

ELIZA RAMSDEN (1874-1875)

A three masted iron barque built in Glasgow.

Diving on the Wreck of the *Eliza Ramsden*

The *Eliza Ramsden* is considered the most spectacular wreck dive in Port Phillip Bay. The vessel sits upright on the seabed in 12 - 18 metres of water with the ship's bow pointing towards Police Point, Queenscliff.

The bow of the old clipper is virtually intact and is a spectacular feature of the wreck. The hull plating and some of the decking along the starboard side of the vessel is still in place. Much of the port side decking has collapsed, probably as a result of explosives used to clear the site in the early 1960s.

Deck supports called stanchions can be seen running along the centre of the vessel and are now covered with seaweed. An old donkey boiler can be seen near the bow and was probably used to supply steam for the winches.

There are still some small artefacts in the bow of the ship, however they are often covered over by gravel, shells and sand. Some of the larger and more interesting relics from the *Eliza Ramsden* have been salvaged. For instance the ship's anchor is on display at Queenscliff's foreshore reserve.

Common reef fish found around the wreck include blue devils, old wives, boar fish, wrasse and cuttlefish.

The overall length of the wreck site is approximately 27m (154ft) x 10m (33ft)

Dive Standard: Intermediate - Experienced

Dive Conditions

As the wreck is in the main shipping channel, it is necessary to buoy at the site and keep the dive boat motoring in the area. Before diving, divers must check shipping activity by contacting the Point Lonsdale Lighthouse on VHF Channel 12. Diving must be done at slack water due to strong tidal currents.

Locating the Wreck of the *Eliza Ramsden*

Launch Site: Launch from Queenscliff Pier. Proceed from Queenscliff Creek until the Pine Tree Transit comes into view. The site gives a good sharp peak on an echo sounder rising from 18m to 12m.

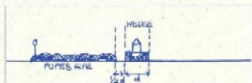
Chart No: AUS 158
Area: Port Phillip Bay
Latitude: 38° 17'39" S
Longitude: 144° 44'03" E

Visual Transits

1. Facing SE, Big pine tree appears between quarantine buildings at Portsea.



2. Facing NNE, the wedge light stands clear of Pope's Eye by half the width of the wedge.



3. Facing west, rock at the end of Point Lonsdale between sand patch and Ranvon Head.



Similar Wrecks in Victoria

Other wrecks of iron sailing ships included in the Underwater Shipwreck Discovery Trail are the *Eliza Ramsden* (Port Phillip Bay), the *Fiji* (Moonlight Head), *Falls of Halladale* (Curdies Point), *George Hoper* (Point Lonsdale), *Holyhead* (Point Lonsdale), *Hurricane* (Port Phillip Bay), *La Bella* (Warmambool) and *Loch Ard* (Port Campbell).

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