

GEORGE ROPER (1882-1883)

A four masted iron barque built to carry cargo.

Diving on the Wreck of the *George Roper*

The *George Roper* lies in shallow water (4-5 metres) with its bow facing into Point Lonsdale Reef. The 66 ton steamer *Blackboy*, used in the salvage of the vessel, lies nearby.

The wreck of the *George Roper* extends for over 83 metres from the large anchor winch at the bow, to the rudder which lies seaward of the Lonsdale Reef.

The lower portion of the hull, below the bilge line, lies semi-intact with the ship's keelson, side keelsons and bilge keelsons clearly visible for most of the wreck's length. At the bow, one of the ship's large winches is offset to the port side of the wreck. A hawse hole can be seen amongst the hull plating on the starboard side of the vessel.

Parts of the rigging such as masts, yards, backstays and deadeyes lie among the hull remains. A lifting davit lies at the stern with a bollard and bit nearby. Divers should also be able to see the rudder standing upright towards the port side of the wreck.

Fragments of cargo including slate, ceramic pieces and clay pipes are strewn about the wreck.

The remnants of iron and other debris around the wreck have become home to many different species of reef fish. The wreck has also been colonised by masses of kelp and other seaweed, making this a very colourful wreck dive.

Dive Standard: Basic - Intermediate

Dive Conditions

This is a tidal site and is best dived at slackwater at the end of the ebb tide.

Locating the Wreck of the *George Roper*

Launch Site: Queenscliff boat ramp

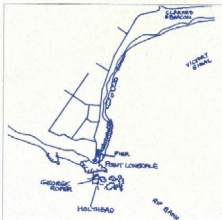
Longitude: 38° 17'54" S

Latitude: 144° 36'51" E

Compass Bearings:

1. Lonsdale Lighthouse - 346° (T)
2. End of Lonsdale Pier - 026° (T)
3. Point Nepean - 101° (T)

Locality



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), *Holyhead* (Point Lonsdale), *Hurricane* (Port Phillip Bay), *La Bella* (Warmambool), *Loch Ard* (Port Campbell) and *Sierra Nevada* (Portsea Ocean Beach).

Help Protect Our Maritime Heritage

The *George Roper* was protected as an Historic Shipwreck on 17 January, 1989 under the Commonwealth Historic Shipwrecks Act (1976). Any damage or interference to the *George Roper* is an offence under the Act and penalties are severe.

Many wrecks are fragile and require constant monitoring. Divers visiting wreck sites can help the Maritime Archaeology Unit protect and manage Victoria's Historic Shipwrecks by:

- Reporting any damage to wreck sites caused by natural erosion or the activities of divers.
- Reporting artefacts which have become exposed through erosion and are at risk from being washed away or looting.
- Reporting any diver seen actively looting a wreck.
- Informing the Unit of a new wreck site. Divers who find and report a new wreck may be entitled to a reward.

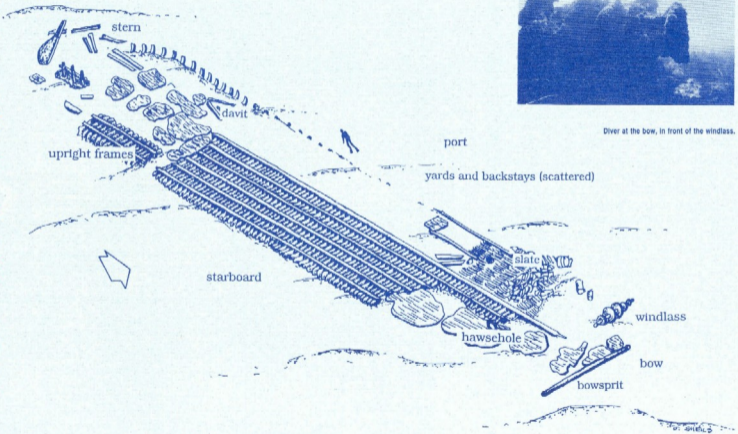
Please contact the Maritime Archaeology Unit at:

Victoria Archaeological Survey
29-31 Victoria Avenue
Albert Park VIC 3206
Telephone: (03) 690 5322

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Diver at the bow, in front of the windlass.



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