

# JOANNA (1856-1857)

A small Victorian built sailing ship used to transport lime within Port Phillip Bay.

## Diving on the Wreck of the *Joanna*

The *Joanna* is a very significant shipwreck. To date, it is the best preserved and the earliest known example of a Victorian built sailing ship located in Australian waters. It offers archaeologists an opportunity to learn about Australian shipbuilding and local trade in the mid- 19th century.

The *Joanna* is situated one and a half kilometres from shore on the Western Bank of the West Channel, between Swan Island and St Leonards.

The wreck lies on sand in two to seven metres of water and stands between one and three metres above the sea bed. The *Joanna*'s cargo of bagged lime, which has now turned to concrete, can still be seen. Divers visiting the wreck often find stingrays living between the lime bags.

The weight of the cargo has pinned down the hull and preserved it under the sand along with ship fittings and crew's possessions. Artefacts found at the site by the Maritime Archaeology Unit include a child's writing slate still inscribed with the date 1855 and the child's name Annie Morgan.

On the south side of the wreck site, remains of the ship's rigging, the anchor chain and rope can be seen: the Maritime Archaeology Unit has placed a plinth on the site.

Dive Standard: Basic - Intermediate

## Dive Conditions

The site of the *Joanna* is very exposed to weather from the north and south. It should be dived only at slack water.

## Locating the Wreck of the *Joanna*

Launch Site: St Leonards Boat Ramp. Head south down Coles Channel to No.5 beacon. Head south-east across West Sand to the six metre hole west of No 12 Pile. Beware of shallow water on top of West Sand bank.

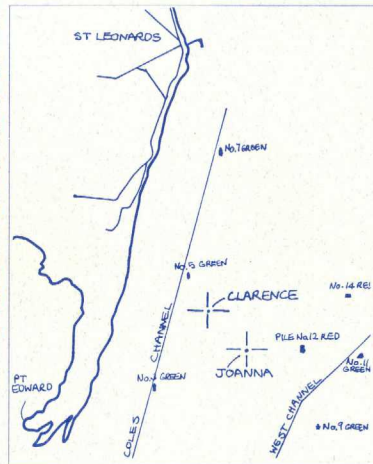
Chart No: AUS 158  
Latitude: 38 12'35"S  
Longitude: 144 43'34"E

Compass Bearing:

1. West Channel Pile Light: 55° (T)
2. Knopwood: 134° (T)
3. Grimes: 181° (T)
4. Swamp beacon on beach: 300° (T)

A yellow marker pile was placed on site in 1991. This is a 100 metre radius Protected Zone, **access** is by permit only. Anchoring is prohibited.

Position of the *Joanna* in relation to the Clarence and West Channel



## Similar Wrecks in Victoria

There are few well preserved wrecks of early Australian built sailing ships in Victoria. The only similar vessel included in the Underwater Shipwreck Discovery Trail is the *Clarence*, located nearby.

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A diver inspects some fragile ropes found at the wreck site.

Help Protect Our Maritime Heritage

The *Joanna* was declared an Historic Shipwreck and a Protected Zone on 5th December, 1990. Any damage or interference to the wreck of the *Joanna* is an offence under the Act and penalties are severe.

At present, divers need a permit from the Maritime Archaeology Unit to dive on the wreck of the *Joanna*. No boating or fishing is permitted within 100 metres of the site.

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

