

# SS WAUCHOPE (1877-1900)

A steamship which sailed between Melbourne, King Island and Launceston.

## Diving on the Wreck of the *SS Wauchope*

Newspaper reports at the time of the fire on board the *SS Wauchope* give the impression that the ship was totally destroyed. But, there is still enough of the wreck on the seafloor to make this an interesting and worthwhile dive. The site extends for 41.5 metres in length. The wreck has an extensive growth of seaweed on and around it and is home to a large population of fish including stingrays.

The *SS Wauchope's* boiler is the largest feature of the site. In the bow area there is good definition of the hull shape and remains of wooden ribs protrude from the sand. The keelson can be seen extending along the length of the bow, from the deck framing to the boiler. Remains of the propeller shaft and blades can still be seen at the stern along with a small amount of coal. Wooden railing, decking and more of the ships ribs can also be observed at the stern.

Broken green champagne bottles and black glass whiskey bottle necks, together with concrete bags lie on the Sorrento side of the hull.

The boiler of the *Wauchope* is exposed at high and low water and can be seen from Sorrento boat ramp.

Dive standard: Basic

## Dive Conditions

The wreck lies in shallow water and it is best to dive on flood slack for maximum visibility.

## Locating the Wreck of the *SS Wauchope*

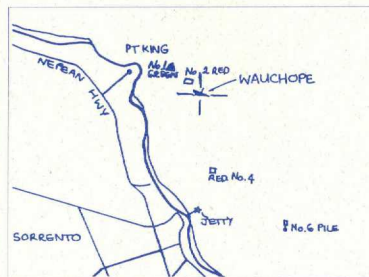
Launch Site: Portsea pier or Sorrento boat ramp

Chart No: AUS 158

Latitude: 38° 19'42" S

Longitude: 144° 44'41" E

## Locality



## Help Protect Our Maritime Heritage

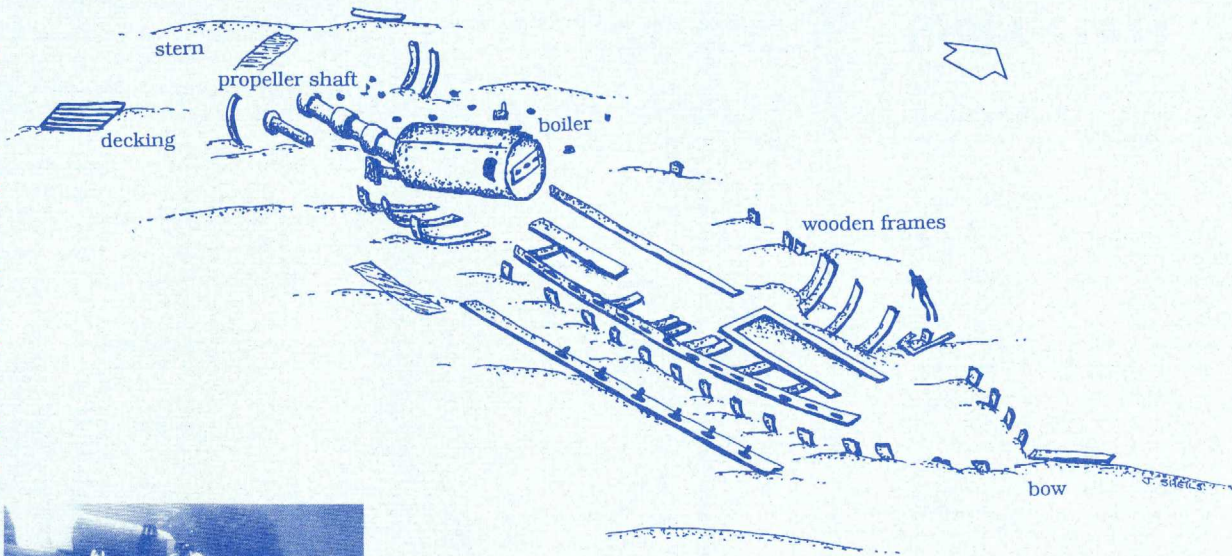
Many wrecks are fragile and require constant monitoring. Divers visiting wreck sites can help the Maritime Archaeology Unit protect and manage Victoria's Historic Shipwrecks by:

- 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:

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

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Diver on the Wauchope wreck with the boiler in the background.