INTERPRETING MARITIME HERITAGE:
Australian Historic Shipwreck Trails

Shirley Strachan

The archaeologist must explore ways and means of preserving and presenting wreck sites to the public.....we must be prepared to “show it” to all walks of life, to professional people, labourers, school children, politicians, the unemployed and the handicapped.

(McCarthy 1983)

(Statement made at the Second Southern Hemisphere Conference on Maritime Archaeology, Adelaide 1982).

Background

National recognition of shipwrecks as cultural assets began with the passage of the Federal Historic Shipwrecks Act 1976. Although protection of historic and scientific values of shipwrecks was the primary aim at this time, very shortly after the consideration of shipwrecks as recreational and educational assets became a prominent concept advanced by McCarthy, wreck inspector with the Western Australian Museum. This was adopted in 1982 as one of the criteria for gazettal of a shipwreck as historic under the act (McCarthy 1980;1983).

In the early 1980s the Commonwealth Historic Shipwrecks Act was applied to protect shipwrecks in waters adjacent to state coasts. The initial focus on Dutch wrecks widened with interest expanding to Australian colonial wrecks involved in the discovery and early settlement of Australia. Two states developed their own specific Historic Shipwrecks Acts to protect wrecks in State inland waters (Victoria in 1981, South Australia in 1980).

McCarthy’s 1982 statement (above) was made at a time when maritime archaeology programs were non-existent or rudimentary in the other Australian states. The first graduates of the Graduate Diploma in Maritime Archaeology from the now Curtin University in Western Australia were only just beginning to obtain professional postings Australia-wide to lead the establishment of official shipwreck protection programs in other states.

In the period from 1983 to date, educational and recreational promotion of shipwrecks to the community has been significantly demonstrated through the response of three State authorities to establish land-based and underwater shipwreck trails. This mode of promotion and interpretation, away from more mainstream reliance on Museum exhibitions has been a major component of shipwreck heritage programs led by State authorities in Western Australia, Victoria and South Australia. In some instances trails have been developed and installed independently by local councils and museums, with or without liaison with State authorities. There are no shipwreck trails in Queensland, Tasmania or the Northern Territory. New South Wales has three trails installed by other agencies.

This paper is written at a time when there has been a call for a National Historic Shipwrecks Trail (Kenderdine et al 1994) and aims to provide a chronology of the establishment of shipwreck trails (land-based and underwater): their main features in terms of who initiated and funded them, and the facilities offered by them; and an evaluation of key issues for the future in terms of shipwreck site protection and promotion.

Figure 1: Great Ocean Road Historic Shipwreck trail: landbased marker overlooking Childers Cove on the west coast of Victoria, the wreck site of the Henty vessel Children (1839) (Maritime Heritage Unit)
Evaluation

When the promotion of shipwreck sites was first proposed in the Western Australian Rottnest Experiment in 1979 there was a strong awareness that site promotion and access could have both positive and negative spin-offs for shipwreck protection. The benefits were perceived to be increased cooperation of divers and the general community in supporting the work of the West Australian Maritime Museum and in reporting the location of shipwrecks; the negative impacts were perceived to be increased site looting and vandalism.

These concerns were voiced at a time when only a very small number of shipwrecks had been declared as historic shipwrecks; the protective legislation faced a critical lobby from treasure and souvenir hunters, the Museum’s colonial wreck program was only recently introduced and the research and survey of the State’s some one thousand shipwrecks was barely underway.

A survey of diver attitudes to shipwreck protection and the aims of the museum’s program was conducted in 1981 by Lester (1983). At this time views were still very polarised in the aftermath of treasure salvor Robinson’s failed fight to secure treasure salvage rights to Dutch shipwrecks off the West Australian coast.

Changed legislative and economic environment and community attitudes

Today the community attitudes to shipwrecks are very different. Although site promotion still involves concerns about user impacts on the sites, conservation policies dictate the management approaches required to achieve balance between access and preservation on the more archaeologically significant wrecks. Active site monitoring programs and an enforcement capacity are vital parallel programs to major site promotion. Although the concerns about the effects of promotion remain, they are offset by the major positive effects of official recognition of the social and cultural significance of the wrecks to the local community, and their wider relevance to cultural tourism and the economy.

Some twenty five per cent of Australia’s 6000 documented shipwreck sites have been located; a rolling date protecting all shipwrecks with wreck dates of 75 years and older was applied nationwide in 1993 (complemented by a similar provision in the Victorian Historic Shipwrecks Act 1981 and the Western Australian Maritime Archaeology Act 1973 which has an automatic protection of sites earlier than 1900). Prosecutions have been effected under state and federal legislation and a one year National Amnesty was declared in 1993 to allow divers to report relics without fear of prosecution, the aim being to document and preserve information about maritime heritage which otherwise would be lost to the public. The positive response to the Amnesty nationwide reflected the changes in community cooperation with shipwreck heritage management agencies.

Approximately 2.5 per cent of located shipwrecks nationwide have been interpreted through shipwreck trails. These trails are popular and have served in the first instance to establish better liaison between a centralised shipwreck management agency (whether Museum or Department) and the local community where the wrecks are located. Community access to shipwreck heritage is an important program goal in most States, and features predominantly in the priorities for the National Shipwrecks Program (Henderson 1994, 33-37).

In some States heritage management programs within larger Planning Departments are linked to the wider goal of improving the economy of the State (Department of Planning and Development 1994). Inclusion in tourism and public use initiatives is also vital in this context.

Catering for the audience and user

Issues which are important in this area are:

• stakeholder involvement in the design stage
• awareness of different expectations about what constitutes a meaningful experience of an underwater
heritage site; achieving cultural value balance in the selection of sites
• obtaining user feedback
• consideration of children as clients
• consideration of the physically challenged as clients
• the international audience: marketing and multilingual issues
• interpretative products: need for multilevel approach
• conflict with other users of access areas to trails

It is evident from the chronology of the establishment of trails (see pages 30-34) that there are different levels of involvement of stakeholders in the selection of sites to be promoted, in the design and implementation of shipwreck trails whether land or underwater based, and in their promotion and design for users.

A brief evaluation of the Rottnest Experiment was written by Prince (1987). The overall response of diving business clients was positive although there were some design and administration issues that required further work. Deficiencies identified were lack of a site plan on the underwater markers around the island, need for sites to be identified with mooring systems to allow fast easy access, and some disappointment expressed about the lack of visual appeal of some of the sites. Problems identified in project concept were lack of networking with other trails (proposals for integration with environmental trails around the island were then being aired); low level of involvement and input by the local community - particularly diving clients; lack of a focus on the needs of children using the trail, and the need to cater for faster moving tourists so that they could obtain a deeper awareness of the trail’s value in the short time available to their visit.

A proposal for a Protected Zones Access Scheme (Strachan 1991) was put forward in Victoria to ascertain the feasibility of a user-pays system to cover the costs of improved design and administration of underwater shipwreck trails. This was followed with an informal and formal client survey of dive charter operators, and included feedback on the underwater shipwreck trail concept. The general feedback indicated widespread support for the trail; the tastes of the diving clients were oriented to more intact, deeper sites with major visual and experiential appeal.

However, the inclusion of archaeologically significant and sensitive (but not so visual) sites was valued more with the provision of special interpretative booklets such as Time and Tide produced for the William Salt House shipwreck, a Protected Zone which can only be accessed under permit. At the time of writing a visitor survey of diving visitors to this site is being undertaken which aims, firstly, to ascertain the quality of experience obtained by divers using this interpretative support to the underwater marker and site/history pamphlets included in the Underwater Shipwreck Discovery Trail kit. A second aim is to identify what additional support is required to ensure that the cultural value of the archaeological integrity of the site is appreciated, for example on site briefings prior to the dive (Maritime Heritage Unit 1995 in prep.).

There is still a significant amount of work to be done to improve visitor services to the wrecks. Business clients expect ready access with quickly identifiable moorings. There has been no work undertaken to specifically cater for the needs of school children visiting land-based shipwreck trails. Despite the value of trails being flagged in teacher training courses, a product has yet to be implemented (Varley et al 1990).
Some work has been done in Western Australia to promote access to maritime sites for the physically challenged, particularly those requiring wheelchair access. A pamphlet was produced promoting a range of sites, including those in trails (Chapman et al 1994). Although there is scope in diver training bodies to train those with disabilities to dive, there is as yet no dialogue established with the disabled as users which would allow us to plan for the visitor service needs of this group. It was some years ago that an underwater trail for the blind was established at Florida Keys with underwater markers produced in braille.

Promotion and market penetration

Unfortunately many of the trails have been set up without major consideration or opportunity to promote their existence widely. The reasons for this are complex and include issues such as the following:

- most of the energies of participants creating a trail goes into creating the product, not selling it. The creative mass which exists when a multi-stakeholder team is working together to install a trail dissolves after the product is completed;
- government departments and museum institutions are not set up to market or distribute their products other than through in-house bookshops or official newsletters;
- the lack of expertise of heritage managers in the area of tourism and marketing results in the under-utilisation of promotional avenues and networks within the tourism industry;
- the ongoing availability of high quality products to support the trails is jeopardised by the sales revenue returning to consolidated revenue and not being channelled into maintenance and development trusts.
  
  The versatility and business acumen of State Government Finance Departments in this area varies;
- the lack of a structure to address the international/national situation (Henderson 1992);
- there is a low level of awareness of maritime heritage opportunities in the business plans of land-based and dive charter based Tourism Operators.

Presentation

The problems in this area can be overcome by government agencies taking on the role of providing guidelines on presentation. In Victoria, the Department of Conservation and Natural Resources had a well established approach to marker design and materials since it is involved in major interpretation projects in National Parks and Coastal Reserves; works on Crown Coastal Land are controlled through its Coastal Coordination Management Committee. The Southwest Historic Shipwrecks Trail benefited from design consistency because of this. Departures from this design occurred where areas came under municipal or Foreshore committee management control. In New South Wales the Department of Urban Affairs and Planning has recently issued Guidelines for Local Councils aiming to establish heritage trails with the aim of overcoming the non-consistent design occurring in that state.

In Victoria the involvement of Vic Roads and tourism bodies in the 325 kilometre land-based South West Historic Shipwrecks Trail led to the Working Group designing an easily identifiable logo which appears on all the signs, markers and interpretation products for the trail. The use of the logo is also controlled by guidelines to ensure quality products are available to trail users. This logo has also been taken up in signage for other heritage/environmental walks.

Administration

The ongoing resourcing of shipwreck trails is difficult because of the lack of business planning structures in government agencies. Particularly with larger scale projects the initial funds are often provided by a number of external agencies or sponsors without the possibility of an ongoing commitment. Similarly it is important to negotiate a maintenance agreement and identify a key agency to undertake this role. This can be difficult where a number of agencies have control of land jurisdiction, and where resourcing constraints impact on the level of financial commitment available.

In Victoria duplicate sets of land based interpretative plaques were produced to cater for damage or vandalism. The vandalism experience has been varied depending on the location of markers, and has tended to occur where promotion of access to the coast has conflicted with the proprietary/territorial perceptions of other coast users; or where the Maritime Heritage Unit has had minimal contact with the community in terms of education. In some instances the entire marker has been stolen or souvenired. Over a five year period 25 per cent of the 20 markers have been vandalised, with 15 per cent being replaced.

Future directions

The possibility of a National Shipwrecks Trail was suggested in a recent National Themes for Maritime Archaeology Project (Kenderdine et al 1994). All of the issues raised above would need to be carefully considered and a National Project Plan produced. The creative potential of shipwreck trails to instil appreciation of cultural protection and enjoyment of sites is immense. Once established, they take on a different dimension creating interest and new clients in unexpected ways. They are therefore dynamic concepts which must have support products developed for them which cater for new levels of interest. This too has a bearing on the refinement and reconsideration of management strategies and conservation policies for the wrecks themselves.
HISTORY AND FEATURES OF WRECK TRAILS IN AUSTRALIA

WESTERN AUSTRALIA

Rottnest Island Underwater Shipwreck Trail (1982)
The first underwater and land-based shipwreck trail was established at Rottnest Island (located offshore in easy proximity to Perth).

• developed by the Western Australian Maritime Museum and the Rottnest Island Board
• underwater markers on all eleven shipwrecks around the island, involving installation of one tonne concrete plinths with ceramic plaques containing textual information (but no graphic information) about the wrecks
• wrecks thematically connected by the island itself which presented a major hazard to shipping in the 19th and 20th centuries
• booklet with individual histories of the wrecks
• availability of a privately produced book with details on location of wrecks
• complementary land based bicycle trail which starts at the Rottnest Museum
• complementary displays at the museum to enhance the interpretation of the trail
• partially networked with an environmental trail
• availability of privately operated glass bottomed charter vessel 'Seaviewer' for trail tours
• availability of brochures on the island, and through the Western Australian Museum bookshop; publicity in museum publications
• involvement of the Maritime Archaeology Association of Western Australia in maintenance of the underwater markers

A series of pamphlets with histories of various vessels and locational diagrams has been produced for the following areas:

Mandurah Wreck Trail (1993)
The Albany Maritime Heritage Trail (1993)
Albany’s Coal Hulks (1993)
Wrecks in the Geraldton Area - plus wall chart (1993)
Wrecks of the Coral Coast (1993)
Wrecks in the Houtman Abrolhos (1993)
Wrecks in the Hamelin Bay area (1994)
Shipwrecks of Shark Bay (1994)
The Castaway Coast (1994)
Pending Wrecks between Guilderton and Lancelin - plus wall chart (1995)

Many of these pamphlets were put together by work experience students and local schools using municipal, tourism and government funding sources coordinated by the Western Australian Museum. Some of the accessible and safe sites are marked with underwater markers, with a view to expanding interpretation underwater as further funding becomes available.
SOUTH AUSTRALIA

Adelaide Underwater Heritage Trail (1987)
- developed by the State Maritime Archaeologist at the State Heritage Branch of the Department of Environment and Planning
- four sites located in the Gulf of St Vincent which were typologically distinct, illustrating a variety of construction techniques and trading activities of ships wrecked in the Gulf of St Vincent
- an A5 fold-out brochure with a short history of each wreck, an underwater survey plan, underwater photographs of the sites, and locational information
- brochure available from the Department (directly and through the bookshop)

Wardang Island Shipwreck Trail (1991)
- coordinated and installed by the Department of Planning, State Heritage Branch
- eight shipwrecks selected with underwater markers, thematically connected by their location around the island and their strong appeal as diving experiences
- booklet which includes information on the wrecks and other island features
- information shelter to orient the visitor
- diver orientation
- joint funding between the local council and the Department, with the council undertaking the land management role in relation to landscaping needs
- installation by the council of a geology trail with complementary information shelter design
- later development in 1994/95 of complementary Flora and Fauna research as part of a school project; to be edited and produced as a brochure in 1996

Kangaroo Island Trail (1993)
- regional perspective with interpretation of 50 sites overall, six more prominent shipwrecks highlighted from around the island
- seven signs installed in the vicinity of key sites
- land based and oriented to a more general tourist audience
- A4 full colour brochure
- coordination and funding by the State Heritage Branch, Department of Planning
- proposal to develop a complementary Flora and Fauna interpretation of the sites, similar to work conducted at Wardang Island

Investigator Strait Trail (1994)
- installed by the State Heritage Branch, Department of Planning
- regional approach
- interprets seven shipwrecks around Yorke Peninsula
- highlights 3-4 shipwrecks which are attractive destinations
- anodised aluminium plaques with text and graphic information on features

River Murray Heritage Trail (1995)
- coordinated by the State Heritage Branch, Department of Planning, in conjunction with local councils of townships sited along the river
- a regional interpretation of the Murray River from the river mouth to the Victorian border
- holistic, regional approach
- incorporates a wide range of maritime and land based features, explored more fully in a booklet taking a regional approach to the entire river system's cultural assets
- involved all local councils of the eleven townships along the river
- eleven signs, one in each township which interpret the 61 wrecks, 16 extant vessels and 89 land sites along the river system
**Lady Bay Places Trail (1987)**

A small land based trail skirting Warrnambool’s Lady Bay on the West Coast was established involving the Warrnambool Council and the Foreshore Committee of Management.

- established under the direction of Flagstaff Hill Maritime Museum Warrnambool, and with research assistance from the now Maritime Heritage Unit of Heritage Victoria
- six land-based markers consisting of cylindrical concrete supports capped off with bronze plaques. The wrecks selected were those better known in local history and included wrecks which had blown ashore, or wrecked in the vicinity during the 1850-1905 period. Several had become buried under land which had accumulated as a result of building the Breakwater. In the 20th century this land had been reserved and developed as foreshore caravan parks
- brochure on wrecks and other significant features around Lady Bay produced using a publications fund managed by Flagstaff Hill Maritime Museum; brochure available through the Museum, foreshore caravan parks and the Tourism Information Centre

**La Bella (1987)**

Coinciding with the above the first Victorian underwater marker was installed on the historic shipwreck *La Bella* (1905) wrecked offshore from the Warrnambool Breakwater.

- coordination by Flagstaff Hill Maritime Museum
- involvement in installation by the Warrnambool Scuba Diving Club
- business sponsorship by Warrnambool Textiles for the plinth materials
- logistics support by the National Safety Council whose helicopter airwing lifted and installed the one tonne marker which was based on the WA design
- production of a low budget information sheet on the wreck, provided by and available at the Museum
- informal registration system operated by Museum for site visitors to assist them in locating the site and with information about site protection

**Port Fairy Trail (1988)**

- established independently through local Historical Society and Borough initiative
- small land-based trail involving numbered markers established on Port Fairy beach
- a general sign (perspex over artwork mounted on an aluminium pole) at one of the beach carparks showing the numbered positions of four wrecks at the southern end of the Bay, and other features such as the flagstaff and coastal gun emplacements. The wrecks were selected from a larger group wrecked along the Bay and were directly linked to the sealing, whaling and rural background of the historic township
- an A4 brochure with brief histories on each of the wrecks, and plan showing the position of markers funded by the Borough and available through the Borough and its Tourism Information Centre


- coordinated and funded by the Maritime Heritage Unit of Heritage Victoria with the support of Museums, Maritime Archaeology Association and Port Authorities
- three underwater markers were installed in 1989 and formed the beginnings of the Victorian Underwater Shipwreck Discovery Trail
- markers included an underwater site plan for diver orientation
- in 1991 production of an Underwater Shipwreck Discovery Trail kit to support the trail; involved consultation with dive charter operators
- a statewide approach involving the selection of 21 shipwrecks around the State’s eastern and western coastal waters and Port Phillip Bay. The wrecks included those popularly dived by sport divers, and wrecks of high archaeological significance which had been gazetted ‘Protected Zones’ and require a permit for entry to the zone
- underwater markers installed and funded by the State agency on eight of the wrecks by 1993, with an invitation to diving clubs to sponsor other markers with another pending in 1995, funded by the Geelong Skindivers Club
• production of a comprehensive kit which contained a statewide map showing the positions of all the wrecks, and a thematic historical overview of the wrecks; individual history brochures on each of the sites including artefact drawings and photographs of the ships; local museums or outlets to visit which had interpretative or other display material pertaining to the wrecks; individual site sheets with a three dimensional isometric site plan of each wreck, locational details, safety information and other site data; a detailed booklet ‘Time and Tide: a Guide to the Wreck of the William Salthouse’. This site is one of the most archaeologically significant wrecks in Victoria and has been open to permit access since its declaration as an historic shipwreck and protected zone in 1982 and 1983.
• a complimentary copy of the kit was given to dive charter operators around the State

South West Historic Shipwreck Trail: Shipwreck Coast (1990)
Planned to extend from Geelong on the western side of Port Phillip Bay to the South Australian border.
• installation and launch of phase 1: Shipwreck Coast, from Cape Otway westwards to Port Fairy
• picked up and integrated the interpretation of the smaller trails established at Warrnambool and Port Fairy
• formation of a Working Group administered and coordinated by the Maritime Heritage Unit of Heritage Victoria involving the Warrnambool Council and Shire, Department of Conservation and Natural Resources, Flagstaff Hill Maritime Museum, Vic Roads, local tourism groups, Tourism Victoria, local historical society, local divers
• 145 kilometre vehicle/land based shipwreck trail indicated by major highway signage, off-road chevron markers and ten interpretative markers containing text and images on 25 shipwrecks (including a rocket shed with equipment used in shipwreck rescue)
• siting of interpretative markers on cliff tops and coves in the vicinity of submerged shipwreck sites
• a wreck trail logo which appears in all signage and products associated with the trail
• a trail guide including a regional road map with marker locations, inset maps with more directional information, and location of museums and other centres involved with maritime heritage in the coastal region
• inclusion of the trail map in the Warrnambool Visitors Handbook, produced by Warrnambool Tourism Information Centre; inclusion jointly funded by Heritage Victoria and Flagstaff Hill Maritime Museum; regular inclusion in Southwest Tourism News; distribution through other tourism promotions
• availability of a wall mounted logo for businesses and centres carrying stocks of the brochure, and which may also have interpretative displays, or videos and exhibits pertaining to the wrecks (with ‘information available here’)
• funding and sponsorship of the markers and other products involved by Working Group participants, and local businesses with an interest in tourism
• a draft thematic monograph ‘Wild Coast’ which draws the shipwrecks together into a regional thematic framework

Barwon Heads Bluff Shipwrecks Walk (1990)
• a ten minute land-based walk trail established on the bluff to the west of Port Phillip Heads (The Bluff overlooks the southern ocean and ships’ graveyard)
• twelve land-based markers (burnished copper effect on aluminium) on wooden stands around the head of the bluff, interpreting selected shipwrecks (including text and graphics) scuttled in the shipwrecks graveyard offshore from the bluff or wrecked near the shore on their approaches to and from Melbourne
• independently initiated and established with funding provided by the Foreshore Committee of Management; research support was provided from the now Maritime Heritage Unit of Heritage Victoria

Lorne Foreshore Wreck Trail (1991)
• installed for the 1991 statewide commemorations of 1891, the worst year for Maritime Disasters in Victoria
• independently initiated by the Lorne Historical Society
• liaison with the Maritime Heritage Unit in relation to research, and locational information to assist in clarifying identification issues about local wrecks
• concrete foreshore markers with an aluminium plaque with details of the shipwrecks, and a graphic of ship type included

South West Historic Shipwrecks Trail: Discovery Coast (1993)
The Discovery Coast trail was a 180 kilometre westward extension of the South West Historic Shipwrecks trail from the already installed Shipwreck Coast; stretched from Port Fairy to the South Australian border.
formation of a Working Group, administered and coordinated by the Maritime Heritage Unit of Heritage Victoria and involving participation from the now Glenelg Council and Shire, Department of Conservation and Natural Resources, Port of Portland Authority, tourism groups, historical societies, the Council’s Maritime Heritage Advisory Committee, local hotels

- 28 wrecks interpreted using ten land markers (final installation 1995)
- sponsorship from a range of government authorities and local business interests (Australian Maritime Safety Authority, Portland Aluminium, CSR Softwoods, local hotels and tourism businesses)
- brochure with identical design to Shipwreck Coast brochure
- 28 markers with complementary design to Shipwreck Coast
- production of a promotional video by Portland Aluminium 'Anchored in Time'
- full integration into the highway signage system for the trail, and off-road chevron markers produced by Vic Roads and installed by local shires
- brochures available through tourism outlets, museums and various businesses reliant on tourism economy
- availability of a wall mounted logo of the trail with ‘Information available here’ for those stocking information and other interpretation of shipwrecks along the trail

NEW SOUTH WALES


- centred around the northern Newcastle Breakwater which was built over a number of shipwrecks in Newcastle Harbour; linked to another small trail at Pirate Point
- independently initiated, researched and designed by the Newcastle Branch of the Maritime Archaeology Association of New South Wales, in conjunction with the Newcastle Maritime Museum
- funded by the Newcastle Maritime Museum
- input from the local Council, Port Authority, citizens, and the NSW Department of Planning; site works done as part of a prisoner integration scheme
- large introductory anodised aluminium sign at the entrance to the trail, with text and graphics
- individual markers on eight shipwrecks with name of shipwreck cast in concrete
- majority of sites thematically linked by being part of the foundation of the breakwater construction
- museum sole source of stocks and information on the trail
- some displays of relics from the wrecks at the Newcastle Maritime Museums


- is part of a larger heritage trail for the town
- independently initiated and installed by local groups coordinated by the mid North Coast Maritime Museum
- includes 30 wreck bronze plaques, set in concrete in the grass in a river park and sited along the banks of the river, following an existing path
- contain information on popularly known shipwrecks wrecked elsewhere at sea near Port Macquarie
- supported by a single information plinth with directions of the wrecks from the river
- funding provided by families of town who sponsored a plaque
- supported by a brochure available locally

Cronulla Shopping Centre Mall ‘trail’ (1993)

- independently initiated and installed by the Sutherland Shire Council
- includes eight brass plaques laid into the pavers and walls of the Mall containing text and illustration of shipwrecks remote from the area
Shirley Strachan is a maritime archaeologist and has been Manager of the Victorian Maritime Heritage Unit since 1987. The Maritime Heritage Unit primarily delivers the shipwreck research, survey, protection and interpretation programmes of Heritage Victoria. Shirley previously worked in Tasmania as Curator of Conservation and Maritime Archaeology at the Queen Victoria Museum.

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