

SHIPWRECKS OF SOUTH AUSTRALIA

Historic Shipwrecks Act 1981



Fact Sheet No. 30

Excelsior

Mutton Cove Ships' Graveyard

The screw steamer *Excelsior* was built in 1897 by Gourlay Brothers of Dundee, Scotland. The steel hulled vessel measured 131.0 feet (39.9 m) in length, 24.0 feet (7.3 m) breadth, 10.8 feet (3.3 m) depth and was 310 gross tons.

Excelsior was originally registered in Sydney (1897) and employed on the north coast of New South Wales before its purchase by the Tahiti firm, L Ballands, and its register transferred to Papeete.

In 1904 the vessel was again registered in Sydney, and in 1908 was owned by South Australian flour millers, John Darling and Sons. By 1912 *Excelsior* was owned by the South Australian Farmers Union Cooperative (registered in Adelaide) and remained under their ownership until 1933 when it was sold to the South Australian Harbors Board. The steamer was converted to a coal hulk, and used for lightering coal to the steam powered dredges working in Port Adelaide.

As diesel-powered dredges took over from the coal-fuelled ones, *Excelsior* was laid up, eventually being abandoned at Mutton Cove, on the northern end of the Lefevre Peninsula, in 1945.

Today the remains lie embedded in mud, east of Outer Harbor. The rusting hull shows little sign of salvage. The bow is intact but sections of the stern have collapsed.

Image: DEW Files



The remains of SS Excelsior at Mutton Cove

More information

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