

56 km north of Perth between Wreck Point and Eglinton Rocks on March 20, 1963. The 7,176 ton ship ran aground three times before being sold for scrap. In October 1969, a fire broke out while salvors were cutting it up. They were forced to swim for safety. All that remains of *Alkimos* today is a huge hulk of rusting metal.

### *Klara Borg* 1982

The 132 year old *Klara Borg* sank in heavy seas about 45 km off Yanchep on July 14, 1982. Built in 1850, the vessel was the oldest and last remaining double-masted ketch of wooden construction still sailing the oceans of the world. Leaving Fremantle, it was bound for Singapore on July 13 with a crew of 10 men, three cats and a parrot. The vessel began taking water from the beginning of the voyage but was in no immediate danger until the pumps failed the following morning. At about 1 pm a fire broke out in the galley while the crew was busy trying to keep the vessel afloat. It had to be abandoned and all on board were rescued by the State ship *Koolinda*. Only the ship's wheel and bell were saved.

### *Key Biscayne* 1983

*Key Biscayne*, a 2,695 ton jack up oil rig, was being towed by two rig supply ships, *Lady Sonia* and *Atlas Van Dieman* with *Argusguard* as a standby vessel. The rig was being towed from its last drilling position in the Arafura Sea (north east of Darwin) to Cockburn Sound, Fremantle. On September 1, 1983, a large low pressure system struck with full force

between Mandurah and Lancelin forcing the *Key Biscayne* to sink near Ledge Point where it lies today.



### Unknown Wreck c.1945

In February 1982, Mr D. Sheppard discovered the wreckage of a small 15-ton vessel, lying in about 1 metre of water, approximately 10 metres from the shore at Wanneroo Beach, Quinns Rocks. Little is known about the wreck except it is about the size of a small lugger, probably less than 50 years old thought to have sunk c.1945.

For further information on historic shipwrecks contact the WA Museum Shipwreck Galleries or the WA Heritage Council: <http://www.museum.wa.gov.au/collections/maritime/march/march.asp>  
<http://tourism.heritage.wa.gov.au>  
 Text by Michael J. Lapwood, Craigie S.H.S, December 1992. Updated by Jessica Berry, Tracey Miller and Jessica Reynolds, WAM 2008.



#### Diving notes

Wrecks are often hazardous. Access to some wrecks requires a boat. Divers need to be fit and qualified. Use of this trail is at your own risk. A diver must show a flag. Do not dive alone or leave the boat unattended. Persons diving on these wrecks do so at their own risk. These wrecks are part of Western Australia's heritage. They are protected under legislation. Please enjoy them but do not disturb them.

# SHIPWRECKS BETWEEN NORTH MOLE AND MOORE RIVER

## The Wrecks

### *Vergulde Draeck* 1656

*Vergulde Draeck*, or *Gilt Dragon*, struck a reef at latitude 31' 40' 03 NW of Cape Leschenault on April 28, 1656. Two ships *Waeckende Boey* and *Emeloort* found no trace of the wreck as they searched along the Western Australian coast.



### *Vergulde Draeck* artefacts

In 1931, a young boy found coins and a skeleton on the dunes which people were certain came from *Vergulde Draeck*. On April 14, 1963 the wreckage was found on the reef by a group of spear fishermen after lying 306 years on the seabed. *Vergulde Draeck* was 137

feet long, 32 feet wide and 13.5 feet in the hold with 7 feet above. It was declared a historic shipwreck in 1964.



*North Mole*

### *Elizabeth* 1839

The 104-ton barque *Elizabeth* arrived at Fremantle on August 24, 1839 during a trading voyage from Manila and Singapore. Capt. Garrett sold part of the general cargo at Fremantle and prepared to sail to Sydney. *Elizabeth* set sail bound for Sydney on September 21. Up to midnight there was no indication of the coming storm, but at about 1 am it burst forth with the most destructive violence, and lasted for 24 hours. *Elizabeth* was about 5 miles north of Rottnest when it was struck by the gale. By 7 am it was heading east south-east towards Fremantle to reach safety. The vessel struck bottom close to the beach, about 3 miles north of Fremantle.

### *Eglinton* 1852

*Eglinton*, built in 1841, was a wooden barque

of 471 tonnes carrying 31 passengers and 21 crew with a cargo of general merchandise and a consignment of £15,000 of gold sovereigns intended for the treasury of the struggling Swan River colony. At 9.45pm on September 3, 1852, the last night of the voyage, it struck an offshore reef from where the wind carried it over to another inside reef where it stuck fast. In an attempt to abandon ship, two people, believed to be drunk, were drowned. A subsequent investigation revealed that a navigational error and negligence on part of the captain was responsible for the disaster. The wreck was re-discovered in 1971 by Peter Boonman and Brian Castle. *Eglinton* is declared as an historic wrecksite.



*Alex T. Brown*

### *Centaur* 1874

The 25 year old iron brig *Centaur* was wrecked about 24 km north of Fremantle on December 9, 1874 on Centaur Reef. Capt. Brabham ordered the boats and in about 25 minutes, all hands had left her. His certificate was suspended for three months. The 188-ton

*Centaur* was built in Aberdeen in 1849. It was constructed of iron, with one deck, a square stern and a male bust figurehead.

### *Alex T. Brown* 1917

*Alex T. Brown*, an American-built four-masted schooner, ran aground just south of Wreck Point ('The Spot' between Yanchep and Two Rocks) on May 30, 1917. It had left Fremantle the previous day in ballast bound for Puget Sound, via Manila. The news of the stranded vessel reached Fremantle the next day when the ships mate, F. Knutsun arrived in Perth to request assistance of a tug. The tug *Wyola* was dispatched to the scene. After several unsuccessful attempts to refloat it, it was sold as a wreck for 420 pounds to Mr Findlayson of Perth. *Alex T. Brown* can be seen high on the beach (although sometimes totally covered in sand) and is the only wreck of a four-masted schooner in Australia.



*Alkimos*

### *Alkimos* 1963

The Greek freighter *Alkimos* struck a reef