

DARK THINGS IN DARK PLACES

The History Trust of South Australia cares for many fantastical and interesting objects. Each object has its own story. We challenge you to look at the Star of Greece Figurehead, learn about it and then tell its story using art.

Star of Greece Figurehead

Figurehead salvaged from the Star of Greece wrecked off Port Willunga in July, 1888.

Creator: Edward Harland



This figurehead depicts the bust of a Grecian noblewoman wearing a gold leaf coronet. Painted white, her tunic is trimmed with gold on the neckline and she wears a gold bangle. Her right hand crosses her chest and a tendril of hair falls over her left shoulder.

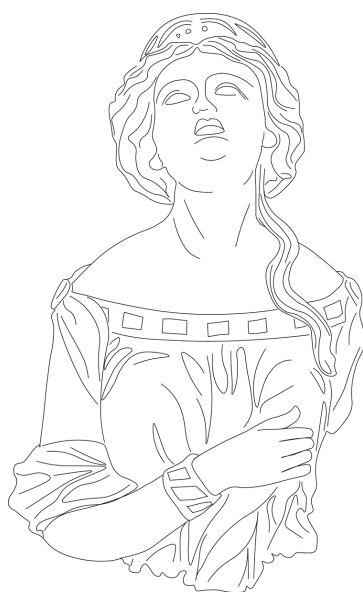
Beautifully carved, it reflects the elegance of the Irish Star vessel which it adorned. Built in 1868 by Edward Harland, the Star of Greece was a sleek three-masted, full-rigged iron ship of 1227 tons.

Figureheads, carved wooden sculptures which ornamented the bow of a sailing ship, signify ancient maritime traditions embodying the 'souls' of vessels and bestowing protection and safe passage to crews on the high seas.

They were also used to identify a ship, reflecting its function or paying tribute to a person connected with the vessel.

The Star of Greece figurehead is an evocative relic from South Australia's most infamous shipwreck that led to significant reforms in maritime safety laws.

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