

SS Copenhagen

Take an Underwater Tour

Audio Transcripts

Bow

Come with us as we explore the remains of *SS Copenhagen*, one of Florida's underwater archaeological preserves. The weather is good today and the fish are glad to see us. Right away we can see the anchor of *Copenhagen* which is situated along the boulders of the limestone reef. Just ahead is a bronze plaque that is set in a concrete base designating this site as a Florida Heritage Site. The Scottish Steamship *Copenhagen* was launched in England in 1898. She was powered by three steam engines but also carried sails to take advantage of fair winds. Her last voyage began May 20, 1900 out of Philadelphia bound for Havana Cuba carrying 500 tons of coal. Swimming over the bow towards the forward cargo hold we can see the remains of the iron frames that reinforce the ships hull.

Port

As we swim along the port side of the vessel we see the remains of the ships inner and outer hull. The vessel suddenly crashed into a submerged ledge while steaming full speed at eight knots, three fourths of a mile off Pompano beach, and that's where we find her today. As an artificial reef, home to countless varieties of sea life that represent a natural aquarium filled with coral and fish. Below us are the remains of the intermediate frames and deep frames and as we keep heading North along the port side of the vessel we are heading up toward the stern of the boat.

Starboard

Like many steamships of her time, *Copenhagen* had a double bottom with separate inner and outer hulls. As we swim south you can see the hulls. This was a safety measure against minor groundings that might puncture the outer hull but not the inner hull. This time the ship's double bottom could not prevent flooding when *Copenhagen* struck the shallow ledge. This is the pillow block that supported the propeller shaft below decks in the stern of the ship. Here is the place where the engine and boilers were located amidships. When *Copenhagen* struck the reef the captain ordered the engine stopped, then reversed, but she was stuck fast, taking on water. *Copenhagen* remained visible above the water for some time, but gradually her identity was forgotten. In the late twentieth century, almost a century after her launching, the Marine Archeological Council of Broward County reestablished the ship's identity and history. In 1994 *Copenhagen* became Florida's fifth underwater archaeological preserve and was listed on the National Register of Historic Places in 2001. We hope you enjoyed your tour of *SS Copenhagen* please help us to keep the site intact for others to enjoy by not disturbing the wreckage or its marine life.