

Exploring the Steamship Tarpon

Underwater Archaeological Preserve



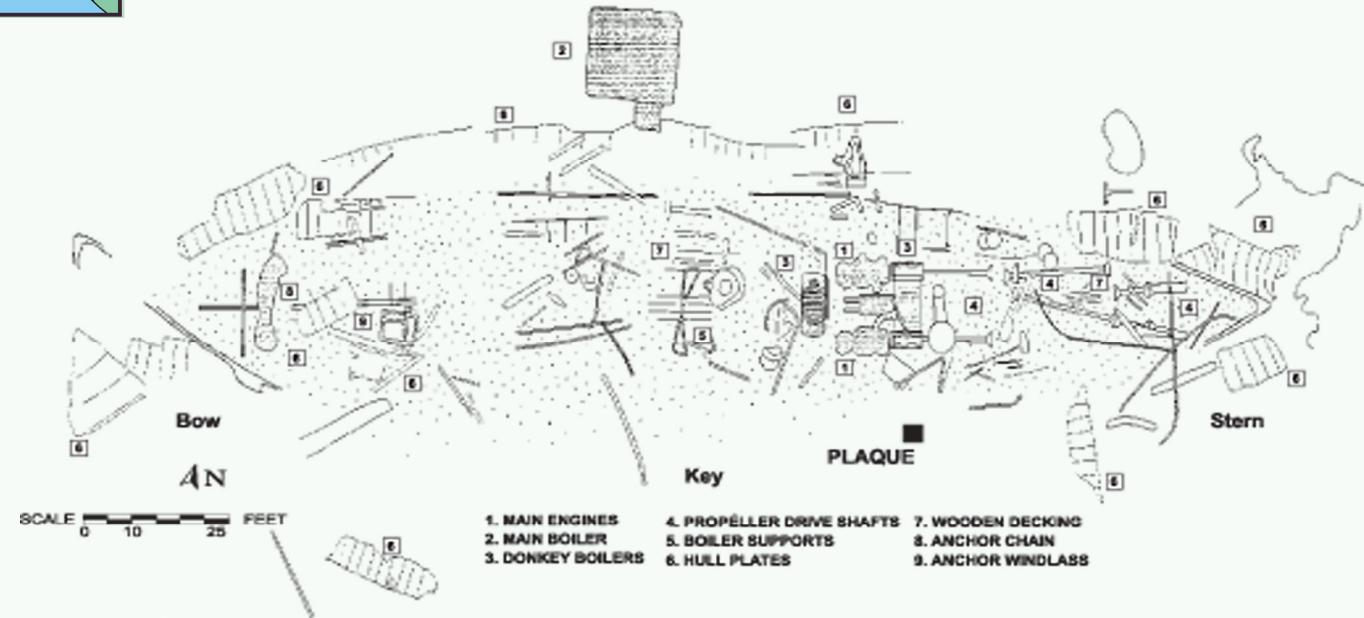
Eighteen people lost their lives during this tragic event, some going down with the ship, and others succumbing to the effects of the cold water, including Captain Willis G. Barrow. One crewman, oiler Adley Baker, swam to shore after 25 hours in the water. Shortly after he was picked up by a passing motorist.

A Window to the Past

Experience history with a visit to a 19th-century freight and passenger steamer. See the inner workings of the engine room and the remains of the hull that at one time carried more than 200 tons of general cargo across the Florida Panhandle.

The wreck of *Tarpon* reflects the era of Florida's Gulf Coast transportation and commerce.

As *Tarpon* left Mobile on August 30th, 1937, she had more than 200 tons of cargo on board, along with 31 crewmen. At 2 A.M. the engineer was awakened by the crew because they could not keep water from filing the bilges. The ship listed to port as the men worked the pumps. The first mate ordered the helm into the seas, and sent the second mate below to jettison barrels of flour overboard. Returning to an even keel, she was put back on course. Just before dawn the wind reached gale force, and the pounding seas began to pour through *Tarpon*'s wooden bulkheads, causing her to list to starboard. The crew tried to jettison the cargo to lighten the ship but the situation was futile. Captain Barrow was forced to order all hands to abandon ship. The vessel began to settle into the seas by her stern as people scrambled to release the lifeboats.



A Living Ecosystem
Observe the myriad lifeforms that have made *Tarpon* their home.



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UNDERWATER ARCHAEOLOGICAL PRESERVE

The remains of *Tarpon* are located in 95 feet of water on a sand and live rock bottom at latitude 30° 05.702' N and longitude 85° 56.555' W. To prevent damage to the site, please do not drop your anchor directly on the vessel.

This is an Advanced-level dive due to the depth. Diving the steamer is not recommended for novices, or those uncomfortable with deep-water dives. Pay attention to time limits and remember to display a "diver down" flag when diving.

Tarpon is protected by Florida laws that prohibit unauthorized disturbance, excavation, or removal of artifacts. Please help keep the site intact for future visitors.

For more information please visit:
www.museumsinthesea.com

