Keshena
US Navy Tug

North Carolina

You Should Know
This wreck is federally protected by the SUNKEN MILITARY CRAFT ACT. Visitation and enjoyment of this cultural resource is encouraged. Removal of artifacts or alteration of the site is strictly prohibited.

This site is owned by the United States Navy and is considered a war grave. Please respect it as such and refrain from alteration or penetration of the site.

You are encouraged to enjoy this resource responsibly and to leave the site unaltered for the enjoyment of future divers.

Vessel History

**Launched:** 1939 by Gulfport Boiler & Welding Works

**Owner:** United States Navy (Navy Rescue Tug Service)

**Actions:** Keshena was an unarmed service craft operated by the Navy Rescue Tug Service. Vessels such as this served an important function and receive few accolades unless lost dramatically. Small support and service craft assisted larger naval vessels, supported operations and were critical to a well-functioning navy.

**History:** On July 15, 1942, the U-576 attacked Convoy KS-520 off the Cape Hatteras coast. Three ships, Chilore, J.A. Mowinckel, and Bluefields were struck by torpedoes. Bluefields sank within minutes while Chilore and Mowinckel were severely damaged but still afloat. Following the attack, U-576 was sunk by the efforts of the armed merchant vessel Unicoi and two Navy Kingfisher aircraft. Chilore and Mowinckel, in an attempt to reach safety, inadvertently detonated mines in the defensive Hatteras minefield. Both vessels were damaged further and ordered to await minesweeping and assistance.

**Fate:** On July 19, 1942, US Navy Rescue Tugs Keshena and J.P. Martin were dispatched to assist Chilore and Mowinckel in returning to port for repairs. Operating under the assumption that all mines in the area had been swept, Keshena accidently detonated a mine while attempting to steer Mowinckel. The resulting explosion sent the Keshena to the bottom immediately, killing two of the service men aboard.

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GPS Coordinates: N34°59'37.51"  W75°45'43.03"
Depth: 85-90 fsw
Skill Level: Novice

US Navy Tug
Archaeological Site Plan

1. Fantail Stern
2. Steering Quadrant
3. Propeller Blade
4. Winch and Chain
5. Break in Hull
6. Debris Field
7. Towing Bits
8. Starboard Hull
9. Port Side Hull
10. Steam Condenser
11. *Keshena*’s Engine
12. Propeller Shaft
13. Double Boilers
14. Towing Bits
15. Hull Break/Debris
16. Collapsed Hull Plates
17. Port Holes and Plating
18. Dislodged Towing Bits
19. Anchor Winch
20. Two Salvage Anchors
21. Line Fairlead
22. Steering Mast
23. Large Towing Bit
24. Anchor Chains
25. Hawse Holes

Take Only Pictures ~ Leave Only Bubbles!