Ashkhabad
Soviet Flagged Merchant Tanker

Vessel History

Launched: 1917, Harland & Wolff Ltd., Glasgow, Scotland
Owner: Sovtorgflot - Soviet State Shipping Line, Moscow

History: Ashkhabad, built as an A-class standard cargo ship operated by The Shipping Controller of London, was originally named War Hostage. The vessel went through several subsequent owners and name changes. In 1927, the ship, then named Misty Hall, underwent a conversion from cargo ship to a tanker. In 1934, Misty Hall was sold to the Soviet State Shipping line where it again changed names several times before finally being named Ashkhabad in 1938. During wartime, Ashkhabad was fitted with a defensive bow gun.

Loss: Ashkhabad was transiting in ballast southbound of Cape Lookout the night of April 30, 1942. While under defensive zig-zagging course, Ashkhabad was struck in the starboard side by a torpedo fired from U-402, and immediately sank by the stern in shallow water. About 50 feet of water with much of the structure remaining above the surface of the sea. HMT Lady Elsa was to Morehead City, N.C. USS Semmes, unaware of pending salvage efforts, acted on standing orders to sink derelict vessels, and was joined by armed trawler HMS St. Zeno in the shelling, and together destroyed Ashkhabad.

Marine Life Commonly Found on the Ashkhabad Site

- Odontaspis taurus
- Seriola dumerili
- Sphyraena barracuda
- Prionotus carolinus
- Caretta caretta
- Great Barracuda
- Northern Sea Robin
- Loggerhead
- Sand Tiger Shark
- Greater Amberjack

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GPS Coordinates: N34° 22.884’
Depth: 55fsw  W76° 21.900’
Skill Level: Novice

USSR (Soviet) Tanker

Ashkhabad
Archaeological Site Plan

Take Only Pictures ~ Leave Only Bubbles!
Produced in collaboration with the Battle of the Atlantic Research and Expedition Group