E.M. Clark
U.S. Flagged Merchant Tanker

Vessel History

Built: 1921, Federal Shipbuilding Company - Kearny, New Jersey
Owner: Standard Oil Company, New Jersey
History: Originally launched as Victolite to support the Imperial Oil Company of Ontario, Canada. As built, the vessel was 499.2’ long, 68.1’ abeam, and had 30.5’ of depth. The ship was powered by twin vertical reciprocating triple expansion steam engines and had a cargo capacity of 119,414 barrels (5,015,388 gallons). Victolite was sold to the Standard Oil Co. in 1926 and renamed E.M. Clark after Edgar M. Clark (VP of Standard Oil). After the outbreak of WWII, E.M. Clark was part of a critical network of tankers that supplied fuel to the war effort. Clark alone delivered 4,812,472 barrels before it was sunk by the enemy.

Loss: On March 18, 1942, Clark was northbound off Cape Hatteras, carrying 118,725 barrels of heating oil when it was spotted by German U-boat, U-124. The first torpedo struck the port-side amidships at 1:25 am, killing Thomas J. Larkin. Just minutes later, a second torpedo slammed into the port side near the number 1 cargo tank sealing the ship’s fate. Captain Hubert L. Hassell quickly gave the order to abandon ship and the crew watched from the lifeboats as E.M. Clark sank by the bow within 10 minutes. While Larkin was the sole casualty, several other were severely injured. The 40 survivors were recovered the following day by USS Dickerson and passing Venezuelan tanker Catatumbo.

Marine Life Commonly Found on the E.M. Clark Site

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GPS Coordinates: N34° 50.5681’ U.S. Flagged Tanker
Depth: 200-260fsw W75° 32.2639’
Skill Level: Technical

E.M. Clark
Archaeological Site Plan

1. Portside Bow Fairlead
2. Mooring Bits
3. Anchor Hawsepipes
4. Forward Hatch Opening
5. E.M. Clark Welded Name Plate
6. Main Anchor Windlass
7. Forward Mast
8. Footprint for Main Deckhouse
9. Collapsed Deckhouse Remains
10. Deck Access Hatch
11. Starboard Lifeboat Davits
12. Deck Plate Degradation
13. Cargo Transfer Support Frames
14. Cargo Transfer Pipes
15. Amidships Derrick/Mast
16. Cargo Transfer Valves
17. Port Side Mooring Bits
18. Broken Lifeboat Davits
19. Collapsed Aft Deckhouse Debris
20. Aft Capstan
21. Stern Cabin Structure
22. Steering Quadrant/Rudderpost
23. Broken Lifeboat Davits
24. Aft Deckhouse Footprint

Dive Site Conditions
This site is a challenging dive in a dynamic environment. Visibility and currents can fluctuate daily. This site is also noteworthy for particularly high currents that change throughout the water column. Dive Safe!

Take Only Pictures ~ Leave Only Bubbles!