

# Basic Detail Report

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## Gladstone Rowing Skiff

**Vessel number**

HV000465

**Primary Maker**

George Towns and Sons

**Description**

The Gladstone Rowing Skiff's hull is 5.79m long and clinker planked in Queensland cedar with four strakes, roved with copper fastenings. The light hardwood frames are spaced on 225 mm (9 in) centres, and a number of them are doubled. It has a sliding seat, footrest, shoes and outriggers, and the high-sided hull is completely open. These proportions formed a strong and stable hull for training purposes. It has a similar construction to the larger watermen's skiffs, but is double-ended rather than having a transom. The Gladstone Skiff was a type understood to have been first built by Tom Stratton in Stockton Newcastle in the 1870s. He named it after WE Gladstone, a UK Prime Minister on four separate occasions from 1868 to 1894. It became widely used as a training skiff in NSW as it featured a modest beam for good stability. The type was still in use for club training in the 1970s and these were a plywood construction in contrast to their planked clinker hull. In 2011 several other examples are known to exist in private ownership. This skiff was built by George Towns at his Gladesville shed on the Parramatta River for the Kings School and was sculled by the boys from their shed further up Parramatta River. Towns was a former world professional champion sculler. The school used it for about 30 years and then donated it to the Sydney Heritage Fleet in 1983. Alex McCormick was a pupil at Kings and recalls rowing the scull. " I actually sculled this skiff a few times at the rowing shed of TKS when I was there from 1944 to 1947 . The highest I got in rowing was stroke of the 2nd Four . During the lunch break on the weekends we would line up to take turns at rowing the Gladstone"

**Dimensions**

Vessel Dimensions: 5.79 m x 0.71 m x 0.3 m (19 ft x 2.33 ft x 1 ft)