

Flying Dutchman in Atlantic

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Abandoned cruise vessel "LUBOV ORLOVA"

As per Deniss Bruant from Maritime Professional magazine:

The ice-strengthened cruise ship Lyubov Orlova was built in Croatia in 1976 for operation under the Soviet-Russian flag. Measuring 4,251 gross tons and with a length of 295 feet, it could carry up to 110 passengers. It operated out of Vladivostok and specialized in cruises to the Arctic and the Antarctic. In 1999, the Lyubov Orlova was transferred to the Cook Islands registry and underwent a refurbishment before returning to its Antarctic cruises. In 2002, it

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underwent further renovations before returning to cruises in the Arctic and Antarctic. On 27 November 2006, it grounded near Deception Island off the Antarctic Peninsula, but was towed off the rocks with minimal damage by the Spanish ice-strengthened research vessel *Las Palmas*. In September 2010, while in port in St. John's, Newfoundland, the *Lyubov Orlova* was arrested by the charterer, Cruise North Expeditions, for debts resulting from a cancelled voyage. The crew members also asserted claims for unpaid wages. In February 2012, the vessel was sold to Neptune International Shipping for recycling. It wasn't until January 2013 that a tug arrived to tow the cruise ship to the Dominican Republic for scrapping. The tow line parted on 28 January 2013, one day after departing St. John's. Due to severe weather, the tug was unable to re-establish the tow and it departed. Concern arose because there are a number of offshore oil and gas platforms in the vicinity. The anchor handling vessel *Atlantic Hawk*, under contract to Husky Energy, got a line on the vessel and towed it away from the offshore structures. Once the vessel was no longer a threat to the offshore structures and in international waters, Transport Canada decided to not pursue salvage efforts. The *Lyubov Orlova* was set adrift on 4 February 2013 in the North Atlantic approximately 250 miles east of St. John's. Transport Canada asserted that the owner remains responsible for its movements. On 22 February, the cruise ship was found drifting in position 49-22.70N, 044-51.34W, as reported by the US National Geospatial-Intelligence Agency in its Notice to Mariners. This places it approximately 1,300 nautical miles west of Ireland. Any similarity to the Flying Dutchman is purely coincidental.