

GLSA & WUAA SELF-SUPPORTING SUMMER FIELDWORK: 2026 UNIDENTIFIED STEAM TUG SURVEY PROJECT

Report by: Peter Kastella

Fieldwork Date: Thursday, June 18, 2026

Meeting Place: Jerry's Silo Marina

Meeting Time: Arrival 4:00 PM Departure 5:00 PM

Survey Team Members Attending: John Tindall

Volunteers Attending:

John Tindall, Peter Kastella, Erik Davis, Justin Tolomeo, Cameron Wilson, Derek Haager and Bob Lijewski

Volunteers in waiting should someone cancel.

A number of volunteers were on the call list

Vessels Being Used: Sandy Ann

Objectives for the Survey:

1. Locate and set a buoy on the first survey site for 2026.

Teams:

Team 1 John, Justin, Pete, Erik and Cameron

Equipment Needed:

Team 1 – Mooring line, buoy and personal gear

Future dates for the next dive: Thursday, June 23

Review of the dive and findings:

The 2026 survey season began with a calm Lake Michigan. In the previous week Bob Jaeck and Gene Nisler were able to get the GPS coordinates of the potential survey site. This week the goal was to determine this to be a site worth surveying and attaching a mooring buoy for future expeditions. We were aboard Jerry's new dive boat, the Sandy Ann. Lake Michigan was fairly calm with waves of 1-foot or less. The air temperature was in the low to mid 70s. The water temperature was a chilly 42 degrees with no noticeable thermocline. Visibility was at best 15-feet at the wreck depth of 44-feet. A mild current was also noticed. John and Justin were first in and secured a mooring line. They were followed by Pete, Erik and Cameron. All divers made a cursory survey of the site. It was believed this may be the Hiram Bond, which is wrecked nearby, but it was determined to be a different wreck, the one we were looking for. It is a small site, about 60 feet long and not very wide. Visible on the wreck are numerous frames standing proud of the soft bottom, a sizeable boiler laying on its side, what appears to be part of the keelson running the length of the site, parts of possibly the steam engine, a porthole and propeller still attached at the stern of the wreck. A rudder was not seen but may be located when the wreck is surveyed. Next week the plan is to get as much imagery of the site as possible, determine a datum site to run a centerline and assign sections for drawing on subsequent dives. The necessary permit is being applied for now. We ended the night with a few cool ones during the "deco session" discussing what we had seen on this dive and what we hope to do during the next.

The one tank dives are limited to six divers, with a minimum of five needed to pay for the charter. You can earn a guaranteed spot on a future charter if you serve as surface support for a week. Surface support does not pay a fee. Anyone interested in joining the self-supporting study should contact John to make sure there is space available. You are required to bring your own dive gear.

The Steam Tug Field Project is a GLSA & WUAA self-supporting project. Money received from divers, after paying the charter fees, is used to purchase new and replacement equipment for this and future self-supported projects on Great Lakes shipwrecks. Dive reports are posted at: <https://www.facebook.com/profile.php?id=100069646586530>

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For those of you who have not paid your annual dues for the WUAA group or need to join the group please go to the web site and do so. <http://www.wuaa.org/wuaa/index.html>