

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

Report by: Peter Kastella

Fieldwork Date: Thursday, August 6, 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, Richard Tessell, Joe Schuller and Erik Davis divers, surface support Emily Roth and Nikki Tindall

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. Survey and draw select areas of the wreck site
2. Search for additional debris

Teams:

Team 1 Joe, John and Richard, (Objective #1 and #2)

Team 2. Erik and Pete (Objective #1)

Equipment Needed:

Team 1 – Survey kit

Team 2 – Survey kit

Future dates for the next dive: August 13

Review of the dive and findings:

Five divers and two surface personnel took part this this week's survey dive. The day was warm with light winds out of the southwest. Waves were around 1 foot. Emily Roth and Nikki Tindall joined this week's crew as surface support. The Sandy Ann was moored at the stern to the wreck site. As the divers entered the water they proceeded directly to the downline and descended to the wreck 45 feet below. The bottom temperature was warmer this week, about 61 degrees. Visibility had improved somewhat from the week prior, however it was still less than 15 feet. All divers began their assignments. Because of the poor visibility it was suggested in the future that markers be attached to the base line to direct divers to the bow or stern. The bow section of the wreck reaching to the boiler is progressing well, but more detail is needed. The boiler and possible funnel can be surveyed next. No additional debris was found this week. John worked on the single propeller, measuring an exposed blade at 24 inches. At least half the prop is buried in the bottom. Brendon Baillod received a lead about the possible identity of the wreck. The ALVAH EATON was a wooden fishing tug reported to have been scuttled around the turn of the last century. The steam tug was 49-feet in length. Our measurement of the wreck site is roughly 47-feet 6-inches in length. The A. EATON had a beam of 12-feet. The wreck site is very narrow. Some of the wreck may be covered with a layer of silt making it hard to accurately determine the site's width. More information is needed before the identity of the wreck can be determined. We ended the night with the "deco session" discussed the plans for the next dive.

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>

"Preservation Through Documentation" ©Kimm A Stabelfeldt

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>