

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

Report by: Peter Kastella

Fieldwork Date: Thursday, August 20, 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, Derek Haager, and Scott Griffiths as divers, Rich Laiacona, Joe Schuller and Bob Lijewski ROV and surface support

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 using ROV

Teams:

Team 1 John and Derek, (Objective #1)

Team 2. Scott and Pete (Objective #1)

Team 3. Rich, Joe and Bob (Objective #2)

Equipment Needed:

Team 1 – Survey kit

Team 2 – Survey kit

Team 3 - ROV

Future dates for the next dive: September 3

Review of the dive and findings:

When it rains it pours. August 13 we did not have enough participants for a survey dive. This week we had a full boat! There were four divers and three surface support who also were deploying an ROV for the very first time. It was a pleasant day with an air temperature of 80 degrees with a very light breeze. With waves of less than one foot, the Sandy Ann was moored to the wreck via the stern making the diver's entry and exit from the water easy. The bottom temperature was 50 degrees with a thermocline noticeable at 20 to 25 feet. John and Derek were first in the water with the objective of verifying the length of the wreck. They reported a measurement of 46' 3" from the furthest remains found stem to stern. Scott and Pete's objective was to determine the dimensions of the boiler. The zebra mussel encrusted boiler, much of it buried in the bottom, measured 8' 4" in length and as best that could be determined, 3' 8" in diameter, with what appears to be a 2' 11" high steam dome. After completing their tasks, the divers took advantage of the surprisingly good visibility of 15 plus feet to look for features that had yet to be seen. Meanwhile, Rich, Joe and Bob worked with a new ROV, learning how to operate the ROV and searching for additional debris. While nothing new was found on this dive, the ROV operators did observe the divers and best of all neither the ROV nor the divers interfered with the other. There will be no survey drive on August 27. A number of regulars will be out of town on a charter trip to the Straits of Mackinac. Several others indicated they would not be available for a variety of reasons. It was determined we would not have enough divers available for a survey dive. We ended the night with the "deco session" discussed the plans for the next planned dive on September 3.

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>