



Shipwreck Society Discovers Ship that “Went Missing” 112 Years Ago – 14 Sailors Gone

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WHITEFISH POINT, MICH. – The Great Lakes Shipwreck Historical Society (GLSHS) is proud to announce the discovery of the wooden steamship, *Adella Shores*, one of the many ships that “Went Missing” over the years in the vicinity of Whitefish Point, MI. The *Shores* went to the bottom of Lake Superior with no survivors on May 1st, 1909.

In shipwreck parlance, the reference “Went Missing” is used to describe a vessel that left the dock and was never seen again. Such vessels vanish with no survivors, no witnesses, and are yet to be located. All of that changed when GLSHS found the *Adella Shores* more than 40 miles northwest of Whitefish Point in over 650 feet of water.

The *Adella Shores* had a storied career. Built in Gibraltar, Michigan in 1894 the 195-foot, 735-ton wooden steamer was owned by the Shores Lumber Company and named after the owner’s daughter, Adella. Adella’s sister, Bessie, christened the new ship with a bottle of water (v. champagne or wine) as the family was strict about alcohol consumption. Old time sailors might have seen that as a bad luck omen. The *Adella Shores* had her share of trouble...she sank twice in fifteen years in shallow waters, later being refloated each time and put back into service.

On April 29th, 1909, the *Adella Shores* was upbound for Duluth with a load of salt. The *Shores* was following the larger steel steamship, *Daniel J. Morrell*, through a thick ice flow, with the *Morrell* plowing a path through the ice as they went. As both ships rounded Whitefish Point, they were met by a fierce northeast gale. The *Shores* was already two miles behind and out of sight of the *Morrell*. The *Adella Shores* was never seen again, disappearing with all fourteen crewmembers. Some debris was found, but no bodies. Captain Millen of the *Morrell* thinks the smaller *Shores* might have struck a large ice flow, puncturing her hull, and quickly sinking. It was that day that the *Adella Shores* became another ship that “Went Missing” on Lake Superior.

In the summer of 2021 GLSHS Director of Marine Operations, Darryl Ertel and his brother Dan were out running grids towing the society’s [Marine Sonic Technology](#) side-scan sonar system when they found a target. “I pretty much knew that had to be the *Adella Shores* when I measured the length of it, because there were no other ships out there missing in that size range”, said Ertel. “As soon as I put the ROV

down on it for the first time, I could see the design of the ship and I could match it right up to the *Adella Shores*”.

“Not only is she a member of the “Went Missing” club... those ships on the Great Lakes that disappeared with all hands... decades later, to be discovered. She still tells a very poignant and fascinating story”, reflected maritime historian and author of “Went Missing”, Fred Stonehouse. “The folks that are out there actively hunting for shipwrecks like the Great Lakes Shipwreck Historical Society are helping to answer that story. And they keep looking for the ones that are not yet told and not yet found. For that, they deserve the highest commendation”.

“People often ask us why we wait so long to release shipwrecks that we find” recalls GLSHS Content/Communications Director, Corey Adkins. “Every one of these stories is important and deserves to be told with the utmost honor and respect. GLSHS has had some banner years of discovery...and a lot of research goes into each press release, ensuring that we tell the story accurately”.

For more on this incredible story, pictures, video, and interviews contact...

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The Great Lakes Shipwreck Historical Society was founded in 1978 by a group of divers, teachers, and educators to commence exploration of historic shipwrecks in eastern Lake Superior, near Whitefish Point in Michigan’s scenic Upper Peninsula. Today, this non-profit organization operates two museum sites on historic properties: The Great Lakes Shipwreck Museum, Whitefish Point Light Station, Whitefish Point; and the U.S. Weather Bureau Building, Soo Locks Park, Sault Sainte Marie, Michigan. The Shipwreck Museum is open to the public seasonally from May 1 to October 31. For more information, visit www.shipwreckmuseum.com

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