

= Elmer S. Dailey =

Elmer S. Dailey , originally known as the Claire B. Follette , is a wooden barge built by William H. Follette in 1915 at Tonawanda , New York , and rebuilt and renamed in 1928 by Brown Drydock on Staten Island , New York . It was used to transport materials from New York , New Jersey and Connecticut . It is the only known surviving Erie Canal boat and is one of a few remaining wooden @-@ hulled canal boats . It sank in 1974 along with the Priscilla Dailey and the Berkshire No. 7 , and has deteriorated to the point that a salvage operation could result in it breaking apart . It was added to the National Register of Historic Places on December 21 , 1978 .

= = Description = =

The barge is an Erie Canal boat that has two Fairbanks @-@ Morse in @-@ line six @-@ cylinder diesel engines . It measures 105 @. @ 2 feet (32 @. @ 1 m) long with a 17 @. @ 9 feet (5 @. @ 5 m) beam . The depth of the hold is listed at 9 @. @ 9 feet (3 @. @ 0 m) and it had a listed capacity of 101 tons .

Clouette describes the Elmer S. Dailey as having an " almost rectangular hull in section and plan , with bluntly rounded bow and stern ... the bulwarks , perforated by scuppers , rise up to the stem which is slightly raked back . There are prominent strakes in the bow and topside along the sides of the vessel . A coaming about 2 feet (0 @. @ 61 m) high frames the single large cargo opening which occupies about two @-@ thirds of the boat 's length " . The cargo opening is covered by convex hatch covers . Towards the stern is a rectangular pilothouse and a low cabin with a companionway which has a protruding stack .

= = History = =

The Elmer S. Dailey was originally known as the Claire B. Follette when it was built by William H. Follette in 1915 at Tonawanda , New York . In 1928 , the ship was rebuilt by Brown Drydock on Staten Island and acquired the name Elmer S. Dailey . Brown Drydock installed two Fairbanks @-@ Morse in @-@ line six @-@ cylinder diesel engines and added the pilothouse and stack . At an unspecified later date , one engine was removed and a direct @-@ drive engine , rated at 180 or 210 horsepower , operated on compressed air . In its final configuration , the vessel was manned by a three @-@ man crew .

The ship was owned by Stewart J. Dailey , a former mule driver on the Erie Canal who later became a partner in a Tonawanda shipbuilding company and afterwards opened his own business , S. J. Dailey Company .

The barge was used to transport materials between New York , New Jersey , and Connecticut , and after the diesel engines were added , it was able to push another barge . It was in service between 1941 and 1972 , and afterwards was moored in Bridgeport Harbor together with the Berkshire No. 7 and Priscilla Dailey .

In the spring of 1974 , one of the barges began to take on water , dragging down the other two . No part of the barge is visible above water . Elmer S. Dailey is listed in the U.S. Registry as # 166315 .

= = Importance = =

The Elmer S. Dailey is historically significant because it is the only known surviving Erie Canal boat and is one of a few remaining wooden @-@ hulled canal boats . It was added to the National Register of Historic Places on December 21 , 1978 . It and the other two barges that sank with it are the only shipwrecks in Connecticut listed on the National Register of Historic Places .

In 1998 , the historic status of the barges was a concern for the Port Authority of Bridgeport Harbor , as the sunken ships interfered with a billion @-@ dollar redevelopment project . Over the years , the barges had deteriorated so that an operation to salvage them would likely result in it breaking apart . No action had been taken by 2003 , but a report noted that prior to any activity of the Elmer

S. Dailey the Federal Transit Administration and / or the City of Bridgeport should document the barge with photos and a technical description . Specifics regarding the documentation based on the activity would be archived at the State Historic Preservation Office and the Mystic Seaport Museum .