



## STUFFS

Strange things you see and say ...

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### Wrecked Lanai ship is most likely an oiler

Anderson Duane Black, who has lived many a year on Lanai, has been wondering many a year about the shipwreck that dominates Shipwreck Beach on the Dole Island. He even checked in with the Jeremiah O'Brien Liberty Ship crew in San Francisco to see if it is an abandoned Liberty Ship. It isn't.

So what is it? The picture shown here was taken by a Star-Bulletin photographer in the early 1960s, but the ship looks pretty much the same today. And so here's a second mystery: why hasn't the wreck rusted and fallen apart?

Because it can't, is the theory of Hawaii Maritime Center historian Stan

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*The ship at Lanai's Shipwreck Beach technically is not wrecked.*

Melman, who also is curious about the beached ship. According to his records, the ship is most likely an oiler built during World War II. What's unusual is that the ship is made of ferro-concrete, not steel. That's why it's still pretty much in one piece.

"There were 22 ships built in this class during 1942 to 1944, called the B7-A1 and the B7-A2," Melman said.

The A1s are 366 feet long; the A2s are 375 feet. They look so similar it's hard to tell them apart, and the Navy generally didn't name them because these were considered mere yard craft. These ships are designated only by a "YO"-prefix followed by a number, such as YO-144 or YOG-41.

Melman thinks the beaching was deliberate, but doesn't know why. "Maybe they didn't know how to sink a concrete ship. But, no matter what the ship is made of, you drill so many holes in the top and blow out the bottom, it's gonna go glub, glub, glub."

Technically, since the ship was beached, it's not a shipwreck. But Beached Beach doesn't have the same cachet as Shipwreck Beach.

By Burl Burlingame, Star-Bulletin

Curious about something you've seen? Ask us: WatDat?, Honolulu Star-Bulletin, P.O. Box 3080, Honolulu, HI, fax at 523-7863 or e-mail at [features@starbulletin.com](mailto:features@starbulletin.com).