

Subject: Re: USS Wayne (APA-54) vs SS Afoundria

From: James Kyser <jimkyser@gmail.com>

Date: 8/13/2023, 5:14 PM

To: Copama <mail@copama.org>

On 8/12/23 8:40 AM, Copama wrote:

On 8/3/2023 5:32 PM, James Kyser wrote:

Lowel,

I have read your web page about your father's trip home on the SS Afoundria and the mention of discrepancies between the dates in the 'Fore N Aft' newspaper versus what you've found on the internet for the USS Wayne.

I think the core of the problem is that there were actually three ships named SS Afoundria during World War 2. The first was a ship built in 1919 and sunk by a German U-Boat off the coast of Haiti in May of 1942. The second was Maritime Commission (MARCOM or MC) hull number 476 built in 1942 as SS Afoundria but renamed USS Wayne (AP-99, then APA-54) in October, launched in December and commissioned by the US Navy in August of 1943. The third was MC hull number 483 built in 1943 as SS Afoundria and assigned to the War Shipping Administration. I think your father was on the third ship, not on the USS Wayne.

If you follow this link within the US National Archives to the the War Diary for the USS Wayne for September of 1945:

<https://catalog.archives.gov/id/77534799>

It shows that the USS Wayne started the month in Apra Harbor, Guam, moved to Saipan, loaded men from the 2nd Marine Division, sailed to Nagasaki, dropped off the Marines, and then left for Manila

If you follow this link within the US National Archives to the War Diary for Pearl Harbor for September of 1945:

<https://catalog.archives.gov/id/77576756>

it shows on page 33 the SS Afoundria entering Pearl Harbor on the 11th, and on page 41 the SS Afoundria leaving Pearl Harbor on the 13th. Sometimes when I look at documents in the archives they show first page last/last page first, so be careful entering those page numbers on the jump to box on the bottom. The actual page numbers are printed in a large font on the lower right of each page.

Since a single ship couldn't be both in Pearl Harbor and Saipan at the same time it's obvious they are two separate ships.

The reason I'm interested in this is I am doing my own research about my father, SGT Kenneth J. Kyser USAAF, and his return voyage from the Philippines. In that research the USS Wayne has come up as one of the most likely candidates for the ship he came home on. The USS Wayne arrived in San Diego before the Afoundria, refitted, and left around the 1st of December for the Philippines. It returned to the Seattle area on January 6, 1946. I am trying to tie down the date the USS Wayne left the Philippines and from exactly which port. I know my father left December 17, 1945 and arrived on the

west coast January 6, 1946. I can't ask him as he passed over 30 years ago so I depend on the few physical documents I have, what I can find in the US Archives and what I can search, find, and verify on the internet.

Jim Kyser

James,

Thanks for this information about the ships named SS Afoundria and the date disagreement in the "Fore & Aft" newspaper. Quite interesting and, if you don't mind, I'd like to add your letter to the webpage to share with others!

I doubt there are any photos of the actual ship my father returned on but I'd be interested in any other findings you make in your search.

Best regards!

Lowell Dowler
COPAMA Webmaster

Lowel,

No problem on adding my email to your web page.

I have something else for you, too. It's a book called 'Troopships of World War II' published in 1947 by the US Army Transportation Association. There is an entry for the SS Afoundria, and I'm pretty sure it's the one your father came home on. It has a nice photo of the ship in port somewhere and even mentions "The vessel made still another voyage to the Philippines from where she returned to Los Angeles in late November 1945". Check out page 151 of this pdf file:

https://history.army.mil/documents/WWII/wwii_Troopships.pdf

Jim Kyser