

( ESTABLISHED 1869 )

# THE FIJI TIMES

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## FOUR AMERICAN DESTROYERS ON VISIT TO SUVA

Headed by U.S.S. Mansfield, the United States Destroyer Squadron No. 9 arrived at Suva at 8 a.m. yesterday.

The vessels were to have arrived at 4 p.m., but a signal announcing an earlier arrival was received on Monday evening.

Coming alongside, the Mansfield hit the wharf at a slight angle and her sharp bow cut as neat as a knife-stroke into one of the 12" x 12" hardwood chafing beams at the side of the wharf.

The destroyer backed out then sid along the wharf to her berth at the south end.

The destroyers were berthed two abreast, the Direct Line vessel Hana-kura occupying the remainder of the wharf.

Captain L. D. McGregor, who is in command of the Squadron, and the commanders of the four ships were guests at a cocktail party at Government House yesterday evening.

The other officers were entertained at the RNZAF Base at Laucala Bay.

## DOING THE TOWN

As the Squadron had previously been announced to arrive at 4 p.m. no sports fixtures were arranged.

When the signal was received announcing an earlier arrival the uncertain weather made sports impracticable.

A number of men were taken on bus rides around the countryside, and a dance was held in the Town Hall last night.

But most of the men preferred to spend their shore leave during the day wandering around the city.

Hotels were well patronised and restaurants and milk bars did a steady trade.

It was noticeable that the sailors appeared to patronise the restaurants to a greater extent than passengers from tourist ships.

However, they did not patronise the curio stalls at the market or the shops in town to any great extent, possibly preferring to save their money for Melbourne.

## SPINNING A YARN

One sailor who was asked what the ships—Mansfield, Benner, Collett and De Haven—were named after said that the destroyers were named after sailors killed in battle.

He probably thought it was as good a story as any.

The local resident promptly replied that there would not be enough ships in the US Navy to go around.

The sailor said he had not thought of that.

The Squadron is based at Long Beach, California.

It encountered bad weather from Long Beach to Hawaii, but later the weather improved.

The vessels will sail from Suva at mid-day today direct for Melbourne.

Later the Squadron will take part in combined exercises in Japanese waters.

All told there are a little over 1000 officers and men in the Squadron, and about 700 men were allowed ashore on leave in the first batch.