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TOURISM IN NEW ZEALAND

Some observations on the patterns and
processes of a summer recreation pursuit,
with particular reference to Napier

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ABSTRACT

This thesis presents an account of the domestic tourism process in New Zealand, compiled through the identification and measurement of some of the elements that characterise this particular form of outdoor recreation. While overseas tourism continues to attract increasing Government attention as an industry with some promise of diversifying New Zealand's economy, it is apparent that holiday-making by New Zealanders has received practically no attention from geographers or, for that matter, from economic and social planning organisations in this country.

The first section of this thesis defines tourism and identifies, through the support of survey studies, its general characteristics of seasonality in occurrence, individuality and spontaneity in expression, and the great range and extent of mobility afforded by the private motor vehicle. Contrasts are drawn between overseas tourism and domestic tourism, and comments are made on the disparity evident in the degree of attention accorded the two forms, and in the growth of national tourist centres compared to regional holiday resorts.

Section Two considers the nature and function of three recreation resources - climate, water and location - in providing the framework within which outdoor recreation activities are pursued. In this, as in later sections, these resources are related to their role in creating a favourable climate for tourism in Napier.

The section on recreation amenities describes in detail the urban amenities and tourist attractions that Napier possesses for recreation. Exercises are conducted on the provision of vehicle parking space at amenities, on attendance frequencies at Marineland performances by Napier residents, and on the annual account of the Hawke's Bay Aquarium and Planetarium Board.

The role of holiday information and tourist publicity services, accommodation, and essential services as they prevail in the tourism process, is discussed in Section Four. The importance of accommodation services is recognised and comments here have been directed towards supply and demand factors. The distinct seasonality of domestic tourism in New Zealand increases pressure on the utilisation of recreation services during the summer, and this situation is compounded by the national close-down of many retail, trade and professional services over the peak Christmas-New Year period.

The case study of visitors staying in motels in Napier over the 1970-71 summer is used as a basis

for presenting material in support of observations made throughout the preceding parts of the thesis as to the nature of the domestic tourism process in New Zealand, and the extent to which its expression is typified in Napier.

The concluding section is used to isolate briefly the problems that have become apparent in both the study of tourism as a recreation pursuit, and in the process of tourism itself in New Zealand.

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PREFACE

Although this thesis is based throughout on individual observations and measurements, acknowledgement is made in particular of the moteliers in Napier who, through their good graces, permitted the questionnaire survey of their businesses to be conducted during that summer of 1970-71. Many others assisted, unwittingly by completing questionnaires, in the production of this work.

The statistics, where a source has not been acknowledged, were compiled either from field work, or from a combination of sources.

Thanks are extended to Mr B.G.R. Saunders of the Geography Department at Massey University for his initial guidance on the topic, and to those whose patience, like mine, endured.

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