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ROTUMA, A CHANGING MOBILITY:

1978 - 1983

A thesis presented in partial fulfilment
of the requirements for the degree
of Master of Arts
in Geography at
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ABSTRACT

This work describes the changes in movement of people to and from Rotuma immediately before, and following, the establishment of an airport on the Island in May 1981. A sample survey was carried out during the middle of 1983 to gain field data. The dynamics of movement are investigated and the research examines whether any subsets within the Rotuman community had a higher or lower level of movement, by sex, age, religion, education or occupation during the period 1978-1983.

PREFACE

Rotuma first came to the author's attention in 1976 when he began a correspondence with an adolescent Rotuman Islander as a study aid for the School Certificate Geography Examination.

Since that time the author's interest in Rotuma has steadily grown, and further increased when it appeared there was a major absence of publications concerning the Island in the literature of the South Pacific.

The study of demography, and particularly migration theory, further attracted the author's interest and when a major transport infrastructural change took place in May 1981 with the opening of an airport on Rotuma opportunity seemed ripe for appropriate research.

This interest culminated with the research survey to Rotuma during 1983. The visit served two purposes, providing the opportunity to gain the necessary field data, and as well allowing the experience of 'fa-Rotuma' (Rotuma way of life).

Rotuma remains the true Pacific Island paradise with a beautiful habitat, and a charming race of people. It must be a Social Scientist's dream research environment.

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