

## Greek Island Life

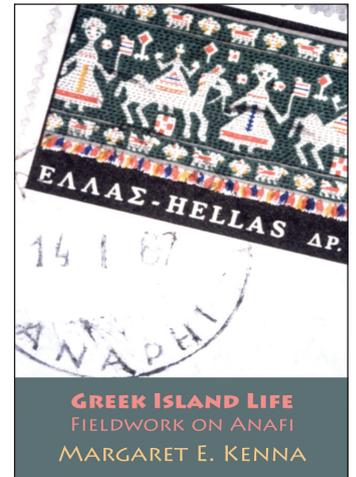
### Fieldwork on Anafi

By Margaret E. Kenna

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Sixteen months on a small Greek island? Not the holiday of a lifetime, but the start of anthropologist Margaret E. Kenna's involvement with the residents of Anafi and its migrant community in Athens. *Greek Island Life* gives a vivid and engaging account of research on Anafi in the 1960s, and is based on letters, progress reports, field-notes and diary entries made at the time. Since then the author has returned to the island many times and her later impressions and knowledge are integrated into the earlier texts. The islanders, who once regarded themselves to be so remote as to be 'far from God', are now making a living from tourism, marketing their island as an unspoilt idyll. Anyone interested in Greece and travel will find this book illuminating and captivating, as will students and teachers of anthropology, sociology, modern history, travel writing and Modern Greek studies.

*'In the whole of the Cycladic and Sporadic groups there exists no island so remote in its solitude as Anafi' wrote the traveller Theodore Bent in the early 1880s: 'it is a mere speck in the waves in the direction of Rhodes and Crete, where no one ever goes, and the 1000 inhabitants of the one village are as isolated as if they dwelt on an archipelago in the Pacific.'*

*So Anafi remained until the mid 1960s when Margaret E. Kenna stepped ashore to begin a memorable stay, and a lifetime's connection, described in this lovely book. Full of wonderful observation, scrupulously honest, it would be compelling simply as a travel book, but it is much more: it is a landmark study of the Greek island world on the eve of the huge changes that would transform Greece by mass tourism from the early 1970s, and it is all the more poignant now given the crises currently engulfing the country.*

*All lovers of Greece will relish and admire this book for its insight, its realism and its humanity: a portrait of a world which is almost gone, but as Margaret Kenna shows in her updates, not quite yet.*

**Michael Wood, Professor of Public History, Manchester University, and broadcaster**

*This wonderful book counters the common accusation that anthropologists do such interesting things and then write boring books about them. This is a unique document, a narrative of fieldwork, written not retrospectively but in the actual ethnographic present, in lucid and lyrical prose worthy of Jane Austen. We the readers are invited to participate in the unfolding of events from Kenna's arrival to her departure, sharing in the first puzzles and initial descriptions of strangers who, by the end, become familiar figures and friends. The narrative confirms how, contrary to the scientific tradition of advancing hypotheses, the role of chance is crucial to anthropological practice: as in a detective novel, once strange things are gradually given sense.*

**Professor Judith Okely, Emeritus Professor of Social Anthropology, Hull University**

## Author

**Margaret E. Kenna** is Emeritus Professor of Social Anthropology at Swansea University.