



University of Aberdeen Museums Solomon Islands Collection



COLLECTIONS LEVEL DESCRIPTION

Data Entry form

Title of the Collection	Solomon Islands collection, Aberdeen University Museums
Author(s)	Eve Haddow
Curator responsible for collection (if different from author)	Head of Museums, Library, Special Collections & Museums
Date Completed	17 th August 2014
<p>There are seventy-two items from the Solomon Islands</p> <p>The collection includes a canoe prow ornament of carved wood inlaid with pearl shell. This came from the collection of Sir William MacGregor in 1899 and is believed to be the item described in the 1912 MacGregor catalogue as a 'rat safe'. Also donated by MacGregor is a ceremonial baton (<i>wari hau</i>) inlaid with worked pearl shell and terminating in a carving of two heads back to back; four clam shell arm ornaments catalogued under one number; and fourteen shell ornaments of tridacna shell, eight of which are decorated with incised drawings of frigate birds.</p> <p>There is a body ornament of dolphin teeth with shell beads and turtle shell (<i>barulifaʻa</i>) which would have been worn on the head or around the neck. Acquired in the 19th century, it is recorded as being owned by Chief Tuligari, however it was probably owned by a chief of the small island of Tulagi.</p> <p>The arms and armour in the collection is as follows: nine wooden clubs, largely dating from the 19th century and some of which have plant fibre binding on the handle; thirty-five arrows, twenty-four of which were collected by Arthur J L Gordon who was Private Secretary to Sir Arthur Gordon, Governor of Fiji. The other eleven are catalogued under the same number: Nine spears, each with bone barbs bound with red and yellow orchid stem and decorated with carving inlaid with lime. One is missing most of its shaft. Three were collected by Arthur J L Gordon and two donated by Lord and Lady Stonehaven who were in the Pacific from 1925-30; and two bows of wood, one of which accompanies the set of eleven arrows.</p> <p>Relating to hunting, there are two fish hooks formed of pearl shell with turtle shell barb and with glass trade beads attached as a lure. Also in the collection is a lime stick, also of the distinctive Solomon Islands style with dark wood inlaid with pearl shell. A large shell valuable (<i>barava</i>) of tridacna shell used in exchange or on ancestral shrines is from South New Georgia.</p> <p>From Santa Cruz is a bag of banana leaf and banana fibre donated by Dr Patrick Smith in 1896. There is a wooden headrest in the form of a pig thought to also be from Santa Cruz. It was given to Algernon Hawkins Falconer in 1893 by his mother but an old label records it as a 'Maori pillow'.</p> <p>Finally, the collection includes an overmodelled skull which has been worked with paste and has pearl shell inlaid into the eyes.</p>	
Have any aspects of the collection been published? Please provide bibliographic references if available.	
Reid, RW (1912), Catalogue of Specimens deposited by William MacGregor in the Anthropological Museum, Marischal College, University of Aberdeen in the Anthropological Museum, University of Aberdeen, 1899-1909, (ABDUA:3250; ABDUA:3251; ABDUA:3252;	

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ABDUA:3253; ABDUA:3254; ABDUA:3255; ABDUA:3260; ABDUA:3261; ABDUA:3266;
ABDUA:5990; ABDUA:5991; ABDUA:5992; ABDUA:5996; ABDUA:84599)

Hunt, C (1981), *Shark Tooth & Stone Blade: Pacific Island Art from the University of Aberdeen*. University of Aberdeen (ABDUA:3250; ABDUA:3251; ABDUA:3252; ABDUA:3253; ABDUA:5992; ABDUA:5996; ABDUA:84599)

Gathercole, P & A. Clarke (1979), *Survey of the Oceanian Collections in Museums in the United Kingdom and Ireland*. UNESCO.

Kwasnik, Elizabeth (ed.) (1994), *A Wider World: Collections of Foreign Ethnography in Scotland*. National Museums of Scotland