



Glasgow Museums Papua New Guinea Collection



COLLECTIONS LEVEL DESCRIPTION

Data Entry form

Title of the Collection	Papua New Guinea collection, Glasgow Museums
Author(s)	Eve Haddow
Curator responsible for collection (if different from author)	Curator of World Cultures
Date Completed	9 th September 2014
<p>There are 630 items from Papua New Guinea (including Western Islands, not including New Britain, New Ireland, or Bougainville)</p> <p>There are several late 19th century acquisitions that form the majority of this large collection. The earliest donation, in 1878, was fourteen wooden spears gifted by John Lyall. Thirty-seven items arrived in 1887 from Mrs Paten including eleven cassowary feather headdresses, four dyed women's skirts, three clubs, domestic utensils and other items of body adornment.</p> <p>151 items were collected by Robert Bruce, a boat builder and ship's captain for the London Missionary Society who was based on Mer and Saibai in the Torres Strait islands from 1881-9. Bruce attributed many items to specific areas. There are two large barkcloth masks from the Toaripi people of the Elema area of the Papuan Gulf, and a third mask from the same area of wood and cane. There are three drums of carved wood, one from Fly River has the form of an alligator head and the other two are ornamented with feathers and shells. There are five headdresses. One worn in dances is formed of sections of grass seed, another two are of cassowary feathers and from Motu-motu is a headdress of shells and another of woven cane. Other items include four shields, two of from the Papuan Gulf and another that previously hung on a chief's house.</p> <p>Also acquired in 1889 were 120 items from William Green of Helensburgh who was in New Guinea 1880-85. This includes a mask of barkcloth and shredded plant fibres over a cane frame in the form of a bird's head. Also in the collection are three ceremonial greenstone axes, four paddle clubs from Brooker Island, apparently used in fighting on the water, twelve lime spatula, six women's skirts, and a waisted shield with cane and feathers and a local repair with turtle shell.</p> <p>Thirty-six items were collected by Sir Hugh Muir Nelson who visited Papua New Guinea in 1898 travelling in the area then known as British New Guinea. Within this collection is a short woman's skirt from the Trobriand islands, two feather headdresses and another of hornbill beaks, five clubs and two wooden bowls with lime infill.</p> <p>A collection of ten items from British New Guinea was acquired from James Goudie in 1897, including two tobacco pipes, a woman's skirt of shredded grass and a wooden comb with red feathers.</p> <p>Within the overall collection are twelve <i>bilums</i> ranging in date from 19th century to</p>	

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contemporary examples, and six baskets. There are forty-one clubs and one stone club head. There are also four Trobriand islands-style wooden sword clubs with infilled lime decoration.

The majority of the collection is from Central, Milne Bay and Gulf provinces. There is also a Maprik basketwork mask from the East Sepik District and a Sepik style carved canoe prow, both purchased from dealers in the 1960s. Also from the Sepik is an ancestral figure (*kandimboang*). From Wuvulu are two late 19th/early 20th century axes with turtle bone blades.

There are a number of contemporary pieces in the collection. A contemporary Wahgi fighting shield with Six 2 Six design of the Gilgalkup section of Senglap people was purchased in 2003. The slogan on the shield refers to Gilgalkup's ability to fight all day. The shield was used in 1989 during fighting between Senglap and Dange people in the Mount Hagen Area, Western Highlands.

There are five contemporary sculptural works formed using recycled metal by Eastern Highlands artist Tom Deko including *Meri Wantaim Bilum; Manus SingSing II; Creation; Pikinini Wantum Babu; and Defending Fallen Comrade I*

The collection also includes five works by Chimbu artist Matthais Kauage OBE entitled: *Suicide; Carry Leg; Misis Kwin; Burial; and Buka War*. In addition is a neck ornament of seeds, shells and beads made by Kauage and two feathers worn as body adornments by the artist.

Have any aspects of the collection been published? Please provide bibliographic references if available.

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