



National Museums Scotland New Zealand Collection



COLLECTIONS LEVEL DESCRIPTION

Data Entry form

Title of the Collection	New Zealand collection, National Museums Scotland
Author(s)	Chantal Knowles
Curator responsible for collection (if different from author)	Principal Curator Oceania, Americas and Africa
Date Completed	18 March 2014
<p>There are 435 artefacts in the collection. This is the largest collection from New Zealand in Scotland.</p> <p>The earliest non-archaeological pieces date from the late eighteenth century and were collected on Captain Cook's voyages in the 1770s. However, the majority date to the nineteenth century. The 19th century material was in the main collected and donated by Scottish administrators, military personnel, missionaries and traders. The strengths of the collection lie in wood and stone carving and weaving. They include three woven cloaks from Cook's third voyage, a fine collection of 12 treasure boxes, all of which are from the North Island, and several carved panels from meeting houses.</p> <p>Sixty-three artefacts are modern and the collection is regularly added to through donation and purchase of contemporary art. Dale Idiens travelled to New Zealand and collected for the museum in 1994 and subsequent to the visit several commissions were undertaken and works received from 1996-8. These are well documented, with an associated archive. Highlights are six works by John Bevan Ford, three works by Lyonel Grant and three works by Puti Hineapounamu Rare. A proportion of the late twentieth-century material (10 items) was collected as souvenirs, documenting how Maori art and culture was consumed by tourists.</p> <p>Of the remaining 334 artefacts, the majority (150 items) are unlocalised, 130 are attributed to the North Island, with the remainder from South Island, most of which came through exchange with the Otago Museum in 1939. There are a number of the North Island artefacts with an East Coast provenance (although many of these attributions are associated with visiting scholars and researchers rather than through primary documentation) and a few name Poverty Bay, Bay of Plenty and the Gisborne area in their records, but none have a fixed attribution to an <i>iwi</i> or Maori region.</p> <p>The collection has benefitted considerably in the past from scholars, curators and artists, both Maori and non-Maori, visiting the collection and adding their opinion to our documentation. From the late 1980s Maori community members have regularly visited the collections, and in 2008 the human remains in the collections were returned to Te Papa. The collection has not been published, but some items have been included in well-known publications. The material is of international significance, not only due to its early date, but as many items can, with research be traced back to their region of origin.</p> <p>Key objects include a house post figure (A.1956.847); <i>karaitiana po</i> (A.1939.164), a house panel which corresponds with two other panels held in Perth Museum and Art Gallery; a Cook voyage <i>kaitaka</i> cloak (A.UC.830) with fine <i>taniko</i> woven border and two rare <i>hoeroa</i>, fine early examples of whale rib-bone weapons (A.1905.211; A.1966.352).</p> <p>Collectors associated with the material include Sir Thomas Brisbane, Admiral McDonald Robertson and Dr Peter Wilson (RN). A high proportion of early material came via the</p>	

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University collection (pre-1854) (48 pieces) and National Museum of Antiquities (mostly late 18th, early 19th century in date) (30 items). In the 19th and early 20th century most objects were purchased through auction houses and dealers, hence their poor provenance information.

Scottish collections of Māori cloaks are exceptional, including material from the first voyages to the region, unique examples (such as Perth Museum and Art Gallery full kākāpo feather cloak) and twentieth-century cloaks that highlight the work of New Zealand's finest contemporary weavers.

Published collections

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