



University of Aberdeen Museums Tonga Collection



COLLECTIONS LEVEL DESCRIPTION

Data Entry form

Title of the Collection	Tonga 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	26 th August 2014
<p>There are 27 items from Tonga.</p> <p>The most significant item is a carved wooden figure depicting a female deity. It represents Sakaunu who is believed to be a goddess that guarded the gate to Pulotu, which is the underworld in Tongan mythology. It was probably collected by Reverend David Cargill who was a missionary based in Fiji from 1835-40.</p> <p>The collection includes two headrests, one of which is formed from a single piece of wood to form a curved shape with single leg at either end. There are two 19th century pieces of barkcloth (<i>ngatu</i>) donated by a Mr Henderson.</p> <p>There are six clubs of wood in a range of Tongan styles all with finely carved surface decoration. The collection also contains six combs and two fish hooks, one of which is a trolling lure made of whale bone and turtle shell.</p> <p>An adze blade of shell is recorded as having been given to a Dr C Dawson by a Tongan chief for services rendered. The chief's name is unknown but the blade is attributed to Nuku'alofa, the capital of the Kingdom of Tonga.</p> <p>Two modern shell items attributed to Tonga appear to be candlesticks made for the tourist trade. The same donor also gave two box shaped baskets of woven pandanus with barkcloth lining.</p>	
<p>Have any aspects of the collection been published? Please provide bibliographic references if available.</p>	
<p>Michie, C (1887), <i>Catalogue of Antiquities in the Archaeological Museum of King's College, University of Aberdeen</i> (ABDUA:1681; ABDUA:4048; ABDUA:4049; ABDUA:4050; ABDUA:4051; ABDUA:4052; ABDUA:4074; ABDUA:4154)</p> <p>Larsson, Karl E (1960), <i>Fijian Studies</i>, Etnologiska Studier 25. Göteborg: Etnografiska Museet (ABDUA:63365)</p> <p>Musee de l'Homme (1972), <i>La Decouverte de la Polynesie</i>. Paris: Musee de l'Homme (ABDUA:63365)</p> <p>Wardwell, A (1967), <i>The Sculpture of Polynesia</i>. Chicago: Art Institute of Chicago (ABDUA:63365)</p> <p>Reid, RW (1912), <i>Illustrated Catalogue of the Anthropological Museum, University of Aberdeen</i>, (ABDUA:1681; ABDUA:4002; ABDUA:4003; ABDUA:4036; ABDUA:4037;</p>	

Produced as part of *Pacific Collections in Scottish Museums: Unlocking their knowledge and potential* project 2013-2014. For full information and resources visit www.nms.ac.uk/pacific

ABDUA:4048; ABDUA:4049; ABDUA:4050; ABDUA:4051; ABDUA:4052; ABDUA:4074;
ABDUA:4119; ABDUA:4154; ABDUA:4173)

Hunt, C (1981), *Shark Tooth & Stone Blade: Pacific Island Art from the University of Aberdeen*. University of Aberdeen, (ABDUA:4622)

Hooper, S (2006), *Pacific Encounters: Art and Divinity in Polynesia 1760-1860*. British Museum Press: London (ABDUA:63365)

Neich, R (2007), 'Tongan Figures: From Goddesses to missionary trophies to masterpieces', *The Journal of the Polynesian Society* Vol. 116, No. 2 (JUNE 2007), pp. 213-268 (ABDUA:63365)

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