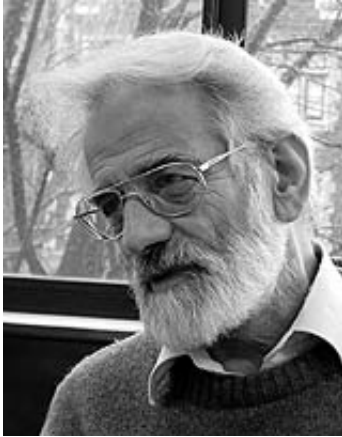


In Memoriam - Peter Gathercole

Date : November 11, 2010



Last month, one of our esteemed colleagues - Peter Gathercole - passed away, aged 81. Born in Norfolk in 1929, Peter was educated at the Universities of Cambridge and London. He then trained as a curator in Birmingham, working for two years at the Scunthorpe Museum and eventually moved to New Zealand to teach in the Department of Anthropology at the University of Otago from 1958 to 1968 where he also worked at the Otago Museum alongside HD Skinner. Under their guidance the Department grew from a partly employed single lecturer to an independent and fully functioning four fields Anthropology & Archaeology Department.

Peter returned to England to work as Lecturer in Ethnology at Oxford, jointly with the Pitt Rivers Museum until he became the Principal Curator of the Museum of Archaeology and Anthropology in Cambridge from 1970 to 1981, subsequently taking up the position of Dean at Darwin College. He was an inspiration and much loved by many who worked in the ethnographic museums communities of the Pacific as well as the UK. He was a founding member of the Pacific Arts Association and equally, as its first Chair, co-founded the Museum Ethnographers Group. An ever-supportive mentor to many junior curators and researchers, the twenty-eight MEG conference in 2004 (hosted by Cambridge's Museum of Archaeology and Anthropology) was held in his honour. Over the years Peter Gathercole wrote a number of papers, reviews and books. Appreciations of his life and work are scheduled to be published in the MEG Newsletter and Journal in due course. He was interviewed by Alan Macfarlane and Ami Henare on 8 May 2003 ([Anthropology Ancestors](#)). Peter retired to Veryan, Cornwall, where he died on the evening of 11 October. His funeral was held on Friday 5 November at the Cambridge City Crematorium and there was a reception at Darwin College afterwards.

Two appreciation comments, one from his partner Bobbie Wells, the other from David Lowenthal, can be read on [Antiquity's](#) website.

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