

Geoff Scott collects: British bobby helmets

"I collect British Bobby helmets. I have 71 British (and related) police helmets plus numerous other police caps from around the world – from Iceland to Russia to China. Some are current and some are historic.

"The oldest Bobby helmet in my collection is from the 1960s but most are from the 80s, 90s and 2000s. There are older ones available but I don't seek them out because they're too expensive. What many people don't realise is that each police district in the UK has its own unique helmet and badge.

"I started collecting law enforcement memorabilia back in 1992 when the Ministry of Transport, which I was working for, was absorbed into the New Zealand Police. I kept some of the old MOT memorabilia. Initially I started out collecting shoulder patches – mainly American, but then I discovered there were 55,000 different law enforcement agencies in the USA and I'd never be able to get a full set – so I switched to the Bobby helmets! My collection is almost complete – but there are another eight forces which have since changed their badges so I'm slightly out of date. I was lucky to get a City of London sergeant's helmet – they're very hard to come by as they're a very small police force.

"I've bought some and been given some. Some I've swapped for other items. They're not really worth anything unless you're a collector, but they vary in value up to about NZ\$400. It's a good way to meet interesting people especially when you're travelling.

"New Zealand-wise, my collection is very large but compared to people in the UK, this is just a drop in the bucket! Lots of people have a few helmets but are constrained by space – I'm lucky to have a whole wall. Many wives aren't so understanding!"

