

ALASKA STATE MUSEUMS

ALASKA STATE MUSEUM, JUNEAU ❖ SHELDON JACKSON MUSEUM, SITKA

Sheldon Jackson Museum

104 College Drive, Sitka, AK 99835

Phone (907)747-8981 Fax (907)747-3004

ESKIMO POTTERY DISH DECEMBER ARTIFACT OF THE MONTH

FOR MORE INFORMATION

SCOTT MCADAMS, 747-8981

A unique [pottery dish](#) from the Kuskokwim River area is the Sheldon Jackson Museum's Artifact of the Month for December.

Pottery making in Alaska was unique to the Eskimo. Local clay mixed with a binder of bird down, grass, sand, animal blood or water made poor quality, fragile lamps and cooking pots. However, the low fired, low-grade clay generally improved with continuous use. The small flat dish formed by the coil method of pottery has only one design in the center: an X.

The pottery dish came to the museum in a roundabout way. From 1907 to 1917, Herman and Elizabeth Holtmeier were Moravian Church missionaries at Bethel and Quinhagak, Alaska. Elizabeth Holtmeier died a few years after the couple returned to the midwest and Herman remarried. His second wife donated the Holtmeier's Alaska collection to the Carver County Historical Museum in Waconia, Minn., after Holtmeier's death. The Friends of the Sheldon Jackson Museum later purchased the dish, as well as 26 additional items.

The pottery dish will be on display Dec. 1-31. Winter hours are 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Tuesday through Saturday. Admission is \$3; youth 18 and younger are admitted free. Annual passes and membership in the Friends of the Sheldon Jackson Museum allowing entry at no charge may be purchased at the Museum.

Assistance is available for visitors with special needs. Please contact Visitor Services at 747-8981 before the visit.

[SJ Native artist demos](#) | [press releases](#) | [SJ home](#) | [Alaska State Museums home](#)

ESKIMO POTTERY DISH



Pottery bowl II-S-180 Kuskokwim River area.
Sheldon Jackson Museum

[return to top](#)