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## Press Release

SHELDON JACKSON MUSEUM

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
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### **FEBRUARY ARTIFACT OF THE MONTH** **[MINIATURE TLINGIT FEAST BOWL](#)**

The Sheldon Jackson Museum in Sitka is featuring a small carved bowl attributed to turn-of-the-20th century Tlingit artist, Rudolph Walton, for its February artifact of the month.

The bowl has been stained a dark brown to black color, with the natural color of the wood showing on sides of the rim and bottom. It is only 5¾ inches long and 2¾ inches wide – the smallest of the Walton bowls in the museum’s collection. The details and workmanship are identical to the larger 12-inch bowls in the collection and to those that have appeared in auctions around the country. The bowl is in the form of what is thought to be a sea lion as the powerful head with bared teeth and flippers sweeping up along the sides strongly suggests. Traditional form line design sea lions would have small pointed ears; however these Walton sea lion bowls do not. By the turn of the twentieth century, artists did not always follow all the “form line rules” and may have used the basics but sometimes omitting the finer details.

The size is another interesting characteristic. The large sea lion bowls were large enough that they could have been functional if a buyer had chosen to use them. This tiny bowl might hold a few coins or a trinket but must have been made simply for display. It also raises the question of whether it made so small by request (other small bowls are in private collections) or whether the artist started making these smaller versions to expedite the manufacture of these very popular bowls. These smaller versions are not as common and the museum did not have one this size. When it was offered for sale by a local person who had purchased it on eBay from a dealer in Burnaby, B.C., we felt fortunate in obtaining it for the collection.

Rudolph Walton, Kaawootk’ (Little Bead) Aakw’tatseen (Lively Frog in a Lake), Kik’sadi Tin.aa Hit (Copper Plate House) was a well-known Tlingit carver from Sitka. Walton lived in Sitka from 1867 to 1951. He was widely known for his silver and wood carving and made many spoons, bracelets and other items for the tourist trade. He was the proprietor of the Rudolph Walton and Son Store on Katlian Street until 1920.

The miniature feast bowl will be on display February 1–28 and can be viewed on our web site at [www.museums.state.ak.us](http://www.museums.state.ak.us). Winter hours at the Sheldon Jackson Museum are 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Tuesday through Saturday. Winter admission is \$3. Visitors 18 and younger, Friends of the Sheldon Jackson Museum, and those with passes are admitted free of charge.

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