

PRESS RELEASE

Sheldon Jackson Museum

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THE FIRST ARTIFACT OF 2002: AN ESKIMO GRASS BASKET

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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In January, the Sheldon Jackson Museum features an Eskimo coiled grass basket woven in the shape of a tea kettle as its Artifact of the Month.

This basket's history is almost as unusual as its shape. It was collected by Father Andrew P. Kashevaroff, a Russian Orthodox priest who was also curator of the Alaska State Museum in Juneau from 1919-40. The basket was eventually passed along to his granddaughter, Natasha Calvin. The Alaska State Museum's recently acquired the Calvin/Kashevaroff Collection, which includes the tea kettle basket, two sets of telescoping spruce root baskets, a silver hairpiece, a Tlingit bow, and an Aleut grass mat all of which are now part of the Sheldon Jackson Museum's collections.

Father Kashevaroff ministered to congregations from Sitka to Kodiak before settling in Juneau. Some of the artifacts in his collection likely came to him through his Alutiiq heritage; he received other pieces as gifts or purchased them during his travels and assignments throughout Alaska.

Several of the pieces from the Calvin/Kashevaroff Collection were featured in *Looking Forward, Looking Back* the Alaska State Museum's centennial exhibition in Juneau in 2000. A recreation of Kashevaroff's office was a focus of the exhibition.

The basket may be viewed in the Sheldon Jackson Museum gallery from January 1-31.

