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## Press Release

SHELDON JACKSON MUSEUM

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
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### JANUARY ARTIFACT OF THE MONTH [ARGILLITE SHIP PANEL PIPE](#)

A Haida argillite pipe that was returned to Alaska from Finland in September is the Sheldon Jackson Museum's Artifact of the Month for January.

Early argillite pipes were smoked by the Haida but lost their functionality as the demand for tourist art increased from maritime traders. According to researcher and author Robin Wright, Curator of Native American Art at the Burke Museum of History and Culture in Seattle, there were three categories of pipes carved by the Haida: traditional Haida motifs, ship panel pipes and pipes similar to early clay trade pipes. The pipe falls into the category of ship panel pipes. Some of the characteristics outlined by Wright and evident on the donated pipe are the baseline representing the hull of a ship, an upturned prow or "billethead" and a central floral pattern resembling a palm tree or rosette. Wright points out that the pipes were being made and sold from the early part of the 19<sup>th</sup> century but the style's popularity gave way to the elaborate Haida motif pipes and evolved into other forms such as totem poles, dishes, bowls, platters, figural groups and boxes.

The donor of the pipe, Marie Jarlsdotter Enckell, is a descendent of Johan Joachim von Bartram who was the second-in-command under Governor Arvid Adolf Etholén of the Russian American Company from 1840-1845. Ms. Enckell also traces a number of other ancestors living and working in Alaska during the Russian-American period. She can not say for sure which of the relatives collected the argillite pipe but does cite a letter from a "local girl" whom the Bartrams raised while in Sitka. The Bartrams were in Helsinki at the time of the letter. The young woman stated that she "was looking for local artifacts to send them as a gift." The Bartrams and other family members stayed in touch with others who had served and continued to serve with the Russian-American Company in Alaska. Who actually collected the pipe or if the Bartrams collected it themselves will probably remain unknown.

Ms. Enckell previously donated two other argillite pipes in 1989 and an Aleut grass cigar/cigarette case in 1998.

The ship panel pipe can be seen at the museum January 1 through January 31 and can be viewed on our web site at [www.museums.state.ak.us](http://www.museums.state.ak.us). Winter hours are 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Tuesday through Saturday. General 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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