

A L A S K A S T A T E M U S E U M S

ALASKA STATE MUSEUM, JUNEAU ❖ SHELDON JACKSON MUSEUM, SITKA

Sheldon Jackson Museum

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TLINGIT BONE KNIFE FEATURED FOR OCTOBER ARTIFACT OF THE MONTH

FOR MORE INFORMATION

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A Tlingit bone knife is the featured artifact at the Sheldon Jackson Museum for October in recognition of the Battle of 1804 in Sitka between invading Russian forces and the Tlingit Kiks.ádi clan. The battle took place during the first week of October.

There's no evidence this piece was used in battle, but it's similar to ones that were. The 14-inch bone knife or dagger may have been used for defense. Early daggers used for this purpose had a double blade—one in the usual position and a shorter blade on the top. Later knives had a single blade with the top carved in a bird, animal or human figure.

Tlingits used metal, ivory, baleen and bone to create knives. The curved back of this particular knife suggests a leg bone from a large animal such as a deer may have been used.

The bone knife has been in the museum's collection since at least 1931, when it was noted during a museum inventory.

The Artifact of the Month series at the Sheldon Jackson Museum offers visitors an opportunity to view various pieces that aren't on exhibit or are new to the collection.

The bone knife will be on display Oct. 1-30. Winter hours at the museum are 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Tuesdays through Saturdays. 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, are available.

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