

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

104 College Drive, Sitka, AK 99835

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

Home page: <http://www.museums.state.ak.us>

Release date: **March 30, 2006**

FOR MORE INFORMATION:

Scott McAdams, 747-8981

APRIL ARTIFACT OF THE MONTH

ESKIMO LANCE POINTS

The featured Artifacts of the Month for April are five lance points: two representing Inupiat Eskimos from King Island and three of other Eskimo affiliation. This selection of points shows the variety of materials and methods used in constructing these essential hunting tools.

Three of the examples are traditional points shaped from slate or flint. The other two points, from the post Euro-American contact period, are made from copper and glass. Lashing on all the points is either baleen or rawhide. Regional preferences are reflected in the various shapes of the points.

A toggle-head harpoon was the initial weapon used in hunting large sea mammals. The first strike with this weapon, which might be thrown from a distance, weakened the animal enough to allow the hunter to approach it with relative safety. A lance point was then placed into an ivory socket on the end of a long shaft. The point fit loosely into the socket allowing it to detach in the animal. Additional points were then driven and left in the animal, eventually killing it. A hunter normally traveled with a bag of eight to ten of these points each with a mark designating his ownership. The identifying marks allowed the animal and the points to be returned to the hunter who made the original strike.

The lance points will be on exhibit April 1-30 and can also be viewed on our website at 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.

[return to top](#)

[SJ Artifacts-of-the-Month](#) | [press releases](#) | [SJ home](#) | [Alaska State Museums](#)

ESKIMO LANCE POINTS



[return to top](#)

[SJ Artifacts-of-the-Month](#) | [press releases](#) | [SJ home](#) | [Alaska State Museums](#)