

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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[ALEUT GRASS MAT](#)

AUGUST ARTIFACT OF THE MONTH

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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SCOTT MCADAMS, 747-8981

The Sheldon Jackson Museum features a rare and fragile [Aleut grass mat](#) as its Artifact of the Month for August. This mat was once in the private collection of Father Andrew Kashevaroff, a Russian Orthodox priest who was also Curator of the Alaska State Museum in Juneau from 1919-40.

Constructed in the open-twined method, the mat displays colored yarn caught in the weft stitches that form a variety of diamond shapes. Although the mat has extensive breakage of both warp and weft and much of the colored yarn decoration has been abraded over the decades, the Museum pursued this piece because of its rarity. The mats were used in traditional semi-subterranean homes to divide room space, or cover walls and floors.

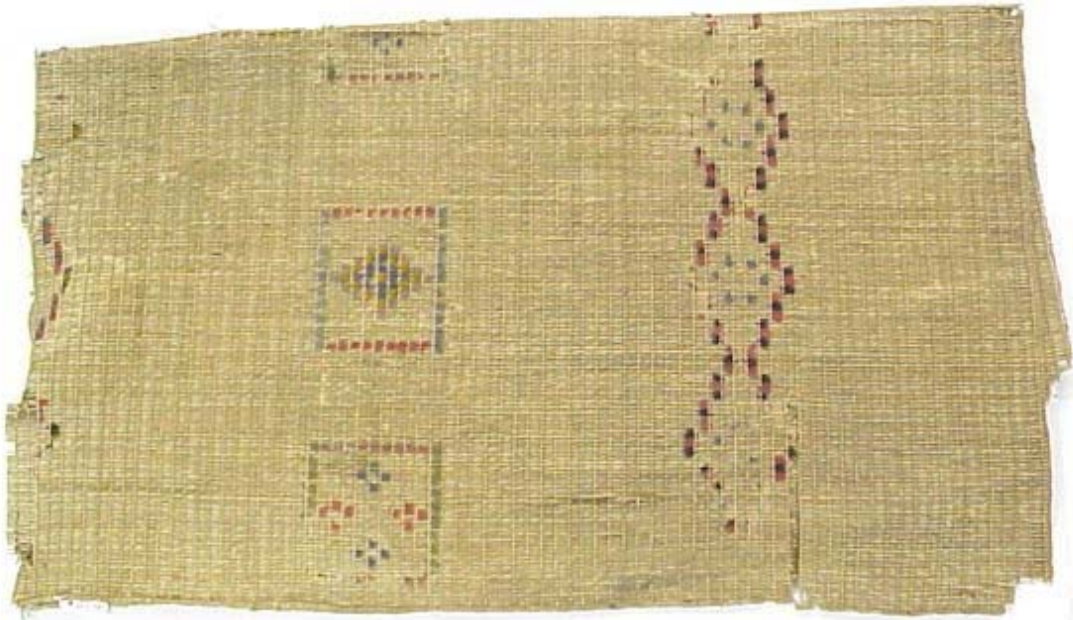
The mat is part of the Calvin/Kashevaroff collection acquired by the Alaska State Museums in 2001. This group of artifacts also includes a tea kettle basket, two sets of telescoping spruce root baskets, a Tlingit bow, and a silver hair comb, all of which are now at the Sheldon Jackson Museum.

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.

The mat can be viewed at the museum during the month of August or on the museum's web site at <http://www.museums.state.ak.us>.

Admission is \$4.00. Hours are 9:00 to 5:00 daily. Visitors under 18 are admitted free of charge. An annual pass that allows unlimited visits to the Alaska State Museum and the Sheldon Jackson Museum in Sitka is available for \$15.00.

Assistance is available for visitors with special needs. Please contact Visitor Services at 747-8981 before the visit.



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