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## Press Release

SHELDON JACKSON MUSEUM

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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### August Artifact of the Month: Tlingit-made Deer Hoof Rattle

The Sheldon Jackson Museum's Artifact of the Month for August is a Tlingit-made deer hoof rattle. The rattle is made of two concentric circles of wood wrapped in split spruce root and hung with "deer toes."

The rattle was part of a large collection donated to the museum in 1997 by Grayce C. Alexander of Pennsylvania. Ms. Alexander's grandfather taught shoe making at the Sitka Industrial Training School (forerunner of Sheldon Jackson College) from 1889-1894. During his time in Sitka he collected everything from baskets, moccasins, mukluks, and bentwood boxes to loops of sea mammal hide line. A pair of children's shoes from that year was also donated.

The rattle is the only deer hoof rattle in the Sheldon Jackson Museum. When it arrived, it was in extremely fragile condition with hooves falling off and the spruce root wrapped around the circles was either missing or loose. In October 2009, a conservation intern working at the Alaska State Museum, Lauren Horelick, was able to travel to Sitka with the museums' Conservator Ellen Carrlee and was given the assignment of stabilizing and putting the rattle back together. The rattle is now stabilized and repaired enough to be exhibited.

Concentric rattles such as this one may have been used by clan dancers during performances at potlatches and were also sometimes found in shaman's kit. Often, puffin beaks would be used in conjunction with or in place of "deer toes" on the concentric rattles.

The rattle can be seen in the museum gallery from August 1 through August 31. Summer hours are daily from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. with \$4 admission. Visitors 18 and younger, Friends of the Sheldon Jackson Museum, and those with passes are admitted free of charge.

The images can also be viewed on our website at

[http://www.museums.state.ak.us/sheldon\\_jackson/artifact\\_of\\_month.html](http://www.museums.state.ak.us/sheldon_jackson/artifact_of_month.html)

#### FOR MORE INFORMATION:

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[www.museums.state.ak.us](http://www.museums.state.ak.us)

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## Tlingit Deer Hoof Rattle



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