

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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[Northwest Coast Style Canoe Model](#) **September Artifact of the Month**

Many Native cultures created miniature tools and vessels that were used by children as toys or sold as souvenirs to visitors. A toy-sized [canoe](#) that was likely carved as a souvenir is the Sheldon Jackson Museum's Artifact of the Month for September.

The Museum acquired the canoe model, carved in Northwest Coast style with formline designs with a group of artifacts purchased by the Museum in 2001 from the Fuller Theological Seminary in Pasadena, California. The pieces had been donated to the Seminary by Paul Gaebelein Jr., a former instructor whose great-grandfather collected the piece.

Written on the bottom of this dish is "D. Wilson Moore Alaska 1879" and on the right side in pencil is "D.W. Moore Indian Canoe 1879." The museum has a similar canoe that was collected by its founder, Sheldon Jackson. Another piece from the family indicated that the 1879 trip was made with Sheldon Jackson. This was Jackson's second trip to Alaska and one intended to introduce high-level Presbyterian officials to the area. So far, the name of D. Wilson Moore does not show up in any of the articles, books or correspondence written by the members of this group. Moore was a wealthy Presbyterian benefactor who may have been along on the trip in some capacity, but his participation remains unsubstantiated.

Although little is known about canoe models such as this one, traditionally, they were made for children. After Euro-American contact with the Tlingit culture, model canoes became important in the trade market. Early explorers collected them as examples of Tlingit "material culture" and, beginning in the later part of the nineteenth century, tourists to Southeast Alaska purchased them as souvenirs.

The canoe model can be viewed at the Museum from September 1-30 or on the museum's web site at <http://www.museums.state.ak.us>. Summer admission is \$4.00 with daily hours of 9:00 to 5:00. Visitors under 18 are admitted free. Winter hours begin September 16: Tuesday through Saturday with an admission fee of \$3. 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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