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Press Release

SHELDON JACKSON MUSEUM

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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SHELDON JACKSON MUSEUM ARTIFACT OF THE MONTH FOR SEPTEMBER: [ATHABASCAN DRUM AND DRUM BEATER](#)

The Artifact of the Month for September at the Sheldon Jackson Museum is an Athabascan drum and beater. The drum came into the collection in 1974 – a time when the scope of the museum’s collecting was broader. The museum no longer collects Alaska Native objects made after to the 1930s. The drum was purchased in Tok, Alaska by a museum volunteer who was traveling through the Yukon and northern Alaska. She purchased a number of items for the museum and donated them to collection.

The drum and beater were made by elder Steven Northway who was living in Tok at the time. Caribou hide was stretched over a circular frame which was steamed and bent then secured with heavy hide lacing. The crisscrossing of the lacing forms a hand hold in the center. The beater is a stick steamed and bent with a loop at one end and wrapped in more hide.

Singing, dancing and drumming are still a rich part of the culture of the Tanana people in the Tok area. In 1974 when the drum and beater were made, Steven Northway was still composing and presenting songs for his Lower Nabesna band.

The drum and beater can be seen at the Sheldon Jackson Museum September 1 through September 30. Summer hours are daily from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. with \$4 admission. Winter hours begin September 22 and are Tuesday through Saturday from 10 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.

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.



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ATHABASCAN DRUM AND BEATER



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