

# Sackett introduces bill to buy Sheldon Jackson College Native artifacts

Senator John Sackett (R-Ruby) and Senator Dick Eliason (R-Sitka), recently introduced legislation appropriating \$2 million for the phase one purchase of the Sheldon Jackson Museum collection of Alaska Native artifacts. The bill, SB-256, is the result of efforts by the administration of Sheldon Jackson College in Sitka to ensure that the prized collection remains in Alaska rather than sold to an outside source.

The museum and artifacts were established by Dr. Sheldon Jackson who spent years collecting Native artifacts throughout Alaska during the latter part of the 19th century. The collection is now considered to be one of the

most valuable of its kind in the world.

Sheldon Jackson College has reluctantly decided to give up the collection because the college no longer can afford the cost of housing and care for the artifacts. The museum facility is in need of upgrading and repairs and many parts of the collection need restoration work. The college has had offers from private and outside interests but would prefer the collection remain in Alaska.

Senator Sackett said that retaining the collection and museum in Alaska is vitally important. The Senator noted that far too many artifacts of Alaska Natives have been removed from the state. The Senator said he could not in

good conscience permit the Sheldon Jackson collection to be sold to non-Alaskan interests and see the collection leave the State.

"The collection of Native artifacts at Sheldon Jackson College represents our heritage and culture from centuries past. We can not afford to lose these valuable remnants of Alaska's great history," said Sackett.

When the full purchase price has been met the State of Alaska will own the museum and collection as well as land at the campus site. The museum and collection will become part of the State Museum system. The remainder of the purchase price will be used to establish an endowment fund at the college.