

## Kaguyak — Kangiyaq

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### ILATEN KANGIYARMIUWAT. – (SOME OF) YOUR RELATIVES ARE FROM KAGUYAK.

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Photo: Kaguyak Village, courtesy of Tim and Norman Smith.

The village of Kaguyak lies on the Aliulik Peninsula at the head of Kodiak Island's Kaguyak Bay. Today, this once-flourishing coastal village is overgrown with brush and few remnants of its habitation remain. The fourth tidal wave generated by the Great Alaska Earthquake flattened the village in 1964 and killed two of its residents. Kaguyak was never resettled.

Prehistoric people lived in Kaguyak Bay and were among the first Kodiak Islanders to encounter Russian traders. However, the historic village of Kaguyak developed in the 1860s when people displaced from the nearby village of Old Kaguyak by the smallpox epidemic returned to their homeland. The nineteenth-century village was large, with many homes and several stores. The community rested on a small spit fronting a freshwater lake at the head of the Kaguyak Bay. Here, residents enjoyed an abundance of salmon, ducks, and ptarmigan. Kaguyak was also a destination

for Alutiiq hunters, who traveled to the village to trade their furs for food, tools, and household supplies. Kaguyak's population declined with the decimation of the sea otter population. By the early twentieth century, the village had less than one hundred residents. In 1964, only thirty-four people lived in the community.

Following the destruction from the 1964 tidal wave, the residents of Kaguyak temporarily relocated to Anchorage and then Kodiak. Many settled permanently in the communities of Old Harbor and Akhiok. Villagers considered resettling Kaguyak, but the lake where villagers fetched fresh water from was contaminated with saltwater, and so residents opted to move into larger neighboring communities where many had family ties. However, Kaguyak has not been forgotten. Alutiiq people continue to use the area as a seasonal fish camp, there is still a Kaguyak Tribal Council, and the village corporation that represents the Alutiiq people of southern Kodiak Island — Akhiok-Kaguyak Incorporated — bears its name.