

Port Lions — Masiqsiraq

ELLTUWAQA MASIQSIRAMI SKUULUQUTARTUQ. – MY GRANDDAUGHTER IS GOING TO GO TO SCHOOL IN PORT LIONS.



Photo: Russian Orthodox Church in Port Lions.

On Friday, March 27, 1964, life changed dramatically for the residents of Afognak village. A magnitude 9.0 earthquake ripped open the seafloor off the coast of Kodiak, creating a series of tsunamis that devastated the village. Residents were forced to evacuate as seawater engulfed the community.

With an outpouring of assistance, the village was rebuilt in Settler Cove near the mouth of nearby Kizhuyak Bay. In December of 1964, forty families moved into new houses. They named the community Port Lions in recognition of the very generous aid for community construction provided by the International Lions Club. Recent census data indicate that 153 people live in sixty-two houses in Port Lions, making it Kodiak's second-largest rural community. Only the village of Old Harbor has a larger overall population.

Today, Port Lions is one of few Kodiak villages served by the Alaska state ferry. The M/V Tustumena links the community with Homer and Seward to the north and Kodiak to the east. Port Lions' deep harbor is also home to a variety of commercial vessels, reflecting the community's economic focus on fishing.