The Quarterly Newsletter of the Alutiiq Museum Volume 23, Issue 1 | Summer 2018

Masks, Headdress Journey back to Kodiak

An unremarkable wooden crate arrived at the Alutiiq Museum in July. Beneath its simple exterior, however, lay treasures—two ceremonial masks and a set of beaded regalia collected on Kodiak in 1872. The objects are part of the Pinart Collection, an assemblage of rare nineteenth century Alutiiq items stored at the Musée Boulogne-sur-Mer, France, and the focus of an ongoing cultural exchange between the French and Alutiiq peoples.

The collection includes masks, drums, headdresses, and a feast bowl obtained by Alphonse Pinart, a French anthropologist. These items provide a rich record of traditional arts, ritual practices, spiritual beliefs, and the Alutiiq language. Pinart collected vocabulary, songs, and legends with the objects, and deposited the collection in the museum near his home in northern France.

For more than twenty years Alutiiq culture bearers and museum leaders have been visiting Boulogne-sur-Mer to study the collection and share cultural traditions and contemporary artwork. In return, the French have graciously allowed items from the collection to visit Alaska. Musée Director Elikya Kandot traveled to Alaska this summer to exchange more objects. She brought two masks, a beaded headdress, a beaded belt, and a pair of beaded cuffs, and returned home with two ceremonial masks that had been in Kodiak four years.

Elders, culture bearers, tribal leaders, and community members gathered at the Alutiiq Museum to greet the items. Prayers and songs in Alutiiq welcomed both Kandot and the ancestral objects, which were uncrated while those assembled watched with excitement and pride.

“We are so very grateful to the French for recognizing the value of these piece to the Alutiiq community, and for their willingness to share them on long-term loan,” said Alutiiq Museum Executive Director April Laktonen Counceller. “We are particularly excited to borrow a complete set of beaded regalia—a headdress, a belt, and a pair of cuffs. These pieces are one of just a handful of complete sets in the world and our artists can learn a great deal from their design and construction.”

In September, the objects will be incorporated into Ag’inarluni—Worthy of Respect, an Alutiiq Museum exhibit exploring traditional beliefs and ceremonial practices. They will also support arts education. The museum plans to assemble a group of beaders to study and recreate the regalia. This will help artists learn directly from the work of an ancestor and provide the museum with replicas to share when the historic set returns to France.

Generous support for this phase of the cultural exchange came from Koniag, Inc., Old Harbor Native Corporation, Chugach Alaska Corporation, Alyeska Pipeline Service Company, Perry Eaton, E/P Roofing, and Betsy Lawer.
Collaboration is an old and enduring Alutiiq tradition. Alutiiq legends are filled with examples of people working together to overcome obstacles—hunger, illness, treachery, sea monsters. Similarly, our Elders tell stories of people working together—men team up to build houses, groups of women split fish or stitch a kayak cover. Partnerships make big jobs easier and build strong communities.

Collaborations have been especially important to the Alutiiq Museum in recent months as we tackled unique projects. I am truly grateful to both our traditional partners and new friends for their outstanding assistance. The development of a new public park and an upcoming exhibit of items on loan from France are the result of strong collaborations, and they will benefit many people.

In June, we broke ground on Ancestors’ Memorial Park, a partnership with the City of Kodiak to develop a public space honoring our people (p7). This ambitious undertaking received tremendous support from the City of Kodiak—the Mayor, City Council, and city staff, as well as local business, grantors, and community members. We’ve learned about permitting, construction, and landscaping with your help, and raised nearly $200,000.

I am especially grateful for the contributions of the museum’s founding and sustaining Native corporations to this effort. In addition to their annual gifts, every one of these corporations gave to the park project and attended the groundbreaking. To see a full list of park supporters you can visit www.ancestorsmemorial.org. It is still possible to add your name to the project by buying an engraved brick for the park walkway.

Another collaboration, two years in the making, brought rare ceremonial artifacts to Kodiak. In July, the Musée Boulogne-sur-Mer, France, loaned the Alutiiq Museum two ceremonial masks and a set of beaded regalia (p1). Shipping a crate of antiquities across the globe safely required close work with the Musée and both French and American art handlers as well as many preparations in Kodiak. I am very grateful to Konig for helping to negotiate the loan and oversee fundraising.

This partnership with the Musée Boulogne-sur-Mer is helping our people connect with their material history. Knowledge lost in colonial period is renewed by today’s artists, and cultural pride is awakened. Please join us September 27th to see our exhibit Ag’inarluni—Worthy of Respect featuring these special objects.

Tang’rciqamken tawani!—See you there!
April/Isiik Counsellor, PhD
Executive Director
A caribou skin parka decorated with puffin beaks. A hunter’s bag with intricate embroidery. A painted spruce root hat. These are among the traditional objects featured in Coloring Alutiiq, a publication highlighting Alutiiq clothing and the animals and tools used to make traditional garments. Created by Alutiiq artist Hanna Sholl, the 28-page paperback is the museum’s latest publication and it designed for children. Black and white line drawings provide plenty of space for coloring and opportunities to learn about the Alutiiq world.

“This project unites Hanna’s tremendous drawing skills with traditional information,” said Alutiiq Museum Executive Director April Laktonen Counseller. “The book shows illustrations of Alutiiq clothing beside the animals harvested to make clothing and the tools used in harvesting and processing those animals. This will help young people gain a deeper understanding of Alutiiq technologies and the ingenuity of our ancestors.”

The book also includes simple phrases to explain the objects and Alutiiq language vocabulary selected with the help of Elder speakers.

Sholl and museum staff members developed the book this summer and will release it in time for the start of the 2018-2019 school year. The museum plans to share paper and electronic versions with schools and teachers, donate copies to local medical facilities for children to enjoy in waiting rooms, host coloring events in Kodiak and Ouzinkie, and post a downloadable coloring page to its website once a month starting this fall. Paper copies will also be available in the museum store.

Counseller said, “We want this resource to reach as many people as possible. Coloring Alutiiq be a great addition to the museum’s educational tools. Children enjoy learning from visual resources and connect well to activity books. Moreover, coloring helps young people develop hand-eye coordination, mental focus, and creativity.”

“We also suspect adults will enjoy the book! Coloring has become popular for all ages,” she added.

A generous grant from The CIRI Foundation supported the development of Coloring Alutiiq.
Weekly Words

The Alutiiq Word of the Week, our lessons on all things Alutiiq, is available for free in many formats. No matter how you like to connect, there is a lesson for you. Lessons can be downloaded, delivered to your in-box, read online or in the newspaper, and heard over the airways. Pick your way to connect and cali liici—learn more. Generously sponsored by the Koniag Education Foundation.

Listen: Visit iTunes and search for Alutiiq Word of the Week to subscribe to the podcast.
Tune In: KMXT Public Radio airs the program Tuesdays at 9:00 am, Saturdays at 5:00 pm, and Sundays at noon.
Subscribe: Sign up for the program email or RSS feed at https://alutiiqmuseum.org/learn/alutiiq-word-of-the-week.
Read: Visit the museum’s Facebook page on Sundays, pick up Friday’s edition of the Kodiak Daily Mirror, go to Word of the Week page on the museum’s website anytime.
Explore: Find more than 500 past lessons in our archive https://alutiiqmuseum.org/learn/word-of-the-week-archive.

Green Salmonberries
Alutiiq Word of the Week Lesson 2108

Salmonberries (Rubus spectabilis Pursh) are perhaps the most widely harvested wild fruit in the Kodiak region. The big juicy berries are a favorite summer treat, enjoyed fresh and in a mouth-watering assortment of desserts and preserves.

Salmonberries flower in late spring and bear fruit between June and August. Harvesters have different opinions about when they are best to pick. Some gather the fruit when it is bright red. Others wait until the berries ripen to a deep crimson color. However, all agree that unripe berries should be avoided. Eating green, yellow, or even lightly red berries can cause constipation. For this reason, many Alutiiq people eat salmonberries mixed with sugar and milk. This simple dish helps people avoid the unpleasant side effects of consuming quantities of these tasty but binding berries, especially if they are not entirely ripe.

If a love of salmonberries leads to an uncomfortable situation, there are traditional remedies. Tea made from pineapple weed (Matricaria discoidea DC.) is said to be soothing and have a gentle laxative effect. If you need something more powerful, culture bearers advise eating boiled sourdock leaves and stems (Rumex occidentalis S. Watson) by themselves. A tea made by boiling sourdock roots is also an effective treatment. Be carefully, however, sourdock is also an emetic. Too much taken by itself can induce vomiting!

A green, developing salmonberry.

Uurungile (N) | Uurunguliiit (S)
---|---
Aanama niu’utaapiinga “Uurunguliiit piturkunaki.”
My mom always told me not to eat the unripe salmonberries.

Season 21 | Lesson 8
learn more at alutiiqmuseum.org
We Remember

We are one community connected through our people. From past to present, from present to future, we remember those who came before us and the life, land, language, and ways of living they gave to us.

This is the message on a new display at Koniag, Inc.’s Kodiak headquarters that honors shareholders who have passed away. Developed by the Alutiiq Museum, the display features a panoramic photo of an ocean sunset by Lachelle Roberts inset with two video screens. One screen cycles the names of shareholders who have passed away. The other shares pictures of friends, family members, and ancestors who are gone but not forgotten.

Koniag will continue to add names and photographs to the display. If you would like to share a picture of a passed shareholder, you can email photos to mcortez@koniag.com.

Late Koniag, Inc. shareholder Hank Eaton, ca. 1990. Rostad Collection.

ENROLL NOW!
ALUTIIKTSTUN NIUWAWIK
ALUTIIQ LANGUAGE NEST

The Alutiiqstun Niuwawik Language Nest is a child-focused Alutiiq language immersion environment where language is acquired naturally. Children develop kindergarten readiness skills while they problem solve, explore, and play through the language in a supportive multi-generational setting.

For more information, call or text our Language Nest teachers at 907-512-5995, or email Raissa, at raissa@sunaq.org

Sponsored by the Sun'Aq Tribe of Kodiak and the Administration for Native Americans

Language for Little Ones

The Alutiiqstun Niuwawik Language Nest is a half-day preschool program that meets three days a week from September through May. Enrollment is open now for all children in Kodiak whose families want to start their language learning journey. The cost is only fifty dollars per semester.

Come visit our store!

New items including fleece jackets, hats, jewelry, artwork and more.

Shop online at alutiiqmuseum.org
Wanted - Family Photos to Scan

Visitors love the museum’s collections. Artists examine carvings to see how they were made. Children imagine paddling the historic kayak on display in our gallery. Tourists marvel at the beauty of stone lamps. More than anything else, however, people love our photographs. Pictures transport people into the past. They connect visitors to distant place and times, and sometimes even to family members. Because cameras were rare in Alutiiq communities until the digital age, people often look for pictures of parents and grandparents. Our collections hold some of the only images of beloved relatives. It’s not surprising that photographs are the mostly widely used of the museum’s collections.

Many people don’t think their old family photographs would be valuable to the museum. We disagree! Part of collecting items that reflect the Alutiiq world is documenting recent times. We don’t just collect artifacts from the distant past. We document the entire Alutiiq experience, photos are valuable documentation of people, communities, and activities. They help us connect the different eras of the Alutiiq world and provide an amazing visual record for future generations.

So, consider donating your photographs to the Alutiiq Museum. We are interested in photos of Kodiak people, places, communities, events, and activities. With modern technology, you don’t need to give us your originals. The museum can scan your prints and return them to you. We’ll keep a digital copy and provide you with a set of digital images too. We’ll also create an agreement that governs the use of the collection and tells us how to credit you if an image is used in a publication or exhibit. You can even help us catalog the photos. Tell us about the people and places in the pictures and we’ll record the information to be stored with the images forever. In this way you can preserve pieces of family history for your own family and for the Kodiak community. Future generations will thank you!

If you would like to share your photographs with museum, please contact Amanda Lancaster, amanda@alutiiqmuseum.org, or 844-425-8844, x22.

Take a Plant Walk

What is the best time to pick salmonberries? How do you say cottonwood in Alutiiq? What are the uses for wild rose petals? The answers are in Alutiiq Plants, the museum’s new app. The app shares traditional uses of Kodiak plants and audio recording of Alutiiq plant names.

Look for the devil’s club leaf icon and download the app for free—from the App Store for iOS or from Google Play for Android. Take your smartphone on a plant walk!

Produced from Priscilla Russell’s research on Kodiak Alutiiq plantlore with generous support from the Alaska State Museum.
Construction Begins on Ancestors’ Memorial Park

On a cloudless Friday in June, a crowd gathered on the undeveloped lot behind the Alutiiq Museum to celebrate a milestone—the creation of a public space honoring Kodiak’s Alutiiq people. The Alutiiq dancers performed in the sunshine and community leaders spoke. Then, tribal, city, and museum representatives moved the first shovels of dirt in the construction of Ancestors’ Memorial Park.

The Museum and the City of Kodiak have been planning the park for more than a year. An agreement between the organizations establishes a long vacant .34-acre lot in downtown Kodiak as the park site and a place to share local history. Construction of the park is being funded by grants, sponsorships, in-kind donations, and brick sales. To date the Alutiiq Museum has raised $195,400 to support the work.

This summer, Project Specialist Kate Schaberg, is working with local contractors to build the park, transforming the conceptual design into reality. Park features will include a circular planter filled with forget-me-nots, surrounded by benches sponsored by park supporters. Interpretive signs will discuss Alutiiq history and share historic preservation messages. The park will also include a pathway filled with engraved bricks. Community members and organizations sponsored bricks that will share personal messages, honor loved ones, and show support for the project.

Although the first brick order has been placed, Schaberg says brick orders are still possible. “Each year following Memorial Day, we will order additional bricks for installation in the park, so people can continue to remember loved ones or show their support for the memorial.” Brick orders can be placed online at www.ancestorsmemorial.org, by phone, or in person at the Alutiiq Museum.

Attention Artists!

The Alutiiq Museum is seeking artwork to purchase through the Rasmuson Art Acquisition Fund this fall. If you are an established artist, living in Alaska and would like the museum to consider your work for our collection, please contact Amanda Lancaster 844-425-8844, x22, amanda@alutiiqmuseum.org

We will consider any piece of visual art that compliments the museum’s mission and was produced within the past five years. Application materials are available at and proposals are due by Friday, September 12th at 4:00 pm.

Photo: Pat Branson, April Laktonen Counceller, Frank Peterson, Shauna Hegna, and Pat Heitman break ground for Ancestors’ Memorial Park.
Events

Calendar

September 7, 5:00-7:00 pm | First Friday, Coloring Alutiiq with Hanna Sholl
September 22, Noon-4:00 pm | Craft Sunday, Coloring Activity
September 27, 5:00-7:00 pm | Annual Meeting and Debut of Ag’inarluni - Worthy of Respect exhibit
October 5, 5:00–7:00 pm | First Friday with artist Gloria Selby
October 20, Noon–4:00 pm | Craft Saturday, petroglyph pumpkin carving
November 2, 5:00–7:00 pm | First Friday
November 10, Noon–4:00 pm | Free admission for veterans and their families
November 17, Noon–4:00 pm | Craft Saturday
November 22–23 | Museum closed for the Thanksgiving holiday
December 1, 11:00 am–4:00 pm | Holiday Bazaar

CONNECT WITH US

MEMBERSHIP & DONATION FORM

Quyanaaśinaq! • Thank you very much!

Name(s):

Mailing Address:

Email:

Phone #:

Member or Donor Level:

- Suk • Person $40
- Ilat • Family $75
- Angnertaq • Leader $150
- Kasainaq • Boss $500
- Pitnertusqaq • Highliner $1000
- Custom Donation $ ________

Donor Note:

- In honor/memory of ______
- Make donation anonymous.
- Contact me about volunteering.

Renewal?

- New Donor
- Renewal

Payment:

- Check
- Money Order

Make payable to:
Alutiiq Heritage Foundation
215 Mission Rd. 1st Floor, Kodiak, AK 99615

Credit cards: join or renew securely online, with options & subscription memberships at:
http://alutiiqmuseum.org/give
Or call our front desk at 1-844-425-8844

All memberships include a year of museum admission, store discounts, and invitations to members-only events. At the Ilat level and above, members receive a free copy of the Alutiiq Wild Foods Cookbook.
Looking for something to do with your friends and family this holiday season? If you’re a current member, you already enjoy free admission to the Alutiiq Museum. Now, thanks to the generous support of KeyBank, everyone gets in for free between November 25 and December 23! Add a little local culture to your holidays with a visit to the Alutiiq Museum, a gift to our community from KeyBank.

November 25 – December 23
FREE ADMISSION

Events

CONNECT WITH US
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