The hillsides are brown and the days short. Dead leaves crunch under foot and the smell of wood smoke fills the air. Winter is nearing, but not everyone is indoors. Alutiiq people are still harvesting plants. Some pick low bush cranberries whose brilliant red fruit has been sweetened by the cold. Others gather fallen salmonberry leaves for use in healing poultices, or pull dried grass stems and pound them into banya switches. Whether you are splitting firewood, collecting kelp for pickling, or gathering Labrador tea to make a throat-soothing gargle, there are many useful plants to harvest at this time of year.

The Alutiiq Museum’s latest publication explores these plant traditions, and many more. Naut’staarpet—Our Plants, A Kodiak Alutiiq Plantlore, is 181-page paperback filled with traditional knowledge. It features the research of Priscilla Russell, an ethnobotanist who visited Kodiak communities in 1990 with support from the Kodiak Area Native Association. With her notebook and camera, Russell worked with more than a hundred community members to document local plants knowledge. She visited in different seasons, collected with people, and sat in their kitchens as they cooked and made medicines.

A team of editors transformed Russell’s research into a book, updating her report, selecting photographs, and adding Alutiiq language vocabulary. The book features 184 images of people, plants, plant harvesting tools, and environments from both Russell’s research and the museum’s collections. Alutiiq plant names appear throughout the presentation and include both terms shared by culture bearer Ephraim Agnot in 1990, and words provided recently by a team of Elder Alutiiq advisors.

“Russell’s research is incredibly important archive of cultural information,” said Alutiiq Museum Executive Director April Laktonen Counsellor. “Her work provides a broad view of Alutiiq plant use in the twentieth century and an in-depth documentation of our traditional ecological knowledge. It is also preserves the knowledge of many Alutiiq people who are no longer living, whose knowledge would otherwise be lost to time.”

Naut’staarpet is available from the Alutiiq Museum Store for $25, in the gallery or online at [https://alutiiqmuseum.org/shop/museum-store/books](https://alutiiqmuseum.org/shop/museum-store/books). Quyanaa to the Kodiak Area Native Association, Koniag, Inc., the Institute for Museum and Library Services, and the Alaska State Museum for supporting its publication.
**Cama’i Friends,**

For many of us, the holidays are a time for family and friends. In the last months of the year, we pause our busy lives for a short while to share cards, meals, and gifts, and remember the blessings of community. Although today’s celebrations are often wrapped in European traditions—candy canes, reindeer, and Santa Claus—connecting with family is an ancient Alutiiq tradition. At winter festivals Alutiiq families ate, socialized, shared gifts, arranged marriages, competed in games, and sang and danced in tribute to ancestors. Honoring those who came before was an essential part of every year-end celebration.

This year, as winter approaches, the Alutiiq Museum has a unique opportunity to honor family members. We are selling engraved bricks. These bricks will become part of the walkway at the **Alutiiq Ancestors’ Memorial**, a public park adjacent to the museum. We are developing this park with assistance from the City of Kodiak as a reminder of Kodiak’s past and to encourage respect for ancestral settlements. A pathway through the park will be made of cement bricks, and community members are invited to add a message to a brick.

Many people ask us what to put on their brick. We invite you to honor a person, a family, a group, a village, or even an event. My sisters and I decided to honor our late grandparents Nick and Alberta Laktonen with a brick that shares their names. Other people have chosen a message like, “Act that each tomorrow finds us further than today,” while others simply include their family’s names as a show of support. You can label your brick any way you like, and people of all heritages are welcomed to join in. Business may also purchase bricks. There are different sized bricks, so be sure to match the length of your inscription to fit the brick you choose.

Once you’ve decided what to say, ordering a brick is easy. Visit the Ancestors’ Memorial website to place your order ([http://ancestorsmemorial.org/](http://ancestorsmemorial.org/)), or contact Jeff Garcie at the museum, jeff@alutiiqmuseum.org, 844-425-8844, x25, for assistance. Please take a moment this busy holiday to think about someone who contributed to your life and honor them with a brick.

We send our warmest wishes to you and your family,
April/Isiik Laktonen Counceller, PhD
Executive Director
Beads sparkled and jingled in the soft light of the museum’s gallery, as one by one, contestants in the first ever Alutiiq headdress pageant walked the runway. As their names were called, adults and children, boys and girls, stepped forward to share their traditional headwear. Some wore a headdress of their own creation, others a piece made by a friend or relative. Announcers acknowledged both the wearer and the headdress maker while judges took careful notes and the crowd clapped enthusiastically. A dozen people participated in the inaugural event, which the museum plans to make a tradition.

The pageant was part of the Alutiiq Museum’s 2017 annual meeting, a gathering dedicated to celebrating Alutiiq culture. In addition to the pageant, the museum served fresh, hot fry bread in its parking lot; unveiled Big Sum Bich #2, a recently acquired painting by Alvin Amason; opened a new display on Alutiiq spirituality; and honored Elders Nick Alokli and Sophie Katelnikoff Shepherd for their participation in the Alutiiq Word of the Week.

“Annual meetings are an important time to share the museum’s work and connect with our membership,” said Executive Director April Laktonen Counceller. “But they can also be dry. As part of our effort to celebrate Alutiiq culture, engage more people in museum events, and create interactive experiences, we designed this year’s annual meeting as a culture fest.”

It worked. About two hundred people turned out to enjoy refreshments, make crafts in the Pililuki exhibit, view new exhibits, honor Elders, and participate in the pageant. An online version of the pageant drew an even larger audience. Visitors to the museum’s Facebook page browsed a series of headdress photos submitted to the virtual contest, and voted for their favorites. Melinda Abyo, an Alutiiq artist from Anchorage, won the Facebook contest with her stunning headdress of moose hide, glass beads, dentalium shells and yarn. Her prize, bragging rights!

“People have more fun interacting with the museum when they can create and share. We are planning to make culture fest and headdress pageant an annual event,” said Counceller. “It’s a great way to live our culture and invite everyone to participate.”

Contestants in the September 2017 headdress pageant.

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**Pageant Winners**

**Girls** – Emma Christiansen wearing a Kayla Christiansen headdress  
**Boys** – Ezra Sholl wearing a Hannah Sholl headdress  
**Adult** – Stevi Frets wearing a Candace Branson headdress  
**Online** – Melinda Abyo wearing her own headdress  
**Grand Champion** – Maryssa Abston Tolliver wearing a Trish Abston-Cox headdress

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**Programs**
New and Improved Educational Boxes

A student uses sea shells to make a dance rattle.

Have you ever wished you could teach a lesson on Alutiiq history or lead an Alutiiq art activity? Educators contact us every week with requests for help sharing the Alutiiq world. To assist them, we have a series of educational boxes appropriate for classrooms, camps, scout meetings, gatherings, and home use. Our traveling boxes are free to check out and they are filled with unique lessons and activities inspired by Alutiiq traditions. They were also recently updated.

Over the summer, Kodiak teacher Sabrina Sutton dug into each box, examining it contents and writing recommendations for improvements. We used her ideas to label and organize, add materials, align lessons to state educational standards, and make the boxes more user friendly. We’ve replaced paper resources with digital resources, so educators can print instead of copy, or project images on a smartboard. We also created a new box featuring the arts activities from our popular exhibit Pililuki-Make Them! With this box, students can explore Alutiiq drawing and paintings, and tell their own stories with culturally-inspired artwork.

To reserve an educational box, please visit our website at [https://alutiiqmuseum.org/teachers/educational-boxes](https://alutiiqmuseum.org/teachers/educational-boxes). The materials are packaged in sturdy plastic tubs that can be picked up at the museum or shipped beyond Kodiak. The museum pays to ship the box to the borrower. The borrower pays to ship it back. For questions about our boxes, please contact Molly Odell, molly@alutiiqmuseum.org, 844-425-8844, x19.

Quyanaasinaq—many thanks to the Munartet Project for supporting box development. Munarṭet means artists in Alutiiq and the project is a partnership between the Kodiak Island Borough School District, Kodiak College, Kodiak Arts Council, and Alutiiq Museum to promote teaching in and through the arts and culture.

Available Boxes

**Who are the Alutiiq?** – Explore the Alutiiq homeland, language, customs, and history with this introductory box.

**Subsistence** – Examine pieces of fur, bone, tooth, stone, spruce root, and other natural resources to learn about Alutiiq harvesting activities.

**Stories and Games** – Play traditional games with darts, throwing disks, and die, and read traditional tales.

**Saving our Alutiiq Language** – Learn Alutiiq vocabulary with toys and games, audio and video resources, and an Alutiiq dictionary. No previous experience with the Alutiiq language needed.

**Alutiiq Dance** – Listen to Alutiiq music (CD), watch Alutiiq dancers (DVD), and make headdresses and dance rattles.

**Petroglyphs** – Use stamps and clay tablets to make petroglyph art.

**NEW! Mask Box** – Learn about Alutiiq masks and make miniature masks. This box has directions for carving masks from soap and for painting wooden masks.

**NEW! Pililuki – Make Them!** – Explore Alutiiq graphic arts with hands on drawing and coloring activities.
Alutiiq Technological Inventory Underway

What is a burin? How do you tell the difference between a net sinker and a line weight? What does basalt look like? These are the types of questions people working with ancestral Alutiiq tools often ask. It can be difficult to identify ancient stone and bone tools, particularly when they were once a part of a larger object.

“The Alutiiq people used many complex tools, assembled from a variety of parts,” said curator Patrick Saltonstall. “Take a harpoon for example. A fully assembled harpoon has a shaft, line, float, float plug, finger rest, socket piece, foreshaft, and one of several types of heads. Identifying these pieces when they are not part of a complete weapon can be tricky.”

To help staff, volunteers, and researchers better understand Alutiiq technology, the museum is creating a manual. The Alutiiq Technological Inventory will describe each of the major types of tools found in the museum’s archaeological collections with a written summary and illustrations. The goals of the project are to record current knowledge of Alutiiq tools and create a reference that can be used by others. Elders will contribute to the project by reviewing and providing Alutiiq tool names.

“The project will help us capture what we’ve learned studying and caring for Alutiiq tools over the past twenty years,” Saltonstall said. “We’ve created a system for artifact identification, but it’s never been recorded. The inventory will make sure that future staff members can use and expand the system, and it will help us to be consistent in the way we identify tools. This will also help us compare the contents of different sites. When tools are correctly identified, we can better understand the activities that took place in settlements.”

The Alutiiq Technological Inventory will also be useful to others. Saltonstall notes that Alutiiq tools are often misidentified in research, exhibits, and publications. The museum plans to share the manual with artists, scholars, and organizations that care for Alutiiq objects. This will help to ensure ancestral objects are correctly and respectfully identified.

“Ultimately, this project will help us to improve the care of Alutiiq objects, and enhance the information available on the manufacture and use of traditional tools,” he said.

The two-year project, which began this fall, is funded by a grant to Koniag, Inc. from the Institute for Museum and Library Services.
At first glance, Genevieve Opheim’s Ing’iq (Barometer Mountain) appears to be a photograph. A closer look reveals it is actually an incredibly realistic painting, an oil on canvas image that captures the details of Kodiak’s interior mountains with remarkable detail and clarity. This painting is now part of the Alutiiq Museum’s collections, thanks to a grant from Museums Alaska and Rasmuson Foundation.

“We are excited to purchase Genevieve’s painting,” said Collections and Exhibits Manager Amanda Lancaster. “It’s unique in that it looks toward the mountains, capturing Kodiak’s interior in winter. It is also the first piece by Opheim we’ve acquired. It expands our painting collection and adds the work of another talented local artist to our holdings. We plan to show it next year, in a new area of our gallery set aside for recent purchases.”

Opheim, an Inupiaq Artist originally from Anchorage, learned to paint while attending Chemawa Indian School in Salem, Oregon. She perfected her techniques in art classes at Fort Lewis College in Durango, Colorado and at Kodiak College. For more than fifteen years, she has lived on Kodiak Island painting scenic landscapes, plants, and facial portraits, and sharing her work in local galleries and shows.

Ing’iq is one of five works purchased this fall for the museum’s collections. Other additions include three fine art photographs by Alf Pryor showing the historic Akalura cannery, and a hand-carved, painted paddle by Jonathan and Hanna Sholl. Our thanks to the Art Acquisition Fund for supporting the purchases. Images of the artwork will be added to the museum’s online contemporary art gallery at https://alutiiqmuseum.org/explore/collections/types-of-collections/contemporary-art.
In the gallery

Award for Excellence

Congratulations to our board, staff, and community advisors for receiving the 2017 Museums Alaska Award for Excellence. The statewide professional organization recognized the Alutiiq Museum for its innovative, interactive exhibit Pililuki–Make Them! Pililuki invites visitors to learn about Alutiiq graphic art, create artwork in our gallery, and add their work to the exhibit.

The award committee wrote that the Alutiiq Museum has, “taken a large step in expanding how people perceive the role of museums and how they experience exhibits in Kodiak. The project not only works toward the museum’s goal of encouraging diverse audiences, but challenges customary ways museums present information.”

Pililuki–Make Them! will be on display until January of 2019.

Ag’inarluni – Worthy of Respect

The latest addition to the museum’s gallery is a display on Alutiiq spirituality and winter festivals. Large photographic panels explore traditional views of the universe and the ways that Alutiiq people celebrated and worshiped, and a floor case shares ceremonial objects. Old Time Memories, a richly decorated beaded headdress by June Pardue is currently on display. Alex Painter, who designed the new exhibit, explains that it will continue to grow in 2018. “We are planning to add a headdress by Kayla Christiansen. Then next fall, we will expand the display to incorporated cases with historic masks and a beaded picture by Cheryl Lacy.”

A child creates a drawing inspired by ancestral artwork in the exhibit.
Calendar

November 20 - December 23 | Free Museum Admission for All

November 18th, Noon-4pm | Craft Saturday | Yarnica (Yarrow+Arnica)
Learn uses for Kodiak plants and create your own healing oil

December 2nd, 10-4pm | Christmas Bazaar | Native & Local artists featured | Early bird shopping opens at 10 am for members, open to the public at 11am

December 16th, 6-8pm
Date Night | Learn Alutiiq games & enjoy refreshments

December 19th, 10am-4pm | Museum Member Tuesday
Shop in our store and receive a 10% discount

December 21st & 21nd, 4-7pm
Last Chance Holiday Shopping-extended store hours

December 24th through January 1st
The museum will be closed for the holidays.

January 5th, 5-7pm | First Friday | artist TBA

January 7th, time TBA | Starring
Join carolers from the Russian Orthodox Church

January 27th, Noon-4pm | Craft Saturday | Russian Tea

February 2nd, 5-7pm | First Friday | TBA

February 10th, Noon-4pm | Craft Saturday | Alutiiq Valentines

Events

Become a Member!

- New Membership
- Renewing Member

**ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP OPTIONS**

- Nikliq Red Salmon.......$30  1 unlimited admission + News
- Kumi’agvak Eagle...........$50  2 unlimited admissions + News
- Isuwiq Seal................$100  Eagle level + 1 unlimited guest pass + collectible gift
- Taqula’aq Bear..............$250  Seal level + 4 unlimited guest passes + ad recognition

**PARTNER LEVELS**

- Arhnax Sea Otter...$500-999
- Arluk Orca ............$1,000-4,999
- Ar’uq Whale.............$5,000+

All members and donors $250+ receive recognition in a Kodiak Daily Mirror ad and on our website.

- I wish to make an additional contribution of $______

Donations are tax deductible. Tax ID #92-0150422

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You may submit your application by mail, phone, fax or in person. For online donations visit: alutiiqmuseum.org/give/donate

Alutiiq Museum
215 Mission Road, First Floor
Kodiak, Alaska 99615

PHONE 844.425.8844
FAX 866.335.7767

CONNECT WITH US  

HAPPY HOLIDAYS

A HOLIDAY GIFT TO KODIAK

FREE ADMISSION
TO THE ALUTIIQ MUSEUM
NOVEMBER 20TH - DECEMBER 23RD

A Holiday Gift to Kodiak
Free Admission
To the Alutiiq Museum
November 20th - December 23rd

Happy Holidays

KeyBank

Uswillraraat aguskutaraanga slaawirluta.—The kids are taking me starring.
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

November 20 - December 23
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January 5th, 5-7pm | First Friday
Artist TBA

Connect with us

HAPPY HOLIDAYS TO THE ALUTIIQ MUSEUM

November 20th - December 23rd
A HOLIDAY GIFT TO KODIAK
FREE ADMISSION

Orthodox Church

Join Carolers from the Russian Church

January 7th, time TBA

Berlin Night

January 8th, 5-7pm | First Friday | Artist TBA

Early bird shopping opens at 10 am for members, open to the public at 11 am

Extended store hours

Last chance holiday shopping—extended store hours

December 21st, 4-7pm

Free museum admission for all November 20th - December 23rd

Calendar