Ancestors Returned

More than half a century after they were taken from Chirikof Island, human remains representing more than 100 Alutiiq people were returned to Kodiak in February. They were transferred to the Alutiiq Museum by the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, as a step in their repatriation to the Alutiiq community. Alutiiq Elders, Sun’aq tribal leaders, and museum board and staff members gathered to greet the remains and acknowledge their return with an Orthodox blessing.

Collected in 1962, the remains are largely from the Russian Orthodox cemetery in the historic village of Ukamak. About 100 miles south of Kodiak Island, Ukamak was the site of a Russian Artel from 1798 to 1867. Here, Alutiiq people lived and harvested sea lions, sea birds, and squirrels for the Russian American Company. Church records indicate that the cemetery was used until about 1870. They also provide names of the individuals interred. Surnames link some of the dead to members of today’s Alutiiq community, demonstrating direct ancestral ties.

Since the cemetery’s erosion, and collection of the remains from the beach, they have been held by two universities—the University of Wisconsin Milwaukee and Indiana University at Bloomington. During this time, they were subjected to research without the knowledge or consent of the Alutiiq community, even after the passage of the Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act. The return represents the culmination of years of work by the Service, Alutiiq Museum, and Sun’aq Tribe, and an important step in closing a painful chapter in Alutiiq history. Alutiiq Museum Executive Director April Laktonen Counseller explained.

“The Alutiiq Museum and Alutiiq community have worked for over fifteen years, under three different museum directors, to bring these people home. I am so grateful that the Fish and Wildlife Service did not give up. We have also been helped by numerous others. The Russian Orthodox Church, the St. Herman Theological Seminary Archives, the Sun’aq Tribe, and Senator Dan Sullivan have all advocated for this homecoming.”

While the Alutiiq Museum does not normally hold human remains, the museum’s directors, in consultation with Sun’aq tribal leaders, agreed that this was a unique circumstance. According to Counseller, community leaders wanted to return these Alutiiq people to their homeland as soon as possible.

“There were other facilities that could have accommodated the remains during the repatriation process, but we wanted them to be cared for in Kodiak and in our own museum. The Kodiak Alutiiq repatriation council identified reclaiming our Chirikof ancestors as their top priority. There was no reason to wait any longer,” said Counseller.

The Alutiiq Museum will hold the remains while the repatriation process unfolds. Then, the Sun’aq Tribe will claim and rebury the remains behalf of all Kodiak Alutiiq people. ●

Father Innocent Dresdow, of Kodiak’s Holy Resurrection Cathedral, says a blessing for the remains.
**Cama’i Friends,**

Last week, walking over a potential location for an Alutiiq ancestors memorial, I spotted a cluster of crocuses. The colorful, delicate petals were poking through the dead, brown vegetation. It was an encouraging find. Perhaps this symbol of springtime, rebirth, and resurrection foreshadows a successful memorial project. It also reminds me of the importance of new beginnings. The museum is feeling positive energy this spring, as we celebrate new connections with members (p.7), donors (p.6), volunteers, and staff.

In the past two months, we’ve welcomed three great new employees. Rosanne Wilson joins us as Assistant Director, filling a critical role in our busy daily operations. Previously employed in the healthcare industry, Rosanne has an MBA from the University of Alaska and numerous human resources certifications. She is an enrolled tribal member of the Agdaagux tribe, grew up in the southwest Alaska community of King Cove, and relocated to Kodiak from Anchorage.

After a nationwide search, Amanda Lancaster joined us from Texas to become our Collections & Exhibits Manager. We knew she was the right person for this position when she told us she’d inventoried a collection of over 62,000 artifacts, and was interested in working with archaeologists! Amanda will be leading efforts to document and preserve the museum’s large collections, a central part of our mission and a key component of maintaining our state and national certifications.

Finally, we are thrilled to welcome Jeff Garcie, a Kodiak Islander, recent retiree from the USCG, and an artist. Jeff serves half time as our Development Assistant, working with me on development, volunteer corps, and our membership program. This year, he will spend the other half of his time working with the National Digital Inclusion Alliance (NDIA) to help our rural communities improve their access to and use of the Internet (p.4).

Drop by and visit us soon. Say cama’i – hello to our helpful staff and enjoy Pililuki–Make Them! Our newest exhibit features traditional Alutiiq graphic arts (p.3). If you are a supporter by distance, you can tour the exhibit virtually at [https://goo.gl/btbJFR](https://goo.gl/btbJFR)!

With warm regards,
April/Isiik Laktonen Counceller, PhD
Executive Director

---

**ALUTIIQ HERITAGE FOUNDATION**

Chair  Margaret Roberts, Koniag, Inc.
Vice Chair  Margie Bezona, KANA
Secretary  Loretta Nelson, Afognak Native Corporation
Treasurer  Perry Eaton, Ouzinkie Native Corporation

Board Member  Fred Coyle, Akhiok-Kaguyak, Inc.
Board Member  Pat Heitman, Natives of Kodiak, Inc.
Board Member  Tanya Inga, Old Harbor Native Corporation
Board Member  Shauna Hegna, Koniag, Inc.
Board Member  Gordon Pullar, Jr., Leisnoi, Inc.
Board Member  Marty Shuravloff, At-large
Board Member  Andy Teuber, KANA
Board Member  Emerita-at-Large Ruth Dawson
Board Member  Emerita-at-Large Rita Stevens

**Mission and Vision:**
By preserving and sharing cultural traditions of the Alutiiq people, we seek to celebrate Alutiiq heritage through living culture.

The Alutiiq Museum is governed by Afognak Native Corporation, Akhiok-Kaguyak Inc., KANA, Koniag Inc., Leisnoi Inc., Natives of Kodiak Inc., Old Harbor Native Corporation, and Ouzinkie Native Corporation. Each organization elects a representative to the Alutiiq Heritage Foundation, the Alutiiq Museum’s board. Funding is provided by charitable contributions, membership fees, grants, contracts, and sales from the museum store.

Accredited by the American Alliance of Museums

Tax ID #92-0150422

The Alutiiq Kasitat is published quarterly by the Alutiiq Museum & Archaeological Repository.
Pililuki – Make It!

The Alutiiq Museum’s latest exhibit is more than a display of beautiful Alutiiq objects, it’s an ongoing community workshop. Since April, visitors to Pililuki have been learning about Alutiiq graphic arts—painting, incising, and traditional colors—and the ways Alutiiq people tell stories with pictures. But this is just the first step. People are also sharing their own stories through hands-on activities in the museum’s gallery.

On tables filled with art supplies, simple directions encourage visitors to make their own artwork with inspiration from Alutiiq traditions. Patrons can design and color Alutiiq hats. They can etch incised pebbles after their own image, or they can draw a picture that represents a family story. The interactive design of the exhibit is purposeful, and it reflects the museum’s desire to enhance visitor experiences.

“Too often museums are places that present information without allowing people to personally explore content or share their own perspectives,” said Executive Director April Laktonen Counceller. “We want our audience to learn by doing, to develop a more meaningful connection with the lessons we share, and to feel welcomed in the process.”

In addition to creating in the museum, Pililuki encourages visitors to share their artwork. People can add their creations to the exhibit or share photographs of their artwork through social media using #AlutiiqMuseum and #Alutiiq Everywhere. There is even a photo backdrop where visitors can stand to take a picture.

The third element of the exhibit is a place to relax. Comfortable seating, Alaska Native art books, and Alutiiq heritage videos all invite visitors to spend time in the museum and enhance their knowledge of traditional arts. Counceller explained.

“We want the museum to be a fun, relaxing, community space, where people can experience our heritage.”

Pililuki will be available at the Alutiiq Museum until December of 2018. Access to the exhibit is included in museum admission, and group visits can be scheduled by contacting Gallery Manager, Dana Haynes.

Support for the development of Pililuki, and large quantities of art supplies, was generously provided by the Munartet Project, the Alaska State Council for the Arts, and the Alaska State Library, Archives, and Museum.
Connecting Kodiak

Websites have become an indispensable part of daily life. People increasingly read the news, pay bills, make appointments, chat with friends, and even study online. The Alutiiq Museum is taking advantage of this trend to share the Alutiiq world and our work. On our website you can watch lectures, tour the museum, listen to Elders speak Alutiiq, download cultural information, and shop for Alutiiq art. Every day, we make Alutiiq heritage accessible to a global internet audience.

Unfortunately, however, a core part of our audience still struggles to connect. Most residents of Kodiak’s villages have poor access to the digital world. The challenges of bringing broadband to remote communities, slow speeds, and expensive plans make it difficult for many Alutiiq people to use the Internet.

As part of a national effort to promote digital inclusion, the Alutiiq Museum is partnering with National Digital Inclusion Alliance (NDIA) on a project called NDIA Corps. Our Development Assistant Jeff Garcie is one of five NDIA Corps members in the United States working to promote digital inclusion. Through this initiative, Garcie is working on Connect Kodiak a project to make broadband accessible to Kodiak’s rural residents.

Connect Kodiak has three parts. The first is a planning partnership. Working with KANA’s Kodiak Rural Regional Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy, funded by the Economic Development Administration, Garcie will help to design a program for sustainable broadband development.

Second, Garcie will help Kodiak communities establish and improve local media centers. While some villages have a publicly available media center where residents can access the internet, others do not. This part of the project will focus on both equipment and connection.

Finally, the museum is helping Ouzinkie with a grant proposal to test TV White Space as a source of internet signal. If funded, the award would help the village supply improved Broadband WiFi to its public media center.

Ultimately, this one year project will help the Alutiiq Museum connect its resources with the Alutiiq community.

SHOP ALUTIIQ
GET GEARED UP FOR SUMMER!

Enjoy long Alaskan days with our new baseball caps and waterbottles, now available in the Museum Store. Caps feature petroglyphs and are adjustable to fit all sizes. Our Nalgene waterbottles, customized with designs of incised pebbles, are BPA free and hold up to 32oz.

Shop in store or online at: alutiiqmuseum.org/shop/museum-store

Kaugya’aq manigsurtuq unuvpak. – The fox is looking for eggs this morning.
Armed with butter knives, a room full of teachers works intently to carve blocks of soap. Each holds a thick, oval bar of Dove, whittling the soft white material into the shape of an Alutiiq mask. Noses, brows, and mouths emerge from the soft bars, their rough edges polished with fingers dipped in water. This activity is one of two miniature mask-making projects designed by artist June Pardue, and shared with educators through a recent museum workshop. The event was part of the Munartet project, an effort to infuse Kodiak classrooms with art and culture.

Munartet—the Alutiiq word for artists, is the title of this innovative, multi-year partnership between the Kodiak Island Borough School District, Kodiak College, the Kodiak Arts Council, and the Alutiiq Museum. Through Munartet, these organizations are helping teachers add art and cultural activities to their lesson plans, so that they become vehicles for teaching history, literature, and even science.

At the recent miniature mask-making workshop, Pardue introduced participants to the use and importance of Alutiiq masks, including their connections to song and dance. Then teachers carved masks on bars of soap and painted a mask design on a split, wooden, goose egg. Importantly, both activities are suitable for a variety of grade levels, use affordable materials, and can be completed in a single class period with tools safe for even the youngest students. And they help students learn about Native heritage in a fun, creative way.

The mask lessons, along with others, will be available in the museum’s new Alutiiq Mask Education Box starting this summer. The box can be checked out at no costs for use by classrooms, summer camps, after school programs, and homeschoolers. Please contact Rebecca Pruitt, rebecca@alutiqmuseum.org to review or check out the box.

History Buffs Needed

Are you set netter, fisherman, pilot, guide, lodge owner, rural resident, hiker, hunter, or camper? Would you like to document archaeological sites as a museum volunteer?

Contact Patrick Saltonstall (patrick@alutiqmuseum.org) to be an archaeological site steward. A few minutes of your time can help to preserve hundreds of years of history. Program supported by the US Fish & Wildlife Service.

STEWARDSHIP STATS

17 years of research  
59 volunteers  
565 sites studied  
1250 archaeological site visits
Cheryl Lacy’s Gifts

Cheryl Lacy loves to make pictures. “I live, breathe and NEED to draw every day,” said Lacy. “It is not an occupation, it is who I am. My art reflects the journey to learn more about myself, where I came from, and introduce people to Alaska Native culture.”

Lacy paints, draws, colors, and illustrates to tell stories about Alaska, and sometimes, she makes pictures with beads. It takes her hundreds of hours to create a bead embroidery, but the results are spectacular. From tiny, twinkling pieces of glass, Lacy builds layers of bright color and brings the north to life in three dimensions. Lacy’s beaded pictures are known for their textures and projecting elements—a leafy branch, undulating ocean waves, knobby birch bark.

In March, Lacy gave two of her award-winning, three-dimensional beaded pictures to the Alutiiq Museum’s collection, to preserve her work and share it with others. Aleut Fisherman shows a person in a gutskin parka casting a net over a salmon. Lady in Red is a diorama featuring a salmon in an undersea world. A brilliant red fish swims through sea weed, sand, and shells all created from beads.

Lacy says, “I am one of the luckiest people because my work is something that I love to do. To be able to tell stories through artwork, whether it’s my family history, fun things to do, or places I’ve been, brings me great joy.”

Quyanaasinaq – our sincere thanks to Cheryl Lacy for sharing her gift for beading.

Aleut Fisherman, a three-dimensional beaded picture by Cheryl Lacy, 2002, 22.5 x 14.5 cm.

Left: Cheryl Lacy holds Lady in Red, a beaded diorama she donated to the museum.

“I live, breathe and NEED to draw every day. It is not an occupation, it is who I am. My art reflects the journey to learn more about myself, where I came from, and introduce people to Alaska Native culture.”
Member Spotlight - Stevi Sison

S tevi Sison bought an Alutiiq Museum membership in 2015 because she loves the museum. As a shareholder in a few Native corporations she laughs, acknowledging that she has free access to the Museum on multiple accounts. But to Stevi, being a member is important.

“As a member you feel more a part of the family, and you get special invitations to events, the newsletter; you’re supporting your museum. It just feels really special to be a part of it.”

Born in Kodiak, Sison left the island when she was very young. She grew up traveling the western United States with her family and returned to Kodiak at age 15. It was then that she first visited the Alutiiq Museum. The museum’s exhibits and programs made a big impact. Sison was awed.

“As a kid you have an idea of museums as old dead places, but at the Alutiiq Museum I remember there was always something new to see or do.”

Sison now works just down the road from the museum, as the education coordinator for the Sun’aq Tribe. Aside from managing their scholarships, for higher education and vocational training, she coordinates special programs. She recently wrapped up a youth drum-making workshop, an event she looks forward to replicating this summer. Also in the works are programs exploring Alutiiq subsistence and traditional food handling. And when she is not working, Sison is pursuing her Alutiiq Language Occupational Endorsement Certificate at Kodiak College.
**Events**

## Calendar

**Founding Day**
May 13th, Noon-4pm
Enjoy free admission in honor of the anniversary of our opening!

**Jacquie Madsen Munartet Workshop**
May 13th, 10am-2:30pm

**Date Night | Kodiak Dances!**
May 19th, 6-8pm @ the Harbor Room
Advanced Ticket Purchase Recommended

**Meet the Artist | Nannette Foster**
May 23rd, 11am-4pm

**Craft Saturday | Crab Ornaments**
May 27th, Noon–4pm

**Blue Star Family Admission Program**
May 30th – September 2nd

**First Friday | TBD**
June 2nd, 5-7pm

**Andrew Abyo Munartet Workshop**
June 5th-9th

**Craft Saturday | Father’s Day Cards**
June 17th, Noon-4pm

**First Friday | Anna Donaldson**
July 7th, 5-7pm

**First Friday | Nannette Foster**
August 4th, 5-7pm

**Coast Guard Appreciation Day**
August 13th, Noon-3pm

---

**Become a Member!**

- **New Membership**
- **Renewing Member**

**ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP OPTIONS**

- **Niklii̯q Red Salmon** $30
- **Kumi’agya̱k Eagle** $50
- **Isuwi̱qx Seal** $100

1 unlimited admission + News
2 unlimited admissions + News
Eagle level + 1 unlimited guest pass + collectible gift
Sea level + 4 unlimited guest passes + ad recognition

**PARTNER LEVELS**

- **Arhnaq Sea Otter** $500-999
- **Arluk Orca** $1,000-4,999
- **Ar’uqw 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 #92-010422

**CONTACT INFORMATION**

- **NAME**
- **MAILING ADDRESS**
- **CITY, STATE, ZIP**
- **EMAIL**
- **PHONE**

**PAYMENT METHOD**

- **Credit Card**
- **Check attached**

**CREDIT CARD NUMBER**

**EXPIRATION**

**CHARGE AMOUNT**

**SIGNATURE**

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 99915

**PHONE** 844.425.8844
**FAX** 866.335.7767

---

**Tamamta alatit/alacit qunukapet. – We all love fry bread.**