

PRESS RELEASE

February 14, 2023



FROM:

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Chris Wooley Named Volunteer of the Year

In honor of Valentine's Day, the Alutiiq Museum likes to show a little love for its volunteers. We are fortunate to have many friends who contribute their time and talents to our work. To highlight the importance of our volunteers, we honor one outstanding contribution with our Volunteer of the Year award. For 2022, we picked Chris Wooley for his help with researching the lives of two Alutiiq teenagers who died while attending the Carlisle Indian Industrial School in Pennsylvania.

Chris is a retired anthropologist and the former owner of Chumis Cultural Resource Services. He worked around Alaska completing cultural and historic studies for over 40 years. In the 1990s, he assisted Leisnoi, Inc. in documenting the Alutiiq history of Woody Island, research that helped the corporation protect its certification as a Native Village under the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act. He was an early advocate for the Alutiiq Museum and assisted tribal leaders with retreats on Woody Island.

Now, Chris' knowledge of Woody Island and his research skills are helping the Alutiiq community again. When the Alutiiq Museum learned that the remains of Anastasia Ashouwak and Pariscovia Achacee Friendoff could be repatriated from the Carlisle Indian Industrial School, we formed a Carlisle School Repatriation Working Group for the Kodiak region and invited Chris to join. Requesting the return of the girls' remains required identifying their closest living relatives. Anastasia's family was quickly identified, but Pariscovia's family has been harder to find. Chris has been a regular participant in working group meetings and given many hours of his time to explore historic records as the search for Pariscovia's relatives continues. His research has been invaluable.

"In the early 2000s I had the privilege of working with the late Gordon Pullar and Margaret Roberts doing research and conducting Tribal retreats on Woody Island which instilled in me a love for the families who can trace their roots to that special place," said Chris. "Pariscovia was connected to Woody Island and when the Alutiiq Museum called, I was glad to help."

"Pariscovia died of TB in 1906 after spending four years essentially indentured to Pennsylvania families through the 'outing' program of the Carlisle Indian Industrial School. All of us who have worked to discover and tell her story will be thankful when she returns home."

To learn more about volunteering with the museum, please contact our Director of Advancement & Operations, Djuna Davidson (844-425-8844; djuna@alutiiqmuseum.org). We welcome all volunteers, and no experience is necessary.

The Alutiiq Museum is a non-profit organization dedicated to preserving and sharing the history and living culture of the Alutiiq, an Alaska Native people. Representatives of Kodiak Alutiiq organizations govern the museum with funding from charitable contributions, memberships, grants, contracts, and sales. #