

## Cama'i—Hello,

What do you do for the love of culture? Maybe you bead, dance, or cook octopus. Maybe you visit with grandparents, pick berries, or practice Alutiiq/Sugpiaq words. Or maybe you visit the Alutiiq Museum. Every year we help thousands of people deepen their cultural connections. From research that reveals Alutiiq history to displays that bring people close to ancestral works, and a museum store that fuels the arts, we help Alutiiq people explore and celebrate their heritage. And we invite the world to join us.

This February we are asking our friends to show some love for culture by donating to our building renovation. We have raised over \$519,000 toward our goal of \$600,000. Help us reach our target. Gifts of all sizes are welcome and every donor will be thanked in a special display in the new museum lobby. Show your love for culture.

Give now at: [alutiiqmuseum.org/visit/renovation](https://alutiiqmuseum.org/visit/renovation)

Future generations will thank you.

April Isiik Counciller  
Executive Director



<https://alutiiqmuseum.org/visit/renovation>

## Newsletter Sponsors



### OUR MISSION

The Alutiiq Museum preserves and shares the heritage and living culture of the Alutiiq people.

### OUR VISION

Celebrating heritage through living culture.

### ALUTIIQ HERITAGE FOUNDATION BOARD

Chair	Lorena Skonberg, Ouzinkie Native Corporation
Vice Chair	Shauna Hegna, Koniag
Treasurer	Tyan Hayes, Koniag
Secretary	JJ Marsh, KANA
Board Member	Peter Boskofsky, At-Large
Board Member	Cheryl Christofferson, KANA
Board Member	Fred Coyle, Akhiok-Kaguyak, Inc.
Board Member	Freddie Christiansen, Old Harbor Native Corporation
Board Member	Chelsea Dallal, Afognak Native Corporation
Board Member	Cheryl Heitman, At-Large
Board Member	Gordon Pullar Jr., Leisnoi, Inc
Board Member	Gerald Anderson, Natives of Kodiak, Inc.
Board Member	Rita Stevens , Emeritus At-Large

The Alutiiq Heritage Foundation (d.b.a. Alutiiq Museum) is a 501(c)3 nonprofit and 509(a) public charity, funded with charitable contributions, memberships, grants, investments, and contracts. **Tax ID #92-0150422**

### ALUTIIQ MUSEUM STAFF

Executive Director	April Laktonen Counciller, PhD
Dir. of Advancement & Operations	Djuna Davidson
Chief Curator	Amy Steffian
Dir. of Archaeology & Special Projects	Molly Odell
Language & Living Culture Manager	Dehrich Chya
Education Manager	Leda Beuthin
Gallery Manager	Samantha Heglin
Curator of Archaeology	Patrick Saltonstall
Curator of Collections	Amanda Lancaster
Exhibits Manager	Alexandra Painter
Store Coordinator	Chyian Heine

Accredited by the American Alliance of Museums.

Alutiiq Museum  
215 Mission Road, Suite 101  
Kodiak, Alaska 99615

PHONE: 844.425.8844  
FAX: 866.335.7767

info@alutiiqmuseum.org  
alutiiqmuseum.org



ALUTIIQ HERITAGE FOUNDATION  
215 MISSION RD STE 101  
KODIAK AK 99615

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED



Volume 28, No. 4 | Winter 2024



The Quarterly Newsletter of the Alutiiq Museum

## Repatriation Project Begins

Recent research by the Alutiiq Museum reveals that there are at least 168 Kodiak Alutiiq/Sugpiaq ancestors awaiting repatriation. Their remains are from 65 distinct locations across the Kodiak region and held by 12 institutions. Helping Kodiak's ten federally-recognized tribes bring these remains home is the focus of a new two-year project, Angitapet—We Are Returning Them. With a \$99,713 grant from the National Park Service's Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act (NAG-PRA) program, the museum will work with tribal representatives to plan repatriations and create helpful resources.

“The repatriation process is complicated, time-consuming, costly, and sensitive,” said Alutiiq Museum Executive Director April Laktonen Counciller. “Tribes need to determine which remains to repatriate, complete a formal request, and then oversee the repatriation process. Many people don't realize that multiple tribes can claim the same remains and that there is no easy way to track what remains have been claimed or reburied.”

Through the project, the museum will develop a private online database where tribes can see a list of remains affiliated with their communities and track their repatriation status. Additionally, museum staff will work with each tribal government to discuss the repatriation process, share the database, identify potential repatriation claims, and plan for future repatriations.

“This project will lay the foundation for bringing home all the identified ancestral remains we are aware of,” said Counciller. “Our island-wide repatriation commission, representing all Kodiak Alutiiq people, has identified reburying our ancestors as the central goal of current repatriation work. Angitapet will advance this important effort in a thoughtful, systematic way.”



## Doll Headdresses



Sheila Leinberger with doll wearing a beaded headdress.

Did you know that Native students who play with toys, read books, and watch shows that reflect their culture are more successful? Seeing Alutiiq/Sugpiaq heritage represented in the world tells youth that we are important and our culture matters. To encourage cultural connections, the museum recently collaborated with Alutiiq beader Kayla McDermott to create a headdress activity for children's dolls. Together we developed easy-to-follow instructions that use inexpensive, widely available craft materials.

This activity uses felt, thread, and large plastic beads to create a miniature headdress that fits a Glitter Girls doll. It can be modified to fit any doll. The beading process is very similar to making a full-sized headdress. Beaders work to attach strings of beads to pieces of supporting material, but in this case, with a much simpler pattern. It is a great introduction to headdress making, suitable for use at home or in the classroom.

To test the activity, the museum hosted a workshop for educators. Kayla led participants through the steps and received rave reviews. Many are already planning to share the activity with their students.

You can find a free downloadable copy of the headdress instructions on the beading page of the museum's website. They were developed with support from the Munartet project and the Alaska State Council on the Arts.

## Parka Making

Before the introduction of Western clothing, Alutiiq/Sugpiaq people wore *atkut*—parkas, long, hoodless robes made of fur and bird skin. Puffins, cormorants, and other sea birds provided pelts for these elaborately decorated garments. The number of birds needed varied by species and parka design. It took about 150 cormorant neck skins to create a snow falling parka. These black parkas featured tassels with tufts of ermine fur that moved like snow when people danced. This garment is the inspiration for many of the parkas Alutiiq men and women wear today.

Wearing a piece of Alutiiq clothing is a wonderful way to celebrate heritage, but you can't buy *atkut* at the store and few people know how to make them. To help, the museum partnered with Susan Malutin to develop a set of instructions for a basic parka, inspired by the snow falling parka. Together a set of video tutorials and written instructions provide a list of the needed tools and materials and then guide people through sizing, cutting, assembly, decoration, and finishing steps. The instructions leave room for fabric and decorative choices, so that each sewer can make a unique parka.

Copies of the instructions are available for free download from the sewing page of the museum's website, where the video tutorials are also posted. Sizing directions are provided, but if you prefer to work with a pattern, the Alutiiq Museum Store has an adult pattern available for purchase.

*Quyanaa* to the Tangirnaq Native Village and the US Bureau of Indian Affairs for supporting this project.



Chyian Heine wearing an *atkut*—parka made by Susie Malutin.

## Studying Tuivy'uq

Tuivy'uq, or Tugidak Island, lies at the southern end of the Kodiak Alutiiq world. Uninhabited today, this remote grassy island is 25 miles from Akhiok, the nearest community. Until about 1840, there was an Alutiiq village on Tuivy'uq, and Akhiok residents hunted sea otters in its waters into the early twentieth century. But what about Tuivy'uq's older history? How long did Alutiiq people live here and what did they do? Were there year-round villages or just camps? Was it a destination for summer seal hunting parties or perhaps a resting place for voyagers traveling to distant Chirikof Island?

To explore these questions, the Alutiiq Museum conducted an archaeological survey of Tuivy'uq in 2023. Very little research had been done in the area, and a grant to the Tangirnaq Native Village from the US Bureau of Indian Affairs allowed a team to spend a week looking for ancestral activities.

Tugidak has a flat and dynamic coastline. Some areas are eroding rapidly. Others are building toward the sea. To find ancestral settlements, the crew identified and searched old beach ridges—the remains of past coastlines. The results were exciting. They found 37 ancestral sites ranging from small camps with garbage piles to a village with the remains of 22 houses. One unexpected find was stone net sinkers used in river fishing. Although Tuivy'uq's streams are small, Alutiiq ancestors harvested salmon here. Importantly, many of the sites holding Alutiiq history are stable. Tuivy'uq's lack of bears, foxes, and human visitors has limited disturbances.



Patrick Saltonstall with stone sinkers found on Tuivy'uq.

## Color Your T-Shirt

Packaged with fabric markers, these colorable cotton t-shirts feature artwork by Hanna Sholl and include the Alutiiq words for five salmon species. Available in adult and child sizes in our store or online at [alutiiqmuseumstore.org](http://alutiiqmuseumstore.org).



## Volunteers of the Year Jim & Bonnie Dillard

Kodiak educators Jim and Bonnie Dillard have a long history of assisting the Alutiiq Museum. From Akhiok to Kodiak, they have helped bring Alutiiq traditions to classrooms, infusing lessons with cultural arts. In 2023, they volunteered for a special project—making drums for the museum to share with elementary school musicians. Students wanted Alutiiq drums. Jim agreed to build two of them. It took him over five weeks to shape and bend the pieces and cover the heads with airplane fabric. Then Bonnie added the finishing touches—painted designs. The drums now spend the school year with Kodiak music teacher Tyler Barnes and return to the museum each summer for care.

For sharing their time and talents, the museum named the Dillards our 2023 volunteers of the year. *Quyanaa* Jim and Bonnie for helping to pass Alutiiq traditions to the next generation.