



For Immediate Release

Alutiiq Museum & Archaeological Repository
215 Mission Road, Suite 101, Kodiak, AK 99615
Phone (844) 425-8844, Fax (866) 335-7767
Home page: <http://www.alutiiqmuseum.org>

DATE: May 19, 2025
CONTACT: Djuna Davidson, 844-425-8844
amy@alutiiqmuseum.org

Alutiiq Museum to Open Renovated Facility with Public Celebration

KODIAK—On May 22, the Alutiiq Museum will reopen to the public. The museum has been closed to visitors since August 2023 to undergo expansion and renovation of its facilities. The multi-year, \$14.3 M project added 3400 square feet to the building and greatly expanded the space available for community education and collections care. The renovation is now complete, and the public is invited to attend a series of Grand Reopening events. The celebration will take place May 22 through May 24 during Kodiak's annual Crab Festival. It also marks the museum's thirtieth anniversary.

"We are excited to share our beautiful new facilities with Kodiak," said Executive Director April Counciller. "Our patrons made this transformation possible. They told us they needed more space for learning. We used their input to attract funding and design a renovation that will support museum services for decades. Our community also stepped up with exceptional support. We raised over two million dollars in our capital campaign. It is now time to welcome everyone back to the Alutiiq Museum."

In preparation for visitors, staff members created an entirely new set of exhibits for an expanded exhibit hall. The displays share over 670 cultural belongings from the museum's collections, fusing Alutiiq/Sugpiaq values, ancestral artifacts, historic photos, quotes from community members, and contemporary artwork into presentations emphasizing continuities in Alutiiq traditions. Other notable features include touchable petroglyph replicas, a play space filled with toys, audio stations with recordings of Alutiiq legends, a touch screen display of historic village photos, and a creation station. Here, visitors can make an art card inspired by petroglyph designs. Staff have also enhanced the museum store, now doubled in size, with new furniture and merchandise. And they developed an honor wall—a glass tile display in the new lobby with the names of renovation donors.

Grand Reopening events will include an evening celebration on May 22, from 4:00 to 8:00 PM, with Alutiiq dance performances, gifts of beaded necklaces, all new exhibits, and a red carpet photo fundraiser. The following day, on May 23, from 10:00 AM to 5:30 PM, the museum will host an Alutiiq/Sugpiaq film festival in its new workshop space, a large addition to the facility designed for cultural events. The festival will feature nine films exploring the Kodiak Alutiiq heritage movement. On May 24, from 12:00 to 5:00 PM, the public is invited to a Native Arts Market, where artists will sell directly to patrons. The artists will include Bianca Doran, Skyler Gertz, Samantha Heglin, Kathy Johnson, Susan Malutin, Native Village of Afognak, Mariah Stapelton, Brandy Thomas, Lisa Truitt, and Diana Velez.

All events are free to the public and include access to the museum's new exhibits, thanks to generous sponsorship from Matson and Kodiak Diesel. Everyone is welcome to attend. Additional information on the events, including a program for the film festival, is available on the events page of the museum website at <https://alutiiqmuseum.org/museum/visit/events/>.

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



Grand Reopening

ALUTIIQ MUSEUM

215 MISSION ROAD, KODIAK

Everyone
Welcome!



Opening Celebration

All new exhibits, dance performances, and more.

May 22
4:00 - 8:00 PM



Alutiiq/Sugpiaq Film Festival

Nine films explore the reawakening of traditions.

May 23
10:00 AM - 5:30 PM



Native Arts Market

Shop directly from Native artists at the museum.

May 24
Noon - 5:00 PM

Sponsored by Matson and Kodiak Diesel
alutiiqmuseum.org • 1(844)425-8844



Quayanaa — Thank You

Renovation of the Alutiiq Museum cost more than \$14,300,000. Many generous gifts and grants supported the transformation of our facility. Giving is an Alutiiq/Sugpiaq tradition. Elders teach us that acting generously builds strong communities and future prosperity. We honor each contribution.



Lla - Universe, \$250,000+

Donald W. Clark, EVOS Trustee Council, Institute of Museum and Library Services, Kodiak Area Native Association, Koniag, Margaret A. Cargill Philanthropies, MJ Murdock Charitable Trust, Rasmuson Foundation, Sun'aq Tribe of Kodiak

Imaq - Ocean, \$50,000 - \$249,999

American Indian Alaska Native Tourism Association, Anonymous, City of Kodiak, Museums Alaska, US Bureau of Indian Affairs

Qik'rtaq - Island, \$10,000 - \$49,999

Afognak Native Corporation, Alaska Office of History & Archaeology, Alaska State Museum, Alyeska Pipeline Service Company, ConocoPhillips Alaska, Carl Dobbins, Perry Eaton, First National Bank of Alaska, KPB Architects, Leisnoi, Inc., Matson, Inc., Northrim Bank, Roger McCracken, Old Harbor Native Corporation, Old Harbor Settlement Trust, Ouzinkie Native Corporation, RurAL CAP, Tangirnaq Native Village, Trident Seafoods, Gloria & Jerome Selby, Ron Unger

Ingrig – Mountain, \$5,000 – \$9,999

Pat Branson & Gordon Gould, Alex Cleghorn, Dexter Cleveringa, GCI Gives, Shauna Hegna & Family, Kodiak Community Foundation, Natives of Kodiak, Patrick Saltonstall, US Fish & Wildlife Service, Jeff Wood

Nuna – Land, \$1,000 – \$4,999

Akhiok-Kaguyak, Inc., American Seafoods, Sharon Beeson, Sheryl Blackman, Peter Boskofsky, Derek Bowers, Matthew Carle, April & Jeremy Counciller, Tony & Sandee Drabek, Adrian Furman, The Furman Family, Sven & Balika Haakanson, Sarah Harrington, Tyan & Tony Hayes, Cheryl Heitman, Monica & John James, Katie Kavanaugh, Kodiak CHARR, Kodiak Diesel, Kodiak History Museum, Kodiak Island Borough, Kodiak Lawn Care, Wayne & Pat Kozak, Kris Leite, Kathleen McKnight, Native Village of Afognak, Native Village of Larsen Bay, Native Village of Ouzinkie, Loretta Nelson, Matt Olsen, Jon Panamaroff, Tom Panamaroff, SueAnne Ramaglia, Lisa Ruble, Matt Barton & Josh Vanderbur, Teri Mahle Schneider, Jim Simon & Kevin Mechem, Amy Steffian & Steven Hall, Rita & Gary Stevens, Kevin & Wenona Suydam, The CIRI Foundation, Jana Turvey, Uganik Natives, Inc., U.S. Coast Guard Spouses Association of Kodiak

Kuik – River, \$250 – \$999

Alan Amoth, Gerald Anderson, Joy & Jim Arneson, Alan & Ginny Austerman, Lydia Black, Candace Cutmen Branson & David Taineq Tucker, Brantley Robinson Family, DeeDee Christofferson, Chugach Regional Resources Commission, Chelsea Dallal, Huxley Dallal, Djuna Davidson, Ruth A. Dawson, Dixie Dayo, Deckload Aviation—Michelle & Keller Wattum, Ryan Ellison, Cecelia Esparza, Wallace & Beth Fields, Fish Inc.—Mitch & Sasha Keplinger, Ben Fitzhugh & Laada Bilaniuk, Bernie Flam, Freed/Schmitt Family, Branko Gerovac, Trevor Gridley, Corey & Katherine Gronn, Nina Gronn, Glenda Hayes—in loving memory, Natali Hayes, Samantha Heglin, Chyian Heine, Pat & Carolyn Heitman, Ellen Helgason, Steve Helgason, David Herman, In honor of the M/V Tustumena and her crews, Kim Homolka, Charlotte Irvin, Lisa Jilek, Chris Johnson, Janissa Johnson, Christine Kaineg & Family, Diane Kaplan, Meghan Kelly & Rob Baer, Brian & Dawn Kewan and Family, Robin Kleinjans-McKee, Kris Knigge, Kodiak Bay Services—Juan Alvarez, Kodiak Rotary Club, Madeline Kreger, Cheryl Lacy, Amanda Lancaster for Carolyn Hicks, Michelle Lawson, Elanie Lederer, Marnie Leist, Beth A. Lynk, Amy Margaris & Family, Denise May, Kathleen McKnight, Adam, Coco, & Max Messner, William Morse & Cynthia Strout, Laura & Jackie Muller Jr., Mutch Family, In loving memory of Betty and Abner Nelson Sr., Nancy Nelson, David & Elizabeth Odell, Eric Thor & Tonya Olsen, Pacific Northwest Alutiiq Culture Camp, Alexandra Painter, Idamarie & Leroy Piccard, Poe Family, Gordon Pullar, Vicki Randolph, Natura Richardson & Michael Nanit'sqaq Bach, Catherine, Caia, & Keelin Rice, Beverly Roddy, Donna Roduta, In Honor of Margaret L. Roberts, Richie Rooney, Germaine Salmine, Sea Hawk Air, Cameronn N. Selby, Cavik P. Selby, Kalen H. Selby, Zoey Tyan Selby, Stacey Simmons, In loving memory of Marie A. Skonberg, Spenard Builders Supply, Beth Steffian, Steven & Linda Suydam, Team Robinking, Joan Thayer, Vicki Vanek, The Venua Family, Malia Villegas, Jay Wattum—Vertigo Air, WESTAF, George Wichers, Katharine Woodhouse-Beyer, Yield Giving

Engluq - Home, \$1 - \$249

Tom & Chris Abell, Suzanne Abraham, Andrew Abyo, Aaron Amoth, Shannon Andersen, O'Raun Anderson, Anonymous, Peggy Azuyak, Dionisio Barboza, Randi Jansdatter Bolderin, Arwen Botz, Barb Bundy, Sophia & Ashley Cange, David Carlsen, Jeanette Chernikoff, Dehrich Chya & Stevi Frets, Sofia Chya, Freddie Christiansen, Roger & Denise Clyne, Marilee Coles-Ritchie, Brianna & Travis Cooper, Julie Counciller, Fred Coyle, Peter Cummiskey, Charles & Rosemarie Davidson, LaRita De Young, Sonja Delgado, Delta Fettes, Samael Filatov, Michael Galloway, Karen Garcia, Melayna Halvorsen, Ingrid Hansen, Carol Henson, Pat & Patty Holmes, Helena Jacobs, Christine and Matthew Jamin, Natalia Johnson, Alberta Jones, Katie Qutirta Knigge & Jarred Chaffin, Koniag Education Foundation—in honor of our past, present, and future scholars, Koniag Energy & Water Sector, Robert Korth, Jerry Laktonen, Melinda Walsh Lamp, Sheila A. Leinberger, Kelly Elizabeth Longrich, Mary Jane & Tim Longrich, Elmer J. Lotter, Linda Infante Lyons, Liz MacDonell, JJ Marsh, Linda Dallal McElmurry, Juney Mullan, Joanne Mulcahy, Ronna Myles-Era, Patricia Adkisson Ella Naumoff Family, John Nichols, Dan Ogg & Sue Jeffery, Marcia Oswalt, Megan Partlow, Michael Pestrikoff, Bob Peterson, Price Family, James Rains, Celine Ramio, Greg Razo, Lisa Rhodes, Catherine Argy Rice, Mike Rostad, Evie Russell, A. Simeonoff Jr. & Family, Lorena Skonberg, Sandra Smith-Poling, Janell Snider, Michelle Sparck, Thomas Stream in memory & heritage, Cheryl Sutter, Gretchen Hery Sziebert, Mary Jane P. Townsend, Nancy Valente, Lee VanWagner, Judith Villegas, Phillip Vollands, Wade & Tania, Lori Walker, Betty Walters, Maria Williams, Dewey Wilson





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Outdoor Mural Celebrating Alutiiq Heritage Added to New Museum Addition

KODIAK—The Alutiiq Museum has unveiled *The Fire of Living Culture*, an outdoor mural featuring an original piece of digital artwork by Sugpiaq artist Todd Metrokin. The 13 by 35-foot vinyl wall hanging is displayed on the outside of the museum's new addition—a workshop space created as part of a recent building renovation. The mural features bold graphic shapes shown in high contrast. The drawing is intended to capture attention from a distance and draw viewers toward the museum.

The mural project was part of the museum's efforts to add cultural imagery to its building. Executive Director April Counciller explained. "For this month's Grand Reopening, we wanted to share a large piece of contemporary artwork—as a celebration of our living culture and a visitor aid. In the past, people have had trouble finding the museum. The mural is part of an effort to help people locate our building and feel welcome. We have also added a new sign to the front of the museum, and our name and petroglyph logo now appear above the front door."

Metrokin's artwork mixes local scenery and cultural images—a woman holding a burning naniq—oil lamp, men paddling kayaks, the cultural hero Raven, a berry picker, and a float plane. He said, "My design concept connects our past to our future—from creation (represented by the raven) to our ancestors to modern life and beyond—through the enduring flame of the naniq. The naniq's flame echoes through time and grows richer in colors as it reflects a culture continuing to grow. This represents the resilience of our people and is meant to act as a counterpoint to the notion that our culture is only a reflection of the past. It is a living, evolving blend of experiences, knowledge, and creativity that we bring forward and enrich with each generation."

The museum selected Metrokin's design through a competitive process. First, tribal artists were invited to submit examples of their work. From fifteen submissions, a volunteer review committee picked three artists to create draft mural designs. Then, the committee selected Todd's concept as the winning entry. A grant from the American Indian Alaska Native Tourism Association (AIANTA), funded by the US Forest Service, supported the project. The mural will be displayed for the coming year.

Todd Metrokin grew up in Kodiak and has spent his entire life creating art. He tells stories through his illustrations, using ancestral symbolism to create a modern graphic language. His work ranges from minimalist illustrations to dramatic collages. Each piece is grounded by a strong composition with layers of pattern and details that invite the viewer deeper into the story. Metrokin currently works in Spokane as a creative director in advertising.

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Museum Showcases Watercolor Paintings by Cheryl Lacy

KODIAK—On May 22, the Alutiiq Museum will debut Cuumillapet—Our Ancestors, an exhibit of watercolor paintings by Sugpiaq artist Cheryl Lacy. The show is part of the museum's Grand Reopening celebration. It features eleven portraits of Alutiiq ancestors, restyled from early 19th-century Russian paintings. Lacy captured the faces of Alutiiq people documented in the painting and then placed each in a Kodiak landscape. Cuumillapet—Our Ancestors is the first show in the museum's new Living Culture Gallery—a space created for short-term exhibits as part of the recent building renovation.

"We are thrilled to share Cheryl's paintings in our new gallery," said Executive Director April Counciller. "Her lovely watercolors bring our ancestors to life and remind us that Alutiiq culture persists thanks to their strength. This is the first of many shows that will grace this special space. In the coming years, we look forward to featuring displays of all kinds, from locally curated art exhibits to presentations from archaeological studies, and visiting displays produced by other organizations."

Cheryl Lacy is an avid illustrator, painter, and beader. She has been drawing for as long as she can remember, inspired by the beauty of Alaska and her Sugpiaq heritage. Cheryl is particularly known for her ability to capture faces. It took her just five months to reimagine the eleven portraits. She said, "I am so honored to be a part of this project. It allowed me to sit with our ancestors and try to imagine the life they led. I would turn on wave and seagull background sounds, and my surroundings would drop away."

Lacy helped to develop the show, advising on the layout of the paintings and contributing to the text. She will travel to Kodiak to attend the show's opening. Many organizations supported the development of Cuumillapet—Our Ancestors. Rasmuson Foundation supported the commission of Lacy's painting through the Alaska Art Fund administered by Museums Alaska. The Frame Shop provided a substantial discount on framing the eleven large watercolors, a Grant-in-Aid from the Alaska State Museum supported exhibit production and travel costs, and funding from The CIRI Foundation supported staff time and framing.

Access to the museum's Living Culture Gallery is always free. The public can visit Cuumillapet—Our Ancestors anytime during the museum's regular hours. The museum plans to share the watercolor display for a year. A digital version is also available on the exhibits page of the museum's website at <https://alutiiqmuseum.org/museum/exhibits/living-culture-gallery/>.

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CHERYL LACY

"My art reflects a journey to learn more about myself, where I came from, and introduce people to Alaska Native culture."

Cheryl Lacy is a multi-media artist and educator. She is currently a graduate student at the University of Alaska Fairbanks, where she is studying for her MFA in Art. She has been creating art for over 10 years and has exhibited her work in various galleries and museums. Her work often explores themes of identity, culture, and the environment. She is currently working on a series of paintings that explore the history and culture of Alaska Natives.

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EXHIBITS



Mani'iwik — Place to bring some out and show

Our exhibits tell the continuing story of the Alutiiq people—from the distant past to the present. Archaeological discoveries, Alutiiq vocabulary, photographs, historic objects, artwork, and quotes from community member fill displays on history, harvesting, social life, and spirituality.

Left: Sunset at Pyramid Mountain, by Linda Lyons

Exhibit Facts . . .

2,685

Square feet
of display space

670+

Objects on display

2

Galleries for short and
long-term exhibits



Canasqat — Things That Matter

Appreciation for ancestors, stewardship of the land, care for others, and respect for the spiritual world are values that guide Alutiiq life. The museum's exhibits explore these themes and illustrate how the past has shaped today's Alutiiq community. Community advisors helped to design our displays.



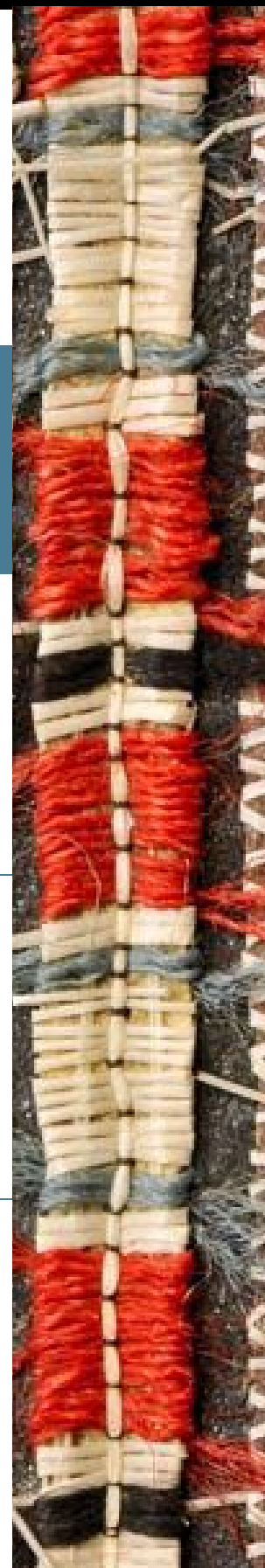
Play & Create

Inside a replica of a sod house in the People gallery, our youngest visitors will find puppets, dolls, puzzles, and Alutiiq games for culturally inspired play. Or stop at the creation station in the Fire Gallery to make an artcard. Add your creation to our displays to share with others or take it home to enjoy.



Living Culture Gallery

- 400 sf display space accessible from our classroom and lobby
- Designed for visiting and locally curated shows
- Featuring Our Ancestors, in 2025, a display of water color paintings by Alutiiq artist Cheryl Lacy



EDUCATORS OPEN HOUSE

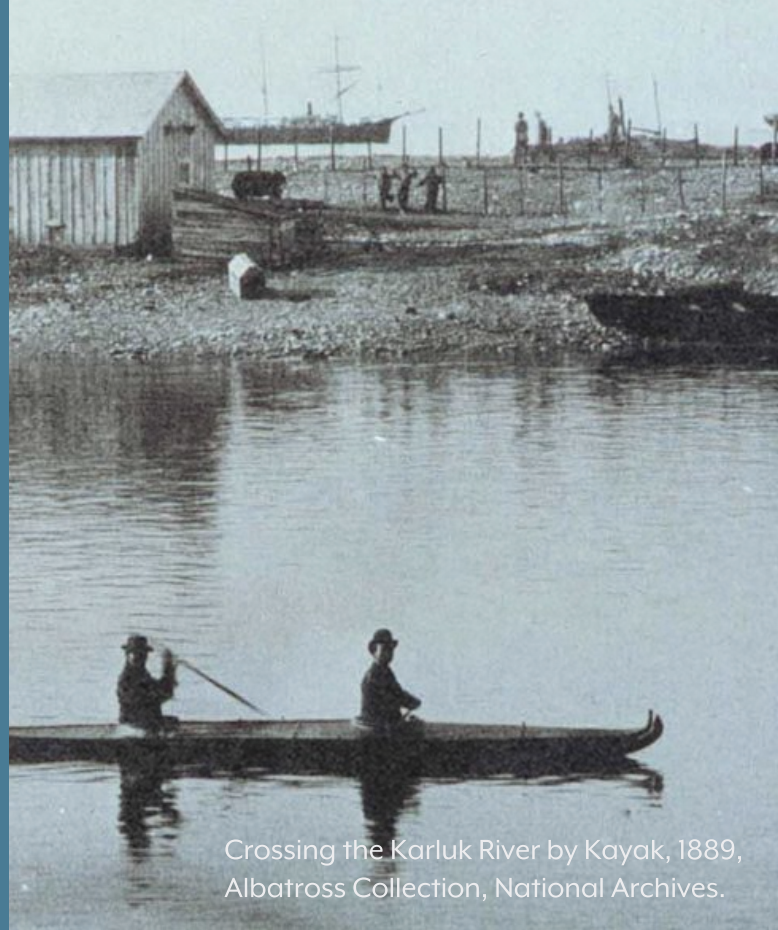
📅 Monday, June 2

🕒 10:00 am - 11:00 am

📍 Alutiiq Museum
215 Mission Road, Kodiak

Join us for a free open house to tour the museum's new exhibit hall with staff members. Learn about our educational resources and browse displays.

All educators welcome.



Crossing the Karluk River by Kayak, 1889, Albatross Collection, National Archives.



FEATURING

- Staff led exhibit tour followed by time to browse
- Introduction to new lesson plans and gallery resources for classroom visits
- Focus on new qayaq-kayak display

Staff Led
Tour

FOR MORE INFORMATION

Dehrich Chya, Director of Language and Living Culture
dehrich@alutiiqmuseum.org, 844-425-8844

SUPPORTED BY



PUBLIC EDUCATION



The Alutiiq Museum welcomes all people to its accessible facility to explore and celebrate the cultural traditions of the Alutiiq/Sugpiaq people. Through public education, we enhance awareness of Kodiak's remarkable cultural heritage, promote understanding of Alutiiq traditions, and create a stronger community. Partnerships with tribes, educators, agencies, and the media help us reach many people. Social media extends our impact across Alaska and beyond.

Alutiiq Museum Audience Facts . . .

12,565

Residents of 8
Island Communities

2228

K-12 Students
in 11 schools

10

Federally Recognized
Tribes with >4,000
members

Programs & Events

- Document and teach the Alutiiq languages in partnership with Elder speakers and an island-wide language advisory committee
- Partner with educators to teach Alutiiq culture in schools
- Pair experienced and developing artists to study Alutiiq arts
- Involve community members in archaeological research



Exhibits

- Explore Alutiiq heritage from the distant past to the present with ancestral tools, historic photographs, and artwork
- Teach about history, harvesting, community life, spirituality, and art to in-person and online audiences
- Share ancestral objects returned to Kodiak for study
- Provide hands-on activities for all ages

Publications & Resources

- Books that tell Alutiiq stories, share museum collections, teach the Alutiiq language, and feature artwork and artifacts
- An extensive website with resources for cultural research
- Eleven traveling education boxes available for free checkout
- Word of the Week shared via radio, newspaper, and internet
- A mobile museum that brings artifacts to community members

