



# Alutiit Kasitat

The Quarterly Newsletter of the Alutiiq Museum

Spring 2026

## The Archaeology of Inner Uyak Bay

Uyak Bay stretches far into the interior of Kodiak, almost cutting the island in half. The outer portion of this enormous waterway is busy with people and activities—set netters, homesteaders, hunters, fishermen, and the village of Larsen Bay. Inner Uyak Bay is an entirely different world. Here, the rock shores of outer Uyak give way to sticky grey mud flats where bears graze on the newly sprouted salt grass in the spring.

Today, other than an occasional hunter, very few people visit this part of the bay. There are no cabins, few recent campsites. But this has not always been true. A recent study by Alutiiq Museum archaeologist, Patrick Saltonstall, illustrated that Alutiiq ancestors visited the head of Uyak seasonally to harvest its valuable resources. This spring, Patrick spent five days kayaking the shores of Inner Uyak searching for evidence of past settlement. Dotted the shoreline, he found numerous old house depressions and shell middens from Alutiiq visitors. There were several fall fish camps near the salmon streams at the very head of the bay, but most of the sites were thick deposits of shell, the garbage discarded after mussel and clam dinners.



Field Assistant Philip Tschersich kayaking Inner Uyak Bay.

What were Alutiiq ancestors doing in Inner Uyak? The sites and the resources provide clues. It is likely that the protected inner bay was a great place to harvest herring, hunt bears, and collect shellfish during the stormy spring season. In the past, Inner Uyak Bay was an important part of the economic life of the region's residents.



Patrick Saltonstall taking field notes.



## Cama'i—Hello,

In May, we welcomed more than 2,340 visitors to the museum. During this busy season, we remain grounded in our mission to preserve and share the heritage and living culture of the Alutiiq/Sugpiaq people. We are honored to be a place of discovery for both new and returning friends. As we open our doors to visitors of Sun'aq (Kodiak), we reflect with gratitude on the community that supports and guides us year-round.

We have an exciting season ahead with hands-on workshops, archaeological digs, and new Alutiiq art arriving in our museum store. We look forward to welcoming you soon.

Isiik April G.L. Counciller, Ph.D.  
Executive Director

### Accredited by the American Alliance of Museums.

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### OUR MISSION

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

### OUR VISION

Celebrating heritage through living culture.

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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.

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# First Peoples Fund Workshop

Are you an Alutiiq artist interested in growing your skills and business knowledge? We have an exciting professional development opportunity coming up. On June 12th and 13th, the First Peoples Fund will return to lead a workshop for Native artists, following a successful training held here in 2015. Artists will learn from experienced trainers how they can improve their marketability and business/financial skills when selling their art.

This is an excellent opportunity for artists of varying skill levels to learn from experienced trainers. The training is geared towards both emerging artists and experienced artists. The in-person workshop is free of charge but has limited availability.

If you have more questions about the event please email [veronica@alutiiqmuseum.org](mailto:veronica@alutiiqmuseum.org)

Sign up: <https://formstack.io/E13B8>



Susan Malutin practices an artist presentation at the 2015 training.

Presentation at 2015 First Peoples Fund artist training.

## Crag Point Collection

Before the Alutiiq Museum was built, when archaeologists conducted digs on Kodiak, they usually took the artifacts back to their university. Since opening, the Alutiiq Museum has brought many collections back to Kodiak. In 1986, Dr. Richard Jordan led an excavation at the Crag Point archaeological site on northern Kodiak Island. The artifacts he collected have been cared for at the University of Alaska Museum of the North for many years. With funding from the Museums Alaska Collections Management Fund and the Rasmuson Foundation, two Alutiiq Museum staff members recently traveled to Fairbanks to pack up the collection of about 2,800 artifacts. They then traveled with 10 large shipping totes via Alaska Airlines bound for Kodiak. Once back, staff began processing the collection and moving it into the Alutiiq Museum's storage vault.

The Crag Point assemblage is unique for its organic preservation. Among the artifacts in the collection are net sinkers, line weights, bone harpoons, fishhooks, labrets, and much more. The collection is owned by the Bureau of Land Management but will be housed at the Alutiiq Museum for long-term curation, where it is available for research by community members, artists, culture bearers, and archaeologists.



Harpoon head from the Crag Point Collection (AM1149)

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**RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED**

## From Kodiak to Carlisle: Tracing our Lost Students



Eleven Alaskan Students with Charles E. Bunnell, 1901.  
Photograph courtesy of the National Anthropological Archives.

The Alutiiq Museum is honored to present a new exhibit in our Living Culture Gallery. In the early 20th century, the United States government sought to assimilate Native children into American society through a system of boarding schools designed to suppress Indigenous languages and cultures. This exhibit shares the story of eleven students taken from Woody Island and Long Island to the Carlisle Indian Industrial School in Carlisle, Pennsylvania, in 1901, and the ongoing efforts to bring the remains of two girls home.

Admission to the Living Culture Gallery is free.