



Alutiit Kasitat

The Quarterly Newsletter of the Alutiiq Museum

Summer 2026

Remembering Irak—Eagle Harbor

If you talk to Elders from Old Harbor, you will hear stories about Irak or Eagle Harbor. Although it was home to settlements at various points in Alutiiq history, its nineteenth century village was formed after a smallpox epidemic in 1837. Russian administrators resettled survivors into seven communities around the island. Eagle Harbor was one of them.

Located south of Pasagshak in Ugak Bay, Eagle Harbor sits in a wide valley bisected by a river. South of the river was a Russian American Company workstation, and north of the river was the village with its own Russian Orthodox chapel and store. In the late nineteenth century, there were at least 265 people living in Eagle Harbor. However, by the early twentieth century, many Native people were being pulled into the cash economy. Some families moved to Old Harbor where their children could attend school and men could get jobs at the nearby Port Hobron whaling station. Other families moved to Woody Island or Kodiak. Eagle Harbor was abandoned by the 1930s, but many of its stories live on in oral histories and archival documents.

With a grant from the National Park Service, the Alutiiq Museum is leading a project called Remembering Eagle Harbor. The first phase included archaeological mapping, testing, and drone imaging at Eagle Harbor in May. Over the next few months, our team will use this information to nominate Eagle Harbor to the National Register of Historic Places for its significance in the reshaping of Alutiiq communities in the past 250 years. Stay tuned for public presentations to share results of this project.



Archaeologists mapping features at Eagle Harbor.



Cama'i —Hello,

It has been a busy summer at the Alutiiq Museum. Our archaeology team is doing a new season of surveys and digs, we hosted cultural heritage interns who helped process incoming collections like the one from the Tanginak Spring site that you will read about in this newsletter, we've led special cultural experiences for cruise ship passengers, we've begun a series of artist workshops through our KITA project, and we've welcomed over 4,500 guests to our gallery and store.

To learn more about the museum's recent projects, come to our annual Open House on Thursday, August 20th from 5:00-7:00 pm. Join us for a special presentation, hands-on cultural activities, and cookies. Bring your family and friends, everyone is welcome at this free event. We look forward to sharing our work and celebrating with you.

Taikici – You all should come!

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

Accredited by the American Alliance of Museums.

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Native Arts Raffle

Win a \$1,000 shopping spree
to the Alutiiq Museum Store!

July 30th to September 30th

To enter scan the QR Code or visit:
www.zeffy.com/en-US/ticketing/alutiiq-museum-native-arts-raffle

State of Alaska Gaming Permit 1961



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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NATIVES OF KODIAK

Bringing Alutiiq/Sugpiaq History into the Classroom

Have you heard about our education boxes? Filled with lesson plans, activities, publications, replicas, and more, these boxes encourage hands-on exploration of Alutiiq heritage through themes such as language, plantlore, games, legends, masks, and more. This is the perfect way to bring Alutiiq/Sugpiaq history and culture into your classroom, home, and community organization.

To schedule a tour, classroom visit, or borrow an education box, please contact us a minimum of 2 weeks before your requested date. Whether you visit us in the gallery, invite us into your classroom, or borrow one of our education boxes, we are committed to making local history and culture accessible and engaging for learners of all ages.

To learn more about our education opportunities, please visit our website (alutiiqmuseum.org/museum/education/) or email phia@alutiiqmuseum.org.

Tanginak Spring Site

Summer is a busy time in the Alutiiq Museum's lab. Interns have been working hard to process collections of artifacts that have recently been returned to Kodiak for long-term curation. One of the collections is from the Tanginak Spring site on Sitkalidak Island. Dr. Ben Fitzhugh led excavations at Tanginak Spring in the 1990s and early 2000s. He and his students have been studying the collection at the University of Washington. Now that their analysis is complete, they've returned the collection to Kodiak where it will be cared for at the Alutiiq Museum. This assemblage of artifacts (over 10,000 pieces) is one of the oldest collections of ancestral stone tools from Kodiak. The site was occupied from about 7,500 – 6,000 years ago.

As interns unpack the boxes, they weigh and catalog each object, then move it to our secure storage vault. This ensures that information for each piece is accurate and tracked. The Tanginak Spring collection is owned by Old Harbor Native Corporation and is available for research at the Alutiiq Museum.



Cultural Heritage Interns, Ash and Sky, working in the lab to catalog each object.

Annual Open House

August 20th, 5 to 7 PM

Join us on August 20th from 5 to 7 PM for our Annual Open House. Meet the staff, participate in cultural activities, explore our galleries with free admission, and learn more about the Alutiiq Museum's work. All are welcome.

Event sponsored by Natives of Kodiak

Petroglyph Decal Fundraiser

Get creative with iron-on petroglyph decals at our Annual Open House! Bring a shirt from home or purchase one for \$10 at the event. Petroglyph decals are \$3 each. Every purchase supports the Alutiiq Museum's operations and programs.



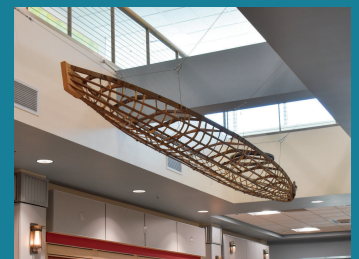
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KODIAK AK 99615

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

Qayaq Exhibit in the Kodiak Marketplace

A new public exhibit about Kodiak's maritime history has been installed in the Kodiak Marketplace building downtown. As visitors enter the building through its western doors, there is a clear view of a historic wooden frame of an Alutiiq paitaalek—triple-hatched kayak. The qayaq—kayak is the centerpiece of the new exhibit, displayed in an opening between the first and second floor and viewable from both below and above. A panel on the first floor says Cuglluten—Look up! inviting visitors to notice the beautiful historic vessel above. With information about maritime living, different types of qayat—kayaks, and the history of the paitaalek on display, the accompanying panel brings context to the exhibit. A recent community survey shared that people want more public displays showcasing Kodiak's rich history, and this is an accessible introduction to Kodiak's maritime heritage found right downtown, near the harbor.

Kodiak Area Native Association partnered with the museum to install the exhibit and are the hosts for the display. The exhibit was supported in part by a National Maritime Heritage Grant administered by the National Park Service, Department of the Interior, and the State of Alaska Office of History and Archaeology, and with support from Kodiak Island Borough.



The exhibit was produced with assistance from the Maritime Heritage Grant Program administered by the National Park Service, Department of the Interior. Opinions, findings, and conclusions or recommendations expressed in this material are those of the author and do not necessarily reflect the views of the Department of the Interior.