

Alutiit Kasitat

Alutiiq MUSEUM
ARCHAEOLOGICAL REPOSITORY

The Quarterly Newsletter of the Alutiiq Museum **Fall 2026**

History of Aiaktalik

Today Angyartalek—Aiaktalik Island is unassuming and rarely visited, located off the southeastern tip of Kodiak Island it has long beaches, cliffs, and a gently sloping mountain. But 250 years ago it was home to a thriving village. According to the first Russian census, Aiaktalik had a population of over 400 Alutiiq/Sugpiaq people – the largest in the Kodiak Archipelago. Throughout the Russian period Aiaktalik played an important role in the fur trade. By the early 20th century, as sea otter populations declined, many Aiaktalik residents began moving away in search of cash jobs. At the outbreak of the Second World War, the remaining families left after the storekeeper, a Japanese man, was sent to an internment camp.



Archaeologists photograph shell midden exposed on Aiaktalik Island.

To document the ancestral villages on Aiaktalik and connect recorded oral histories and archival documents with the physical locations, the Alutiiq Museum completed an archaeological survey on the island in June of this year. In total, 11 archaeological and historical sites were documented, including the historic village and the foundation of the Russian Orthodox Chapel of Andrew the First Called. One of the remarkable finds from Aiaktalik is the prevalence of village sites, some at least 1,000 years old, rather than small harvesting camps. While we might think of Aiaktalik as remote today, for Alutiiq paddlers it was in the middle of a rich marine environment with easy access on the water to migrating whales, sea mammal haul outs, marine fishing grounds, and salmon streams on the mainland of Kodiak Island. Stay tuned for a recorded presentation on our website sharing results from the survey.





Cama'i —Hello,

Over the summer, we welcomed almost 8,000 visitors to the Alutiiq Museum. We had a vibrant tourist season with over 30 cruise ships and all the bustle of a typical Kodiak summer. Museum staff stayed busy with archaeological digs and surveys, hands-on workshops, community events, and new Alutiiq art arriving in our store weekly.

Now we transition to the holiday season and another type of busy with end of year grant reporting, budgeting for the pending new year, our new Craft Saturday events that you will learn about in this newsletter, our popular Annual Holiday Bazaar (November 28th!), and more! Through it all, we remain grounded in our mission and grateful to our patrons and supporters.

We are honored to be a place of discovery for both new and returning friends.

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

Accredited by the American Alliance of Museums.

Alutiiq Museum
215 Mission Road
Kodiak, Alaska 99615

PHONE: 844.425.8844
FAX: 866.335.7767
EMAIL: info@alutiiqmuseum.org
WEB: alutiiqmuseum.org

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 Corp.
Vice Chair	Peter Boskofsky, At-large
Treasurer	Tyan Hayes, Koniag
Secretary	JJ Marsh, KANA
Board Member	Gerald Anderson, Natives of Kodiak, Inc.
Board Member	Emily Jean Capjohn, Old Harbor Native Corp.
Board Member	Cheryl Christofferson, KANA
Board Member	Fred Coyle, Akhiok-Kaguyak, Inc.
Board Member	Malia Villegas, Afognak Native Corporation
Board Member	Cheryl Heitman, At-large
Board Member	Gordon Pullar Jr., Leisnoi, Inc.
Board Member	Stacey Simmons, Koniag
Board Member	Rita Stevens, Emeritus Member

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 Counceller, PhD
Director of Advancement	Djuna Davidson
Dir. of Archaeology & Special Projects	Molly Odell
Dir. of Language & Living Culture	Dehrich Chya
Curator of Archaeology	Patrick Saltonstall
Curator of Collections	Amanda Lancaster
Exhibits Manager	Alexandra Painter
Project Coordinator	Veronica Johnson
Lab Coordinator	Wesley Pyle
Education & Outreach Manager	Phia Padilla
Board & Executive Coordinator	Ash Magallanes
Gallery & Retail Manager	Chyian Heine
Store Coordinator	Amelia Boger
Archaeology Fellow	Sarah Simeonoff
Communications Coordinator	Sydney Mutch
Chief Curator Emerita	Amy Steffian
Gallery & Retail Intern	Breana Sharp
Gallery & Retail Intern	Marissa Campbell

KEEP THE LIGHT OF CULTURE BURNING BRIGHT

Be a Lamplighter

www.alutiiqmuseum.org/give/
Quyanaa—We thank you.



QUYANAA TO OUR NEWSLETTER SPONSORS

ALASKA STATE COUNCIL ON THE ARTS

HIGHMARK MARINE FABRICATION

Matson

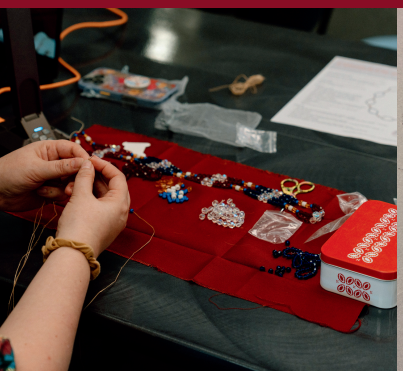
Craft Saturdays

This fall we are kicking off the cozy creative season with a new series of monthly Craft Saturday events at the Alutiiq Museum. These family-friendly activity days are supported with funding from a City of Kodiak Nonprofit Grant and will help keep you busy in the cold months. From making an Alutiiq-style 3-strand beaded bracelet to participating in a "craft catch-up" drop-in workshop with on-site artists offering support and consultation, there will be something for all skill levels and interests.

Each Craft Saturday will be hosted in our first-floor workshop from noon to 2:00pm. Mark your calendars for our upcoming Craft Saturdays on November 14th and December 19th, and join us to create, learn, and engage with Alutiiq culture.

Upcoming Dates: November 14th and December 19th

Have questions? Please contact Phia at phia@alutiiqmuseum.org.






Preserving Community Documentation

Language revitalization and preserving historic documentation are integral parts of the Alutiiq Museum's work. The museum does much of this work itself but also serves as a repository for the work others have done. This fall, the Native Village of Afognak (NVA) shared from their archives several boxes of audio and video recordings, contemporary and historic photos, and extensive genealogical research done by Helen Simeonoff. They brought these items to the Alutiiq Museum for processing and long-term curation. Museum intern Sky Pahmeier-Olson is working through the archival materials, digitizing, and storing them in the Alutiiq Museum's secure collections vault. The archive contains many historic photos of the Afognak community, as well as contemporary photos from Dig Afognak. Once the archive is fully processed, it will be open for research to community members, artists, culture bearers, and other researchers.



Sky Pahmeier-Olson processing archival material from the Native Village of Afognak.

ALUTIIQ HERITAGE FOUNDATION
215 MISSION RD STE 101
KODIAK AK 99615

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

FREE ADMISSION ALL NOVEMBER

Quyanaa! Thank you to Matson for sponsoring free admission for every visitor throughout November in celebration of Native American Heritage Month.

Annual Holiday Bazaar

November 28th, 10:00am - 4:00pm

Featuring original art, jewelry, and other handmade goods from: Susie Malutin - Heritage Furs, Brandy Paddock & Family - Raised Wild Works, Ann Barker, Sky Pahmeier-Olson, Skylar Gertz, Veronica Johnson, Sue Baker - Clay Creek Pottery, Kathy Johnson, Sally Troxell - Sally J's Red Thread Studio, Bruce Nelson - Bruce Nelson Fine Art, Barb Bundy - Alutiiq Reflections, Briana Springer, Stacy Studebaker, Cassey Rowland - Nerdy Native Creations.

