

Alutiit Kasita

New Exhibit Features Qayat - Kayaks

From driftwood, animal skins, tendon and baleen, Alutiit people created qayat that were expertly designed for Kodiak's notoriously windy waters. Working with stone and bone tools, and using the proportions of the human body as a measuring guide, men built boats that permitted swift, secure travel through ocean waters. For the Alutiit, qayat were a lifeline. They allowed people to harvest fish and sea mammals from the ocean, to travel and trade over great distances, and to carry supplies home. In coastal Alaska, the qayaq remains a symbol of maritime knowledge, craftsmanship, and manhood.

The Alutiit Museum's newest exhibit Qayat, explores this technology, assembling historic and modern objects to illustrate the gear essential to every hunter. Harpoons, paddles, a bailer, and a visor surround a complete kayak and a kayak frame. The heart of the exhibit is an historic qayaq, a boat collected in Alaska in 1869 that retains its oiled, hand-stitched, and decorated seal skin cover. Loaned to the Alutiit Museum by the Peabody Museum of Archaeology and

Ethnology the boat is a rare, complete example of the graceful, light, and flexible Alutiit qayaq.

Adjacent to the historic vessel is a qayaq frame. Carved by Alfred Naumoff in 2014, this piece illustrates the internal framework of traditional boats. Pieces of a qayaq were never nailed together, but carefully lashed to allow the boat to bend in the waves. Naumoff is one of just a handful of contemporary Alutiit kayak builders, and his knowledge has been informed by studies of historic boats.

"We placed the two kayaks together to show both the inside and the outside of a boat. Naumoff's boat is not covered, so you can really see the details of internal construction—frame design and lashing," said Leist. "Then with the historic kayak, you get to see how the skin cover is made and attached. We placed the two together to help people to understand the links between old and new objects. This exhibit is about kayaks, but it also about living culture, how collections can inspire and inform cultural practices." ●



Historic qayaq collected in Alaska in 1869 and now on display at the Alutiit Museum. Courtesy Presidents and Fellows of Harvard University, Peabody Museum of Archaeology and Ethnology.

Qayanaasinaq – Many Thanks to our Exhibit Sponsors



Cama'i Friends,

Last February, as our exhibits team was busy producing *Qayat* (p. 1), another team was envisioning the museum's future. At a retreat in Girdwood, board, staff, and community members gathered to consider how the museum can build new and larger audiences. This week-long work session was part of New Pathways Alaska, an initiative led by EmcArts of New York City with support from the Foraker Group and the Rasmuson Foundation. The program helps arts organizations innovate around a complex challenge, in our case involving more of the Kodiak community in exploring Alutiit heritage.

The outcome of the retreat was a series of prototypes, test programs designed to provide fun, new opportunities for exploring community history. This summer we are rolling out three prototypes.

On May 13th we are partnering with the Kodiak Public Library to host an evening of storytelling. Community members will share stories about life on the ocean as part of our current focus on maritime traditions. Everyone who comes to this free event at the library will receive a pass for admission to the museum, to see our new *Qayat-Kayaks* exhibit. The coupon doubles as a prize drawing ticket. Fill out your coupon and take it to the museum to be entered in a drawing to win a dinner cruise for four with Galley Gourmet.

On July 15th, we will be hosting Date Night with Disaster! (p. 5). Couples are invited for dinner at the museum and to test their survival skills with Alutiit-themed activities. Could you survive the apocalypse with your knowledge of the outdoors?!

And throughout the summer there will be opportunities to discuss local history. What do you want to know about Kodiak's past? What are the best ways to share history? And who are the people that have stories to share? Watch for Free Fry Bread Friday on July 8th, where we will be enjoying *alacit* (fry bread) with butter, honey, and fun conversation.

Join us this summer and bring a friend. Who do you know who hasn't been to the museum but might be curious about Alutiit culture and history? Help us extend some of our famous Alutiit hospitality to our neighbors.

Best wishes from our families to yours,
April

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Director of Operations	Russell Armand
Gallery Manager	Dana Haynes
Gallery Assistant	Lauren McCausland
Language Program Manager	Michael Bach
Chief Curator	Amy Steffian
Curator of Archaeology	Patrick Saltonstall
Curator of Collections	Marnie Leist
Exhibits and Collections Specialist	Natalie Wadle
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Mission and Vision:

By preserving and sharing cultural traditions of the Alutiit people, we seek to celebrate Alutiit heritage through living culture.

The Alutiit Museum is governed by Afognak Native Corporation, Akhiok-Kaguyak Inc., KANA, Koniag Inc., Leisnoi Inc., Natives of Kodiak Inc., Old Harbor Native Corporation, and Ouzinkie Native Corporation. Each organization elects a representative to the Alutiit Heritage Foundation, the Alutiit Museum's board. Funding is provided by charitable contributions, membership fees, grants, contracts and sales from the museum store.

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Traveling by Kayak – A Memory from Natalie Simeonoff

Natalie Simeonoff had vivid memories of family travel. Each year her parents packed their qayaq and paddled from Woody Island to Eagle Harbor, to harvest from their summer fishing grounds. It's not far as the raven flies, but lying inside the slender boat filled with camping essentials, it was a long fifty miles!

"In the summertime, mama tells me, and this is probably where I got claustrophobia, they would load us in the bidarkis and . . . She said they would have a chicken maybe, a couple of chickens maybe, a dog, a cat, and two babies and the mother, and, papa would take us over to Eagle Harbor where we would camp for the summer. And we lived in tents. We would dry fish, and then in the fall they would bring us back home."

In Simeonoff's memory, a qayaq was their family vehicle, used like a skiff or pickup truck today, to haul everything from food and belongings to animals and children. Despite being the likely cause of her claustrophobia, Simeonoff has fond memories of traveling by qayaq in the long, light days of summer. In 1991, she shared her recollections with Deborah Robinson, talking about her youth on Kodiak Island. The interview transports listeners back to a time where boats of all shapes and sizes took center stage in the daily lives of Kodiak Islanders.

Simeonoff recalls how people moved from between villages, canneries, fish camps, and other remote coastal locations on all sorts of boats. People traveled using qayat, dories, skiffs, cannery owned vessels, and mail boats. There seems to have been a boat for any situation in Simeonoff's childhood memories.

You can listen to Simeonoff's discussions with Deborah Robinson online. Visit the homepage of the Alutiiq Museum's website (www.alutiiqmuseum.org) for a link. To explore the Alutiiq Museum's online archive for similar recordings, click on the research tab on the Museum's website and select language collections.



Natalie Simeonoff, photograph courtesy the Baranov Museum, Kodiak Daily Mirror Collection (P-837-29-96).

Natalie Fadaoff Simeonoff (1916 to 1992) was the daughter of the Nicholas Fadaoff of Uganik, and Feockla "Ella" Ballamutoff of Unga. Her parents met at the Kodiak Baptist mission on Woody Island, where they were both raised. Natalie grew up on Woody Island living a subsistence lifestyle. She married Kelly Simeonoff, Sr., a family friend from Kodiak, and they had seven children. ●

Speaking of Boats

Why is the Alutiiq word for kayak sometimes spelled with a q at the end and at other times with a t? The answer is, Alutiiq grammar! The word qayaq is singular. The q at the end of the word tells us that there is one skin-covered boat. The work qayat is plural. Here, the final t indicates there are three or more kayaks. And if you want to say there are two kayaks, qayak is the right spelling. The k at the end of the word signals the dual form. It tells you that there are exactly two boats!

English	Alutiiq - One Boat	Alutiiq - Two Boats	Alutiiq - Three+ Boats
Kayak	Qayaq	Qayak	Qayat
Open Skin Boat	Angyaq	Angyak	Angyat
Skiff	Skiifaq	Skiifak	Skiifat
Schooner	Skuunaq	Skuunak	Skuunat
Sail Boat	Raa'uciq	Raa'ucik	Raa'ucit

Cross Country Journey

What weighs about 39 pounds and is 14 feet long?! It is the historic, one-man qayaq featured in the Alutiit Museum's latest exhibit (p. 1). This rare, 150-year-old artifact was collected in Alaska in 1869 by US Army Officer Edward Fast, and sold to Harvard University's Peabody Museum of Archaeology and Ethnology. Why is it rare? The boat features both its wooden frame and oiled sealskin cover. It's hard to preserve skin objects, let alone one of this size and complexity. There aren't many complete Alutiit kayaks in museums, and where boats are preserved, the skin cover is often missing.

When the Peabody Museum and the Alutiit Museum set out to share the rare qayaq in Kodiak, the process required special preparation and planning. First, the Peabody Museum undertook a major project to stabilize the boat. With the help of Alutiit culture bearers Alfred Naumoff, Susan Malutin, and Sven Haakanson Jr., they studied the qayaq, cleaned it, and repaired tears in its cover. Then, they created a custom storage crate, a box to protect the fragile vessel from light, dust, and pests.

Next, the two museums worked together to develop a ten-year loan agreement and raise money to pay for the boat's exhibit in Kodiak. A grant to Koniag, Inc. from the Institute for Museum and Library Services and donations from the Peabody Museum, Matson, Marion Owen Photography, and the Alutiit Heritage Foundation covered the costs.



From left, Judy Jungles (Harvard), Marnie Leist and Natalie Wadle open the outer crate containing the historic qayaq, April 2016.

The final step was to arrange for cross-country travel. A Boston-based art handler constructed a hard-sided, 18-foot shipping case to hold the storage crate housing the boat. Double layers of padding and crating, helped to keep the kayak from moving in the box and to cushion the inevitable bumps of a 5,000 mile, cross continent journey. A moving truck carried the case from Cambridge, Massachusetts to Tacoma, Washington, to a Matson shipyard. Containerized, the crate continued by ship to Kodiak. The final leg of the journey, by water, provided a fitting return for this masterpiece of Alutiit engineering. ●

Date Night with Disaster!

What is your survival IQ? If the apocalypse came tomorrow would you be prepared? Join Alutiit Museum staff members for a fun evening of survival training, and bring your sweet heart. We are hosting a Date Night with Disaster on July 15th. Couples will enjoy a buffet dinner at the museum and learn Alutiit survival skills. Make a knife from a piece of slate and transform plant materials into natural Neosporin! Stay tuned. Ticket sales will begin in June. ●



Takesqat—Ground Slate Lances, Karluk One Collection, Koniag, Inc., ca. 8cm long.



**Maritime
Story
Share**

Friday, May 13th 6-8pm, at the Kodiak Public Library

Join us for an evening of stories on Kodiak's maritime traditions. Enjoy refreshments while listening to tales of humor and drama on the sea!



Attendance includes a free pass to visit the Alutiit Museum's latest exhibit, *Qayaq- Kayaks*, and your chance to win a dinner cruise for four with Galley Gourmet!

In partnership with the Kodiak Public Library and New Pathways Alaska, a program of EmcArts and The Foraker Group, supported by the Rasmuson Foundation.



Contact 907 486 7004 or dana@alutiitmuseum.org for additional event details

Quiver Gifted to Museum

A red cedar quiver is the newest addition to the Alutiiq Museum's collections. The 35-inch, nineteenth century piece is a family heirloom, passed through generations of Kodiak's King family. Sven Haakanson, the Alutiiq Museum's former director, recognizing the piece as a rare and important example of traditional technology, encouraged owners Roger and Donna King to donate it to the Alutiiq Museum.

Quivers were among the gear men carried in their qayat. Small tools were placed inside the boat—containers of food and water, a sewing kit for emergency boat and clothing repairs, extra hunting and fishing implements, and spiritually potent amulets, helpers for the trip ahead. Large items—a spare paddle, harpoons, a throwing board, and a quiver filled with arrows and darts, were secured to the deck, for easy access when prey was encountered.

The King's quiver is made from a single piece of wood. The craftsman shaped the outside of the quiver, then split the object in half, hollowed out each side, and lashed the two sides back together. This

quiver arrived with a single arrow, a piece with a wooden shaft, eagle feather fletching, and a rounded metal tip. This arrow tip is unusual. It has a cylindrical metal cap designed to screw into the shaft, and may have been removable at one time. Haakanson thinks that the arrow was a practice piece, used by an archer for target shooting. For now, the quiver is resting in collections storage, while the museum works on plans to share it in an upcoming exhibit on Alutiiq subsistence.

Alutiiq Museum Executive Director April Laktonen Counciller, expressed her gratitude for the donation. "We are so grateful to the King family for preserving and sharing this historic quiver. Many of our ancestors' artifacts are out of reach in distant museums. It's so important to have objects like these in Kodiak where craftsmen can study them. We also thank Sven Haakanson for helping to return the piece to Kodiak." ●



Rebecca Pruitt returns a copper kettle to storage in the muRogers and Donna King hold the wooden quiver and arrow they donated to the Alutiiq Museum. Photograph courtesy Sven Haakanson, Jr.



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Archaeology in the classroom: from Kodiak to Boston

by Catherine West, Boston University

How can college students in Massachusetts learn about Alutiit heritage? By partnering with the Alutiit Museum to study archaeology in a Boston classroom! This semester, archaeologist Catherine West taught a hands-on course to Boston University students using small assemblages of archaeological materials from the Alutiit Museum. The goal of the semester-long study was for students to learn to conduct research using stone tools, pottery, animal bones, charcoal, oral histories, and historic documents. Each student designed an individual research project to investigate some aspect of Alutiit heritage or the Kodiak environment.

All the students wanted to understand how archaeological material might be useful for connecting the past to the present, and they did this by thinking about identity, how people use their environment, and the foods people eat. One group of students investigated Alutiit heritage. They were interested in how laws have influenced archaeological preservation and Alutiit heritage on Kodiak, whether Russian settlement of Kodiak affected the foods people ate, and why people wore facial jewelry to express their social status.

A second group of students wanted to reconstruct the Chirikof Island environment of 500 years ago, using fish bones, squirrel bones, and charcoal. They learned that people on Chirikof ate cod and seemed to be skinning squirrels and burning the bones, all while using a huge amount of driftwood and brush to keep warm and cook their food.

The third group of students examined objects from a fish camp outside the cannery in Olga Bay, and found that all of their objects were associated with meals! Alutiit people were using ulus to cut fish, cannery workers were using Japanese and English pottery to prepare and serve food, and they harvested bear, red fox, and salmon.

For Boston University students, the process was exciting and ignited an interest in both archaeological research and making connections to the community in Kodiak. Even though we live far away, we have been privileged to learn about Kodiak's history and to see up close the incredible story told by the archaeological record. ●



Boston University student Kristian Boschetto identifies fish bones from Chirikof Island in the BU Zooarchaeology Laboratory. Photograph courtesy Catherine West.

Volunteer as an Archaeologist

Have you ever said, "I've always wanted to be an archaeologist!"? Stop dreaming and pull on your rain gear. It's time for Community Archaeology 2016. Join the museum's research team to explore Kodiak's buried past. The program is free and open to all volunteers 14 and up. All you need is a sense of adventure and a sack lunch. We'll take care of the rest.

From July 18th to August 12th, 8:15 am to 5:00 pm, we will be working at the Kashevaroff Site, a prehistoric settlement at the head of Women's Bay. Space is limited. Please contact Patrick Saltonstall (907-486-7004, x23) to reserve a spot. High school and college credit will be available. A volunteer orientation meeting will be held on July 14th, 7:00 pm in the museum's gallery. Join us. Who knows what you might find! ●



Archaeological excavations under way at the Kashevaroff site, 2014.

Connection

Artist Spotlight—Teacon Simeonoff

For Alutiiq artist Teacon Simeonoff, carving is a lifestyle not only a way to make a living. “My passion is to keep art alive, I would much rather teach than make art to sell,” he says. Simeonoff began carving as a teenager growing up in Akhiok. At 17 he apprenticed with Jacob Simeonoff, and learned to make bentwood hats and boxes. Carving helped Simeonoff battle addiction and he has been creating ever since. He lives in Akhiok and is known for his generosity—sharing his works with others.

Simeonoff’s inspiration comes from many places. In 1994, he was a member of the archaeological team that salvaged artifacts from the Karluk One site, a remarkably preserved Alutiiq village at the mouth of the Karluk River. Over the years, he has returned to the museum to study these collections, to examine carved faces and consider that shapes of boat parts.

About three years ago, Simeonoff had the opportunity to study model boat making with Sven Haakanson, examining the construction of large open skin boats known as angyat. Although this art form has vanished from living memory, angyat models in museum collections are helping artist like Haakanson and Simeonoff reawaken the tradition. Building model boats helps craftsmen understand the shape, configuration, and integration of boat parts. Working on a small scale prepares carvers to build a full-sized boat, a process that Simeonoff has



Angyak model with paddles by Teacon Simeonoff. Alutiiq Museum Teaching Collection.

been participating in. One of Simeonoff’s most recent angyak models is now part of the Alutiiq Museum’s teaching collection.

“Teacon approached the museum with a red and yellow cedar boat model he completed last year,” said Curator of Collections Marnie Leist. “He offered to sell us the boat, so that we could add it to our teaching collection. He wanted the model to be available to students and carvers, to help this boat building tradition live. Angyak models are rare and the Alutiiq Museum didn’t have one. It’s a very detailed piece and it represents many, many of hours of careful research, carving, and lashing. It will be a great educational tool.” ●

Qayat in the Museum Store

Shirts:

Celebrate the opening of Qayat with this commemorative t-shirt! Each locally screen-printed shirt is made of 100% cotton. Shirts are pre-shrunk and available in sizes S through XXL. Purchase yours in the Alutiiq Museum Store or online for \$15.



Postcards:

Write home about Qayat with new postcards featuring objects featured in the exhibit! Available in the Alutiiq Museum Store and online for \$1.00. Choose from hunting visor (below) or kayak prow (p. 8).



Alvin, bentwood hunting visor by Jacob Simeonoff, Kodiak Area Native Association Collection, 1995. AM56.

Events

Upcoming Events

First Friday ArtWalk

Qayat Grand Opening

May 6th, 5:00-7:00pm

With door prizes courtesy Henry's Great Alaska Restaurant, Kodiak Electric Association, and Northern Exposure Gallery.

Maritime Story Share

May 13th, 6:00-8:00pm, Kodiak Public Library

Craft Saturday – Hunting Visors

May 21st, 12:00-4:00pm

First Friday ArtWalk

Artist TBD

June 3rd, 5:00-7:00pm

Free Frybread Friday

July 8th, 5:00-7:00pm

Alutiiq Language Summit

June 16th and 17th

Community Archaeology Orientation

July 14th, 7:00-8:00pm

Date Night with Disaster

July 15th

Community Archaeology

July 18 - August 12th

First Friday ArtWalk

Cindy Pennington

August 5th, 5:00-7:00pm

Alutiiq Language Club

Every Wednesday 12:00-1:00pm, Sun'aq Tribal Hall

CONNECT WITH US



Qayaq prow, ca. 1910, Gift of Larry Matfay's family. AM53. One of the new post cards available in the museum store.

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Qayaq prow, ca. 1910, Gift of Larry Matfay's family. AM53. One of the new post cards available in the museum store.

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