



Alutiiq Museum Bulletin

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Short Films to Share Alutiiq Heritage

Video is everywhere! Short films reach millions of people everyday through computers, cell phones, and even music players. Over the next two years, the Alutiiq Museum will expand its use of short films to tell Alutiiq stories and link audiences to Kodiak's cultural heritage through the latest technologies. *Telling Our Stories*, a collaboration between the museum and the professional filmmakers at WonderVisions, will create a series of short films on two topics – the Cape Alitak petroglyphs and Alutiiq weaving. The National Park Service Shared Beringian Heritage Program is providing funding for the project.

“Video is a great way to pull people into a story,” said Alutiiq Museum Executive Director Sven Haakanson. “It gives the viewer a richer, more detailed sense of people and places. The videos we create with WonderVisions will transport people into the Alutiiq world, and because they are short, visitors will be able to enjoy them whether they are touring our gallery or browsing our website.”

Known as vodcasts, or video podcasts, each film will be about 6 minutes long and carefully focused on a specific topic within a larger story. Link them together and these focused films will form a short documentary.



*Film crew captures Sven Haakanson documenting the Cape Alitak petroglyphs.
Photograph courtesy Elizabeth O'Connell.*

Filming for the project began in May. On a brilliant, sunny day at Cape Alitak, called a “miracle day” by director Elizabeth O’Connell, the WonderVisions film captured museum archaeologists at work. Sven Haakanson, Jr., Patrick Saltonstall, Jill Lipka and Mark Rusk gave the crew a physical workout along with a tour of local sites. The archaeologists spoke about rock art, house construction, whaling, and the use of jewelry making ancient Alutiiq culture come to life. In Kodiak, O’Connell gathered images of objects in the museum’s collections, as well as historic photographs and discussion with those who care for and

use museum collections. “We want the people who watch these films to understand how the museum’s collections are used and valued by our community,” said registrar Marnie Leist. “The field research is just the first chapter of the story.”

Next year, WonderVisions will film Alutiiq weavers sharing their knowledge with students. These short films will focus on the ladies who traveled to St. Petersburg’s Kunstkamera Museum with Haakanson in January of 2010 to study ancestral basketry. What did they learn? How has it impacted their work? How will they share their knowledge? It will all be captured on film to share with the many people who want to know more about Alutiiq culture.