

Cooking & Storing—*Kenirtaallriit* (they used to cook), *Ang’ataallriit* (they used to keep things)

This category of tools includes fire-starting tools, containers, and tools used to prepare food (Table 8.8, Figure 8.18). Some of these tools were also used in other settings. Vessels held water in the steam bath. Ulus were used to split fish and to cut materials for sewing.

Table 8.8. Alutiiq terms for cooking and storing tools

English	Alutiiq	Comment
Box Panel	Yaasiigem cania ^c ; Yaasim cania ^c	
Fire-starter Drill	Ken’lisuutem ukit’suutii ^c	Whole tool = nucuutaq ^h
Fire-starter Drill Bow	Ken’lisuutem qitguyaa ^c	Whole tool = nucuutaq ^h
Fire-starter Drill Handle	Ken’lisuutem agaa ^c	Whole tool = nucuutaq ^h
Fire-starter Hearth	Ken’liwik ^c	Whole tool = nucuutaq ^h
Mortar	Ciiwik ^c	
Pestle	Ciisuun ^c	
Plug	Mallarsuuteq ^c	
Spoon	Laus`kaa ^m (N); Luus`kaa ^m (S)	
Tube	Cupllukaruaq ^c	
Ulu Handle	Ulukam agaa ^c	
Vessel	Yaasiiguuaq ^c	
Vessel Handle	Agaa ^m	“its handle”
Vessel Lid	Patuq ^m	

m = term in modern usage, h = historic term, c = term created by Elder Alutiiq speakers

* = suggested term needing additional review, N = northern way of speaking, S = Southern way of speaking

Figure 8.18. Examples of cooking and storing tools from Karluk One (AM193)



Alutiiq Technological Inventory

Artifact Class Summary Sheet

English Names	Box Panel		Alutiiq Names	Yaasiigem cania, Yaasim cania	
Industry	Carving	Activity	Cooking/Storage	Function	Storage
Common Materials	Wood				
LxWxD (cm)					
Tradition	<input type="checkbox"/> Ocean Bay	<input type="checkbox"/> Kachemak	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Koniag	<input type="checkbox"/> Alutiiq	
Miniature	<input type="radio"/> Yes	Example Sites Found	Karluk One		
	<input checked="" type="radio"/> No/Unknown				
Description	<p>Boxes held people's belongings, including objects like knives and feathers (Golder 1903b:90). These artifacts are the component parts of small wooden boxes, and feature both sides and bases. Similar to bentwood vessels, wooden boxes were pegged or lashed together. Typically small, these containers feature carved panels for both the sides and the bases. Interestingly, a number of small wooden box panels from Karluk One feature painted images.</p> <p>Side - small, rectangular pieces of wood with holes drilled on the ends and a lip of wood along the base for acomodating a box bottom.</p> <p>Base - rectangular panel with four beveled edges for fitting to the lipped edge of .panels These pieces are thicker in the center (the majority of the box bottom) and thinned on the edges (the beveled areas designed to join with panels).</p> <p>Handle? - a small trapezoidal piece of painted wood (like a truncated pyramid with a rectangular base) may be a knob-like handle secured to a box.</p>				
References	Knecht, Richard A., 1995, The Late Prehistory of the Alutiiq People: Culture Change on the Kodiak Archipelago from 1200–1750 AD. PhD dissertation, Bryn Mawr College, Bryn Mawr, PA.				
Last Update	07/14/2021		Updated By	Amy Steffian	

Alutiiq Technological Inventory—Carved Organic

BOX PANEL





Alutiiq Technological Inventory

Artifact Class Summary Sheet

English Names **Alutiiq Names**

Industry **Activity** **Function**

Common Materials

LxWxD (cm)

Tradition Ocean Bay Kachemak Koniag Alutiiq

Miniature Yes No/Unknown **Example Sites Found**

Description

Alutiiq people lit fires with wooden fire starters. These four-piece implements had a flat wooden platform (hearth) and a long shaft (drill) held by a simple handle that was rotated rapidly against the platform with a small bow. The friction caused by the movement of the shaft created an ember that people coaxed into a flame with a small bit of tinder. Wood shavings, birch bark, spruce pitch, and even bird down were used to feed the fire. Driftwood and woody brush then provided fuel for cooking, drying clothing, and heating, as well as light for indoor chores.

The drill is typically a carefully-shaped cylindrical piece of wood (perhaps a segment of a branch) that has a smooth, rounded distal end designed to fit into and rotate in a hearth. The proximal end of the drill is also typically rounded, but may tapered some to fit into a stabilizing handle.

The distal end of the drill - and sometimes the proximal end - is burned from the friction used to generate a spark.

References

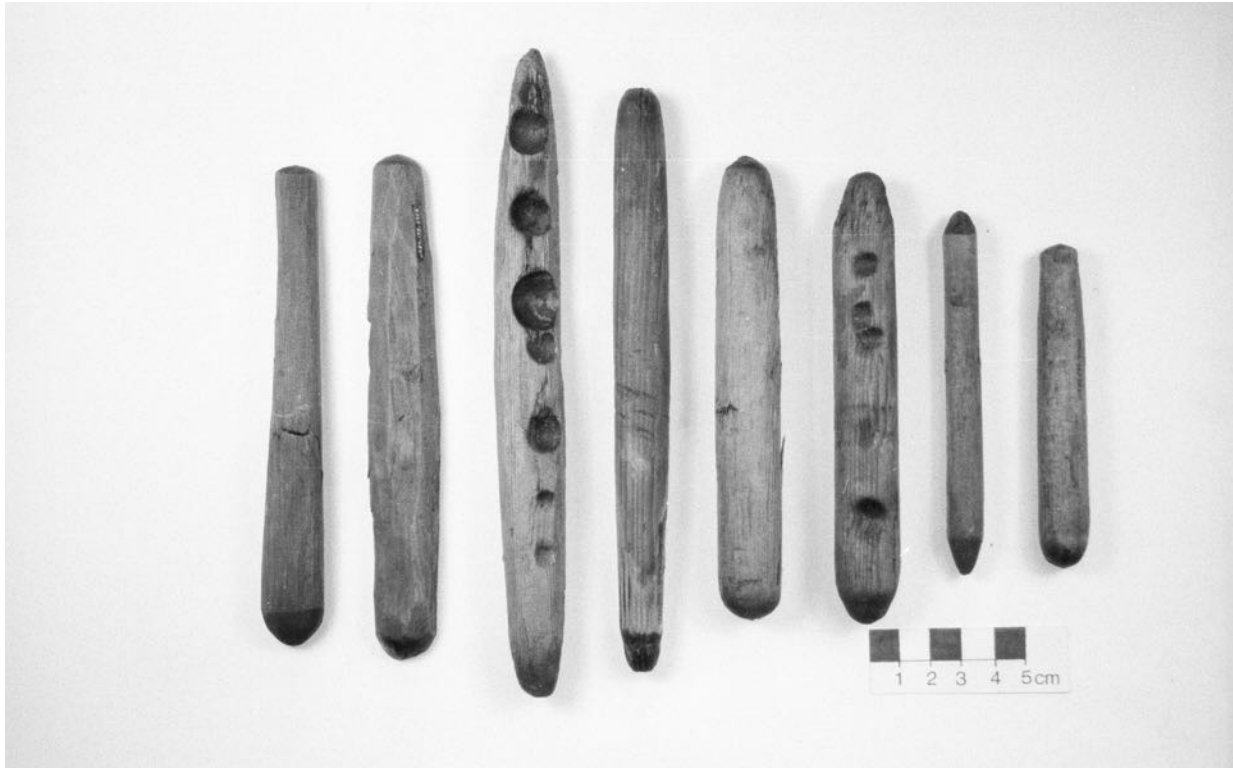
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Alutiiq Technological Inventory—Carved Organic

FIRE-STARTER DRILL

Fire starter drills from Karluk One (AM193)



Alutiiq Technological Inventory

Artifact Class Summary Sheet

English Names

Fire-Starter Drill Bow

Alutiiq Names

Ken`lisuutem qitguyaa

Industry

Carving

Activity Cooking/Storage

Function

Fire making

Common
Materials

Wood

LxWxD (cm)

Tradition

Ocean Bay

Kachemak

Koniag

Alutiiq

Miniature

Yes

Example Sites Found

Karluk One

No/Unknown

Description

Historic sources describe Alutiiq people using both holding a string in their hands and using a bow to rotate a fire drill.

“They make fire by using a sharpened stick. . . . In the middle of this stick, the end of which is smeared with fat, a string has been twisted round several times. They take the end of the string in their hand, and turn it as quickly as they can in both directions, until smoke comes from the end of the stick which is poked into the woodchips. Then they pick up a smoldering chip and put it to some dry grass; this they wave in their hands until a flame appears” (Davydov 1977:187).

There are many small bows in the Karluk One collection that could either be children's toy or bows for working a fire drill. These wooden pieces feature a nock at each end of a short, flat, thin length of wood. Similarly, pieces identified as handles could have been used for this purpose - these pieces have knobs at either end of a short length of wood with a cylindrical shaft.

References

Knecht, Richard A., 1995, The Late Prehistory of the Alutiiq People: Culture Change on the Kodiak Archipelago from 1200–1750 AD. PhD dissertation, Bryn Mawr College, Bryn Mawr, PA.

Last Update

07/14/2021

Updated By

Amy Steffian



Alutiiq Technological Inventory

Artifact Class Summary Sheet

English Names **Alutiiq Names**

Industry **Activity** **Function**

Common Materials

LxWxD (cm)

Tradition Ocean Bay Kachemak Koniag Alutiiq

Miniature Yes No/Unknown **Example Sites Found**

Description

A simple wooden handle with a hole in the distal side acted as a handle for a fire drill. A likely example from Karluk One is a roughly square piece of wood with a central hole on the underside that fits into the proximal end of a fire drill shaft. It is possible the hearths and handles were used interchangeably.

Some people call these tools a fire-drill bearing.

References

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Alutiiq Technological Inventory—Carved Organic

FIRE-STARTER DRILL BOW

Fire starter assembly from Karluk One (AM193)



Handle

Drill

Hearth

Bow



Alutiiq Technological Inventory

Artifact Class Summary Sheet

English Names **Alutiiq Names**

Industry **Activity** **Function**

Common Materials

LxWxD (cm)

Tradition Ocean Bay Kachemak Koniag Alutiiq

Miniature Yes No/Unknown **Example Sites Found**

Description

These distinctive artifacts acted as the base of a fire starter - the place where the turning drill shaft created an ember. They are typically minimally shaped, long, rectangular pieces of bark or wood with multiple, deep, circular wooden holes from use. The diameters of the holes generally matches the diameter of drill shafts in an assemblage. Sometimes broken or expended objects were recycled as fire hearths.

References

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Alutiiq Technological Inventory—Carved Organic

FIRE-STARTER HEARTH

Fire starter hearths from Karluk One (AM193)





Alutiiq Technological Inventory

Artifact Class Summary Sheet

English Names	Mortar	Alutiiq Names	Ciiwik
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Industry	Carving	Activity	Cooking/Storage	Function	Grinding food, medicine, snuff
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Common Materials	Sea mammal bone
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LxWxD (cm)	
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Tradition	<input type="checkbox"/> Ocean Bay	<input type="checkbox"/> Kachemak	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Koniag	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Alutiiq
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Miniature	<input type="radio"/> Yes	Example Sites Found	Kalruk One, Lightfoot Collection
	<input checked="" type="radio"/> No/Unknown		

Description	<p>A mortar is a cup or bowl designed for grinding or crushing. There are two Alutiiq words for mortar. Milliwik comes from the root word mili- meaning grind, and ciiwik from the root word cii-for smashing. Both words can be used to describe similar tools.</p> <p>These terms and clues from archaeological finds suggest that there were once different types of mortars. Alutiiq people carved large mortars from sea mammal bone, hollowing out whale vertebrae to make bowls with a rough surface for grinding. These implements are typically made out of a whale vertebrae. The vary from roughly carved (hollowed out vertebrae) to very carefully finished pieces resembling bowls. Elders remember these tools being used to make iqmik, a mixture of tobacco, wood ash, and plants used as snuff.</p> <p>A much smaller sea mammal bone mortar from Karluk is cup-shaped, with tall, sloping sides and a wooden plug in the bottom that could be removed to let the contents out. Smaller pieces like this one may have been used for mashing medicinal plant materials or grinding pigments for paint. The Karluk piece features a round base and tall, conical sides.</p>
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References	Knecht, Richard A., 1995, The Late Prehistory of the Alutiiq People: Culture Change on the Kodiak Archipelago from 1200–1750 AD. PhD dissertation, Bryn Mawr College, Bryn Mawr, PA.
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Last Update	07/14/2021	Updated By	Amy Steffian
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Alutiiq Technological Inventory—Carved Organic

MORTAR

Mortars from Karluk One (AM193)



Mortar from the Lightfoot Collection (AM10)—two views, gift of the Sundberg Family



Alutiiq Technological Inventory—Carved Organic

Mortar from Karluk One (AM193)



Alutiiq Technological Inventory

Artifact Class Summary Sheet

English Names **Alutiiq Names**

Industry **Activity** **Function**

Common Materials

LxWxD (cm)

Tradition Ocean Bay Kachemak Koniag Alutiiq

Miniature Yes No/Unknown **Example Sites Found**

Description

A funnel-shaped wooded pestle in the Karluk One collection features a cylindrical a stout cylindrical handle and a cone-shaped base stained dark brown from use. It is similar to an ethnographic example photographed in Karluk—also with a cylindrical wooden handle and a heavier base (though the ethnographic example widens to a fat cylindrical base - see photo below).

References

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Updated By

Alutiiq Technological Inventory—Carved Organic

PESTLE

Wooden pestle in a bentwood bowl, Karluk One (AM193)



Marie Shugak smashes berries with a wooden pestle, Karluk, 1991, Kodiak Area Native Association Collection, photograph by Priscilla Russell (AM4:196).





Alutiiq Technological Inventory

Artifact Class Summary Sheet

English Names	Plug	Alutiiq Names	Mallarsuuteq
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Industry	Carving	Activity	Cooking/Storage	Function	Stopper
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Common Materials	Wood, Ivory, Bark
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LxWxD (cm)	up to ca. 7 cm across
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Tradition Ocean Bay Kachemak Koniag Alutiiq

Miniature	<input type="radio"/> Yes <input checked="" type="radio"/> No/Unknown	Example Sites Found	Karluk One
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Description	<p>Alutiiq people stored oil and foods like berries, fish roe, or clams in pokes - flexible containers made from the stomachs of sea mammals. The distal end of the poke (bottom) was tied closed. The proximal end (top) may also have been tied, or fitting with a small round to oval plug. The plugs were likely intended to help people open and re-close a poke to access its contents. Some have central hole, perhaps to accommodate a tube (e.g., for pouring liquid out of the poke).</p> <p>These plugs have a flat bottom (distal side) and a gently domed top (proximal side). Around the center of their circumference there is a deep groove, presumably designed to hold a string for tying the plug into the neck of the poke.</p>
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References	Knecht, Richard A., 1995, The Late Prehistory of the Alutiiq People: Culture Change on the Kodiak Archipelago from 1200–1750 AD. PhD dissertation, Bryn Mawr College, Bryn Mawr, PA.
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Last Update	07/14/2021	Updated By	Amy Steffian
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Alutiiq Technological Inventory—Carved Organic

PLUG

Plugs and a tube (far left), Karluk One (AM193)





Alutiiq Technological Inventory

Artifact Class Summary Sheet

English Names	Spoon	Alutiiq Names	Laus'kaaq, Luus'kaaq		
Industry	Carving	Activity	Cooking/Storage	Function	Eating. Stirring
Common Materials	Wood				
LxWxD (cm)					
Tradition	<input type="checkbox"/> Ocean Bay	<input type="checkbox"/> Kachemak	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Koniag	<input type="checkbox"/> Alutiiq	
Miniature	<input checked="" type="radio"/> Yes	Example Sites Found	Karluk One, Malina Creek		
No/Unknown	<input type="radio"/>				
Description	<p>Spoons in the Karluk One collection are generally made of wood and resemble small scoops. They typically feature a short, cylindrical handle and a long oval or tear-shaped bowl that tapers to a wide, thin, rounded end. Some have decorated handles, including one featuring the snout of an animal carved at the end. A few spoons used in cooking have long handles and short, shallow bowls.</p> <p>Spoons can be difficult to distinguish from gut scrapers. However, as spoons were used in preparing food, they often have burn marks on in their bowls. They also have a rounded distal end (bowl) that curves upward. Gut scrapers tend to have a very thin, flat, distal end - the scraping end of the bowl - that may be polished from use.</p>				
References	Knecht, Richard A., 1995, The Late Prehistory of the Alutiiq People: Culture Change on the Kodiak Archipelago from 1200–1750 AD. PhD dissertation, Bryn Mawr College, Bryn Mawr, PA.				
Last Update	07/14/2021	Updated By	Amy Steffian		

Alutiiq Technological Inventory—Carved Organic

SPOON

Spoons from Karluk One (AM193)



Alutiiq Technological Inventory

Artifact Class Summary Sheet

English Names **Alutiiq Names**

Industry Carving **Activity** Cooking/Storage **Function**

Common Materials

LxWxD (cm)

Tradition Ocean Bay Kachemak Koniag Alutiiq

Miniature Yes No/Unknown **Example Sites Found**

Description

Tubes of bone and wood, both decorated and undecorated, occur in both Kachemak and Koniag assemblages and may reflect a variety of tasks.

Some tubes, particularly those of bird bone, are likely debris from making needles and awls. People cut the articular ends off of certain wing elements to create a long portion of bone for cutting slivers of bone out of. Sometimes these bones are even scored along their length as a step in manufacturing needles and awls.

Other tubes may be needle cases - storage for delicate sewing tools. Such cases are well-known among the neighboring Yup'ik, although at least historically Alutiiq seamstresses kept their needs in sewing bags with other tools. It is not clear whether needle cases were ever used in the Kodiak region.

Another possibility is that tubes are part of a harpoon assembly, used to inflate the floats attached to a harpoon shaft.

Finally, some tubes may represent devices for helping to pour liquid out of the tops of the flexible seal stomach pokes used to store foods.

References

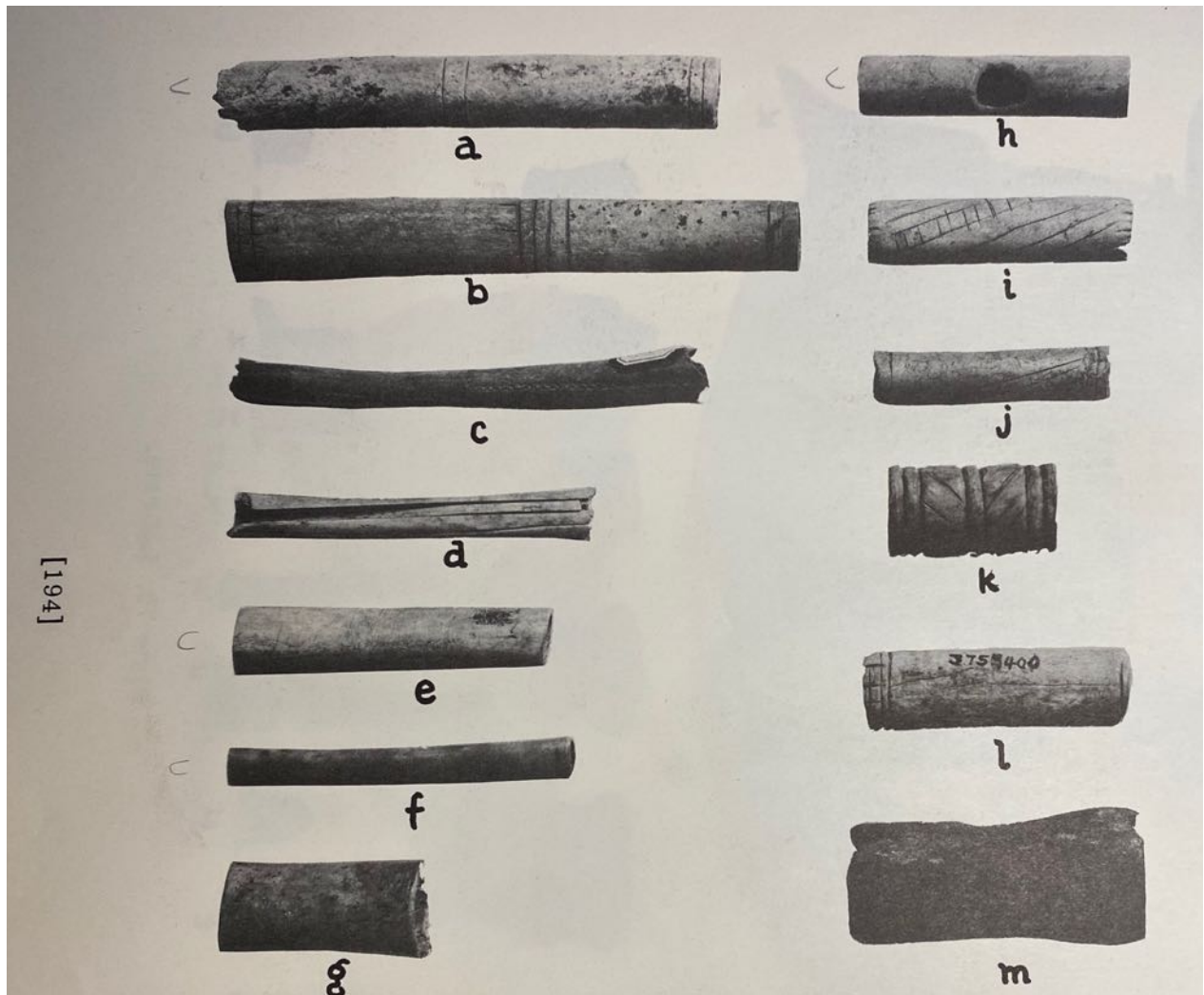
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Alutiiq Technological Inventory—Carved Organic

TUBE

Bone tubes from the Uyak site (from Heizer 1956:194, Plate 80)



Alutiiq Technological Inventory

Artifact Class Summary Sheet

English Names	Ulu Handle		Alutiiq Names	Ulukam agaa	
Industry	Carving	Activity	Cooking/Storage	Function	Gripping an ulu
Common Materials	Wood				
LxWxD (cm)					
Tradition	<input type="checkbox"/> Ocean Bay	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Kachemak	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Koniag	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Alutiiq	
Miniature	<input checked="" type="radio"/> Yes	Example Sites Found	Karluk One		
	<input type="radio"/> No/Unknown				
Description	<p>Ground slate ulu knives were fitted with smooth wooden handles. These handles were carved in a variety of styles, perhaps to signal ownership/family, and there are two-piece and one-piece ulu handles. The thicker, blunted, non-working edge of an ulu knife blade fit into the handle, which was designed to provide a grip and protect the hand of the user. Some ulu handles are decorated, carved in shapes that resemble animals, or painted.</p> <p>One-piece ulu handles: Although these handles were made in a variety of styles, they all features a deep groove along the center of the dorsal side for accommodating the proximal edge of a slate blade. Some of these handles feature a carved recess perpendicular to the length of the handle for lashing the handle to the blade through a hole drilled in the blade. Others don't have a recess to hold lashing and may have been secured to the knife blade with small wooden shims or glue.</p> <p>Two-piece ulu handles: These handles feature a carved recesses to accommodate the top edge of the ulu blade and grooved ends for lashing the handle together.</p> <p>The Karluk One assemblage reveals that ulu handles were often reused.</p>				
References	Knecht, Richard A., 1995, The Late Prehistory of the Alutiiq People: Culture Change on the Kodiak Archipelago from 1200–1750 AD. PhD dissertation, Bryn Mawr College, Bryn Mawr, PA.				
Last Update	07/14/2021		Updated By	Amy Steffian	

Alutiiq Technological Inventory—Carved Organic

ULU HANDLE

Ulu handles from Karluk One (AM193) – top: dorsal view, bottom: ventral view



Alutiiq Technological Inventory—Carved Organic

Curved ulu handles from Karluk One (AM193)



Two piece ulu handles from Karluk One (AM193)



Alutiiq Technological Inventory—Carved Organic

Ulu blade and handle, Karluk One (AM193)



Alutiiq Technological Inventory

Artifact Class Summary Sheet

English Names	Vessel		Alutiiq Names	Yaasiiguaq
Industry	Carving	Activity	Cooking/Storage	Function Holding food, water, etc.
Common Materials	WoodBowl			
LxWxD (cm)				
Tradition	<input type="checkbox"/> Ocean Bay	<input type="checkbox"/> Kachemak	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Koniag	<input type="checkbox"/> Alutiiq
Miniature	<input checked="" type="radio"/> Yes	Example Sites Found	Karluk One, Malina Creek	
	<input type="radio"/> No/Unknown			
Description	<p>Alutiiq collections with wood preservation hold many different sizes and shapes of wooden vessels. Bentwood bowls and boxes are the most common type of containers, made by attaching a thin, bent rim of wood to a sturdy, flat wooden base. Some had square or rectangular bases, others oval bases. Some had short sides, like a tub or dish, others had tall sides, like a bucket or box. Some of these containers were fitted with handles lengths of wood with grooved ends to which a cord was tied.</p> <p>To create wooden containers, craftsmen carved a thin piece of wood into a rim and bent it to shape with steam. The precise method of steam bending is not known, but pieces of water-saturated wood were probably heated gradually, perhaps in the steam bath or in a pit designed for this purpose. Craftsmen carved the corners of rims intended for square and rectangular vessels especially thin. Known as kerfing, this technique eased the bending process and prevented cracking. Rim ends in the Karluk One collection are sometimes thinner than the body of the rim. This allowed the rim ends to overlap and create a thickness similar to that of non-overlapping areas. Other vessels have a base with a notch designed to accommodate the thicker portion of the rim, where its ends overlap. An incomplete vessel from Karluk One illustrates that the next step was to glue the ends of the rim together. Craftsmen then attached the bent rim to the flat wooden base of the vessel, inserting small wooden pegs into holes drilled through both the rim and the base. Finally, the rim was further secured by drilling additional holes in its ends for spruce root or baleen lashing or additional pegs.</p> <p>Vessel bases are flat or gently dished, less than ca. 2cm thick, carefully shaped, have holes along the sides for accommodating pegs, and often have burn marks on their surface (the inside / proximal side) from dropping hot rocks into the containers they were a part of.</p>			
References	Knecht, Richard A., 1995, The Late Prehistory of the Alutiiq People: Culture Change on the Kodiak Archipelago from 1200–1750 AD. PhD dissertation, Bryn Mawr College, Bryn Mawr, PA.			
Last Update	07/14/2021		Updated By	Amy Steffian

Alutiiq Technological Inventory—Carved Organic

VESSEL

Bentwood vessel from Karluk One (AM193)



Vessel bases



Alutiiq Technological Inventory—Carved Organic

Vessel rims



Alutiiq Technological Inventory

Artifact Class Summary Sheet

English Names

Vessel Handle

Alutiiq Names

Agaa

Industry

Carving

Activity Cooking/Storage

Function

Carrying

Common
Materials

Wood

LxWxD (cm)

Variable but up to about 30 cm long

Tradition

Ocean Bay

Kachemak

Koniag

Alutiiq

Miniature

Yes

Example Sites Found

Karluk One

No/Unknown

Description

Like baskets and bentwood vessels, vessel handles come in a range of sizes and styles reflecting their use with different types of containers. Some of these bar-shaped tools are small and delicate, others are large and sturdy. Typically handles are long with a roughly cylindrical shaft that has a knob on either end. The knob tends to have one or two notches/grooves carved around the proximal face (top side) and along its sides, but not around it. In other words, the notch/groove doesn't extend under the bottom (distal) face of handle.

Several vessel handles in the Karluk One collection have carvings, painting, and inlaid decorations on the ends. Bird imagery is particularly common on handles.

References

Knecht, Richard A., 1995, The Late Prehistory of the Alutiiq People: Culture Change on the Kodiak Archipelago from 1200–1750 AD. PhD dissertation, Bryn Mawr College, Bryn Mawr, PA.

Last Update

07/14/2021

Updated By

Amy Steffian

Alutiiq Technological Inventory—Carved Organic

VESSEL HANDLE

Vessel handles from Karluk One (AM193) – common styles (top photo), unique styles (center and bottom photos)



Alutiiq Technological Inventory—Carved Organic



Alutiiq Technological Inventory

Artifact Class Summary Sheet

English Names

Vessel Lid

Alutiiq Names

Patuq

Industry

Carving

Activity Cooking/Storage

Function

Cover

Common
Materials

Wood, Bark

LxWxD (cm)

Tradition

Ocean Bay

Kachemak

Koniag

Alutiiq

Miniature

Yes

Example Sites Found

Karluk One, Malina Creek, Igvak

No/Unknown

Description

Vessel lids were carved to fit the shape and size of the vessel they were designed to cover. They are typically rectangular pieces of wood, similar in shape to a gaming disk. However, lids has a conspicuous round hole in the top. This hole is to insert the finger to list the lid.

These wooden pieces are very similar to slate shingles that have been trimmed to shape to fit over infloor storage boxes in Koniag houses. In essence, similar lids were made from both stone and wood, for use with different containers.

These tools often appear in miniature - and they tiny examples are typically made of cottonwood bark.

References

Knecht, Richard A., 1995, The Late Prehistory of the Alutiiq People: Culture Change on the Kodiak Archipelago from 1200–1750 AD. PhD dissertation, Bryn Mawr College, Bryn Mawr, PA.

Last Update

07/14/2021

Updated By

Amy Steffian

Alutiiq Technological Inventory—Carved Organic

VESSEL LID

Wood and bark vessel lids from Karluk One (AM193)



Vessel lid of bone from Igvak (AM34)

