



THE FRIENDS OF THE JENSEN ARCTIC MUSEUM

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Inupiak Ceremony in Sculpture

Recognizing our
Tremendous
Increase in
Memberships
(see page 3)

An installation of major sculpture opened on Commencement Day, June 13th. The artist, Larry Ahvakana is Inupiat Eskimo, born and raised in Barrow, Alaska. His parents, grandparents, and ancestors lived in a land of incredible, if barren beauty. They lived by hunting and fishing in close daily contact with the weather, landscape, and animals that affected their well-being. Artwork was not divorced from that daily life, but was meant to convey respect for the forces that shaped and affected existence itself. Beautifully

decorated clothing and tools honored the animals that allowed themselves to be hunted. Amulets and masks were used to communicate with the world of the *inua*: the spirit of the land and its inhabitants.

Larry Ahvakana's art is a contemporary expression of thousands of years of Inupiat people's relating to the world through the talent of hand and mind. This installation links past traditions and future predictions. Ahvakana, who currently lives in Suquamish, WA, combines the work of an artist with his Inupiat background. He visits relatives in Barrow, taking part in a culture that still hunts whales from small boats. He performs as a dancer and singer with a group whose leaders grew up on King Island, Alaska. Trained at the Institute of American Indian Art, Cooper Union School of Art, and the Rhode Island School of Design, Ahvakana has mastered sculpture, printmaking, painting, glass work, and carving.

Mariana Mace, Curator

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*"Drummers bringing the Seal"
sculpture by Larry Ahvakana.*

Saami Exhibit

A temporary exhibit of Saami knives and clothing has been installed in the Arctic Culture Gallery of the museum. The exhibit was made possible by Friends of the Jensen Board member, Eric Alava, and two Portland residents who loaned the objects. The Saami are the Lapp reindeer herders of the European Arctic. Their traditional lifestyle has much in common with the reindeer hunting Eskimo and Inuit people of Alaska and Canada.

One of the highlights of the collection on exhibit is a knife that has been dated back at least to the Iron Age. The knives are of several styles used for hunting,



for dress occasions, and for everyday use. Several of them have handles of antler, or birch with engraved designs.

Another unique example of Saami life is a pair of woven birch boots that were used by the Finnish Resistance fighters

during their struggle against Russian occupation. These, along with some fine examples of Saami clothing, can be compared with the Eskimo clothing throughout the rest of the museum.

Seeking New Board Members

The Friends of the Jensen Arctic Museum Board of Directors will soon have several vacancies to fill. The Board is a very important part of the museum, involved in program planning, special events and fund-raising. If you would be

interested in becoming a member, we invite you to contact a current board member. We will be glad to give you information about what we do and why we think it is well worth your time and energy.



Board News

Art Oomittuk was honored at the recent Northwest Indian Art Market in Portland with a first place award for one of his

carved masks. Art, along with board member, Larry Ahvakana, has donated artwork for the last two Salmon Bake raffles. Larry's sculpture is featured in the third annual Arctic art exhibit.

(see story on page 1)

Special Thanks to Our Current Board Members (expiring term years)

Erik Alava (2000), Larry Ahvakana (1998), Jim Birken (Ex Officio), Leta Edwards (Ex Officio), Joe Harding (2000), Carol Jensen (1997), Deanna Kingston (2000), Mariana Mace (Ex Officio), Art Oomittuk (1998), and Sylvia Warren (2000).

