

Linda S. Thibodeau

Director

Division of Libraries, Archives,
& Museums

lam.alaska.gov

STATE OF ALASKA

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
AND EARLY DEVELOPMENT

Robert C. Banghart

Deputy Director

395 Whittier St.
Juneau, Alaska 99801-1718
907.465.2901

Press Release

ALASKA STATE MUSEUM

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

DATE: February 8, 2013

CULTURE ON CLOTH

Alaska State Museum Exhibit Showcases Stories, Beliefs, And Traditions from Nunavut

JUNEAU – Join the Alaska State Museum for the official opening of *Nunavut's Culture on Cloth* on Friday, February 15, with a lecture at 7:00 p.m. by the exhibit curator, Judith Varney Burch. The museum is open extended hours with free admission on First Fridays beginning at 4:30 p.m.

Nunavut's Culture on Cloth features three dozen wall hangings, highlighting the work of several renowned Inuit artists from the hamlet of Baker Lake in the Territory of Nunavut, Canada – a community of 1800 people located 320 miles inland from Hudson Bay.

For hundreds of years, the Native seamstresses across the Arctic have skillfully sewn elaborately decorated clothing as well as sturdily constructed blankets and coverings for tents and kayaks using hides, gut and fur. In the heart of the Canadian Arctic, the age-old tradition of intricate hand sewing took on a new dimension during the 1960s as the nomadic people of Nunavut, Canada moved off the land and into communities where many began to work as artists producing arts and crafts for sale to an outside world. The vibrantly colored wool wall hangings that are featured in the exhibit were made by combining long-established sewing skills with introduced applique and embroidery techniques, and depict scenes and symbols of traditional culture.

Judith Varney Burch became captivated by the Inuit art of Nunavut after her first six-week stay in the Arctic. She has since become a lecturer, gallery owner, curator, and research collaborator to the Smithsonian Arctic Studies Center as well as an honorary board member of the Nunavut Arts and Crafts Association

About the exhibit, Varney Burch says, “These were all made in the homes of the artists, and frequently tell a story of the culture of the Inuit who live in Baker Lake. They are one of a kind and I am thrilled to be able to share them with others.”

Winter hours are 10 a.m. – 4 p.m. Tuesday through Saturday. Discounted winter admission is \$3. Visitors 18 and under are admitted free of charge. An annual pass that allows unlimited visits to the Alaska State Museum and the Sheldon Jackson Museum in Sitka is available for \$15. Assistance is available for visitors with special needs by contacting Visitor Services at 465-2901 before the visit.

FOR MORE INFORMATION:

Phone (907) 465-2901 Fax (907) 465-2976

www.museums.alaska.gov

[return to top](#)

[press releases](#) | [Alaska State Museums](#)