



Surfing Florida: a photographic history

It was September 2009, during the CBSM's Big Board Show opening, when a couple of strangers walked in. Low key like. Rod Faulds and Paul Aho, they said. They were interested in doing a surfing exhibit at Florida Atlantic University and they were just stopping in to check things out.

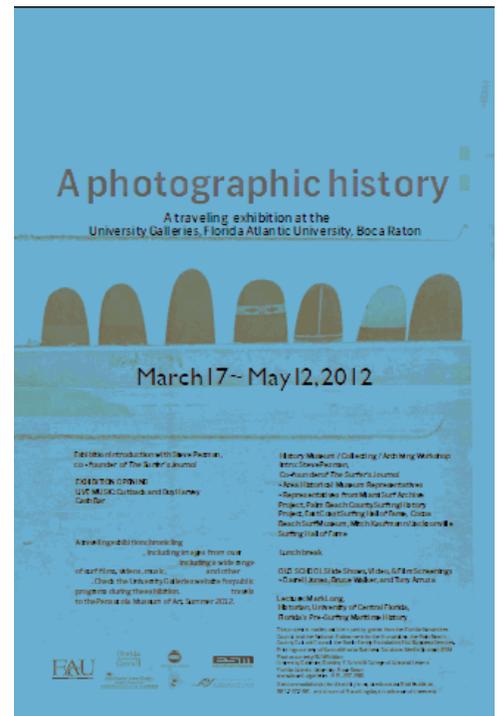
Two and a half years later, we will return the visit, when John Hughes and Dennis Bennett will be among the representatives of the Cocoa Beach Surf Museum at *Surfing Florida: a Photographic History*, which opens at FAU's Schmidt Center Gallery in Boca Raton on March 16. After its initial run at FAU from March 16 through May 12, a portion of the exhibit will travel for six- to eight-week exhibition periods through 2013.

The exhibit's curator, Paul Aho is an adjunct professor at FAU's Schmidt College of Arts and Letters. He began surfing during the boom years of the early 1960s. Aho says, "I experienced the same internal and broad cultural shifts that shaped the sport from decade to decade." He turned away from competition and the surfboard industry in the late 1970s to pursue a more self-contained relationship to the sport. In *Surfing Florida*, Aho says international stars, local legends and industry leaders "are seen within a context of the communities and culture in which they thrived."

Rod Faulds, Director of the FAU University Galleries, coordinated the exhibit's several components. Through the process, Faulds became an advocate for East Coast surfing getting its due, citing as one example the inexplicable omission of Jeff Crawford – the first non-Hawaiian to win the Pipeline Masters - from Warshaw's *The History of Surfing*. "When I was a grom in California," Faulds says, "I became aware of Propper, Tabeling, and Codgen's domination of East Coast surfing competitions." Still, the role of Florida in the broader history of surfing and skating is typically under recognized, and Faulds is hopeful the *Surfing Florida* project "will have some influence in adjusting the larger world of surfing's understanding of the importance of Florida's amazing array of great surfers and surfing industry leaders."

"CBSM is happy to have been a part of the process with Rod and Paul and many other contributors," says CBSM's director, Tony Sasso.

Surfing Florida celebrates surfing's halcyon days that are behind us, while recording them for the future.

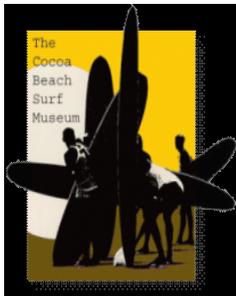




The programs of the Cocoa Beach Surf Museum are supported in part through a grant sponsored by the Brevard County Board of County Commissioners and managed by the Brevard Cultural Alliance.



THE COCOA BEACH SURF MUSEUM
www.cocoa beachesurfmuseum.org



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Wave Lengths

Published quarterly by The Cocoa Beach Surf Museum
 Where possible, the editor has given credit for photographs
 Please advise when additions or corrections are in order.
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Enjoy the Ride

Every newsletter, I go through the same dilemma. I want to write about all the wonderful people who make the CBSM a success. They take on dozens of fun jobs, small and large. Some do mundane chores like cleaning the exhibits, office and floor (yes, we do that). Some have specialized skills and build exhibits, walls, doors, work tables and more. Some rearrange and organize our storage units as we are in and out of there often. Some are sponsors and donors. Some write grants, newsletters, articles, and press releases. There are social media gurus (not me!) and artists and photographers. There are contest judges, contest directors, tabulators, emcees, musicians, and chefs, like Mickey King, pictured below. Historians and researchers work behind the scenes with imaging, archiving and oral histories. And at one time or another, we're all "gofers." We schlep. Did you see yourself in that list? Don't miss the fun. Get plugged in soon.

As you read this, the long-awaited *Surfing Florida* will be opening at FAU in Boca Raton. CBSM worked closely with Rod Faulds, Paul Aho and others who put their hearts and a couple of years of work into the effort and CBSM will be well-represented at the exhibit and workshops. We are currently working with Rod to try to bring the traveling portion of the exhibit to Cocoa Beach. So stay tuned. Meanwhile...

See you in the water, *Tony*



EAST COAST SURFING HALL OF FAME INDUCTS NEW CLASS

Congratulations to the 2012 Class of the East Coast Surfing Hall of Fame, who were inducted at the Surf Expo in January. The honorees are surfers John Holeman, Tim Briers, Sean Slater, Pat McCoy Wilcox, Barbie Belyea, Larry Miniard, photographer Kevin Welsh, and surf industry pioneers Kirk Cottrell, Shagg Catri and Bill Feinberg.

Photos courtesy of Tom Dugan, ESM (ECSHF class of 2006)



John Holeman



Kevin Welsh



Pat McCoy Wilcox



Tim Briers



Sean Slater

Join the Cocoa Beach Surf Museum and help preserve surfing history.
 Members receive a quarterly newsletter and special invitations to museum events.
 New memberships include a museum T-shirt.

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Agatha Christie: Writing Murder Mysteries And Surfing by John Curran

Which famous author wrote the following passage?

'Surfing looks perfectly easy. *It isn't*. I say no more. I got very angry and fairly hurled my plank from me. Nevertheless, I determined to return on the first possible opportunity and have another go. Quite by mistake I then got a good run on my board and came out delirious with happiness. Surfing is like that. You are either vigorously cursing or else you are idiotically pleased with yourself.'

Need a hint? It is from a novel written and published in the 1920s and the scene is South Africa. Still no idea? The book is in print in almost every bookshop around the world to this day. One last clue? It was written by one of the most popular authors of the last hundred years and the word 'clue' really is a clue. Would you believe Agatha Christie?

Yes, the creator of Hercule Poirot and Miss Marple loved to surf! Despite the cozy image of afternoon tea at the Vicarage -- although with the possibility of poison in the sandwiches -- and pre-dinner cocktails in the library -- just before the retired Colonel discovers a dead body sprawled on the carpet -- there were other, and much unexpected, sides to Agatha Christie. There was the Christie who, for many years, spent three or four months living in the desert in a tent while working on her husband's archaeological digs, the Christie who endured a fourteen-hour mule ride during her honeymoon in Greece and the Christie who describes in her "Autobiography" the joys of surfing in Honolulu.

Perhaps because she was born in Torquay, a coastal town of south-west England's Devon, dominated by the majestic sweep of Torbay, Agatha Christie loved the sea. Swimming in the sea was a favourite pastime; as she writes in her "Autobiography," 'Bathing was one of the joys of my life.' She goes on to describe in detail the complicated process this involved in the early days of the 20th century -- segregated beaches and a 'bathing-machine' to preserve one's modesty. A major innovation in the teenage Agatha's world was the introduction of mixed bathing; although it seems to have involved putting on more clothes than one took off! The closing pages of her "Autobiography" lists, ruefully, the pleasures that advancing years forced her to abandon and 'swimming in the sea' was one of these. Poignantly, the last page of "Autobiography" records that one everlasting memory will be of 'swimming in the sea at Torbay with [her daughter] Rosalind.' And an exhibition in Tokyo last year included rare home-movie footage of the Queen of Crime swimming in her beloved Devon.



Photo: Museum of British Surfing

Although the extract above, from her 1924 novel "The Man in the Brown Suit," is narrated by its heroine Anne Beddingfeld, it exactly mirrors Christie's own experiences while travelling the world with her first husband, Archie. He was asked to join a trade delegation, the British Empire Mission and, with a far-from-reluctant Agatha in tow, he left England in January 1922. Over the next year they visited South Africa, Australia, New Zealand and Canada with a holiday in Hawaii as an unnecessary inducement. Agatha hadn't needed one; she was an ardent and life-long traveller and she considered the possibility of seeing these (then) remote parts of the world was 'the kind of fantasy you had in dreams'. She wrote much of "The Man in the Brown Suit" during this tour and many of the travel experiences of Anne in the novel were, in reality, the experiences of Agatha in real life.

She devotes a few pages of her "Autobiography" to the initial difficulties, but eventual joys, of her surfing adventures in 1922 - being towed out by a native Hawaiian, waiting for her wave, and, initially, coming to grief. Perseverance paid off, however, and one can sense her exultation as she writes: 'Oh, the moment of complete triumph on the day that I kept my balance and came right into shore standing upright on my board!' And when you remember that these triumphant words were written a quarter-of-a-century afterwards, you realise what a memorable and exhilarating experience it must have been. To clinch the matter, there is a photo of the 32-year old Agatha standing in front of her surf-board!

Some of her most memorable characters and plots involve the sea. Emily Brewster in "Evil under the Sun" is a hearty swimmer; and one of her novels involves the killer's ability to swim strongly across a body of water. The victim in "The Hollow" dies at the side of a private swimming-pool; Christie got the inspiration for this setting from her visits, and, in all likelihood, swims, at the home of her actor friend Francis L. Sullivan, one of the earliest Poirots in the London's West End. The short story "The Bloodstained Pavement" from "The Thirteen Problems" (aka "The Tuesday Night Club") centers around two women who go swimming in the sea but only one returns; and "The Rajah's Emerald" concerns one James Bond and his adventures after an enjoyable swim at a fashionable beach. "A Caribbean Mystery" and "Evil under the Sun," "Triangle at Rhodes," "Problem at Sea" -- these and other titles reflect Christie's love of travel and the sea.

So, having examined the clues and carefully considered the evidence I think we can safely call that early surfing challenge in Honolulu, and its subsequent appearance in her third book, the start of a crime wave...



John Curran, a life-long Christie aficionado, and formerly editor of the Christie Newsletter, is a leading authority on the writer. He is the author of "AGATHA CHRISTIE'S SECRET NOTEBOOKS" and the forthcoming "AGATHA CHRISTIE: MURDER IN THE MAKING," both from HarperCollins Publishers. He lives in Dublin, where he is writing a doctoral thesis on Christie and her contemporaries.

Thanks to John Curran and to Heather Drucker of HarperCollins for their permission to reprint this article in Wave Lengths.

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The U.K. Daily Mail reported on July 30, 2011, that Agatha Christie was one of the first Britons to surf standing up. She first tried it in South Africa in 1922. At the time, Christie wrote, "The surfboards in South Africa were made of light, thin wood, easy to carry, and one soon got the knack of coming in on the waves." Peter Robinson, founder of the Museum of British Surfing, was surprised to learn of Christie's skill. "In the early 1920s, very few British people were surfing and the only one we know about earlier than her, standing up, was Prince Edward," Robinson said. Christie wrote about her experiences in *An Autobiography*, back in print from Harper Collins, November 2011. For more information, see <http://www.museumofbritishsurfing.org.uk/>.



Flagler Surfing Reunion, St. Augustine
January 2012. Photo by Andy Luce.

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EVENTS

For further details: Facebook and www.cocoabeachsurfmuseum.org



First Wednesdays, 7 pm

Cocoa Beach Surf Museum Volunteer Meetings

Join us at to see how you can be involved in exhibits, archiving, special projects and events. Lots of opportunities for fun this year!

Third Tuesdays, 6 pm

Surfrider Foundation Meetings

Meetings at Café Surfinista.



MUSEUM FILM SERIES AT THE COCOA BEACH LIBRARY

Saturday, March 24, Doors open 6:15 pm – Movie begins 7 pm

TUBULAR SWELLS

“You’ll see the best in Australia, Hawaii and then secret spots in Bali and Indonesia. Spectacular travel sequences show lush island paradises of sparkling beauty, with long outer reef break tubes.”



April 6-8, 2012

48th RON JON EASTER SURFING FESTIVAL

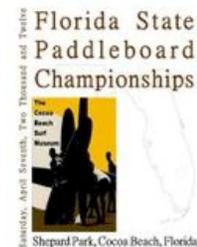
See <http://www.eastersurffest.com/esf12/> for a full schedule of events



April 7, 10:00 a.m. Race Time

FLORIDA STATE PADDLEBOARD CHAMPIONSHIP

Beach registration begins at 8:00AM. Race time is 10:00 AM. **REGISTRATION WILL CLOSE AT 09:30.** King/Queen of the Beach competition begins after completion of the race. Trophy presentation is after completion of events. The competitor with the best combined time in the 7 mile race and the King/Queen of the Beach race will receive the Grand Champion trophy. Also the top two finishers in each category get their names engraved on the Perpetual Trophy.



April 7, 7-10 p.m.

CBSM EASTER EXTRAVAGANZA

Admission \$20 at the door. Museum Members get in free! Don’t miss the Easter party! New exhibit, music, and food. Renew your membership or become a new member and support the programs of the CBSM.



June 2-3, 2012

11th ANNUAL WATERMAN’S CHALLENGE AND LUAU

Don’t miss a laid-back couple of days of surfing, paddling, eating, dancing and seeing old friends! International Palms Resort. Registration June 1 at 5:30 – 7:00 p.m. Luau at the Cocoa Beach Pool Pavilion 6 p.m. on June 2.



September 28-30, 2012

3rd ANNUAL FLORIDA WOMEN OF THE WAVES WEEKEND

Check out the WOW Facebook page for all the latest updates!



Splitting the Atom - A Tale of Two Pieces

© 2012 Tom Fucigna Jr., Hobe Sound FL

The words ocean, beach, surf and bikini may seem to flow together seamlessly, but the evolution of the modern bikini has been far from fluid.

A mosaic in a 4th century Italian villa depicts women exercising in bikini outfits. During the interceding few thousand years, however, suit size and coverage has varied substantially. Bathers cycled from going *au natural* to wearing gigantic "bathing gowns" until the early 1900s, when a combination of feminine gumption, war materials rationing and competitive fashion spawned the bikini.

Australian swimmer Annette Kellerman was arrested in the U.S. in 1907 for wearing a form-fitting one piece suit, which by 1910 became the generally accepted swimsuit for women. In 1913, Carl Jantzen, inspired by the debut of women's Olympic swimming, designed the first functional two-piece, which exposed the midriff but concealed a true lady's navel.

Then, in 1946, the bikini was created almost simultaneously by two competing Parisians. Jacques Heim was a bona fide fashion designer, and Louis Réard was an automobile engineer running his mother's lingerie boutique. Heim introduced a two-piece suit with the bottom still large enough to cover the navel, christened it "The Atome" - the smallest known particle - and described it as "the world's smallest bathing suit."

Réard's suit "split the Atome" and scandalously exposed the infamous navel. It also had a g-string backside, but the bellybutton component somehow drew more attention. He pronounced his 30 square inch masterpiece to be "smaller than the smallest swimsuit."

In 1946, South Pacific natives were displaced to facilitate atomic-weapon testing on the island of (yup) Bikini, inspiring the naming of a completely different kind of fission. Réard called his swimsuit the "Bikini" believing "its revealing style would create reactions among people similar to those created by America's atomic bomb."

Réard's bikini was introduced to U.S. markets in 1947, but many Americans were shocked by its scantiness, and the style was even outlawed in many cities. It wasn't until the late 1960s that American women finally accepted the bikini. Kevin Jones of the Fashion Institute of Design & Merchandising observed "Réard was ahead of his time by about 15 to 20 years." Pop culture bridged the gap. Brian Hyland's 1960 *Itsy Bitsy Teenie Weenie Yellow Polka Dot Bikini* instigated a bikini-buying spree. Ursula Andress emerged from the sea in 1962 wearing that white bikini in *Dr. No*, and former Mouseketeer Annette displayed her belly button in *Beach Party* in 1963 then showed America *How to Stuff a Wild Bikini* in 1966. *Sports Illustrated* published its first bikini-riddled swimsuit issue in 1964, and by 1965 a woman told *Time* magazine that it was "almost square" not to wear one.

All of this fascinating history raises two questions. First, what on Earth does this have to do with surfing? The answer involves adding a word to the question. Like it or not, "Surf Culture" has come to include the bikini. Frankie, Annette and most of the other stuffed bikinis didn't really surf, but they fueled the beach blanket bonfire that backlit the surfing lifestyle craze. Whether the suit is on a woman in the lineup, or a daughter, sister or mother on the beach or boardwalk, those two chunks of fabric are part of the surf scene.

The second question, perhaps not so commonly asked, is whether acceptance of bikinis as mainstream fashion constitutes progress in the liberation of women, or is just another chapter in the international conspiracy to objectify them. Seriously, did you notice that all the two-piece innovators were men? Yeah, yeah, I know nobody's forcing anybody to wear anything, but the desire to conform to fashion is a formidable force. If a man tells a girl that she should show the world her bellybutton, and a national magazine tells her she's "almost square" if she doesn't, what's going to happen? There's no simple or definitive answer, but it's food for thought. As they say in Paris, *Bon Appétit*.

The atom is a fascinating structure
common to all mankind
Positives and negatives united as opponents
revolving all the time

Viewpoints swing and shift with the wind
body beautiful or lewd
A victory for liberty
or a conquest of the crude

Does a bikini bolster
a woman's right to decide?
Assert her independence
or leave her objectified?

Fashion swings and shifts with the wind
how far below, how near above
but clothes will never make the woman or man
or define the stuff we're made of



350 AD - What's the big deal?

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- bikinihistory.com
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- carnival.com/bikini

Parting Shot



Peter Pan reported on the Annual Holiday Surfabout, held December 3, 2011, at Narragansett, RI, in "relatively balmy conditions for the month of December." Pan quoted ESA Competition Director Mario Frade as saying, "You could actually take off your wetsuit without it icing up."

<http://www.nesurf.com/surf-spots/newport-ri/557.html>

Photo by Joe McGovern