

surfing florida

a photographic history





Daytona Beach, 1930s. This early photo represents the sport's origins in Florida and includes waveriders Dudley and Bill Whitman, considered to be the State's first surfers. Having met Virginia Beach lifeguards Babe Braithwait and John Smith, who worked and demonstrated the sport in Miami Beach with Hawaiian style surfboards in the early 30s, Bill and Dudley proceeded to make their own boards out of sugar pine. Pioneer waterman Tom Blake showed up shortly thereafter and introduced the brothers — and much of the rest of the world — to his new hollow-core boards. The Whitmans were quick to follow Blake's lead and immediately abandoned their solid planks for the higher performance and lighter weight of hollow boards. Blake and the Whitmans remained close friends for life, and the Whitmans went on to foster major innovations and success in every aspect of their interests. Dudley, pictured fifth from the left, still resides in his native city of Bal Harbor. Photo by permission of the Gauldin Reed Archive, courtesy of Patty Light.*

** Gauldin Reed was among the State's earliest waveriders and resided in Daytona Beach. His impact on the sport's growth and the philosophy/lifestyle of surfing is equally enormous. Blake, the Whitmans and Reed shared a passion for adventure and remained the closest of friends.*

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Call it what you like, the sport, art, or lifestyle of surfing has had a profound impact on popular culture throughout the world – and while they never actually surfed, the Beach Boys captured its appeal best in their recording of “Surfin’ USA” – *If everybody had an ocean, Across the U.S.A., Then everybody’d be surfin’, Like Californi-a.* As a lifestyle, the sport reigns supreme in the heart of cultures worldwide – and while most think of Hawaii, California or Australia as meccas for the ever-growing population of surfers, the state of Florida has a long and rich history of innovation, influence and inspiration in the practice of riding waves. *Surfing Florida: A Photographic History* is a proposed exhibition, print publication and media project that intends to document the history of surfing in the state as well as providing interpretive and critical commentary on surfing’s influence on popular culture in Florida and beyond.

As an exhibition, *Surfing Florida: A Photographic History* will chronicle the history of surfing and surf culture in the state of Florida primarily through photographic works and displays. The exhibition will be designed to travel, with a significant core of two-dimensional graphic panels, vintage photographs, original works by current photographers documenting the “state” of the art, and digital prints of vintage material. In addition to chronicling the state’s emergence as the east coast epicenter for surfing in the U.S.A., the exhibition will feature the work and archives of the state’s most esteemed surfers, professional surf photographers and collectors of surf photography and memorabilia. The exhibition’s graphic panels will include texts relating how surf culture shaped popular culture, tourism and commerce in Florida’s surfing centers, as well as how local, national and international events shaped the evolu-



Top: Mike Tabeling, Sebastian Inlet, early 1970s. Mike Tabeling began surfing in 1963, made an immediate name for himself on the contest circuit and became the first east coast surfer to win a contest overseas during a visit to Peru. With the birth of the short board in the late 60s, Tabling quit contests altogether and dedicated himself to “free surfing” and a life of travel and nefarious adventures that took him and fellow Cocoa Beacher Bruce Valluzzi to France, Spain, Portugal, Morocco, Australia, South America and South Africa, where Tabeling later moved before returning to the states. While in Africa, he learned to fly motor-less Para Gliders and won the cross-country title for the Eastern Province. He also took up competitive surfing again and became the 1992 South African Short Board Champ. Tabeling now resides in Southern California.

Photo: Permission of Larry Pope, all rights reserved.

Bottom: Charles Williams, Showers, Palm Beach, 1980s. Identical twins, Charles and George Williams regularly set the Jetties on fire before making the move to the Treasure Coast and earning international recognition for their exploits in Puerto Escondido and elsewhere.

Photo: Permission of Tony Aruza, all rights reserved.



This shot of Shaun Abrams by Tony Arruza at Reef Road on Christmas day, 1989 graced the pages of Surfing magazine as a two page spread opening a feature story on Reef Road and restating the facts for surfers in Florida – yes, the surf does get good; yes, the surf does get big; yes, there is a ton of talent making their mark when the elements come together, and yes, Tony Arruza's skills behind the lens, in or out of the water, are second to none.

Photo: Permission of Tony Arruza, all rights reserved.

tion of surfing in Florida. Interestingly, this tide flowed and continues to flow both ways, with the state of Florida able to boast a legacy of male and female world champions, as well as extraordinarily talented and visionary pioneers who bested the best in the days that were.

While this initial proposal prioritizes photography as the primary documentary artifact to be exhibited, the organizers wish to leave the question of objects/artifacts – surfboards, clothing, printed materials, etc. – an open item of discussion and assemblage. Two options are suggested:

Option 1: The exhibition will be designed in a way that each exhibition venue may embrace local collections of surfboards, memorabilia and other surfing artifacts as they see fit or can realistically manage. Such object intensive presentations could be integrated or independent of the core graphic exhibition, depending on the resources of each presenting organization/region. The traveling panel style exhibition will also be able to stand alone as a high quality graphic presentation suitable for display in small museums and historical societies, libraries and/or community galleries.

Option 2: The exhibition will strive to include a definitive selection of artifacts, which, along with the graphic portion of the exhibition, will be presented at each exhibition venue.

It is anticipated that a component of Option 2, will serve as a nucleus for exhibitions to be hosted in each of the designated venues/regions.

Assuming the graphic portion of the traveling exhibition is well designed and fabricated to last many years, at the end of the exhibition's tour it could possibly be donated to an appropri-



Competition among surfers starts at the moment of conception — at most breaks you must compete to even catch a wave — and while Florida may not host the most consistent surf in the world, it has certainly produced a lion's share of world class talent. Centered is a very young Kelly Slater, now eight time world champion and one of the world's greatest sports phenoms. Kelly Slater is from Cocoa Beach and calls the Sunshine State home. Pictured with Slater are (l to r) Todd Holland, Scott McCranels, Rich Rudolph, Matt Kechle and Charlie Kuhn, all among the best surfers of their day.

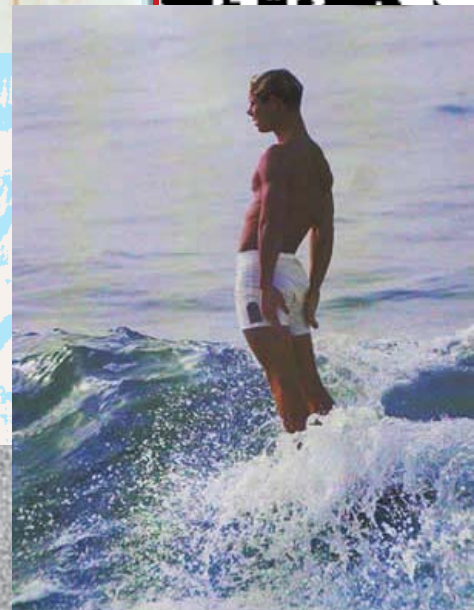
Photos: Permission of Tony Arruzo, all rights reserved.

Florida and the East Coast's first champion surfer, Gary Propper rose to international prominence with a flair that was impossible to ignore. Known worldwide as GP, Propper defeated west coast stars Dewey Weber and Tom Leonardo to win the 1966 East Coast Surfing Championships, having also won the junior's division in 1964. He was the highest paid surfer of his generation, with a top selling Gary Propper model by Hobie Surfboards that was ridden by the winning surfer in every division of the 1967 East Coast Surfing Championships. GP continues to exercise his entrepreneurial and artistic skills through Propper Entertainment and other creative ventures.

Photos: Permission of The Propper Archives, all rights reserved. bottom: photo by Tom Dugan

ate venue for long-term/permanent display. The exhibition's focus will be culture and community.

As a book, *Surfing Florida: A Photographic History* will acknowledge the state's role in the international community of surfers — culturally, commercially and competitively. Envisioned as an attractive "coffee table" publication it will also include one or more essays by surfer scholars on topics like "soul surfing" and environmentalism and reflections on the counter culture and surf culture of the 1960s and 1970s. The *Surfing Florida* book will expand upon surfing within the state to chronicle the achievements, anecdotes and activities of the surfers who found their feet in Florida. While documenting the growth of surfing in the state, this publication will actively seek to position Florida, its surfing pioneers and contemporary practitioners, as formative and influential participants in a global phenomenon that has shaped





Jeff Crawford, 1984. The central coast of Florida has produced exceptional surfers from generation to generation, earning international recognition in the media and contest circuit. Among the standouts in the 1970s was Jeff Crawford, who along with Kelly Slater, was one of only two east coast surfers to ever win the prestigious Pipeline Masters. Crawford took the crown in 1974, after having placed third in the Duke Classic in 1973.

Photo: Permission of Tony Arruza, all rights reserved.

a collective language of participation on the internet highway as well as the emergence of a myriad of related extreme sports.

As a traveling exhibition and print publication, *Surfing/Florida: A Photographic History*, will be curated and edited by Paul Aho (see organizer's biographies), who will consult with relevant figures, active participants, historians, museum and historical society collections, key figures in the surfing industry, surf photographers and historically significant surfers. Among those who have expressed interest and support for this project to date are internationally recognized surfers Gary Propper, Mike Tabeling, Yancy Spencer, Claude Codgins, Peter Mendia, Carmen Irving and Kevin Grondin, among others; shapers and entrepreneurs Juan Rodriguez, Ricky Carroll, Ron Heavyside, Michael Mann, Phil and Richard Salick, and Pete Dooley; photographers Larry Pope, Tony Arruza, Nik McCue and the estate of M.E. Gruber; and surfer/activists Cecil Lear, Dick Catri, Paul West, Sean

O'Hare, Tom Warnke, "Chummer" McCrannels, Fred Salmon, Pat Valuzzi, Bob Baugher and Joe Twombly, among others.

Aho will be aided by FAU student interns, student employees and contracted consultants (grant and sponsorship dependant), as well as community volunteers like John MacDonald, Nik McCue, Greg Tindall, Harry Donner Tom Warnke, Bill Whidden, Mitch Kaufman, Mike Pechonis and Brandon Tarpley (see volunteers' biographies), who will assist in the logistics of each region's participation, including assisting the curator to make contacts with notable persons and collections in their respective region.

Following are the proposed regions for the project's organization: 1) Metro-Dade and Broward Counties; 2) Palm Beach, Martin and St. Lucie Counties; 3) Central Florida—Cocoa Beach region (Sebastian to Titusville); 4) New Smyrna and Daytona Beach; 5) North Florida (Flagler Beach to Jacksonville); 6) The Panhandle; and 7) the Central

Gulf Coast. The organizers will travel to each of the seven regions to meet with key figures to develop a defined proposal for exhibition dates, venues, speakers and publication agents, potential sponsors and grant application possibilities by mid 2009. The organizers are proposing that the exhibition could open during the 2009/10 academic year at one or both of the University Galleries' spaces at Florida Atlantic University, Boca Raton. Exhibition venues in each of the respective seven regions, as well as speakers and topics are to be developed. It is anticipated that lecture presentations in association with funding proposals will focus on the mythology of surfing as perceived and presented by the entertainment industry, to be conducted by film/media academics within the State's university system.

As a documentary movie and/or film project, *Surfing/Florida*, is a topic of development and considerable interest among industry personalities and interests within the State and beyond.



*Surfers across the planet seek out swells produced by storm systems crossing the world's oceans — either the hand of god or the work of the devil, depending on who and where you are at the moment. On occasion, systems come together off the Atlantic coast that bring to life a completely different encounter for Florida surfers than that of a good day in the water. In recent memory, this would include the Halloween Swell of 1991, generated by the same storm system that inspired the novel and movie *The Perfect Storm*. More recently the even more unbelievable swell that arrived on the shores of Florida in May of 2007. The former resulted from the merger of the remnants of Hurricane Grace and a huge low pressure system off Nova Scotia; the latter was produced by tropical storm Alberto, which also turned extratropical as it roamed and drifted south off the mid-Atlantic coast.*

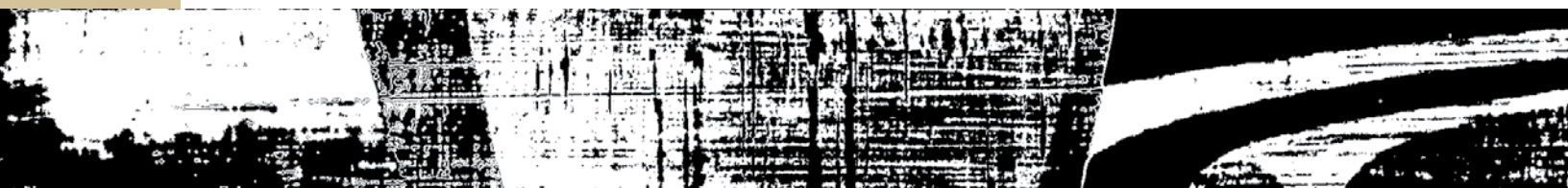


Above: Palm Beach, May 2007. Forget the relationship of scale between the wave closest to shore and the buildings it is approaching; forget the scale between the wave closest to shore and the wave furthest at sea; forget the distance between those two unforgettables; forget the opulence of the structures you are viewing and the calm beauty of the man-made canal beyond; forget the 19 second wave period, and concentrate instead on the sheer physical beauty of the lacework of whitewater occupying both a greater height and depth with each approaching wave.

Below: Palm Beach during the Halloween Swell of 1991.

Photos: Permission of Tony Arruza, all rights reserved

It is a subject rife with possibilities. As a documentary, it recounts the time and place of an emerging culture, both revolutionary and reactionary, from its beginnings in the early 1930s to the present. It's the stuff of a Hollywood movie, including one of the world's most spectacular jewelry heists and the emergence of a culture of competition that pitted east against west in a quest for fame and fortune. In addition to the early success of Gary Propper and others from the central Florida coast, the story also includes two former female multi-time world champions, Lisa Andersen and Frieda Zamba, as well as nine-time men's world champion Kelly Slater.





The Gulf Coast of Florida is home to two regions that benefit from the right bottom conditions and geography to receive quality surf and has been home to huge numbers of avid and accomplished surfers. In the southern Gulf, this would include the region centering on Venice Jetties and the surrounding barrier islands. In the Panhandle, it stretches from the States' western edge to the beaches surrounding Panama City. Within the Panhandle, Yancy Spencer has held court for decades and his sons Yancy IV and Sterling continue to set the standards in the region. Yancy, the patriarch, is regarded internationally as the best surfer of his generation to come out of the Gulf, having earned titles as Gulf Coast Champ in 1970, East Coast Champ and U.S. Longboard Champ. His son Sterling appears to be the Panhandle's heir apparent, having four NSSA Junior titles under his belt and his first pro-victory at the Billabong Junior Pro at Sebastian Inlet in 2006. He is currently rated #61 on the World Qualifying Tour and shows signs of continuing to move up.



*Top: Yancy Spencer III, Central Florida, 1974
Photo: Permission of Larry Pope, all rights reserved.
Middle: Sterling Spencer, Destin Beach
Bottom: Yancy Spencer IV, Pensacola Pier
Photos: Permission of Nik McCue, all rights reserved.*

ORGANIZERS

Project Director: W. Rod Faulds

Director of University Galleries, Dorothy F. Schmidt College of Arts and Letters at Florida Atlantic University (FAU), 1997 – present, Faulds earned an M.A. in Design and a Certificate in Museum Studies at California State University at Fullerton and completed graduate studies in Art History at Williams College, Williamstown, Massachusetts. He has served in a number of museum positions including Chief Designer, Brooklyn Museum (1995-96); Associate Director of Operations and Public Programs, Guggenheim Museum, N.Y. (1993-94); Associate and Assistant Director, Williams College Museum of Art, (1984-1992). Faulds functions as both curator and director of the University Galleries, FAU. Since 1997 he has curated numerous exhibitions, such as: Stereotypical Errors: Michael Ray Charles and Joyce Scott, (1999); Natural Histories: Artists Forge in Science and Nature, (2001); southXeast: Contemporary Southeastern Art (2005 & 2008). Faulds first surfed in 1965 in Southern California and has lived/surfed in Northern California, New York City and Florida.



Exhibition Curator/Publication Editor: Paul Aho

Artist, surfer, designer and arts administrator, FAU adjunct professor of art, Paul Aho will serve as the exhibition's curator and publication editor, surveying Florida's public and private resources and collections for surfing related photography and other historically relevant materials. He will also serve as liaison with the state's best surf photographers and recognized surfers. Aho earned both BFA and MFA degrees in art within Florida's university system, the latter from the University of South Florida. He is a lifetime Florida resident who grew up in Ocean Ridge and frequently traveled the east coast as an AAA amateur surfer in the early seventies, winning the Junior Men's Division of the Florida State Open Contest in the 1970s. Aho's surfing has taken him to numerous international destinations and he remains an avid and able surfer. He is also an accomplished surfboard shaper, who still has rights to the shaping bay at Nomad Surfboards, a former east coast industry leader and venerable surfboard shop that has been in operation since 1968.



The Ship— Surfers in the Palm Beaches were treated to the creation of a spectacular new wave with the grounding of the *Amaryllis* on Singer Island during Hurricane Betsy on September 9, 1965. At 450 feet and hard aground on the reef, "The Ship" proved impossible to remove and remained in place until 1969 when it was cut into pieces and taken to its final resting place as a fishing and diving reef a half-mile from shore. During its day, the *Amaryllis* attracted surfers and spectators alike, and produced an excellent left hander that hosted the region's top talent. Shown here are locals, Eddie Scozzare (right) and Fred Salmon.

Photo: Permission of M.E. Gruber Archive and the Palm Beach County Surfing History Project, all rights reserved

Surf Clubs were an integral part of the nation's surf culture and the Palm Beaches sported no less than 13 at one point in the early 1970s. The Palm Beach County Surfing Association served as an umbrella group and as an advisory and activist organization at large. Contests were held between and within clubs, creating a competitive spirit and an excuse to skip out of work and head to the beach. A Possum's Reef inter-club award presentation at "The Ship", picturing left to right Mike Frantz (seated), Mark Soverel, Kim Neilson, Eddie McCoy, Jerrie Graham, Doug "Hoy" Soverel, Bill "Holmesy" Holmes, Mike Ross, Mike Bowe, Eddie Bauer and Phil Flourrey.

Photo: Permission of M.E. Gruber Archive and the Palm Beach County Surfing History Project, all rights reserved.

The Hobie Team, 1969. With boasting rights to major wins at contests up and down the east coast and beyond, the Hobie Team out of Cocoa Beach included Gary Propper, Michael Tabeling and Mimi Monro, among the most influential and accomplished surfers of the time. Centered behind Tabling and Monro, is team captain Dick Catri, who began surfing in the late 50s in Miami through a friendship with Jack "Murf the Surf" Murphy. Catri moved to Hawaii and Murf headed north to open Murf's Surf Shop in Indiatlantic, near to where Catri would many years later open his own shop. Also pictured are Joe Twombly, Michael Shea, Sam Gornto, "Skinny" English and "Sunday", among others.*

**Murphy would go on to spend time in prison for his role in one of the most dramatic jewel thefts in the nation's history and a life sentence for the murder of two women with whom he was involved in securities theft. Having found God in prison, he was paroled in 1986, after spending 20 years behind bars, and today travels to prisons around the world, spreading the word of God and its alternatives to men who have made bad decisions during their lives.*

*top right: M.E. Gruber, 1960s, photographer unknown
middle right: Doug "Hoy" Sovereil, Singer Island, 1969*

Photos: Permission of M.E. Gruber Archive and the Palm Beach County Surfing History Project, all rights reserved

bottom right: Reef Road, Palm Beach, 1980s

Photo: Permission of Tony Arruza, all rights reserved.



COMMUNITY VOLUNTEERS

John MacDonald is a lifelong surfer who is acting as a community volunteer for the Cocoa Beach region for this project. John learned to surf in Cocoa Beach in the early sixties before moving with his family to California. After extensive worldwide travels, including Australia and Bali, John returned to Cocoa Beach in 1976, where he has made his home and his career as an international salesperson for a global producer of aluminum products.

Harry Donner is an experienced and accomplished surfer who runs the business of One World Surfboards in Sarasota, Florida. As a veteran of multiple winters in Hawaii, Harry confides that everyone who has been in the water at Sunset Beach when its ten feet or over, has a story to tell. And while his may not be that of another Harry Donner, who starred as Major Sloan in *Wine, Women and War*, the 1973 Hollywood feature leading to the television series *The 60 Million Dollar Man*, our man Harry certainly has his own stories to tell, as well.

Greg Tindall speaks and surfs, and surfs and speaks very well. As a surfer and story-teller of note and growing recognition, Tindall was named a 2007 Florida Voice by *The Society of the Four Arts in Palm Beach*, has hosted open mics for *Poetry & Prose* events at the Little Theatre in Libby, MT, has participated as a guest-speaker at FAU and will soon be published in *Surfer's Path*. Among his spoken works is a piece on the huge swell of May 2007, written in second person specifically, as he says, for his friends who wanted absolutely nothing to do with the scale of that event. As one who did, Greg has structured the piece in a tone which puts you smack dab in the middle of the experience, rather than assuming a journalist's recounting of the facts and circumstances. Its a subtle difference but one that makes sense, if you agree, that surfing is more of an experience than anything.

Brandon Tarpley is a graphic designer and surfer who has made the Treasure Coast his home since relocating from the Panhandle over a decade ago. He is well connected in the surfing community of the Treasure Coast and has shown his metal through some gnarly days in the region to earn his way in the fray and a place in the lineup. Brandon has surfed in Costa Rica, Mexico, Puerto Rico and the eastern states, and has degrees in communication, graphic design and photography from Florida Atlantic University.



The Cocoa Beach Pier has been home to major contests since the sport's early days and continues to be the site of the Annual Cocoa Beach Easter Surf Festival, which hosted its 44th competition in 2008, as well as the Annual Labor Day Pro-Am Surfing Festival benefiting the National Kidney Foundation, celebrating its 21st event in 2008. Pictured among other Floridians are John Eakes, Bruce Valluzzi (in hat), Betsy Twombly, Gary Propper, Claude Codgins, René Eisler and Gary Freeman.*

Photo courtesy of Pat Valluzzi

**Organized by Phil and Rick Salick, the NKF Pro-Am was founded in the early 1980s to raise money for the Kidney Early Evaluation Program, which provides testing for at-risk people at Kidney Centers in Florida. Currently raising approximately \$50,000 in Cocoa Beach, the event expanded in 2008 to include the Aqua East Pro-Am Surfing Festival in Northeast Florida, sponsored by Aqua East Surf Shop in Jacksonville Beach.*

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Nikolas McCue is the recognized figure behind the lens in Florida's northwestern Gulf Coast. He is also owner of SideStreamSports.com – documenting and promoting the region's water sports with compelling and lasting proof that the Panhandle remains Florida's best kept surf and watersports secret.

Mitch Kaufman is the surf advocate extraordinaire and director of the Eastern Surfing Association's largest membership district, serving Jacksonville Beach and the surrounding communities. An accomplished competitor in his own right, Mitch holds the keys to the region's historical archives and has documented the early years of the sport in North Florida through a recent documentary exhibition presented at the Beaches Museum & History Center in Jacksonville Beach.

Mike Pechonis is owner of Bird Products and shaper of Bird Surfboards in Deerfield Beach. With over 20 years' association with Island Water Sports near Deerfield's Pier, and a leading role in his region's ESA competitions, Pechonis is connected to his surf community like no other. He remains active in the area's Christian Surfers and Christian Skaters Association, organizations he helped to create and was co-founder of *Ramp 48*, a coveted indoor skate park in Broward County.

Bud Wright is among New Smyrna Beach's pioneer surfers and has the distinction of being a founding member of the Smyrna Surfari Club, among the longest standing surf clubs in the US. The Surfari Club survives because it has purpose, awarding over \$100,000 in scholarships to area high schoolers since its inception and organizing amateur and major profession competitions in the region, including the 1989 Aloe Up Cup (directed by Skipper Eppelin), the most lucrative competition in the sport's history. Bud Wright got his first board in 1961 and has been an advocate and activist since that time.

Tom Warnke has served as director of the Eastern Surfing Association's Palm Beach County District almost every year since its inception in 1971. He also founded the Palm Beach County Chapter of the Surfrider Foundation – serving on its executive committee since its beginning – and is deeply involved in environmental advocacy issues and policymaking in the Palm Beaches. Not all business, Warnke began surfing in 1964 and continues to surf and compete, winning the ESA 2004 Southeast Regional Championship Legends Short Board competition before taking third place for the East Coast and second at the national competition in Huntington Beach, CA.

Bill Whiddon is creative director for *The Miami Herald* and a established member of Miami's surfing elite. He is



Bruce Cleland Photo: David Silver



a co-owner in re-establishing *Surfboards Miami*, a pioneer board builder in Miami and an informed witness to the region's contributions to the sport. While long gone are the days of the Miami Pier and the former Kennel Track at South Beach, Whidden remembers them well. He continues to surf and travel regularly and takes particular pride in his newest Surfboards Miami longboard, a 10'4" beauty shaped by former Miamian Dave Hamilton at Ricky Carroll's Rockledge-based R&D Surf Inc.



Above: Pictured here in the 70s, Chris Snyder (Frosio) began surfing in the 1960s and led the way for generations of female stars to emerge from North Florida. Hailing from the surrounding communities, the legacy of internationally recognized female surfers from the region includes multiple-time world champions Frieda Zamba and Lisa Anderson.



Opposite page, top and center: Bruce Clelland, Jax Pier, 1966. Clelland was a natural talent and went on to earn serious recognition as a leading figure among other "world-class" talents to emerge from North Florida. He had his own signature model, The Bruce Clelland East Coast Special, released in 1965 through Greek Surfboards and was re-released in 2007.

Opposite page bottom: Dick Rosborough, New Jersey, 1969. Rosborough made his claim to fame on the East Coast and beyond, competing in the World Contest in Australia in 1970, and moving to Hawaii in 1973. After 11 years surfing and shaping, he returned to Jacksonville Beach, where he continues to shape, surf and live the life.

Bottom: Karina Petroni, from Atlantic Beach, is among the leading talents competing today, having won the National Championships in 2002. In 2008 she was the only female surfer from North America to qualify for the World Tour.

Inset: A young Karina Petroni trains for the future.

All photos this and the prior page courtesy of Mitch Kauffman and "Hanging 10", The History of Surfing in the Jacksonville Beaches, an exhibition Kauffman organized for the Beaches Museum & History Center

Long recognized for its reign as a winter resort and home to America's most decadent night life, South Beach is also home to one of the State's best waves. Beyond the Art Deco hotels and at the site of the former pier and Dog Track, a unique wave zone still waits for the conditions to come together. Whether the elusive refractory swell or tropical event, South Beach lights up with unmistakable A-frame barrels and water so amazingly turquoise it's the stuff of fantasy. Serving the surfing needs of a city with over 1 million residents, when South Beach is on it also home to horrific crowds and things do get tense.

While under-recognized for its occasional yet exceptional surf, Miami is maybe even less known in the history of surfing in Florida, as home to Florida's first surfers, Dudley and Bill Whitman. Additionally, given the rarity of good surf in Miami, the region has witnessed a regular exodus of its leading talent over the decades. Among the many superb surfers and industry leaders originating from Miami are Jackie Grayson, Lewis Graves, Doug Deal, Bill Stewart, Bob Rotherham, Ross Houston, Mike Mann and of course Dick Catri and Jack "Murph the Surf" Murphy, two of the most renowned figures in the history of the sport.



Above: Will Tant enjoys a magic moment at South Beach, Miami Beach. Hailing from Flagler Beach, Tant is arguably one of the most under recognized surfers from Florida to make their mark on the international scene. As a traveling pro, Will gives back as hard as he charges, having supported Waves of Compassion with Surf Aid International for tsunami relief in Sri Lanka, as well as programs to help the poor in Nicaragua. The Tant Family also presents the annual Tommy Tant Memorial Surf Classic at the Flagler Pier, a growing success in support of scholarships and food programs for those in need.

Photo courtesy Chris Wilson, all rights reserved.

Below: The Wall, late 1960s. Photo courtesy Bill Whiddon, all rights reserved.





Opposite page top left: Miamians Hector Smith and John Shearer hit the road on Ocean Drive in South Beach, late 1960s. Photo courtesy Bill Whiddon, all rights reserved.

Opposite page lower left: A classic grom shot in front of the wall at the Kennel Club, South Beach, Miami, early 1970s. The wall enclosed the underground parking lot serving the Kennel Club which was the site of an historic confrontation between local youth and law enforcement, September 11, 1967. Adjacent to the pier, the site was home to Miami's surf community well into the early days of short boarding.



Opposite top right: Dudley Whitman stands proud at the Whitman Family Museum in Bal Harbor. Pictured with Dudley are exact reproductions of the first surfboards built in Florida by the Whitmans. On the left is a solid Hawaiian-style board built in 1936 by Bill Whitman that was quickly replaced by this Blake-style hollow board, which Dudley built at the age of 13. Photo courtesy Rod Faulds, all rights reserved.

Bottom: A day in the water is still a day in the water, Miami Beach shows its enthusiasm for the sport. Photo courtesy Bill Whiddon, all rights reserved.

Community and Culture — Behind the Scenes, the New Smyrna Surfari Club remains a vital element in the cultural life of its community. Likely the oldest extant surf club in the state, the Surfari Club remains vital by putting purpose into practice, providing scholarship support for local youth through events and competitions, mentors the development of its own and positions New Smyrna Beach as a player in the state's surf hierarchy. With the recent emergence of talent like Evan Geiselman, among many, many others, coming in the footsteps of Kem McNair, Charlie Baldwin, Terry Presley, the Crouch Brothers, and again, many, many others, the region is once again emerging as a major player in the national scene. The Surfari Club boasts nearly 150 members. Among those pictured here are Mike Martin, regional tour director for the Association of Surfing Professionals and "Skipper" Eppelin, director of the 1989 Aloe Up Cup, the most lucrative contest in the sport's history.



Middle: The Surfari Surf Club, late 1960s. Photo courtesy the Surfari Club.

Below: Jax Beach remembers Jed Davis, who was struck by a car while riding his bike and died in December 2007. One of North Florida's most successful competitors, Jed was nicknamed "Money Man" due to his consistent place in the finals of both long and short board divisions. Photo courtesy Mitch Kaufman

Opposite left top: The Treasure Coast crew hanging out at the public beach in Stuart in the late 1960s. Photo courtesy Bill Whidden.

Opposite left middle: Four time world champion Frieda Zamba was the first Floridian to earn such honors, winning three consecutive titles between 1984 and 1986 and reclaiming the title in 1988. Her first win in '84 made her the youngest competitor ever to take the title. Zamba's radical approach narrowed the gap between the sexes in performance and perception and she won five straight Surfer Poll Awards between 1985 and 1989.

Opposite bottom left: Juan Rodriguez holds honors as one of the leading surfers to hail from Florida's central Gulf region and one of the nation's best and most experienced shapers. Rodriguez began surfing in 1963 at the Old Casino, a former landmark in Lido Beach but soon came to call Siesta Key's Crescent Beach his home break. Juan continues to operate One World Surfboards out of Sarasota and to put his skills as a craftsman to work making a wide range of products serving surfers and the surfing lifestyle. Photo courtesy One World Surfboards. Photo by Nicki Daly



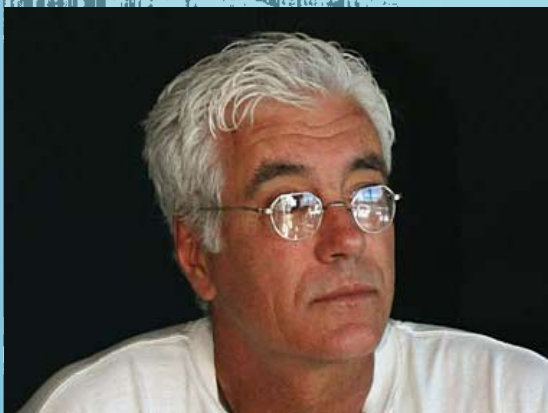
Opposite top to bottom: Dick Catri and Cecil Lear, key figures in the growth, mentoring and support of surfers on the Atlantic coast, at the Surfing Legends Hall of Fame booth at Surf Expo, Orlando, 2009. Cecil continues to serve as the president of the East Coast Surfing Hall of Fame in Cocoa Beach and was co-founder of the Eastern Surfing Association in 1967 with New Yorker Rudy Huber. Catri, along with Palm Beacher David Reese, co-directed the first ESA district encompassing all of Florida.

Mitch Kaufman runs the ESA for the district serving Jacksonville and northernmost Florida, boasting the largest membership on the coast and many of its best surfers.

Fred Salmon previews the development of the Palm Beach County Surf History Project at Surf Expo 2009. This dedicated group, including Tom Warnke, Corky Roche, Bill Keeton and Mike Spellman, are seeking to preserve and document the lively history of surfing in the Palm Beaches.

Bill Whiddon shares his knowledge and archives with Surfing Florida at his office at The Miami Herald where he serves as creative director. Fortunately for Whiddon, the Herald's building is located on Biscayne Bay just minutes from South Beach, Bill's home break for over 40 years.

Cecil Lear and David Reese at Reese's home on Reef Road. David and Cecil remain active in the ESA, which they helped to found in 1967, among other activities serving the sport. David served as contest director from the early 1970s until 1980, establishing the systems and guidelines that continue to govern competitive surfing worldwide.



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Florida Atlantic University
777 Glades Road
Boca Raton, FL 33431

Dorothy F. Schmidt College of Arts and Letters
School of the Arts, University Galleries
561.297.2661 | www.fau.edu/galleries

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