

## You can help!

We're getting increased traffic in the Museum lately. Please consult your schedule to see if you can help out with some open docent shifts. We provide a docent at the museum from noon to 2 p.m. every Saturday, and docent training is available. If you can help, please email Jim Dale at [jdale12@cfl.rr.com](mailto:jdale12@cfl.rr.com).

## CBSM is on Facebook

Follow the Cocoa Beach Surf Museum on Facebook! Become a fan.

## CBSM in Beachside Resident

Thanks to Lani Mucha for writing about CBSM in the Beachside Resident, and to the Resident for helping us keep the beaches informed about our programs.



Photo Dr. Diana

THE COCOA BEACH SURF MUSEUM  
[www.cocoa beachesurfmuseum.org](http://www.cocoa beachesurfmuseum.org)

**Sean O'Hare** ■ President Emeritus  
**John Hughes** ■ President  
**Melody DeCarlo** ■ Vice President  
**Bill Tweedie** ■ Sec.-Treasurer  
**Tony Sasso** ■ Executive Director  
**Marketing Director**



Editor ■ Athena Sasso  
Membership ■ Marie Hughes  
Program ■ Sharon Wolfe Cranston  
Webmaster ■ Jeff Cranston  
Archivist ■ Dennis Bennett

## 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  
[athenagsasso@aol.com](mailto:athenagsasso@aol.com)

## Enjoy the Ride

What does it mean, exactly, to preserve surfing history? How, who, and for whom?

Our exhibits and programs have informed and entertained a widening group of people interested in surfing lore, culture and heritage. And from time to time, there's an opportunity to make a leap – I mean a big leap – in our ability to preserve history for future generations.

We have recently acquired imaging equipment and licenses that will enable us to take our print collection digital and enhance our capacity to serve as a resource for research both to the curious and to the academic. The lead on this project is our archivist, Dennis Bennett, and Jeff Cranston has been working on the technical issues.

This is the exciting next step in our evolution from a mere repository of hard objects to a trove of digital history more accessible to all.

Recently, we have been presented with several opportunities to expand our abilities to preserve surfing history. You'll read in this issue about Rod Rodgers, who accessed our magazine archives in his research for The Paipo Board Project. We look forward to working with Rod on his research.

We are also working with Rod Faulds and Paul Aho at Florida Atlantic University, who have received a grant from the Florida Humanities Council to produce a traveling exhibition entitled "The History and Culture of Surfing in Florida." We lent our recommendation to the Council on behalf of this grant and are in the process of building a collaboration with Rod and Paul to not only host the exhibit in Brevard County, but also to assist with the research for the project.

In 2010, we will launch new projects to preserve the stories of the first generation of local surfers. It is so exciting to watch this all-volunteer organization advance because of the varied talents, vision, and energy of its members and friends. We want to hear your ideas and find out what talents you have to share to make 2010 the best year yet for preserving surfing history. See you in the water, *Tony*

## The Paipo Project

By Rod Rodgers

*We recently had the honor of hosting Rod Rodgers, a paipo board enthusiast who had contacted us earlier in the year asking if he could access our archive of surfing literature to help research the history of paipo boarding. He finally made it down. Unfortunately his research mission was severely hampered by an incredible run of good surf. However, he was still able to leave the water long enough to grab a tote full of magazines from the museum and come to my house for a day to scan images from the museum's archives, my personal collection of tattered magazines dating from the mid-60s on up, as well as some more obscure surfing related books.*

*Rod also met Roy Scafidi at Oceansports World to document several paipo boards in Roy's collection, and Roy introduced him to a friend who has a substantial collection of paipos. This gave him plenty of material to keep him busy for months. – John Hughes*

What is a paipo? Is the word Hawaiian? Who invented the paipo board? Does anyone still ride paipos? How do you make a paipo? Simple questions, but not so simple answers. That is one of the reasons we started the Paipo Research Project.

Paipo boards are known by several different names depending upon time period, locale, size, and materials. They have been called surfboards, bellyboards, lamaroos, bodyboards, lunch trays, kioe, skim boards, kneeboards, coolites and many other terms, but are most commonly known as bellyboards and paipos. Regardless of the name used, these boards are intended to be ridden prone, i.e., on the belly or with the body on the board. A distinguishing characteristic that generally separates a paipo from its cousin, the contemporary bodyboard, is that the paipo features a hard surface unlike the soft surfaced bodyboards. Speed with control is another common denominator

Available evidence suggests the first boards surfed upon the waves were ridden prone – probably for centuries before the Hawaiian Islanders mastered the art of surf riding boards erect style. Evidence also suggests that the term *paipo* is Hawaiian in origin even though the word is not to be found in any ancient Hawaiian dictionary. In a forthcoming book, *Hawaiian Surfing: Traditions From the Past*, John R. K.

Clark identifies and describes the types of surfing that native Hawaiians did, one of which was *pae po'o*, or prone board riding. He notes that while it's true that "*paepo*" can be translated as "night landing," Clark has since learned that the original word was actually "*pae po'o*."

Paipo boarding probably reached its zenith in the 1950s and 1960s, before being eclipsed by kneeboarding and bodyboarding in the 1970s. After lying dormant for a couple of decades the sport has experience a growing interest around the world. Although you won't find waveriding magazines featuring paipo board advertisements, there is a lively cottage industry and increasingly surfboard builders are including paipos as part of their board line. One such builder, Austin Saunders, made his first paipo two years ago according to my specifications, and has since built and sold over 200 boards and shipped nationwide and around the world. The boards are marketed on his website just like his other surfboards. From simple homemade wooden boards to high-tech fiberglass/epoxy creations, boards ridden with and without fins - there is no standard design or way to ride a bellyboard – people like variety!

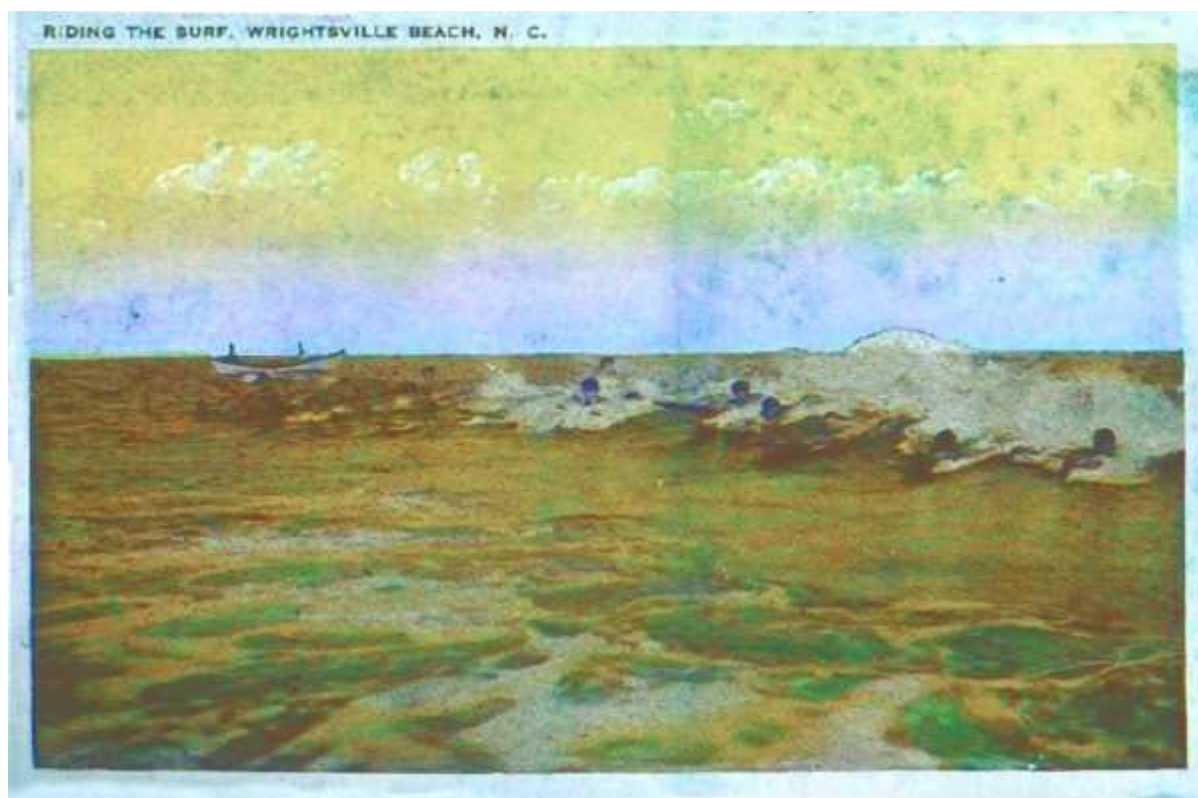


The World Belly Boarding Championship, in Cornwall, England (September 2009). Photo courtesy of Kaloptic.

The Paipo Project aims to document this diversity: the boards, texts, the surfers past and present, and photographs. The majority of published stories and photos are contained in old magazines that are identified by memory or trawling through back issues. Often these magazines are no longer published and are collector's items. Old publications often did not name the surfers. This has required

detective work often facilitated by tracking down and interviewing the surfers involved or their families. Older boards are now collector's items in more demand than when they were being originally sold or made. Interviewing these surfers brings to life and records this history which would be lost, while recording the boards that were ridden opens up private collections to a wider public and can influence would-be shapers and surfers.

More information at <http://mypaipoboards.org>.  
Photos in this article from <http://mypaipoboard.org>



The post card is identified as being printed sometime in the 1920s. Exact date is still being researched. It clearly shows kids riding wooden paipos (bodyboards) and at least one alaia-sized board. Posted on the Legendary Surfers Blog, February 22, 2009. Post card image courtesy of Skipper Funderburg. (Remember him? See our Fall 2009 issue of *Wave Lengths* at [www.cocoabeachsurfmuseum.org](http://www.cocoabeachsurfmuseum.org).) See Funderburg, Joseph. *Surfing on the Cape Fear Coast*. Carolina Beach, N.C.: SlapDash Publishing, LLC, 2008.



Photos  
Parade – Tim Chastain  
C2C – Marie Hughes  
Opening – Dr. Diana  
Paipo - <http://mypaipoboard.org>

