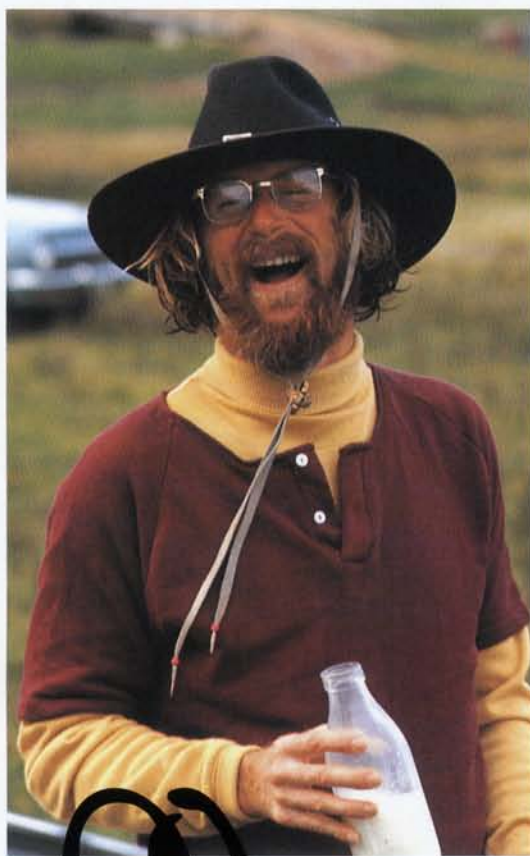
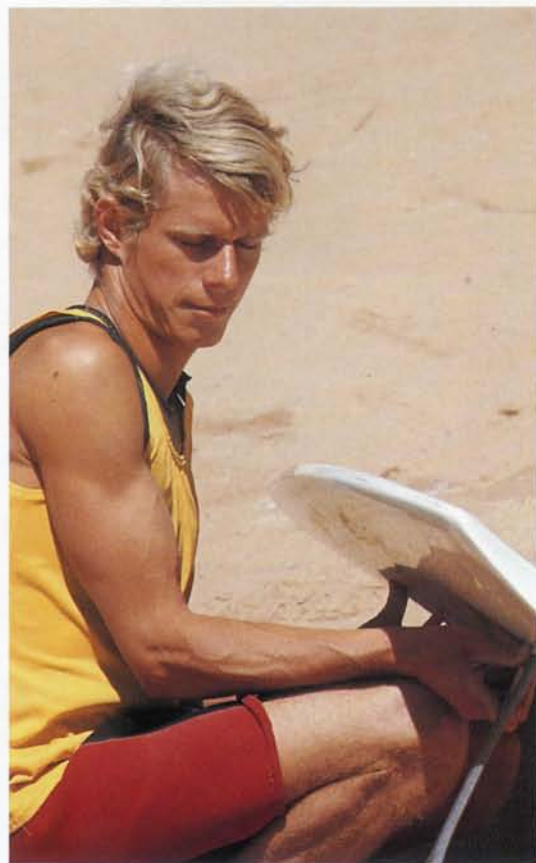
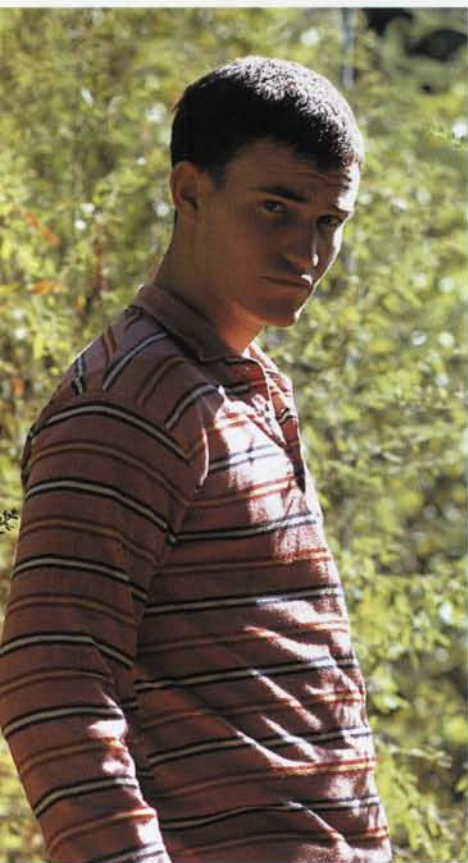


1969



When the Sm



Smoke Cleared

1969

*It was the Best of Times, it was the Weirdest of Times.
Shit, it was the Best of Times.*

BY
DREW
KAMPION

1969 was different. It was a year of abundance. Up in Napa Valley, California, the grapes went off in an orgy of heat-wave ripening, sending sugar content to the moon and alcohol levels into the mid-teens and beyond—these would be big, fat, chewy wines with significant clout. The surf vintage was similar. The summer of 69 culminated in a

everyone had new ideas for new moves and a new crew of intrepid voyagers was anxious to lay down pioneer paths on the serious muscle power of the North Shore.

Meanwhile, men were gone to the moon, the counter-cultural revolution was in full-frontal flower. Global society seemed on the verge of exhilarating and cataclysmic changes and Mickey Dora was calling for apocalypse by next year at the very latest.

I remember 1969 extremely well. In fact, I took notes. I've got them right here. I thought I'd share a few with you, knowing full well that maybe half of you readers weren't even born yet. Let me say, you missed a big set.

SURFER 69

I was crawling down the hallway at *Surfer Magazine* one day. I was on my way to John Severson's office. But before I could get there he came crawling out to meet me. We met there on all fours beside the row of paper "flats"—the laid-out spreads for the new issue. It was the first annual "End of the World" issue. Vietnam was in high season and Richard Nixon was in town. Nixon was now Severson's next door neighbor. It was clear that the nation and the world were both at some kind of crossroads, and we weren't feeling optimistic. Some of our best friends

were out dodging the draft, and half the others were involved in undercover businesses that were highly compatible with lifestyles centered around extensive travel to agricultural hot spots.

Sevo and I had already smoked about a dozen double-enders that morning, a couple of 'em while we parked on the bluff above Doheny for the surf check, one or two in the art department trying to "visualize greatness" with art director "High" Moore. Chris Maxwell had closed her office door the way she always did when the smoke started drifting to the front of the building.

"Rrrnnngghh!" I growled at Sevo.

"Aaarrnnnnnggglllaaaahhhh!" he gargled back.

I nodded, and we each crawled back to our offices. Ad man Don Kremers watched nervously from the water cooler area where he was brewing up a cup of Maxim, wondering if he'd made the right career move. Secretly, we knew, he wanted to be at the editorial end of the building. We knew he felt we knew something he didn't. We knew he knew we did things he didn't—and couldn't—do.

Behind Kremers, long, tall photo editor Bradley Barrett just sat on his stool, snickered and slapped his knee, cocked his head and whined an Elmore James line, something like, "You been five-timin' me, baby, nookie and dimin' me t'dayyy-eth."



Rick "Black" Kalinowski at the portal to Country Surfboards, Haleiwa. Photo: Drew Kampion

fifteen-foot New Zealand swell that humped the reefs of Southern California dead in the middle of a glassy mid-September heat wave. It was magnificent. And the winter of 69-70? None comparable, maybe ever. The process of digesting the equipment revolution of 1968 had set in and refinement was the operative word. Minds had expanded,

THE 1968 SURFER POLL

Fittingly, the 1968 Surfer Magazine Poll occurred in April of 1969. It was held at the San Clemente Inn at a most interesting moment in surfing history. The surf "establishment" was still the old Makaha-San Onofre-Dana Point-Malibu crew, and they weren't sympathetic to all this cosmic bullshit, all this long hair and beads and peace signs and marijuana. They were of the opinion that drinkin' a quart of booze in the brush at Trestles and flashin' your bare ass to the folks on a highballin' Southern Pacific train was about as cool as a fella would wanna get.

The 1968 Surfer Poll was a milestone for these dinosaurs. They got to see David Nuuhiwa and Skip Frye and Nat Young and even Mike Doyle in long hair and beads and shirts with friggin' Nehru collars. They got to see the brave new world of peace and love. But they just shook their heads and got drunk.

I'd had an aperitif poolside with my friend Steve Bigler (who'd ridden Sunset as big as anybody, and as well), and later found myself at the head table between Louise Severson and Hevs McClelland. Disguised as

the owner of The Spigot, a typical corner liquor store in Laguna Beach, Hevs was, in reality, a long-time San Onofre and Makaha surfer, husband to arguably the most outstanding woman surfer of the early fifties (Marge Calhoun), and a veteran surfing contest announcer and judge. In fact, Hevs was one of a number of judges that had gone blue in the face and started drooling venom when they read my anti-contest editorial, "Those Who Sit in Judgment" in *Surfer* the summer before. Sevo had helped me ride out the backwash from that one (as he often did), and I'd explained to all the judges that took it personally that, of course, it wasn't them I was talking about. But I could tell, though they smiled, they didn't believe me. As for Hevs, throughout the banquet, whenever I tried to strike up a conversation, he would just stare at my forehead.

Sevo was sitting on the other side of Hevs and sweating bullets; his eyes looked pretty dilated. He hated making public appearances almost as bad as he hated flying in airplanes.

He even hated visitors at the office, especially advertisers. Fortunately, *Surfer* had a front exit and a back exit. He'd see Hobie or Hansen or Dewey or one of the others drive up, he'd wait till they were into the building, then down the back stairs he'd fly, jump into his Mercedes and head for the golf course, where he could breathe freely and drive balls into the distance. But in a situation like this Surfer Poll he was a trapped man. He couldn't exactly flee his own party. But he muddled through (soaked through, too), sensing most profoundly, I believe, that he was a man sandwich—caught between the establishment of old-school advertisers, contest organizers, high school librarians and the anti-establishment of long-haired, pot-smoking, anti-almost everything acidheads that had surfed in on the shortboard revolution.

Nat Young won the poll that year. I think Corky Carroll was pretty pissed about it, seeing as how the Aussies had been spankin' the yanks pretty heavily, both in print and in the water. After all, I'm sure he rea-

(PREVIOUS SPREAD) Period players: (TOP ROW, L TO R) David Nuuhiwa, Russell Hughes, Bill Hamilton, Jock Sutherland (on leave), Greg MacGillivray, Midget Farrelly (with the "first" short V bottom), (BOTTOM ROW) Herbie Fletcher, Owl Chapman, Corky Carroll, Nat Young, Bob Cooper, Mike Tabeling. Photos: Drew Kampion except for Midget by Dick Graham (BELOW) Dana Nicely, test piloting experimental wave craft at Backdoor. Photo: Art Brewer



soned, if not for *Surfer's* publicity, Nat would be unknown north of Kahuku Point. And here it was wartime and this Australian victory in such a prestigious American reader poll seemed somehow un-American, and I suppose it was.

Anyway, towards the end of the evening the old guard got pretty soused and salty. Greg Noll threw Dewey into the pool. They tore the place up some. It got ugly, I heard. But I was already down on the beach in San Clemente, watching the pier oscillating with some other members of the next generation.

SILLY SLIDIN'

Floating in the middle of the ocean in 75-degree water, a person who keeps his wits can easily expect to survive for some ten hours, maybe a good deal longer. But fear can drag you down in a few seconds. Panic drives oxygen out of your cells the way a fire alarm clears a theater; it turns you into a rigid, spastic mass of ballast with a fatal attraction for gravity. So why do we panic when panic itself is the real enemy? This was a

question I had often asked myself, usually right after losing my board at places like Sunset or Laniakea where the swim was so long I always felt that, naturally, I was going to die now.

But then in 1969, by chance in Southern California, I imbibed of a fungus that somehow suspended my usual fears. I leapt into the warm Pacific and bodysurfed the waves... for minutes...for an hour...for hours. I was adroit, amphibious, unconcerned and at home. I was a recovered throwback, wallowing in the primal ooze from whence I'd sprung, sliding gracefully into coiling cylinders of mathematical perfection. Like, it was totally wholistic, man! So the question, of course, became: which is the illusion, which is the hallucination? The normal state, in which I am an alien floating in a hostile medium? Or the altered state, in which I am as much at home in the sea as I am on the land? Which do I prefer? Which is allowed? Why? Etc.

It was questions like these that sent me (and plenty of others, I'll bet) off with my lantern into the ominous, darkening seventies.

NAT YOUNG

Robert "Gnat" Young was a pompous, arrogant, opinionated son of a bitch back in 69. He and that other pompous, arrogant, opinionated son of a bitch from Australia, Bernard "Midget" Farrelly, were always firing off at one another. They had weekly columns in the big competing Sydney newspapers.

Everybody hated Midget, Nat told me. Everybody hated Nat, Midget told me.

I first met Nat on the beach at Rincon, Puerto Rico, in November of 1968. I'd been watching him surf, and when he came out of the water I introduced myself as "Drew Kampion from *Surfer*," and he grabbed me by the collar and lifted me a foot off the ground and said, "You son of a bitch, I ought to kick the shit out of you!" For a moment I thought he must be a buddy of Corky Carroll, but he continued: "That Severson son of a bitch..." and so on. Nat didn't like John. A lot of people didn't at the time, including a lot of his advertisers. John was into golf and speed and real estate. He wasn't into surfing anymore and he didn't want to have anything to do with most of the people around him. Everybody hated

Casually into burying space needles into deep pits and deft use of extreme body english to guide the resulting squirts into poetic, connected moves, Barry Kanaiaupuni, Rocky rights. Photo: Brewer



John, Nat told me. Later Midget said the same.

But then John heard the gospel of mellow. Of peace, love and double-enders. He put away his golf clubs and paddled out to Cotton's Point, right in front of his house. He slid back into the groove and stayed there. Buttons and mushrooms and buds, oh boy!

Nat was the best surfer in the world in 1969. I mean, Nat can surf anything—he's proved it with some of the boards he's built for himself—and he's been a quality surfer throughout the last four or five equipment eras, but the boards of 1969 were completely in sync with his imagination, power and foot size. He was The Animal at his peak, he was a beast of a paddler, and the rhythmic cadence of his S-turning, climbing and dropping, deep-carve wave riding was the most coherent thing happening out on the water then...or maybe ever.

WHEN WORLDS COLLIDE

Was there ever a more intense, thunderous and weird time and place in surfing than the Winter of 69 on the North Shore? Who knows? But there was a lot going on. There was a real sense that the pioneers who'd been coming here for almost two decades were being relegated to the sidelines by the sheer psychic vibrational rate of guys like Jock Sutherland, Jimmy Lucas, Mike Turkington, Gerry Lopez, Herbie Fletcher, Fleet White, Jeff Hakman and the rest. It wasn't even that these guys were pushing some trip on guys like Butch Van Artsdalen, Fred Hemmings, Noll, Rick Grigg, Jose Angel and Peter Cole, but the combination of new and different equipment and new and different attitude, along with the perpetual wedge of age, came together to create a severe generational gap in 1969. You were on the bus or off the bus. You got it or you didn't. You believed in gravity or you believed in space. You were rigid or you flowed and there was a whole lotta flowin' goin' on. And out of this flow there grew a new appre-



Tiger Espere souling at Sunset. Photo: Brewer

ciation for the greatest flow-ers of all time—the Hawaiian surfers.

Eddie Aikau seemed to personify the best of all solutions. While Butch sat on the beach and sucked down Primos and grew desperate at his own inertia and the speed of change around him, Eddie took it all in and stylized it. When Jock abdicated the crown he'd just put on (that winter he matured into the best) to join the Army and earn respectability (okay, so he cut a deal with the D.A.), Eddie reaffirmed his own traditional family values (Quayle don't surf) and gathered his surfing buddies past and future for ukelele and luau pig. No one had more courage or grace under pressure than Eddie at Sunset or Waimea. He was also the key behind-the-scenes neutralizer in so many transitional blow-outs back then. Eddie was the very image—the symbol and actual incarnation—of the possible fusion of surfing's nations, eras and attitudes.

Barry Kanaiaupuni, Tiger Espere, young Reno Abellira and Clyde Aikau (who grew larger to carry more of the family and tribal responsibilities after Eddie died swimming for help for his Hokule'a crewmates) followed in Eddie's groove. The groove was the waterman's way, and the slam dance of 69 cross-pollinated this age-worthy

career path with a strong dose of cosmic consciousness and some global village brotherhood. The uncanny effect was to steer surfing back towards a full-circle return to its ancient Polynesian roots...until professionalism got in the way. But that's another story.

On the beach and on the waves, 1969 was a different year. Women's swimsuits began their great disappearing act, puka shells were plentiful but no one was buying yet, the sweet smell of burning weed was in the air. Taking umbrage at a recent wave of Aussie propaganda, Hawaiian and Californian surfers decisively brought the issue of "total involvement" to the table and jammed every maneuver towards the red line, deriding the idea of "limits" and demanding equipment that would respond to the new visions of their unfettered imaginations. This was the seedbed that was soon to give birth to Larry Bertlemann.

Maui was the retreat—country scene and acid test—where the casualties of the new experimentation went to retire. Kauai was the next stop if you wanted to avoid the casualties. The west side dug in to protect its time-capsule Hawaiiana. And Led Zeppelin howled the theme music to the no-holds-barred performance out on the North Shore.

MIKLOS DORA

Mickey Dora visited *Surfer Magazine* a couple of times in 1969. Somehow we always felt him coming ahead of time; we'd be looking out through the blinds as he swung into the gray asphalt parking lot that stretched alongside the building. Early in the year he had a Porsche, maybe a 58 or 59; later he had a Volkswagen bus. This one time he pulled in (I think it was the bus) and he just sat there below us. We couldn't see what he was up to; it was all roof to us. After awhile we wondered if he'd somehow slipped out and wandered off. We sent Brad down to check. He casually strolled out to his own car, made a bogus search for something, then sauntered back toward us, giving Mickey a cool little wave and a casual chin-nod. Yep, he was still there alright.

Eventually the door of the bus swung out and one of Dora's legs appeared, then the other. As he pulled himself out over them, his head emerged. Six or seven of our



Reno Abellira at Huntington Pier, Sept. 1969 with Inter Island, super scoop nose. Minds were freed up to try almost anything and make it work. Photo: Brewer

heads pulled back from the second story windows above, but I caught his eye before I vanished, and so he caught mine. Damn.

After awhile Shirley (our incomparable mistress of reception) called back to announce Mickey's arrival. I saw John go past my office on two legs; it was a good sign. A few minutes later I heard a mumbling voice coming down the hallway. Sevo went

past, then Mickey looked in.

"Ah, Mister Kampion," he said.

"So." And he was gone.

"Drew!" called John. "Come on in here."

I entered the sanctuary of John's movie editing room.

"You may as well join us," he said. There were three simple chairs and a small table. I sat between them. Mickey had apparently primed John for this because they cut right to the chase. Dora talked about his recent trip to South America, how he'd encountered some well-connected and not-completely-ethical personages who'd shown him around their "property." They also made available certain compact, highly portable natural resources from their rich native soils. These had been brought back by his truly in the strictest confidence with some assistance, no doubt, from certain understanding authorities. Mickey made it clear that this was a rare opportunity, that these "resources" had been procured at a fraction of their street value, that he was showing them only to a select few, that this was all in the strictest confidence, and that opportunity only knocks once.

Then he snapped open his brief case, took out a smaller black leather case and opened it. It was a jeweler's case lined in lustrous black velour. Lying on the velour was a black velvet pouch with a black silk drawcord. Studying us briefly, but carefully, Mr. Dora picked up the pouch, opened it wide and skillfully spread out a constellation of large pale yellow crystals.

"Rare Brazilian topaz," he whispered. He turned them delicately with a jeweler's tweezers, apparently so we could admire the glittering facets. John was hunkered down over the table, virtually drooling into the case. I was cooler, since I didn't have two dimes to rub together, but was privately wondering if Greg MacGillivray would give me a loan.

Dora continued to turn the stones with the tweezers. He did it like an elegant fry cook nursing jumbo prawns. He muttered some-



thing like, "Only once in a lifetime," and Sevo cracked.

"How much?" the publisher of *Surfer Magazine* asked.

"How much?!" exclaimed Mickey, stiffening.

"For one of... For this one," said Sevo, pointing gingerly at one glorious gemstone.

"I should have known," huffed Mickey, snapping the case closed so briskly it almost caught John's indicative digit. "These are highly personal...precious family keepsakes...very important to me...heirlooms I could never bear to part with...how could you be so presumptuous as to think I'd ever sell them?"

The jeweler's case went into the



Jock power driving at acute angles, Velzyland. Totally ambidextrous in his surfing attitude, Sutherland was "the man" in 69. Photo: Brewer

briefcase and, all in the same motion, Dora rose and fled the room. John called after him trying to explain that he didn't understand, just made a mistake, it seemed like Mickey had wanted to...

But Mickey Dora was gone. A car door slammed, the little four-banger chugged to life and the bus wheezed out of the lot. Red in the face and shrugging, Sevo headed back to his office. I stood there in the hallway marveling at the subtle science of The Cat.

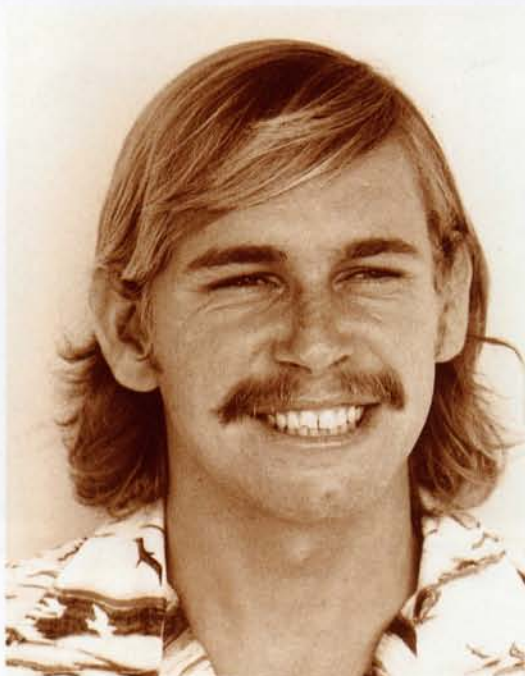
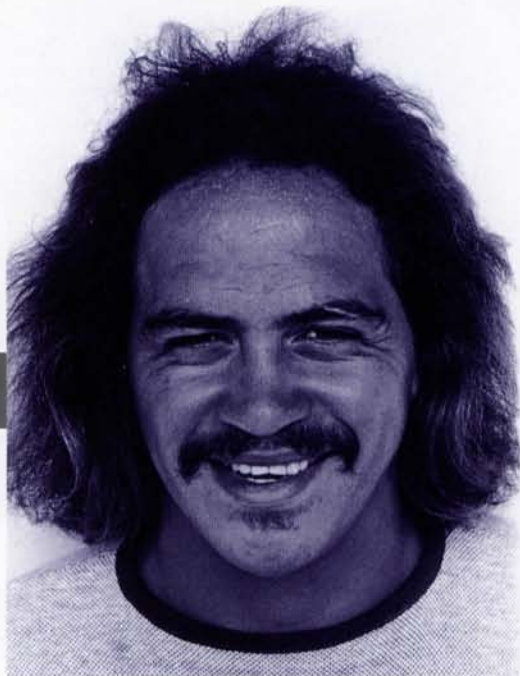
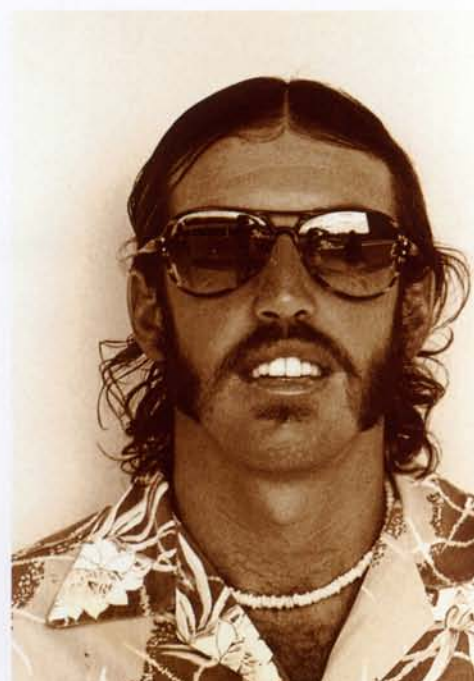
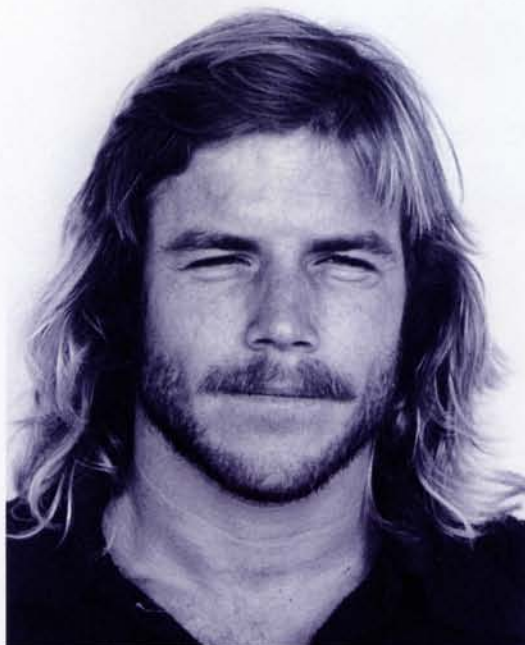
MONSTER MASH

December 69. A monster Aleutian low heaves mammoth walls of water towards the north shores of

all the Hawaiian Islands. Early warning comes from French Frigate Shoals, 500 miles to the north, where 19 sailors spend a perilous night on the roof of their strategic outpost, their low island completely buried beneath the onrushing surge of swell. Sixty-foot waves jack up and crash out at Kaena Point, Waimea closes out at forty-plus and dozens of beachfront homes are derailed and storm-renovated.

No one I know surfed that famous swell on the North Shore. It hit at night and came on strong and left the ocean agitated and wild with dirty foam and flotsam and coconuts

for days afterwards. All that energy and no handle. The situation was desperate; it was like having Vanna White over for an intimate hot tub party and nobody can handle the water temp. But the opportunity for heroism was in the air and one legend rose (or dropped) to the occasion: Greg Noll caught a point wave at Makaha that witnesses said was the biggest hump ever ridden by a man. An icon of the sport and an archetypal tribal image personified, Noll made it to the bottom—wide-stance and black-and-white-striped trunks—and was seriously going for greatness when the bowl section



threw out fifty feet and dampened an otherwise perfect experience.

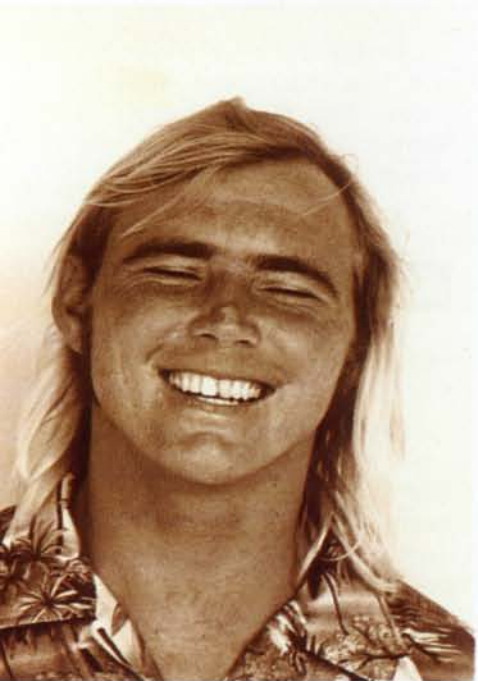
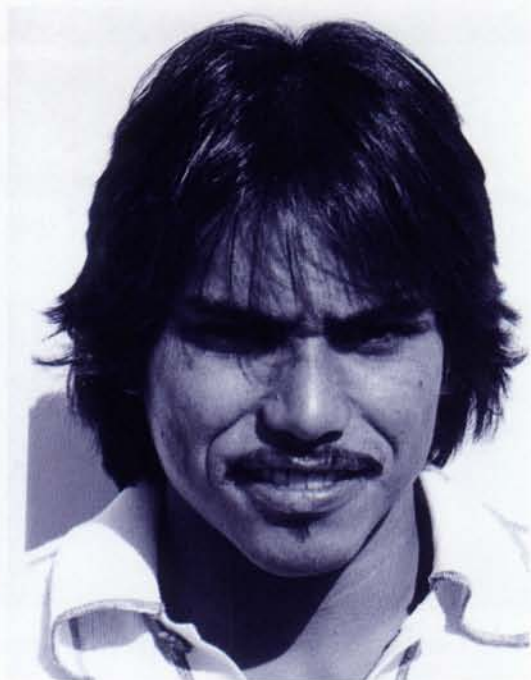
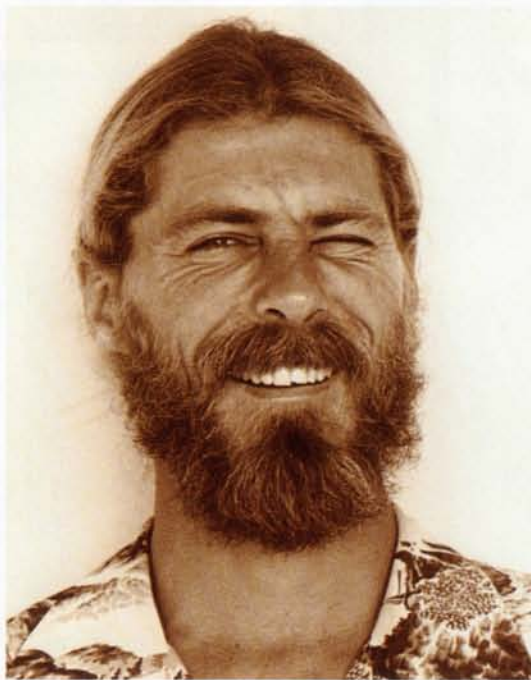
And so it was that the big swell of 69 generated a lone image of conquest—The Bull as Sir Edmund Hillary. Maybe Noll was the only guy who still had a board big enough for the situation. Whatever the reason (and it could have simply been a matter of guts or insanity or both), the irony was profound. In a sport racked by change, hype and revolution, a no-bullshit fifties dinosaur caught the last great wave of 1969.

MacGILLIVRAY

I alluded to Greg MacGillivray above. He deserves mention on behalf of a new generation of readers. Greg started off making surfing films in high school. He doggedly patrolled the California coast in the mid-sixties, capturing the most classic conditions imaginable, much of it in the Santa Barbara area (which, incidentally, has almost completely disintegrated in the years hence). His *Cool Wave of Color* is testament both

to California's once exquisite, glassy quality and MacGillivray's considerable technical expertise. When Greg teamed up with Jim "3-D" Freeman in 1965 (approximately), things only got better.

During the winter of 68-69, Greg was hard at work on a new film to follow up MacGillivray-Freeman's very successful and pretty soulful *Free and Easy*. The working title was *Waves of Change*, and both Greg and Jim were intimately tuned to the seismic shifts in surfing at the time. They



wanted to get it all on film. Winter 68-69 would be very key. Just back from Puerto Rico, they rented a house at Log Cabins on the North Shore and got into the filming. They went at it like pros, did things on a schedule that Greg printed up with colored markers on hand-lined shot sheets. It was most impressive.

But the secret reason I knew that Greg was headed for greatness was that (bless his Scottish soul) he had sheets of lined paper Scotch taped to the wall above the phone, and on

(TOP ROW, L TO R) **Peter Townend, Sam Hawk, James Blears, Paul Nielson, Mike Hynson, Reno Abellira.**
(BOTTOM ROW) **Clyde Aikau, Jeff Crawford, Jeff Hakman, Ian Cairns, Larry Bertleman, Terry Fitzgerald.**
The 1969 gene pool. Photos: Dick Graham

these he carefully and diligently and precisely noted each and every penny of expenditure. Returning from any activity he would belly-up to the ledger and reduce the outing to its pecuniary essence. His special genius was that he did this in an environment (hell, it was an era!) where no one seemed to know or care what was going on, as long as it flowed.

THE 1969 WORLD CONTEST

When Japanese surfing champion Doji Hisaka flew into California to represent his country at the world championships in Baja, California, he learned that the 1969 World Contest had been moved to Australia's Bell's Beach and that it was postponed until 1970.



Fred Hemmings riding the first wave at the first artificial surfing pool, Big Surf, Tempe, AZ. Photo: Graham

CHUCK DENT

The self-proclaimed mayor of Huntington Beach, afro-haired Chuck Dent was truly a phenomenon of his time. It killed him that he was not born in James Brown's soulful body. He hated that he was a con-man and not an artist. He abhorred the nickel-and-dime shit that he loved so much.

Dent grew from clean-up boy anonymity to expert ding repair stardom to sub-cultural icon in a small window of time and space. He was a vicious man with a foul mouth and a heart of gold. No one on the beach jived-talked better. He was generally disliked by the very people who hung on his every word. He tried to make surfing into rock 'n roll so that he could be its carny-barker Bill Graham.

When Dent traded his British racing green Porsche (and other favors) for Jack Haley's surf shop, he tried his hand at shaping for awhile, then hired a stable of surfers and shapers to mow foam for him. He saw his employees, their friends and hangers-on as his goons. He ran a mid-60s/early-70s sweat shop that kept, at various times, Mark Martinson, Steve Pezman, Stu Herz, Tom Lonardo, John Boozer, Bill Fury, Dennis Raney, Danny Calohan, Geg Tucker, Randy Lewis and a six-pack of others off the beach. His Main

Street shop, a half-block up from the pier, was his soapbox. He loved to insult the cops, the local politicians, the tourists, his customers, you name it. His irreverent articles in *Surfer* established new frontiers in bad taste and definitive analysis. He was a martyr looking for a fight; he was Jesus in search of Judas...with thirty pieces of loose change jingling in his baggies. His inspired cameo in Mac-Free's *Five Summer Stories* almost transformed him into a cuddly cult classic. Dent mixed booze with 'ludes in the seventies and checked out early, but in 69...he had his prime.

LEFTS

In 1969 small boards and new ideas transformed the Banzai Pipeline from a winter sideshow to the main event. Close to the cameras, dramatically backlit and photographically perfect, Pipeline turned Ehukai Beach Park into the focal point of the North Shore media experience. This was the stage upon which the great goofy-footers of the late 60s and 70s came to prominence: Jock, Rory Russell, Jeff Crawford, Tom Stone, Mike Armstrong and Gerry Lopez. All you had to do was shine at the Pipe and you were "known."

Lopez discovered the sideslip on the South Shore in the summer of 69 and brought it with him for the first fall swells. The images of him non-

chalantly drifting sideways down out of a Pipeline curl were just too much. Following in the tradition of Butch Van Artsdalen's early sixties on-camera "coffin" maneuver and John Peck's casual backside rail grabs, Lopez seemed to not take it all too seriously; he was relaxed and actually seemed to be enjoying himself. He was practicing what the age was starting to preach: do your own thing. Go with the flow. Be where you are. Over the next year Lopez synthesized surfing into an essential and perfect haiku, something like:

*The warrior
in perfect
position
lets the wave play his own
music.*

Gerry Lopez was the culmination of the sixties momentum in surfing. When the evolution of the sport/art got to him, it politely paused. He was the essence of the sport and continued throughout the 70s. Sixty-nine was his coming out.

NIXON

United States President Richard Milhous Nixon moved to sleepy old San Clemente in 1969. The majestic old Cotton estate, perched on the sand-tan bluffs between the gated/guarded Cypress Shores community and the gated/guarded Trestles surfing area, was now officially known as The Western White House. Video monitors were installed to watch over the canyon and the beach and—when Tricky Dick was in town—a small army of suits stood around the perimeter at hundred-yard intervals. These not-so-secret-service dudes paced their days away, muttering every few minutes into walkie-talkies, watching for enemies and weirdos and especially for surfers.

Sevo was Nixon's next door neighbor. His rakish modern home hung out over the shallow canyon that was the west-end boundary of the Cotton spread. His front porch looked out on the famous Cotton's Point left-handers; his side porch

looked right over into Nixon's front yard. This made the SS extremely nervous, especially when Sevo realized (as he soon did) that there was jingle in this chance proximity. He broke out his Nikon, fluid-head tripod, and 1000 mm Century lens. The latter was a five-foot, long black tube that was indistinguishable at medium range from any number of popular terrorist anti-personnel weapons, from bazookas to grenade and rocket launchers. When Dick was in town and John set up his rig, the boys on the bluffs went bananas. They couldn't keep their hands out of their jackets. Incessant interpersonal dialogues via walkie-talkie were clearly audible, even upwind a quarter mile. The projected vibe level was enough to cause severe interference on the Seversons' television. The phones were tapped, the house was bugged and—no doubt—x-ray scanners routinely probed every nook and cranny of the domicile for potentially lethal and/or contraband material.

It didn't help that the editorial slant of Mr. Severson's *Surfer Magazine* had become venomously anti-establishment, anti-Vietnam war

and anti-Dick. It didn't help at all that I—Sevo's editor—would periodically try to penetrate the phalanx of storm troopers that cordoned off the beach to keep us dangerous types not only away from Cotton's, but also away from the serious recreational zone known to some as the United States Marine Corps Base Camp Pendleton. (Who can forget the appalling expenditure of energy and bucks it took to finally use a Coast Guard cruiser to drive a lone surfer close enough to the beach at Uppers to be apprehended by a platoon of goons and a squad of mugs?)

"You're off limits," they'd yell.

"I'm below the mean high-tide line," I'd whine.

"It doesn't matter," they'd shout.

"Why doesn't it matter," I'd wail.

"National security," they'd scream.

In those evil times only one dude and his buds got to surf Cotton's when Dick Nix was in his villa, namely the future-lite-beer-guzzling-kiss-up Corky Carroll, who in true surfer style was so bold and so gross as to give the Prez a new surfboard. I was envious, and worse: never once did I see Nixon paddle

1969: CROSSROADS IN TIME

- Jan 14** Lyndon Johnson's last State of the Union address.
- Jan 20** Richard Nixon sworn in as 37th U.S. President.
- Feb 5** Huge oil slick off Santa Barbara.
- Mar 10** James Earl Ray pleads guilty and gets 99 years for the murder of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.
- Mar 28** Eisenhower dies at 78.
- Apr 9** Militant students take over Harvard's administration building; similar events follow at New York City College, San Francisco State, Berkeley, hundreds more.
- Jun 8** Nixon announces withdrawal of 25,000 U.S. troops from Vietnam, the beginning of the end.
- Jul 18** A car runs off a narrow bridge on Chappaquiddick Island. Senator Edward M. Kennedy escapes; 28-year-old Mary Jo Kopechne doesn't.
- Jul 20** At 10:56 p.m. (EDT) Apollo 11 astronaut Neil Armstrong steps onto the surface of the moon.
- Aug 18** A three-day concert ends in Bethel, New York. Attended by some 300,000 folk, the event was called Woodstock (where it was intended to be held nearby).
- Nov 15** The largest anti-war rally in U.S. history (250,000 people) protests the Vietnam War in Washington, D.C.
- Nov 20** Some 78 militant native Americans seize Alcatraz Island, demanding its return to the Indians.
- Nov 24** Lt. William L. Calley charged with pre-meditated murder in the massacre of Vietnam civilians in the hamlet of My Lai.
- Nov 25** Nixon orders all U.S. germ warfare stockpiles destroyed. Encased in concrete coffins, two trainloads of nerve gas are sunk in the Atlantic Ocean the following August.
- Dec 1** Drawing birthdate capsules from a glass bin, the first draft lottery since WWII is held in New York City. Later, towards midnight, forty-foot waves hit the North Shore.

Corky at Cottons Point, like throwing Brer Rabbit into the Briar Patch. Photo: Kampion



out, pivot and nail the drop. Rumors abounded: he was waiting for bigger stuff; he was a kook (not likely); he wanted to learn to swim first (like Mao); he was waiting on air support (I bought into this one).

There was, of course, an up-side of all this harassment: unless you were given a copy of the Prez's personal calendar, you weren't really up-to-date on when he was in town and when the runway to Trestles was off-limits. Given the executive perch at Sevo's, I was poised to jump over the line as soon as the Man in the Palm Beach Suit had waved a fond aloha to the gate guard at Cypress. I could be

soloing at Trestles before he'd dropped a single blurb of El Adobe's mock-tourist salsa down the front of his star spangled tie. It was glorious. Even industrial-strength hallucinogens couldn't heighten the experience.

In the end, it was too bad he had to leave town. But Sevo went first. Apparently Eichmann or Hess (excuse me, Erlichman or Haldeman) got wind of some possible potential un-American activities going on over at the neighbors, and John was advised to mellow way out. Since existing in a state of induced paranoid schizophrenia was not his idea

of living at the beach, Sevo sold *Surfer* and moved to Maui. His timing was exemplary. Cotton's hasn't had a great year since.

THE 1969 SURFER POLL

The 1969 Surfer Poll wasn't held in 1969 or 1970. It wasn't held at all. When things change, they change fast, and things changed fast in 1969. Now, it seemed, Surfer Polls were irrelevant. A waste of time and money. Who really wanted to stand around and drink likker and shoot the shit with a bunch of lame advertisers and wannabe surf nazis anyway? Better to gather around the old bongfire with your friends and see what happens...have a mellow

Mike Turkington, holder of a fourth degree black belt at Pipe in 69. Photo: Brewer



evening...no hassles...no ratings...no numbers...no contests...

So we did the 69 poll in the spring of 70 as an editorial spoof. Jock Sutherland was the number one vote-getter ("Man in Tube Wins Poll!" read the headline). But Jock was already off to Fort Ord for basic training. His head was shaved and his mind was on hold. A phenomenal creative force in surfing during the late 60s—in and out of the water—he was never the same after that. But who was?

REVISIONISM

Look up revisionism in the dictionary. Originally it meant a philosophical departure from the doctrine

of Karl Marx. More recently it's come to refer to the tendency to revise history in retrospect, after the fact.

Take the Indians. At least when I was a kid they were Indians. (That was because of Columbus' paradigm. He'd been born into the paradigm that the world was dead flat like a table, and if you sailed straight west out into the Atlantic Ocean you'd eventually come to the end...and...come to the end. Now, he knew that India was reachable with great difficulty to the east, and he also knew that there was this amazing new theory that the world was actually a ball. Not having a lot going for him at the time, he decided to risk the Spanish Queen's money and charge west around the ball to India. That's why, when he laid into the slaughter of the cannibals who paddled out to welcome him to the New World, he called them Indians. He thought they were.) Now we call them Native Americans, but what's that? America was named after Vespucci, one of Columbus' rabid henchmen. Let's face it, we have no correct word for the peoples who were here on this continent before the Europeans got here.

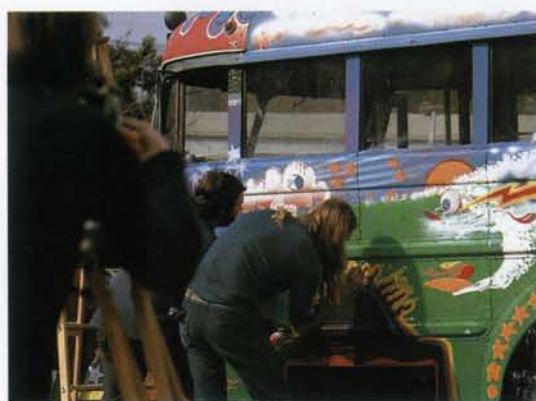
The history of the settling (and simultaneous unsettling) of the West has been revised many times. At the time of this 500th anniversary we've got a bit of cold conscience upwelling, perhaps a healthy current of primal guilt. But, really, we can't call it even until they rise up from the reservations and come out and slit our throats in the night and bash our children to pieces on stones. Then we'd begin to approach some historical parity. Parity being tit for tat.

Yet just a few years ago, this holocaust of native peoples (they called themselves the human beings, or the equivalent) was seen in the paradigm of manifest destiny, of a higher form of creation plowing under a lower one. Millions of Africans were kidnapped to handle the labor, to raise up the infrastructure of the American giant. Chinese too. It was all okay and quite in the "natural" order of things.

But now it's not. Not anymore. The past changes. Paradigms shift. The winners write history, but time exposes their bones.

You may or may not have noticed what's been happening to the 60s. Either you get the impression it was a foolish, naive era in which drugged-out, spoiled kids with too much time on their hands decided to fuck up society, or that sinister anti-establishment tendencies were calculatedly unleashed by pinko saboteurs bent on sapping our will in Southeast Asia. Both are true, and both are just components of the most incredible decade in the history of the world. I know they're playing it all down...acting like it never really happened. But it did. And society has absorbed it like a body absorbing a thorn.

Now the world's got amnesia. But the weirdness and relevance of the 60s had quite a lot to do with surfing; surfing somehow contained and reflected all the bizarre and contradictory facets of that time, and that time came to a head—to a cross-



Surfer Mags soul monster Barrett (circa 69), filming Rick Griffin painting Motor Skill for Sevo's last cinema opus, *Pacific Vibrations*. Photo: Kampion

roads—in 1969. It's no accident that surfing has become so subliminally mainstream today. No wonder that ideas like "flow" and "going for it" and "riding the big wave" are metaphors shared on a global scale. And people around the world wear surf clothes as an unconscious sign that they hear the message: Life is a wave. Time is a surfboard. You are the surfer.

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