

Surf Museum.

The Museum explores and preserves the historic connections to the sport and the lifestyle of the New Jersey surfer and tells the story of surfing in the state through its exhibits and artifacts. From the early days of Duke Kahanamoku's lasting example through the vast array of surfboards on display, surfing's New Jersey beginnings and rich heritage are evident. Many of the boards were crafted and donated by Long Beach Island surf icon and NJSHOF inaugural class inductee Richard Lisiewski, founder of Matador Surfboards, who passed away earlier this year. A pioneer of the New Jersey surf scene, Lisiewski crafted his first board out of wood and rode it, finless, off Seaside during the mid-1940s, and that legendary board is one of the many historical boards displayed at the Museum.

Located on the docks across from Tuckerton Seaport's visitor's center, the Museum also boasts an extensive collection of memorabilia from such organizations as the Eastern Surfing Association (which was started more than fifty years ago in Belmar by Cecil Lear and remains a premier amateur surfing association) and the Long Beach Island Surfing Association. Visitors will also enjoy a vast array of surf art, historic magazines, vintage clothing, and environmental displays with surf music and videos playing on a loop. Admission to the New Jersey Surf Museum is included with admission to Tuckerton Seaport.

The New Jersey Surfing Hall of Fame

About the same time as the New Jersey Surf Museum was finally taking shape, another initiative surfaced as the result of a now-famous Facebook post by surfer and poet Jim Kirk on January 1, 2015. Little did the Stockton professor know his simple, heartfelt post about finding a way to honor the who's who of the Jersey surfing world would grow into the New Jersey Surfing Hall of Fame. "The East Coast Surfing Hall of Fame had been around for years,



Jill Ocone

Vintage surfboards on display the New Jersey Surf Museum.

but Jim threw out the idea of doing something here in Jersey for the homegrown legends," said NJSHOF secretary John James Ryan.

A steering committee with twenty-three surfers and volunteers of all ages quickly formed, and before they knew it, the first inauguration ceremony for the newly-established New Jersey Surfing Hall of Fame was held later that year, organized in part by committee member Kris Kopstafis who owns Homegrown Coffee Bar & Surf Lounge on Main Street in Manasquan.

Thirty-five people were inducted into the inaugural class in 2015, many of whom hail from Monmouth and Ocean counties including renowned surf photographer Dick "Mez" Meseroll from Manasquan who heads up the photography division at *Eastern Surf Magazine*, surfboard shaper and two-time world qualifier Vince Tronic from Allenhurst/Long Branch, and surfer/former storeowner Greg "Grog" Mesanko from Seaside Heights.

The NJSHOF has evolved into a not-for-profit charity that strives to honor and recognize surfers, artists, media/photographers, and those with significant achievements in the surf community from Sandy Hook to Cape May where many world-class surfers and achievements originated. Inductions for the NJSHOF are held every two years, while surf awards are presented in the off-years. The 2019

inductions are scheduled for May 31 at the Algonquin Arts Theatre in Manasquan and the list of inductees will be made public in March.

"We've lost too many of the great ones like the Rich Lisiewski and Chris Rooneys of the world to not acknowledge them in our own Jersey way, so hopefully we can pack the Algonquin this year as a tribute to those who have come before us and have had a serious impact on New Jersey surfing and beyond," said current NJSHOF president and 2017 inductee Brian Heritage. "We look to involve and honor both the young and the old alike because that leads to longevity and sustainability for the HOF in the future. The NJSHOF also focuses on promoting the up-and-coming generations in our off-year Surfer Awards with the hope to see the fruits of our roots flourish."

"Dan Heritage, Brian's dad, was one of those first-generation surf shapers who took a risk by setting up shop in Jersey," Rosenblatt said. (The elder Heritage was honored posthumously as a 2015 inductee.) "And here's his son, Brian, still involved, still running Heritage Surf and Sport, and still passing down the example set by Dan."

It's his father's legacy that continues to inspire Heritage. "I'm satisfied that, by being inducted, I continued his legacy of promoting surfing to others and allowing everyone to

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