

## He‘e Nalu: The Art and Legacy of Hawaiian Surfing

Labels - SECTION labels

Edited by Deb P., 12/14/22, 12/21/22 – Edits reviewed and accepted by Velma, 12/15/22, 12/21/22

### LEGACY WALL LABEL

*Kai He‘enalu Ho‘ilina*  
(The ones who are the legacy of surfing)  
*He kā‘e‘ā‘e‘a pulu ‘ole no ka he‘e nalu.*  
(An expert on the surfboard who does not get wet.)

– *‘Ōlelo No‘eau: Hawaiian Proverbs & Poetical Sayings #649* by Mary Kawena Pukui, 1983

This Hawaiian proverb was said in praise of an outstanding surfer by the *kūpuna* (ancestors). You can easily say that this *‘Ōlelo No‘eau* (Hawaiian proverb) refers to all of the following *kānaka he‘e nalu* (surfers) because of their proficiency in the surf. Yet, what makes these *Kānaka Maoli* (Native Hawaiians) truly outstanding is the way they carried themselves on land and became leaders of their communities. Some are still alive and are continuing to raise the bar with their performance on waves and their kindness on land. The others have *ua hala* (passed on), and the way they rode the waves of life will forever be an inspiration to us all. They have all contributed immensely to Hawaiian culture and the global surfing community with their *‘ano* (nature), *‘ohana* (family) and *ho‘oilina* (legacy).

This is a list of legendary *Kānaka Maoli* watermen and waterwomen who are not depicted in this exhibition.

Clyde Aikau, b. 1949  
Akila Aipa, b. 1970  
Larry Bertlemann, b. 1955  
Keone Downing, b. 1953  
Clement “Tiger” Espere, 1946-2005  
Sunny Garcia, b. 1970  
Snake Ah Hee, b. 1946  
Derek Ho, 1964-2020  
Mike Ho, b. 1957  
Lance Hookano, b. 1965  
Kaipo Jaquias, b. 1971  
Bill Kahanamoku, n.d.  
David Kahanamoku, n.d.  
Sam Kahanamoku, 1902-1966  
Louis Kahanamoku, n.d.  
Sargent Kahanamoku, n.d.  
Kealoha Kaio, 1935-2005  
David Kalama, b. 1964

## He‘e Nalu: The Art and Legacy of Hawaiian Surfing

### Labels - SECTION labels

Ilima Kalama, b. 1943  
Noah Kalama, 1904-1979  
Thomas “Tubby” Kalama, 1940-2021  
Montgomery Ernest Thomas “Buttons” Kaluhiokalani, 1958-2013  
Barry Kanaiaupuni, b. 1945  
Dane Kealoha, b. 1958  
Brian Keaulana, b. 1961  
Rusty Keaulana, b. 1966  
Titus Kinimaka, b. 1955  
Kainoa McGee, b. 1975  
Dino Miranda, n.d.  
Joseph Momoa, b. 1955  
Kelia Moniz, b. 1993  
Toni Moniz, b. 1959  
Anona Naone, b. 1941  
Nanette Napoleon, b. 1952  
David Kawaikoolihili Nuuhiwa, b. 1948  
Maile Orian-Collins, n.d.  
Bonga Perkins, b. 1972

### STONE SURFBOARD COLLECTION LABEL

Tom “Pōhaku” Stone  
Kanaka Maoli (Native Hawaiian), b. 1951  
Papa he‘e nalu kahiko (traditional-style surfboards), 2022

This collection of *papa he‘e nalu kahiko* (traditional-style surfboards) was handmade by *he‘e nalu* (surfing) practitioner Tom “Pōhaku” Stone. The boards are connected to the present, since the traditional designs influenced the modern-day short boards, long boards and bodyboards that his family members currently use for surfing. Surfboard innovations over time also inspired and influenced both skateboarding and snowboarding.

In 1993, Stone made the momentous decision to return to school, going on to complete a bachelor’s degree in Hawaiian studies, a master’s degree in Pacific Island studies, and a Certificate in Historic Preservation, bringing him back full circle to his roots on the beach at Waikīkī. It was through his studies that Stone would reconnect with his family’s traditional Hawaiian cultural knowledge, such as *he‘e hōlua* (land sledding) and other traditions. Today, Stone is recognized as the foremost expert and crafter of traditional styles of *papa he‘e nalu*

## He'e Nalu: The Art and Legacy of Hawaiian Surfing

### Labels - SECTION labels

(surfboards) and *papa hōlua* (land sledding boards), focusing on the traditions of the past and sharing them with the next generations and the world community.

### Stone family collection

## THREE PRINCES LABEL

### **The Three Princes: Kawānanakoa, Keli'iahonui and Kūhiō**

Three decades before Duke Kahanamoku would popularize *he'e nalu* (surfing) in California, the three Hawaiian princes surfed Santa Cruz on the weekends as a break from military school. All three were brothers, *hānai* (adopted) sons of Queen Kapi'olani, the wife of King David Kalākaua. In 1880, King Kalākaua had championed the Hawaiian Youths Abroad program to provide a broad education to future Hawaiian leaders. In 1885, the three princes attended St. Matthew's Hall, a military academy in San Mateo, California.

On Sunday, July 19, 1885, David La'amea Kahalepouli Kinoiki Kawānanakoa, 17, Edward Abnel Keli'iahonui, 16, and Jonah Kūhiō Kalaniana'ole, 14, paddled out onto the mouth of the San Lorenzo River in Santa Cruz to *he'e nalu* (surf). These Hawaiian teenagers all rode 150-pound, 17-foot olo, finless *papa he'e nalu* (surfboards) that were the traditional surfboard shapes of Hawaiian *ali'i* (royalty). The princes' *papa he'e nalu* were made of California redwood, milled by the Grover lumber company in Santa Cruz. Eventually, the princes would return to Hawai'i with their Redwood olo and would become a catalyst for importing redwood to the Hawaiian Islands.

Their historic surf session was documented the next day in the article "Beach Breezes – Some Scenes a Surf Reporter Saw on Sunday" in *The Santa Cruz Surf* newspaper. This led to Santa Cruz becoming known as "Surf City USA." Although Duke Kahanamoku is known as the father of modern surfing around the world, it was actually these three princes – Kawānanakoa, Keli'iahonui and Kūhiō – who were the first Hawaiians to *he'e nalu* in *Amelika* (America). Today, the olo that Kawānanakoa and Kūhiō rode at Santa Cruz on that fateful summer day in 1885 is still preserved by the Bishop Museum. A monument to the three princes is located at the Santa Cruz Surfing Museum, which is inside a lighthouse on the Monterey Peninsula.

Photo included in label:

## He‘e Nalu: The Art and Legacy of Hawaiian Surfing

### Labels - SECTION labels



The three Kānaka Maoli princes (left to right): Jonah Kūhiō Kalaniana‘ole, David La‘amea Kahalepouli Kinoiki Kawānanakoa and Edward Abnel Keli‘iahonui, taken while they were attending St. Matthew’s Hall military school at San Mateo, California, c. 1886.

### INNOVATION LABEL

#### **Innovations of Kānaka Maoli (Native Hawaiians)**

*E lawe i ke a‘o a mālama, a e ‘oi mau ka na‘auao.*

(Those who take their teachings and apply them increase their knowledge.)

– *‘Ōlelo No‘eau: Hawaiian Proverbs & Poetical Sayings #328* by Mary Kawena Pukui, 1983

*Kānaka Maoli* (Native Hawaiians) were innovators from the first voyage from *Kahiki* (Tahiti) to Hawai‘i. Consider poi, the staple food of Native Hawaiians. All of Polynesia ate the starchy, superfood *kalo* (taro). Yet, it was only the Hawaiians who steamed *kalo*, pounded it and added water to turn it into the gelatinous paste called poi. Taro in the form of poi can be kept for long periods of time—like a trans-Pacific voyage on a double-hulled sailing canoe. As poi gets older and ferments, it increases its nutritional value with probiotics. Furthermore, poi is a nutritious paste that does not require chewing to be consumed, so it can be fed to everyone, from babies to the elderly. Poi was an intrinsic part of daily life for the *Kānaka Maoli* and had a direct influence on the prosperity of Hawai‘i before Western contact.

The ocean has always been a teacher for the *Kānaka Maoli*, and the lessons from the water helped Hawaiians innovate sports like swimming and surfing as well as lifeguarding throughout history. Olympian Duke Kahanamoku invented the Kahanamoku Kick, also known as the double-flutter kick, which is still practiced in freestyle swimming today. Waikīkī Beach Boy Albert “Rabbit” Kekai is credited for inventing noseriding—the quintessential maneuver of longboard—where the surfer perches on the nose of the surfboard to stylishly gain momentum down the line of the wave. Master surfboard builder Ben Aipa invented the swallow tail, the 2

Labels - SECTION labels

+1 fin setup and The Sting, a surfboard design that allowed surfers like Larry Bertlemann to influence the Z-Boys and high-performance skateboarding. Pro surfer Dane Kealoha created the backside tube riding stance called the “pig dog,” which is still used today by surfers from intermediate levels all the way to the professional ranks. Kealoha was also the first competitor to surf Backdoor (the right-breaking wave from Pipeline) in a surf contest when many believed the wave was too dangerous to ride. Legendary water safety officials Brian Keaulana and Terry Ahue were the first lifeguards to use jet skis for ocean rescues. Archie Kalepa and his friends were the first surfers to use the jet skis to tow-in to giant waves at the surf spot Pe‘ahi (Jaws), while Terry Chung and a lot of the same friends were figuring out foil boarding at the same time.

OLYMPIANS LABEL

**Kānaka Maoli (Native Hawaiian) Olympians**

*Piha‘ā moe wai uka.*

(Stones that lie in the water in the upland.)

—*‘Ōlelo No ‘eau: Hawaiian Proverbs & Poetical Sayings #2630* by Mary Kawena Pukui, 1983

The Hawaiian proverb quoted above is said in reference to experts in strenuous sports. They are compared to stones that not even a torrential downpour can wash down to the lowland.

Hawai‘i is the most isolated island chain on Earth, and its subtropical climate and warm waters are the perfect *‘āina* (land) to cultivate Olympic athletes. In the early 1900s and through five Olympic Games, numerous medals were awarded to *Kānaka Maoli* (Native Hawaiian) swimmers Duke Kahanamoku, Samuel Kahanamoku, Warren Kealoha and Pua Kealoha.

Duke Kahanamoku was a six-time Olympic medalist in swimming and water polo. At the 1932 Olympics, Duke was an alternate for the U.S. water polo team who was awarded the bronze medal. His younger brother Sam Kahanamoku won one Olympic medal in 1924. Unlike the Kahanamoku brothers, Warren Kealoha and Pua Kealoha were not related. Warren and Pua were each recipients of two Olympic medals.

At the 2020 Summer Olympics in Tokyo, surfing and skateboarding made their debut. *Kanaka Maoli* surfer Carissa Moore and skateboarder Heimana Reynolds continued the proud tradition of Hawaiian athletic excellence, with Moore winning the inaugural gold medal in women’s surfing at the Tokyo games.

He'e Nalu: The Art and Legacy of Hawaiian Surfing

Labels - SECTION labels

OLYMPIC MEDAL WINNERS LABEL

### **Kānaka Maoli (Native Hawaiian) Olympic Athletes Through the Years**

#### **Duke Paoa Kahinu Mokoe Hulikohola Kahanamoku, 1890 – 1968**

1912 Summer Olympics, Stockholm  
100-meter Freestyle: Gold Medal  
4x200-meter Freestyle Relay: Silver Medal

1920 Summer Olympics, Antwerp  
100-meter Freestyle: Gold Medal  
4x200-meter Freestyle Relay: Gold Medal and new world record of 10:04.4 in the event final along with teammates Pua Kealoha, Perry McGillivray and Norman Ross

1924 Summer Olympics, Paris  
100-meter Freestyle: Silver Medal

#### **Samuel Alapai Kahanamoku, 1902 – 1966**

1924 Summer Olympics, Paris  
100-meter Freestyle: Bronze Medal

#### **Warren Daniels Kealoha (Kanaka Maoli), 1903 – 1972**

Two-time Olympic gold medalist and a world record holder.

1920 Summer Olympics, Antwerp  
100-meter Backstroke: Gold Medal

1924 Summer Olympics, Paris  
100-meter Backstroke: Gold Medal

#### **Pua Kealoha (Kanaka Maoli), 1902 – 1989**

1920 Summer Olympics, Antwerp  
4x200-meter Freestyle Relay: Gold Medal

He'e Nalu: The Art and Legacy of Hawaiian Surfing

Labels - SECTION labels

100-meter Freestyle: Silver Medal

**Carissa Kainani Moore (Kanaka Maoli), b. 1992**

2020 Summer Olympics, Tokyo

Women's Short Board Surfing: Gold Medal

**Heimana Reynolds (Kanaka Maoli), b. 1998**

2020 Summer Olympics, Tokyo

Men's Skateboard Park: 13th place

Photos included on label:



Brothers Duke Paoa Kahinu Mokoe Hulikohola Kahanamoku (Kanaka Maoli) and Samuel Alapai Kahanamoku (Kanaka Maoli), 1924. Courtesy of Bettmann/CORBIS.



Warren Daniels Kealoha (Kanaka Maoli), 1920. Historical Photo Collection, Flickr.

## He'e Nalu: The Art and Legacy of Hawaiian Surfing

Labels - SECTION labels



Pua Kealoha (Kanaka Maoli), 1920. Historical Collection, Alamy.



Carissa Moore (Kanaka Maoli) shortly after winning her gold medal at the 2021 Summer Olympics in Tokyo. Ryan Pierse/Getty Images.



Heimana Reynolds (Kanaka Maoli) holding skateboard, 2019. Harry How/Getty Images.

SKATEBOARDING LABEL

### Sidewalk Surfers

*Ua lehlehu a manomanao ka 'ikena a ka Hawai'i.*  
(Great and numerous is the knowledge of Hawaiians.)

– *‘Ōlelo No‘eau: Hawaiian Proverbs & Poetical Sayings* #2814, Mary Kawena Pukui, 1983



## He‘e Nalu: The Art and Legacy of Hawaiian Surfing

### Labels - SECTION labels

The influence of *he‘e nalu* (surfing) on skateboarding is indisputable. Three Hawaiian princes – Kawānanakoa, Kūhiō and Keli‘iahonui – brought *he‘e nalu* to California in 1885. *Kānaka Maoli* (Native Hawaiian) surfing icons Duke Kahanamoku and George Freeth spread surfing up and down the Californian coast in the early 1900s. In the 1950s, Californian surfers invented the skateboard as a means to “sidewalk surf” when the waves were flat.

In 1975 at the Del Mar Nationals, the Z-Boys, a group of young skateboarders from Santa Monica and Venice, showcased their ability to transition a style of surfing to skateboarding by skating low to the ground and dragging their hands against the concrete as if they were riding a wave. The Z-Boys’ inspirations were *Kānaka Maoli* surfers Larry Bertlemann and Montgomery “Buttons” Kaluhiokalani, who surfed stylishly low and springy with an open-knee crouch on the Sting surfboards shaped by Native Hawaiian board builder Ben Aipa. The Z-Boys paved the way for modern skateboarding.

Much like skateboarding, snowboarding shares similar roots that trace back to *he‘e nalu*. In pre-Western contact Hawai‘i, *Kānaka Maoli* practiced a sport similar to snowboarding called *he‘e hōlua* (land sled sliding). In this ancient Native Hawaiian sport, the athlete goes down the slope of a *kahua hōlua* (a man-made or naturally occurring course of rocks) standing up, kneeling or prone on a *papa hōlua* (wooden land sled). These sleds are approximately 12 feet long and 6 inches wide and can reach speeds that exceed 50 miles per hour.

Whether it’s snowboarding, skateboarding, windsurfing, kite surfing or foilboarding, all of the action sports on a board can trace their genealogy back to *he‘e nalu* – the beloved pastime of *Kānaka Maoli*.

#### Photos included in label:



Still photo of skateboarder Jay Adams from the documentary film *Dogtown and Z-Boys*, 2001. Alamy Stock Photo.

## He'e Nalu: The Art and Legacy of Hawaiian Surfing

Labels - SECTION labels



*Larry Driving*, photo of Larry Bertlemann (a.k.a. “the Rubberman”) surfing in Hawaii, 1970s. Photo by Dan Merkel.



Pioneer skateboarder Larry Bertlemann (a.k.a. “the Rubberman”), mid-1970s. Photo by Kirk Aider.