



SURF CITY

Surfing Sydney in the 1950s, 60s and 70s

Museum of Sydney | 5 November 2011 – 17 March 2012

the message

The exhibition is about surfing in Sydney in the 50s, 60s and 70s: an amazing period of social upheaval, post war optimism, rambunctious youth culture, rock and roll, travel and drugs. We'll look at influential and everyday surfers, trailblazers and entrepreneurs and the evolving Sydney surf scene during these vivid and volatile years. We'll also show how surfing changed Sydney. The exhibition will feature boards, movies, photos, magazines, music, clothes and surfing treasures.

the exhibition

The five main areas ...

- ▶ a line up of intriguing and influential Sydney surfers
- ▶ key moments, breakthroughs and people
- ▶ everyday surf culture artefacts: magazines, movies, music, clothes, bricabrac and surf junk
- ▶ hit list of surfboards, skateboards and popular surf craft
- ▶ large scale interactive map of Sydney beaches

the concept

A new kind of surfing hit Sydney in the 1950s, sparked by the arrival of 'finned', fibreglass covered balsa boards known as Malibu chips, straight from California. Unlike the hollow skis then common in Sydney, the Malibus were agile and expressive and could be trimmed along the face of a fast breaking wave. By the early 1960s, a young and adventurous board making industry, scattered across Sydney, struggled to keep pace with the teen driven surf craze, fuelled by an avalanche of surf music, clothing, movies, magazines and a hunger for travel and independence. Pretty soon, surfing, surfer style, cars and the beach were king. Throughout the decade, Sydney-siders rose to international prominence as hot riders and designers, driving the 'shortboard revolution' of 1967 that forever changed the way boards were made and surfed. Surfing's popularity in the 70s continued to rise and evolve, harnessing a fiesty print media and hunger for out of town breaks with rock and roll, environmentalism and a trippy counterculture. By the end of the decade, the surf industry had gone mainstream. Along with wetsuits, legropes and surf wares came crowds, aggro, localism and for some a lucrative professional circuit. In 1980, Sydney's own triple finned "thruster" hit the waves, signaling a new dawn in surf culture and the end of a golden era.

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