



# Surfing in Hawai'i:: 1778-1930 (Images of America)

*Timothy Tovar DeLaVega*



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When the early European explorers traversed the globe, their journals held numerous accounts of Hawaiians enjoying surfing. Since Europeans of that era were not accustomed to swimming in their own cold waters, it must have seemed like a dream to watch naked native Hawaiians riding the waves of a turbulent sea.

Nowhere in the ancient world was surfing as ingrained into the culture as on the islands of Hawai'i. He'e nalu (wave sliding) was the national sport and enjoyed by all. When a swell was up, whole villages were deserted as everyone fled to the beach to test their surfing skills. Legends of famous surf riders were retold in mele (song/chant), and fortunes could be decided on the outcome of a surfing contest. From these shores, modern surfing was born, along with the iconic romantic images of bronzed surfers, grass shacks, and hula. This new book from Arcadia Publishing offers a view of *he'e nalu* (surf-sliding) pre-1930.

A few of the many discoveries to be found inside the book:

1. The Foreword, written in Hawaiian and English by Hawaiian scholar Keao NeSmith, opens the book with the Polynesian view of surfing.
2. Many previously unaccredited images have been properly identified, credited and dated.
3. Printed for the first time are the oldest documentable photographs of surfing and surfers with their surfboards.
4. Extensive research done on the early days of the surfing clubs of Waikiki. 2 Chapters tell the story of their early days, with many previously unpublished photographs, that have added new insight into the early years of the clubs.
5. Surfing in this era was done on solid planks of wood, or the era when surfers rode waves on the souls of trees.
6. History of the early mailing cards and postcards.
7. History of early photographic equipment and techniques used to capture the thrill of surf riding.
8. A Chapter dedicated to Duke Kahanamoku, along with previously unpublished images and information on the "Father of Modern Surfing"
9. Surfing petroglyph's are discussed by the pre-eminent scholar Edward Stasack
10. Over 200 surfing images from ancient petroglyphs to the first modern surfing boom.



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