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PERSPECTIVE The Simmons Project: Tunnel Testing a Neo-Widetail

SOUNDINGS Walker, Parmenter, Loehr, Biolos, St. Pierre, French

PHOTOGRAPHY Callahan's Year • Two x Fours

ONE MAN'S TRASH

Surfing the Web to trace the lineage of a vintage tri-fin

Like a black lab placing a dead bird at his owner's feet, I unveiled the vintage shortboard I'd plucked from the mountain of trash at the Carlsbad dump. My wife just shook her head: "Only my husband would come home from the dump with more junk than he left with."

Not exactly the reaction I was hoping for. Sure, it was yellowed and covered in black soot, but the thick six-footer had all three fins and required no major bodywork. Scraping off



The plan shape might be bloated and the rocker rather blunt, but for all that, would you throw this board away?

25 years of wax and grime revealed sponsor laminates: Op, Body Glove, and British Airways. The thruster was of an early '80s vintage and obviously once owned by a professional surfer. I flipped the board over and ran my hand across a sticker that said: TRI by Channel Islands. Up by the nose, another large laminate read: Freedom Surf Designs—Channel Islands.

"Holy shit," I mumbled to myself. "An original Channel Islands board!"

I shot digital photos and fired them off to a contact at Channel Islands in Santa Barbara.

"Dude, Al says it isn't one of his," said my friend at CI. "You should probably find another board to write a story about."

That's when my infatuation began.

I focused on a decal near the tail:

"Steve Harewood Shapes," and started Googling. My Internet search led to an article from the *Jersey Evening Post*. Not New Jersey, but the Isle of Jersey, in the English Channel.

From the article I discovered Harewood was a well respected shaper back in the '80s when Jersey was the epicenter of European surfing. I sent off a blind e-mail to the *Post* reporter asking for assistance in locating Harewood. He obliged.

I'll pass your e-mail on. I'm sure there will be no problem in making contact.

I was stoked, but three months passed and nothing, until one morning I awoke to an e-mail in my Inbox:

Hi Mark,

Believe you have been trying to get in touch, tried one E.address but it was returned, then we went surfing in warmer climes.

Anyhow am available on this address

Keep on Surfing, Stephen Harewood.

We traded e-mails and eventually connected by phone weeks later. I described the board and Harewood thought back

over his 30 years of shaping. "I'd say it's probably from like 1984," he said in a thick, almost Cockney accent. "That's when Shaun and Barton Lynch came over." Then something clicked: "I'll tell you who. I'm sure I know whose board it is. It's a girl. Yeah, she's over here. I bet it's hers. I know her name. It's on the tip of my tongue."

Arlene Maltman, a former British pro from Jersey. Steve thought he might be able to locate her, but I couldn't wait. Another Internet search yielded one page of leads, including old surf contest postings and a Web page about the Santa Cruz Film Festival where Maltman used to work. I fired off another blind e-mail and a response from her old boss arrived, almost instantaneously, with Maltman's current e-mail address.

I sent Maltman a note and photo of the board. A week later, an ecstatic e-mail arrived from an Internet café somewhere in Bali:

Yes, Yes, that is my old stick—I can't believe it!!!

We e-mailed back and forth and finally spoke by phone once she returned to Jersey. Hearing Arlene's voice on the other end of the line felt like I was talking to an old friend. Two surfers, separated by more than 30 years but connected by one board.

"My heart just jumped. I couldn't believe it," said Maltman, now 40, describing how it felt to see her old board. "It has so many memories. When I saw that board it brought it all back."

At 17, Arlene surfed the board while touring the States and competing at the 1984 World Championships in Oceanside. At that time, she stayed with three-time PSSA tour champ Mike Lambresi and his family and became good friends with his sister, Alice, as well as Barbie Buran, sister of the 1984 Pipeline Master Joey Buran. Maltman figured she either gave the board to one of those girls or pawned it to fund her travels.



COLLECTION OF ARLENE MALTMAN

Jersey girl: not Newark, but the English Channel Islands.

"I just can't understand how it could end up in the dump," Maltman said to me. "No one throws away old boards these days."

What really struck me, though, is the fact that I was able to trace the lineage of this old surfboard. You couldn't do that with a pair of ancient golf clubs or snow skis. I've been surfing Arlene's board a lot lately. The yellowed stick, with its proud logos, always turns heads at the beach, and I keep hoping that one day a surfer will recognize it—like some old friend—and stop me, filling in a missing part of the puzzle. ✨

—MARK ANDERS

If you have any information regarding this board, contact: mark@markanders.com