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Ralph Yeramian, vice president of the Huntington Beach Long Board Crew, videotapes memorabilia at the International Surfing Museum.

Surfing museum set to reopen

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Landmark returns in hot new spot

By Chris Monahan
The Orange County Register

HUNTINGTON BEACH — With the pier locked and scheduled for demolition after Labor Day, Surf City seems to lack a distinguishing surfing landmark. But that will change for the better Saturday, with the reopening of the International Surfing Museum at 411 Olive St.

The opening will be part of a weekend celebration that includes a luau, a longboard surfing tournament, an exhibition of woodie automobiles from the 1940s, '50s and '60s, and a street dance featuring Dick Dale, "the king of the surf guitar."

The festivities will take place on Olive between Main and Fifth streets beginning with the ribbon-cutting ceremony at 4:45 p.m. Tickets will be \$35. Tickets for the dance only, which begins at 8:30, are \$10.

The museum will open to the public Sunday; it will be open daily noon to 6 p.m. Admission will be \$1.

Grand-opening activities

Saturday

7 a.m. Qualifying heats for ProAm Longboard Surfing Contest begin (south side of pier).
9. Woodie Meet begins (north side of pier).
12:30 p.m. Award for Woodie Meet (north side of pier).
4:45. Hawaiian blessing and ribbon cutting (411 Olive St.)
5:30. Cocktails

6:30. Dinner

7. Polynesian Show
8:30. Surf concert, featuring Dick Dale.

Sunday

7 a.m. Surfing contest continues.
Noon. Museum opens to the public.
TBA (afternoon). Paddle race around pier.

The original museum, at Walnut Avenue and Main, opened in June 1988 but closed after eight months. Items were put in storage when the original building was torn down in February 1989 as part of the redevelopment of downtown.

This location — a renovated building from the 1930s — also is temporary. According to museum board chairwoman Natalie Kotsch, the permanent home will be a 10,000-square-foot building under the new pier.

The pier is scheduled to be finished in summer 1992, but Kotsch said it probably would be another year before the museum moves.

The Surfing Hall of Fame, without a home but incorporated and

based in San Diego, will be housed at the new museum site.

The new museum location is 2,200 square feet. The renovated Art Deco-style building includes a gray and green tile exterior with glass block windows.

Most of the work was paid for by the city redevelopment project, but things such as paint, carpeting and exhibit costs, totaling about \$9,000, according to Kotsch, were funded through donations, both corporate and private. The building is owned by the city and is being leased to the museum for \$1 per year.

The first thing visitors will see as they walk in will be a small area dedicated to Duke Kahanamoku, widely considered the fa-

ther of modern surfing. The display will have a bronze bust and plaque taken from the end of the old pier.

Kahanamoku died in 1968, but his widow, Nadine, is scheduled to fly in from Hawaii to help dedicate the museum Saturday.

Other items on display in the museum, which covers eight decades of the sport, include:

- Surfboards dating from the late 19th century to the mid-1960s;

- Trophies from past surfing contests in the Huntington Beach area;

- Original surf music record albums from the '60s, featuring artists such as Dick Dale, the Ventures, Jan and Dean, and Jack Nitschke;

- The hood ornament, in the shape of a surfer on a wave, from Kahanamoku's Lincoln Continental.

The museum also plans two other attractions, which will not be in place for the opening but will be added as funding allows: a small theater, placed in a corner, with projection on several walls to give a three-dimensional feel, and a computer catalog system, for those doing research on surfing.

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