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Jacky Rott from the Landes area, a pioneer of surfing in France, died Saturday, June 8, 2019 at 11:30 a.m. Updated on Sunday, June 9, 2019 at 10:30 a.m. - By Frédéric Denis, France Bleu Gascogne, France Bleu Pays Basque, France Bleu Gironde Dax.

He was the first French surfer. We owe him the manufacture of the first surfboards in France: Jacky Rott from the town of Dax, died at the age of 87. He had been battling cancer for several years. His funeral will be celebrated Tuesday at 4 p.m. in Saint-Vincent-de-Paul.

He was the first French surfer. We owe him the manufacture of the first surfboards in France: from the town of Dax Jacky Rott died at the age of 87. He had been battling cancer for several years. His funeral will be celebrated on Tuesday June 11 at 4 p.m. in the Notre-Dame de Buglose basilica in Saint-Vincent-de-Paul, followed by burial in the Saint-Pierre cemetery in Dax.

Jacky Rott, "he was one of the most valiant of the gang of uncle surfers who started surfing in the summer of 1957" recalls the co-founder of the famous surf session magazine, Gibus de Soultrait.

French surfing champion in 1961, Jacky Rott represented France with his friend Jo Moraiz at the world surfing championships in Peru in 1962. The Landais was truly a pioneer of French surfing.

The man from Dax is the first Frenchman to have had the idea of ​​standing up on a board. We are in 1952. Jacky Rott is then 20 years old. He was already practicing what was called Planky at the time, the ancestor of bodyboarding, on wooden boards. The man from Dax, who was a cabinetmaker, makes these boards himself, which he sells in beach shops.

In 1952, therefore, Jacky Rott went to the cinema to see a film on Pearl Harbor, and in a very short scene, he saw a surfer standing on a board sliding on a wave: a real revelation: the Landais had only one idea in mind: do the same. He builds a prototype, a 2.50 meter board, but he can't stand on it.

He tried again in 1957, on his return from the Algerian war. But this time, he has an American surfer's board as a model. He also knows that you have to put paraffin on it so as not to slip, and it works! Jacky Rott starts on the North in Hossegor, in front of his relatives. He stands on his board, takes several waves. Thanks to the Landais area, French surfing was born.

Robert Rabagny, organizer of surf competitions in Biarritz, had the opportunity to meet Jacky Rott several times. He remembers someone very accessible, always ready to give advice. He remembers the boards he had made alone and with Michel Barland. They were boards that weighed 20 kilos. When surfers surfed without a leash (an accessory used in board sports to connect the rider to his board) and the boards went into the blocks, they took hits, water. They gained weight and they managed to make 50 kilos.

Robert Rabagny has a Jacky Rott surfboard which he treasures for the day when a real surfing museum will open in honor of the uncle surfers, of which the citizen from the town of Dax was a part, these pioneers who brought surfing to Europe on the coast Basque, in Biarritz at the end of the 1950s, in 1957.

A traditional ocean ceremony for surfers should take place in his honor on Sunday June 16 in Parlementia (Bidart-Guéthary) at the end of the morning. Last summer, the city of Anglet honored Jacky Rott with the imprint of his feet on the avenue du surf.