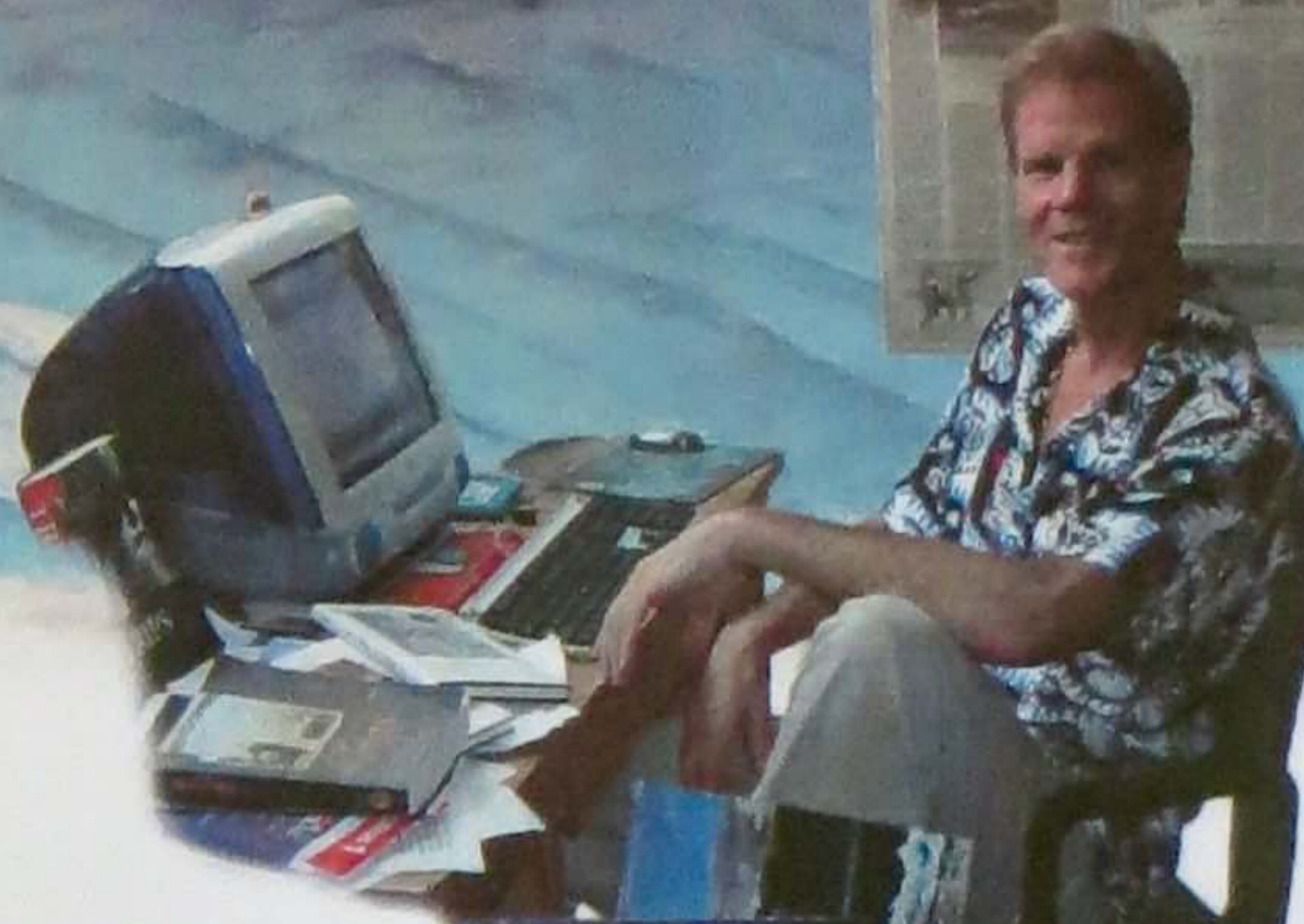




# FOCUS WEST



## THE NOMADIC PATH FROM BARRHAVEN TO BYRON BAY AND BACK...



By Louise Rachlis

**T**hey are dreamers both. Rick and Dale Taylor, of Barrhaven, she an artist, he a writer, both creators of the world in their own image, each of them an unlikely combination of free spirit and hard work, an example of those who live life with no excuses, rather than just passing through.

"Wave Dreaming", Dale's exhibit of acrylic paintings, pastels and stained glass now showing at the Atrium Gallery at Centrepointe, evolved from the inspiration of living with the sound of the surf breaking in front of her beach house during a year in Australia in 1997 on a teaching exchange. During the day, Dale taught English at Byron Bay High School, and her husband stayed at home to surf the Point and begin writing his new book.

An art and drama teacher, Dale, has worked in the medium of stained glass for the past seven years, striving to capture the light that strikes through waves. These stained glass waves were first shown at the Unfolding Images Gallery in Westboro two years ago.

The Unfolding Images Gallery was also the location of "Clothesline Art", a massive art show of the work of 120 of Dale's Broadview Public School grade seven and eight students.

For 20 years she taught physical education, art and English for grades seven and eight for the Ottawa Board of Education. In September she'll be teaching grade five for the Ottawa-Carleton District School Board at the new public school in Longfields.

An active volunteer in the community, Dale has coached dozens of sports teams, both at the schools where she was teaching, and in the Barrhaven community. Over the years her husband Rick has taught over 30 writing workshops in Ottawa and Nepean.

A lecturer in Carleton University's English Department, Rick has published a novel, *Cartoon Woods*, and a collection of short stories, *Tender Only to One*, and has written frequently in *The Citizen Weekly* and elsewhere. His new book *House Inside the Waves, Reflections on Domesticity, Art and the Surfing Life*, is a travel memoir he wrote while living with his family for a year on the beach in Australia. It will be published by Beach Holme Publishers in Vancouver in spring 2002.

At the age of 19, while living in Vancouver, he got the surfing bug. A summer of surfing in Hawaii changed his life "and forever imprinted the metaphor of surfing as the ultimate pleasure."

Dale and Rick met up at his family's cottage in Norway Bay, Quebec, in 1973. Both grew up in Ottawa. "It was love at first sight," says Rick. "We were both thunderstruck by love."

The couple got married in 1975 and ever after have been living "a life of travel that can only be described as fabulous, without a lot of money." "A long time ago we decided to use our money, time and energy for travel. We never stay still for very long. Every few years, as romantic nomads, we've managed to rid ourselves of our material possessions so that we can travel to the most amazing places on earth... Our bank account is always overdrawn, but our soul account is over-brimming."

For a decade, he stayed home to look after their two daughters, Sky, now 15, and Quinn, now 11.

In 1976 they took a trip around the perimeter of North America in a renovated van, surfing and swimming, writing and doing art. In 1978-79 they travelled the world with backpacks - Hawaii, Sri Lanka, Bali, Fiji, Australia, the Greek Islands, and New Zealand where they ran a youth hostel. They started off with a brand new MGB sports car to drive around Canada and live in Vancouver for a few months.

They sold the MG and bought round the world tickets from Vancouver to the Greek Islands. When they came back, Dale got her teaching degree from University of Ottawa. She started teaching and Rick worked in three Ottawa bookstores - "a great job for a writer." They spent two whole summers in Hawaii surfing, and he published his first book. Then they did a self-funded leave around the world on an "endless summer" trip in 1988, following the sun and surf with their first daughter, Ski, then two.

After 10 years in the Glebe they bought a house in Barrhaven but didn't compromise their dreams, and in 1990 their second child was born. "We emptied our house and rented it out and left for a year in Hong Kong, living right on the ocean with a view of the city 30 minutes away by ferry."

Last summer for their 25th anniversary they went for a cruise on the Caribbean, and this summer they just returned from a medieval hilltop town in Tuscany where Rick was teaching creative writing and Dale did pastels for her upcoming art show.

You can see those pastels, along with her acrylics and stained glass waves at the Atrium Gallery until September 26th. The Gallery is open Monday to Thursday 8:30 a.m. to 9 p.m., Friday 8:30 a.m. to 6 p.m., and Saturday 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.

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Rick Taylor

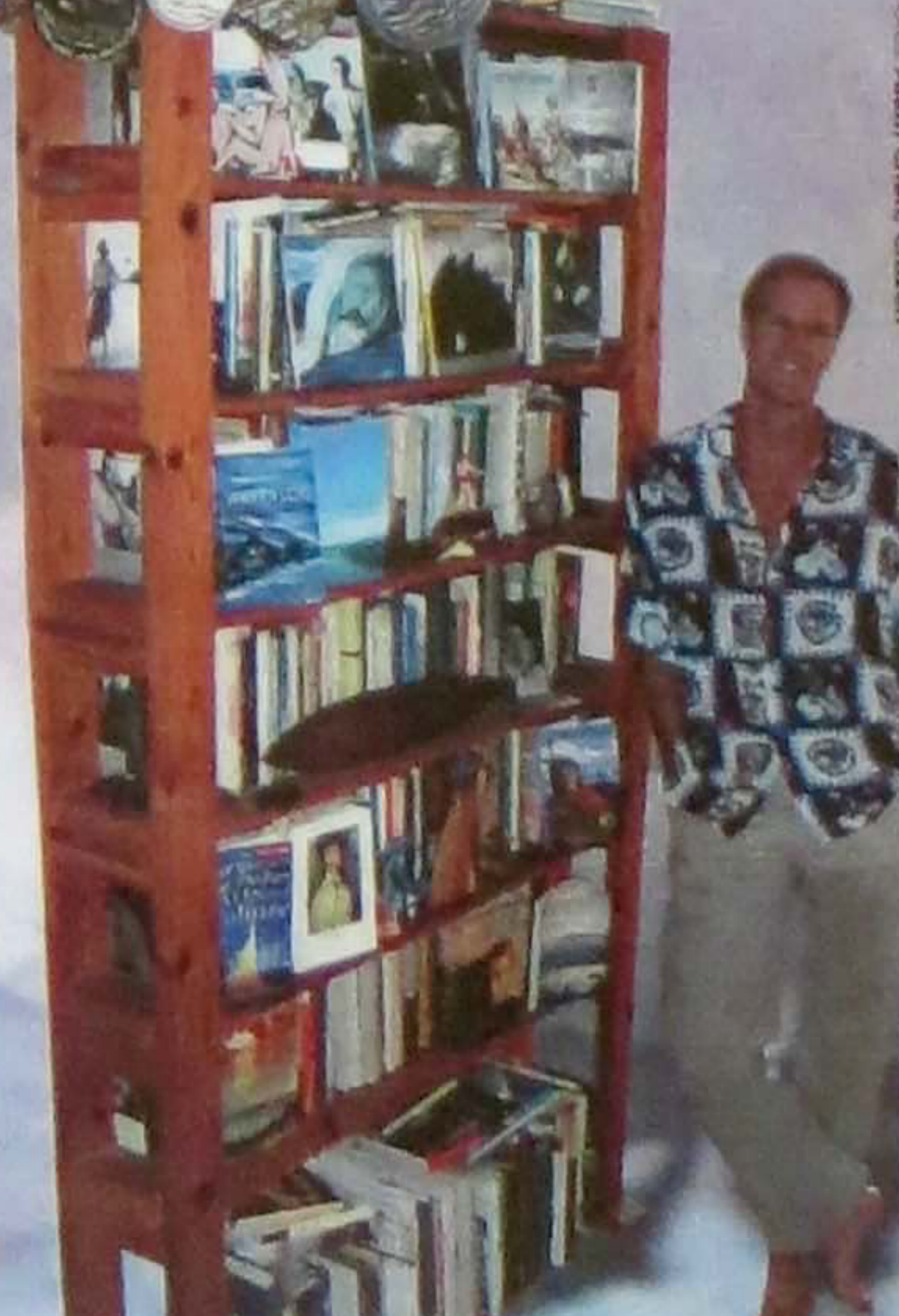


Photo: Alvin Chen, Citizen