

## Historical Diving Society

# Ernie Brooks Sculpture Unveiling

By **Jeanette Casillas** / CASA

**T**HE RECENT ADDITION TO THE “LEGENDS OF THE SEA” SCULPTURE COLLECTION, a portrait of a young Ernie Brooks with a camera in hand, by famed sculptor Viktor was unveiled at the Historical Diving Society’s annual fundraiser at the Santa Barbara Maritime Museum in July.

“As a hometown boy receiving this *Legend of the Sea* unveiling here in Santa Barbara...I bow to all those before me who have given their lives to foster this Global Awareness to the value of our Oceans,” shared Brooks.

From his 30-year tenure as president of the Brooks Institute to his mentorship under Jacques Cousteau, to his advancements in underwater photography, Brooks is a legend in every sense of the word. He has been a Santa Barbara resident since the 1940s.

The granite sculpture is part of the “Ocean Pioneers” installation originally commissioned by Google to introduce Google Ocean in 2009. The collection includes sculptures of individuals who have received the Legends of The Sea Award and are famous figures in oceanic exploration like Jacques Cousteau and Zale Parry.

Ernie’s sculpted portrait will be on display on the Maritime Museum’s front patio through October before it is transported to Mountain View where it will join the rest of the pioneers at Google’s Headquarters.

“We were pleased to see so many friends from the local community come out and support this important recognition of Ernie Brooks. There aren’t many living people with their own statue in Santa Barbara,” shared Jill Leaney, Historical Diving Society Project Manager.

The evening’s program included a cocktail reception and silent auction of photography donated by Ernie Brooks, Richard Salas, Viktor, and Bob Talbot, among others. Brooks also gave the Museum a \$50,000 challenge grant to encourage additional community support. As a special incentive ten major matching donors will receive a signed copy of Brook’s retrospective *Silver Seas*.



**Ernie Brooks** and sculptor **Viktor** next to the unveiled statue at the Santa Barbara Maritime Museum



**Ernie Brooks** and **Lad Handelman**



**Arthur von Wiesenberger, Wendy McCaw,** and **Ernie Brooks**



**Danny Ramirez; Eve Ramirez; Ernie Brooks;** and **Silvio Di Loreto**



**Pat Hinds; Ernie Brooks;** and **James Forte**

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