

Peace, Love, Surf: Growing Up In The 60's (California Style)

Peace, Love, Surf: Growing Up In The Sixties (California Style)

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Prologue

It is my totally unbiased opinion that I grew up in what must be considered one of the most controversial and exciting times in the twentieth century, especially that narrow band of time during the sixties to mid-seventies. There were a lot of things going on like the Watts riots, the Cold War, the so called lunar landings, The Assassinations [JFK](#), [RFK](#), [Martin](#) , the [Viet Nam](#) war, [People's Park](#) in Berkeley, the [Monterey Pop Festival](#), the [Kent State](#) killings, Chicago Democratic Convention, [Woodstock](#), SLA, [Watergate](#), [The Beach Boys](#), the [Beatles](#), [The Doors](#), [Bob Dylan](#), [Jimi Hendrix](#), [Janis Joplin](#), the best music ever to be recorded, and, subsequently, the loss of J cubed (Jimi, Jim and Janis), late night sitcoms with Johnny, SLN, high school, college, presidential resignations and pardons, and more. It was like a pre-cyberspace overload era.

Hence, given all that I went through during this short time on planet Earth, I felt the title of these short stories covers the appropriate time spectrum. There was a saying for the Viet Nam war that went around in this era called, "Peace, Love, Dove". I took it and made a

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slight modification to reflect what it was like to grow up when surfing was taking off as a California craze; pray for **Peace**, free **Love**, let's **Surf**.

If you want to contribute your viewpoint, feel free to email me at cal.clack@gmail.com .

Finally, I made my entrance on this ship, called planet Earth, in December 1950; a Sagittarian born in the Year of The Tiger. Cowabunga, dude, and dudettes; let's go surfin'.

The Northern California Years 1963-1965 Beginnings

The year must have been around 1962 or 1963, more than likely summertime. Bruce Brown was going around and showing off his new movie, [Endless Summer](#) and if I recall right my sister drove a few of us from Vacaville up to the Civic Auditorium in Sacramento to catch this cool movie. As luck would have it, I won a door prize (some cheapo pair of baggies) and actually got called up on to stage and was congratulated by Bruce himself. Tell me that wasn't really cool. Just to show what a small world it is, years later, 1974, I would meet my brother's next door neighbor, John Burns, who just happened to be a teammate of Bruce Brown's on the Long Beach Wilson High School gymnastic team. Also, John would eventually teach all of us how to sail Hobie cats and I would eventually wind up meeting Hobie Alter and race against him and his children at regattas around California and once back in Ft. Lauderdale, Florida.

Anyway, this Bruce Brown travelcade movie really started the surf craze in Vacaville. I mean, we had to have the latest surf look, Van tennis shoes, red and white striped tee shirts, Hobie skateboards. The skateboards were neat because they were mutli-stringered, just like a surfboard. The problem here being that these custom skateboards were not cheap. We all had another game plan, though. See, most of us were taking wood shop, and what better project(s) than to custom make your own skateboard. Those were neat because we could then test drive and critique our own work. I think I must have made several variations that one year in junior high wood shop.

Of course the best place to test drive your new product was on Vine Street and Andrews Park. Vine Street is about as steep an angle that can be, either driven or manually traversed, without falling off the face of the earth. This street probably parallels the sheer steepness of Mason, Powell or Lombard Streets in San Francisco. We would start out at the top (took some balls to do this) and try and negotiate the turn at the bottom of the hill. This being in the early 60's precludes helmets, shoulder, knee and elbow pads so a wipeout was a near death experience and I'm not joking here. There were some gnarly wipeouts, which resulted in deep, deep skin abrasions, concussions and broken bones. If memory still serves me, I think the City sent out the cops to try and close it down to skateboarding. I doubt they succeeded because of the "You can't" factor kids seem to possess.

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The other favorite place to burn your wheels was over at Andrews Park, about three blocks over from Vine Street. Andrews was not that balls-to-the-walls place like Vine Street, heck, even girls could skateboard here. The park had a long sweeping and turning sidewalk with a slightly pitched angle; not the 70 degrees like Vine Street. The cool thing to do here at Andrews was to double up on a board, or ride the wheels right on the curb's edge, or have someone sit on top of your shoulders. The actual park was elevated about three to four feet above the sidewalk so all the gremmies could sit on top of the wall and watch everyone else coming down and passing by on their way to the bottom.

The Northern California Years 1963-1965 Getting Serious

After several Vine Street experiences, lots of woodshop skateboards and all the other surf related things, it was time to get on with the "real" thing. Damn it, I need a surfboard. Never mind I was only 11 or 12, maybe 13, had no idea how I would get to the beach (money, what me worry?) or anything like that; mom and dad were always there to cover for you. Anyway, I needed a surfboard to make this whole scene legitimate. Mom and Dad were not about to buy my surfboard, so I decided I would have to take matters into my own hands.

A friend of ours had a paper route and after discussing the issues at hand, he suggested that I also should take up delivering papers. This actually worked out well for Steve Bolling (see accompanying story about Steve and Pat Ketchell) and me. Steve was my sister's age; same birthday, year and class. Anyway, Steve and I would get up real early, while the rest of Vacaville was still sleeping, fold our papers, stuff and mount our bags and be off with our bad selves. Our routes were close enough where we could share taking the same route on and off, and sometimes even cross paths while delivering. He had a real nice 26" bike, lots of chrome, butterfly handlebars, banana seat, black and shiny. I bought a small 18" and made it look just like Steve's bike. In retrospect, I probably had the first "sting-ray" bike, hand built by Steve and me. It was an exact replica of his Schwinn 26" model. It looked cool when we were riding side by side. Sometimes we would take playing cards and clip them on the forks so the spokes would rub against them. Really, it looked pretty cool when we were riding side by side. Steve was also what I would consider a better than average baseball player. He taught me how to fold and pitch the paper with precision. We had it down to a science.

This making money thing was starting to work out pretty well. I was starting to accumulate some and wound up stuffing it in the local savings and loan. However, I don't want to insinuate I was getting a little greedy, but I wanted to make more, faster. I think Steve was having the same idea and we both wound up going to work for the San Francisco Chronicle, which paid more handsomely than the Vacaville Reporter, plus the routes were bigger. Taking on this route was a new experience. The big difference between the Reporter and Chronicle, not to mention pay, was the Chronicle was delivered twice daily and the Sunday paper must have averaged around eight pounds. We had to do at least two trips, sometimes three, on Sunday, even double bagging our bikes; one set on the

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handle bars and one set over our shoulders. Well, not too long after we started the Chronicle routes, Steve got his driver's license and a brand new, two tone red and white, 1957 Buick, lots of chrome. On Sunday, we would load both paper routes into the back seat of that big old Buick, then do his route first then mine. What made this fun was that not only could we do the routes faster, but also it was a whole lot more fun and easier to do. Our method involved opening both doors to the Buick, setting the idle to about three miles an hour and walk along with the car yanking the papers from the back seat as needed. Thank God for the hour and era in which we did this. Can you imagine pulling this off in the 21st century; I think not.

It wasn't long after the paper route that I had saved enough money to buy my first brand new surfboard. It was a Shark model. No craftsmanship gone into this one other than someone pushing the "Inject" button on the mold. However, it sufficed for a few months until I decided I needed a handmade model. Man, was I ever stoked when UPS pulled up to deliver my custom made Hobie, [Phil Edwards](#) model. A real nice board with three redwood stringers, double layered glass (four on the rail) and a cool looking reversed fin (or skag as we called them) with a nice clear bead and sharp as a razor blade. This was the board that took me throughout my surfing adventures for the better part of five years. I wish I still had that board, but I wound up stripping the glass and reshaping it my junior year in high school. I took it over to a professional glasser who put some light brown color tint. I was proud I had done a decent job shaping that board and it rode well. I cut it down from a 9'6" to just about 7'9", set in a new fin block with an adjustable, clear blue, fin.

I wound up trading that old Shark board (see accompanying story by [Greg](#)) for a [mini-bike](#) .

On one glorious sunny afternoon Pat Ketchell dared Steve Bolling to climb one of those really high power transmission towers. Steve did, and Pat commenced to shoot Steve with a shotgun. Steve was really pissed off at Pat and on their walk back home Steve said he asked Pat if he could carry the rifle; Pat said no. Steve was mad at Pat for quite a while.

The Northern California Years 1963-1965 Let's Go Surfin' Now

Now that there were a couple of surfboards in Vacaville (Bob Merrick somehow wound up with one), we needed to get to the beach somehow. We were more or less land locked just about a little more than an hour's drive to the nearest surf. Hmmm, what if a bunch of us formed a "club" of sorts. This way, we could pay dues and use that dues source for things like gas and travel expenses. So we formed a surf club. I don't know if there was an official name, titles or anything like that. Somehow, though, Bob Merrick became the Treasurer for our little club. I think that was the only office held and self-appointed. Bob was a little older than the rest of us so I guess the self-appointment was by seniority rules. Good, bad or indifferent, we had a few meetings to figure out logistics on getting down and back from the beaches, food, gas, drivers, etc.

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Somehow we managed. We would all pile into someone's parents station wagon or truck. Wow, I just can't even imagine being responsible for a truck load of gremmies going down the highway in the back of a truck, much less trying to account for them out in shark infested surf. No wonder I never had kids. I scared myself shitless just recounting stories of my childhood. We surfed places like [Bolinas](#), [Stinson Beach](#), [Rockaway](#) and Santa Cruz with [Steamers Lane](#), [Cowells](#) and [Pleasure Point](#); pretty awesome places for kids learning how to surf in the middle of winter, no wetsuits, no fear of wave heights and totally bliss to the fact that this area resides in what is known as the [red triangle](#) for its great white shark attacks. One thing about all of us, though, we could swim like fish. Growing up in Vacaville, or the Central Valley, forced one to seek the shelter of bodies of water in the dead of summer and we swam a lot.

I think because we only had a couple of boards, that one of the Club rules must have read to allow a maximum of so many minutes out in the water until you had to come in and let the next guy go out and give it a go. We would surf, without wetsuits, until we came out shivering and blue from hypothermia. But was it fun. We were absolutely fearless.

The Northern California Years 1963-1965 Partings From Northern California

Mom and Dad separated sometime in 1965. I finished up my eighth grade graduation from Willis Jepson Junior High and mom, my brother and I packed up our belongings and headed on down to Long Beach to start a new life for mom (my sister came also, but did not adjust well to Southern California, see the Milk Truck stories below). I was pretty excited myself because that meant warmer water and surfing all the time. We were going to be living just minutes from Seal Beach, where I had tried surfing a few years earlier with my cousins Jerry and Jimmy Groseclos. I would imagine this is when I got the surf fever. The funny thing here being that I wasn't even thinking about leaving all my surf buddies back in Vacaville. All I wanted to do was move closer to the ocean where I could surf at will, but I was only fourteen and didn't even think about how one would get to the ocean whenever one so desired.

Anyway, so long Northern California, hello Southern California.

A Story from Greg Linder LINDER'S LIE (or HOW TO BS YOUR WAY TO THE BEACH)

It was 1964 and I did not really surf yet. I told people I had but everybody sort of tells fibs like that when they are only 12 and they are new in town and are not accepted into the social group yet. Besides I really wanted to surf... and I mean I really wanted to surf. My brother had done it a few times so I felt like maybe my "fib" had some sort of veracity since at least a blood relative of mine had done it hence I wasn't totally lying. (Some sort-of "pre-teen" logic I guess.)

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All of this took place in a very unlikely place for a "wanna-be" surfer. That place was Vacaville, CA, a town that for a 12 yr. old seemed as far away from the ocean as Kansas. (I have since learned that Kansas is a lot further away and Illinois where I went to college is further still but that is another story.) But in reality Vacaville was only a little over an hour from the coast if you had a driver's license, or knew someone who did.

Now my family had just moved to Vacaville and I was to start my seventh grade year, puberty, and hopefully, surfing in a totally new school with people I did not yet know. Yeah, I was the "new kid" in school.

Interestingly, Vacaville was not totally foreign to me. We had lived there for a few years and then moved away when I was eight. I guess my folks liked it so much they moved us all back when Dad retired from the Air Force. I, therefore, knew some kids from before but of course they all had changed from when they were eight to now, age twelve. Some girls had developed nicely, some fellows had gotten huge like Ralph Divan, Tony Hernandez had not gotten any friendlier, etc. I visited my best friend from when I was eight, Bob Paolini. He was a kid and had a doughboy pool in his back yard. I asked him who was "cool" that I would be meeting in Junior High. He mentioned a few names but one that I remember to this day was the name Cal Clack. He said Cal was cool because he wore his hair in a "flat-top" with a "duck-ass" on the sides and back. He also said he was a good athlete and perhaps a few other things.

It was later that I was to learn that Cal also surfed, or at least had surfed. That to me was the coolest thing of all. It turned out that Cal was to be in all my classes that year and I was able to observe him and his buddies from a fairly close distance. Being the new kid and also somewhat of a "runt" I knew it was going to take me quite a while to even approach "acceptance" from the "in group" (Sounds like a National Geographic special on the Timber Wolf doesn't it?) Cal and his buddies, Ron Hawley, Bob Merrick, Kenny Russell, Jessie Garcia, John Vasquez, Billy Ward (Thumper), "Big Bill" Ward and others that will come to mind as I write this, were all part of the in group. They were all bigger than me; all made the football team or basketball team or baseball team, which I always had difficulty in doing because of my size. They also seemed to get the girls, which I did not because again they appeared more physically mature than me. If I was going to become "accepted" it was not going to be for my stature.

Now, at this time I want to add that I was fairly decently coordinated. If I had been bigger I could have competed with anyone because I had good athletic ability, I was just small. Anyway months went by as I sat on the outside of the "group", observing them. Luckily I did not become an object of loathing by them during this period like some of the unluckier outsiders. One fellow got the unfortunate nickname of "booger Bill" because of his supposed graving for eating his boogers. I could tell he would have a difficult time getting accepted into the "group".

During this time period "surfing" was the craze that had swept the nation. All the music, the movies and television seemed to revolve around surfing. I had collected surfing

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magazines, acquired every Beachboy album, seen all the Gidget movies and had built a skateboard from an old metal skate and a two-by-four. Boy was I a "wanna-be" surfer!

Well gradually some of the guys in the in-group started to notice that I was not a complete "klutz" and even though I was small they would let me hang around with them on occasion. One day in class I overheard them talking about surfing and before I knew it I blurted out that I had surfed a few times. (I had gotten so absorbed in the surfing lifestyle through the movies, magazines, music and skateboarding that I almost believed that I had really surfed. Besides, how hard a sport could it be, it could not, it seemed to me, be as hard as riding a skateboard with metal wheels down some of the hills we used to ride on could it?)

Anyway I figured who would ever know if I were lying since we lived so far away from the ocean and if they thought I really did know how to surf I might make it finally into the "group".

I remember when Cal heard me say that I surfed he started to pay some attention to me. He asked me how many times I had surfed to which I replied "three times". I did not want to sound like too much of an expert. Then he asked me where I had surfed and I told him [Bolinas](#), a place my family had often gone to before we moved to Vacaville. It is north of San Francisco in Marin County. And I told Cal that I had surfed in [Monterey](#). I could tell by his responses to my answers that he probably suspected I was "full of it" but he did not let on to my deception. He was always nice like that. [Cal](#) was secure enough in himself, even at that age that he did not need to humiliate others. To this day I appreciate that.

Well, either because of my claiming to surf or despite it I sort of became part of the group. Not a full member by any means but I was on my way to being accepted. Cal and the gang formed a surf club and I was invited to join. Besides the fellows named earlier there was "Spud" Roland Duane Ramey, Ralph "the Surf" Divan, David Kenert (who disappeared the day the police searched his locker) and a few others. We all paid dues and acquired a fairly decent treasury. It later turned out that our treasurer, Bob Merrick, was able to buy himself some pretty nice clothes with the money. Bob was a little bit bigger than most of us, and a lot meaner so nobody got too mad at him. All we could do was complement him on his wardrobe.

One day a wonderful and yet terrible thing happened. I was invited to travel to the beach with the group to go surfing! It was indeed wonderful because I was finally going to be able to try surfing but it was at the same time terrible because the group might find out that I did not really know how to surf; that I had been lying and decide to ostracize me. Even worse, Bob Merrick might try to do a "job" on me like he tried to do on the football field earlier in the year. Despite the possible downside, I was quite excited. To this day I cannot remember whose mother volunteered to take all us borderline juvenile delinquents surfing. I know it was not Ron's mom, Mrs. Hawley... she would take us surfing many times later on. But as I now think harder it was Cal's mom who drove us. She took us in a pick-up truck that had a camper shell. Two fellows rode up front with her and it seems like I recall, about twenty of us rode in the back with two surfboards. One of those boards

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belonged to Cal and I would eventually own it by trading a non-running Mini-bike for it. It was what was called a "pop-out" (not custom made) made by SHARK SURFBOARDS. The other board was a custom of some sort but was in pretty sad shape. Bob Merrick owned it and considering what he had done with the surf club treasury I was not about to ask him how he had acquired the board (I was not totally stupid).

We headed from Vacaville bound for [Rockaway Beach](#), just south of San Francisco. I do not know how Rockaway was decided on as it not a very well-known surfing spot, especially to someone from Vacaville and to this day (thirty years later) I have never gone back to surf there. But thanks to Mrs. Clack, Rockaway Beach became the first place I would truly "go surfing."

Now as you will recall I had boasted to the "group" that I had surfed before. And after the freezing ride in the back of the pick-up truck none of the guys at the top of the pecking order were anxious to get into the cold Pacific to be the first ones to try one of the two surfboards. None of us at that time had ever seen a wet suit let alone owned one. It was going to be swimming trunks and bare skin against the 50+ degree water. So someone came up with the idea that "Linder" should be one of the two to surf first since he had already "surfed" a couple times before. I had not counted on this happening and I was a bit nervous. I had counted on sitting back and observing others before going out to give it a try.

Well fate being what it is I submitted to it, grabbed the old Bob Merrick board, and headed to the water's edge in my swimming trunks and goosepimply bare skin. Luckily Cal Clack was the other guy that would be surfing alongside me. Since he had really surfed before I felt I could at least mimic his actions and fake it. Besides, how difficult could surfing be; Lord knows I had seen enough movies on the subject and read enough magazines and it looked easy enough.

Well as you can guess, I had plenty to learn. I can only imagine how I must have appeared from the beach. Judging from years of watching others who are "clueless" about the ocean and try to surf for the first time I must have been a "hoot". Somehow I managed to paddle out OK. I think I even managed to get out before Cal did (must have been a lull). I was even able to turn the board around to face shoreward while I waited for a wave. But then again a lot of this is hazy. The funniest thing I can remember though is that I knew one was supposed to paddle for the wave but I had no concept of what catching a wave really entailed. So what I did when I saw a wave I began paddling, and when I thought the wave should be about even with the tail of my board and the ride was about to begin, I would leap to my feet in totally flat water only to have the wave a moment later absolute crush me and slap be around but good. It must have been absolutely hilarious. This happened about two times before board and I washed in shivering and defeated. What happened then was quite interesting. What was interesting was that someone handed me a towel, someone else got the surfboard for me and nobody gave me any shit about obviously not knowing anything about surfing! Everybody was pretty damn decent about the whole thing. A few more things happened that day that were nice that I may share another time. But out of that group that went to the beach that day, some

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never would go surfing again, some continued for a while to surf and a few still continue to surf. It has been 30 years of surfing for me since that first day and to you guys who let me off the hook for my fib--this is a belated thank you--and I wanted you to know that finally I really can surf !!!!!!!

Thanks Cal

PS. Later that day I was able to observe some other fellows from the group surf. Ron Hawley seemed to quickly have some success (he was always a natural at any sport.) I watched him let the foamy part of the waves catch the board and then he would stand up and ride twenty or thirty yards to the beach. On my later trips surfing I applied what I saw him doing and was able to start to get the idea of how to surf. Thank you Ron!

II. The Southern California Years 1965-1974

The Southern California Years 1965-1974 The Junior High Years 1965-1966

Talk about strange things. I had just "graduated" from junior high and now moving to Southern California required that I go back into junior high at the ninth grade level. I mean, what gives with that. I just graduated, now I have to go back and do it all over again? That kind of sucks. What gives on this? Are we still in California? Why is it different? (who knows, even today I have never figured it out. Northern and Southern Californias are very different in their ways).

The transition from one to the other was seamless for me. Because I had decent teachers when it came to athletics (primarily my older cousin Tim Sheehan), I blended right in with the "in crowd" like I had never missed a step, or pass. I wound up going through junior high, again (but I already had the graduation experience from Vacaville), so it was fairly easy. I excelled in all sports but loved to surf more than anything. The main problem here was that I was so close to the ocean, but no Johnny-on-the-spot method to get down to the beach. I wound up creating a surfboard cart that I would attach to a bicycle and pull it the nine or so miles on down to Seal Beach. On other occasions I would just chance it and stick my thumb out to hitch a ride. On her days off, or in between the start of work and lunch, Mom would run me down to the River mouth and drop me off. Thank goodness gas was only thirteen cents back then. Those big Chrysler V-8's were gas-guzzlers. There always seemed to be a way to get to the surf.

Some of my favorite surf spots during my "appended" junior high year were the [Seal Beach River](#) mouth. This is where the San Gabriel flood control met the ocean. This meant the river would deposit whatever it carried down the river and make some pretty decent sandbars, which created excellent rights and lefts. During the winter months I recall surfing the river on six to eight foot days, easy. The ride was extremely long, like half way up the river. To get back out, simply paddle over to the north side river, next to 72nd street jetty, and let the current jet you back out into the surf zone.

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The one big drawback with surfing the river mouth in the middle of winter was raw sewage. I remember joking with Ron Hawley, or Howard Jacobs, or whoever I was surfing with, to look out for the turds. It is a wonder that I never caught typhoid, diphtheria or some other waterborne disease. I mean it would get ugly at times. I would hold on to my board for dear life, literally. Also, because this was a river mouth with warm water being discharged from a local power plant upstream, it was shark infested but we were not cognizant of those types of perils as kids. The river mouth was also known as Ray Bay because of the plethora of stingrays on the bottom. I, or any of my friends, never encountered one, but we would on occasion see the lifeguards attending to someone who had happened to get hit by walking on the bottom. I heard it was painful. I do recall being hit with jellyfish parts from time to time.

Seal Beach pier and 13th Street were hard to beat when the hurricanes blew in from Mexico. [13th Street](#), in particular, would be just about as hollow and big as it could get. It was fast, very fast, and broke in a perfect left hollow tube. The pier was good for body surfing when those hurricanes would hit. It would be so big that instead of swimming out, we would go almost to the end of the pier and jump in. That made it a whole lot easier to get out. We had this place so wired we would even go out after dark just like we did during the day, although judging how big and when the wave was going to pass was a bit more difficult.

Probably one the better places to surf on those huge south swells generated from the hurricanes down in Mexico was the [Huntington Cliffs](#). Howard Jacobs and myself had this place so wired it was like a dream. What made the Cliffs unique was that on those big days you would catch these giant walls that would eventually shape up into a pretty good peak. You had to be an excellent swimmer to surf here, though. The rip tides were horrendous and could take you up the coast a half mile in a very short time. We were excellent swimmers.

This is where I taught [Mark Waite](#) to surf. Mark was a project as he was in the throes of having a bout with Osgood's Slaughter (growing so fast which leaves blank space in your knee cartilage and knee cap). But boy was Mark determined to learn and we would stay out for hours down at the cliffs. He caught on and became a pretty decent surfer. On one particular day we were hitch hiking down to the beach early one Saturday morning and I'll be damned if the baseball team didn't drive by in the school bus and told the coach as they drove by. We had cut that game and opted to head on down to the cliffs and surf our asses off for the day. That was pretty funny. I remember hearing someone say something to the effect, "Hey coach, there is Clack and Waite with their boards.....". Oh well, although I was pretty decent at the game of baseball, it wasn't my stronghold.

Making our way on down the coast, we spent a lot of time body surfing the [Newport Beach Wedge](#) when those hurricane swells hit. One particular time, the surf was running about eight to twelve and I was out with [Greg Lamey](#). I took the wave before Greg, got way back in the barrel and wound up going over the falls. I would guess the wave to be about twelve to fourteen feet (I was pretty good at estimating because I pole vaulted and knew the heights), and it just took me right on up to the high water mark on the beach and put

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me down. Greg took off on the next wave, equally as big, got to the bottom and sucked him up and over. This time though, when the wave finished with Greg at the high tide mark, poor Greg thought he was still in the wave. I almost died laughing as I walked up to him, put my hand on his shoulder and said, "Greg, you can quit kicking and swimming. You are on dry land now...." No kidding, he did not have a clue what and where the wave had deposited him.

We all used Voit Duck-Feet fins and tied them to our ankles with shoelaces. Also, we would usually just surf with one fin and keep the other for a backup. I guess, even though I tied them to my ankles, I lost seven or eight pairs of fins over the years. Never lost any surf trunks, but have had them pulled down to my knees and ankles on more than one occasion. Another buddy, Rich Jones, went out and body surfed the Wedge at close to eighteen to twenty feet. He made the feature story of Surfer Magazine for the biggest wave ever body surfed at the Wedge; he was truly fearless.

Oh, by the way these twelve-foot waves broke in about three to four feet of water. That is real shallow for such a powerful wave and you really had to try and play it right when getting crushed. My normal procedure was to curl up in a ball and let the ocean do what it was going to do. There was no sane reason to fight Mother Nature, unless it was for that "one last" breath of air.

Closing out our junior high school year, Mark Waite, Susie Berke, Barbara Berthon and I double dated to our Junior High Prom. My cousin Jerry Groseclos, whom I still surf with to this day, chauffeured all of us to the dance in his 1957 Chevy. Cousin Jerry would wind up the next year doing the first of his three tours of Viet Nam, earning a Purple Heart and eventually retiring as Lt. Col. Groseclos after some thirty plus years in the Marine Corps. Mark wound up moving out to Fullerton for his high school years but we still managed to surf together all the time together. Barbara would wind up marrying one of my best friends in high school, Alan Lemmerman (one of the best running backs I have ever played with and seen, in football... he was gifted). My wife and I, and Susie, would wind up, some thirty plus years later, sharing the town of [Carmel-By-The-Sea](#), with my grade school surfing buddy, Greg Linder, as our second homes. Greg, wound up getting me back into the world of surfing sometime in the early nineties after I had a ten year, or so, hiatus. What a small place this ship we call Earth, is.

You might wish to view some old photos that have been graciously supplied by Susie Berke-Childs. These old photos were taken as we were closing out our last year in junior high.

1. [Most](#) all of us; Susie in lower left picture out front, me right behind her to the right (2nd row, far right) and also in the lower right picture.
2. [Susie](#) front row, third from left.
3. [Same](#) as previous blown up. Me in second row far right.
4. [Pool](#) shots at Susie's house.
5. [Mark](#) Waite in lower right picture on the diving board.
6. [Me](#) on the diving board.

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Okie dokie.... I graduated for the second time in two years and it is now off to high school, finally. All my old buddies up in the Northern part of the state already have a year of high school under their belt; bastards.

The Southern California Years 1965-1974 The High School Years 1966-1969 Hawaii

Moving into the high school years brought on a whole new set of situations and circumstances, as one can imagine. One thing to realize what it was like in Southern California being more people, a lot more people than in Northern California. My high school, Lakewood Senior High School, which incorporated grades ten through twelve, had 4,200 kids. My graduating class was comprised of 1,400 kids. This brought on all kinds of new relationships with kids from other junior highs in the area. Alan and I didn't meet until we came to Lakewood High. Old friendships from junior high were still maintained but with new infusion from other junior highs. In addition, most all of the senior high schools in the Long Beach district had fraternities and sororities; functional groups that did good community deeds like fund raisers.

One of the first surf trips I ever took, without parental supervision, was to the Islands. Don Richardson and I played Pop Warner football, while in junior high although different divisions, and Don's team played some team from Hawaii for the championship. Well, Don became pretty good friends with one of the guys from Hawaii and saw him when Don's family went over to Oahu.

In our sophomore year, Don arranged a trip over to Hawaii with Bob Donnelly and myself. Bob and I were in the same fraternity (although from different junior highs), Thor, and Don was in Kappa Epsilon. Anyway, we all worked for one of the local florists in Long Beach who treated the kids very well. Ed paid us good money, gave us a lot of breaks, let us drive the company van, his Grand Torino or whatever it took to deliver and pick up the flowers. I think he was really in the cash laundering business.

Can you imagine, sixteen year olds with the responsibility of driving this 390 cubic inch Grand Torino to go deliver flowers? Or sometimes we would double up in the van to go to the LA flower mart to buy and pick up. Also, what about those COD's without a carbon copy? Sometimes we would have fifteen of those a day with five going unaccounted for. We were quick learners, ha. We worked mostly on those special holidays like Easter, Mother's Day, weddings, etc., busted our butts and worked long hours. Our deliveries took us all over Southern California; hell we were driving and delivering to Beverly Hills, Rodeo Drive and the likes before it was cool. Also, we saw the seedy side of LA and all of its winos, in glory. What an educational experience for kids at this age. We all made decent money and socked a lot of it away. This is how we all financed our first unsupervised trip, to the Islands no less !!!

As soon as school was let out for summer in our Sophomore year, 1966, we packed our bags and had mom drop Don, Bob and myself off at LAX. We purchased round trip tickets

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for \$75, stand by. I guess we got to the airport at about 6:00am, and went up, showed some type of student body card, maybe a birth certificate, and put our names on the roster for student stand by. Throughout the day, we would get called for standby but it was usually for one or two, not the three of us together and we all wanted to go over as a unit. The day started to drag on so we started playing cards. That lasted for a bit and we got bored even more. Don came up with the brilliant idea to get a taxi and head down to the nearest liquor store so he and I left Bob with our belongings, went out and hailed a cab, had the cab driver take us to the nearest liquor store. Once he pulled in we bribed him to buy us a pint or fifth of vodka and in return we would buy him the same. I think he thought about for a bit, asked why we didn't buy it ourselves and one of us answered back something like, "yeah can you believe it. We're nineteen years old, fighting the war in Viet Nam, and we can't even buy booze....". He believed us, bought the vodka and drove us back to the airport, dropped us off and wished us good luck. Okay, now playing cards was a little more enjoyable being as we had our breakfast juice (screwdrivers) protein.

Playing cards and drinking our protein carried on for a couple of more hours when finally, we got the break we were waiting to hear. All three of us made it on one flight. Of course once on board and tucked in it was good night Irene. Next thing we know that big old stretch DC-8 was landing in Honolulu. We made it to the Islands.

After getting our luggage and stumbling around the airport we headed out the main doors where the girls led us, no kidding. Back then, a lei was placed around your neck by one of the local natives dressed in a grass hula skirt. Wow, were we in heaven, or what? We jumped in the first available taxi, gave the driver directions to our hotel and said let's go. As we are heading for the airport to downtown Waikiki, we passed a used car lot and yelled to the driver, STOP. Wait here and give us a couple of minutes. After about ten minutes, we settle up the bill with the taxi driver and are pulling out of the used car lot in our brand new [1957 two door Ford Galaxy](#), vroom, vroooooom. I think I had a driving permit but the car dealer probably didn't care one way or another. We gave him some phony address where the State of Hawaii could send the pink slip. We didn't care; this was a short-term solution to an age-old problem on how to get around the island on a limited budget. I think we must have paid about \$50 for that old Ford. It was a real nice two tone, white and yellow. Not a bright yellow, but more of a pea-green yellow. Little did we realize the price difference in gas there in the islands. We were paying somewhere around thirteen to twenty-six cents for a gallon of gas on the mainland (there use to be price wars all of the time) but just about two dollars a gallon on the Islands. Whoa, we had to start budgeting like right away. That is tuff on kids who are fifteen and sixteen years old.

The first several days there we stayed in some hotel back off of Kalakaua back towards the Ala Wai canal. It certainly wasn't the Hilton, but it would do. One thing to realize was that all of us were playing football and had crew cuts. The legal drinking age in Hawaii at the time was eighteen and although we were a few years shy, and being pretty buffed out, I guess most bars and liquor stores thought we were probably on R&R from the military. Don was about 6'1", I was 6' and Bob was about 5'10" and we all looked older than what we were. We never had a problem when it came to getting alcohol.

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One of our favorite tricks was to use the waste basket, with a clean trash bag of course, get some wine, vodka or whatever we wanted for that particular session, fill the bucket, pour in the ice, pour in the booze and mix it with whatever was the proper mix for whatever the alcohol was for the day. It could have been sangria or screwdrivers or whatever. Also, we met a lot of people along our journey. One neighbor happened to be a black guy, Mel Harden, who we partied with daily. He was pretty cool and an up and coming musician. He would belt out a few tunes after having a few drinks and one in particular went on to make the top forty back in either 1966 or 1967. Actually, I found out, via the net, it was in the Top Forty list for 1969, so it took a couple of years for Mel & Tim to get it produced. The name of that tune was "Backfield In Motion" and we heard it before anyone else as he was in the middle of writing and refining when he used to sing it out in the hotel. I've searched out the internet and found the lyrics. In addition, I have downloaded to MP3 for your playing pleasure, if wanted.

Track Title: Backfield In Motion

Album Title: Beg, Scream & Shout: Scream II

Prime Artist: Mel & Tim

Producer: Karl Tarleton

Written by: Mel Harden

Written by: Tim McPherson

Lyrics:

Backfield in motion, yeah,
I'm gonna have to penalize you
Backfield in motion, baby,
You know that's against the rules.
Off side and holdin, yeah,
You ought a be ashamed of yourself baby
Offside and holdin yeah,
Holdin on to some one else
You know you're cheatin baby,
Ffakin the bout
You know you're balking, baby,
(oh yeah) strike three you're out
And I caught you with
Backfield in motion, yeah,
I'm gonna have to penalize you
Backfield in motion, baby,
You know that's against the rules.

First down you start cheatin' on me
Second down, I was too blind to see

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Third down, you know I love you so
Fourth down, baby I got to let you go,
Cus I caught you with your
Backfield in motion, yeah,
I'm gonna have to penalize you
Backfield in motion, baby,
You know that's against the rules.
Now you will see, ah yeah, just how I felt
You beat me to the punch honey,
But you hit me below the belt
And I caught you with your
Backfield in motion, yeah,
I'm gonna have to penalize you
Backfield in motion, baby,
You know that's against the rules.
Backfield in motion, backfield in motion...
Backfield in motion, backfield in motion...

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mel_and_Tim

After a few days at our first hotel, we picked up and moved to another one closer to the main drag down Waikiki, which is Kealakekua Avenue. Our new digs were much better as this one was on the top third floor, had windows all around and just felt better to be in. The first was like being in a cinder block bunker. I can't even recall if it had a window. This new one was more like the Islands. It had an open-air atmosphere. Towards the end of our stay I guess it was a little to open air because both Don and Bob had a camera and money lifted out of the room. The money loss really put a crimp in our budget, big time. Now we had to resort to things like stuffing our pockets full of food before leaving Denny's All You Can Eat Buffett. We would walk out with French toast, bread, fruit, and sausages, anything that wasn't immediately perishable and stuff into our Army jackets; not too suspicious looking in eighty-degree weather, is it? This would be our lunch and sometimes dinner. Man, losing that money really put the hurt on our lifestyle.

Wow, surfing in the Islands. I guess my favorite place to board surf was over at [Ala Moana](#). On one particular occasion, I had a spot all to myself, except for the four-hundred-pound turtle that hung around in my take off zone. That was pretty neat. I tried surfing the beach at [Waikiki](#) and it was also fun, but really, really crowded. We also did a lot of body surfing at Whites and Sands, on pretty good-sized waves I might add. It was great to surf bathtub warm, clear blue water and almost pure white sandy beaches.

Don's friend showed us around Oahu off and on. We made trips to the "jungles" to ride palm fronds down the mudslides and down into the creek. We spent hours one day hiking the jungles and doing this. What fun. On another occasion, we stopped off somewhere along the Kam Highway and did cliff diving; I mean really, really high cliff diving. On that same day, we visited one of the sacred Menehune caves along the river just off Kam Highway. We dove into the river then swam upstream a way until we approached a cave.

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Don, Bob and myself ventured into the cave but Don's friend refused because of go with us because of his superstitious beliefs. In retrospect, we probably did it just to see if we had balls enough to enter.

Well, we packed a lot into our nine-day stay over in the Islands and now it was time to think about heading back to the mainland. We had a lot of things to take care of. For the last night or two, we had run out of money and were sleeping at Ala Moana Park and there must have been a city ordinance (duh...) against this because the police would roust us about every four hours to get up and move it. Man, they had no compassion, but probably saw this stuff all the time. I don't remember why I didn't sleep in the car, but that was probably where Don and Bob were. I always liked sleeping outdoors instead of under a roof.

The day before we were to leave, we came up with a game plan on how to get rid of our vehicle. We got a can of black shoe polish and wrote on each side of the car " \$75 or best offer". Man, did this work out really well. We drove down Kealakekua and at every stoplight were made an offer. Each stoplight brought on a better offer, and more than we were asking, or paid for. The first few offers were for about the asking price. Not sure if there was going to be a better one, we would say "OK, meet us here tomorrow, cash in hand and you have to take us to the airport." This went on for a few blocks then we got one offer for three brand new surfboards; done deal. I was all for this one, but Don wasn't to keen on it. We haggled over this one. The next stoplight was more to Don's liking. We were offered three baggies of Maui-Wowie and cash. Ok, we were definitely very, very low on cash, but I wanted new surfboards and Don wanted weed. I think Bob was pretty neutral and just wanted the hell to get home. It was quite weird for Bob and I. Don insisted that we try the stuff before proceeding with the transaction. We did, we got high.

We consummated our "deal", got dropped off at the airport and got on the first "stand-by" flight off the Island. It seems like everyone was coming over but no one was going back. In any event, it seemed like we had that big old DC-8 to ourselves, but there were probably thirty or so people on board. About an hour into the flight, Don went into the bathroom and rolled a few joints. This I know because he came out and told us he had left us a "little" something in the head. Boy, talk about taking a trip. I remember the plane making these great big sweeping dipsy-do dives; way up, then way down. We all fell asleep.

Waking up upon landing into LAX; that "trip" didn't take long at all. It was a whole lot better coming home than going over. How we ever made it through customs without getting busted is beyond me. Anyway, back to LAX, landed at 6:00am, and no one to pick us up. I don't recall how we got home, probably a taxi. I just remember getting off the plane, wearing only baggies, tennis shoes and a tee shirt. Man, was I freezing my ass off back in LA.

Once back, it wasn't long before half of Lakewood found out that we brought back some Maui-Wowie. This was scary. Everyone wanted to try this out as they had heard the

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stories and songs about Maui-Wowie. It didn't last long, but everyone sure was happy and laughing when smoking this stuff.

2. Mexico
 - a. let's`go to TJ

The Southern California Years 1965-1974 **The High School Years 1966-1969** **Falling For Mexico**

My first trip to TJ was with Ben Waid, Gary Schwenn, Jay Ardizzone and some other guys I played football with on the JV team when I was in my sophomore year. We wound up going down there with some other guys from Milikan High, another senior high school in the Long Beach district. Somehow, one of the older guys knew these guys from Milikan. I think I was the only sophomore to go down there that night. I don't think mom ever knew about my first trip to TJ. What a strange place, indeed. Remember, this was at the very height of the Viet Nam war so the San Diego area was a hotbed for all kinds of activity; sex, drugs and rock and roll; drugs being the biggie here.

It seems like at every corner, someone was offering to sell LSD, weed, uppers, downers, and heroin, whatever. It was really pretty spooky, even for me. We walked all through TJ, saw the night clubs, where the cars were outfitted with button rolled nagra hide cover seating. Man, we saw it all. What a freak show TJ was back then; probably it is still like that.

Update from Ben (2008-02-14): "the guy that drove down to TJ was Jack Rice, a good friend of mine..I remember getting on the 405 Freeway in the Long Beach area heading for the border and I started tossing beer bottles out the car window...we were in the outside lane so the bottles were landing in the ice plant that grew along the freeways....I also remember a Highway Patrol car on our left side hauling ass right by us, my first thought was they saw the beer bottles flying out the car window, but they continued by us....I was scared shift-less!...What a night...Jack bought some small white pills from a guy in TJ who claimed they were Spanish flies...they looked like aspirin...I remember walking into one the bars and the women at the door started grabbing our balls and all the whisky drinks we bought for the whores was actually tea....I think we got back to Long Beach around 6:00 AM."

"benny bought the beer at the bait shop"

Keep on Surfing

BW

- b. John Wilkins dad takes us south of the border and actually films us in color with 16mm film - Stacks, 3Ms, K58, San Miguel

The Southern California Years 1965-1974 **The High School Years 1966-1969**

Peace, Love, Surf: Growing Up In The 60's (California Style)

First Surf Trip To Mexico

That was my first trip south of border. Mexico, if you have never been there, is a third world country. You must keep that in the back of your mind at all times. Once you cross the border, the law of the land is guilty until proven innocent, period. Anyway, somehow we talked John Wilkins' dad into driving a bunch of us south of border and film us surfing. Mr. Wilkins was a good sport and agreed to do it. I can't remember who all went on that first parental supervised trip, but I think it was Howard Jacobs, John Wilkins Jr., Mark Waite and myself. We surfed our butts off in quite a few places that day. The one I remember most, and which we got the best surf shots, was at a place called Stacks.

Johns' dad shot football film for our high school so he was an excellent film taker. In addition, this film was 16mm and in color, no less. I believe John and I would eventually show the film to one of our classes. Somehow I worked it into a science project for our biology class, and wound up getting an A+. I worked it into a marine biology subject; don't know how, but it worked and everyone loved it. This is when I really fell in love with traveling south of the border to surf every chance I got. I absolutely loved the remoteness of the country, the uncrowded conditions and the crystal clear water.

b. it's Thursday; let's go to Mexico

The Southern California Years 1965-1974 The High School Years 1966-1969 Thursday's In Mexico

I couldn't wait until the next time I could go down to Mexico to surf. During my senior year in high school, 1969, I would head on down to [Mexico](#) to surf every Thursday. I am not quite sure why I picked Thursdays, but I think this was a "dead" day without any athletic practice of any kind and it was towards the end of the week. It didn't matter; I would ask Mrs. Donnelly (Bob's mom, Hawaii trip) if she would pull my pink slip, let her know where I was going and that I would check in to let everyone know I was OK. Usually, I would go with someone so Mrs. Donnelly would pull everyone's absentee slip. Man, I can't even imagine someone doing this now. I guess we were just good kids.

I had a 1961 Chevy, four doors, sedan. It was a manual transmission so I took every opportunity to put that old car in neutral when I hit a downhill so as to save gas. I think I learned that trick from Grandpa Groseclos. I remember him doing that whenever we took trips with my grandparents. Also, we were on a low budget, supplemented our gas money by collecting Coke bottles along the beach, so we conserved every chance we had. Looking back, I suppose we were really the pioneers when it came to conservation and recycling, although our intent was a whole lot different than it is today. Along those lines, our favorite source of carbohydrates was a bag of Cheetos and an RC Cola. We usually supplemented that with peanut butter and jelly sandwiches, and if we were lucky, ice cold milk, lots of it.

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c. me and Larry and the M-1

The Southern California Years 1965-1974 The High School Years 1966-1969 M-1; Not A Surf Spot

On one memorable trip, Larry Jones and I headed on down on one of the Thursday trips. This was not to be just any old trip. There were some pretty intense moments, totally unrelated to being in the water.

Larry had a brand new Dodge pickup truck so this was going to be our mode of transportation on this particular trip. We loaded up the truck with what we usually packed for trips south of the border, food, water, extra gas, etc. Except, I don't know why, but on this particular trip I felt the need to take a little bit more protection. Larry had a husky dog so we loaded her in the back with our gear and surfboards. On the way out of Lakewood I asked Larry to swing by my cousins' house, as I wanted to grab one last item for the trip.

I think Larry shit his pants and his jaw dropped a country mile. I brought out an [M-1 carbine](#) and a few hundred rounds of thirty-caliber ammunition, all loaded into thirty round banana clips. I packed the rifle under the dash and said to Larry, "Let's go surfin..".

We crossed the border without incident. Going into Mexico, especially back then, they really didn't care what was brought into the country so long as it helped out their economy. However, in the back of our minds, we always had that fear of being pulled over and spot-checked. We made it through OK. We got down to just south of Ensenada, at about Estero Bay where the first checkpoint is located. No problem here. We show them our birth certificates and go on through. Back in 1969, the road just past the Estero Bay checkpoint was dirt. It was in the process of being graded for eventual paving some day although it was quite rutted in places.

Anyway, Larry and I are merrily headed on down to around the San Quentin area in search of some decent surf, passing some pretty good breaks at San Miguel, K58, Stacks and more. We wanted to go further south than we had ever been. The further we went the more deteriorated the rode became, bumpier, uneven and rutted. A few hours past the checkpoint we passed a 1962 Chevy low rider heading in the opposite direction. Only there was something wrong here. I noticed a carload of guys, plus, a rifle barrel sticking out of one of the passenger side windows. This was not a good thing, even for fearless young shits like us.

After we had put about a quarter of a mile between them, and us I see they are turning around and heading "after us". Uh oh, we have a potential problem on our hands. We surmise that Larry's brand new Dodge pickup truck is fair game. They are closing pretty fast. Larry and I discuss the situation and it is agreed that Larry throw a giant Kowolsky u-

Peace, Love, Surf: Growing Up In The 60's (California Style)

turn and we make tracks back towards the border. While he is doing his part to get us the hell out of there, I am pulling the carbine from under the dash as I think his trustworthy dog won't be able to pull us out of this little problem, if there was going to be one. I got the rifle out, threw in one of the banana clips, and loaded a thirty caliber round into the chamber. This was starting to get a little intense. The low rider was hauling ass and gaining on us, Larry is pushing as equally hard on his accelerator pedal, the dog is hanging on for its dear life, and I have a jacket over the rifle, which is resting on the window sill, round in chamber.

Luckily, Larry's truck had a lot more clearance than the low rider so eventually we started to make gains on getting the hell out of dodge (no pun intended). After what we estimated was safely out of harm's way, I asked Larry to pull over. We pulled over and off the road near the beach whereupon I took the rifle, took aim and let loose. Yep, it was functioning just as I had hoped and was throwing out lead and flame just like it was supposed to do. I don't recall ever being more frightened. It was a boatful of fright for a couple of kids. I just prayed and thanked God it didn't come down to exchanging gunfire. I can't recall if we camped out and surfed or headed straight back to the border. In any event, crossing back into the US I am sure we didn't care if we got stopped and checked. At least we were back in the good 'ol USA.

- d. major mechanical failure with the Falcon down in Mexico with me and Mark, about 1974

The Southern California Years 1965-1974 All Of The Time Or On Occasion Post Grad With White Weenie

Shortly after I graduated from Cal Poly, San Luis Obispo, I moved back to Long Beach with my brother Craig. I hauled all my belongings from my college stay in SLO town, back down to Long Beach in my trustworthy 1961 Falcon station wagon. It had been named the "[White Weenie](#)" while during its life in SLO town. I think I paid \$25 for it from one of my college chums because she wanted to sell it to a friend.

When I bought the White Weenie, it had a brand new motor, but had major front-end damage to the left side. What the hell, I got a hack saw, eliminated all the busted pieces and went down to a local wrecking yard and replaced and welded the car back together. Although it was white with red interior, I could only find a blue fender for it at this wrecking yard. It didn't matter. As long as the motor was strong, that was the main thing. And oh man, was the motor ever strong. I bet between 1973 and 1977, I put more than one hundred and fifty thousand miles on that in-line six.

You know, thinking back, it only made sense that I bought a car from the era the majority of these stories are based upon.

Peace, Love, Surf: Growing Up In The 60's (California Style)

In any event, Mark Waite and I hooked up and decided to pack enough stuff in the White Weenie, along with our boards, and head on down to wherever we felt like going in the badlands of Baja.

I guess we surfed at every conceivable break we happened upon. We drove the dirt roads right along the coast as much as we could. Where we couldn't, and had to turn back inland, we always made note to somehow get to "that place" where we saw the wave breaking. We wound up staying in two places I recall vividly. The first place we found, had pretty good waves and a truck with a camper that just happen to be occupied by a couple of ladies that were a few years older than we were. We all hung out for a couple of days, drank a lot of beer and tequila, played a lot of Frisbee games we made up on the spot, that entailed all kinds of body contact; what a trip. They left, we stayed.

We picked up camp and continued our journey. At our next stop, we happened upon what looked like a promising place. It was a small bay, had a point and lots of seaweed so we knew it would never blow out. Only problem was, there was already two other dudes right where we wanted to be. Shit, let's go make friends cause if this place picks up a south from a hurricane, it is going to be good.

Mark and I, without hesitation, went up and introduced ourselves and let them know they would be sharing this spot with us (no M-1 on this trip). They were pretty laid back and said what the heck, OK. We pitched our stuff and commenced to start talking surf stories, share the bottle and pass one around. They were from the Santa Monica area and had been coming down to this spot for a few years.

What was really cool about this place was they had dug a hole, a shit hole, out by the point, placed a wooden chair without a bottom on a scaffold of sorts, looking right out at the surf on the point. Talk about a place to do your morning R&D. Also, they turned us on to listening to CBS' Mystery Hour, which came on every weekday night at nine o'clock. We camped with them for about four or five nights and never missed a night of CBS. That was really quite entertaining. We also had some smaller fun surf while camped there.

It was time to head home so Mark and I made preparations and packed up the White Weenie, burned a couple of more and had a few more shots of courage and headed back north to the border. About two hours into our trek back north, just heading up a long grade on a curve, the axel gave way on the White Weenie. Luckily, I immediately pulled off the side of the road before the angle became too much. Damn, damn, damn, damn. Mexico is the very last place you would want to have mechanical failures.

I jacked the car up, crawled under to access the situation and asked Mark to give it a few more pumps on the jack, as I needed a little more clearance. Mark did the first pump, gave me an inch or two and I asked for one more. This time, I got the clearance I needed but Mark yelled, in a somewhat stoned voice, "Look out..." The car was coming down on top of me so I rolled out as fast as I could and just beat the car coming down. That one was too close for comfort. Anyway, we jack it back up, make sure we are more secured

Peace, Love, Surf: Growing Up In The 60's (California Style)

and I pull the whole wheel and axel right out. We had sheered and broke it right off. OK, what to do now.

We decided Mark would hitch it back into Ensenada and I would stay with White Weenie to try and save it from vandalism. Not to long afterwards, some gringos came by and picked up Mark and he was headed into Ensenada to get help. About five hours later, here comes a tow truck with Mark on board. The guy hooks us up, I stay in the car and Mark climbs back in the cab with the driver and his son. Thank God we made it back to Ensenada safely. Mark told me the guy had been drinking all the way, coming and going. Anyway, he dropped us off at one of the local wrecking yards in Ensenada. This being Sunday, nothing was happening; nobody was going to do anything. We made friends with the guy running the wrecking yard, El Mundo, and conversed with him all night. He camped out in the bell tower of the local Kentucky Fried Chicken (no kidding), knew everyone who worked there, and procured us some Mexican KFC that night. We passed around a bottle of tequila and went to sleep.

Once the yard opened up on Monday, I grabbed a hand full of tools (always took a tool chest) and sought out a 1961 Falcon station wagon. I found one and had the axel out in a couple of minutes and into the White Weenie is a couple of more. Total time was about twenty minutes and about ten bucks. Anyway, we said our good byes and headed home after another venturesome surf trip meeting a lot of people and doing a lot of things along the way. Mexico continued to mesmerize me almost ten years after my first trip, but I felt like I was almost a local with all the time I seemed to have spent down there and the people I met along the way.

- C. All of the time, or on occasion
 - a. real short boards

The Southern California Years 1965-1974 All Of The Time Or On Occasion Real Short Boards

It must have been sometime early in my senior year, while my younger brother Craig was still at Hoover Junior High, that Howard and I got in to the idea of surfing on boards that were no longer than we were high. Craig was making these radical belly boards that we absolutely loved to take down to the Wedge or the brand new Newport Beach sewer pier where all the shit came out of the [Santa Ana River mouth](#). His boards were faster than lightening. This got Howard and I to thinking about how short you could make a surfboard and still ride it standing on two feet.

Howard and I made some really, really short boards; just about six to six and one half feet long. It was ridiculous how short these boards were in comparison to what was being ridden at that point in time. We could custom make one of these in just about a day's time which included shaping, glassing, sanding and glassing a second coat. We had it down to a science by how much catalyst we would mix with the resin. Sometimes, just for fun, we would overload some resin with way too much catalyst and start a fire. This stuff could get

Peace, Love, Surf: Growing Up In The 60's (California Style)

hot, in a hurry. We always made the boards with clear color because we didn't want to take the extra time to mix in coloring. We made some really short, really, really fast boards.

One memorable occasion is when we took Jimmy Bassler's ten-foot board and stripped all the fiberglass off it. We then decided where we would pick up the most rocker and commenced to hack the board down to size. We started early in the morning and by evening had a board that was just over six foot, about eighteen inches wide and about two and three quarters inches thick. It looked more like an overgrown belly board than a surfboard.

As luck would have it, the next day a giant south swell hit Southern California. Time to test drive this baby as the glass was just about finished curing under our extreme cataclysmic portions of catalyst we mixed. OK, I am the oldest; the board was made in my garage so I suppose I am entitled to test drive this baby. The first thing I noticed, while paddling out, was the board, for the most part, was submerged. In addition, I also had to kick my feet while paddling to make headway. Just what the hell did we build?

I found on that first wave I paddled into. I caught that ten footer, set up to make my bottom turn and the damn board came out from under my feet. Crap, this sucker wasn't even into overdrive and it outran me both mentally and physically. OK, had to paddle all the way in (no leashes back then), grab the damn thing, say a few cuss words and start the big long ass paddle back out to the lineup. I was both exhilarated and exhausted, but knew what I had to do the next time.

I patiently wait for the biggest wave of the set. Good, another ten footer. Stroke, kick, stroke and kick. The wave has picked me up. I aim straight down to the bottom of this giant wall, make a long hard driving turn and climb right back into the lip of that wave. I was completely stoked. This board was so fast I could play with the lip, turn backside to the bottom, make another bottom left turn and back up into the lip. The board was so fast, so amazing that it would respond at will and let me play with these giant south swells with ease. I was stoked, but at the same time thinking this is a lot of work. I had to swim and kick to make the lineup. I never had to do that with a longer board.

a1. the parking meter incident at the Cliffs

The Southern California Years 1965-1974 All Of The Time Or On Occasion The Night The Meters Died

Sometime into the late sixties, the State of California got greedy once again and devised a way to suck the blood out of those who used the beach the most. It all started in the city of Huntington Beach. In what used to be free parking along the cliffs, now the city decided it was best to put in parking meters along the cliffs and charge us to park for what we had been doing for free for years and years. What a bunch of pricks.

Peace, Love, Surf: Growing Up In The 60's (California Style)

It only served them right (city officials) that someone waited until all the parking meters were in place, then with the swiftness of the grim reaper, poured surfboard resin down into each of those weasel meters. So sorry; the city of Huntington Beach had to replace each and every one, ha, ha. I am glad someone had the balls to stand up for our God given right to park where ever we pleased in order to catch some decent waves.

- a2. how many stop lights between the traffic circle and Oceanside
- b. let's go to Ventura Overhead

The Southern California Years 1965-1974 All Of The Time Or On Occasion Ventura Overhead

Overhead with Ben Waid and Howard Jacobs. This must have been the summer, or Memorial Day weekend, in my junior year in high school, 1968. We headed up to Ventura to catch some more giant south swells and boy did we ever hit this one right. We pulled into the state park at [Overhead](#) and were greeted with waves in the six to ten-foot range (Ben recently corrected me stating that it was a solid twelve feet and frightening when we paddled out at dawn's first light the next morning – cec 2003-06-09), with perfect rights and lefts. I preferred the lefts because I am goofy foot where I surf with my right foot forward.

I remember we pulled in just about four or five in the afternoon and commence to set up our camp spot. We had some time to kill in waiting for the tidal change, so we head into town and sought out one of the local markets. No problem, Ben walks in and right back out with a gallon of "something". We make it back to our campsite, make a small campfire even though it is still daytime and commence to pass the jug around. After an hour or so of this, the tide has changed where it is making the outside reef break pretty good. We all grab our boards and make the long paddle out. Overhead broke about a quarter mile out when it got big, but seemed like two miles when high on your favorite juice. We probably shouldn't have been surfing under the circumstances, but we were excellent swimmers.

Man, we caught some good, big waves then came back in to have a few more rounds from the jug, stoke the fire and make friends with our next door neighbors. One little problem came up with our campsite for the next day; we didn't reserve it for enough days so we had to depart. Damn, ok, what to do now. No problem, we went up the beach, just outside the entrance to Overhead, grabbed and collected a bunch of driftwood and made a real nice crib right there at the beach. Hell, we even calculated how high the tide would come so we didn't have to worry about vacating when the water came up.

That was a pretty cool spot we built and turned it over to some hippies who were looking for a semi-permanent place to pitch their lives. Good luck hippies, but we must be moving on.

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- c. Salt Creek; real big, real serene and the walk in, stickers in our feet and all

The Southern California Years 1965-1974 All Of The Time Or On Occasion Salt Creek

Of all the places I've surfed, I believe [Salt Creek](#) was the most fun, harrowing and peaceful. This place, when a south swell was running had the most perfect waves I've ever ridden and shared with friends. There were numerous days and evenings where sometimes I would be the only one out there surfing. I would drive down after football practice, a fairly lengthy drive even by standards of yesteryear when there wasn't any traffic and stoplights along PCH, and be the only one out at dusk with the sun setting on the horizon, smog in the air so the Sun was real bright orange, and perfect five to eight foot peaks rolling in from the south. The peaks would eventually wall up into perfect left tubes that offered a very long ride. I would just stick my hand in the tube, standing straight up and just get buried inside and still make it out. It was fun. It was on evenings like this that lasted well into night that I felt closest to God. What a feeling; a true natural high. There would be occasions where dolphins would also ride the waves trying to show me up I am sure.

There were a handful of us out surfing one weekend late into summer or early fall, and we knew there was a hurricane of Baja and had hoped to catch some sizeable surf. We were out carving up the place with some other guys named David Nuuhiwa, Corky Carroll and Donald Takayama. These three guys were shredding the place apart. After about an hour, a monster set came through and I remember just paddling for my life to get outside. Within about five minutes, the surf went from about six feet to twelve and fifteen feet. It got scary within the blink of an eye. I remember just paddling harder and harder, faster and faster to get outside. I was becoming quite concerned about my welfare and these fun waves were becoming mountains. Meanwhile David and Donald continued to rip Salt Creek a new one.

Anyway, I got caught inside and had to swim for my life. It was one of those occasions where your life passes before your eyes, also known as the life in review process. My lungs were on fire from the lack of oxygen. I would just come off the bottom and pop out of the white water to see another monster breaking right in front of me. Gasp, gulp and head back down. Try this for five to seven times. It gives a whole new meaning to the phrase, "...respect for life". After what seemed like eternity, I finally managed to grab my board and take a brief break when I heard someone yelling for help. Shit, it was Rich Godhardt and he was about to drown. I am hurting, bad, but Rich is in really bad shape. I whip my board around and start digging, harder than when trying to get outside. Rich is in trouble and staring to panic. I made it over before the next rush of white water came and Rich and I grabbed my board for dear life. Anyway, we were pushed to shore and we came out with lives and baggies intact. This one was a real eye opener. Once on shore, we just sat there dazed, confused, waterlogged and watched David, Corky and Donald continue to carve the place up. Oh yeah, they surfed professionally and had their own board shops.

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They were good. Another insight by Ben Waid who was with us that day stating there were crews of photographers from Surfer and film makers shooting from the bluff that day. Hey, maybe we made the celluloids.....

- c1. arrested again at the Camp
- c2. President Nixon's west coast white house
- c3. the train incident
- c4. Surfside water tower
- d. weekends along the coast with Johnny dude
- e. the Dixon May Fair
- f. rolling the VW
- g. the Andrews Park incident
- h. the Milk Truck

The Southern California Years 1965-1974 All Of The Time Or On Occasion The Milk Truck

The place and time was Lakewood, Southern California, in early June 1967, and I traded my 1956, yellow two door Bel-Aire, Chevy station wagon for a 1952, [Divco-Wayne](#) milk truck; the kind that looks real short with a rounded stubby front end and accordion folding doors that opened with an overhead hand pull. At the time I was consummating this deal I really didn't have a clue as to why I was doing it, although somewhere in the recesses of my mind I was probably thinking the vehicle could serve a multitude of purposes; the main one being it afforded some place to crash out and sleep in, if need be.

Ah, yes, the Chevy station wagon. This was the first car I purchased when I turned old enough to drive. Mom had to go with me to sign the papers and whatever else it took for a youngster to get a car back in those years. In any event the car was really in pretty decent shape; a very light yellow, enamel paint job (probably Earl Schieb's "...\$19.95, no-ups, no-extras..." special) with your standard black and white interior. It was real clean and to this day I wish I still had it.

The main thing I remember about my first car was when a bunch of us went to the Long Beach drive-in with the notion of scoring with any decent babes we came across. Well, just to get our nerve up in order to carry on a more than intelligent conversation with prospective babes, we made our more often than not detour through a not so nice section of downtown Long Beach to buy some courage in the form of Colt 45 malt beer, or something as bad. On one occasion, to seek out what we came for, Rich Herman puked his guts out in the back seat floorboard of my Chevy.

I believe this cut short our stay at the movies, but I was so infuriated that the night had all gone away in vain, we pulled into a gas station on the way home and made Rich clean the back out so spotless you could eat off it should you have to. In retrospect, it wasn't a fellow like thing to make Rich do this, but poor Rich, what a character.

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One other incident with the Chevy involved about four or five of us who headed on down to the Salton Sea probably around Memorial Day, 1967. We had just set up camp and settled in for a couple of days of rest and relaxation and somehow we ended up with some type of alcohol in camp. Upon further research it was determined the rotgut we consumed was something called "Zombie Juice". I haven't seen this beverage on the market in something like thirty years so it was probably banned from being sold in our state, as were a host of other cheap wines.

To make a quite long and involved story short Dennis DiGiovanni got so sick we really thought he was going to pass on, not to mention passed out, and, Bruce Thomason's parents drove down during the middle of the night and had whisked him away for some emergency back home. No kidding. We all awoke the next morning wondering where the hell did Bruce take off to. To this day, when [Joe Mangeng](#) and I talk about that eventful trip, we still cannot figure out how his parents found us in the middle of the desert during total darkness; it's as if he had some type of homing device built in. Maybe they were part pigeon or something. Really weird.

Because we had no access to a telephone, we were totally left in the dark and somewhat baffled as to where he was. I believe we figured he had gone home with one of the girls we met down there, or just flat ran away. This really bothered us for the next couple of days. What were we going to tell his parents when we got home, "Uh, well, the last time we saw Bruce he was with some babe..." We were all crapping our pants while walking up to his parent's front door, trying to get our story straight as to what we were going to say. One of us finally got the nerve (more than likely it was Joe) to ring the doorbell, while sweating profusely, the door opened and there was Bruce with a big wide grin on his face. Wow, we were pissed off.

Anyway, I went from the Chevy to the Milk truck in the spring of 1967. I had just made the trade, as mentioned earlier, and this truck was really a mess as far as looks go, and later to find out, mechanically.

Well, Joe Mangeng and I came up with a totally brilliant idea for sixteen year olds. We decided to skip Spring football practice and head North on Highway One, surfing the whole way along the coast.

Before we could leave, however, we needed to spruce up the truck and make it presentable for the public's eye. Our plan went something like this: We tell our coaches we came down with the measles and this is why we missed something like thirteen days of spring practice. Joe was pretty convincing because they believed us and to this day he is probably one of the best salesman ever to walk a floor.

While being "bedridden" with the measles, Joe procured some house paint from his father; not just any old house paint, but the best Sears offered in those days, and it had to be brown and blue; the same as our high school fraternity colors. I think it took about a week's worth of time to rip out the insides of the truck (the metal storage racks were soundly welded in place), prepare (joke) and paint that old truck.

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We armed ourselves with several gallons of house paint, a couple of rollers (no kidding), some masking tape and paintbrushes. The most difficult part of the preparation was ripping out those metal storage racks. They were thick, heavy and really welded to the body. It took some kind of brute physical effort but both Joe and I were playing football, surfing, and swimming, and were the epitome of a physical specimen. Oh, by the way, we left the ice box in place because it not only could keep perishables from perishing, but one could load it up with cold beverages for those real hot summer days while traveling along the coast in search of that perfect wave. It also had a real neat place between it and the so-called dashboard, for hiding things like valuables and more beverages.

The truck was formerly one that belonged to Foremost Dairy and had a real ugly paint job that was orangish in color and pretty well faded out. Remember, the truck was a 1952 vintage and this was 1967. Well, we put on several coats of paint to the outside and by the time it was completed it looked pretty good, if you were at least thirty feet away. With the brown exterior finally applied, plus a real neat six-inch wide aqua blue horizontal stripe, we then tackled the inside with same aqua marine blue. Our fraternity colors where brown and blue so naturally we were going to show our pride and loyalty by painting the milk truck the same. No, we did not consider ourselves as participants in a gang. We actually performed quite a few civic services like collecting for needy groups through auctions and raffles, and being certified locally by our high school.

Back in 1967, latex paint had not come to market so all the paint we used was oil based. Working within the small confines as a milk truck got us higher than a kite. Cleaning up was also a nightmare because we had to use thinners and cleaners. It was a real pain(t), but paid off handsomely when our efforts were completed. It was really cool looking. A stubby old milk truck painted brown, with a blue horizontal stripe around the middle ([Divco-Wayne](#))and, aqua blue on the inside. Looking back and knowing what I know now, the combination of those colors probably had some sort of hidden psychological effects on such young and innocent minds. All in all, the milk truck took on a new and powerful image; LET'S RUMBLE !!!

It was time to pack our bags, boards, fins, camp stove and load up the milk truck and follow the setting sun. We did have a plan in place and that plan started out right in Long Beach and took us along the coast all the way north to San Francisco. There were minor detours along the way, especially when we encountered private properties and could not reach the coast. Most private properties that took up huge areas of non-accessible land back in those days belonged to the government or old family land corporations. Single private land owners presented no problem because we would just go in where it was legal and walk back to where ever we needed to go. Basic law as far as we could tell said land ownership only goes as far as high tide. That suited us just fine, however herein lies the problem with the large landowners. It was just too far to walk or paddle in.

Joe and I surfed every conceivable spot along the coast from Long Beach to San Francisco, that took us through Ventura, [Santa Barbara](#), [Lompoc](#), [Shell Beach](#) area, [Big Sur](#), Carmel, [Monterey](#), [Santa Cruz](#), [Half Moon Bay](#) and finally somewhere along the

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[Great Highway](#) of San Francisco. Here we were just sixteen years old and setting out in search of that perfect wave; not knowing really how far and where we would finally end up.

Along the way we encountered a whole bunch of people hitchhiking northward with backpacks, sleeping bags and whatnot. The strange thing about this was everyone was going north. I don't recall ever seeing anyone trying to get a ride headed south. Joe and I had crew cuts from spring training and all of these hitchhikers had real long hair and were not very well kempt. At the time, June 1967, we had no idea there was something powerful about to happen in a place called Monterey. It was to be known as the Monterey Pop Festival of June 16-18, 1967, with the likes of Hendrix, The Who, Buffalo Springfield (who used to play down at the Golden Bear, when California still had golden bears, in Huntington Beach, what seemed like forever), etc.

Being in a vehicle like we were, I suppose it just seemed natural, although not to us, that we should give these longhaired, hippie-looking people, a ride. Wrong. We had things to do and people to see; no time to stop along this beautiful coast of California for such frivolous things as taking people to, and participating in, one of the most influential rock concerts ever to take place. Talk about a complete one-track mind with no social graces.

Our final destination was Vacaville to pick up a good buddy and make the trip again, only heading south this time. The return trip would be a lot better because we would be headed in the right direction in order to get a really good look at the various surf spots along the coast. Going south puts you on the cliff side of the highway, for the most part, on the West Coast; just the opposite on the East Coast.

Joe and I encountered just one slight problem. What we thought was going to be about a two-week trip wound up taking somewhere closer to four to six weeks. We didn't really plan ahead to determine if our buddy was at home, going to make the return trip with us, etc., etc. We just naturally assumed. Come to find out he had gone to Montana to visit relatives for a few weeks so Joe and I decided to hang around and wait for him to get back, still not knowing if his parents would let him go back south with us.

Also, sometime within this time frame, Joe (who just also happened to be one of the better baseball players in all of Long Beach) missed his calling to be on a Southern California all-star team that was headed to the Hawaiian Islands for a tournament. I don't think I found out about this until years later and to this day I really feel bad about him missing that trip and what might have been. He was good.

Joe and I spent the time in Vacaville doing odd jobs, picking up a little spending money for pleasure and petroleum products. I think some of the things we did was paint houses, clear horseshit and cut lawns. We made enough to skate by on and still have enough to spend taking out the local babes. We also spent a lot of time up at lake Berryessa skiing, diving off the cliffs, fishing and partying. We also made a few trips through the Height district, North Shore, the Wharf and San Francisco in general.

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We also spent considerable time down in [Santa Cruz](#) doing a lot of surfing and hanging out at the boardwalk. So far it was a real neat summer for a couple of sixteen year olds going on twenty-one. We always had more than enough room in that old milk truck to take anyone with us when we ventured out on the highway, especially to any of the beaches from Monterey to Fort Bragg. Everyone always made time to go with Joe and I.

Ron Hawley finally got back from his relative's place, somewhere out east called Montana, one day, packed his board into the milk truck, got a few bucks from his mom, said our good byes to everyone and headed back south to Long Beach. However, before heading over the mountain on Highway 17 to Santa Cruz. We stopped at my grandparent's house in Mountain View to pick up a small hydroplane I had built with my grandfather the summer before. It was about eight feet long and five feet wide from hull-to-hull. Oh yea, it was also painted brown; but no blue stripe.

We thought it would fit all right inside of the milk truck, but with all of our surfboards, clothes, sleeping gear and baggage, we wound up tying it to the top of the truck somehow. We didn't really know at the time, but this worked out in our favor once we hit old Highway One. We simply threw a beach chair inside the boat and Ron would ride on top looking out for that perfect swell.

If there was decent wave to drop in on, Ron would pound on the roof of the truck to notify the driver to start looking for a hill to park on; the old milk truck didn't have a real reliable starter, no reverse gear, no gas gauge and a hole in the radiator. We could make about eight miles before having to stop and put more water in the radiator. We also had to do a fairly accurate job in calculating our mileage because there were some pretty lonely stretches of road along Highway One and the gas gauge was not reliable at all. One method for conserving gas was to put the transmission in neutral on every downhill we encountered. Even doing this, I don't think we ever miscalculated and ran out of gas; ever.

We surfed some real [strange places](#). Sometimes our only encounter with other mammals would be the seals, otters and some sort of fins swimming around further outside the surf zone. If you put things like this out of your mind it was really easy to enjoy the surf, serenity, beauty and loneliness of the great outdoors.

I guess it took us about two weeks to get back to Long Beach as we surfed the whole way back, not to mention all of the required pit stops along the way. All in all, Joe, Ron and I had a good time on our trip and it makes for some good conversation after all these years, even to this day.

Of course the milk truck saw plenty of other types of action while in existence down in Long Beach. For example; we loaded up a keg of beer on occasion and about fifteen of us would commence to party hardy someplace. Poor Rich; I was making some type of "S" turn going through some alleys in Lakewood one night and Rich just happened to be standing in the passenger side doorway. Unfortunately, the door was folded open and when I made one of the turns Rich fell out backwards just like a big 2 X 12 piece of

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redwood lumber. He didn't feel a thing. As a matter of fact, I recall seeing a wide grin on his face as he was going over and out. Luckily we didn't run him over. We stopped, picked him up, put him back in and continued with our so-called "function".

I think we had a tendency to overdue whatever we set out to do. I believe this to be true because my sister and some of her friends took the milk truck down to Huntington Beach one day. While driving around down in that vicinity, they were approached by some wild looking dudes that were pretty well hell bent on doing some damage to whomever was inside the truck. When they got close enough to find out it was full of girls I guess they apologized to my sister and her friends and said they were looking for my buddies and me. Oh well; can't please everyone all of the time. Anyway, we never seemed to turn down a good time with anyone, anytime. We might have upset a group of people at some time in the past, and, with a low profile vehicle like the brown and blue milk truck... Yea, right.

- e. getting the "measles" and heading North
- h. all of the hippies
- i. the Height district
- j. Trestles

The Southern California Years 1965-1974 All Of The Time Or On Occasion Trestles

[Trestles](#), just south of San Clemente, was another one of our favorite places to surf. This was a pretty unique place for a couple of different reasons. First of all, the surf, when big, was great. It has a gigantic peak that eventually walled out with rides going both left and right. In addition, Trestles, which was named for the train trestle that ran over the lagoon and beach, was situated at the foot of the Western White House for the Nixon era, and also owned by the U.S. Government and manned by the Marine Corps at Camp Pendleton.

There were a few times when we all had a run in with the Marines there. Remember, the time frame was during the height of Viet Nam. Once, Ron and I decided it would be a hell of a lot faster to paddle out through the lagoon than doing the two-mile walk-in. The surf was perfect; about eight feet and tubular. We parked the car at the south end of San Clemente, walked down to the lagoon, slipped in and started digging silently and swiftly for the beach. We were in enemy territory but knew our rights in that if we hit the water before the Marines showed up there was little they could do once we were in the water.

As we got closer and closer to the beach, the roar of the surf was getting louder. I think the louder it got, the faster and harder we paddled as the thought of getting in the blue-green chamber made us delirious. Just a few more yards and...."Hold it right there boys..." Shit, we got caught and hadn't even got out of the lagoon yet. We stopped paddling and just about that time a squad of Marines came out of the foliage with 45's and M-16's drawn. On top of that they had on their camo gear and faces painted. "What the

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crap is happening here..." I thought to myself. "Do they think we are the VC, or something..." . Should we paddle like hell and try and make it to the water or will they open fire. Geez, we didn't want to die just yet. We paddled over and got raked over the coals.

They threw our boards into the back of the troop carrier and loaded us in with them. They proceeded to take us to the Provost office where they questioned our allegiance and patriotism then wrote us up a warning. Crap, perfect swell and we couldn't even get out. It was one of those hurricane swells that comes up from Baja California; The kind that generates perfect, giant, South Swells.

About three days later I came down with one hell of a fever. I think it was running around 103 for a couple of days. The inside of my mouth was like a skeleton. Man, I caught something and to this day I think it was malaria or something similar. Did it stop me from surfing the giant south??? Not on my life. I still went out, sick as a dog but still managed to rip Huntington Cliffs to shreds.

One of the really unique things about Trestles was that [President Nixon's Western White House](#) was there. When we got out from surfing, we crossed the back yard of his house and used the water faucet and hose to get the sand and salt water off of us. We knew who owned the house and the significance of it, and looking back it was peculiar we never, ever, saw anyone around. Of course, without our knowing, there was probably a swarm of Secret Service and National Security all around. But, we never saw anyone. This was one place where we never screwed around. Even back then, we were very appreciative being able to use the fresh water.

On another occasion, about five of us had walked in from Upper Trestles and it took about 45 to an hour to do the walk. We would come in from the horse ranch, climb down the cliffs then either walk along the beach or the rail tracks to get to our favorite spots. On this particular day, after surfing a few hours and coming out of the water, we were having a bite to eat and waiting for the tidal change to prepare for our second go around. Sometime between the wait, a passenger train came along (this was the normal run between San Diego and on up the coast) and Dave Hernandez thought it would be funny to pitch a rock at the moving passenger train. Was that ever a mistake? No kidding, within minutes the Sheriff and CHP were down there talking to us. I was never more pissed off at Dave than on this occasion. We were very lucky not to wind up in jail for this little incident.

As previously mentioned, the track as one way to get down to the beach. Using this method always presented some risk. Once the decision is made to do this method of walk-in, you are virtually stuck to following the tracks for some length of distance before you can exit. You see, the track ran right against the cliff and a natural sea wall of sandstone that separated the tracks from the beach. On this particular day, we were all walking along the tracks with our gear and boards. Surfboards were generally about 8'6" to 10'6" and weighing about 25 pounds back then; plus, any other gear we brought with us. Shit, the tracks started to vibrate and we were on them with the cliff on one side and the sea wall on the other. No way to escape this one boys. We all started to run like hell

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and knowing we couldn't make it to an exit in the sea wall, we all froze as close as we could between the track and hugging the cliff, and held onto our boards with all of our God given strength.

Wow, try that sometime. I believe all but one of us made it through the ordeal OK. Someone had their board spun around like a propeller and a string of clothes and shoes were laying on the track. Uh, oh; someone didn't make it by the looks of what was laying around. Feverishly, we started to look around and see who is missing, as clearly there has been a casualty. But, we don't see any body parts lying around. Seems as though Mark Waite said the hell with his material goods and ditched them on the tracks and climbed the sea wall to escape with his life. The rest of us thought our boards were more important. Guess we had too much salt water on the brain that day.

There was another time when, again, the Marines leveled weapons at us and ordered us off the beach and up to the truck. On this occasion, they gave Howard Jacobs and myself a rash of shit because they thought we went AWOL from the Corps. While playing football at Lakewood High, all participants had to have their heads shaved so as to be assimilated into the program. Ok, this was fine with us. In the long run, it was easier to surf with no hair than with. However, because our heads were shaved, the Marine guards thought we were them. They asked for our "orders" and proof of whatever that they are supposed to carry. We didn't have crap except for our boards, baggies and converse tennis shoes. Another trip to the Provost and the fear of having our boards confiscated.

Trestles was fun.

A Short Story by Howard Jacobs Cottons Point

A long, long, long time ago and many, many, many waves ago, two surfers were taking the short cut into Cottons Point. They both had shaved heads but that's another story for another time. They got over the fence; so far so good. The waves looked good, about 4 to 6 feet, and no one out. Then they saw it coming straight at them; out of nowhere a jeep, MP... MARINES. For years the government had kept the beach closed to all people, and all things. Well, the MPs stopped them. One MP put his hand on his gun. They, the MPs, thought the two surfers were AWOL. The two surfers were twice the size of the MPs. They kicked the two surfers out. The two surfers went in another way; the LONG WAY IN. They surfed until dark.
A TRUE STORY.

LOVE HOWIE RASCAL

Comparisons by Howard Jacobs Mother Ocean

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Surfers are like fishermen. Fishermen lie about how big their fish are. Surfers lie about how big the waves were. Cal, I miss playing in the ocean.....

love howie rascal,mother ocean.