

The Lifeguards: A Reminiscence of West Coast Beaches in the 1950s

Robert C. Baxley

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Early surfers became accomplished rough water swimmers because, with leashes an invention for the future, they spent a lot of time swimming after their boards. They quickly learned the advantages of using swift rip currents to get out to the break and, when knocked off their boards, of swimming with the breaking surf to quickly get to shore (and retrieve their boards). Most of the early Ocean Beach/Sunset Cliffs surfers went on to become excellent ocean lifeguards because of their developed swimming strength and first hand knowledge of waves and rip currents, gained through their surfing adventures.

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