



# The Del Mar Historical Society



## NEWSLETTER

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### THE GATES OF DEL MAR

BY

Susie Stevenson



From its early days, Del Mar has been a glorious cornucopia of architectural styles: Victorian, Craftsman, Mid-Century Modern, Colonial, 1920s Spanish Colonial Revival, New Modern, Cozy Bungalow—and many wonderful homes that don't necessarily fit into any special category, but are charming just the same.

Growing up in Del Mar, I walked by many of these wonderful homes every day. Several of my friends lived in some of the most historical houses in Del Mar: the Castle, The Pink Lady, and others. Much to my regret now, even as we played in the yards, we were pretty much oblivious to their beauty and significance. Blame it on our youth!

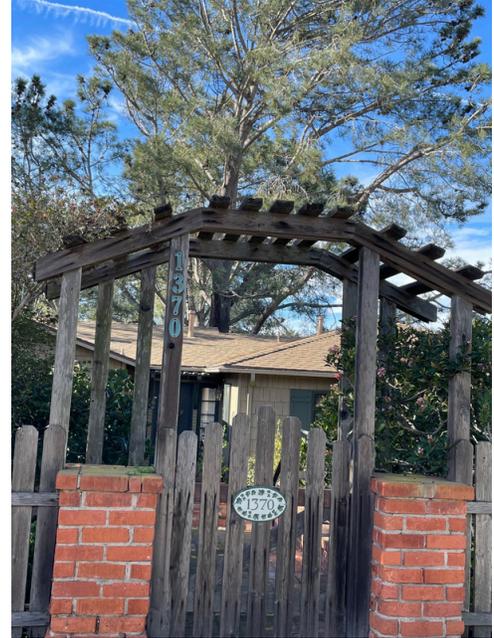




**Much has been written—and more will follow—about the unique architectural character of Del Mar, but I wanted to write about something different, something that reflected the history and the feel and personality of the individual homes. And what could be more symbolic of a home and the people who live there than its entry gate? One glance tells you almost all you need to know about who the folks are, and in the case of businesses, a gate is worth a thousand words about the owners and how they feel about that business and their customers.**

**Originally, gates were simply practical ways to get in and out of fortress walls: totally functional. Eventually, they became larger and larger and more intimidating, with lavish decorations designed to engender fear in the beholder on the outside: think of the great Egyptian gates the pharaohs were so fond of creating in their own honor. These gates were almost always made of wood, but as time went on, gate builders began using other materials like iron and steel to create these formidable barriers.**





However, as society progressed along with the materials, gates were used less for intimidation and protection, and more to impress: gloriously intricate, huge in size, beautifully designed. Gates could speak volumes about the status and importance of whoever lived inside. My quest to find Del Mar's most interesting gates was so much more than I could have hoped for, and far more enjoyable than I could have imagined. The examples you see here are just a few of the beautifully creative ideas that residents over the years have chosen to represent how they feel about where they live. Some of these gates belong to long-time Del Mar homes, and some of the newer ones may become historic as the years go by.





**Most of us travel the same routes every day, whether we're walking or driving. Wherever you live in Del Mar, you'll probably recognize some of these gates, but do yourself a favor. Get up early on a Sunday morning, and drive to areas in Del Mar where you haven't been in ages. There won't be much traffic, and all you're likely to encounter are people happily walking their dogs. See if you can spot some of these gates and look for ones that I've missed. By the time you get home, I promise that you'll have a whole new appreciation of the unique beauty and character of Del Mar. And if you don't already have one, you may be inspired to build a gate of your own. What story will yours tell?**



# COMING EVENTS

The Del Mar Historical Society

Presents

## Life's a Beach



Retired Del Mar lifeguards Brett Mattei and Jack Ross will share stories about the history of Del Mar's service.

Wednesday, April 16, 6:00 pm

Del Mar Town Hall

**FREE** for DMHS members

\$25 donation recommended for non-members  
(one year membership)

### **RESERVATIONS REQUIRED**

To make reservations, go to

[www.delmarhistoricalsociety.org](http://www.delmarhistoricalsociety.org)

**SAVE THE DATE**

**DEL MAR CLIMATE PRESENTS**

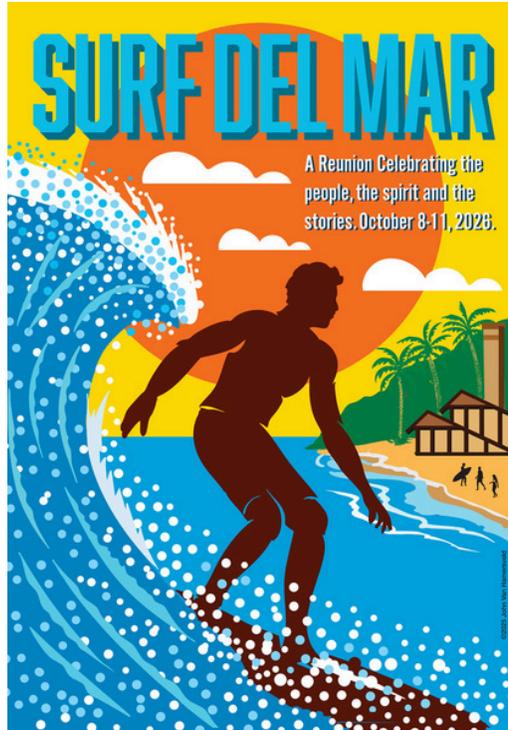


**PLASTICS: HEALTH RISKS, ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS  
AND THE PATH TO SOLUTIONS**

**THURSDAY, APRIL 23, 2026 AT 6:00 PM  
DEL MAR CIVIC CENTER  
1050 CAMINO DEL MAR, DEL MAR CALIFORNIA**

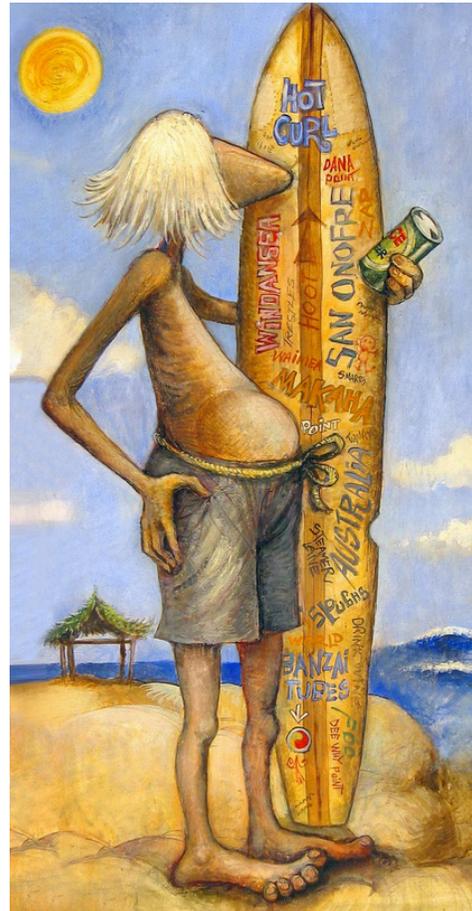
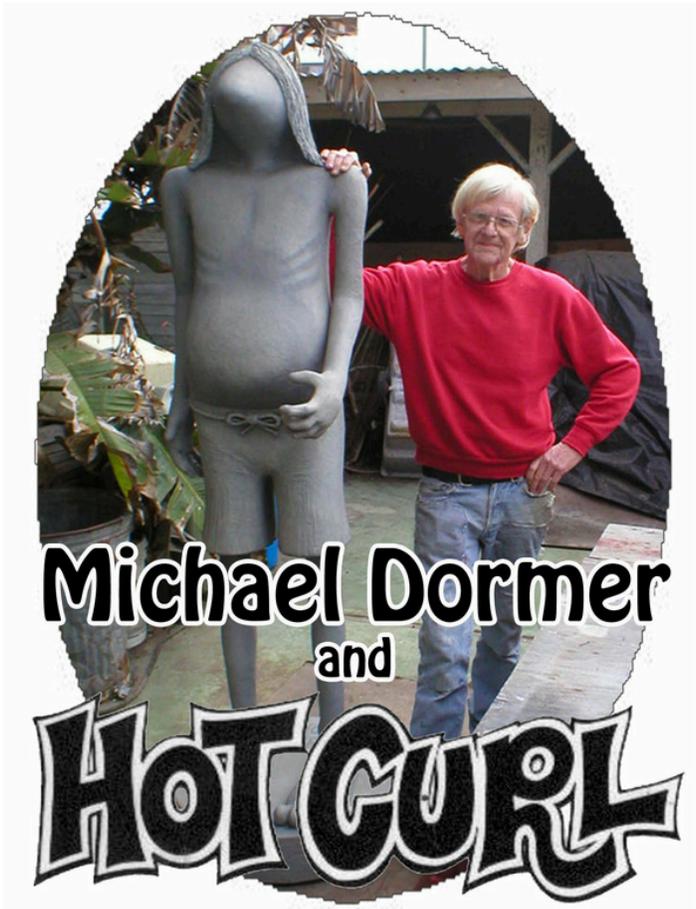
# SAVE THE DATES:

OCTOBER 8-11, 2026



**Legendary artist John Van Hamersveld signing the posters for Del Mar Historical Society's Surf Del Mar Festival. Note the Endless Summer poster in the background which he created for Bruce Brown's much loved film in the 1960s.**

# The Iconic Cartoon Surfer Hot Curl



Hot Curl was created by well-known artist and cartoonist Mike Dormer, who was a Del Mar resident in the 1940s and 1950s. Hot Curl was the star of his own TV show in the 1960s, and there were Hot Curl figurines, t-shirts, mugs and more. Hot Curl cartoons appeared in numerous publications like Surfer Magazine and San Diego Magazine for decades. He was beloved by surfers around the world, and you'll see him in the Art Walk area of our Surf Del Mar Reunion at the Plaza on Thursday, October 8, 2026.



# DEL MAR SENIOR FAIR

- ✔ **Meet Nonprofit and Government Organizations!**
- ✔ **Learn About Resources for OLDER ADULTS and CAREGIVERS!**
- ✔ **Enjoy Entertainment, Activity Demonstrations, and Live Music!**
- ✔ **Win Opportunity Drawings!**
- ✔ **Free Community Yoga - With a View!**
- ✔ **Check Out the Farmers Market and Support the Local Economy!**

**SATURDAY, APRIL 18, 2026**

**NOON - 4PM**

**DEL MAR CIVIC CENTER - UPPER PLAZA**

**1050 CAMINO DEL MAR**

**FREE**



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