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Meet the Real Gidget

Author: [Bob Etier](#)

Published: [September 27, 2011 at 3:47 pm](#)

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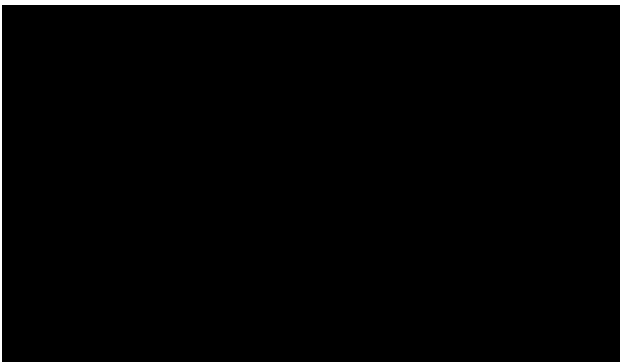
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Remember Gidget? [Sandra Dee](#) played the role in movies and [Sally Field](#) was television's *Gidget*, but did you know that Gidget was based on a real teenage girl who discovered "Malibu, boys and surfing" in 1956? Her name was Kathy Kohner and her story is revealed in the documentary [Accidental Icon: The Real Gidget Story \(2011\)](#). Reportedly still an active surfer, she was born in 1941 and is considered one of the most influential people in surfing.

Kohner kept a diary of her adventures with Malibu surfers, which her father, screenwriter Frederick Kohner, read and turned into a book, [Gidget: The Little Girl with Big Ideas](#), which was a best-seller. With the success of the book, movies, and television series, a new American identity was formed. Female surfers were often nicknamed "Gidget" and many of them participated in the making of *Accidental Icon: The Real Gidget Story*.



The documentary is narrated by Jorja Fox (*CS*) and its participants include top surfers and entertainment notables, including Sally Field, Cliff Robertson, James Darren, Gregory Harrison, Caryn Richman, and director Paul Wendkos. Among the surfers represented are Layne Beachly, Seven-time World Champion; Summer Romero, Women's Longboard Champion; Jericho Poppler Bartlow, Former US Champion; Kassia Meador, Top Longboarder/Roxy Model; Belen Kimble, Top Longboarder; Carla Rowland, Malibu Champion; Sophia Sarlo, Top Malibu Surfer; Allen Sarlo, Veteran Malibu Surfer; Lance Carson, Surf Legend ("Endless Summer"); Mike Doyle, Surf Legend/Former US Champion; and Mickey Munoz, Surf Legend.

Accidental Icon: The Real Gidget Story introduces the audience to Kathy Kohner and shares how she inspired "the character we all know and love." Ironically, the man she married, Marvin



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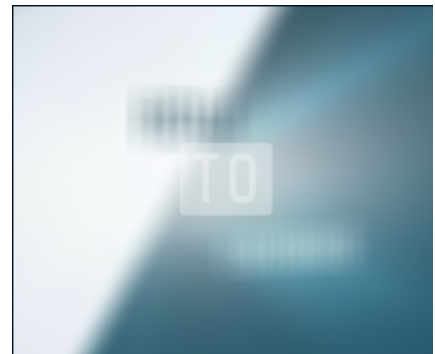
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Zuckerman, had never heard of Gidget. DVD release: September 27, 2011.

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Two words describe Bob Etier: "female" and "weird." Like many freelance writers, there's something about her that

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