

Sketch of a West Pointer – Alex Andrews



Alex Andrews joined West Point Golf Club in 2016. In recent years he has been an instrumental part of the Vancouver Golf Players Association, working closely with lead and fellow West Point member, Nick Atkinson, in efforts to work with current and prospective members of the Vancouver Park Board, providing much needed background information to them. The VGPA's mandate is to continue to promote the full retention of all three public golf courses and, in particular, Langara Golf course - as it is the one most targeted for re-use. The VGPA enlists support of golfers and public alike, circulating information and bringing questions to the floor at Candidates Meetings.

Although the Vancouver Golf Players Association has been quiet since the fall Vancouver civic election, the executive is planning on meeting with the Parks Board in the near future. Alex encourages members to solicit subscribers for the VGPA's website.

In the previous glory days of our Palcutta event, Alex was one of several prolific bidders on teams. *[I was fortunate to be included in his syndicate a couple of times, and found it interesting to watch him in action at the bidding social night.]* Due to his astute bidding, his group often won money on the day of the event. He is of the opinion that the Palcutta wagering fits the dictionary definition of a MUG'S GAME!

Alex is a Vancouverite through and through. Born in Vancouver on July 22, 1947, he attended General Wolfe Elementary School and Sir Charles Tupper Secondary. He was an active youth and was a good swimmer, becoming a member of the Vancouver Dolphins Swim Club at the old Crystal Pool on Beach Avenue, but he did not enter competitions as a member of VDSC. His job experiences included going from an order desk clerk at B.C. Ice and Cold Storage from 1970 to 1974 and to middle management in the B.C. Commercial Fishing Industry in 1974. In 1979, recognizing that the conglomerate he worked for had a good chance of going belly up, he enrolled in night school, receiving his Certified General Accountants' designation in 1985. Eventually he started to work for himself in 1989, establishing his own commercial fishing buying and processing business, mainly salmon and roe herring. He retired from that in 2014.

His musical hobbies revolve around the piano. Alex realizes that to be a good pianist, a person must practice for a minimum of two one-hour sessions each day. He desperately wants to be a pianist but has not been able to commit to practice in order to reach his goal.

Playing golf with his first wife, Carol, began in 1990. When she became ill, he gave up golf until 2009. Alex has two adult children and a 19 year-old granddaughter and a 16 year-old grandson. Over the years, Alex and his second wife, Jo-Anne, have enjoyed many favourite vacations, travelling to Mexico, Viet Nam, China, New Zealand, Europe, United Kingdom, South America and Africa. Alex identifies Barcelona as the most interesting city they have visited. New Zealand (in depth), Egypt, and Costa Rica are next on the bucket list.

Although Alex admits to a low handicap of 22, he states that his children describe his golf game as "weak and feeble". Friends have suggested that he move forward one tee box but, as he is struggling to regain some muscle mass lost over the past 3 years, he hopes he won't have to make the adjustment, just yet.

He's currently investing in the skills of Sergio at Fraserview in an effort to get some additional yardage on all shots.

Alex remembers scoring a hole-in-one on the third hole at McCleery Golf Course but says it was anticlimactic! Why was it anticlimactic? Normally, you hit a high towering iron to the green, the ball stops on a dime, gives us 9 cents change, and drops in the hole. On Alex's hole-in-one, he thinned it. The ball hit the front of green to a back pin. It rolled and rolled and rolled, and then, after what seemed like an eternity, fell in the hole.

Ben Hogan is his favourite golfer, not for his personality but for his work ethic. *You can't argue with that.* Alex liked Tiger Woods when he first started out on the tour but following Tiger's divorce, he no longer rooted for him. He recalls being on a plane from Barcelona to New York when he found out that Woods had won the 1997 Masters and saw this as a remarkable achievement at the time. Another great golfer he liked was Seve Ballesteros, for his personality, competitiveness and zest for life. Alex doesn't understand why, but he was never a big fan of the GOAT, Jack Nicklaus.

His favourite golf courses include: the Desert Gold course at Osoyoos Golf Club because he sees it as a fair test, Princeton Golf Club as he likes to support the local economy, and Talking Rock, which is carved out of a forest, with the wild animals close at hand.

A couple of memorable occasions in his golfing history: he played golf in three different hay fields in Uganda and Rwanda and he enjoyed a round at the Prince of Wales Golf Club in Victoria Falls, Africa. It should have been closed but they kept 9 holes open. He and his guide were the only two people on the course! The main hazard on the final green were the forty goats surrounding it. He has played Gleneagles and Dundonald in Scotland, as well as others. He intends to play Ullapool on his next visit to the U.K. in June. He will send a report in, because he thinks he is the only West Point member to have ever considered playing Ullapool. *Late flash July 12:* Alex just reported that he played Ullapool Golf Club and "found it a delight, right on the seaside. A very pleasant walk, 9 holes with two sets of tees. Very enjoyable, our weather was unbelievably good."

One of his favourite expressions is: "the best laid plans of mice and men gang aft agley....."

It was on his bucket list to visit Angkor Wat. So, a few years back, he booked a cruise down the Mekong River with stops in Cambodia and at Angkor Wat. It was a crushing disappointment; he flew thousands of miles to see something for four hours, and then be told to head back to the boat. A proper visit to Angkor Wat remains on his list of things to see and do. He played a round of golf at Phokeethra Country Club near Angkor Wat with the compulsory female caddies. They failed to help his game. When he wears his Phokeethra golf shirt in Vancouver, none of his playing partners ever notices it.

Alex was a bit reluctant to participate in the Sketch project, but we're happy that he agreed to do it. He says that he has sort of skated through life and has been very fortunate all his life. Alex is a strong person, a character, and a treat to play golf with.

As of late June 2023, Alex has agreed to assume the duties and responsibilities as Club Webmaster, succeeding Ron Pound, and working with Wayne Gatley, who has been actively involved forever!

*Material submitted by Alex to Lorne, February - June 2023
Published July 12, 2023*

Robert Burns' poem "To a Mouse" (7th verse)
The best laid schemes o' Mice an' Men

Gang aft agley,
An' lea'e us nought but grief an' pain,
For promis'd joy!