

Sketch of a West Pointer – David Haddleton

David Haddleton was born in the UK, being brought up initially in Croydon, and at the age of six moving to Horley, both in Surrey in the south of England. He suffered a major setback in his education and sports activities in 1944 when he spent six months in Queen Victoria Hospital Burns Unit in East Grinstead, Sussex, having sustained 3rd degree burns on both lower legs. David hastens to say that his older brother was not trying to harm him when he threw methylated spirits (from a Christmas present chemistry set!!) onto their bonfire. The wind caught the flames and set David's pants on fire. At QVH David had numerous debridements, special baths and skin grafts and was most fortunate to have Dr. Archibald McIndoe, a pioneering New Zealand plastic surgeon who worked for the Royal Air Force during World War II. David, being only 9 at the time was greatly spoiled by RAF pilots who were there recovering from burns sustained during the war. After his release, he spent a further six or so months doing therapy, including learning to straighten both legs after the formation of much scar tissue.

Afterwards he attended St. Edwards for Boys (now co-ed which David would have much preferred when he was there!!) in Oxford. Here he excelled at many sports, his favorites being rugby and squash in the winter and cricket and track in the summer. He represented St. Edwards in the 3rd cricket eleven and 1st team in rugby in his latter two years, having worked his way up from lower teams. He had what he considers his best rugby match against a rival school, Radley, which got an action photo of the scrum half into the sports pages of The Times newspaper.

When the family moved to Bournemouth on the south coast, he fell in love with sailboats and the ocean and his love of sailing lasted several decades. He married first wife Jenny in 1959 while working in London as an ad man. A year later they bought and lived on a Thames barge "Kate", moored on the River Wey. This was huge by comparison to the boats he was sailing at the time and it made an excellent home for 5 years until they emigrated to BC. Two children, Chris and Kate, were both born in Vancouver in the late 60's.

David worked in advertising before getting into the boat business, first building them and latterly as a broker operating from an office on Granville Island. In the mid 1980's the bottom fell out of the yacht business and David went on to run his own renovation business until retirement. Yacht racing was a big part of his life, his ultimate win being the prestigious "Swiftsure" in 1983 in his boat 34' Slicksilver. He also found time to sweat it out on the squash court and was a long-time member of the Vancouver Racquets Club. David is also a life member of the Vancouver Rowing Club.

He re-married in 1995 and moved with Barbara to South Surrey in 1998. In 1995, after many years of pain and a very distinct "nautical roll", he had a left hip replacement and was warned about returning to squash which could lead to an earlier re-fit!! This led him to the golf course and he played off and on before joining West Point in 2002. He served as Captain in 2006 and his lowest handicap is 18 - many moons ago!! He has never shot his age, something he feels now is probably not achievable but is very proud of his hole-in-one at the 5th hole at McCleery on February 25, 2010. David doesn't have a favourite or funny golf story but is always overjoyed when son Chris suggests a golf game or a weekend away to play somewhere.

Travel has seen David back in the UK and Cayman Islands often to visit relatives, as well as trips "down under" and brief getaways in the sun to California, Mexico and the Caribbean.

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