

Sketch of a West Pointer – Joe Hurley

Do you know Joe Hurley as the friendly Monday and Thursday golfer, the Social Studies teacher or the man who flew F-86 Sabre jets? Well, there's obviously more to the man than what we see on the golf course.

Many moons ago (September 1931), Joe was born in Lillooet, BC. He has lived in Manitoba, Quebec and Europe, before settling in Vancouver. Joe served as a fighter pilot in the Royal Canadian Air Force for six years. He was stationed at 2(Fighter) Wing on the 416(F) Squadron for two years in Grostenquin, northeastern France and flew F-86 Sabre jets, logging over 1,000 hours. Joe also served 2 years on the Overseas Ferry Unit that delivered new Sabre MK VI's to the twelve squadrons stationed at Marville and Grostenquin, France, and Zweibrucken and Baden-Soellingen, Germany. Joe flew twelve F-86 VI's across the Atlantic and one Sabre MK V back to Canada for delivery to the Reserve Squadrons. While on the Overseas Ferry Unit, stationed in St. Hubert, Quebec, he was the unit's Navigation Officer in charge of preparing the flight plans for Canada's Overseas Random Crossings. This meant that he was always in the first section of four aircraft or the second section so he could prepare the next leg's flight plan - in the event that the weather allowed a double jump to the next station.

Following his time in the RCAF, Joe attended the University of British Columbia, earning his BA degree. He started his teaching career in Kamloops where he taught grades 5 and 7 on a Letter of Permission for one year. He returned to UBC for his year of Teacher Training and then taught grades 9 to 11 in Castlegar for a year before returning to Vancouver, where he taught for 31 years. During this time, he went to Western Washington State College for three summers, completing a Master's Degree in Education in Geography Teaching Methods. Joe retired from David Thompson Secondary School in 1997.

Joe was introduced to the wonderful game of golf by his squadron commander, who was an accomplished golfer. Joe had never played before but took an immediate liking to the sport. He didn't keep score in the beginning; that's probably something we should think about! Since getting more serious, keeping score and getting a handicap, Joe played to a 25. When asked if he had ever shot his age, he replied, "Never, and the way things are going, I suspect I never shall." Joe has come within an inch or two of a hole-in-one on several occasions but the ball has never fallen into the cup. Some of his memorable shots are eagles from 100 to 150 yards out. One of Joe's favourite golf stories relates to a time at Troon, Scotland. He was playing with 3 friends and each started with 12 golf balls. By the time they reached the seventh hole, none of them had any golf balls left!! Joe's favourite course is Fraserview, as it reminds him of a nature park – and it's relatively easy to walk. Joe has been playing there with a group of retired teachers for many years. Joe joined West Point in 2008 and has been successful in many competitions, as you see listed under his photo in the Members Gallery.

Joe and his wife, Filomena, have 3 sons – Matthew, David and Joel. Joe and Fil enjoy travelling, particularly in Europe, where they've taken several river cruises, and will celebrate 34 years of marriage this August.