

Sketch of a West Pointer – Brian Boone



Brian was born in East London during the war and attended City of London School for Boys, a time he recalls as not a favoured time in his life. He started golfing at age 10 with his father and eventually achieved a 10 handicap while living in Zimbabwe. His Dad also taught Brian and his scouting buddies mountaineering and rock climbing. As a Queen Scout, he spent all his available time on rock in England, Wales, France and Switzerland. Since achieving an honors degree in Civil Engineering from Sunderland University, Brian has lived and worked around the globe.

In 1968, he sailed to Canada on the S.S. Batory (Polish Ocean Lines). After spending 2 years in Vancouver, he set off around the world – Australia for one year, working on the Sidings Spring Telescope Building (at 1165 metres on Mount Woorat near Coonabarabran, New South Wales) and then on to South Africa

and Rhodesia for two years. While in Johannesburg, he shared a house with Rob and Rosemary Dickinson. *[Read about the many parties in Rob's Sketch.]* Brian met his wife in South Africa; they returned to the UK for a year, got married and then caught the newer version of the S.S. Batory (same name, different boat) to Montreal in the fall of 1975. They spent two years in Calgary with Montreal Engineering Ltd. before being offered a transfer to Vancouver in '78. Son Matthew was born in '78 and Nicholas in '81.

After spending a year in Kitimat working on the construction of the Anode Paste Plant, he was asked to go to Lombok, Indonesia, where he enjoyed 3 wonderful years advising on dams and canals construction. Returning to Vancouver he was then asked to go to Barbados for 3 years, to project-manage ventures in Grenada, The Grenadines, St. Vincent, St. Lucia, Montserrat, St. Kitts and Nevis. All these projects were funded by CIDA, the Canadian International Development Agency. These beautiful locations enabled Brian to do a lot of Scuba diving, having qualified in Kitimat, and hone his skills in the waters around Lombok. The family returned to Vancouver so that eldest son, Matthew, could attend Kerrisdale Mini School for his secondary education.

Brian qualified as a PMP (Project Management Professional) and managed the construction of a Bio-Conversion Facility locally on Mitchell Island, which was subsequently gutted by fire (probably arson), and a large 150,000 square foot FAG Bearings manufacturing plant in Stratford, Ontario. He spent 2001 as the Assistant Resident Engineer on the completion of the Keenleyside 170 Megawatt Powerplant Project, on the Arrow Lakes near Castlegar. *[You can see by now that Brian was in demand.]* His travels continued when the client who gave him the Vancouver and Stratford projects sent him packing to the Algerian desert, 100 kilometres from the nearest town, to install a large warehouse, offices, and fire station complex for the Hess Oil Company. Sadly, by this time, Brian and his wife had divorced, and he was managing construction of facilities around the world for oil companies. The next phase included: 18 months in Bata, Equatorial Guinea, managing construction of a fully self-supported \$US35 million housing and office complex (including a helicopter hangar) for Amerada Hess Oil; 3 years in Qatar as the Senior Project Manager for ExxonMobil Real Estate Division planning a 500-home residential complex

for future oil and gas projects; and then a year in Angola as the Financial Coordinator for an ExxonMobil project.

Since his retirement in 2008, Brian has worked for Builders Without Borders Foundation, which was co-founded by West Point member Neil Griggs in 1997. *[See Neil's Sketch.]* I sense that Brian was eminently qualified as he had already been building all over the world! Much of his work was in Haiti on a planned Construction Trade School. Unfortunately, after raising and spending \$1.4 million on the project, it was stalled for lack of further funding. Builders Without Borders have nearly completed their support of eight "Tiny Homes" being built in the indigenous community of Bella Bella. In 2020, Brian took over as President of BWBF, but Covid-19 has significantly hindered their ability to work on suitable projects.

Brian's 3 favourite golf courses are Fraserview (minus the 18th hole), Shuksan GC in Washington State and Indian Canyon South course in Palm Springs. He loves to watch Tiger Woods compete but favours golfers with skill and an easy-going nature, players like Rory McIlroy, Jason Day and Viktor Hovland from Norway. Brian became a member of West Point in 2012 and has been competitive - especially in putting competitions, winning the Putting Jamboree in 2013 and finishing as runner-up a couple times. To keep the wonderful game going, he recently presented his 7-year-old grandson with a junior bag of clubs.

During his stay in Lombok, Brian played the 3-hole course – as in, not an 18-hole course – on the beachside overlooking Bali. If the tees were not covered with drying rice, his group would tee off through the 20-a-side football game on the first fairway and hope that the local kids wouldn't steal more balls than were needed to complete their round! On a serious note, he discovered that a significant part of the Canadian funding for the canals and dams was openly being used to construct a true 18-hole course in the centre of the island. The money was paid to the canal and dam contractors who provided the material, manpower and equipment. When this was reported to CIDA, their response was, "That's Indonesia."

In addition to playing golf, Brian has owned and sailed many boats from a 13-foot Flying Junior to a 30-foot Columbia. Twice he has participated in the Swiftsure International Yacht Race, the premier long distance sailing race in BC and the Pacific Northwest, which starts and ends in Victoria. He now builds wooden model boats such as the St. Roch and the Bluenose. Brian organized the inaugural Vancouver and Lombok "Hash House Harriers" gatherings, a running and drinking sub-culture ubiquitous around the world; he suggests you check it out on the internet. The HHH gatherings were central to the Boone family social life in Lombok and Barbados.

Brian was recently blessed when his older son's family with four children returned to Canada after living in Bellevue, Washington for 14 years. They moved to Okanagan Falls but due to Covid restrictions, visits have not occurred yet. From all the information that Brian has shared with us, it is apparent that he loves travelling the world. In the last 3 years he has travelled to Belize, Tanzania (on safari), Peru and Antarctica – the latter thanks to his younger son, Nick, whose job as Hotel Manager on an Antarctic/Arctic cruise ship enabled him to arrange a 75% discount in trip costs for Dad!

*Prepared from material submitted by Brian to Lorne - December 2020
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