

## **Judy (Wakeham) Gill, Class of 1960...**

**Entrepreneur, Proud Mom, &  
Lifelong Vic High Enthusiast**

*By Linda Baker, Class of 1969*

April 2021



Judy got in touch after receiving the Alumni's March newsletter, to tell us all about her brother Bill Wakeham, Class of 1959, who was apparently a bit of a golf prodigy (our words). Clearly his story needed to be told, so Judy helped with info and a connection to brother Bill, and you can read that story [here](#).

Judy remembers how the family got into golf. "My grandfather had a farm on Atkins Road and delivered meat with his horse and buggy out Sooke Road. One day he took my 12 year old dad with him, who at the Royal Colwood Golf Course stop, sat patiently under a tree while meat deliveries were being unloaded. Along came a Scottish gentleman dressed in plus fours with a patch over one eye, apparently the Caddy Master. 'We need caddies right now!' he hollered, and pointing to my dad said, 'Get that lad to the first tee and tell him to tuck in his shirt!'

"My dad didn't know what a tee or a caddy were, but he ran over there and did the job and was paid a whole fifty cents. That was in 1928. For three years my dad walked from Marigold to the Royal Colwood Golf Course and back. And that's how my whole family got started with golf. Three of my dad's brothers, and nine of us cousins all play."

### **Judy the Golfer**

When Judy was fifteen her dad bought her a junior membership at a local golf course. "But we were all so busy watching Bill play every week-end," says Judy, "and I studied more than Bill did. So I never really got interested until I was about 60. I'm happy to say that my handicap continues to drop, even at age 78. I finally figured out the swing!"

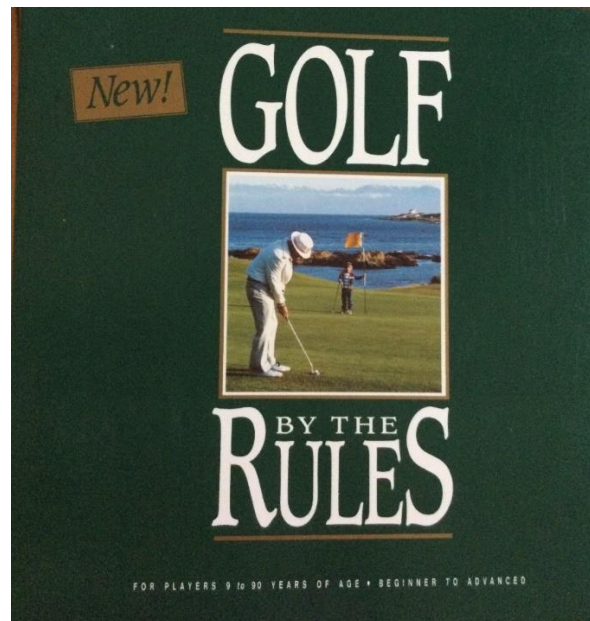


Just playing golf, though, wasn't enough for this go-getter. So in 1990 she decided to create a golf board game, *Golf By the Rules*, which took five years to get to market.

"First I had to figure out the rules," says Judy, "which are very complicated. Then nobody had home computers so I had to hire someone to type up the question cards and an artist to design the game board. And I had to have the rules checked by the Royal Canadian Golf Association and then have them translated into French."

"It was great fun," Judy remembers, "and I learned all the rules that even some touring pros don't remember. I now understand why they have a rules official at all the big tournaments."

Determined to manufacture it in Canada, she then had to market it to retailers. "It did make the front cover of *Golf Magazine* for Christmas and our biggest sale was Walmart USA for Father's Day." Needless to say, Judy's first game 'hot off the press' went to her dad. (The game may still be available to purchase online.)



### **Judy and Reunions**

But despite a hectic life, Judy was definitely not too busy to fly home to Victoria for Vic High's 1976 Centennial celebrations, or to help organize several very successful Class of 1960 reunions.



*Some of the Class of 1960 'Reunion 1987' Team. Standing L to R: Russ Leech, Ken Hicks, Jane Gilliland, Gloria Porter. Seated L to R: Jo Humber, Barry Slagboom, Judy Wakeham, Ron Grant. Additional Team Members Bill Hosie, Terry Cox, Jamie Robertson, John Britt, John Roberts, Heather MacFarlane, Alix Esselmont, Lois Gow. The first reunion in 1987 was so much fun, there were 30 people on the team for the next one!*

“When I moved back to Victoria in 1986,” Judy explains, “my grad class, 1960, had not yet held a Vic High reunion. So under Russ Leech’s very capable leadership 12 of us put on a four-day reunion for our 28-year reunion. About 320 grads attended! It was fabulous. Since then we have done 40, 50, 55 year reunions, always with the same committee. We always have some sort of musical skit re-enacting our days at Vic High and some reappearance of the Totems, we cheerleaders, and the majorettes. Tommy Maine and a few other remaining teachers attended all our reunions, and Tommy even approved of our skits! Our planning meetings were at least as much fun as the reunions. We had to cancel our 60th reunion due to covid but we are still the best of friends and keep in touch on Zoom.”

### **Judy in the Camosun**



*Secretary of Div. 2, Judy is an ardent KKK member; a cheerleader, in future teachers’ executive, bowling, curling, students’ council, and Grad Choir. She has an outside interest in Mill Bay??? and takes special interest in “Totems”. She plans a career in Airline Stewardess.*

“There were mostly four choices for girls when I graduated,” says Judy, “stewardess, teacher, nurse, retailer.” Realtor, property developer, entrepreneur definitely weren’t on the career list for girls back then, but thankfully that didn’t stop Judy, although she did later certify to teach ESL at the Victoria Intercultural Association.

### **And what the heck was the KKK?**

“We formed a girls’ club in high school,” says Judy, “fifteen of us, and called it the KKK. We had a silly secret code. The boys pestered us, wanted to know what it stood for. And no, I can’t reveal what ‘KKK’ stands for, even now! We were pretty well known around the school, because we had T-shirts printed, weekly meetings, kind of like the ‘dead poets society’. Most of us were cheerleaders or majorettes.



*Some KKK members lookin’ gorgeous for grad.*



*Still lookin' gorgeous! Standing L to R: Norma (Redfern) Gray, Edna (Wilson) Barriault, Lani (Restall) White, Judy (Wakeham) Gill, Sandy (Dodd) James, Alix (Esselmont) Sutton, Bev (Lewis) Price, Carol (Small) Mobberley. In front: Donna (Mummrie) Shewchuck, Joan (Cannon) Stern. Original KKK members missing:: Barbara Chesman, Joanne McLennan, Eileen Jacobsen, Marilyn Arnold, Janis McLennan (Deceased), Jill Shepherd (Deceased), Sandy Jones (Deceased)*

“In 1997, ten of us began travelling together every five years,” says Judy. “We’ve been on three cruises, plus trips to New York and San Francisco. After 64 years, we are still the best of friends! So I guess you could say the ‘secret code girls’ club’ still exists today!”

Judy’s life is busy and rewarding, with stints in Toronto, Calgary, San Diego, Mexico, Victoria, and now Ottawa, where she moved in 2014 to be closer to her kids, It included very successful careers as a Calgary realtor, a small developer in Victoria, running her own condo management company, and of course creating a popular board game. She and husband Joe raised three kids, one a lawyer, one an airline captain, and one an accomplished musician. Life in Ottawa is good – she golfs, she paints, she travels, and of course enjoys her grandkids. “Although I do very much miss my brother and my lifelong girlfriends in Victoria,” says Judy.

Judy can’t say enough good things about Vic High. “In my mind,” she says, “no high school could be a more lasting experience than Vic High.”

Way to *Come Give A Cheer*, Judy. And thanks, for all you do to help keep Vic High alumni connected and having fun.