

SPARE A THOUGHT FOR GREENKEEPERS

by Bill Dunn

(from *Newmarket Journal*, 7th November 1968,
with acknowledgments)

Mr Bill Dunn is a well-known Cambridge county player and a past captain of the Gog Magog Golf Club

AT a time when most club members are relaxing from the rigours of a hard season's activity on the links the greenkeeping staff of golf clubs are now busy with the highly important job of restoring courses at least to their condition at the start of the season and in many cases to carrying out developments and improvements not possible earlier due to heavy occupation of courses.

This is the time when the head greenkeeper takes stock of his responsibilities in matters of course, equipment and staff potential, but the pause is only a brief one, for, month by month, he has a strict calendar sequence of operations just as pressing as those which require to be carried out by the keenest gardeners among us, and his constant care is to try to get ahead of nature.

This year has been a very difficult one due to excessive rainfall which has both resulted in courses being more heavily divot-scarred than usual, and a much greater rate of grass growth.

In these conditions, too, weeds have flourished and altogether there is cause for dismay. No wonder there is a shortage of greenkeeping staff nowadays.

* * * *

Give sympathetic and understanding thought therefore to those who, for your future enjoyment, rise early in all sort of weather and work thoughtfully and painstakingly to bring your course up to a standard which will satisfy them and are often maligned in their absence. The greenkeeper has no redress against members' complaints, although he has a pretty good buffer in the secretary (who is paid to listen patiently to complaints!)

Greenkeeping is a vocation for the enthusiast and of the dozen or so I

know in the area there is an air of sincere dedication displayed in every one of them. Nowadays, of course, his burden is considerably lightened with the rapid development of machinery and its intelligent use, effective fertilisers and worm and weedkilling agents (lead arsenate—£200 a ton!)

Skilled in his art, he is a manager of men, chemist and scientist, an expert in Critical Path Analysis (the "in" word for organisation). He has to be a book-keeper and scribe into the bargain for he registers all activities, materials used, time taken and so on in his log book—his most important record.

He can also call on the expertise offered to him free by the Greenkeepers' Association and the Sports Turf Research Institute who will give him Soil Analysis Reports and recommendations for curing acid or alkaline conditions particularly on the putting greens.

Courses of instruction both for the head greenkeeper and his staff are run regularly and most clubs are foresighted enough to enrol them, so that they may be kept abreast of all modern methods and developments.

Any club which has an experienced head greenkeeper today can count itself fortunate. It is a race which is slowly being reduced in number each year by retirements without suitable replacement, for not many young men are coming along with an interest in the upkeep of a golf course, not really surprising when they know they can earn more money on the factory floor.

On the other hand, it is a good open-air life and the job is one which is worth while and satisfying.

Tradition plays a large part, however, and locally this is borne out in the
(contd. on p. 15)

success the more we are able to give in grants when necessary.

SHEFFIELD

Chairman:
G. HERRINGTON
(Lindrick)

By **H. Gillespie**
63 Langsett Avenue
Sheffield 6

S.T.R.I.

THE NOVEMBER LECTURE BY Mr W. H. Bartle of the Sports Turf Research Institute was a repeat of that he gave to our members last January which was said at that time to be the best presented to the Section. The subject was "Greenkeeping in General" and the idea of a repeat was to invite the Chairmen of Green Committees of all Sheffield and District Golf Clubs. However, only seven clubs were represented at the lecture along with thirty-two of our members to hear Mr Bartle present ideas and recommendations on course maintenance, work planning, management and staff relationship, etc. The evening had to be brought to a close at 10.30 p.m. after three hours of discussion and questions which was in itself proof of the popularity of the lecture.

Tractors

The February lecture to be held on Thursday the 27th will be given by Messrs. J. I. Fearn (Agricultural) Ltd., and the subject will be "Tractors" Maintenance and Handling Tips.

We wish all our friends both old and new a happy and prosperous New Year and may 1969 bring more favourable weather conditions than its predecessor.

MISCELLANEOUS

PROFESSIONALS AND GREENKEEPERS having stocks of used golf balls contact Sparkbrook Golf Ball Co., 295 Highgate Road, Stoney Lane, Birmingham, with a view to filling export orders.

FOR HIRE

SISIS AUTOTURFMAN AERATOR, £25 per week—do it yourself. For contract prices telephone Burnell, Eaglescliffe 3647.

(contd. from p. 12)

person of the head greenkeeper at "The Gogs", Douglas Neville. He is the son of a present greenkeeper in Buckinghamshire and his own son, Andrew, has joined him and is making the progress under his watchful eye.

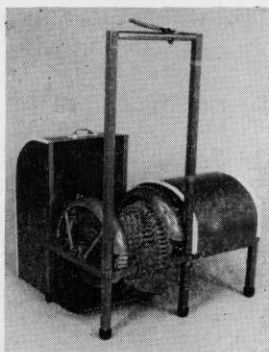
Nearer home and with a splendid record of service to the Links Golf Club is my old friend "Ted" Scrivener. Working with his brother who has now retired, Ted can be considered the doyen of his profession in this area.

The splendid condition of the course is a testament to his hard work and enthusiasm and he has the best of both worlds for he is a keen golfer himself.

Talking with him recently, he told me that next year he completes 50 years with the club. I shouldn't think there are many greenkeepers in this country to beat that.

Our friends the greenkeepers deserve well of us—salute them all.

CLEAN CLUBHOUSES



"MUNROTA" £59 10s. EX WORKS
ELECTRIC SHOE CLEANER

STEWART & CO.,

FINE TURF SPECIALISTS

EDINBURGH, 2