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B.I.G.G.A. may not necessarily be better

At the last meeting of the three Greenkeeping Associations the final draft of a new Constitution was agreed. It was also agreed to call an Extraordinary General Meeting of all the Associations — provisionally the 12th August — when each member will be able to vote on the proposals.

The proposed resolution is as follows:-

"It was agreed as follows:

a) That the Constitution of the proposed British and International Golf Greenkeepers Association a copy of which has been circulated to each member is approved.

b) That the English & International Golf Greenkeepers Association shall be disbanded with effect from the 1st January 1987 and the assets of the Association transferred to the British & International Golf Greenkeepers Association.

c) That this resolution is conditional upon the British Golf Greenkeepers Association and the English & International Golf Greenkeepers Association and the Scottish & International Golf Greenkeepers Association passing similar resolutions prior to the 1st November 1986."

In the draft Constitution the objects of the new Association are:-

a) To promote and advance all aspects of greenkeeping.

b) To assist and encourage the proficiency of members.

c) To arrange an International Annual Conference, educational seminars, functions and competitions.

d) To raise money for the benefit of the Association.

e) To maintain a benevolent fund.

f) To act as an employment agency.

g) To provide a magazine.

h) To collaborate with any body or organisation which may in any way benefit the Association or its Members or with which there may be a common interest.

i) To carry out and perform any other duties or responsibilities which shall be in the general interests of the Association or its Members.

It is to be hoped that all Association Members will give serious consideration to the proposals and no doubt some searching questions will be asked.
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Applications in writing to:

The Chairman
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Links Parade, Carnoustie.

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**BOOKS FOR GREENKEEPERS AND GREEN COMMITTEES**

THE most frequent question I am asked by young greenkeepers is: where are the books we can study? I am afraid that until we have a definitive text book, we must seek our information where we can find it, not just in books specifically devoted to greenkeeping, but those on golf, golf courses and basic science, writes Eddie Park.

I started to collect books on golf and greenkeeping 35 years ago when the price of old books was measured in pennies. Prices have now escalated into hundreds, sometimes thousands, of pounds. Some books are strictly for collectors, but there are still bargains to be had.

In the case of books on golf greenkeeping, it is clear that the small potential market caused publishers to play safe and ask authors for a general volume covering also garden lawns or other sportsgrounds.

This has led to some unsatisfactory compromises and we must also bear in mind the fact that individual books reflect the fashionable methods of the time – using a steam roller (1906), spreading lime (1926) or agricultural granular fertiliser (1978) and these should be recognised as the blind alleys they undoubtedly were.

*Country Life* magazine was at the forefront in the early years but, naturally enough, the earliest books came from seedsmen and contractors. Martin Sutton produced a book of grasses (mainly agricultural) with beautiful illustrations over a century ago. The first edition of *Lawns and Sportsgrounds* appeared in 1892 and revised editions were still appearing seventy years later. A useful buy.

The same author added *Layout And Upkeep Of Golf Courses And Putting Greens* in 1906.

In these very early days, we find golf greenkeeping chapters in golf books, such as Gordon G. Smith in his *World Of Golf* (1898) and Horace G. Hutchinson in *Badminton Golf*.

Hutchinson, the first amateur champion (from England), became a prolific writer and in 1906 published *Golf Greens And Greenkeeping*, which was a series of essays by the experts of the day. They range from greenkeepers to architects and, unfortunately, tend to contradict each other.

Sutton again contributed a chapter to Harold Hilton's *Royal & Ancient Game Of Golf* (1912), dealing with the establishment of golf courses on dry and sandy soils. Present-day research on this topic would find his methods of interest, including a nurse crop of rape to bring up fertility for germination.

Sutton also produced his *Book Of The Links* in 1912 and as the game gathered momentum, Reginald Beale, director of rival constructors Carter's, produced two books, *Lawns For Sport* (1924) and *The Book Of The Lawn* (1931). These are of more than passing interest, as they display the then perceived notion that agricultural liming would help golf courses (there's a marvellous picture of the Royal Mid-Surrey Golf Club being 'reconditioned' with the stuff).

We know now that all this caused such widespread damage that the Board of Greenkeeping Research was established. Just before this, Norman Hackett (the founding secretary of Bingley) produced a small book entitled *Soil Acidity - The Vital Importance Of Top Dressing* (1928), which sets out the 'cure' for over-liming – the acid theory. J. MacDonald and William Wood were other contractors and purveyors of fine turf who produced books in 1923 and 1934.

A.J. MacSelf and T.W. Sanders were, at times, editors of gardening magazines and produced books on *Lawns And Sports Greens* in the early 'thirties and *Lawns And Playing Fields* (1940) by F.J. Reed is often available and is a useful general reference.

In more recent times, there has been quite a spate of smaller books aimed ostensibly at the subject of lawns, but with some useful information for golf greens. Authors such as David Pycraft (of Wisley), Roy Edwards and, most recently, Bob Palin (director of Sutton's) and George Shielis (Writtle College, Essex) have brought the subject up to date.

I fear that I've strayed from my subject of golf greenkeeping and I have omitted the real heavyweight in the field. *Practical Lawn Craft* by R.B. Dawson, the first director of Bingley, initially appeared in 1939 and continued through several editions. In his declining years, Dawson was ably assisted by W.H. Bartle (also of the STRI) and this book should find a place in everyone's library.

It does seem a bit dated in parts and it is not entirely helpful with our modern self-inflicted problems of Poa Annuia domination and thatch, but it nevertheless contains a great deal of useful information.

Dawson also produced a Penguin Handbook on *Lawns* in conjunction with the Royal Horticultural Society and one of his former assistants I.G. Lewis wrote *TURF* in 1948. To close the Bingley connection, it should not be forgotten that Dawson’s successor J.R. Escritt published an *ABC Of Turf Culture* in 1978 and *Lawns in 1979*.

The two most interesting American text books are *Turf Management* (1950) by H. Burton Musser and *Golf Course Management* (1982) by Jim Beard, both sponsored by the USGA. Although they show an increasing divergence from British requirements, they are packed with interesting thought and information and we simply have to admire the commitment and leadership that the USGA has shown.

An interesting paperback I found is *Lawn Keeping* (1976) by Robert W. Schery, which manages to blend a good deal of basic science with practical information.

*This series will continue with books on golf and golf courses.*
Obituary

It was with deep regret that we received news recently of the death of Steve Donnachie. Steve, a native of Maybole in Ayrshire, served with the 4th and 1st Battalions The King's Own Scottish Borderers during the last war and was a popular personality with his fellow regimental members.

Severely wounded in action, Steve eventually finished his army life as company sergeant major. However, he retained his links by way of reunions and also in his work with the army cadet force in Banchory after the war.

His greenkeeping career started at Banchory, where he worked for 12 years. From there, he moved as head greenkeeper to Royal Deeside GC, where he remained for 26 years. He was much respected for the work he carried out improving and keeping the course in excellent condition.

He was a past-president of SIGGA and an enthusiastic member of the north section for many years, where he served on the committee and as chairman.

Steve was a gifted man in many ways. Many of us remember his poems and sketches, which appeared from time to time in greenkeeper magazines. He was also a great character, a fund of humorous stories and a personality in his own right.

He will be sadly missed by his many friends in SIGGA, especially those in the north section, and, no doubt, his name will crop up in many greenkeeping conversations for years to come.

Steve is survived by his wife, son and daughter and our sympathies are with them at this time.

Executive Report

The executive held a meeting on June 3, at which a comprehensive agenda was covered. The draft constitution for the proposed new association was discussed thoroughly and a few alterations mooted for the next meeting.

SIGGA’s representatives at that meeting will be president W. Woods, vice-president J. Kidd, past-president J. Neilson and general secretary J. McKeen.

Organisation for the national tournament was finished and we look forward to a great day at Downfield.

The Open Championship arrangements were discussed fully and everything seems to be running to plan. SIGGA will again have a tent and we look forward to continuing the successful venture that started at St Andrews in 1984.

Cecil George gave a report on education, indicating that all colleges were pleased with the standard of greenkeeper training. Section secretaries gave reports on outings and activities and it was pleasing to note that membership is still rising.

The president stated that he had attended all the section events, which he found well-organised and attended by well-dressed greenkeepers and he would like, on behalf of the general secretary and himself, to thank all the sections for their hospitality.

Elliott Small.

Central

At the April committee meeting, members were given an updated report on the new greenkeepers' association. Numerous questions were raised by the committee and, after hearing the chairman and secretary's answers, it was felt that the steady progress being made was in the best interests of the profession as a whole.

It was decided that the two trophies presented to the section by the Australian Mutual Provident Assurance Company would be awarded to the best third-year student at college within the section and to the player with the best combined scratch score over the spring and autumn tournaments.

Golf outings for 1987 were proposed to Leven Thistle in the spring and Callander in the autumn.

J. Crawford.

East

With the problems of last year all ironed out, the section has settled down. Membership stands at 70 fully paid up with a few still to come in.

The annual spring outing was held at North Berwick GC. A windy day did not deter the 60 members, guests and trade. We were delighted by the presence of the SIGGA president, past-president and general secretary, who presented the prizes.

Our thanks go to North Berwick GC for the courtesy of the course, head greenkeeper D. White for the condition of the course and the clubhouse staff for the catering.

New dates for diaries are: the national outing at Downfield, Thursday August 21, greenkeepers and greens convener tournament, September 24, autumn outing to Royal Musselburgh, Tuesday October 28 and a winter outing to Winterfield, Dunbar (date to be announced).

The annual match versus the north east of England has not been finalised yet, but should be in early October. The first winter lecture will be held in early November and will be a visit to Oatridge College.

W. Blair.

West

A joint seminar involving the west and Ayrshire sections was held at Inverclyde. Speakers were W. Lockie, who gave his views as a professional golfer, and W. McLaren of the Ayrshire Golf Union.

D.G. Allan Oils presented a talk and then a video of how an engine and its lubrication work.

Our spring outing was held at Cowglen - some 40 participated and all found the course in fine shape.

The education committee has been very active. A meeting between them and the Woodburn House principal has taken place and the winter programme of college lectures is well in hand.

A. Connell.