Fund's success means two new projects in 1993

Berks, Bucks and Oxon and South Coast are the latest Sections to contribute to the Education and Development Fund. Cheques for £300 and £100 respectively confirm the trend for Regions and Sections to make contributions to a fund which has been successfully established during 1992.

Executive Director Neil Thomas commented: "I am particularly pleased to receive these contributions which show the determination at local level to support a fund with the specific purpose of increasing and improving the educational and training opportunities available to greenkeepers."

Confirming that the fund has passed the £60,000 mark during 1992, Neil Thomas added: "The response from the industry and our members has enabled the Board of Management to proceed with two major projects during 1993. The production of a career video is much needed and will be targeted at schools and colleges to attract new recruits and to disseminate knowledge of the profession of greenkeeping. The establishing of a Scholarship Awards Scheme will enable the Association to offer financial support to selected student during their college courses. Both initiatives are exciting and a further example of BIGGA's commitment to educational and training programmes and the furtherance of the profession."

FLYING DIVOTS

The way it used to be

I were here afore seven this mornin' Cuttin' the greens at first light An' somewhere a sky lark were singin' An' nary a member in sight!

In a lifetime of shovin' this mower I mus' have walked ten thousand mile But I backlapped the bitch Monday evenin' An' this mornin' she's cuttin' in style

You can't beat a pram-handle Cortez On dry turf rollin' along With the bent flyin' clean to the grass-box An' her cylinder hummin' its song.

There's our Dick down there on the fairway Cuttin' the greens at first light An' grubbin' up weeds in all weathers An' I'd die in the mine or the mill for me to be slavin' 'ere still

An' oV Joe's changin' 'oles on the seventh As calls himself chairman o' green. Still the Club's paid me regular wages For me to be slavin' 'ere still.

An' oV Joe's changin' 'oles on the seventh Then 'll be cuttin' the tee Ten hours with a Lloyds Pennsylvania By duck 's'll be down on 'is knees!

Thirty year its bin sin' I started Of 'Arry were greenkeeper then An' e were a right 'oly terror Though always right fair with 'is men

'Tstarted me rakin' the bunkers When I was a lad twelve year old An' grubbin' up weeds in all weathers Come December by God it were cold!

Still the Club's paid me regular wages An' I'd die in the mine or the mill There must be summert about it For me to be slavin' 'ere still.

It's grand in the sun in the summer Satisfying, if you know what I mean If you don't mind that toffee nossed tyrant As calls himself chairman o' green.

"E can't tell 'is grass from 'is elbow 'E can't tell a green from a tee But 'e thinks 'e's God of this golf course When the only God round 'ere is me.

C D R SNAVE

BIGGA stalwarts discover they were brothers in arms

Two high profile BIGGA members met again at the IISKI finals and fell to reminiscing about 'the good old days'. Imagine the surprise of Bert Cross and Gordon Child when they discovered they had both joined The Kings Regiment on the same day, subsequently travelling on the same ship to the same Korean wartime destination. Gordon recalled seeing Bert stretchered off at Suez, suffering from appendicitis, though he didn't know who the invalid was! Gordon was in 'D' and Bert in 'C' Company, within a block of each other throughout the whole conflict. Recalling basic training, Bert remembered how paved the boys were when Gordon, in the armed forces for just three weeks, was given three days leave to play cricket for Yorkshire - 'what a jammy devil' being the obvious comment!

The naked truth

Paul Worster, head greenkeeper at Minchinhampton, tells an amusing story which, though not strictly greenkeeping, is along similar lines: 'My sister runs an estate agents' office in Wiltshire. During the spring, a secluded country cottage came onto their books, the very private garden contained many rare plants and flowers. My sister, realising the potential of the garden, recommended to the executors that the garden be maintained prior to the sale, to maintain the value of the property. This was agreed and a contract placed with a local garden maintenance company.

Some weeks later, on a hot sunny day, my sister was showing a prospect over the property. Standing in a room overlooking the sheltered garden, she was running through the usual sales patter about how one could enjoy meals in total privacy, sunlight through the French doors etc., when the peace was shattered by the coughing splutter of a Flymo engine doing its thing. My sister ran for the French doors to escape, her husband was given three days leave to play cricket for Yorkshire - 'what a jammy devil' being the obvious comment!

Despite hoping to have his skills tested by examples of exotic new fungi or rare species of past, the problems brought to Robert Laycock, at a recent Barenbrug Turf Clinic, were remarkable mainly in that they reinforced the dangers of cutting corners.

Laycock, well known in the industry as a top agronomist, consultant and writer, had been invited by grass seed breeder Barenbrug to join their own experts, hosting the Clinic at the ISCA Show.

"The best advice I can give to anyone" said Laycock, "is never to compromise on materials. Problems may not become apparent immediately but as sure as night follows day, they'll surface sooner or later."

"We were on a meeting to observe a meadow of grass with a particularly high incidence of meadowgrass. We were told that the meadowgrass had been sufficiently weakened, more desirable grasses will become prominent."

For example of these grasses, surely the better option is to avoid its introduction in the first place. For instance, such as Barenbrug, for instance, take considerable pains to exclude annual meadow grass, selecting farmers who are able to produce clean crops (grasses) and after cleaning, select lots for special amenity use.

Like all good optimists, though, Laycock found some good arising from the incidence of Anthracnose which causes grass to yellow and then die. Its high incidence in 1992 is probably due to the much wetter weather and in particular damaging to annual meadow grass. Relieving compaction and improving surface drainage tend to overcome the problem and it's always possible that once the meadow grass has been sufficiently weakened, more desirable grasses will become prominent.

But in critical areas, such as greens, surely the better option is to avoid its introduction in the first place. For instance, such as Barenbrug, for instance, take considerable pains to exclude annual meadow grass, selecting farmers who are able to produce clean crops (grasses) and after cleaning, select lots for special amenity use.

Like all good optimists, though, Laycock found some good arising from the incidence of Anthracnose and wonders whether the disease could be harnessed as a biological control for annual meadow grass. And maybe next time he's invited to a Barenbrug Clinic he'll find the exotic strain he's looking for.

GOLDEN KEY and SILVER KEY CIRCLES

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