Story left me in floods of tears!

After reading Elliott Small's final "As I see it" where he said he would like us to write in with something humorous about flooding it brought to mind something which happened at Lenzie Golf Club some years ago.

In the distant past the area around Lenzie was known as the Loch lands. Most of the smaller stretches of water were drained into man-made ditches, hence to burns and rivers. Now the one remaining loch is the Gadloch and 200 years ago this was reduced to a mere scattering of pools.

I was pumping out the loch. As you can imagine, everyone stopped talking and awaited my report from the警告器 operator. "Yes," he said, "The Fire Brigade are starting to empty the Gadloch." I could not listen to any more of this rubbish so I jumped in my car and arrived to see the Fire Brigade clearing up their hose pipes. They had been requested by the Police to clear the drainage system which was blocked and causing the road to flood. I told him that one of our members had just come into the Clubhouse and said they were pumping out the Loch. We looked down the Loch, and looked at his equipment and I both just laughed.

Cecil George, Lenzie

Help needed with sandy dilemma

We have two golfing hotels in the Midlands: the Abbey Hotel Golf & Country Club near Redditch has an 18 hole golf course and we have just developed a new 9 hole golf course at Lea Marston Hotel & Leisure Complex. The latter was built between February and July last year by Contour Golf under the leadership of Ingrid Eichler. Contour have done a fabulous job and the golf course has grown in extremely well and is virtually fit for play already. We actually won't be opening the course to the members until April 1 this year.

The course at the Abbey is 15-years old now and was constructed to a fairly high standard such that tees and greens drain beautifully. However the clay content of the sub soil and top soil means that water runs on the course and indeed, as like many other clubs, the course has been shut for approximately half of October and November. Over the last 18 months we have installed around £1,000,000 of fairway drainage systems. We are trying, but the recent rain has not been able to get away effectively from the surface. Last year we bought a vertidrain machine which is proving to be of some use. However we need to transfer large quantities of sand into the fairways.

I would be very pleased to hear from other BIGGA members whether they have come up with a cost effective solution for spreading large quantities of sand effectively over an area with preferably a low ground pressure being applied. This would I imagine is a fairly universal problem and I do feel that a survey would be most beneficial not only to us but to other members, ie including best sand, type and cost machinery used and/or third party contractors.

M I Blake, Managing Director, Lea Marston, Harouch Lane, Lea Marston, Sutton Coldfield, Warks B76 0BY

Tribute to Fred Hawtree

Fred Hawtree's passing reported in your December issue, was to me very sad reading, primarily because being unaware of his death. I was not able to pay my respects earlier to one of the industry's true gentlemen.

When I took over the publishing of Golf Greenkeeping for BIGGA in 1982, Fred was one of the first to offer his support offering produce for me a series of articles on golf course architecture. They were always amusing, written with style, sound a heading message for greenkeepers, but never preached in a manner that others would put pen to paper, were so inclined to do.

Not that Fred accepted fools lightly. There were several occasions when either of my typistess had altered a word or phrase, worst still, subbed out a few paragraphs to fit the page and then the 'gods of wrath' descended almost before his copy of the magazine had fallen through the letter box.

I still have all the original manuscripts he typed out in clean double spaced copy, totally free of any grammatical errors or spelling mistakes and what is more he never charged or accepted a penny payment from me or the Association.

Our most precious memory of 'Uncle Fred' as he was known to my wife, was an invitation to lunch on a fine summer day at the Hawtree office in Woodstock.

Driving down a crowded Oxford Road, every car parking space was taken except for one right outside number 3. There was a large board with just three words in capital letters on a white background. It read - RESERVED FOR ELELEAN. What a welcome!

I have had the pleasure of playing many of Fred Hawtree's courses over the past 18 years. Always demanding, of impeccable standard, distinctive, but fair. That precisely sums up the man and is a fitting tribute to a long and distinguished life.

John Lelean, Wetherby