Unsung hero is often a tribute bestowed on someone who has quietly gone about their work with a quiet professionalism not seeking recognition or payment.

Well our sector may have many Unsung Heroes but one very special individual has to be mentioned in this category: W.N.B Sweet, or just Nick to so many of us, who sadly passed away, somewhat ironically on St George’s Day, April 23.

A proud Scotman with an incredible sense of humour, a smile which will be most remembered for and, not forgetting the wearing of the orange kilt at every opportunity – Nick will be missed by so many.

His wisdom and knowledge over many years has helped so many, including me personally, as he has been the Chairman of the GTC’s Technical Committee in recent years.

Older greenkeepers will remember first registering as an Apprentice with Nick in the days when the GTC had no funding but who could find the ascendancy at the 66 Old Orchard, Haxby, York….. Nick, his wife, Pat, and family eventually moved from that address, but for years it was known as the home of apprentice registrations.

The registration scheme then did not require any formal training but Nick always had an eye on the future that one day all trainee greenkeepers would receive dual registration. He had a vision that at this stage, that the students had some basic skills and knowledge with a Government approved qualification.

Having attended school in St Andrews, his love of golf and golf courses commenced on the Links of St Andrews, his love of golf and golf courses aligned to the City & Guilds and Scotec Phases with supervisory and management levels added, giving the student the tools to progress to the GTC Certificates and even Horticulture.

Nick was the GTC’s number 1 assessor when N/BVQ’s were introduced by the Government.

He was also co-author of the GTC’s originally recognised Training Manual and Learning Materials and a BIGGA Master Greenkeeper even before the term was introduced.

I am sure his former colleagues at STRI and Askham Bryan have many fond memories of Nick as well as the many students who passed through under his caring watch over many years.

Nick always enjoyed helping students especially those who, while being practical, struggled a little with the theory.

He was particularly proud when as an Askham Bryan College student, James Finlayson was one of three green-keepers to receive the City and Guilds of London Institute’s 2010 Apprentice of the Year award.

His passion for education was unwavering and this was reinforced by his role as the Chairman of the GTC Technical Committee.

I am fortunate to have known and worked with Nick for 18 years, also sharing a trip to the GCSDA show in Orlando back in the 90’s. All those whose lives he has touched will miss him.

David Golding, Education Director, with a monthly update from the GTC

Greenkeepers Training Committee

Seven Days in Sunny June’ by Jamiroquai is one of my favour- ite summer songs, however, I am hoping for more than seven days of sunshine this June!

It was with great sadness that I learnt of the passing of Nick Bisset. Nick was a great supporter of BIGGA and the GTC.

He was instrumental in the development of the original Master Greenkeeper Certificate and right up until his passing, was one of the examiners for the Certificate. His passion for education was unwavering and this was reinforced by his role as the Chairman of the GTC Technical Committee.

I am fortunate to have known and worked with Nick for 18 years, also sharing a trip to the GCSDA show in Orlando back in the 90’s. All those whose lives he has touched will miss him.

For those of you heading towards your 5th or 10th consecutive Certificate it also means you’ll be getting notification of receiving your Diploma for Continuing Professional Development.

If you have any queries regarding your Certificate, please call 01347 833800 (option 3) or email to rachael@bigga.co.uk.

For the Toro Student Greenkeeper of the Year Award 2011

Entries for this year’s Toro Student Greenkeeper of the Year Award closed last month.

Now, the final list of greenkeepers competing for a place in the National Final and ultimately for their chance to win the Toro Scholarship to the Winter Turf School at the University of Massachusetts and a trip to the Golf Industry Show in Las Vegas. Local nominations will be made in early July. Details of the finalists will appear in this column in the August magazine.

To all those whose lives he has touched will miss him.

C_TPDU Updates & CPD 2012

For those of you active on the Continuing Professional Development (CPD) scheme, it’s that time of year that the reminder letters will land on your doormostat reminding you that the CPD year is coming to a close on 30 June.

We would like to remind you that you need to forward any outstanding CPD credit claim forms to Rachael, so that she can update your record and your certificate for the 2010/2011 CPD certificate.

Continuing Professional Development

Thank you to our Gold and Silver Key Sponsors

BLOGA Higher Education Scholarships

Sponsored by Ransomes Jacobsen

There are funds available for those members who are applying for, or undertaking a Higher Education course. For further information on the application process, visit www.bigga.org.uk/education/resources/higher-education-scholarships

Harrogate Week 2012

The Harrogate Week 2012 programme is slowly developing in my mind. A great many calls will be made over the next few weeks to begin confirming speakers and sketching out the Conference, Workshop and Seminar schedules.

I always like this process to do a jig-saw – usually it resembles one of those that have 1000 pieces all with baked beans on! Watch this space.

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