I attended the very first Harrogate and can particularly recall the Royal Hall where the education was held. It was an eerie place and I distinctly remember the echoes.

Education was absolutely the main focus of why I was there and I remember Jim Arthur as a speaker, as was my dad and Walter Woods.

If I'm honest, we couldn't see the images on the screen, and the acoustics were poor because the IT at the time wasn't the best, but it was a very exciting time for a young greenkeeper.

Once a speaker had finished I used to rush out, run round the stands and get back to hear the next speaker, sneaking in the side door trying to not be found out.

Today we've found a wonderful balance of ensuring an audience for the Continue to Learn programme as well as a footfall for BTME.

This has not just happened but is the culmination of a lot of hard work and know-how.

The IT, which backs up the education nowadays, is exceptional and certainly on a par with anything else I've seen anywhere.

In fact many other bodies have said to me that they had learned a lot on how to set up programmes of this nature.

More years of ensuring an audience for the Continue to Learn programme as well as a footfall for BTME

I've been strolling through the town and got chatting to someone on a street corner and ended up there for an hour talking about the benefits of bent over fescue, or red machines, over orange machines over green machines or deep aeration over shallow aeration.

As for my own personal highlights I have too many to mention but I can particular remember my year as Chairman handing out prizes and representing the Association.

That year was the highlight of my career representing greenkeepers at our show bringing a wonderful thing to behold.

Some of the machinery that I have seen for the first time at Harrogate is wonderful.

No malice and 99% of the time the reason for the argument would be agronomic.

A difference of opinion and a bit of passion is a wonderful thing to behold.

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