**Wimbledon Seminar**

A total of 140 grounds and golf course managers gathered at The All England Club recently for a seminar at which prominent speakers addressed the challenges of preparing turf for major events, hosted by Scott Professional.  

Head Groundsman, Eddie Seaward MBE, opened the day’s programme with an insight into the logistical challenges he and his team face in preparation for an intensive summer of sport in 2012, which will see the world’s tennis stars competing twice a matter of weeks.

The hectic period begins in June with the regular Championships fortnight.  

The courts will then be brought back into action at the end of July for a week of Olympic tennis.

Simon Barnden, then took to the floor to discuss the development of Primo Maxx, new grass for tournament turf.

After lunch, Dr Ruth Mann, of the STRI and her colleagues, John Lockyer, described some of the work the team at the institute has carried out at stadina in Ukraine, Monaco and South Africa.

The focus then switched to golf, as Director of Greenkeeping at St Andrews Links, Gordon Moir, outlined his team’s preparations for last summer’s Open Championship staged on the Old Course.

Completing the speaker programme was Ipswich Town’s Head Groundsmen, Alan Ferguson, whose presentation described the steps he took to prepare the football club’s playing surface for the heavy plant, staging and 25,000 music fans that descended on Portman Road for Pink’s concert in June.

A visit to the world’s most famous tennis venue wouldn’t have been complete without a tour of the courts.

Eddie Seaward and his staff gave everyone the opportunity to see some of the construction work taking place in preparation for the Olympics.

**GEO Certified™: International Sustainability Award for Auchterarder Golf Club**

The first traditional UK members’ club to be awarded GEO Certified status, Auchterarder is a sustainability leader in Scottish golf. As they join the international group of clubs that has received the prestigious GEO designation, the Perthshire club can be proud in the knowledge that they are positioned among the world’s most sustainably managed golfing environments.

Archie Dunn, Head Greenkeeper at the club for 14 years and National Director of BIGGA, is not one to shy away from innovation or the need for leadership.

“GEO Certification is an important ongoing project for Auchterarder Golf Club, helping us to shape our environmental programme and provide a basis from which we will work to make our club more sustainable year on year. The targeted support we’re receiving from Sustainability Adviser, Elspeth Coutts, has brought our planning, monitoring and recording activities into line with GEO requirements, a huge help on the whole learning curve towards sustainable golf,” said Archie.

Sustainability Adviser, Elspeth Coutts, has brought our knowledge they are positioned among the world’s most sustainably managed golfing environments.

**Harrogate Week: The Natural Choice For Company Launch**

Sod fertility company Organic Soil Systems selected the 2011 BTME at Harrogate as the venue for their UK launch.

The Company Chairman, Ronald (Ron) Green, explained, “HTMS is widely regarded as Europe’s leading showcase for turf and grounds care professionals, with attendance consistently in the thousands. This was exactly the right forum for us to hold the official launch of our world leading soil fertility products and technology in the UK. We have received an excellent response throughout the exhibition and look forward to developing relationships further with our new clients.”

For further information visit www.organicsoilsystems.co.uk

**South East Region Annual Gentleman’s Day Golf and Dinner**

Walton Heath Golf Club  
Friday 4th March 2011

One of Greengropping’s longest running events and is always well supported.

For more details please contact:  
Clive Ogood  
South East Regional Administrator  
cliveogood@yahoo.co.uk  
Phone 01737 819343 mob 07841 948410

**George Hampton**

Former SPGA, SIGGA and RGBGA member, George Hampton, died at the end of last year at the age of 72 after a short illness.

George joined left hand was a well-knit face in the Scottish greenskeeping and golfing circles and you would always hear him if you were within ear shot with his distinctive laugh, either talking or receiving jokes!

George completed his National Diploma in Groundskeeping in 1991 and took on the post of Greenkeeper at Stornoway GC on the island of Lewis before moving back to the east coast in 1993 to do the same at Fortrose and Rosemarkie GC.

Not only a good teaching pro but also happy to say George retired from greenskeeping in 1999 and took up the post of Pro at Pitlochry during which time he won the Scottish Seniors PGA in 1993.

Arthritis in his hands restricted his golf then pastime hobby before finally setting home for retirement in Inverness.

We pass our thoughts to his wife Mary and family. George Paterson

**IOG Launches Apprenticeships**

The IOG has announced its IOG Apprenticeship in Groundskeeping – a work-based programme available to aspiring groundsmen and women.

Providing a choice of options – Apprenticeship Level 2, Advanced Apprenticeship Level 3 and Higher Apprenticeship Level 4 – the programme is targeted at anyone aged from 16 years. The IOG Apprenticeship will take between one and three years, depending on the level chosen.

Explaining that the new Apprenticeship is the latest in a comprehensive range of affordable education services delivering high quality and accredited qualifications at every level of groundsmen the IOG’s Head of Professional Services, said the new scheme follows through the recent launch of the IOG Young Apprenticeship Scheme as a curriculum option for students aged 14 at Harrowfield Academy, St Albans.

“The IOG Apprenticeship, a work-based programme designed around the needs of an employer, leads to nationally recognised qualifications such as diplomas in Groundsmanship and greenkeeping accredited by City & Guilds land-based services,” said Ian.

“To support the new scheme, the IOG is offering a ‘one-stop shop’ apprenticeship service which includes accessing literacy and numeracy, assessment of occupational skills, advice on learning styles and psychometric testing, plus help with the induction and sign-up and the assessor visit, and ongoing monitoring of progress.”

**George Paterson**

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**SCOTTISH REGION**

On behalf of the Association I would like to express our thanks to our Patrons for their support during 2010. Their financial and practical support makes it possible for the Scottish Region to run another successful Conference in March at the Carnegie Conference Centre, Dunfermline. Individual sections continue to organise various seminars, talks and golf outings throughout the year. All of this, plus the Scottish National Tournament, made it a very successful year for the Association.

The Patron’s Award winners enjoyed a trip to Harrogate along with their book prize presented by the Patrons. This is only possible with the support of the Patrons. We are very grateful to them all.

We look forward to continuing the relationship we have with our Patrons and look forward to 2011.

Thanks to the following firms: Richard Atkin (Seadeck); Bayer; David Industrial Products; The Double “A” Trading Company; Fairways Group; Hamilton Bioc (E)g; Golf Finance; Grounds (Sportsturf); Henderson Grass Machinery; Indigrow; McIntyre; Melkmans Drainage & Grounds; Iain Brown (Glasgow); Parlaw Racing; Piggy Taylor; SIGMA Contract; LLP; Scottbrite; Symbole The Scottish Company (UK); Budget Sports Turf Services; Tennagers Services; Thomas Sheriff & Co and Thornness Amenity.
Download and learn

1. “How to Cascade Goals to Teams and Individuals”

“How To...” guides are now available exclusively to BIGGA Members, on a range of Human Resource topics.

These short, handy guides provide practical, step by step guidance on a range of subjects. The guides can be downloaded and used to help you develop your knowledge and implement new processes within your workplace.

To access the “How To...” guides, log on to the BIGGA Members Area at www.bigga.org and click on Member Resources.

On October, 21, 2009, I received an email from Paul Worster, BIGGA Chairman 2010, asking me to give him a call. I had an initial slight concern, thinking we had done something wrong at Section level. I called him that afternoon, and much to my surprise, he asked me to consider taking on the role of Chairman for 2011.

Surprise was probably an understatement, and my initial reaction was, that I would be honoured, but that I would need to know more about the commitment required, consult with my family, my employers and our team at Elmwood Golf Course. I also wanted to speak with my Section committee (Central), and the Scottish Board to ensure I had their support.

Having done that, and discussed with John Pemberton in more detail the challenges involved, and receiving full support from all concerned, I was honoured to accept.

My first meeting was at Harrogate 2010, when I was welcomed and introduced to the Board. I came out of that meeting under no illusions to the fact that this was not a committee for committees’ sake, but a group of people passionate and dedicated to ensuring the success of BIGGA, and supporting their fellow Greenkeepers.

We were also beginning to feel the bite of the recession, and the challenges of not only running a successful Association, but a successful business, became only too apparent to me.

When I arrived at the AGM this year to step up to Chairman, I had attended many meetings, both with the Board and several working parties, attended several events in the year, including The Open at St Andrews, and formed stronger working relationships with the Board members and the Staff at HQ.

Having checked my email inbox out of interest just before the AGM, and having received a good luck email from Paul, I noticed that I had received 554 emails from Paul over the year. I knew for a fact that we had spoken almost daily during that year, not to mention my correspondence with the rest of the Board and the staff at HQ.

That may give you an indication of the level of commitment shown by those who serve you, the members, while volunteering their time to help steer the association.

I’d like to thank Paul and the rest of the Board for their dedication to this task, and also the staff whose enthusiasm, drive and dedication ensure that we can strive to meet the needs of the members.

There are many other members, (Greenkeepers and Trade), serving the Sections, Regions, and working parties and sub-committees, who often go unrecognised and their contribution is vital to our future success. The support we receive from Industry is significant, and their recognition of the importance of our Association, despite their own current challenges, is something we value.

I returned from Harrogate, and once the adrenalin had worn off, I was shattered, but elated. I witnessed first hand the hunger among the members for further education, which had been more than satisfied by a fantastic record breaking education programme put together by Sami Collins, Rachael Duffy, and I’m sure support from many other staff. To see the queues up the escalator waiting to enter the sessions was incredible.

I spoke with many exhibitors in the halls. Despite the gloom and doom expressed by some in the lead up to Harrogate week, they were delighted and astonished at the level of support and interest they had received during the show.

My frustration was that I was unable to meet them all personally to thank them for their support. I am writing to them all to thank them and to ask for their input to ensure we continue to develop and organise the event in such a way to obtain the most benefit for them and for the members – win/ win.

During the week I attended many productive meetings, seeking to establish collaboration from other Golfing Bodies and Industry Partners. We sought feedback at open forums from the members and exhibitors which were well attended.

We will be actively engaging with all stakeholders. The Board took part in a strategic planning session during the week, the first of several.

By engaging with you we can ensure that we are working toward a common vision, and we can formulate the correct strategies and objectives to ensure our resources are focussed on achieving it.

“The support we receive from Industry is significant, and their recognition of the importance of our Association, despite their own current challenges, is something we value”

While we have all this attention, due to the challenges of the economic climate, it presents a great opportunity to evaluate our position and communicate. I am sure, more than ever, that not only will we face this challenge, but, that as we work together with our members, and collaborate with Industry and Golf bodies, we will flourish and ensure BIGGA’s success.

I would like to close by thanking John Pemberton for his faithful, dedicated service to BIGGA over the last 18 years. We have grown from small beginnings, to the strong vibrant Association we are today.

John will always be part of that and always welcomed by our members.

On behalf of all the members, thank you John and all the best for the future.
The start of a busy year ahead

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The GTC was back in attendance at this year’s show after one year’s absence as an exhibitor and for many of us it has been a pilgrimage since the first exhibition back in 1989.

So many faces who have attended since that first show are still committed to ensuring that greenkeeping is seen as a respected profession and they should be proud of their achievements over the years. Prior to this year’s show, there was much talk about there being three halls and the recession will keep people away...well back in 1989 there were only two halls but that event signalled the start of something very special.

Those in attendance back in 1989 will remember the image of the greenkeepers and how BIGGA was continually encouraging members to buy Association blazers, sweaters and even giving ties away as a membership benefit, all designed to promote a more professional image.

There were even neck scarves for any lady members. You could say the Association was ahead of the sexes back in the 1980s.

Image is so important and while we all accept that a greenkeeper’s hands can look a bit dirty on occasion, there has to be the continual drive to be professional as it clearly has put greenkeeping in the spotlight.

Most recent, the greenkeeping team, admirably managed by Jim McKenzie at Celtic Manor, during the most atrocious weather imaginable, were all aware of the importance of image and were maintaining corporate effective attire was brilliant to see.

The site of the GTC stand this year meant everyday brought about the seminar or workshop that had to be passed on and from the displays of thebreadth of the professionalism of speakers it spoke volumes for the industry.

Harragole Week may be all about supporting the exhibitors whether they are in two halls or five, but many companies now contribute so much to the very soul of the annual January gathering and that is EDUCATION!

It has been said by many who attended this year’s event that the education programme had something for everybody and attendances were record breaking.

Those older readers may well remember the dynamic stumping speaker, Bobbie Gee, back at the 1991 exhibition giving a keynote address on ‘image – understanding the role image plays in personal and professional success’.

If my memory serves me right, Bobbie’s husband was a Golf Course Superintendent in the USA and she knew first hand how the profession, or image of the profession, had to be changed and she was inspirational for all of us at the presentation.

We have known for many years that the American Golf Course Superintendents are held in high esteem by their employers and golfers and thankfully I believe our Head Greenkeepers and Course Managers are now at least on a par with their colleagues throughout the world of golf course management.

For many years the GTC focused, quite rightly, on ensuring the agrochemical aspect of the greenkeeper’s job were covered in education courses and qualifications and rest assured this is still the number one priority, just look at the content of the greenkeepers’ qualification scheme.

However since The R&A’s discussion document The Way Forward was circulated to golf clubs and golfing bodies in 1989 which, amongst other matters stated: “that many Head Greenkeepers and Course Managers feel that advanced training in management skills is the greatest deficiency in their training” – times have changed!

During this year’s Continue to Learn programme, there was a workshop for assistants hosted by Frank Newbery (nowhere near as attractive as Bobbie Gee) which focused on the importance of good communication and image. It is by raising the awareness of the importance of image at the earliest opportunity in a greenkeeper’s career that we will produce the Course Managers for the future.

Some 22 years on there is so much to be proud of in the way greenkeepers have progressed both in seeking knowledge to add to their skill sets or to move on out of the workforce and now we see many apprentices from the 1990’s today’s Golf Course Managers and some stepping into General Manager positions.

The GTC will ensure the ranges of qualifications available within the sector include “communication” Units and that includes image.

We will work with our Quality Assured Centres and Training Providers to ensure there are seminars, workshops and short courses available to help health and safety employers and learners to choose from.

BIGGA, I am sure, will continue to promote supervisory and management short course provision through its Sections and Regions, which are often subsidised through the Learning and Development Fund and the GTC will continue the drive for professionalism through greenkeeper training.

In closing please feel free to feedback any views you might have on current provision of education, training courses and seminars or workshops.

If my memory serves me right, Rachael and I are soaking our feet while looking aghast at the attendance figures for the Continue to Learn Education Programme. Now we know why we’re so tired and our feet still hurt.

That was the week that was... and what a wonderful week it was!

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Thank you to our Gold and Silver Key Sponsors

speakers who (sometimes with a little coaching) agree to speak on the Continue to Learn education programme. Without them, there would not be an education programme to present.

The next challenge is to replicate the success in 2011, please support BIGGA and BIGGA’s Gold and Silver Key companies and individuals to the Learning and Development Fund for their support in enabling us to present Continue to Learn at Harragole Week.

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BIGGA, I am sure, will continue to promote supervisory and management short course training through its Sections and Regions, which is often subsidised through the Learning and Development Fund and the GTC will continue to drive for professionalism through greenkeeper training.

In closing please feel free to feedback any views you might have on current provision of education, training courses and if you feel the GTC should be addressing.

Please contact us on Tel: 01347 838640 or email david@the-gtc.co.uk

For the latest news on greenkeeper education, training and qualifications including the up to date list of GTC Assured Centres and Training Providers visit www.the-gtc.co.uk

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Contact Details
Sami Collins, Head of Learning & Development, on sami@bigga.co.uk

A huge thank you goes to the Gold and Silver Key companies and individuals to the Learning and Development Fund for their support in enabling us to present Continue to Learn at Harragwee Week.

Pesticide Update for NPTC Certificate Holders

Health and Safety advisor, Jon Allibutt has confirmed that the possession of a City and Guilds NPTC Pesticides Certificate is more than five years old may not be accepted as evidence of competency, unless the holder has updated their skills and knowledge and kept pace with the many changes in this important legislation, the Code of Practice, application equipment and techniques for the control of pests and diseases.

The following Prescribed document workshop at Harragwee, there are a number of Update Courses being presented. For up to date availability, contact Jane Glassett at Jon Allibutt Associates on 01959 575375 or visit the Events page on the BIGGA website.

The current Prescribed Code of practice for using plant protection products is now available as a free download in the Members’ Area of the BIGGA website.

Thank you to our Gold and Silver Key Sponsors

GOLD KEY INDIVIDUAL MEMBERS: Steven Tannery; WJ Rogers; Andy Carpenter MGS; CGCS; Iain A Macleod; Frank Newbery; Andrew Turbutt; Ian Matthew MG; Ian Mcbran; Steve Dixon; Ade Archer; Steve Dixon; Paul Jenkins; Richard McGlynn; Sam Langrick; Neil Whitaker; Graham Wylie.

ARGENT key individual members: Ian Mcbran; Steve Dixon; Paul Jenkins; Richard McGlynn; Sam Langrick; Neil Whitaker; Graham Wylie, Michael Beaton, Douglas Duguid, Jaey Goodchild.
New Name for JCB Groundhog

James Watson Joins Sherriff Amenities

JCB has rebranded its Utility Terrain Vehicles with the new name JCB WORKMAX.

This covers both the current diesel-powered models, the 4x4 for rough terrain applications and the 6x6 for ‘fine turf’ applications such as golf courses and sports fields.

Until now JCB has used the name ‘Groundhog’ for its UTVs. JCB is focused on answering the demands of the professional equipment user and therefore the new Registered WORKMAX name has been adopted to reflect this. The ‘Groundhog’ name has been in use since JCB entered the UTV market in 2005.

JCB/UNITY Products Sales Director Keith Hoskins said: “The old Groundhog name has served us well in establishing our products particularly in the UK. “But we are on course for market share growth in several countries at the expense of ride-on quads which we believe can never offer the ride quality, safety, and lead carrying performance of a Side-by-Side design.”

“Our new WORKMAX name is also easily understood in other languages.”

TWO HEADLIGHTS, ONE BATTERY

Ian Howard, Managing Director of Dennis, has announced that his company has acquired SISIS, which will now operate as a division of Howardsoo Ltd, alongside Dennis.

“We have acquired the respected brand, designs, patents and intellectual property and this new partnership is part of our on-going investment strategy,” explained Ian.

“I would compare Dennis and Sisis to two headlights being operated by one battery,” said Ian, as he explained the new strategy at a press briefing in Harrogate.

“The companies will run independently, while at the same time benefiting from each other’s strengths and powered by parent company, Howardsoo Ltd. “Our traditional strengths of reliability and excellent customer support will enhance this partnership and I am optimistic about our future together, working as a team to further our profile in the market. Our products dovetail extremely well,” said Ian, who added that they would be conducting an immediate review of all aspects of the business including customer service and supply.

Ian Howard, Managing Director of Howardsoo Engineering, with Andrew Whiter, Field Sales Manager of SISIS.

Huxley Golf extend into Europe

A new business, Huxley Golf Europe, has been formed in Luxembourg under the direction of Danish golf professional, Ole Pedersen, and entrepreneur, Torben Poulsen.

The pair are targeting golf clubs, teaching academies, hotels and private clients across a large and important new sales territory for Huxley Golf.

Paul Huxley, Director of Huxley Golf, which has a growing network of clients in the UK and abroad, said: “The region spanning the Benelux countries and France and Germany has become very important to Huxley Golf. Ole and Torben have the local presence and expertise necessary to position our products successfully in this marketplace.”

Huxley Golf provides all-weather surfaces for golf around the world. Clients include training and coaching establishments, golf ranges and academies as well as several Open Championship and Ryder Cup venues.

For more information, visit www.huxleygolf.com.

James Watson has joined Sherriff Amenities as National Sales Manager to play a key role in continuing with this month’s lucky number...

What’s your number?

Name: Fiona Gebbett
Company: PAN Publicity Limited
Position: Director
How long have you been in the industry? Almost 20 years
How did you get into it? In my previous job, PAN was one of my key suppliers. When a job came up there, I applied and the rest is history.

What other jobs have you done? After university, I was a Holiday Rep in France and then Tenenille. I then joined a Conference Production company and ran corporate events around the country.

What do you like about your current job? My clients. We handle a variety of accounts which means we get to know some great people and no two days are ever the same.

What changes have you seen during your time in the industry? Very little change in the printed media compared to other industries we work in; but, of course, on-line media has developed considerably. What I have seen is the reduction in editorial staff and the growth of freelance writers. This has had an impact on our output seeing us supply more finished copy rather than marrying up a Journalist with a Greenkeeper/Groundsman.

What do you like to do in your spare time? Socialising mainly, but living on the coast I like nothing more than getting rugged up on a Sunday morning and going for a nice long walk on the sea front. We also have the beautiful North Norfolk coast to drive to and enjoy the superb beaches and pubs there.

Where do you see yourself in 10 years time? I very much want to be doing the same thing in a re-vitalised industry. Basically my job is about people; talking to them and finding out how they do their jobs. It’s what I love about what I do and I don’t see that changing much in the next 10 years.

Who do you consider best friends in the industry? The Press. They’re a great bunch of people. We’ve had some fun times over the years on Press trips in various countries. We all have some very fond memories from them, I’m sure.

What do you consider to be your lucky number? 4

Fiona has picked Tim Merril, of The Grassy Group.

NEW IRRIGATION ADVISORY SERVICE

Intelligent Watering is a new irrigation advisory service that has been launched by Adrian Handbury. Adrian has been in the industry for 17 years, originally as the First Irrigation Manager at the London Golf Club. As well as being an end user, Adrian has also installed many irrigation systems. However, his main discipline has been the specification and design of irrigation for the companies he has been employed by or those that he advises, and has worked extensively over three continents.

Intelligent Design has been set up to supply irrigation advice, design and new system design services to the Golf, Sportsturf and Landscape industries.

Email design@intelligentwatering.co.uk or go to the website www.intelligentwatering.co.uk

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New Name for JCB Groundhog

JCB has rebranded its Utility Terrain Vehicles with the new name JCB WORKMAX.

This covers both the current diesel-powered models, the 4x4 for rough terrain applications and the 6x4 for ‘fine turf’ applications such as golf courses and sports fields.

Until now JCB has used the name ‘Groundhog’ for its UTVs. JCB is focused on answering the demands of the professional equipment user and therefore the new Registered WORKMAX name has been adopted to reflect this.

The ‘Groundhog’ name has been in use since JCB entered the UTV market in 2005.

JCB Utility Products Sales Director Keith Hoskins said: “The old Groundhog name has served us well in establishing our products particularly in the UK. ‘But we are on course for market share growth in several countries at the expense of ride-on quads which we believe can never offer the ride quality, safety, and lead carrying performance of a Side-by-Side design. ‘Our new WORKMAX name is also easily understood in other languages.”

James Watson Joins Sherriff Amenity

Sherriff Amenity has strengthened its national sales team by appointing James Watson as an Amenity Specialist covering Surrey and the south.

James, who will be working closely with Chris Rudkin to support Sherriff Amenity’s current customers and also develop new business in the area, spent 15 years as a Greenkeeper in the UK and Europe before joining Headland Amenity as a Regional Manager.

“James’ previous experience, both as a Greenkeeper and in a sales position made him the ideal candidate for the job,” commented Mark Pynsk, Amenity Director of Agrovista UK.

What’s your number?

Our regular and random profile of an industry figure continues with this month’s lucky number...

Name: Fiona Gebbett
Company: PAN Publicity Limited
Position: Director
How long have you been in the industry? Almost 20 years
How did you get into it? In my previous job, PAN was one of my key suppliers. When a job came up there, I applied and the rest is history.

What do you like about your current job? My clients. We handle a variety of accounts which means we get to know some great people and no two days are ever the same.

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Scott MacCallum catches up with Gordon Child, the latest recipient of BIGGA’s Lifetime Achievement Award.

A smile is never far from the tips of BIGGA’s latest Lifetime Achievement Award recipient.

Gordon Child has lived life to the full and, in modern sporting parlance, not left anything out on the park. His greenkeeping career was carried out at some of the finest golf clubs in the country and he watched some of the finest players in the world playing courses he’d prepared. His BIGGA career saw him become the only Chairman to date to serve for two years and spend 10 years as Regional Administrator for the South West and South Wales, while his own golfing ability was good enough for him to play in two Open Championships and now sees him beat his age virtually every time he goes out.

“It was while I was there that I enjoyed one of the pieces of luck which I’ve enjoyed all my life. I started work in 1947 and at the time there were only two colleges in the UK which did turf culture and one of them was Leeds College of Art and Technology while the other was in Scotland. The college was in easy reach of my home so for three years I was able to study three nights a week and one half day for which the club gave me time off. It provided me with the foundations for my whole career.”

It also saw the beginnings of a friendship which was to last for over half a century.

“It was while at college that I met Jim Arthur who was working for the STRI at the time and who was one of the lecturers brought in by the college,” said Gordon.

Friendship with the legendary agronomist lasted until Jim’s death at the age of 84, in 2004, and ironically saw the pair of them living just a few miles from each other in Devon – Gordon in Churston and Jim in Budleigh Salterton.

Following his time at Dore and Totley Gordon joined the Army and the Liverpool Regiment where he served in Korea along with another well known BIGGA figure, the late Bert Cross, and when he got back his grandfather told him that he was to take up a job at Royal Birkdale.

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“Going to an Open venue was his idea, his feeling being that I’d worked on a parkland and that I should learn how to work on a links course.”

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FEBRUARY 2011
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LIFETIME ACHIEVEMENT
host to a number of events
Tour venues at the time playing
Rickmansworth Council.
municipal course on behalf of
courts and the gardens, while
golf courses as well as the tennis
long time make up my mind to
Moor Park came in it took me a
Rickmansworth.
country at the time – Moor Park, in
at one of the biggest clubs in the
away was the prospect of working
was very hard to leave.”
were a great help to me. We were
somehow.
were in you were a part of the club
were members, but once you
class estate and a lot of celebrities
were playing.
of the those courses on which you
out of a pine forest and it was one
people there. The course was hewn
was a gem of a club and I loved the

It was also one of the premier
courses on which you

He was on a severe downslope
with the hole cut just over a
bunker on the 17th but he ached
it up following week we all tried to
play the shot and no-one could
keep the ball on the green never
mind anywhere close to the
hole,” recalled Gordon, who also
remembered Greg Norman
playing a ball from off the television
gantry.
After six years, six tournaments
and, at the age of 50, Gordon
accepted the job which was to see
him through to his retirement and
provide him with home for the next
30 years of his life.
“The Chairman of Green at
Churston played Moor Park and
came and spoke to me about
coming down to Devon.

“The timing was right because
if I had stayed at Moor Park I
wouldn’t have had the time to get
involved with BIGGA or the other
work I’ve been able to so since,”
said Gordon.

Gordon was on the Board of the
BIGGA when the amalgamation
talks started in the mid 80s and
was actually delivering a paper
on Parkland Golf at a St Andrews
conference, chaired by Walter
Woods, when the RA got
involved in bringing the BIGGA,
ERPGA and ERPGA together with
a view to forming what became
BIGGA.

When it became a reality in 1987
Gordon, ably assisted by wife,
Marion, who has been a constant
companion, became a volunteer
Regional Administrator for the SW
and South Wales and remain so
until the role became a salaries
position in 1997.

He is particularly proud of the
Westurf Show, at Long Ashton Golf
Club, which run for 10 years and
which ensured that the Region was
financially secure for many years.
Another success was the
creation of the Cannington College
golf course for which he was a key
moover, along with Jim Arthur and,
another close friend, golf course
architect, Martin Hawtree.

The following year Gordon
became BIGGA National Chairman
and he is still the only man to date
to have held the position for two
years.

Highlights during that time
was the Duke Of York officially
opening of BIGGA HOUSE in 1998
and being Captain of the Rest
of the World team for the Ryder
International Cup in Atlanta, Georgia, that same year.

“I’ve got so many wonderful
memories of my time as
Chairman and particularly
meeting so many great and
wonderful people.

“I remember some superb trips
to the American and Canadian
Conferences and meeting
motivational speakers, Frank
Dick and Simon Weston at
Harrogate.

“Frank Dick’s speech is still
the best I’ve ever heard,” said
Gordon who continued to be
BIGGA’s representative on the
GTC and the Region’s Education
Officer for several years after his
Chairmanship.

Another one of the coincidences
which have followed Gordon
through his life occurred when he
retired.

“I took over from Jock Millar, at
Moor Park and when I retired from
Churston. Jock’s son, Kevin, took
over from me.

“The families have both been
close and I have to say Kevin has
done a wonderful job since he took
over.

Since retiring Gordon has had
his fair share of health issues and
now battles a new knee in one leg
and a new hip in the other while he
is a superb advert for a Plymouth-
based Scottish heart surgeon
from whom his quadruple by-pass
represented 286 successful
operations in a row.

“I was playing in the final of the
Devon Seniors at Teverton
recently when a friend came over
and said that a guy wanted to meet
me.

“Went over and he looked
familiar but I couldn’t place him.

“The good old days, and the
memory of my time as
Chairman will never fade; a time
of great enjoyment and achievement is it
hit 80 so I think I’m going to make
it,” said the man who still plays
twice a week, often 36 holes
in a day, and only on a rare bad
day does he fail to beat his age.

Marion Child
Indeed, the quality of his
golf saw him play off +2 in his
prime and compete in two Open
Championships - the Centenary
Open at St Andrews in 1960 and
the British in 1962, and he is still
the only man to date
in a day, and only on a rare bad
day does he fail to beat his age.

Marion Child
As he looks back on a life full of
effort and achievement is it
any wonder that smile is never far
away?