

Chairman's message

As my year of EIGGA chairmanship draws to a close, I would like to make some observations about our industry in general and EIGGA in particular.

First, I should like to say what an honour it has been for me to have served as chairman since my election at Cambridge. I have greatly enjoyed meeting people from this and other countries who share the same interests and ideals.

EIGGA has, in its first two years, come a long way—perhaps not as far as some would have liked, but things take time.

Looking at education, EIGGA is now represented on the GTC (Greenkeeper Training Committee) along with SIGGA, the BGGGA, the secretaries' association, national golf unions, Bingley and Jim Arthur. The aims of the GTC are to check on the content of courses on offer, discussing with the tutors what greenkeepers feel is right or wrong and to ensure that they are run on the right lines.

The involvement of the golf unions is extremely important, as it has become obvious that, in many cases, golf clubs do not wish to educate their staff. The reasons behind this attitude are many but, with the support of the golf unions, we will have a stronger voice. After all, better education will have many benefits, most obviously the improved condition of the courses.

This brings me to the standing of greenkeepers in golf. EIGGA was formed to present a much more professional image, both in education and appearance. The latter has, undoubtedly, been achieved. The new blazers and ties mark our members as the smartest in the country and this has brought favourable comment from many quarters.

Education, as I have said, is moving along the lines we wish to see, coupled with the various diplomas offered by EIGGA. It should be noted that some colleges are offering a phase three City and Guilds course in management, covering all aspects of golf course management. However, I feel it must be said that greenkeepers can be, and frequently are, their own worst enemies. Many seeking more rewards from their chosen career are not prepared to help themselves.

How can we expect others to take us seriously when we do not take ourselves as such? There are several

Election Of National Officers

Nominations have been received for the undermentioned offices, which will be ratified at the association's AGM on Sunday March 24 during the annual conference at Warwick University.

President—Dennis Ayling (presently vice-president), nominated by Sussex.

Vice-president—David Jones, nominated by north west.

Trustee—Kevin Munt, nominated by the board of management.

thousand greenkeepers in this country today—how many belong to an association? Far and away the minority.

Apathy is our worst enemy. I'm not quite sure how we deal with this, but deal with it we must to achieve our

goals. Ask yourself: "What do I want from greenkeeping?" If you consider it a 40 hours a week job—and many do—and when you have finished work, you no longer want to think about golf courses, then changes in



Surrey

The recent turkey trot at Malden Golf Club was won by Mickey Connors. Thanks go to Alex and his staff for their part in organising a most enjoyable day.

The branch's next lecture—at Woking GC on February 11, 1.30pm—will be on course preparation and presentation and given by the PGA European Tour.

The annual dinner-dance takes place at the Drift Golf and Country Club on Saturday April 27.

Finally, congratulations go to Mickey Connors on his recent election as captain of the Drift.

Ken MacNiven.

North West

The last two lectures of 1984 proved to be very enjoyable—40 years experience went into Bob Janoskis' talk and all those present learned something.

Wrexham GC was the venue for the November seminar. Martyn Jones kept everyone interested, both inside the clubhouse and out on the course. Thanks go to the speakers and also to the club and secretary K. Fisher for all his help.

Forthcoming events include two evening talks—one by Nick Park and the other by Mike Harbridge, plus a full-day seminar by Watermaton. Members will receive all the information for these by letter.

Finally, the branch would like to congratulate Eric Staniforth, managing director of SISIS, on receiving the MBE.

Bill Lawson.



EIGGA members and guests at the autumn meeting, which was staged at Wrexham GC.

status and salaries are a long way off.

Greenkeeping *is* a profession, make no mistake about it—a career that is with you 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

It is not that many years ago that professional golfers were looked down upon and it is only since the formation of the PGA that progress and status have zoomed. Strength is what we need. Every greenkeeper in this country should join EIGGA *now*. We already have more greenkeeper members than any other association in Britain, but we need more. If every head greenkeeper joined, we would have 2,000 members!

Progress must be maintained. Our most important aim is to employ a full-time administrator to visit clubs and check on such things as conditions of employment. This can only be achieved with money. All over the country there is a small hard core of dedicated people working to benefit your future. Give them the backing they deserve. Support your branch and if you don't have one, form one today!

I was interested to read a recent article questioning the role of agronomists in British greenkeeping. The author said they threatened the jobs of many greenkeepers and that if greenkeepers were more articulate, agronomists would be out of a job.

I do not agree with this view. On a well-run course, the course manager and the agronomist can work in harmony. It is extremely helpful to have a second opinion from a trained eye. As for being more articulate, we're back to education again, aren't we?

In a recent copy of the USGA *Green Section Record*, there was a letter from a top superintendent thanking agronomists for their contribution to raising the status of superintendents in America. The secretary, course manager and agronomist are all part of a team—they are not in competition.

I trust that as many members as possible will attend EIGGA's annual conference at Warwick University on March 22, 23 and 24. A full programme is planned by greenkeepers for greenkeepers.

I look forward to seeing EIGGA move ahead in 1985. Remember, your future is in your hands. Join now!

Peter Wisbey.



Central

Sixteen members of the section paid a visit to Henry Sheach's of Kirkcaldy recently. After being welcomed by Alistair Sheach, we toured the workshops. After lunch, we were given a practical demonstration on how to choose, use and maintain a chain saw. This part of the afternoon talk was given by Mike Irons of Omark Industries. To finish, Grant Chalmers of Sachs Dolmar gave the history of his company and run-down of products.

There was an excellent turn-out of 45 at Muckhart Golf Club to hear a lecture by Walter Woods and Jimmy Kidd. Both were given a hearty vote of thanks. Walter spoke on the work required to bring the courses at St Andrews back into shape after the Open Championship. Jim then took as his theme classical British golf courses and the points that link them, such as how architects used the natural topography of the land and flora and fauna to create courses that blend into the surrounding landscape.

E.Small, Secretary and Treasurer.

East

The east section held its annual dinner-dance at Turnhouse Golf Club. Over 70 members and guests were present. Thanks go to Turnhouse for the hospitality and to club-master John Leeburn for the first-class meal. Turnhouse has been provisionally booked for 1985 and tickets are expected to go quickly, so start saving!

The section held its AGM by kind permission of Kingsknowe Golf Club. The important changes are that J.Paton has become chairman and J.Easton vice-chairman. Ronnie Bunting has stepped down as chairman after two years.

Our thanks go to Ronnie for his excellent service on the committee and to all the other committee members who give up their spare time to ensure that the section runs smoothly.

The majority of members fail to see just what goes on behind the scenes

and how much time and effort has to be put in by committee members. The easiest thing to do in this day and age is to criticise.

Congratulations go to Ronnie Blair, ex-foreman at Murrayfield, on his appointment as head greenkeeper at Thornton Golf Club in Fife. The section wishes him well in his post and he assures me that he will stay a member of the east section. Ronnie served his time under Jim Neilson and is the son of the east section secretary.

Congratulations also go to Stuart Greenwood and his wife Agnes on the birth of a daughter just before the New Year! I understand mother and child are well.

Negotiations are under way to hold the spring outing in the Borders. Our friends from Peebles, George Stavert and Jimmy McCulloch, who very seldom miss an outing no matter where it is, have given the invitation. Although we have still to negotiate this with the local authorities, there are high hopes.

I am sure George will do everything in his power to arrange this.

Subscriptions are now overdue, so if anyone hasn't paid yet, do so now before your name is taken off the mailing list for the magazine, etc. Subs this year are £14.

The section is on the look-out for some kind member of the trade to offer a trophy to be played for at the autumn tournament. At present, the section has only four trophies and they are played for in the spring.

If anyone knows a company that would like to donate a trophy, please get in touch with me.

I would also be glad to hear from any member who has relevant news for the magazine, as we are always short of material. It doesn't matter how brief the story is.

William Blair, Section Secretary.

