

## All write now

*New editor Chris Boiling launches an award scheme to encourage you to contribute to your magazine.*

THE PHOTO on this month's cover was taken by a greenkeeper. The crossword is compiled by a greenkeeper. There are a couple of articles by greenkeepers. But I want more.

This is your magazine, so why don't you all make it your goal to contribute at least one article, idea, letter, photo or news story this year. That will give me more time out of the office, so I can come and sample your courses.

To encourage you I'm launching two new awards this issue – the Greenkeeper International Writer of the Year Award and the Greenkeeper International Photographer of the Year contest. Any greenkeeper who has a word or image published in the magazine this year will be eligible.

As well as a trophy there will be a prize, but I've only just started in this job so I haven't had time to source something suitable. But it will be worth winning.

The winners will be selected by the magazine sub-committee and the work of all the shortlisted candidates will be exhibited at the 1995 BTME – for all your colleagues to admire.

The American magazine Golf Course Management runs its own editorial awards and the winner, Thomas Christy, a golf course superintendent in Oregon, collected his prize at this month's International Golf Course Conference and Show in Dallas.

His winning article was called 'Redesigning Equipment Washdown Pads'. In it, Christy described an innovative system that he devised for wash water containment and recycling. The system was inspired by regulations put into effect by the federal Clean Water Act and local water-use restrictions enacted as a consequence of the Western drought. And I hope it has inspired you. I shall look forward to hearing from you ALL at some point this year.

# Working towards the next millenium

In the course of this column I will report from time to time on Board of Management matters and I believe a particularly important decision was taken at the recent December meeting. 1994 has been earmarked for the preparation of a five year plan which will take the Association through to the second millennium. Throughout 1994 there will be the opportunity to review the workings of the Association after seven years of solid growth and achievement. Whilst the plan will be initiated from your Headquarters there will be a full consultative process through the Board of Management to Regional Boards and Section Committees and then back up through the structure. I would urge each individual member who has something to say to make his views known to his Section Committee by contacting his Section Secretary – and the earlier the better!

Apart from looking at policies and programmes to take us forward from 1995, the review will examine the structure of the Association as established through the Constitution from Board of Management through regions to sections. Changes may be necessary to the Constitution. If so they need to be well thought out and capable of standing the test of time. The Constitution is fundamental to any organisation and whilst ours has served us well during the last seven years it may well need a little fine tuning now to ensure a viable structure for the Association into the next century. There has been much discussion of late concerning the composition of the Board of Management, on how long Board members should serve and an increasing awareness of the demands made on Board members. At regional level the increasing amount of paperwork is a concern and there is a need for a uniformity of approach amongst Regional boards. In line with the Constitution sections continue

very much as independent units but this does cause variations in standards and overall administration. I wonder, after seven years, how many sections have actually formed their own bye-laws as provided for in the Constitution? There is a need for a common approach and one area which I know John Pemberton intends looking at closely in 1994 is the preparation of section accounts, still too often a loose and haphazard annual event. Many areas then to be addressed.

Apart from specifics, the benefits of such a review and the creation of a plan which can then be updated annually are many. Some



## BIGGA in focus

BY NEIL THOMAS

of you may be aware of recent problems within the structure of the Golf Course Superintendents Association of America. There the fundamental issue concerned a large organisation which was perceived to be losing touch with its members. As one GCSAA member put it '...The Board needs to know what the people in the field are doing, and the people in the field need to know what the association is doing... It's a sign of opening up for the members out in the field'. Now here we are talking about an organisation over sixty years old. By comparison we are very much at the fledgling stage. However, after making allowances for size and tradition, some comparisons are valid. I have long since been aware of the

need for BIGGA to provide within its structure the opportunity for any member to make his views known, and for that member to have the confidence that those views will be listened to, respected and, where appropriate, acted upon. With our membership now well past the 5,000 mark we need to examine the democratic processes we have in place to ensure that they will serve our members well in the future. BIGGA is a members' organisation established not for the benefit of its officers or staff but for its growing membership and it is they who must ultimately determine the future direction of the Association.

During the early months of 1994 your senior management team at Headquarters will initiate the review and five year plan. Regions and Sections should be submitting ideas for consideration as soon as possible. After consideration by the Board of Management, the initial draft will be circulated to Regions and Sections in early summer with a view to comments being forwarded to Headquarters by the beginning of September. It will be incumbent on Regions and Sections to widely canvass the views of members at section level. During the autumn period a final plan will be drawn up for approval by the Board of Management and ratification at the 1995 Annual General Meeting. It will be a year of opportunity, a chance for objectivity, a time when we can consolidate our achievements but be innovative and initiate policies and programmes which will enhance our development. If, through this exercise, we can improve our structure and administration as well as set future goals then we will be strengthening BIGGA and ensuring that greenkeepers both now and in the future will be well served by a forward-looking, professional Association. Like me, I hope that you, the members, will look forward to the challenge.



### BIGGA Staff Profile **JOHN PEMBERTON** Administration Manager

The man with day to day financial control of BIGGA's affairs is a former company accountant and computer and systems manager – with a passion for classic motorcycles! John Pemberton, who is married with one boy and two girls, owns a Triumph Bonneville which puts him on slightly firmer ground than his sporting interests when he was younger. "I was a keen oarsman in my teens and twenties," he says. "On several occasions I competed in and completed the UK's – if not the world's – longest rowing race of 21 miles from Lincoln to Boston. It involved negotiating locks by lifting the boat out of the water." John relaxes these days by "trying" to play golf, walking, squash and DIY "by necessity".