

Education officer is a high flier

BIGGA's new education officer is Kenneth Richardson.

Previously a senior training manager in the Royal Air Force, Kenneth achieved the rank of squadron leader in training and education specialisation.

With proven experience in training development, computer based training, distance learning and lecturing, he brings well developed leadership and communication skills to one of BIGGA's key posts.

Commenting on the appointment, executive director Neil Thomas said: "Kenneth brings specialist skills, knowledge and experience to the education officer post which will serve the Association well in the future and enable us to move forward progressively with education and training programmes for our members."



BIGGA
Staff
Profile

PAULINE THOMPSON
Accounts Clerk

Pauline used to swim for Yorkshire until she was 16 and this, coupled with nine years working for Barclays Bank, means she's never out of her depth at the sharp end of BIGGA's computerised accounting system. During the day, Pauline processes sales and purchase invoices and after work it's back to the swimming pool with her 12 year old daughter, teaching life saving techniques.



An information pack for the 1995 BIGGA Turf Management Exhibition is now

available. All you need to know about how to exhibit at the industry's premier event is explained. For a copy, contact Louise Lunn at BIGGA HQ on 0347 838581.

A privilege under threat?

One issue which the Association will need to address this year is the use of membership cards for seeking courtesy of the golf course. This is a privilege extended only to full greenkeeper members who are reminded on the reverse of their membership cards of the etiquette involved. These cards are most certainly not a passport to free golf and they need to be used both sensitively and conservatively. The vast majority of BIGGA's greenkeeper members respect the privilege of obtaining courtesy of the golf course and benefit greatly from the opportunity not only to play golf but to experience other golf courses in many varied conditions, thereby enhancing their own knowledge and expertise. Long may this continue but some notes of caution need to be struck. Whilst we are talking of a small minority, there is increasing evidence of misuse of cards not only by greenkeepers seeking to use cards over frequently and for purely golfing purposes, but by members in categories of membership other than full greenkeeper, who, quite simply, are not entitled to seek courtesy of the golf course.

It is essential that members becoming aware of card misuse report such instances to Headquarters in order that appropriate action be taken. Turning a blind eye will achieve nothing other than I suspect an increasing reluctance by golf clubs to grant courtesy. During the course of BIGGA's review this year we shall be looking to tighten our procedures still further to protect this privilege and ensure the continued cooperation of the many golf clubs across the country who welcome our members onto their golf courses.

Appeal for books

The news of an R & A grant of £10,000 to establish an Association library is to be warmly welcomed. In the years ahead we will have the chance to establish the history of greenkeeping within our own Headquarters and provide a service to members both when they are attending Aldwark Manor on courses or visiting and also in operating a lend and return service. So far so good but no-one should pretend that there is a great avalanche of books waiting to descend on Aldwark Manor. Far from it. Indeed since 1987 I have been singularly unimpressed by the numbers of books available to greenkeepers. The profession is not rich in its literature particularly on this side of the Atlantic.

Yet if BIGGA is not prepared to make a start in locating and initiating such literature the profession will continue to bemoan the lack of a vital resource in disseminating information and enhancing the learning process. So whilst an authentic library is not going to appear overnight, I would urge our readers to blow away the attic dust and see if they can discover some long lost literary masterpieces which might be better located at BIGGA Headquarters.

Book donations, loans or sales will all be welcomed and this library will only be a success if there are concerted moves within the membership to support it. Let's be hearing from you. In thanking the R & A for this grant, we thank them not only for the finance



BIGGA in focus

BY NEIL THOMAS

involved but also throughout the last seven years for their steadfast and ongoing support of BIGGA. The R & A was instrumental in the formation of BIGGA and it continues to actively support our growth and development acknowledging the need for a strong greenkeepers' association. The R & A welcomes the improved education and training opportunities now available for greenkeepers and the enhancement of the status of those working in the profession as the evidence of better maintained and quality golf courses becomes clearer with each passing year.

Your views wanted

In the February issue of 'Greenkeeper International', I wrote of your Board of Management's decision to implement a review and prepare a five year plan. Regions and Sections were invited to contribute to this process and to canvass the views of members at section level. I recently spoke with a Section Secretary who considered it would be impossible for his section to comment on the structure and workings of the Association in its entirety. I could not

agree more. Indeed this was never the intention in implementing the review. Of necessity much of the work entailed has to be undertaken by your duly appointed professional staff who will report in the first instance to the Board of Management. There will then be circulation of an initial draft to Regions and Sections in the early summer for comments to be forwarded by the beginning of September. It is during the autumn that the final plan will be drawn up for approval by the Board of Management and ratification at the 1995 Annual General Meeting. However, as of now and throughout the process, any member either independently or through his section has the opportunity to put forward a view. Views can be submitted either individually, by sections or by regions. You may wish to see a change in procedure or policy at section, region or national level. If so, please let us know. If you have a concern communicate it to Headquarters. Members should not see this as an intimidating or onerous task - it was never meant to be and the administrative details will fall on your Headquarters office. This exercise should not be viewed as an attempt to restructure the Association. We would not be the growing and successful organisation we are today if our structure and policies were fundamentally unsound. Essentially we are seeing where the existing structure and policies can be improved and strengthened. Viewed in this context I hope that many members will feel able to make a contribution to the present exercise.

With regret...

In this issue you will read of the passing of John Shildrick. I first had the privilege of meeting John when the Association commenced its activities at the Sports Turf Research Institute in Bingley late in 1987. Shortly after in 1988, John retired from the STRI and became Chief Executive of the National Turfgrass Council. In that capacity he continued to work closely with BIGGA. Like many others I had a tremendous respect for John - his knowledge, his grasp of detail and his abiding wish to see the industry develop and prosper. At all times, often under acute pressure, he remained friendly, approachable, compellingly industrious and willing to offer advice and guidance. Within the Association as elsewhere in the industry, he will be sadly missed.