

As I see it...

BY DEAN CLEAVER
BIGGA CHAIRMAN

This has been a busy month for me involving trips to Switzerland, Scotland and France. It just hasn't slowed down since my year began and I've enjoyed so much wonderful hospitality I've put on half a stone since January!

My trip to Switzerland was to represent FEGGA at the International Greenkeepers Association Conference in Interlachen. The IGA consists of German, Swiss and Austrian greenkeepers and it is possible that the Association will be wound up with the members putting their support behind FEGGA.

It was a wonderful trip and I was able to visit Gstaad, the exclusive ski resort, and also went up in the cable car which featured in the fight seen in the James Bond film *On her Majesty's Secret Service*. Some of the views were just unbelievable.

The downside of being in Switzerland was that I missed the Toro/PGA European Tour Student Greenkeeper of the Year final and I must thank Pat Murphy for standing in for me. Congratulations to all the finalists and, in particular, Fintan Brennan who won the title. One of my assistants, Noel Greene was runner-up along with John Bachelor from Mendip Spring GC. I am really proud of Noel and he's quite a celebrity at the golf club at the moment.

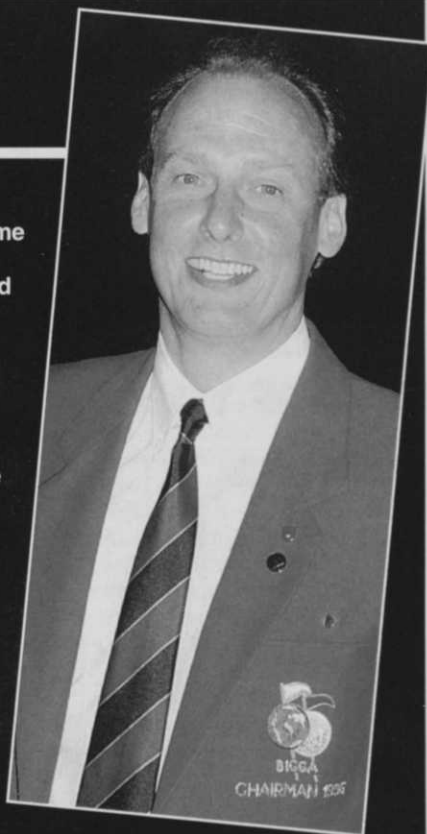
Returning from Switzerland it was straight on to the Midland Seminar where it was nice to take my staff along with me. It would have been good to have seen more people there but those who did attend got quite a bit out of the day.

I also had the chance to attend Scotsturf for a day. It was an excellent exhibition and with spending some time on the BIGGA stand it was a good opportunity to see a lot of old friends again.

The latest FEGGA meeting was held in Bordeaux and although a French air strike caused a few travel problems for some of those attending it was an extremely successful meeting. Everything is moving a lot faster than anyone thought it would and there will be much to report at the Federation's AGM during Harrogate.

I also attended the 10th anniversary dinner of the French Greenkeepers Association held in the function room of the wine Mecca Chateau Lafitte, which was quite an experience... Particularly as everyone complained about the wine! It was red but served chilled and there were even mentions about it in the speeches.

It just remains for me to wish everyone a Merry Christmas and a wonderfully prosperous New Year.



NEWS



The St Catherine's Hospice in Crawley West Sussex benefited to the tune of £1,342.50 thanks to the efforts of the Sussex and Surrey Section members and patrons at the BIGGA Charity Day at Birch Grove.

The companies involved in the day were White Horse Contractors, Watermation, Banks Horticultural Products, Donald Steel and Co Ltd, Colas and CJ Collins

Construction Ltd and the cheque was presented to St Catherine's by Raymond Day, Chairman of Sussex Section. It is hoped that the event will be repeated next year. For the record Surrey won the Inter County Charity Cup.

● Picture shows Ray Day presenting the cheque to Jane Howard, Community Fund Raiser and Susan Town, Fund Raising and Communications Manager.

SISIS stalwart set to retire after 36 years



The retirement of Arthur Harrison, Sales Director, this month will indeed be the "end of an era" as he is the last person still

with SISIS who worked at the original factory in Cheadle, Cheshire.

Arthur joined the company in March 1960 at the start of an important decade for SISIS, seeing the first forays into export. By 1974 SISIS were well established in Europe and Scandinavia and it was time to look further afield. Arthur Harrison elected to go to Japan, Hong Kong and Singapore on a trade mission sponsored by the Manchester Chamber of Commerce. Since that time he has taken a special interest in the company's dealings in the Far East

and Japan is still one of SISIS' major markets.

In his 36 years at SISIS, Arthur has seen many changes, including three factory moves and led the sales team at literally hundreds of exhibitions all over the world.

Even in retirement Arthur has no plans to settle into his armchair. He and his wife Marie have organised the garden to withstand long periods of absence for the various overseas trips they are planning and caravan jaunts in the UK. They will also be able to see more of their three grandchildren.

At the 1996 SALTEX exhibition, a "farewell" dinner party was attended by SISIS export distributors from Hong Kong, Australia, Canada, Sweden, Eire, Northern Ireland, Netherlands, Germany, and USA.