

The sad loss of a greenkeeper's friend

Immediate Past Chairman, Gordon Child, reflects on the debt greenkeeping owes Fred Hawtree, who died recently.

The 22nd of September 2000 saw the passing of one of the best-known men in golf. It was the day Fred Hawtree died. Fred, like his father before him, was a great ambassador of golf, as an architect. They were looked upon as the best in the business, a mantle that now passes to son Martin.

It is their input and support of greenkeeping, which I want to talk about. Fred's father was known as FG, and was the founder of the BGGGA back in 1912, and along with Beatrice, his wife, administered the Association affairs from their offices in Woodstock. He later became the second President, following his great friend Lord Riddell, who as Chairman of the News of the World presented the trophy that we still play for today.

Fred junior, or FW, followed his father in his support of greenkeeping. He edited the BGGGA magazines for many years and wrote regular columns, as well as being our President. I always think Fred's feeling for greenkeepers showed in everything he did, the way he designed his courses, always took in greenkeeping and maintenance prob-



Fred receives his honorary membership flanked by Gordon Child; wife, Mary; Marion Child and son, Martin

lems, and in a way, many would do well to copy today. Fred never missed an opportunity to promote greenkeeping, giving us a mention in many of his books and papers produced over the years. He travelled all over the UK giving talks to sections or BGGGA, and later BIGGA, never charging a penny for expenses.

It was an honour to be counted as one of his many friends, and Marion and I knew him as Uncle Fred. I will always recall that it was Fred and Mary, his dear wife, who were having dinner with us when I got a call to say that the three Associations had at last agreed to come together to form BIGGA. The approval on Fred's face said it all. He loved to talk about golf and greenkeeping, and

his wonderful collection of golf artefacts. They show his lifelong love affair with the game, indeed a love affair in which he was so generous, that it makes us realise just how little we contribute. My final thoughts of Fred are of when Marion and I travelled to Woodstock on the 28th June last year, when I as your Chairman, presented him with his Honorary Life Membership of BIGGA. Fred was absolutely delighted.

Fred is a great loss to us all and he will be sadly missed. We should be very grateful for everything he represented. The loss will be even greater for Mary and the family, but at least he was spared until after their Diamond Wedding.

Grass breeders accelerate pace of innovation

New gene mapping technology is helping plant breeders accelerate traditional 'back crossing' techniques and remove much of the trial and error involved in conventional turfgrass breeding methods.

That was the message delivered to turf care professionals from all sectors of the amenity industry at a recent turfgrass breeding open day organised by British Seed Houses at the Institute of Grassland and Environmental Research (IGER).

"Thanks to the latest gene marker technology, we can now identify desirable turfgrass characteristics more quickly and precisely. This means the pace of innovation in the turfgrass industry is set to accelerate of the next few years," said IGER turfgrass breeder Dr Danny Thorogood.

The IGER turfgrass breeding programme - funded by British Seed Houses since 1987 - has already produced two perennial rye grasses and thanks to new technology, more new rye grass, fescue and bent cultivars will start to emerge shortly.

"Both AberElf and AberImp are rated in a league of their own by the STRI in terms of tolerance to close mowing," Danny Thorogood said.

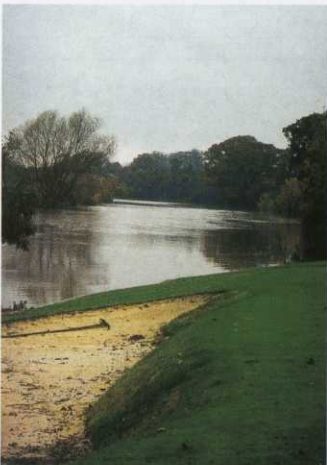
"AberImp in particular can tolerate being mown to 8mm or less and still maintains complete green cover with unparalleled shoot density.

"These attributes make the varieties good choices for cricket pitches and other closely-mown turf areas. In fact, AberImp is the ideal choice because it has 10% higher summer shoot density under 8mm mowing than any other commercially available rye grass variety," Dr Thorogood pointed out.

Visitors also heard that IGER scientists are now looking at other development issues. For example, turf professionals are demanding low maintenance, sustainable grasses that look good under a variety of environmental conditions.

Consequently, the IGER programme is now combining recognised sportsgrass requirements such as wear tolerance, fineness of leaf and shoot density with aesthetic traits such as colour retention; be this over winter, during drought or under low nitrogen fertiliser regimes.

Flooding causes havoc at Aldwark Manor



The scale of the recent flooding can be illustrated by the affect it had on Aldwark Manor Golf Club, home of BIGGA HOUSE. The joint 4th and 14th fairways looked like a potential venue for the World Angling Championships while the depth can be seen by how little of the 4th pin is visible. If you have any similar photographs of the extent of the flooding on your course, or the damage which was left after it went down please feel free to send them to the magazine to share with your fellow greenkeepers.

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IOG invites grant applications

The IOG is inviting applications for grants following the creation of a fund to help education and research within the industry, with particular emphasis on turf management. Applications, within GB&I, can be made by individuals or organisations and money made to fund special projects providing the benefit to the industry can be demonstrated.

Applicants should obtain an application form from IOG Head Office at Milton Keynes Tel: 01908 312511.

New appointments at Rolawn

Paul Dawson has been appointed Operations Director of Rolawn, having worked for the past year as Corporate Development Manager. Prior to that he spent the previous five years with the Shropshire Group.

He now turns his attention to developing and expanding Rolawn's 3000 acres of turf production. He will use his skills and experience to further the expansion and development of Rolawn's business. Already the main instigator of the new bulk products recently added to the Rolawn product range (Topsoil and Soil Conditioner) Paul will now focus the overall level of service provided by Rolawn to its customers and the operational efficiency of the business.

Andrew Langford, 32, has joined the company as Marketing Manager. Andrew, who will be based at the company's Head Office, Elvington near York, joins the company from Express Dairies Plc where he was Marketing Manager for three years, responsible for supporting household doorstep deliveries, national accounts and development of a foodservice business.

New premises are just the Tonick

Tonick Watering, established in Worthing in 1995 is moving to spacious new factory and offices in South Wales. Having outgrown the existing 1200 square feet premises, the company is moving to a 4000 square feet factory on a 17 acre site.

Hayter founder passes away

Douglas Hayter, founder of the renowned lawnmower manufacturing company which bears his name, has died at his home in Old Harlow at the age of 86.

After the Second World War, during which he had been a member of the Home Guard he directed his energies into timber built, temporary homes and agricultural machinery, both of which were treated at the time as priority occupations. Almost by chance, to clear the unwanted growth between his timber drying sheds, he developed the product that was to be his lasting monument - the rotary lawnmower.

Among his proudest personal achievements was the granting of a Royal Warrant in his name for the supply of agricultural machinery to HM the Queen.

He retired from business when he sold his company in 1985 to FH Tomkins plc. It is a fitting legacy to the foundations he laid that the company continues to prosper, offering employment to over 200 people locally and having a sphere of influence in many parts of the world. It is ironic that, only three weeks before his death, the company was sold into foreign ownership.

He is survived by his wife, Susan and by his daughter from his first marriage, Janet.

Northern Ireland Conference success

The Inaugural Northern Ireland Education Conference proved to be a major success. Following the coming together at the end of 1999 of our two Northern Ireland Sections to form one strong Section for the new millennium, this Conference was very much a yardstick for measuring the progress of BIGGA in Northern Ireland.

The occasion was a sell-out at Greenmount College in Antrim and I was pleased that we were able to provide a platform of speakers which has probably been unsurpassed in BIGGA's conference history. The speakers provided a broad spectrum of expertise and interest across the greenkeeping profession. Each session was stimulating and often controversial providing for excellent questions and subsequent debate. The speakers gave freely of their time despite heavy professional commitments and our appreciation is due to David Garland, Chris Kennedy, David McIndoe, John Quinn MG, Frank Ainsworth, Jim Arthur, Gordon Child and Peter Jones for ensuring a conference which delegates will look back upon as a memorable experience.

Not everything goes according to plan at such conferences. Triumph and disaster can go hand in hand. On this occasion two of our illustrious speakers were flying into Belfast on the morning of the Conference only to arrive at the local airport and find that their tickets were dated for the



previous day. Fortunately our intrepid travellers stood their ground and cancellations enabled them to board a flight. Had they failed, a decimated programme would hardly have been ideal for our Northern Ireland Section in terms of adverse reaction and publicity gained.

These problems can so easily arise and it does no harm to be reminded now and again of how vital the checking procedures are to the successful outcome of an event. BTME draws near the organisation of which is both complex and demanding. No doubt there will be problems along the way but if the week runs smoothly then the planning and organisation will have achieved its ends and staff will

breathe freely once more!

In Northern Ireland our thanks are particularly due to Graham Wylie and Frank Ainsworth for their input to the Conference and provision of excellent facilities, to Greenmount College for hosting the event and not least to the sponsors Evergreen Lawns, Golfing Union of Ireland, Graham Prosser - Tacit, Hortasoils Ltd, John Lindsay Professional Sports Turf, Laird Grass Machinery, Lely Ireland Ltd and Turf Care Irrigation Ltd. I am reliably informed that plans are underway to make this a biennial event. If so, I strongly recommend early booking of places next time around.

Neil Thomas

Avoncrop play host to distributors

Avoncrop hosted the 6th annual European Golf Distributors Conference in Bristol over four days at the end of October.

Members gathered from all over Europe including delegates from Holland, Ireland, Italy, Portugal, Scotland, Spain and Sweden.

The group consists of distributor principals who all service the turf and amenity markets within their respective countries. The objectives of the group are to exchange information and ideas.

This millennium meeting proved very successful and areas of discussion included the dynamic market trends that are occurring across Europe. New products and technologies were also discussed, presentations from members on new developments proved very interesting, each of the group may well have potential new products to take back to their own markets.

Commitment to continue this useful exchange of ideas and market trends was made and next year's conference is to be hosted by Portugal.



Elliott Small presents Max Hedingham, Ashton & LGA GC, Preston, with the Whitelaw Bowl at the Whitelaw Cup played at Penrith recently. Watching on is Course Care, Managing Director, John Wood, the competition sponsor.

Can you help?

Waterbridge Golf Course, near Crediton, in Devon, is currently looking for spare parts for a SISIS Hydromain 17 and 20 models. If you have a machine surplus to your requirements please contact Martin Petherick Tel: 01363 85711 or golf@waterbridge.fsbusiness.co.uk

New online venture for Sovereign Turf

Sovereign Turf has launched its new website www.sovereignturf.com - which includes webpages in English, French, German and Spanish.

"These pages should be of particular interest to European golf greenkeepers and Course Managers," said Steve Williams, Sales Manager at Sovereign, because they have an overview of the turf operation in their own language.

Turf currently available is listed and the quality section posts up the turf declaration. This shows the results of the TGA quality assessment for the fields being harvested.

Sad passing of Mike Upton

Mike Upton, who recently joined Green Pride to cover the East Midlands, has died after a short illness.

"Ever cheerful and conscientious he will be greatly missed by customers and colleagues alike. Our sincere condolences go out to his family," said Duncan Bell, of Green Pride.