

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.

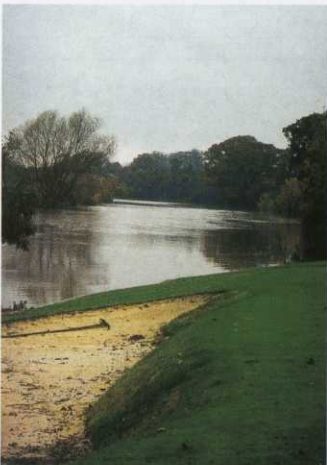
"AberImp in particular can tolerate being mown to 8mm or less and still maintains complete green cover with unparalleled shoot density.

"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.

Royal Inverdivot GC...

www.tonyhusband.co.uk



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.