

Feature listing from December '97

January '98: FEGGA Conference; Buying Power Equipment; Elmwood GC; Mobile Phones; Traffic Management; Spraying; Environment

February '98: BTME Review; Overseeding; Royal Mid Surrey GC; Drainage; Thatch

March '98: Trees, Golf Course Accessories, News from GCSAA, Leamington & County GC, Trevor Smith's BTME Talk

April '98: Gleneagles Hotel, Compact Tractors, Environment, Protective clothing, Rain bird, Internet

May '98: Greens Mowers, Suspended Water Table Greens, Seeds, Letham Grange Resort, Charterhouse profile, Security and BIGGA's Fund Raising Campaign

June '98: Interview with Nick Park, Earthworm special, ATVs, Royal Porthcawl, Grinding

July '98: Aeration, Royal Birkdale preview, The importance of research, Architecture

August '98: Mill Ride, Fescue, Blowers, Textron, Open Review, Nematodes, Training

September '98: Nine holers - Tolladine and Fingle Glen, Turf, Steve Clement profile, Drainage, World Scientific Congress report

October '98: Saltex Review, BIGGA Retrospective, Stirling GC, Toro Awards Preview, Tree grants

November '98: Royal Opening, Ramside Hall GC, Gang Mowers, Hayter International report, Irrigation Systems

December '98: Toro Awards, Environment Awards, The Appliance of Science, Engines, Architects, BTME Preview

January '99: Pesticide Usage, Life in Colorado, Lyschott Heath GC, Worm Research, Stylo Matchmaker profile, Temporary Greens

February '99: Westerham GC; R&A questionnaire results; Finland; grass cutting; BTME99 Review; Bernhard and Co

March '99: Loch Lomond, Worm update, GrassRoots, Softspikes, Maintenance facilities, Environment review, Architecture

April '99: Carden Park, Telecommunications, Water Management, Rolawn, Seeds

May '99: Security, Bude and North Cornwall GC, Spraying Regulations, Jim Arthur, The Acid Theory, Amenity Technology profile

June '99: Thorpeness GC, Millennium Bug Busting, Irrigation, Scotts profile, Company adaptability

July '99: Carnoustie, Golf Course Furniture, Spike Research, Toro profile, BIGGA Silent Auction

August '99: Viscount Whitelaw tribute; Open review; Merrist Wood; Saltex preview; Turf; Trees; Grass Cutting; BIGGA Golf Day review; Redexim profile

September '99: Slaley Hall; Tyres; Spotlight on Thatch; Elmwood College Awards; National Championship preview

October '99: The Manor House, Castle Combe; Aeration; Saltex review; Mycorrhizas; Toro Award preview

November '99: Sir Michael Bonallack interview; The Pines GC; Oil; Bunkers; National Championship review

December '99: Agronomy; Security; Environment Competition Winner; Toro Award Winners



A wealth of experience



In November I visited Mentmore Golf & Country Club for the Midlands Region Seminar, which was the last for Peter Larter who is leaving his post as Midland Administrator, to manage a family business. Peter has been a very popular man who has worked hard for the Region and will be badly missed. The seminar was very good and well organised. My only problem was getting home after. I ran into train congestion, having to pass by Wembley at the same time as the Scots were trying to get there for the match with England.

The following week I attended the FEGGA Conference in Fuengirola, Spain, which started slowly but came to life on the second day with Jonathan Smith's presentation on the Ecology Charter for golf clubs in Scotland. This was followed by a report given by Joe Bedford, as a FEGGA observer, on the Committed to Green Conference held the week before at Valderrama. The report provoked a long discussion as FEGGA had been asked to endorse the Valderrama Declaration on Committed to Green. All 22 member Associations firmly rejected any endorsement on the following grounds.

1) There were no European Greenkeepers invited to take part in the programme despite the fact greenkeepers are the ones who will implement any such agreement.

2) The whole programme was American-dominated with many Superintendents taking part as if the same laws of the land apply here as in the States.

3) We were suspicious of the real motives of running Committed to Green.

Greenkeepers in the UK have a long history of concern and involvement in conservation on our courses and we don't need some jumped up do gooders telling us what to do. We have men like Bob Taylor, from the STRI, and Jonathan Smith, of the Scottish Golf Course Wildlife Trust, to give us all the guidance we need and within the appropriate laws.

This is my last column as your Chairman before handing over to Elliot at the AGM. It has been a wonderful experience for me, meeting and talking to so many members and friends on my trips around the country. But one occasion stands out for so many reasons, that was the opening of BIGGA HOUSE. It was my most nervous time for introducing His Royal Highness The Duke of York. It was also very fitting to have Viscount Whitelaw, our President for ten years, there for the last time and Sir Michael Bonallack, who we had already approached to take over when he was able to say a few words. It was a day we had waited for and we at last had somewhere to call home. The home of greenkeeping in the United Kingdom where we could all meet and our staff could work in pleasant surroundings.

There are so many other occasions that will live with me forever. The Thanksgiving Service for Viscount Whitelaw in London, the peace mission to Ireland to meet Iain, Joe and Tracy from the GCSAI with Elliot and Neil, which ended with both sides on very friendly terms, the keynote speech of Frank Dick OBE at the BTME 99. I had never seen so many greenkeepers transfixed for so long. There was the Hayter International Cup in Atlanta, and for

those who took part I am sure it will be remembered for a very long time.

It was great to meet our Canadian friends and cement the relationship between the two Associations. All these occasions were very moving experiences and I will always look back with pride and enjoyment on the many trips representing the Association.

I would like to thank you all for the way you welcomed me at events around the regions and for giving me the opportunity to be your Chairman. My grateful thanks to all our staff, they have worked hard to put greenkeepers where we are today and on a personal note, for all the help and support they have given me throughout my two years. Finally, to my wife Marion who has put up with all my travelling and for doing all my typing and office work.

I have just been given the sad news that a dear friend, Harry Diamond, has passed away. Harry was a highly respected man, golfer and greenkeeper. He served on the National Board up to 1996 and sat on the Review Body, representing Scotland, which reformed the Constitution and Rules of BIGGA in 1995/96. There are many who will have known Harry longer than me, particularly in Scotland, and they don't need me to tell them of his qualities. He was larger than life and a good friend who will be missed by all who knew him. All our sympathy at this time must be with Jess, his wife and family for their sad loss.

It is a sad note on which to end my final column, but that was Harry, he always wanted the last word.

Gordon Child
BIGGA Chairman