



Welcome

MEMORIES ARE SHORT

If you are anything like me you are much too busy dealing with the here and now to have any time left to look back. I say this because if we did I'm sure we'd be shocked at what we put ourselves through, and what we put up with, in previous lives.

I can think of extended periods in the last dozen years when I've worked away from home, living in rented or B&B accommodation through the week, eating less than wholesomely and suffering the consequences of a poorly sprung mattress.

Financially it was crippling and it was compounded by a long drive home on a Friday evening, followed by an early rise and the reverse journey on the Monday. But the thing is I coped and had some very happy times in what were less than perfect circumstances.

The reason I mention it is that there are times now, when stuck in a traffic jam on my relatively short journey home, or I've forgotten to put the Chablis in the fridge that morning, that I think I'm the unluckiest bloke on the globe. The old me would have scoffed at such a lily-livered approach to life.

It's the same with BIGGA as an Association. I can recall in the mid-90s climbing the stairs to my attic office in the old rented building and having to charge down stairs again every time I wanted to print something off my computer or send a fax – no email in those days.

Nowadays we are in the superbly appointed BIGGA HOUSE, and the Editorial department has grown to incorporate an Assistant Editor which makes editing the magazine far less of a seat of the pants operation. Illnesses don't have to be postponed until an appropriate time slot becomes available any more.

Back then BTME had already established itself as a superb event, but compared to now it was a fraction of the size and the busiest day was quieter than the quietest day nowadays.

BIGGA was seen in some quarters as very much as a young upstart in the world of golf administration. Nowadays we punch our weight, have a voice within the game in the UK and talk with other organisations on a regular basis on matters of shared interest.

On a personal level I'm sure many of you would find the same if you thought back. I'm not saying it would be as stark as, "Remember when we weren't even allowed in the clubhouse", although for some of you it may be the case, but there will be quite a number of improvements to your working life which have been introduced in recent times. Some of these will have been down to health and safety legislation but many will have come about as a result of your improved status within the club.

As I say, it does pay to think back on occasions, not just to recall how much we were capable of tolerating, but also to show just how much our lives have improved over the years.

Scott MacCallum
Editor

OLD COURSE VOTED NUMBER ONE

The Old Course at St. Andrews has been awarded the accolade of the best golf course in Britain and Ireland by Golf Monthly magazine.

The panel of judges, composed of golf writers, administrators, course designers and photographers, assessed over 500 courses and rated them according to the challenge presented to players, course condition, visual appeal and off-course facilities.

"It is only fitting that the Old Course stands on top of the pile as it prepares to host the Open once again in 2005," commented Jane Carter, Editor of Golf Monthly. "The off-course facilities for visitors

have improved out of all recognition at the Home of Golf in recent years and there really is no finer place to play."

In a further honour to St Andrews Links, the 107 year-old New Course was voted number 34 in the rankings.

"We are delighted to receive this recognition from so prestigious a source," said Alan McGregor, General Manager of St Andrews Links Trust. "All our courses, including the Old, are open to the public and clearly remain a favourite with golfers, even after 600 years of history and with so much high quality competition out there today."

75 NOT OUT

The STRI celebrated their 75th anniversary with an open day and dinner for invited guests last month.

During the day the Bingley headquarters, the trial grounds and the Bingley St Ives Golf Club played host to 13 "zones" where STRI staff gave demonstrations on their departments and looked forward to what can be expected in the years ahead.

The 170 guests at the evening dinner at nearby East Riddlesden Hall heard speeches from STRI President Lord Griffiths and R&A Secretary, Peter Dawson.



Dr Gordon McKillop escorts the Lady Mayoress around the demonstration area.



Denis Lawson explains his stand to Lord Griffiths in the company of Jeff Perris and David Marsh.

NOMINATIONS OPEN FOR UNSUNG HEROES

Terrain Aeration's unsung heroes Brian Payne and Tim Parker opened nominations for this year's awards as part of the STRI's 75th Birthday celebrations.

Dr Tim Lodge, Senior Agronomist and Southern Area Manager for the Institute, who hosted the proceedings, praised the awards saying that they acknowledged the hard work of ordinary groundsmen and greenkeepers that keeps the entire Turfgrass Industry moving.

"They are the absolute opposite of the self promotion that so often leads to less than ideal individuals occupying the limelight," he continued.

Dr. Lodge is one of a three man judging panel, including Gordon Child, of BIGGA, and Derek Walder, of the IOG, which will send one groundsman and one greenkeeper to the South of France next year for a week's holiday with their families.

Terrain Aeration's Unsung Hero Awards are open to all UK practising greenkeepers and groundsmen, judged by their contemporaries or clubs to regularly put in that little bit extra.

Nomination forms can be found on the pitchcare website or with Lynda Green at Terrain Aeration Tel: 01449 673783.



From the left; Brian Payne, Tim Lodge and Tim Parker open nominations for Terrain Aeration's Unsung hero Awards 2004.