

Your Letters...

Tribute to an Old Turfman

I thought he would live forever, I have a copy of his book in which he wrote: To Jack, an old friend and fellow believer. I worked with him for many years and over those years we, on occasion, disagreed.

The one thing we shared in common was the belief this game of golf is played on turf and not mud. He was of the opinion that somewhere along the line we had sacrificed a fine hardwearing turf for visual presentation; it was as simple as that.

Some of the gems of wisdom he shared over the years I am sure that many greenkeepers agree with, while possibly disagreeing with how the message was presented. Unfortunately things change, not always for the better. The demands of today's golfer, many of whom have never enjoyed the delight of playing on fine wiry grasses, and who today demand their courses should be pristine green, and they are always prepared to accept mud on the ball as long as they look good.

I always intended to give him a call and sadly never got round to it. There is no excuse for not catching up, being too busy was mine and today I regret it. I stumbled onto this poem and thought on this occasion it is very appropriate, the author is unknown to me.

*Around the corner I have a friend
In this great city that has no end,
Yet the days go by and weeks rush on,
And before I know it, a year is gone*

*And I never see my old friend's face,
For life is a swift and terrible race,
He knows I like him just as well,
As in the days when I rang his bell,
And he rang mine.*

*If, we were younger then,
And now we are busy, tired men.
Tired of playing a foolish game,
Tired of trying to make a name.*

*"Tomorrow" I say "I will call on Jim"
"Just to show that I'm thinking of him."
But tomorrow comes and tomorrow goes, and
distance between us grows and grows.*

*Around the corner! yet miles away,
"Here's a telegram sir"
"Jim died today."
And that's what we get and deserve in the end.
Around the corner, a vanished friend.*

Jack McMillan MBE, An old friend

Stress Remedy

*If you are so stressed out by your Poa,
Don't take the mower cut lower.*

*Don't go and turn on the water,
This will only lead to your slaughter.*

*Dust down your old slitters and scarifiers,
Then cancel that date with your NPK suppliers.*

*Pick up the phone and order your dressing,
For hear lies one of your blessings.*

*Then go to the back of the old seed shed,
Because that's where you'll find another one of you rescues
It's that old bag of seed called fescue.*

*Then as the golfers come to admire your swards,
Sit back and enjoy your rewards.*

*If you are looking for an answer that's heaven sent,
Well that's where Jim Arthur went.*

**Andy Peel
Bull Bay GC**

The Right Man

It is with a great deal of sadness that I heard of the passing away of Jim Arthur. I had known him for the lectures he gave and the articles he wrote for many years, as did a great deal of others in the world of greenkeeping.

In more recent years he became a particular friend, helping me when I was at a very low point in my working life. Without hesitation he helped me and gave real encouragement, just as I am sure he had to many others along the way. I am sure one of his main goals was to care deeply for the greenkeeper, be of high or low stature, he wished to see them receive a much better recognition of their status.

There can be many things written about Jim by people who are in a much better position than me to do so. It is most likely stated that we will not see his like again, which is possibly true. I would sum it up by saying Jim was simply the right man for the job at the right time.

A sad farewell from one of the many.

David Hinks

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Your Letters...

A Willing Helper

One cannot put into writing the loss of a good and helpful friend. Such a man was John Scott, Senior. He was always there to assist or just for a chat when and if he was required. I have known him to visit sick or retired greenkeepers long after most others had forgotten who, or where, they came from.

John seemed to keep tabs on everyone. If you had forgotten someone and if they required being brought to mind John was the one to get on the other side of the phone.

John was an Engineer of merit, who started his working life with ATGO at Larkball, which was near Lesmahagow, where John was born and bred. He worked out of Inverness for some years and had a great number of stories to tell about his Highland Station and the surrounding populace.

No matter where one met John he had a story to tell or a joke to pass on. If he happened to visit your golf club when you were cursing a machine that would not start, he would shove you aside and 'Hey Presto' the magic touch of the mechanic put life back into the faulty machine.

It is impossible to name all the little favours John Scott did for greenkeepers in the west of Scotland, but there are those of us who will remember him mostly at our AGM, where he would make the arrangements with his Bowling Club for a Games' Night to follow the AGM. He would see to the purchasing of Scottish Mince Pies which were heated and served halfway through these most enjoyable evenings.

John had a long drawn out illness, which he suffered bravely knowing that it was terminal. On Friday May 13, the funeral service was held at Dalnottar Crematorium overlooking the River Clyde. The Chapel was crammed full with John's relations and friends. I could not count the number of greenkeepers present whom John had touched during his working life.

He was a friend indeed who will be sadly missed. I know many greenkeepers in the west and further a field who would tell many a story in John's favour. This is the stamp of a man who took his profession very seriously while he canvassed his skills out to a few companies in Glasgow and the West of Scotland.

I know I am speaking for the whole of the greenkeeping fraternity when we send our condolences and deepest sympathies to John's wife and family in this time of their sad bereavement.

Cecil George
BIGGA Life Member

Martin Collins

Martin Collins passed away recently at the tender age of 37 and he will be sadly missed by all who knew him. Martin was a greenkeeper of 19 years, cutting his teeth at 16 years old at Woking Golf Club. He worked in Spain for a while, before joining his final club, Hershams Village Golf Club, in Surrey.

Martin made an impression wherever he went and whomever he worked with, all sang his praises highly. He was full of life, outgoing and passionate about his profession. His brother told me that Martin made greenkeeping sound like the best kept secret in the world, as he could not believe more people didn't do this wonderful job. Martin called greenkeeping a job of life, one you would want until retirement.

Many came to Martin's service, a sign of the respect he had, and he will be missed greatly.

Clive Osgood,
Regional Administrator

YOUR LETTERS ARE REQUESTED!

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