



# News from the Chief Executive

Welcome to our new Chairman, Richard Whyman, and his Vice Chairman, Billy McMillan and I look forward to working with them. I would also like to take the opportunity to thank Andy Campbell MG, who leaves the Board as Immediate Past Chairman, for his relentless energy and enthusiasm and wish him every success in his new job with the Old Course Hotel in St. Andrews.

Thanks are also due to George Barr, who is replaced on the Board by Raymond Day as the representative for the South East Region. Kerran has been an inspiration to us all with his column and I am sure that he has thrown down a difficult challenge for Richard to beat!

With over 7,000 visitors representing 31 countries there is no doubting that Harrogate Week placed BIGGA well and truly on the international scene. The event is firmly placed in the diary of those involved in either turf management or the administration of golf and many of the delegates took advantage of the diverse package of education available. Despite the perception of Harrogate being buried somewhere in North Yorkshire it still proves to be a popular venue and provides a perfect focal point for the industry.

Thankfully gone are the days of Harrogate being seen as an excuse for a trip away from home or work when the chance to have a drink (or two) was foremost in some visitor's thoughts. Last week I was proud to be associated with an industry, whose representatives and members conducted themselves and their business in a very professional manner.

The success of the week very much depends upon the support of the members and their colleagues, members or not, and I hope that many have taken inspiration from Harrogate Week 2006 and will make a determined effort to attend the event in January 2007. It is a matter of fact that due to budgetary constraints certain major companies have chosen not to exhibit in 2007 however plans are already underway at HQ for an expansion of the education while the actual configuration of the exhibition halls will be decided after the booking deadline of February 28.

I have received unprecedented support for the future from both exhibitors and visitors and together we can make Harrogate Week 2007 an event to beat all others. It was particularly heartening to see the major organisations in the golf industry working together and I intend building on this for next year.

With the prospect of spring around the corner then I and the rest of the management team at HQ will be looking at Regional and Section fixtures with a view to making visits and meeting members. I hope to renew some old acquaintances as well as make new ones and hope that members take the opportunity to support their Section.

All too often members are quick to criticise their local committee but slow to get involved themselves. Please do not be afraid to come forward and offer a little bit of help, even if on a casual basis.

Finally, for the benefit of those of you who read my column last month I can confirm that I have rejoined a club, but I have yet to tell my wife. Maybe some flowers on Valentine's Day will soften the blow!

**John Pemberton**



## ANNUAL SCOTTISH REGION CONFERENCE

The 2006 BIGGA Scottish Region Conference will take place at the Business Learning Centre, Lauder College, Dunfermline on Tuesday March 7.

This year's speakers include Ian Tomlinson, Course Manager from Rungstead Golf Club in Denmark, Richard Windows, Agronomist with the STRI in Scotland, and Euan Grant, Course Manager, Old Course St. Andrews. Other speakers include Dr Colin Fleming, Research Scientist Queens' University Belfast, Ann Murray, of the European Turf Laboratory Stirling, and finally David Snowden, European Technical Director Floratine Products.

Cost of the ticket is £32, which includes Tea/Coffee on arrival, coffee/pastry at the mid morning break and buffet lunch.

Full details and booking forms have been posted to all members and further forms can be obtained by contacting Peter J. Boyd, Regional Administrator on Tel/ Fax: 0141 616 3440 and e-mail at [pj.boyd@btinternet.com](mailto:pj.boyd@btinternet.com).

## East

A club very much in the news this month is Berwick Golf Club, known to many of you as 'Goswick'. During October 2000 the club commenced a major reconstruction of the course, with all works carried out in house by the Course Manager, George Thompson, and his team. Assisted by three part time labourers during the months of October to March the works were finally completed in 2004. The end result, which is a credit to all involved, includes four new greens, seven new championship tees, three realigned fairways and numerous new bunkers.

All materials used were sourced from the course, creating drainage ponds and wetlands areas, which are a great draw for wildlife. The prize for all their hard work arrived just before Christmas, with the announcement that Goswick has been appointed as a regional qualifier for the British Open from 2008 - 2012.

The recipients of the Patrons Awards this year were Ryan McCulloch, of Berwick Golf Club (in the news yet again), and Stuart Crawford, of North Berwick West, who each received a free trip to Harrogate Week. Hopefully their respective Course Managers will now benefit from this trip now they have returned.

During December I had a discussion with Tom Murray, Course Manager at Ratho Park. Tom is heavily involved with the Scottish Environment Group (SGEG for short), who runs a Golf Bag holder scheme. This scheme involves a number of key people of whom Tom is one, keeping a library of books and ideas on environmental issues. Areas covered include information on pond construction, tree planting and creating wetland areas. This information is available for use by all greenkeepers currently in training or others looking to improve their course's environmental potential. For further information Tom can be contacted by email on [t.d.murray@blueyonder.co.uk](mailto:t.d.murray@blueyonder.co.uk) or by telephone on 07709 960163 or a full list of Bag Holders in the east area can contact Elspeth Coutts at [Elspeth.coutts@sgeg.org.uk](mailto:Elspeth.coutts@sgeg.org.uk).

Finally, belated congratulations to Ian Kinlay, Head Greenkeeper at The Glen Golf Club, for being included in the BIGGA Delegation of 10, which is Atlanta bound in February to take in the GCSAA Golf Industry Show courtesy of Bernhard & Co. Hopefully on his return Ian can be persuaded to write a few lines on his trip for this column.

Until next month  
Mike Dooner

## North

New members to the North Section this month are Dane Macpherson, Trainee Greenkeeper, Spey Valley GC; Andrew Aitken, Greenkeeper, Spey Valley GC; Barry Campbell, Greenkeeper, Spey Valley GC. Spey Valley Golf Club is the new course in Aviemore, which is attached to the Macdonald Hotel Group. They are working under Bob Mackay, who is the Course Manager.

Robert Patterson

## West

Welcome to this month's report. I hope everyone has had an enjoyable Christmas and all the best for 2006. During November we held our annual night out at the Studio in Glasgow. There were approximately 45 in attendance, once again it was a