



## News from the Chief Executive

**In early July the telephone system at BIGGA House will be updated to include an automated answering service together with a host of other features that are now possible, thanks to the wonders of modern science. Love them or hate them such systems have become a part of every day life and for the Association it presents an opportunity to make some substantial savings. Callers will be offered a short menu of options, one of which will be to speak to an operator for help. The financial gain comes as a result of the changes in jobs for Rachael and Brad who were originally employed in reception. Their original posts become redundant and their non-telephone duties will be absorbed elsewhere in the office. Brad has accepted the position of Membership Services Assistant and Rachael will become Sami's assistant in the Education Department, both of these are replacement jobs and not new ones.**

There seems to be a great deal of interest, debate and speculation regarding BIGGA's talks with the IOG. I can only repeat my earlier comments, stressing that it is not a 'done deal' and that any firm proposals will have to be approved by the members of both organisations. How this will take place, if we get that far, has yet to be determined. One solution, and arguably the fairest, may be by an independently controlled postal ballot. We are a long way off that stage and I cannot help but feel that some of the Chinese whispers are being blown up out of all proportion. If any member wishes more information or clarification on a matter then I suggest that they contact me direct by telephone, letter, email or in person. Please do not expect me to enter into a loaded debate on a public bulletin board somewhere.

I often see it stated that BIGGA is at a crossroads. Quite frankly I do not know a time when it has not been at a crossroads. The journey since it's formation in 1987 has been far from easy however I would like to think that the greenkeeping industry, and those employed in it, has benefited as a result of the Association's activities and will continue to do so.

I finish with two thought provoking extracts:

'Most of us find change uncomfortable, if not traumatic; yet change can be both exhilarating and desirable. Change tests our convictions and calls into question our intentions and aspirations, clearing a path for growth. It always requires that we make choices - to choose between a reactive and anticipatory course, between being good and doing good, and between suffering change and causing change. The resulting decisions shape our life and how we look at it.' Clement Mok, Communication Arts.

'Are you a professional? How you look, talk, write, act and work determines whether you are a professional or an amateur.' I came across this on [www.tipsforsuccess.org](http://www.tipsforsuccess.org) which is a website worth a visit. If you have five minutes to spare take a look and see if you can relate to any of the other remarks listed there!

**John Pemberton**



### SCOTLAND – CENTRAL

On the education front we hosted two successful seminars last month. Frank Newberry delivered an excellent two-day Course on "Leadership and Management Skills", in his usual entertaining, and inspiring manner. Everyone left with some positive ideas on how to improve their personal effectiveness within their teams, and also how to develop their careers. Kevin Barker, R&A Rules Official, gave a very informative and enjoyable evening presentation, with excellent video examples to demonstrate the importance of course set up by the greenkeepers, and how it influences decisions on the rules of golf. This sparked much debate, which continued into the bar afterwards.

As Chairman of the Central Section I have to say the first golf tournament of 2007 was a great success, having 60 members of the Section playing Panmure Golf Course on a perfect sunny day says it all. On driving up to the course you are presented with a fantastic view of the course and clubhouse. My first impressions then were that we were in for a great day. I was not disappointed!

The hospitality we received from the Golf Club was first class, and many thanks go to Secretary/Manager, Charles Phillip, for taking such good care of us and for presenting the prizes at the end of the day. His warm words of appreciation to the greenkeeping profession were very encouraging. The food and the service from the staff were all first class, and the clubhouse had a fantastic atmosphere. Congratulations to Gary Nicol, the Course Manager, and his staff for presenting a great challenge for us on a fantastic course with some tricky pin positions. It was clear to all why it deserved to be chosen for the upcoming Open Qualifier. Many thanks Gary and best of luck when it comes.

Thanks also go to the BIGGA National Chairman, Billy McMillan, and the Scottish Chairman, Stuart Greenwood, for taking the time to attend our Section outing, and to Billy for his kind words of support at the prize presentation. Having the opportunity to play with them both, and Gary, on the day was very enjoyable. With Gary onside I was looking forward to some local knowledge to help us get round. I think my score tells you how well Gary knows his course. I enjoyed your company and thanks for a great day. Well played all the winners on the day with some really good scores, on such a challenging test of control. To see the winners and scores for the day and photos visit our website (see end of notes).

Billy caddied for Andy Mellon for the last two holes as a reward for finding his passport, which he had dropped on the 4th hole. Unfortunately Andy couldn't play as well as Billy could caddie. Billy's patience with Andy's wayward game was admirable. Last I heard Andy was rethinking his gorse/broom planting policy at Elmwood, and asking his team to hand in any lost balls they find.

Note to Billy: You don't need a passport to get into Scotland, (Not yet anyway), but rest assured you will always be very welcome anytime.

The Patrons play a big part in supporting us locally, and I assure you that your commitment to the Section is very much appreciated and commented on among the members. A huge thank you to all our members who made it on the day. It's you who make this Section the success it is, and it was great to see so many new faces along with