



DUKE OF EDINBURGH AWARD

On February 21, I was invited to Saint James Palace by the Duke of Edinburgh to be presented with my Duke of Edinburgh Gold Award. I dressed in my smartest clothes and my BIGGA tie and headed off for the railway station.

When I arrived at St James' I could see lots of people, all very smartly dressed and many of the ladies wearing hats waiting outside. Police horses on guard were also present.

Everything was very well organised, people were directed to different entrances according to their ticket colour. Security was very strict and you were required to produce two forms of identification, one of which had to be photo ID. Inside, everywhere was very plush and grand, deep pile carpets, oil paintings and lots of gold trimmings.

There was a band playing and we found our way to the State Room. Award winners sat on chairs to the left of the long high-ceiling room, and the one guest allowed per person sat opposite them to the right. There were a number of important dignitaries and celebrities present, speeches and then Bill Turnbull, the BBC breakfast presenter, presented us with our awards.

The Duke of Edinburgh walked through the room talking to people. He was taller than I'd expected and I thought he looked very fit and well for a man of his age. He seemed interested in people and liked to laugh. He did say, "I expect you are all going on to University" I thought certainly NOT me! The Duke asked me "Where did you go for your expedition?" I answered "The Pyrenees Mountains." Then he asked what the weather had been like. I said, "The weather in the mountains can change very quickly and we experienced the most violent storm I had ever seen while we were camping high in the mountains and I thought the tent might blow away." He then moved on.

I really enjoyed the experience and shall always remember the day as it is so different from what I usually do every day.

Stephen Burroughs
Stock Brook Manor Golf Club



A SAD GOODBYE

Hi, my name is James McCormack and I am the Head Greenkeeper at Kirriemuir Golf Club.

It is with regret that I have to inform you of the death of Mr William Ritchie, who, for over 30 years was Head Greenkeeper at Kirriemuir GC.

Willie was a past winner of the Scottish Greenkeeper of the Year Award in 1969 which was then sponsored by Fisons.

Willie looked after Kirriemuir GC from the end of Second World War until his retirement.

He was a good golfer with a handicap of three and was a past club champion of Kirriemuir on several occasions, as well as a former Club Captain and Match and Competition Secretary.

He attended greenkeeper outings and one or two greenkeepers will have a few stories to tell about Willie as he was not prone to a dram or two.

When I got the job at Kirriemuir he was still golfing at that time and was always willing to give any advice or encouragement, his favourite saying was remember you have 500 greenkeepers and one golfer and the golfer, that is you.

Thank You
James McCormack

YOUR LETTERS ARE REQUESTED!

Send to:

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