

Chairman's Column

Hello and best wishes to all BIGGA members. My name is Kenny Mackay, Director of Golf Courses and Grounds at the Belfry. I'm honoured to be your new Chairman this year. When I received the call from Billy McMillan it didn't take me long to accept as after talking to Billy I knew how important a role it would be to help develop the Association and move it forward. I think this role was made easier for me to accept while working at The Belfry as I have a large team with experienced Head Greenkeeper's and Manager's, able to conduct day-to-day business and keep the place running as normal, even though we are holding a European Tour Event in September. Obviously my schedule will change through that period in preparation. Apart from that I am looking forward to the year ahead and getting heavily involved in my BIGGA duties.



between 14000-16000 greenkeepers employed in the UK, and we currently have a membership of 6500, that's just 43%. By looking at new categories of membership and finding out why some greenkeepers are not members we hope to attract them into the Association. I believe we can make major strides in membership numbers over the coming years.

I'd like to thank Billy McMillan following his year as Chairman and his extra effort with the IOG merger talks. It shows the support from his club and its staff and how important that is in allowing him to commit a lot of extra diary time he probably did not allow for. He conducts himself in a professional manner and even though there were a lot of frustrations through the negotiations the work will not be lost, we will use information from the meetings to take the association forward. I didn't carry out many duties as Vice Chairman as Billy was able to commit to most of them. I don't think I will be in that situation for 2008 as my position will be slightly different, although I will be making every effort to attend most things. I am looking forward to working with Billy as past chairman and any tips I might need in this year will be very welcome.

I'd like to introduce the new Vice Chairman, Peter Todd, Golf Course Manager at The London Golf Club. I've known Peter since we worked together in the early 90's. I think he will contribute his management skills to the boardroom as he works at a high end golf club with members and a committee focusing on the business side. This should prove a big asset to the board and Association.

One of my ambitions this year is to continue to work on the membership sub committee to potentially increase our membership through open communication and trying to target non BIGGA members, focusing on large groups of Greenkeeping departments. I estimate there is

I would like to see the Association continue to expand and develop, moving forward through what will be a very tight financial year of trading, but with the right application and attention we will go into 2009 favourably.

Another outstanding Harrogate Week show was put together this year with lots of education and exhibitions to suit all areas of the Greenkeeping and golf associated industry. Here are some of the highlights:

Monday night - Have we got views for you? A question and answer session with Jack MacMillan, Walter Woods, Ken Siems, Andy Campbell and Stan Zonek. They gave us great insight into some of the things they have been through. We had some fantastic debate on all issues. Over 100 people attended.

Tuesday - Ribbon Cutting with Billy McMillan, Sir Michael Bonallack, John Pemberton and myself.

The show opened up to the public today. We then proceeded to the opening session where the presentation of BIGGA Awards took place followed by the keynote speakers. We recognised two new Master Greenkeepers; some CPD awards, the Environmental Awards 2007, and the lifetime achievement award to Jack MacMillan and Walter Woods - a very special moment in their careers.

We were then entertained by Spike Jefferson, Squadron Leader of the Red-Arrows. He gave us

some insight into their world and their search for perfection, team work and self criticism. A truly remarkable session, thought provoking.

Tuesday evening - Bernhard's Delegate Reception, with 10 Superintendents visiting from America and the Canadian President. It was a very pleasant evening with the awards for 10 greenkeepers, who are all off to America, sponsored by Bernhard.

Wednesday - I managed to get round some of the stands and chatted to the exhibitors, with positive feedback about the attendance numbers and the shows continued popularity. I then made my way to EGU Lunch who sponsored the day for Golf Club Secretaries with a day of education and workshops.

The AGM followed into the evening. It was well very attended with the highlight for me being Cecil George who put to the floor a vote for BIGGA to start a savings fund within the Association to contribute towards development and buying our own golf club and HQ in the future.

Wednesday evening - We attended the Past Chairman's Dinner where we recognised Billy for his contribution in 2007, and his golf club official for their joint effort in allowing him the time to commit to the role, in view of such a heavy schedule with the IOG merger meetings.

Thursday - Today was my first official duty as BIGGA Chairman to open the R&A Conference. Very well attended. 'Moving towards greater sustainability' was the subject of the day. I then moved onto the press conference for my new role as BIGGA Chairman.

Thursday evening - The banquet was very well attended. It was great to see exhibitors, greenkeepers and all roles that contribute to the golf industry mixing together. Wonderful food, atmosphere, and entertainment provided by Martin Bayfield, who gave an excellent after dinner speech on his experiences in the rugby and sporting world.

The Blues Brothers tribute band and disco wrapped up a great week of effort for everyone involved.



Kenny Mackay

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