



News from the Chief Executive

The redevelopment of the office at BIGGA HOUSE is now complete and HQ staff are now located in one large open plan office on the ground floor. Already there is an improvement in communication and everyone's approach to the job. The office move was a classic example of how good teamwork can turn a difficult job into a smooth effective operation. The staff knew what had to be done, how it was planned to be done and what was expected of them. To their credit they simply got down to working together and putting the plan into action. As with any project the key components are the planning, the management of the task, the dissemination of information and the attitude of those taking part.

In the words of the famous 19th century industrialist Andrew Carnegie, "Teamwork is the ability to work together towards a common vision. The ability to direct individual accomplishments towards organisational objectives. It is the fuel that allows common people to attain uncommon results".

I wonder how many managers effectively organise and motivate their teams and how many leave much of the teamwork to chance. The Association recognises the skill gaps that exist at management and supervisory level and it will continue to try to address this through its national and local training programme. It is important that members get the support of their employer when it comes to Learning and Development, and BIGGA will be building on its working relationship with bodies such as the GTC, the GCMA and the Home Unions.

There is no doubt in my mind that testing times are ahead for golf clubs as the over supply of facilities and the under supply of golfers starts to compete with personal finance and lifestyle and time issues. Higher expectations of standards coupled with a tightening of budgets inevitably results in stress and sadly sometimes conflict between employer and employee and occasionally between employees.

For some the way forward is perceived only to be achievable by facing up to employers through the intervention of a Trade Union. With in excess of 2,500 separate employers in the UK, each with a greenkeeping staff numbering between two or three to 20, 30 or in some cases 40+, how is being a member of a trade union going to improve on being a member of BIGGA, and what about the extra cost?

BIGGA has chosen to work with employers through their national associations, and by direct contact with clubs, to try to resolve conflict at the earliest opportunity and has earned a great deal of respect for its professional approach. It does not see itself as a substitute trade union and never will.

The management structure at Headquarters has been strengthened by the recruitment of Tracey Maddison who will head up the Membership Department. Part of Tracey's brief is to develop the range of welfare services offered to members and put these on a much more formal basis. If you are prepared to offer help in this regard please contact Tracey or your Regional Administrator. I would hope that the concept of teamwork does not stop at the boundary of your golf club but extends to include fellow turf professionals no matter where employed.

John Pemberton
Chief Executive



SCOTTISH REGION – AYRSHIRE

Hello everybody. Hope you're all well and primed for the new season? I'm Writing this at the beginning of May and we've been out watering our newly turfed areas in earnest when not long ago it seemed the winter would never end!

After an early hail shower the sun shone on the 36 participants at the Spring Outing in mid-April held over the Portland course at Royal Troon. Judging by the excellent returns the good weather must have played its part. Our thanks to Royal Troon GC and the Captain for allowing us the day, Billy and John MacLachlan, and the Green Staff, for the superb condition of the course and to the bar and catering staff for the delicious beer and lovely food.

Results as follows: 1.1 Iain Barr, 39pts; 1.2 George Morrison, 37pts; 1.3 Duncan Gray, 35pts; 1.4 Kevin Kirkpatrick, 35pts; 2.1 Gary Ross, 37pts; 2.2 John Wilson, 30pts; 2.3 Kenny Gilroy, 29pts; 2.4 Will McGee, 29pts; Trade Prize - Alec Cruickshanks, 35pts.

Congratulations to all the winners, on what was a most enjoyable day. Oh! It would be remiss of me not to mention current Harry Diamond, Jug holder George Morrison's hole-in-one at the par 3 4th with a thinned 5-iron, only kidding it was a 4-iron? Well done pal!

That's all folks - except to remind you of the Scottish National Tournament at Irvine GC on Monday, June 23 - see ya there!

Denis Tweddell
denis.t@hotmail.co.uk
07939 104701



CENTRAL

The Section had a wonderful day at Lundin Golf Club for the Spring Outing, with 60 players taking part. Willie Swann and his staff had the course in superb condition with a few testing pin placements. Those lucky enough to go out early probably had the best of the day, as there were a couple of heavy showers for the later starters. I won't bore you all with the prizewinners, you can find them on the website: www.biggacentralsection.org.uk. Our thanks once again for the support from our patrons and all those who helped on the day and to Stuart Clunie, Vice Captain at Lundin, for presenting the prizes.

We were saddened to hear at the outing, the death of Willie (Bill) Milton, a past Head Greenkeeper at Downfield Golf Club. Willie was a stalwart of the North and Midlands Section of SIGGA, serving as the treasurer for many years as well as being the Chairman of that Section. He was a tremendous help to myself, Iain MacLeod, and many others of our era when we first joined the SIGGA. His son, also Billy, currently works at Downfield where he is Deputy Head Greenkeeper and our thoughts are with him.