

## Welcome



### 10 YEARS ON...

Earlier this week I was standing, camera in hand, taking a picture of Prince Edward unveiling the plaque to commemorate the opening of the new Bernhard & Co offices in Rugby. It was 10 years ago, give a week, that I was standing, camera in hand, taking a picture of Prince Andrew, as he unveiled the plaque to commemorate the opening of BIGGA HOUSE.

I remember the occasion because the Prince actually told me it was the worst picture of a plaque unveiling he'd ever seen – he wasn't looking at the camera and the plaque was still covered - and we all trooped back to the plaque and did the picture again. In mitigation it was due to a borrowed, but unreliable, digital camera, but I genuinely felt that having taken the worst picture of Prince Andrew in action ever was a great claim to fame and have dined off the fact since. I'm currently awaiting comment from Prince Edward to discover if I've improved any!

So much water had flown under the bridge since the opening of BIGGA HOUSE on October 21, 1998, not least that Neil Thomas, the Executive Director of BIGGA, at the time is no longer with us.

Neil had steered the Association from its inception in 1987 to the stage that new offices were necessary and was extremely proud of the strides BIGGA had made. He continued at the helm until he was taken seriously ill with a brain tumour in mid 2003 and died the following February. As I write Seve Ballesteros is fighting a brain tumour, and our thoughts go out to Seve and his family, and this again brings back memories of Neil, and his proudest day when the new offices were opened.

Two of the other honoured guests back then were former Deputy Prime Minister under Margaret Thatcher and BIGGA President Viscount Whitelaw and Secretary of the R&A Sir Michael Bonallack, who was to take over as President when Viscount Whitelaw died the following year.

The magazine that marked BIGGA HOUSE's opening, November 1998, contained a report of the Hayter International match held in Atlanta, Georgia; an article by Laurence Pithie MG on the benefits of having a dedicated Golf Course Mechanic; a piece on Ramside GC, in the North East, and an article by Roland Taylor - who, sadly, is also no longer with us, on gang mowers and how they are drawing towards retirement.

National Chairman at the time was Gordon Child, who 10 years on, is still in fine fettle – using two new hips to propel him around the golf course, often in a score below his age!

In many ways 1998 seems like only yesterday but in other ways it's a lifetime away. Where will we all be on October 21st, 2018? is a question to be asked with quite a bit of trepidation bearing in mind the people mentioned above who are no longer with us. However we can all hope that we'll be enjoying the fruits of our labours, lying back, soaking up the sun on some Caribbean island, safe in the knowledge that we are financially secure and that our savings and investments are locked away somewhere safe.

There's a novel thought for November, 2008.

## NORRIE WHYTOCK TROPHY

August saw BIGGA Scottish Region return to Auchterarder Golf Club for their annual Team Competition, featuring the five Sections within Scotland.

Auchterarder was one of the few places in Scotland not affected by the weather and this must have delighted the organisers of the Johnnie Walker Tournament at Gleneagles only a sand wedge from the fairways of Auchterarder Golf Club.

The Central Section were hoping to make it three in a row, but with a blustery wind and tough pin positions, it took its toll on some of the teams. The ever-reliable North Section finished in 2nd place on a total of 100 points. The team comprised Hugh McLatchie, Peterhead GC; Warren Beveridge, Ballindalloch GC; Muir Ross and Fraser Downie, both Peterculter GC. The worthy winners, after their one and only success 10 years ago, were the West Section with a winning total of 105 points, Team Captain, Douglas McIntosh, Cathkin Braes GC; Brian Hillen, Drumpellier GC; Alasdair Read and Alan Syme, both Williamwood GC.

The winning Captain Douglas thanked Bayer and their Scottish representative Kenny Liddell for their continued sponsorship of the event. Thanks go to the Captain and officials of Auchterarder for the courtesy and facilities of the golf club and to the Secretary Barry Johnston for his assistance in organising the event.

Special thanks to Archie Dunn and his staff for all the hard work and congratulations in presenting the course in such excellent condition despite the many days of rain they have had to endure this season.

Next year's event will once again be held at Auchterarder Golf Club on Thursday, August, 20, 2009.

Peter J. Boyd  
Regional Administrator



## OUR APOLOGIES

In the last issue (October) of GI, regrettably, some of the text was missing from the article 'Making the Appliance of Science Simple'; because of this error, we have reprinted the story this month in full.