

## BIGGA



**President**  
Sir Michael Bonallack,  
OBE

**Board of Management**  
**Chairman** – Paul Worster  
**Vice Chairman**  
Andrew Mellon  
**Past Chairman**  
Peter Todd

### Board Members

Chris Sealey, Gary Cunningham, Archie Dunn,  
Ian Willett, Tony Smith, Elliott Small, Mark Dobbell

### Chief Executive

John Pemberton  
john@bigga.co.uk

### Head of Learning & Development

Sami Collins  
sami@bigga.co.uk

### Head of Membership Department

Tracey Maddison  
traceymaddison@bigga.co.uk

### Contact Us

BIGGA HOUSE, Aldwark, Alne, York, YO61 1UF  
info@bigga.co.uk  
www.bigga.org.uk  
Tel – 01347 833800 | Fax – 01347 833801

## GREENKEEPER INTERNATIONAL

The official monthly magazine of the  
British & International Golf Greenkeepers  
Association Limited.

### Editorial

#### Communications Manager / Editor

Scott MacCallum  
Tel – 01347 833800 Fax – 01347 833801  
scott@bigga.co.uk



**Design**  
**Design and**  
**Production Editor**  
Tom Campbell

Tel – 01347 833800  
Fax – 01347 833801  
tom@bigga.co.uk



### Advertising

**Sales Executive**  
Kirstin Smith

Tel – 01347 833800  
Fax – 01347 833802  
kirstin@bigga.co.uk



**Sales Executive**  
Jill Rodham

Tel – 01347 833800  
Fax – 01347 833802  
jill@bigga.co.uk

### Printing

Warners Midlands Plc, The Maltings, Manor  
Lane, Bourne, Lincolnshire PE10 9PH  
Tel – 01778 391000 | Fax – 01778 394269

Contents may not be reprinted or otherwise reproduced without written permission. Return postage must accompany all materials submitted if return is requested. No responsibility can be assumed for unsolicited materials. The right is reserved to edit submissions before publication. Although every care will be taken, no responsibility is accepted for loss of manuscripts, photographs or artwork. Opinions expressed are not necessarily those of the Association, and no responsibility is accepted for such content, advertising or product information that may appear. Circulation is by subscription. Subscription rate: UK £50 per year, Europe and Eire £65. Rest of the World £95. The magazine is also distributed to BIGGA members, golf clubs, local authorities, the turf industry, libraries and central government.



ISSN: 0961-6977

© 2010 British and International Golf  
Greenkeepers Association Limited

## WELCOME FROM THE EDITOR



# Looking for Solutions

**I have just enjoyed what was my 15th Harrogate Week and, despite some apprehension leading up to it on account of the weather, it wouldn't be stretching the truth to say that it was one of the best we've done since my first way back in 1996.**

There were many highlights. The “2 mil Debate” was a big hit, with tickets more sought after than for Led Zeppelin at the O2, and this despite a new larger venue, brought in as numbers grew. It was fantastic to see a debate, on what was a pure greenkeeping issue, proving to be such an emotive and talked about event.

Other highlights, other than the reassuringly high decibel level of the legendary “Harrogate Buzz” in the Halls, included the Association's Wild West Night on the Tuesday.

BIGGA had moved its official Hotel to the Old Swan, which gave a freshness to the whole week, and the Old Swan staff; Wild West Night organisers; Ransomes Jacobsen's, who sponsored the event, and our own Sandra Raper did a superb job in created an evening that will be remembered for quite some time.

Having enjoyed a successful week, BIGGA can now look ahead and tackle the next 12 months, knowing that the tough times currently being experienced will undoubtedly afflict our sector of the industry for quite some time yet.

On the issue of golf's problems, it has been interesting to follow the recent series “Golf Timebomb” in Scotland's Herald newspaper, written by Douglas Lowe. Aware of the problems the game of golf is experiencing in the Home of Golf, Douglas profiled some clubs which are looking at schemes to attract or retain younger members - to counter an average member age of 54, while he also interviewed David Roy, a former prominent

BIGGA member, and now President of the Scottish Club Managers Association of Europe, and Managing Secretary of the Crail Golfing Society.

David described the pressures on Club Secretaries, with many clubs seeking to hark back to the days of the Past Captain taking on the role of Honorary Secretary.

“I've heard people say: ‘We managed fine with an Honorary Secretary. I don't understand why we're employing this guy. What does he do anyway?’” said David, adding that the workload for every club has increased markedly.

“Now there's health and safety, employment law, licences, fire protection and insurance and child protection policies to look after...”

“There can be no doubt that the practice of employing unqualified people is harming golf,” he declared.

While he was talking predominately about inside the clubhouse, we are all aware of the pressures enthusiastic amateurs – often in the shape of Captains and Chairmen of Green - have put on Course Managers and Head Greenkeepers over the years and how their “interfering” has had such a detrimental effect on so many of the country's golf courses. We can all point to a Captain's ornamental conifer half way down the 1st fairway, which sticks out like the proverbial sore thumb.

Fortunately it is becoming rarer but the message must still go out - if golf clubs are to get the best out of their facilities.

“Leave the professionals to get on with their jobs.”

Scott MacCallum  
**Editor**