

The results of the Christmas Competition will appear in February's column as the event took place after this edition went to print.

Back up to date now, and still on the subject of education, the Winter Series Of Evening Lectures has come around again. The first talk will be in January at Pencoed college, please contact Steve Chappell for the date as I haven't received it at the time of writing. Speaker for the evening will be Mark Hunt, of Headland. These evenings will again be sponsored by Countrywide Turf & Amenity, so thanks to them from the Section.

Congratulations to Andrew Mannion, of Southerndown GC, on becoming a father again, this time to little baby boy Noa Tomos. Best wishes from the Section.

Congratulations to Russia and Qatar for being chosen to hold the 2018 and 2022 football World Cups, although this didn't go down too well with an English colleague of mine! He

was especially mystified as to the thinking of the choice of Qatar as a host nation. 'Can you name a Qatar player?' He asked. I thought for a while and then said 'Eric Clapton?' He was not amused.

Finally, mystery surrounds the events of a few months ago, when a few Greenkeepers from our Section went on a golfing trip to West Wales. After a game of golf, they decided to go into the local village to have a few beers. A few hours later, suitably refreshed and in high spirits, they decided to take a short cut across a narrow bridge. Yes, you guessed it, one of them ended up in the drink, much to the amusement of his companions. To be fair, none of them has divulged as to the identity of the unlucky gentleman. So please don't throw pieces bread at him while making duck noises at the Christmas dinner as this might give the game away!

See You Soon
Ceri Richards

Chairman's Word (continued from page 12)

It is our intention to always act in the best interests of all our members.

If you have views yourself on the future of trade shows please let others know about them. Contact your local BIGGA Section committee members; let them know your opinions so that they can represent your best interests.

These fine people volunteer their time to serve you in your greenkeeping career. If you don't know who to contact, check out the Website, Magazine or contact a member of HQ staff on 01347 833800.

There is still much to be done

As mentioned before on these pages the Association we should always strive for must have:

1. A Customer Service Culture
2. The alignment of Services to Mission

3. Data Driven Strategies
4. Dialogue and Engagement with Members
5. The CEO to be a Broker of Good Ideas
6. Organisational Adaptability
7. Alliance Building.

I know that Andrew Mellon (Chairman-elect) feels that BIGGA should be at the very forefront of advancing the greenkeeping profession. He is a driven and talented individual who will do a great job as your National Chairman. I pledge my full support to him.

There is still much to be done and I hope that I can play my part in helping Andrew in every way possible during his year. I hope that you too will find your own way of taking this great profession forward.

My best wishes for a prosperous 2011.

Thanks - and regards,
Paul Worster

AGM Notice

The Annual General Meeting of BIGGA will be held on Wednesday January 19, 2011 at 5.15pm in the Queens Suite at the Harrogate International Centre.

All paperwork including the Agenda and proxy voting forms are available on the BIGGA Website in the Members' Area.

The meeting will be followed immediately by an Open Forum where members will have the opportunity to discuss matters of concern to them with the Board of Directors.



John Pemberton
Chief Executive

Signing off for the last time

As we move into 2011 I sit down to write what is to be my last ever column for Greenkeeper International. This time last year I was focusing on dieting and handicaps with the thought of life without BIGGA never crossing my mind. What a difference a year makes though, my weight and my handicap remain unchanged but having given my future a great deal of thought I have decided to move into semi-retirement as from the end of April and will therefore be leaving my present post with BIGGA.

I first joined the Association in March 1993 and have, in my almost 18 years, built on my previous experience as an accountant and business manager to acquire a wealth of industry specific knowledge and large database of contact details that need to be passed on to the Board and my eventual successor. In order to achieve this the Board have asked me to seek some peace and quiet and to write them what in essence will be a manual to the job of Chief Executive, incorporating as much of that knowledge that I can.

Therefore, with effect from January 4, I will not be attending the office as frequently as I have in the past and in the interim period, until a successor has been appointed, Tracey Maddison, currently Head of Membership Services, will take on the role of Acting General Manager, working with the Board, myself and the existing staff team to ensure the ongoing success of BIGGA and the continuity of the high level of service that it offers to both Members and the Industry. I will continue to be available to the Board to give advice, information and to help with special projects during my wind-down period and over the next couple of weeks I will be actively involved with the management and planning of Harrogate Week 2011.

2010 has been a difficult year for all of us but I have every confidence in the BIGGA Board and the HQ Staff for the coming year and I will be working hard behind the scenes to give them my full support. I thank you for the support that you have given both myself and the Association in the past and ask that you continue to put your weight behind BIGGA and the team at BIGGA HOUSE.

I will be attending Harrogate as usual and hope that I will see you there. After April please spare a thought for the old guy in the bright yellow suit manning the school crossing in the pouring rain ... it could be me!

Wishing everyone Good Luck and Good Fortune for 2011 and beyond. And now, signing off for the last time...

John Pemberton
Chief Executive