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WELCOME FROM THE EDITOR



A greenkeeping giant

In my case it happened on the Sunday afternoon of April 3 when John Pemberton called me at home, but it is something a huge number of people will be able to recall with complete clarity.

It was the moment I learned that Ian McMillan had died, very suddenly, of a heart attack.

The immediate feeling of shock was overtaken by a sense of genuine sadness and concern for Ian's family – his wife, children, father, mother, brothers, nieces and nephews – who have not been strangers to family tragedy in recent years.

It says much for a man born into the most famous greenkeeping family in the golfing world that Ian's personal achievements make him stand out in his own right.

He was the only man to have won both the Toro Excellence in Greenkeeping Award and the BIGGA Golf Environment Competition, sponsored by Amazone, in the same year, while he has managed some of the finest courses in the country in Hankley Common, Queenwood and Walton Heath.

He will also be remembered for his ability to think outside the box.

When we endured the horrendous drought of a few years ago it was Ian who put some of his guys through their HGV tests so they could drive tankers of water to Walton Heath and keep the greens alive.

Nothing was too much trouble if it could possibly help his golf courses be the best they could possibly be.

A tribute to Ian, penned by his own family, appears elsewhere in this issue and I'm sure everyone who knew Ian will have their own treasured memories which will last them forever.

He was a bone fide greenkeeping giant and the industry is a much poorer place for his passing.

The end of the month saw the aforementioned John Pemberton leave BIGGA officially and enter a well deserved retirement, which he will no doubt fill with walking, baby-sitting and golf, but not necessarily in that order.

Since Harrogate he had been working from home, ensuring that the experience, knowledge and contacts he has made over the last 18 years would not be lost to the Association.

John leaves many friends within the industry and he knows that whenever he turns up at any BIGGA event he will always be guaranteed a very warm welcome, although be wary if he offers to play you for money!

One final note. Brad Anderson, latterly of BIGGA's Membership Department, has left the Association to manage a pub in Harrogate.

Brad had been with BIGGA for over 10 years having joined as a fresh faced 17 year-old school leaver, and he has been a valuable member of staff since then, particularly with his outstanding, if a little geekesque, IT skills.

I'm sure you would join me in wishing Brad all the best for the future and I know he would be pleased to welcome you to The Coach and Horses during Harrogate Week, or any time you happen to be in town.

Scott MacCallum
Editor