



# Chairman's Word

National Chairman, Andrew Mellon, gives his thoughts for the month

## An enjoyable week in Harrogate

**I am not long back from an enjoyable week in Harrogate attending BTME. It was great to catch up with so many friends, get lots of excellent education from first class providers and see first hand all the innovations coming to market from our many suppliers.**

I have been invited by the Board to remain as Chairman for a further year in order to complete and implement the strategic review. It will also allow for some continuity between the Board and the CEO as Jim has not been in place for a full year. I will do my best to ensure that members' interests remain at the forefront of all matters that the Board consider.

I'd like to recognise and thank my employers, Elmwood College, and my team at the golf course for supporting me while I undertake this role. It goes without saying, but I must, that the support of my family is essential, as it is to so many of us working in this Industry.

While we sometimes struggle to get the balance correct due to the commitment required of the job, their support and understanding of the demands placed upon you must never be taken for granted, and they should always come first.

The outstanding success of the exhibition was a fitting way to celebrate 25 years of the Association. Many of the founding members were in attendance. I'd like to thank them for having the vision to form the Association, which has helped all of us working in the industry today, raised the profile of our work and provided the vital education to enable us to constantly develop professionally. It has continued to grow and develop due to the support and hard work of many members at Section, Region and National Level. Those who engage and utilise the many member benefits and support provided, demonstrate that this work is worthwhile.

I would like especially to thank the staff. As is the case in many organisations, they do not always receive the recognition they are due. I've had the privilege of working closely with them over the last two years, as Vice Chairman and Chairman, and I've witnessed the dedication and commitment they provide to ensure the Association delivers what the members need. We were

fortunate to have excellent leadership through our two previous Chief Executives, Neil Thomas and John Pemberton, and I'm confident, even more so after BTME, that Jim Croxton has the qualities to ensure we continue to grow and develop successfully.

An Association is nothing without its members, I was so proud to witness the professionalism of all our members attending the show. The enthusiasm and hunger to learn more is inspirational and I saw many young members who, I'm sure, have a bright future.

I'd like to thank the many Trade companies and Golf Industry Bodies whose support to the Association has been essential in helping us progress to this stage. We work in a great industry and the camaraderie which exists comes to the fore during this week.

The feedback we received was very positive, and the increase in visitor numbers certainly created a really good atmosphere

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within the halls. I'd like to thank our fellow Associations who were represented, from Australia, Canada, Ireland and the United States, as well as FEGGA. Their willingness to work together with us to better support all our members should show some interesting developments in the near future.

The generosity shown by all at our 25th Anniversary Dinner raised over £2500 towards the Chairman's Charity, "Make Leukaemia History". Gerry Considine, who spoke at the dinner, has sent a letter of thanks and further information, which is printed elsewhere in this magazine. Sincere thanks also to the members and clubs who donated such valuable prizes for the charity raffle.

We were privileged to have Ken Schofield CBE propose a toast to the Association and his recognition of the contribution

our members have made to the game of golf was a very humbling experience. Our President, Sir Michael Bonallack, gave a very fitting response and also paid his own tribute to the work of BIGGA. His continuous support is of enormous benefit to the Association, for which we are extremely grateful. I'd like to thank Ransomes Jacobsen who sponsored the event and especially David Withers for the kind words and sense of humour that he brought to the occasion.

Last but certainly not least I would wish to thank and recognise Mark Dobell, from the R&A, for serving as Guardian on the Board for 13 years. His guidance and experience has been invaluable.

We wish him all the best in his retirement. Also to Archie Dunn, Auchterarder Golf Club, Scottish Board Director, who has served faithfully for five years showing great commitment and dedication in representing the members.

George Barr, Worthing Golf Club, steps in to the vacant Guardian role. His previous Board experience and many years of involvement at Region and Section level will be of great benefit to the Board. Stuart Greenwood, The North Berwick Golf Club, takes over the reigns from Archie Dunn, again bringing many years of experience at Section and Region level. Both will serve the Board with the best interests of the members at heart.

The progress made in 25 short years has given us a great foundation. With gratitude and respect for those who brought us to this point, I look forward to making every contribution I can to ensure we build on our success and I would encourage all members to play their part.

**Here's to the next 25.  
Andrew Mellon, Chairman 2012.**