



## GOOD MOVE FOR MASTER GREENKEEPER PHIL

One of BIGGA's Master Greenkeepers has been appointed Course Manager at Goodwood's two highly acclaimed golf courses.

Phil Helmn MG, former Golf Course and Estate Manager at Heythrop Park, and who featured in GI back in June last year, has taken the reins at the West Sussex venue.

Phil will be working closely with Andrew Brown, Head Greenkeeper of The Downs course, and Simon Berry, Head Greenkeeper of The Parks course, along with the rest of the greenkeeping team.

Phil's extensive experience includes the construction and grow-in of four courses. One was in Florida under the direction of distinguished golf architect Tom Fazio, the second was in Cyprus designed by Tom Mackenzie of UK based architects Mackenzie and Ebert, The Watermark

Club and finally Heythrop Park Resort. Phil's early career saw him work at Morecambe Golf Club, Camberley Heath and Collingtree Park.

He said: "I have been a greenkeeper all my adult life and I love my career choice. Goodwood is a quality brand and specifically the golf courses are highly ranked and revered. It will be a fantastic challenge to help Goodwood improve even further on its recent successes and ranking.

"Myself and the entire greenkeeping team have some big plans for the future so it's an exciting time to be here."

Phil joins Goodwood at a significant time as the James Braid designed Downs Course celebrates 100 years of golf this year, and to mark the occasion Goodwood will be hosting a number of high profile events throughout the season.



## LIVERPOOL FAN IN OLD TRAFFORD CHARITY ABSEIL

A greenkeeper Liverpool fan is putting football rivalry to one side for charity when he abseils 140 feet from the roof of Manchester United's Old Trafford ground!

Paul Pearse, Head Greenkeeper at Warrington Golf Club, was undergoing a check-up in April 2012 when doctors noticed a lump indicating testicular cancer, and which had begun to spread. He was operated on within days, and after nine weeks of chemotherapy and a further two months of recuperation he was given the all clear last year.

Now Paul, who says he doesn't like heights, is to plunge 140 feet from the 76,000 capacity stadium's roof in aid of The Christie, an organisation which raises funds for vital cancer research and treats more than 40,000 patients each year.

Paul said: "I wanted to give something back so that other people suffering from cancer have a better chance to be as fortunate as I've been.

"I know some people would gladly chuck a Scouser off the top of Old Trafford but I'm doing this willingly, and hopefully the rope will be sturdy! I'm not a fan of heights and I'm not looking forward to that moment when I have to step off the stand at all, but it's all in terrific cause which is obviously very close to my heart.

"Basically I would urge every bloke to check themselves regularly. As it happened my lump was found when I was having a general check-up, but if you do find something unusual go straight to your doctor, catching it early is so important."

Paul's abseil will be on Sunday 23 March and you can find out more and sponsor him at [justgiving.com/Paul-Pearse](http://justgiving.com/Paul-Pearse) – all contributions will be very gratefully received!

# PHIL'S 'TRACTOR AID' TO FLOOD-HIT SOMERSET

A Course Manager who combines his greenkeeping role with his job as a farmer has ridden to the rescue of a flood-hit Somerset farmer after seeing his plight on TV.

Phil Rowbottom is a BIGGA member, head man at Woolley Park Golf Club and member of the National Farmers' Union – and was moved by a TV interview with Somerset farmer James Winslade who has lost 800 acres of his 840-acre farm to floodwater, with the water chest-high in his kitchen.

James managed to save his 500 cattle but had lost all of his cattle feed. So Phil joined forces with neighbour Andrew, an agricultural contractor, and loaded 25 tons of cattle feed on to their tractors. They then set off from Phil's proprietary golf club near Wakefield, West Yorkshire, at 5am on February 13 to make the epic 225-mile journey to Bridgwater, which is at the heart of the badly affected Somerset Levels.

Travelling at a top speed of around 30mph, 'Tractor Aid' arrived 11 hours later to meet a grateful James at nearby Sedgemoor market.

Phil said: "I've been watching the news for the last few weeks and saw what a mess the Somerset farmers are in. I saw an interview with James and you couldn't fail to be moved by it, even more so as a fellow farmer. The water was chest-high in his kitchen and he has lost almost everything, and the pictures showed the only way he could get to his farm was by boat.

"I just thought as a fellow farmer, I could help him, and the thing he really needed was cattle feed. James's feed which he had been storing over winter is now rotting in sheds, it's terrible.

"I don't have any cattle on my farm but I borrowed some feed from local farmers and set off. The support we had on the journey from the public has been fantastic, it makes me really proud."

Meanwhile the rest of Woolley Park's greenkeeping team – Phil's son John, Andy Scaman,



Richard Thompson, Stuart Mason and Pete Colley – have been working to keep the course open despite 100ml of rain in January.

John said: "Golf and agriculture are inextricably linked as they are both so dependent on the weather. If golf courses are underwater for too long the grass rots, and it's the same with crops in farming. We've been hit by the relentless

rainfall as so many other golf courses have, but luckily our site drains well and is high up.

"We made a few calls and mentioned 'Tractor Aid' on Twitter and it's gone on from there. We felt Somerset had been neglected by the media so hopefully this has reminded everybody of the seriousness of the situation down there."

Their amazing journey has caught the public's imagination

with Phil even being interviewed live on the BBC's 'One Show', BBC Radio 2 and in local newspapers.

Phil featured in Greenkeeper International last June when we focused on his combined role as Course Manager and farmer. Woolley Park is a 27-hole facility, and the adjacent farm's main function is drying and storing grain for local merchants and farmers.



# AIRBORNE CHALARA SPORES DEBATE

A Conference\* held in London appears to have 'laid the ghost' of long distance airborne travel of ascospores of the ascomycete fungus *Hymenoscyphus pseudoalbidus* (imperfect or asexual stage *Chalara fraxinea*) to rest, while raising the possibility of another unexplored avenue of transcontinental movement for the fungal pathogen and disease.

Arguments in favour of long distance airborne travel of *Chalara* ascospores from continental Europe and into Eastern England rely heavily on circumstantial evidence relating to the high concentration of reported disease outbreaks in East Anglia. The long distance movement and survival of completely different fungal spores in other parts of the world is used as supporting evidence.

The arguments used against rest on a clear mismatch between long distance air-borne movement with the time lines and distance lines of *Chalara* outbreaks and spread of the pathogen across Europe over the last 20 years, coupled with the known high susceptibility of the ascospores to UV (ultra violet) light and desiccation.

Speaking at the Fraxback Conference Dr Anne Chandelier presented detailed results from *Chalara* spore trapping research carried out in Belgium which throw light on the situation. By trapping *Chalara* ascospores up a vertical profile she showed spore concentration was thirty times higher at 0.5m than 3.0m above ground level. Lateral movement for the majority of spores was no further than 50 m from the point of liberation.

Dr Chandelier showed that *Chalara* ascospores liberated from apothecia (fruiting bodies) on fallen ash leaf stalks are concentrated at only 0.5m from ground level, indicating little opportunity for lift off into the atmosphere and subsequent long distance dispersal in air currents. Moreover any 'high flying' spores would clearly be exposed to correspondingly high levels of UV light and stronger drying out forces compared with the same spores close to ground level.

In these respects the *Chalara fraxinea* situation is completely different to that for *Phytophthora ramorum* the spores (sporangia) of which are released from infected foliage at the tops of tall Japanese larch trees.

Defra's claim that *Chalara* ash dieback arrived in the UK via airborne spores from Europe is clearly questioned by these findings. Evidence supporting the airborne movement of viable *Chalara* ascospores from continental Europe and into the United Kingdom would clearly exonerate Defra from accusations that they acted too slowly in banning the import of infected ash planting material.

However, there appears to be one unexplored avenue of *Chalara* entry into the UK and a corresponding avenue of 'escape' for Defra. Apart from the role of infected ash planting material, comments made by Dr Chandelier's about infected ash leaf stalks being capable of producing apothecia (*Chalara* fruiting bodies containing ascospores) for two to three years after leaf fall raises the spectre of another avenue of disease entry into the United Kingdom. Could infected ash leaf stalks attached to the wheels of European vehicles be responsible for spreading *Chalara* ash dieback and providing a hitherto unrecognised and unexplored route of entry for *Chalara* ash dieback into the UK?

After all this was considered to be the most likely mode of spread of horse chestnut leaf miner (*Crameraria ohridella*) across Europe and into the UK, with dead horse chestnut leaves containing live overwintering pupae adhering to the wheels and bodywork of transcontinental vehicles.

Be that as it may, you still have to explain why *Chalara* ash dieback took almost exactly 20 years to move the 1000km from Poland to the Pas de Calais region of France and exactly what articulated lorry loads of wine from France, cheese from the Netherlands and bacon from Denmark were doing inside ancient East Anglian woodlands.

\* FRAXBACK is a 4-year action plan initiated in 2011 and funded by 'COST' (The European Cooperation in Science and Technology). Generation of a comprehensive understanding of *Chalara* to produce practical guidelines for pan-European sustainable management of *Fraxinus* (ash) species are the aims.

*Dr Terry Mabbett*





# E AT CONFERENCE



## Tributes to BIGGA Life Member Henry Fry

Everyone at BIGGA was saddened to hear of the passing of Henry Fry on 29 January, aged 84, following a brief illness.

A Life Member of the Association, he replaced his father when he became Head Greenkeeper at Clyne Golf Club in South Wales and was also BIGGA's South Wales Section Secretary before his retirement in 1994. He was also a Chairman of the BGGA, as was his father.

Gareth Dunce, Deputy Head Greenkeeper at Southerndown Golf Club in Bridgend, paid this tribute.

"Reserved and unassuming, Henry could be described as a gentlemen, a man of absolute integrity, great loyalty, and worth his weight in gold - a cliché which hardly does him justice. His father Harry Fry was appointed as Clyne Golf Club's first Head Greenkeeper in February 1920 and was directly responsible for the construction of the course as designed by golf architects H.S Colt and Harris.

"Henry joined the greenkeeping team in September 1958 and took over the Head Greenkeeper position upon his father's retirement in 1962. He gave many years of dedicated service on the course, often under extremely frustrating conditions. Henry was heavily involved within the industry from the start of his career and was very

keen to promote all aspects of greenkeeping, and went on to become BIGGA's South Wales Section Secretary.

"As a well-known and respected figure during this period he amassed many colleagues and friends whilst organising many golf days and other events, in which he could be found improving his game. He was a good golfer but never took the game too seriously. He was a very approachable figure and was happy to pass on his many years of experience and advice on to young greenkeepers.

"He was also well known for his mechanical skills and could often be found repairing, improving and improvising on machinery in the workshop. He was frequently many people's first port of call regarding any mechanical problems and always offered to lend a helping hand.

"Clyne Golf Club recognised his outstanding contribution by electing him an Honorary Life Member in 1994 and he also became a Life Member of BIGGA. To mark the end of his time at Clyne the Henry Fry Retirement Event was held in September 1994. The clearest ever indication of the respect in which Henry was held by the club's members was the fact that he was accorded a standing ovation by the large crowd present."





# FTMI DELEGATES ANNOUNCED

The delegates for the second Future Turf Managers Initiative made possible by Jacobsen have been announced, and they will head to Ipswich later this month for three days of superb education and networking.

The inaugural 2013 event, aimed at promising greenkeepers looking to make the step to Course Manager, was such a success BIGGA and Jacobsen have agreed to repeat it.

It will be held at Ransomes Jacobsen HQ between 25-27 March. Course Managers from some of the UK's top golf facilities will be mentoring, there will be sessions covering everything from interview techniques to building a budget and Dr Frank Rossi Ph.D, Director of Turfgrass Agronomy at Cornell University in the USA will be the special guest speaker.

The feedback from last year's event was terrific and Daniel Scott, Greenkeeper at Woburn Golf & Country Club, spoke for many of the attendees when he said: "It was a superb programme with excellent

speakers, I learnt so much during the three days that will be relevant to my career progression."

For 2014, the candidates will have sessions covering effective communication strategies, interview tips, volunteering opportunities at tournaments, dealing with club politics plus an open forum on challenges in the workplace.

They will work with five hugely experienced mentors – Steve Chappell, Head Greenkeeper at Gleneagles' PGA Centenary Course, Matt Plested, Course Manager at Muswell Hill Golf Club, Michael Sawicki, Head Greenkeeper and Club Manager at Dulwich and Sydenham Hill Golf Club, Lee Strutt MG, Course Manager at G West and Stuart Yarwood MG, Course Manager at Lymm Golf Club.

The candidates will also have a factory tour and play RJ National – the three hole course on site. They are:

John Bateson - St Andrews Links Trust  
Sean Brocklehurst - Harpenden Common GC

Stewart Brown - Royal Aberdeen GC  
Joe Buckley - Queenwood GC  
Duncan Cairnie - Carnoustie Golf Links  
Rob Donnelly - Hockley GC  
James Fox - Trentham GC  
Gary Fraser - Rockcliffe Hall GC  
David Gibbons - Little Aston GC  
Kevin Glazier - Royal Mid Surrey GC  
Steven Haire - Ealing GC  
Jamie Hughes - RJ National  
Richard Jenkinson - G West  
Derrick Johnstone - The Wentworth Club  
Harry Larkins - Northamptonshire County GC  
Gregor Mackintosh - Turnberry Hotel & Golf Course  
Peter Moore - The Wentworth Club  
Graeme Roberts - Tandridge GC  
Richard Sheldon - Stonebridge GC  
Chris Taylor - Willesley Park GC  
Myles Wood - Berkhamsted GC

Thanks to all who applied, commiserations to those who did not make it this year.

BELOW: FTMI Delegates 2013







# Future Turf Managers Initiative

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