

called the PGA Centenary course at Gleneagles with Transcontinental.

"I spent 11 months working at Gleneagles working an average 65 hours a week and the experience was superb. I got involved in all aspects of the construction apart from shaping, which is very much a specialist job. I admired the way Transcontinental worked hard in the day and just as hard at enjoying themselves after work, there was a great team atmosphere"

Before he left to return to College for his final year Peter met Joe Paulin, who had been appointed the Grow-In Superintendent at Gleneagles, and they struck up a friendship during the hand over from construction to grow-in.

"I returned to Merrist Wood and later discovered that the Transcontinental had moved on to the construction of the London Club."

Peter asked if he could help out when he had any spare time from studying and spent a week there during the earth moving stage. It was during a night out with the lads that set him down his current path.

"Joe (Paulin) was with them and said that he'd left Gleneagles and was the new Superintendent of The London Club. He asked me what I was going to do after I'd finished college and I said I'd be looking for a job and was interested in doing a grow-in. There he was, in my home county, doing a high end construction job. It was right up my street. So we discussed me joining his new crew when I finished college."

For Peter to have the opportunity to work on the grow-in, having had construction experience at Gleneagles was another piece of his greenkeeping jigsaw.

Finishing college in June '92 he worked with Transcontinental again for three months before taking up a full time position in September with the club. There were plenty of opportunities to learn, particularly from Joe and antipodean colleagues, Steve Marsden and Andy Wood, who were also well versed in warm season grasses.

By this time Peter saw himself very much as a greenkeeper, but one who had yet to come across any golfers.

The club opened with a match between Jack Nicklaus, Seve Ballesteros and Tony Jacklin and members started to sign up. Peter didn't know it at the time but by the end of the century a mere seven years later, he would be the man in charge.

"There was a lot of ambitious people at The London Club, and a lot of movement within the team, so there were opportunities to move up the ladder but I could never have dreamt of being in charge of such a large operation when I started out."

Ironically among his fellow assistants and friends during his early days was one Kenny Mackay.

"Kenny subsequently moved on to Hanbury Manor and in recent years The Belfry, but we have always kept in touch and remained good friends. Our common ground of both working at proprietary clubs and staging tour events has resulted in reciprocal swaps of staff for tournaments and



Outgoing chairman Kenny MacKay hands over to Peter Todd

also exchanges of ideas. Kenny and I run very similar operations and both of us understand the commercial demands of running these types of business, so there is often much we can find to discuss. Greenkeeper involvement in more general management decisions is one of those subjects we both see a future in.

Peter believes that there is a great deal of knowledge, expertise and experience within the BIGGA membership that clubs would be well advised to take advantage of the skills that are there right under their nose.

"There is lots of experience and ideas within the greenkeeping profession but often greenkeepers are not involved in the running of clubs and business decisions."

"It is highly motivating to contribute ideas that are outside of your immediate area of responsibility and then see them instigated.

"I have suggested making clubhouse alterations to give a better view of the course from the bar and on another occasion I suggested charging higher green fees on a Friday, which was our busiest day, to encourage more play Monday to Thursday.

"Both ideas were taken up. The more you can help to develop the business the more valuable you become to the organisation."

Peter believes BIGGA should support those who wish to move towards general club management as he feels that some greenkeepers are well placed to take on greater responsibility at golf clubs.

"I firmly believe that the industry is moving closer to the point where Course Managers, so integral to the running of the golf club, make the natural progression to become General Managers. Part of my aims are for BIGGA to offer education and training opportunities to those who wish the option of taking that route.

"I am delighted that BIGGA has teamed up with The Club Managers Association of Europe allow BIGGA members to take the internationally recognised Certified Club Manager (CCM) qualification.

"There are a lot of talented individuals with a commercial bias who may also wish to move into other areas and we should help them. More generally, we must get the message across to young people that our industry can offer exciting and satisfying careers in a healthy work environment"

With his drive, enthusiasm and commercial background BIGGA could not have a better man as Chairman in what are undoubtedly difficult times.



YOUR GREEN GREEN GRASS OF HOPE

EXPERT ADVICE JUST A PHONE CALL AWAY

By Melissa Jones

One of the most helpful and cost saving **BIGGA membership benefits** is our **Greenkeepers Legal Assistance (GLA) helpline**.

As a member of our Association specialist legal advice is available to you 24 hours a day, seven days a week, arranged by Arc Legal Assistance. The protection is not just limited to supporting you, as Arc is on hand to make sure you and your family get the best and most relevant protection you all need.

Not only can GLA offer advice on employment issues, consumer problems and personal injury cases but they can also give guidance on any personal legal matter, including will writing, moving home, matrimonial issues or discuss any motor offence cases.

Access to unlimited telephone legal advice is included as part of the service and the BIGGA scheme also offers a reassuring benefit of covering the costs of arranging representation at Employment Tribunals and internal disciplinary hearings with your employer. In addition, cover can extend to include legal costs incurred to deal with a consumer dispute and to pursue a personal injury claim.

So how does it work?

The legal advisors are based in Sheffield; they are all qualified lawyers who undertake continuous in-house training in order to answer your calls as effectively as possible.

Arc have been working in partnership with Heath Lambert, the UK's leading independent insurance broker and employee benefits consultants, to provide the specialist legal costs and advice BIGGA members and their families need, since early 2007.

EXAMPLE CLAIMS

Not sure if your situation is a legal matter worth pursuing? The Greenkeepers Legal Assistance (GLA) helpline provides practical information on the legal issues affecting you today. BIGGA knows that the most difficult thing about the law is finding out how it applies to your specific circumstances. Here are some examples of claims that have been made...

Employment...

An individual had been subjected to sustained criticism from his direct manager over a period of 18 months. When it became too much, he decided to resign. Arc's solicitors started proceedings for constructive dismissal against the individual's previous employer and, as a result an agreement was reached with a cash award, company car and future reference for the member.

Consumer Dispute...

As a result of a commissioned full structural survey, the insured purchased a 250 year-old listed property. Following storm damage to the roof which resulted in an insurance claim, the insurance assessor reported that there were pre-existing problems which necessitated the entire replacement of the roof structure. The insured contacted the helpline wishing to make a claim for breach of contract against the original surveyor.

Arc instructed their solicitors to arrange for a subsequent survey to establish how much the original purchase price would have been affected had the faults with the roof been identified in the original survey.

Having quantified the claim, Arc's solicitors issued proceedings against the original surveyor. An out of court settlement was agreed and the insured received significant compensation. All legal



costs and disbursements including the surveyors 'expert report' fee were covered under the legal expenses insurance.

Personal Injury...

When an individual's son was assaulted and badly injured by door staff in a nightclub, he contacted the helpline for advice. As a result of negotiations, Arc instructed specialist solicitors, who were able to secure a substantial amount of compensation for the individual's son.

Government statistics show that the number of accident claims increased by over 8% in 2006-07, and according to experts this is expected to continue to rise over the next five years.

The BIGGA scheme not only provides prompt specialist advice for members, but also assistance for their family too.

Legal Helpline Statistics

- In November 2008 a total of 64 calls were handled by GLA of which 75% were employment related with 9% family and personal related calls. The total call duration was 599 minutes, an average of 9.4 minutes per call.
- In October 2008 a total of 77 calls were handled by GLA of which 58% were employment related and 12% were consumer related.
- In September 2008 a total of 64 calls were handled by GLA of which 58% were employment related.
- In August 2008 a total of 47 calls were handled by GLA of which 83% were employment related.
- In July 2008 a total of 74 calls were handled by GLA of which 69% were employment related.
- During the year September 2007 to August 2008 GLA helped over 500 callers to legal advice.

Useful Employment Law Websites

ACAS

- www.acas.org.uk

Good for downloadable documents policies and procedures.

Health and Safety Executive

- www.hse.gov.uk

Good for download information on health and safety for particular industries.

Equal Opportunities Commission

- www.equalityhumanrights.com

Good for practical examples of the application of equal opportunities.

Disability Rights Commission

- www.direct.gov.uk

Good for explanation of rights for disabled employees. Telephone helpline available to employees only.

UK Visas

- www.ukvisas.gov.uk

Joint initiative of the Commonwealth and Home Office giving clear information in relation to visa requirements.

GREENKEEPERS LEGAL ASSISTANCE

- Freephone number - 0800 177 7891 (remember to have your BIGGA membership number to hand)
- Access 24 hours a day, 365 days a year
- Assistance for you and your family (living at the same address)
- Legal advice on employment, personal injury and consumer matters
- Cover for medical costs and expenses - for personal injury sustained in an accident (where recoverable from the person responsible)
- Legal expenses up to £50,000 per annum



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Email: sales@cleveland-sitesafe.ltd.uk Website: www.cleveland-sitesafe.ltd.uk



YOU CAME, YOU SAW, YOU BOUGHT!

Any trepidation about Harrogate Week 2009 suffering in the worldwide recession disappeared within minutes of the doors of Harrogate International Centre opening.

The Halls quickly filled and many of the exhibitors reported that business was being done. The Continue to Learn Programme was also well subscribed and enjoyed a successful year.

Remarkably the attendance figure, while slightly lower than last year, was significantly higher than 2007, the last occasion it was a four Hall event.



WHAT A GREAT WEEK!

Scott MacCallum takes you through a week at Harrogate

With every newspaper, television and radio station filled with doom and gloom about the world economy it was with a degree of trepidation that I collected my colleague, Melissa, and drove to Harrogate for Harrogate Week 2009.

What would the week be like? Would signs of the downturn be obvious? Would anyone have the money to come? Would it have that old Harrogate magic?

Well, we needn't have worried. All the hard work and preparation paid off. Harrogate Week

2009 was a success. Exhibitors were happy; visitors were there in solid numbers; good business was done in the Halls and the educational workshops and seminars were extremely well attended.

As ever, the week began for some of the BIGGA staff on Saturday, including Chief Executive, John Pemberton – indeed Pauline Thompson was on site from Friday evening so she could be in the Halls first thing on Saturday morning for the hand over from the previous week's show to ours.

What BIGGA hires from Harrogate International Centre for the week are four basic stripped down

halls and the Queens Suite. Everything that goes to dress up the halls and make them as attractive as possible has to be added... and paid for!

It's a little like Disney World, if you get an opportunity to look behind the scenes you'll know that the magic is reserved solely for the areas people are supposed to see.


The workshops began on Sunday with Sami Collins and Rachael Duffy from BIGGA's Learning and Development Department welcoming speakers and delegates from all over the world. Speaking at Harrogate Week is something that many in





Education, education, education...



			
2009 Attendance Figures			
	2007	2008	2009
Day 1	2274	2800	2645
Day 2	3041	3959	3346
Day 3	1338	1882	1647
Total	6653	8641	7638

the fine turf industry aspire to do at some stage in their speaking careers and being invited to be a speaker on the Continue to Learn programme looks very good on a CV.

While the delegates' heads were being filled in the Queens Suite, Halls A,B, C and M were being filled downstairs with the larger companies manoeuvring their machinery into place and ensuring the stand looked as attractive and inviting as possible.

Sunday evening is an opportunity for delegates to head off into town for some well earned sustenance and a chat about the days events while the speakers come together with BIGGA staff and officials for an informal dinner. It's often the only opportunity those speakers get to meet and chat together and the dinner, in the Cairn Hotel, usually fizzes with chatter.

Monday has often been a weather man's dream and an exhibitor's nightmare. In recent years there's been snow, there's been gale force winds, there's been torrential rain. It's then that

you rejoice in the fact that it's an indoor show but everyone has to get themselves into place and the doors to the enormous halls are invariably open to the elements.

The good news is that the weather this year was better than last year. The bad news is that that's not saying much. Heavy rain and strong winds made Monday's chores less than pleasant but as usual everyone pulled together and the race to get ready for the grand opening on Tuesday morning was won.

The traditional BIGGA staff meal on Monday night in an Italian restaurant in town was again graced by the presence of BIGGA's President Sir Michael Bonallack OBE who rarely misses a Harrogate Week. Sir Michael was in fine form chatting to the staff and BIGGA's Chairman, Kenny Mackay, and soon-to-be Chairman, Peter Todd.

An early night was called for and, in the majority of cases, heeded, with a big day, indeed three days, ahead of us.





The official opening of the show: Kenny MacKay cuts the ribbon



Caldy receive the Golf Environment Competition trophy



George Brown receives the Lifetime Achievement award



Daniel Lightfoot becomes the 49th Master Greenkeeper



Tuesday morning and that most important of jobs is down to me – making sure the sheers and the ribbon are in place for the official opening, which is now held at the Hall M entrance. Kenny is instructed to do a few dummy cuts for the sake of the photographer and is then surrounded by some well known BIGGA faces as he makes the final snip. Job done he is given the piece of ribbon as a memento.

Officially underway, the Halls quickly fill and that Harrogate Week buzz begins to permeate the building. It's soon obvious that Harrogate Week 2009 will live up to its predecessors.

Down in the Media Centre, under Hall A, the industry press begin to gather, having travelled to North Yorkshire from all corners of the country. Companies book the Media Centre to give press briefings and make announcements as they know, with all the publications represented in one place, it is an ideal opportunity to push a message to as many as possible.

Tuesday morning is the chance for BIGGA to

pay tribute to its high achievers with the annual Award ceremony. The winners of the BIGGA Golf Environment Competition, sponsored by Ransomes Jacobsen, Scotts, Syngenta and Golf Monthly, including overall winner, Caldly Golf Club, and the BIGGA Photographic Competition winners received their Awards as well as those people who have earned Continuous Professional Development Certificates. Daniel Lightfoot, Course Manager of Bearwood Lakes Golf Club also received his badge and certificate for becoming the 49th Master Greenkeeper. Other achievements are all applauded during the event including Matthew Wormald's Toro Student Greenkeeper of the Year Award, who is currently studying in the States, and Chris Whittle's presentation of Royal Birkdale for the Open Championship. The highlight for many however was the presentation of the BIGGA Lifetime Achievement Award to George Brown, of Turnberry by Sir Michael, a former recipient of the Award. George, as ever, had the audience in stitches as he regaled tales of his career.



The casino tables proved a hit with the crowds on Tuesday night

Around lunchtime the magazine team and some invited BIGGA members got together for a Magazine Forum to discuss Greenkeeper International and share ideas. It was a well attended, extremely constructive, meeting with over 30 greenkeepers taking time out of their busy schedule and some super ideas emerged. Hopefully you will see these in future issues of the magazine.

Tuesday evening saw a Harrogate Week innovation. Having taken heed of feedback, and knowing that for people to remain in Harrogate for the traditional Thursday night banquet often meant another night's accommodation, the BIGGA Social Night was born and having witnessed such a successful evening I'd bet money – not just the free chips that were available for the roulette, blackjack and poker – that it will be back next year.

Around 350 people stayed for the entire evening lapping up the gaming tables and revisiting their youth on pinball machines and old fashioned video games. There was also a Nintendo Wii with

a massive screen so the tennis, tenpin bowling and golf could be even more realistic.

One of the stars of the show though was the raging bull bucking bronco machine. Not to be put off by having to sign a disclaimer many intrepid cowboys, including my good self risked life and ridicule to ride the bull. Tougher than it looked boasting an extremely slippery hide it bucked and spun and usually chucked the jockey off as soon as the lady operator became a little board. I managed 27 seconds but was easily beaten by respected PR guru, Charmian Robinson, who stayed on for a full 41 seconds before dismounting in an extremely lady-like manner.

The ace gambler of the night was Kevin Stott, of Carnoustie, who won £100 for having the most chips at the end of the night. Second was Elaine Golding, who won £50.

With excellent food and subsidised beer helping to fuel the evening everyone had a whale of a time and many headed off to continue their night in town.



Showgirls greeted guests at BIGGA's Social Night