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| logoSURREY BEEKEEPERS' ASSOCIATIONWEYBRIDGE DIVISION NEWSLETTER: October 2014<http://www.pyrford.com/weybridgebees> |

***Editorial***

Does lightning strike twice in the same place? It seems possible as we now have the second article on bee venom therapy in as many months.

This is certainly a remarkable autumn. We are hearing of large amounts of honey being stored with an unusual amount of sealed brood for this time of year. I would draw your attention to the warning from the bee inspectors of the possibility of a very high incidence of varoa mites resulting from this late sealed brood especially if your treatment was completed in August and even more so if given the one week MAQS treatment at that time. We should continue to monitor mite drop in the light of the warning, and give some thought to further treatment in case it is found be be necessary.

**Bee sting therapy – again**

We have received another request for this – from Ben Hopkins, who lives in Walton and has read that Apitherapy may be helpful for his mild MS. Here is his email address: bhop965@yahoo.com. If you would like to contact him, I am sure that he would be pleased to hear from you, but please read first the article entitled **PS to “A cry for help”** on page 2 of the September Newsletter. There is plenty about bee venom treatment on the web, and I think that beekeepers need to be well informed and very cautious before getting involved with the general public on this subject.

**Subscriptions for 2014-2015**

A reminder that these were due on October 1st. If you have not already paid, please contact our Treasurer, Michael Main as soon as possible. The form is attached again for yur convenience.

**Winter Meetings**

As we had a meeting in September and there are AGMs, Training Days and the National Honey Show in the rest of this year, the Committee decided to continue our Winter Meeting series next year. The following have been arranged:

*Wednesday, January 14th*- Heather Hawker, who lives in Weybridge and may well be known to some through her considerable input into a wide range of local and County affairs, is Master of the Worshipful Company of Wax Chandlers this year. While holder of this distinguished role, she will be opening the National Honey Show and has kindly agreed to give to us the talk she gave to Reigate Division last year. It will be about Livery Companies in general, but mainly the history and current activities of the Wax Chandlers, which is one of the oldest. They give substantial financial support to beekeeping, eg the new apprenticeship scheme aimed at recruiting younger people to the Bee Farmers and a Year 3 project with the BBKA aimed at giving further instruction to beekeepers in their third year - a time when many new ones have been giving up. This talk will be suitable for members' friends and families as well, so we hope for a big audience.

*Friday, February 13th*- Another of our Short Presentation evenings that have been popular in the past and which I've been asked by several members to repeat. Any offers for taking a 15-minute slot, please?

*Wednesday, March 11th* – As part of the Beginners’ Beekeeping Course, David Rudland, of East Surrey Bees and one of our Seasonal Bee Inspectors, has kindly agreed to present the session on Bee Diseases. As usual, all members are invited to attend this meeting.

*Wednesday, March 25th*- Swarms (more details later). Michael Main, our 'Swarm Person', will give an illustrated presentation, but advice on swarm prevention and management will be included in the evening as well. We have chosen this month as it's the start of the season, and therefore topical as a reminder of what to do - and not do.

All of the meetings will be held in our frequently used venue, St Peter’s Church Hall, 1 Burwood Road, Hersham KT12 4AA and will start at 7.30 pm. Reminders will be sent as usual nearer the time, but please note the dates now.

Thank you, Marion C.

**Request for a hive site**

 I'm looking for a new site for my 3 colonies preferably in Molesey but Hersham/Walton would be ok too. If anyone knows of a site please can they phone me on 0772 9473278 or e-mail matthew\_240@yahoo.co.uk

Matthew Godfrey

**A request for accommodation**

I’m a beekeeper from Mid Wales and I’m planning on entering the national honey show at the end of Oct. I was hoping to find accommodation for the 29th, 30th and 31st in Weybridge or as near as possible. I have been looking at hotels, but they seem very expensive.  I’m emailing you to see if you know or any of your members of B&B not too far from the show. It would only be for myself and it’s really just a bed for the night so to speak, as I’ve booked to attend courses in the days and spend time at the show.

I would be grateful if you are able to help with the above. shane.jones@powys.gov.uk

Shane Jones

*It would be nice if one of our members could help Shane. It should be beneficial to both of you. – Ed.*

**Bees and equipment for sale**

For family reasons I need to return to Australia asap and my return date to the UK is unknown so the equipment is up for sale along with these wonderful and hardworking and very productive ladies. Details on the attachment. Please contact me on 07802 227837 or brucem@xeniumsolutions.co.uk.

 Bruce Murchie

*We wish you well, Bruce, as you return ‘home’. –Ed.*

**Apiary clothing for sale**

I mentioned some time ago that I was setting up a website to offer apiary clothing.

I just wanted to let you know that this is now up and running.  The website is [www.beetogs.co.uk](http://www.beetogs.co.uk/)

Martin Major

**Bee Improvement for All: a one day course on Saturday 31st January 2015**

This course is designed to help beekeepers to improve their bees with particular attention to queens. Full details are given on the 3 attachments.

**National Honey Show: Latest information**

Please refer to the attachment. Do make an effort to enter at least one of the classes. It’s a bit of hassle, but a surprising amount of pleasure is experienced by winners at ‘The National’. First prizes are more obtainable than many realise; the important things are attention to detail and the careful reading of the rules of the class that you enter.

**Nearly new honey extractor for sale**

9-frame manual radial extractor (also with cage to use it as 6-frame tangential extractor) originally bought from National Bee Supplies. NBS still sell the same model at £467. It has seen virtually no use as it was too large for its current owner. Please contact Peter Webb (peterwebb@btinternet.com)for contact details and further information.

**BBKA Honey Survey**

The BBKA has requested our cooperation in completing this survey. Please use: [http://www.bcdponline.com/honey14.htm](http://bbka.us2.list-manage.com/track/click?u=b2f7bb7991a0c2554c620addc&id=1e32ff070c&e=a451ca9305)

**Vita’s photo competition**

See attachment for details of this competition.

**A case history of treatment for anaphylactic reaction to bee venom**

*Some of you may have heard that one of our members, David Parker, has had to stop keeping bees due to an anaphylactic reaction to bee stings that he received earlier this year. However, like Dr Harry Riches who had the experience some 30 years ago and undertook a self administered desensitising course of treatment with the result that he was able to continue his beekeeping, David has arranged to have a undergo a course (****not*** *self administered, but directed by skilled hospital personnel) and hopes for the same outcome as that of Harry. He has offered to contribute a series of articles in which he will record the history of his treatment. The first is below. These should be of great interest to all beekeepers. It is good to know that this expensive treatment is still available to us as a National Health Service provision. We wish David every success with his treatment and hope he is soon able to be with his bees again.*

**The Journey Starts**

Last year I attended a ‘John Hamer course’ and whilst having best intentions to wait until 2014, the bug got me and I started Bee Keeping in the summer of 2013. All was going well with my two Nucs, built up to be some three colonies and three Nucs by this summer, until I suffered two anaphylactic reactions to bee stings. The initial reaction of my wife was, “That’s it, give up bee keeping”. However, further investigation revealed that the Royal Surrey County Hospital does a desensitisation course.

When I approached my GP to be referred, I was told, “They don’t do this, do they?” and only after advising it was on the website, I was told, “Well okay, I will refer you”, but still with some disbelief that it was available. Well, four weeks after my referral I saw a very nice Registrar and after a quick check and a further blood test I have now been booked on the 12 week course starting on September 25th (the sessions are always run on a Thursday).

Hopefully a successful completion of the course will result in desensitisation to bee stings, and with the purchase of a very good bee suit (I have found one tested with African Bees) I will be allowed to keep bees again; although Apiary based rather than in the garden. I will write an update once the course has started.

 David Parker

*We look forward to reading the next steps of your journey David. – Ed.*

**An Editor required by the International Bee Research Association**

The International Bee Research Association has a vacancy for **Editor** of its journal **Bee World**.

For further details and how to apply please contact Julian Rees (reesjn@ibra.org.uk).

**Some extraordinary photographs of many beehives mounted on cliffs on the side of a mountain**

Do have a look at these pictures!

<http://www.dailymail.co.uk/travel/travel_news/article-2748149/You-bee-good-heights-Amazing-images-fearless-beekeeper-perching-precariously-mountain-covered-hives.html>

*Thanks to Richard Hignett for pointing out these extraordinary pictures. – Ed.*

**How to get your bees on a ‘Drunk in charge’ offence**

As a beekeeper and a recluse I like to play around and try new things and I think I have discovered a completely free and simple alternative to sugar in water or block form. Beer! As I live in a pub I’ve been playing around using the slops instead of the traditional sugar water. Lager is approximately 100 g (sugar? – Ed.) a pint with real ale and cider more like 200 g the bees prefer it to the water mix. Most pubs will give it you if you provide bottles and can prove you’re a beekeeper (with the promise of honey?)

Sam Lacey (a student on our Beginners’ Course this year)

*This is quite a new idea to me. It might be as well to check with the bee nutrition department before following Sam’s example, to ensure that your bees thrive as well as (we hope) his will on this unconventional bee feed… Does anyone have any other thoughts? – Ed.*

**A recent football result**

**Bees 1 : Beekeeper 0**

Our editor thought it worth me penning something on an interesting incident, presumably on the basis it might give you a laugh, might be instructive or more to the point, elicit some remedies or thoughts. So blame him!

I’m a first year beekeeper (I can already hear the alarm bells going off in your heads) and I acquired a poorly swarm in May, they had a high Nosema spore count and varroa mite drop. My sole intention this season was to nurse them back to health, not take any honey and be raring to go in spring 2015. Their temper was very docile, bordering on apathetic. The dog could quite happily stick his nose in the front entrance and even the missus began to show an active interest after being initially scared of having ‘Africanised’ bees in her backyard. So all tickety boo, and come the autumn they’ve been dosed with Nozevit+, soused with HiveClean and fed 3 gallons of 2:1. There’s now 40lbs’ish of stores, perfect. Or so I thought.

In a rush to do a hive inspection having left them for 2 weeks I popped on a smock rather than the suit, why, I've no idea cos I've not used it before. After discovering they'd not unreasonably built their own feral frame of comb in a space where I'd been meaning to pop in a frame or at least a spacer board, I removed it and of course started spilling honey. I was marvelling to see they are now soooo much more feisty these days, a step in the right direction from the poorly swarm of May. And at the pinnacle of my task in removing all the feral comb in a cloud of angry bees, imagine my surprise and then panic on discovering five inside my veil. Cue mad person running up the garden stripping off clothing, the dog being attacked and yelping for the indoors, a screaming wife and son roundly slamming the patio door shut and a de-veiled beekeeper trying to dissuade the aerial bombarders from having another attempt at stinging his already large nose. Ohh how we laughed.

Ever since, we now have unprovoked aerial attacks from one or two roaming air patrols, just by virtue of going into the garden with the hive being 30m away. It’s like a handful have developed ‘memory’ from the ham fisted hive inspection. We now keep a water spray and small beach bat by the back door to deter and swat marauders. They approach with a menacing high frequency wing beat, hovering in an intimidating manner as if searching for bare flesh. Staying still does nothing, they don’t appear to lose interest, so I lost my patience and the bat is proving effective. The missus mentioned ‘hairspray’ and ‘lighters’ the other day, oops.

Apparently there is a hypothesis (unproven) that the queen can produce batches of workers of a particular characteristic as ‘packets’ of sperm from a particular drone kick in. It seems plausible, but is her spermatheca compartmentalised to an extent that drone sperm stays separated/ That seems unlikely. As for them developing ‘memory’ that also seems improbable. The hive is a brood and a half and now brimming, so given the warm weather, the fact that the queen is still laying, that I’ve rammed them full of 2:1 syrup, that their health is now better, maybe some are like me, just a bit ‘grumpy’. I don’t use smoke (too much faff), but inspections are becoming increasingly interesting as clouds of bees try and nibble their way through the bee suit. It’s too late to re-queen, and the issue has subsided almost as soon as it started, so for now we’ll brazen it out until spring. The dog’s ears go back and he tears inside at the slightest hint of an insect, but the wife has calmed down, so all’s well; I don’t think I’ll find a pile of ashes where the hive used to be.

Richard Hignett

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|  **Dates for your diary** |
| Sunday | 12th October |  | Twickenham BKA Honey Show | August p. 5 |
| Thursday-Saturday | October 30th – November 1st | 3 days | National Honey Show, Weybridge | p. 2 |
| Saturday | November 15th | 2.30pm | Weybridge Division AGM | Details later |
| Saturday | December 6th |  | SBKA AGM, Reigate | Details later |
| Wednesday | January 14th | 7.30pm | Heather Hawker – Wax Chandlers | p. 1 |
| Saturday | January 31st | 1-day course | Bee Improvement | p. 2 |
| Friday  | February 13th | 7.30pm | Short presentations by members | p. 1 |
| Wednesday  | March 11th | 7.30pm | Alan Rudland – Bee diseases | p. 1 |
| Wednesday  | March 25th | 7.30pm | Michael Main - Swarms | p. 2 |

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