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| logoSURREY BEEKEEPERS' ASSOCIATIONWEYBRIDGE DIVISIONNEWSLETTER: October 2015 [**www.weybridgebeekeepers.weebly.com**](http://www.weybridgebeekeepers.weebly.com/) |

***Editorial***

Your winter feeding should now be complete. So should your autumn varroa treatments (although you may have decided to leave this as oxalic acid treatment in December/January). As mentioned in a previous issue, some have decided not to treat for varroa at all; please let me know if this is giving satisafactory (or other) results. There has always been a school of thought, even among ‘conventional’ beekeepers, that we should not use any chemical treatment at all, and rely on the bees to learn to deal with varroa themselves. One very highly regarded past member, the sadly missed John Hudson, held the firm opinion that chemical control of varroa should never have been introduced, but he also felt that, having started it, we now have no choice but to continue with it. However, that is another topic for thought and debate. It really would be very good to have some reliable input, in the form of members’ experience (or from others elsewhere), on this topic (to treat or not treat under the prevailing conditions), so that we may all learn from others. As with so many topics, especially in the world of nature, there are so many variables interacting with other variables, that there is not very likely to be a solution that fits every bee colony; all we can do is to listen to everyone, read as much as we can, think about what we have heard in conjunction with other sources of information, then attempt to come to a balanced conclusion that we are happy to try out, and finally attempt to make an accurate assessment of the outcome of what we did and decide how to proceed in the future. Beware of the persuasive beekeeper who gives what appears to be very knowledgeable and ‘correct’ advice: we once had such a member, whose ‘foolproof’ information was often found to be based on a single observation or incident, (this was not the above mentioned John Hudson, but quite a different kind of person).

At the risk of being a bore, I would again like to encourage members to vist the National Honey Show this month, especially if you are a new beekeeper. I would emphasise that this Show is worth at least one visit even if you decide never to go again. You would see all sorts of equipment (and prices) in the trade hall, have the opportunity of hearing talks intended for all levels of beekeepers (beginners to current university researchers), look at many beekeeping books, meet a wide variety of beekeepers including internationally respected ones, and see a spectaclar display of honey and other bee-related items on the show benches. Don’t forget to buy a member’s ticket; it gives you entry on each of the three days and costs less than the ticket for a single day – just another quirk of beekeepers and their organisations. We really are so fortunate still to have “The National” in Weybridge. If you go and are disappointed (I really cannot imagine this) write and vent your wrath on me.

**Your annual subscription to Weybridge Division is now (over)due!**

If you have already paid your subscription, thank you. Members who have not yet paid for 2015/2016 are reminded that this should have been done by the end of September.

The renewal form is attached again. Annual membership provides you with our own monthly newsletter, membership of the BBKA, insurance (public liability and bee diseases) and two beekeeping journals.

If you wish to cancel your membership, please let us know.

Thank you.

Anne Miller (Secretary)

**REMINDERS**

**Gardening Party at Teaching Apiary, Saturday 17th October**

See bottom of this page for details.

**Annual General Meetings**

Copied below is the notice about the Weybridge Division and Surrey BKA AGMs that Anne Miller (our Secretary) sent to members:

We have two AGMs in November.  Please try to attend both important meetings.

Weybridge is hosting the Surrey AGM and it would be fantastic to have as many members there as possible to represent our division.

**Weybridge Division AGM, Sunday 15th November at 2.30 pm**

Notice is hereby given that the Annual General Meeting of the Weybridge Beekeepers will be held on Sunday 15th November at 2:30 pm in St Peter’s Church Hall, 1 Burwood Road, Hersham KT12 4AA.

**Surrey Beekeepers’ Association AGM,  Saturday 28th November at 2:00 pm**

Notice is hereby given that the 137th Annual General Meeting of the Surrey Beekeepers’ Association will be held on Saturday 28th November 2015 at 2pm in Cobham Village Hall.

The meeting will be followed by tea and a talk by Dr Mihail Garbuzov, Research fellow at The Laboratory of Apiculture and Social Insects, Sussex University on: 'Seasonal foraging challenges in honeybees’.

Venue: Cobham Village Hall, Lushington Drive, Cobham, Surrey KT11 2LU.

*More details of both of these meetings will be provided in the November Newsletter.*

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**Report of Special Combined Weybridge and Guildford Winter Garden Meeting**

**Sunday 13th September 2015**

The weather was perfect for this cleaning, making, showing session that was hosted by the human dynamo that is David Parker, kindly supported by his wife Monique, daughter Alyssa and the dog, Eric. There was just one small shower but nothing to put us off.

Around 15 of us guided by David, ably supported by Paul Bunclark, Jane Hall and Geoff Cooper wax melted and cleaned frames, sawed, drilled and screwed the many shapes needed for the various personal projects. The end result was that 2 roofs, 25 brood dummy boards, 15 14”x12” dummy boards, 4 Snelgrove boards, countless crown boards, various ekes and 1 floor were produced. Many frames were cleaned. It was a stunning level of output!

We also had a chance to gaze admiringly at some work that David and Geoff had made in the past and mentally aspire to get better tools, better workspace and be better organised to produce such items ourselves.

This was rounded off by cake and refreshments, including fab scones made by Alyssa. All in all it was a very productive and cooperative session between the two local Associations. Karen Hall

*Our thanks to Karen for allowing us to use this report that she wrote for the Guildford Newsletter. Some photos taken on the day are available – please ask David or me if you would like to see them. – Ed.*

**FUTURE EVENTS**

**Gardening Party at St George’s School Teaching Apiary**

We would like to do some gardening at the apiary off Walton Lane on Saturday 17th October, 10:00 - 12:00.

We need help digging out bramble shoots, raking the ground and sowing more grass seed.

We also need to move some slabs and put up a storage bin.

Please bring spades/forks/rakes.  There are bees on site, so you will need bee protection, bring your suit and gloves and I will also bring some hats and veils.

Please bring your own drink and park in the lay-by just before the gate.  Biscuits/cake will be provided!

Please let me know if you will be able to help.

Thank you, Anne Miller (wbks\_secretary@outlook.com).

**Annual General Meetings**

See above, under REMINDERS. Full details of both meetings will be given next month.

**Winter Meetings**

We shall be holding our usual series of winter meetings in January, February and March next year. I have made tentative approaches to some of you about the possibility of participating in one of the meetings and would be pleased if you would now confirm your willingness to do this. One of the meetings will take the form that has proved popular over several years, i.e., a number of short contributions on the same evening, while for the others we will invite guest speakers. Please give me your ideas for topics and speakers or volunteer to make a contribution of your own – the more variety we have, the better.

Thank you, Marion C. (coopergm56@btinternet.com, 01932 242179).

**ITEMS OF LOCAL AND DIVISIONAL INTEREST**

**Obtain all of your premier grade foundation at at least 70% discount**

I have been surprised to find how many beekeepers, some of whom have kept bees for many years, do not know that new foundation can be obtained from Thorne’s (and other suppliers) with the above or even better discounts. You simply take advantage of the offer to exchange your blocks of old recovered wax plus a small fee for new foundation. The following example shows how it works:

Suppose you wish to obtain 100 sheets of BS deep, wired foundation.

Referring to page 18 (Beeswax Conversion) of the current Thorne’s catalogue, you will see that 1lb of wax is needed for 8 sheets, so 12½ lb will be traded to Thorne’s for 100 sheets. (100 ÷ 8)

The cost to convert this wax to wired foundation is also given on page 18 as follows:

12½ lb wax @ £1.30/lb = £16.25

wiring charge @ £1.00 / 10 sheets = 10.00

total conversion charge = £26.25

The catalogue price for 100 sheets of premier BS deep at the 50 sheet rate (page 15) is £106.70, giving a saving of £80.45, ie a discount of 75.40%. Notice that this discount makes the cash value of your old wax £6.45 per lb. (£80.45 ÷ 12½ lb).

This discount will vary slightly with the type of foundation and wax that you buy, but experience shows that the cost of the foundation acquired this way is always between about a quarter and a third of the price shown in the catalogue.

Thorne’s also have an alternative wax for foundation scheme which they call “No cash - straight-swap” where you don’t pay any money at all, but trade in more wax. Using this method, as shown below, the value of the traded-in wax falls to £4.04 per lb:

From page 18 of the catalogue, 100 sheets of BS deep wired foundation requires 100 ÷ 3**¾** = 27lb wax. This

makes the blocks of your wax worth £3.95 per lb (£106.70 ÷ 27 lb).

It has always seemed odd to me that Thorne’s will pay only £1.59 per lb of wax against purchase of new goods, or £1.02 per lb for outright purchase of the wax when comparing the above allowances that they make.

When I looked into this some years ago, other firms had similar schemes and similar prices. Please let me know if you have found significant differences from the above, elsewhere.

The wax does not have to be in pristine condition; as it comes from a wax extractor, solar or steam, is acceptable to Thorne’s, although they do reduce the allowance for wax in a filthy condition (some that I have seen in their in-box is pretty disgusting).

PS - I am not an undercover agent (or any other sort of representative) for Thorne’s: I am passing on this information as the financial implications of this wax trade-in do not seem to be very well known.

Geoff Cooper

**A talk of local interest, Tuesday November 3rd at 2.00 pm**

Although nothing to do with bees, readers may be interested in a talk in the current Royston Pike Lecture Series. The title is ‘The Elmbridge Commons. A Natural and Social History’. The speaker is Dave Page, who some of us know through the Elmbridge Natural History Society. He is the Countryside Estates Officer and has been involved in nature conservation in the Borough for 24 years – he is also a good speaker! Details are on the attached flyer.

**ITEMS OF GENERAL INTEREST**

**The BBKA in the future**

The BBKA are looking at their role in the current day and age. A report was made in late 2012. This was mentioned in the BBKA News in 2013 but the full report has never been circulated. There is a lot of information in that report which you may find interesting and in some cases challenging. A survey for all members has been prepared (see below).

The full 15-page report is attached, but Anne has kindly extracted the following:

BBKA in the coming years

Over the last twelve years the BBKA has grown significantly. In 2003 there were 60 Area Associations and 8,463 members. Today there are 69 Area Associations and around 25,500 members. Twelve years ago members were mostly interested in producing honey but British beekeeping has changed much over the last 12 years. Today’s membership’s interests are wide and varied.

Like many organisations that have grown rapidly, the BBKA structure and ways of working need to adapt. So the time has come to ask ourselves some questions starting with the following:

1.    What roles should the BBKA be playing?

2.    What sort of organisation structure would be best to fulfil these roles?

3.    What sort of constitutional structure would ensure good governance?

The Survey

A survey has been developed to get input which will allow us to start the process of answering those questions. All members are being asked to complete the survey to get as wide a response as possible. Three months has been allowed for consultation and discussion locally. The survey will be open from the beginning of October to the end of December. To help in the analysis of the data it should be completed online via the link available at <http://www.bbka.org.uk/members/bbka_survey_october_to_december_2015>

The BBKA is your organisation.

This survey is the first step in ensuring that it is the organisation you want it to be whatever your interest in the keeping of bees. Please help by supporting this survey and please be reassured that all responses will be treated in the strictest of confidence, with no one member or Association identified by their responses.

If you have any questions or problems completing the survey then please contact the office on [2015survey@BBKA.org.uk](mailto:2015survey@BBKA.org.uk)

If you do not feel able to answer any question there is, in most cases, a Don’t Know option. There are also opportunities to add comments for all questions where appropriate.

I look forward to seeing the results of this survey which I am sure will give us all a lot to think about. Thank you in advance for your support.

With Kind Regards

Doug Brown

BBKA Chairman

**National Honey Show - Stewards still required**

With the new National Honey Show layout, we will be requiring more stewards this year. Your help would be very much appreciated. Beginners are welcome. You do not need to be an expert beekeeper but I can promise that you will learn a lot from the other beekeepers you meet.  The deal is that you get free entry to the show, work for half a day at the direction of the chief steward and the rest of the day is yours to enjoy the show.  You even get £5 to buy a sandwich!   You have to take what’s given so you could be watching over the security of some of the displays whilst talking to visitors, directing visitors around the show, marshalling the crowds in the lecture theatres or anything else that comes up.

If you would like to do that please apply as soon as possible to The Chief Steward, Bill Fisher:

[steward@honeyshow.co.uk](mailto:steward@honeyshow.co.uk)

**National Honey Show - Volunteers needed for the Surrey BKA Information Stand**

In addition to the stewards required for the Show, as requested above, volunteers are also needed for the Information Stand. These are usually 2- to 3-hour sessions where you meet and chat to the diverse mix of show visitors. Members with all levels of beekeeping knowledge have thoroughly enjoyed their time doing this in the past so why not join in this year?

If you wish to be involved please email me at [rickwoodsbka@gmail.com](mailto:rickwoodsbka@gmail.com) or telephone on 01932 244326.

The Show is on from Thursday 29th October to Saturday 31st. Remember to give me the half days and times when you will be available. Free entry to the show is included for those who are not already members of the NHS.

Thank you, Sandra

**A note from BeeCraft on their presence at the National Honey Show**

We have put together some offers for everyone to celebrate our success at Apimondia and also hope to make suggestions for Christmas presents.

So, we are repeating our Microbox offer for collection at the National Honey Show at the end of this month.  Orders can be placed through our website or via this [Microbox](http://bee-craft.us2.list-manage1.com/track/click?u=1b3026ffe9de637a5feece3be&id=9a7918d397&e=e26e2dc2c4) link and the deadline to ensure availability is 24th October. They could also add a copy of Bob Maurer's book, Practical Microscopy to make the gift complete. Bob's book is part of one of the gift packs that Liz, our Shop Manager, has put together and which are available from now until 31 January 2016.  They can all be viewed [here](http://bee-craft.us2.list-manage.com/track/click?u=1b3026ffe9de637a5feece3be&id=14a9b25abf&e=e26e2dc2c4).

October signals that the National Honey Show is just around the corner.  We will have a prize draw for you to enter, back copies, books and more to buy, not to mention members of the *Bee Craft* team to chat to.  So come along and say 'Hi"!

Wendy and the *Bee Craft* team (edited)

**The ivy bee is here**

If the ivy bee, *Colletes hederae*, is not in your area yet, it soon will be. This solitary bee was first detected in Britain in 2001, having managed to somehow cross the Channel from elsewhere in Europe. It spread quite rapidly along the south coast of England and is now moving northwards. It has been seen in some numbers nesting in a garden in Staines and on ivy flowers in Old Woking.

As with other solitary bees, each female has her own individual nest. The female makes a tunnel in the soil and provisions her nest with a mixture of nectar and pollen that is collected from ivy flowers. Where soil conditions are suitable for nesting, large numbers of ivy bees may be making their nests in close proximity to each other. Get ready for reports of swarming bees in late September-October!

Female ivy bees are slightly bigger than honey bees and have a band of pale coloured hairs at the base of the abdominal segments. At this time of year, the only other bees likely to be seen on ivy flowers are honeybees and a few late season bumblebees. Ivy flowers attract a wide range of other insects, including wasps and hoverflies. Some of the latter are commonly known as drone flies, *Eristalis* species, as they resemble male honeybees. However, being flies they have only one pair of wings and short antennae. For further information on the ivy bee, see <http://www.bwars.com/index.php?q=content/colletes-hederae-mapping-project>

Andrew Halstead

**An opportunity for young beekeepers between 12 and 15 years of age**

This is an opportunity for young beekeepers to represent England at the IMYB (International Meeting of Young Beekeepers) in 2016. Full details are found on the relevant attachment.

**Bill Turnbull has announced he is leaving BBC Breakfast after nearly 15 years**

The presenter [told the*Daily Mirror*](http://www.mirror.co.uk/3am/celebrity-news/bill-turnbull-im-quitting-bbc-6363295) his tenure was "more than enough for me and the audience. So it is a good time to call it a day and do something else".

He said he wants to spend more time beekeeping, which he said he had been "neglecting for far too long".

*Thank you to David Parker for bringing this to our attention.*

**What do we do as beekeepers?**

A panel of pictures depicting what various other groups of people think we do, and what we really do is attached. *This item was contributed by David Parker.*

**Film – Maya the Bee**

Premiere screenings of this film have taken place at some Showcase Cinemas (none near us) and it is to go on national release on 23rd October, so do look out for it. The aim is ‘to raise awareness of honey bees with the younger generation, the beekeepers and bee guardians of the future’.

**FOR SALE**

Neither the Newsletter Editor nor Surrey Beekeepers Association take any responsibility for the accuracy of any of the following entries, or for the condition of any of the items advertised. If considering purchasing bees or second hand equipment, the prospective purchaser should take great care to ensure that the bees are not diseased, and that all equipment is sterilised before use. Inexperienced purchasers should take a knowledgeable beekeeper with them.

**Quantity of virtually new bee equipment**

Sandra Rickwood was contacted recently by Jennie the widow of Mike Gilkes who unfortunately passed away last year. She would like to dispose of his beekeeping equipment but as Jennie had no idea of what was there or the value I agreed to catalogue the items and arrange the sale on her behalf.

Although not a member of a Division Mike did his training with John Hamer at Blackhorse Apiary but sadly, due to ill health, did not have much time left to enjoy his new hobby.

Most of the equipment is virtually new “Thorne’s First Quality” and looked to be well assembled. As follows:-

6 – B.S. National Cedar Brood Boxes with frames.

10 – B.S National Cedar Supers with frames (2 new – unmade)

4 – B.S National Cedar 4” Roof (1 new – unmade)

2 – B.S National Cedar Gabled Roof.

2 – B.S. National Cedar Mesh Floors and Trays.

2 – B.S. National Varroa / Travelling Screens.

3- B.S. National Wire Queen Excluders.

4 – B.S National Plastic Queen Excluders.

4 – B.S. National Cover / Clearer Boards.

2 – 4 pint Rapid Feeders.

2 – 4 pint Contact Feeders.

2 – Nuc Boxes.

All money raised from this sale will be donated to “The Sam Beare Hospice”. With this in mind I would appreciate realistic offers for the complete lot rather than individual items. It would be an ideal winter project either for a new beekeeper or a beekeeper wanting to expand next year.

Offers please to Rob Chisholm by 24th October - Contact Details at the back of the Newsletter.

**WANTED**

**Hive site required**

Simon White, who was an enthusiastic student on our Beginners’ Course this year, has been searching without success for a place where he can start beekeeping. He is interested in a site in any of the following areas: Bagshot, West Byfleet or Fairoaks. If you can suggest anywhere suitable, Simon would be pleased to hear from you. Thank you. (Simon White: whiteage.1@btinternet.com)

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| **Dates for your diary** | | | | |
| Saturday | 17th October | 10 am – 12 noon | Gardening Party at Weybridge Teaching Apiary | p. 2 |
| Thursday - Saturday | 29th – 31st October | All day | National Honey Show, St George’s College, Weybridge | p. 5 |
| Sunday | 15th November | 2 .30 pm | Weybridge Division AGM, St Peter’s Church Hall, Hersham | p. 2 |
| Friday (evening) – Sunday (mid day) | 20th - 22nd November |  | Central Association of Bee-Keepers,  Kenilworth Weekend | September  p. 4 |
| Saturday | 28th November | 2 pm | Surrey BKA AGM,  Cobham Village Hall | p. 2 |

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