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| logoSURREY BEEKEEPERS' ASSOCIATIONWEYBRIDGE DIVISION NEWSLETTER: April 2016[**www.weybridgebeekeepers.weebly.com**](http://www.weybridgebeekeepers.weebly.com/) |

***Editorial***

As I write this (31st March), we are enjoying a second consecutive delightfully sunny day with the 5-day forecast of others to come. During March, my solar extractor has already produced over 5lb of wax from some old comb left from last year when I ran out of sunshine, so the bees have already contributed £30 towards their keep. Some of us are looking forward to next weekend’s BBKA annual spring convention at Harper Adams University in Shropshire, perhaps the major beekeeping event of the year in the UK. This should not be confused with the event at Stoneleigh (where it used to be held), despite intimations in the bee press that would appear to indicate that the long-standing convention has returned to its old venue. I would encourage beekeepers, especially new ones, to consider attending Harper Adams, even at this late stage. All details are in the BBKA News.

**REMINDERS and New Items for the near future**

**Nosema Clinic, Monday 4th April, Hersham Community Centre, Burhill Road, Hersham KT12 4BJ**

Previous newsletters and an email reminder of this event will jog your memory – do bring your bee samples for testing, and enjoy the opportunity to meet other members over coffee, etc.

**Beekeeping Refresher / Continuation Course for improvers, past students, BBKA Basic Assessment**

There is still (just) time to enrol for this 5-week course, which starts on Wednesday, 6th April at Hersham Community Centre, Burhill Road, Hersham KT12 4BJ – the same venue as the Nosema Clinic. Please see the March Newsletter and contact Tim Hutchinson (olddrone58@gmail.com) for further details or to enrol.

**First Summer Meeting, Saturday 30th April, with Michael Main**

See below, under FUTURE EVENTS for details.

**REPORTS**

**Surrey Bee Day, 5th March**

This was another good Bee Day, and our thanks and congratulations go to the organisers for the programme – and the lunch.

Our attention was drawn to a wide variety of bee-related topics: the history of the craft from ancient times, practical and constructive suggestions on what to look for (and do or not do) when opening a hive, an impressive overview of the masses of research being undertaken right now, and encouragement on how to take beekeeping forward after the beginner stage.

At the end of the afternoon we were asked if we would like another Bee Day, and the result was a unanimous affirmative, so look out for the date next year.

Marion C.

**Talk on ‘Honey bee diseases and control’, 7th March**

David Rudland, a bee farmer who was for several years a Bee Disease Inspector and runs East Surrey Bees, gave this talk to the students on the Beginners’ Course and a few members of the Division who came to listen. As always, David was enthusiastic and mainly optimistic, but he did stress particularly the many deleterious effects of varroa and the viruses for which the mite is a vector. He is a great advocate of shook swarms for just about everything, as he and others have found these to work well, with good colonies building up afterwards. However some of us are still not really happy about the massive disruption to the colony and the waste of brood, although this can be used to raise a new queen, then treated for varroa when all of the original brood has hatched, leaving a ‘clean’ colony. Others are not entirely happy about this either - such is beekeeping (and beekeepers), but may our discussions continue…

Marion C.

**Report on the talk by Howard Lawes on ‘Climate, weather and bees’, 29th March**

In our newspapers climate change is often a battleground between ‘warmists’ and ‘deniers’. The science of the subject is then submerged by arguments that rage between environmental catastrophe and economic disaster. The average layman is naturally suspicious of such partisan zeal and has to look elsewhere for a cool overview of climate change. That corrective was provided by Howard Lawes, a professional meteorologist, in St.Peter’s Church Hall, Hersham, on 29th March. In his introduction Howard gave us some quotations on weather from famous luminaries. One, from Einstein, used the unpredictability of the weather to illustrate the difficulty of predicting any phenomenon that is controlled by a multitude of complicated factors.

Were he alive today, I think Einstein would agree that meteorology has advanced a lot since his time, most notably through the huge amount of data gathered from satellites, but his point still holds. The complexity of meteorological phenomena and the uncertainties that attend them were the main themes of Howard’s talk. Using colourful slides he reviewed our knowledge of the structure and circulation of the oceans and atmosphere and their influence on our weather. Homing in on the UK, he explained the importance of the Gulf Stream in providing us with Goldilocks weather – not extreme. On a longer time scale he presented historical and geological records of global warming and pointed out that today’s rate of temperature rise is about twenty times the fastest rate seen in these records (at end of each ice age). Because of the uncertainties, Howard was guarded in his comments on predicting the effects of climate change, although the evidence all points in one direction. He was more guarded still in considering what climate change has in store for the bees. (He refrained from saying whether the bees or the beekeepers were the more unpredictable). In discussing the effect of the Gulf Stream on our weather, he had mentioned, rather sceptically, one prognostication in which melting of ice in the Arctic disrupts the Gulf Stream and leaves us with a climate on a par with Newfoundland. The more likely scenario is that UK winters will become warmer and wetter while summer and autumn will be warmer and drier. That would mean being extra vigilant that our bees are healthy and well-stocked with stores going into winter. Also the moisture content of our soils could drop, restricting nectar flows. On a more optimistic note the outlook for British wine makers was good. For bees and beekeepers, the only certainty seems to be that they will have to adapt to climate change. Roy White

*Thank you, Roy, for this report with its overview and clear sense of Howard’s presentation.*

**FUTURE EVENTS**

**Summer Meeting to be held in Michael Main’s garden at 2.30 pm on Saturday 30th April**

This is our first Garden meeting of the year, and will be held at:

Hill House, Northfield Place, Weybridge, Surrey KT13 0RF.

Directions are as follows:- leave Weybridge past the station heading south along Brooklands Road, pass Caenshill Road on the right at the top of the hill and continue along Brooklands Road approx. 100 yds. and take the next turn on the left (opposite a letterbox on the RHS of the road), that is Northfield Place. Proceed down the hill past one road on the left and another, Crossfield Place, on the right.  The house is the second on the RHS after Crossfield Place (White house with green tile roof)  Please park considerately to the neighbours with as many cars as possible on my drive (we should get 6-7 cars if parked close).  *PTO…*

The theme of this meeting will be swarm control and depending on the weather AND the bees we will be performing a shook swarm and followed, under strict supervision, by an Oxalic acid sublimation.  Some of the culled brood from the shook swarm will be used to make up a Nuc ready to receive a swarm queen cell.  A Bailey comb change, which will have been started beforehand, will be described and completed.  Discussions then on what to do when the colony ignores what preventative steps you have taken which will include a Pagden. Do try and make this meeting to refresh yourself on several swarm control techniques.

 Following the meeting we will be having a picnic tea.  Hot water, tea, coffee and milk will be provided.  Please bring your own mugs and something to share for the picnic.

Michael Main

**Dates and topics for the rest of the summer meetings**

Full details of each will be given monthly in the newsletters.

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| **Hosts** | **Date** | **Main Subject** | **Secondary Subject** |
| Peter Bowbrick | 15th May | Disease Inspection | TBC |
| Geoff & Marion Cooper | 11th June | Queen Rearing | Super Clearing Methods and types |
| Chris Burnett and Sue Lawes | 9th July | Top Bar Hive | Finding and marking a queen (or drone) |
| David Parker | 20th August | Make it Session | Guildford and Weybridge Divisions |
|   | 3rd September | End of Season Social | Location TBC |
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David Parker

**Surrey BKA Training day for the General Husbandry Practical Assessement, Saturday 21st May**

See attachment.

**ITEMS OF LOCAL INTEREST**

**An answer to your garden slug problem?**

On 25th March I went through 6 colonies with a quick inspection and I am glad to say all were alive with plenty of food although a couple were very weak.  All colonies went into winter with double brood boxes.  All boxes were wood except on one colony which had one poly brood box at the top and I was very surprised to find this colony had 25-30 slugs and 8-10 earthworms under the crown board and under the lugs of the frames.  I have never encountered this before and wondered if it was due to the Poly box.  The hive was the end hive of a row of three.  Has anyone had a similar experience with poly hives?

 Michael Main

*I have not used poly hives, but have often found slugs inside an old mini-nuc box made of cork that I use for rearing queens. They must like it warm. –Ed.*

**Swarms 2016**

I am anticipating a considerably reduced number of swarm calls this year, as they will be spread across the BBKA swarm list collectors by postcode.  Accordingly I will  NOT have so many swarms to find homes for.  However,  I will be keeping a list of members wanting swarms and will do my best to supply them.  If any member who is on the BBKA swarm collector list and has too many swarm calls to deal with please let me know and I can supply contacts of those members wishing to get one.

Michael Main

**Feedback on the recent newsletter articles on oxalic acid sublimation for Varroa control**

Our member Martin Major commented to me that when he used sublimation, because of his fairly small number of hives, he felt that there was no need for him to consider the need for the use of a full face helmet-type mask as he had the time to allow the fumes to dissipate from the hive area before removing the heating tool and entrance block to the next hive, but would certainly advocate the use of the lighter type face masks using the correct filter for oxalic acid vapour. He felt it important to keep upwind of the hive during treatment. He contrasted the different levels of hazard experienced by bee farmers and hobby bee-keepers, and suggested that we do not lose sight of common sense and be very aware of the possible hazards of oxalic acid. In my opinion this relatively new subject (oxalic acid sublimation) is significant to all of us; please let me know of any aspects that you feel are important as a result of experience, or what you have read, or from your own specialised knowledge. -*Ed.*

**Ventilated Bee suits**

Just for information, last year I bought an all-in-one ventilated suit from Mann Lake. I was and am very pleased with it, though it cost ?£140–ish.

BUT, I have just bought, and received, a ventilated jacket from Thorne’s for £55 and, having had a good look, am minded to say the two suits come from the same factory. This makes the Thorne’s all-in-one, at £70, a very good buy indeed, in my opinion.

Gil Bray

**ITEMS OF GENERAL INTEREST**

**Seasonal Bee Inspectors Wanted**

The National Bee Unit has two vacancies for Seasonal Bee Inspectors (SBIs) in Greater London and East or West Sussex. If you are interested in applying for either of the posts, please use the following link [SBI Jobs](https://www.civilservicejobs.service.gov.uk/csr/index.cgi?SID=a2V5PTUwNzAwMDAmcGFnZWFjdGlvbj1zZWFyY2hieWNvbnRleHRpZCZwYWdlY2xhc3M9Sm9icyZ1c2Vyc2VhcmNoY29udGV4dD0xNjg4NDU3MyZyZXFzaWc9MTQ1ODU2MDU2Ny1hYjAwYTA1Y2IwZmY4ODJhNTJhYjA3MGJhYTk4YTQ2NDQ5OWQ4MjIy).  The page will display one advert. Please use this to apply for both the Greater London and/or East or West Sussex post.  If you have any questions regarding either of the posts, please contact Diane Steele (Regional Bee Inspector - South Eastern England) - 07775 119452 - diane.steele@apha.gsi.gov.uk

Kind regards,

National Bee Unit.

**The result of a BBKA Survey of Members**

We have been asked to make the attached results from the BBKA Survey of members available to our members. It is too lengthy to include in our newsletter as it is a 54-page document. The aim of the survey was to obtain the reaction of the membership of the BBKA to a number of questions and suggestions for the way the BBKA should develop in the future which had been posed to Doug Brown – a Trustee and former Chairman of the BBKA.

**BIBBA The Bee Improvement and Bee Breeders Association**

BIBBA was formed in 1964 by a group of enthusiastic beekeepers who were convinced of the suitability of native and near native honey bees to the climate and conditions of Britain and Ireland.

They encourage  members to form bee breeding groups to improve and propagate native and near native bees and provide help and advice.  You can find out more here: [http://bibba.com](http://bibba.us8.list-manage.com/track/click?u=539749ff0ecfb725b841f2421&id=7bd6e24ec2&e=e49108156d)

They are offering 'BIBBA HUMM' -  a free e-Newsletter for beekeepers to be kept informed of their activities and to encourage more beekeepers to improve their local bees.

BIBBA Humm will be issued periodically -  Maximum one a month but more likely to be between two and four copies annually.  Please sign up for your copy here ([http://bibba.com/humm/](http://bibba.us8.list-manage.com/track/click?u=539749ff0ecfb725b841f2421&id=d6e2c3f97b&e=e49108156d)).

BIBBA members receive a more frequent electronic newsletter with "magazine standard” articles and a hard copy magazine once (or more!) a year.  If you wish to join BIBBA you will find full details on this link ([http://bibba.com/join/](http://bibba.us8.list-manage.com/track/click?u=539749ff0ecfb725b841f2421&id=e4dec6c531&e=e49108156d)).

**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.

**Seven Commercial Supers – I am converting to Nationals**

6 - Pine, assembled and painted green with masonry paint.

Complete with ten frames and foundation, some partially drawn.

1 – Cedar, assembled and painted green with masonry paint.

Complete with three frames and foundation, some partially drawn.

75 – 16 X 6 side bars

25 – sheets Thornes Premier 16 X6 thin super foundation, unwired.

Buyer to collect from West End, Near Woking. Just off junction 3, M3.

£100.00

Contact: Keith Young, 01276 503000, keithyoung101@hotmail.com

**A flow hive for sale**

I noticed on Ebay for the first time a Flow Hive for sale, with the quote ‘Beat the Que’ but being sold at cost after having been built by someone.  Wonder what caused them to change their mind, the realisation it might be hard to do a shook swarm/Bailey comb change with one of these or the fact that in the warm weather where it was developed the honey might flow a bit more easily than in our lovely climate.  Here it is if anyone wants to bid on it.

<http://www.ebay.co.uk/itm/BEE-Hive-/152031705780?hash=item2365cbbab4:g:9dcAAOSw9uFW-Nh->

David Parker

**An apiary on offer – ? for sale**

After 24 years of beekeeping, I have decided to hang up my smoker and enjoy honey from other local beekeepers. I had the pleasure of sharing my apiary with a new beekeeper last year and decided to gift him my colonies and equipment.

This leaves me with a delightful half acre plot of land near Holmbury St. Mary, Surrey, with a right of vehicle access. It is part pasture, part bluebell coppice bordered by a stream. I have a screened apiary, shed, wood store, covered shelter together with a new wildlife hedge, fruit trees and a weaving willow bed.

I would be pleased to hear from you.

Debbie Vivers (01483 274523)

**Bees for sale**

**A number of FULLY ESTABLISHED OVERWINTERED COLONIES with 2015 Queen - available in both single or double brood box (National brood frames)**

The colonies were treated for Varroa late summer/autumn 2015.

All queens are locally reared from our gentle breeding stock. Price of each colony: £160 (excluding hive)

These colonies are available in early spring as soon as the weather allows.

For more information, please contact me – details below.

**NUCS (available to pre-order now – *Special Offer*: *£10 discount for nuc orders received by 30th April***

**6 Frame Nucs** (National frames) with 2016 mated queen (marked white).

Supplied in 6 frame Poly Nuc. £140 + £20 nuc deposit which is refundable on return.

**5 Frame Nucs** (National frames) with 2016 mated queen (marked white).

Supplied in 5 frame Correx Travelling Box. Price: £145.

The nucs will have a mated 2016 Queen, locally reared from our gentle breeding stock, together with a combination of her brood in various stages and stores.

These nucs will be available from end May/June onwards depending on the weather.

Feel free to contact me, if you have any questions:

**Astrid Bowers-Veenman** (Hog’s Back Bees) Location: Ash Green (between Guildford and Farnham, just off the A31) Distance from Weybridge: 12 miles (as the crow flies)

**Tel.No.: 01252 330229 / Mobile: 07803 069798**

**Email:****astrid@coginternational.co.uk**

**Apiary clothing for sale**

Bee Togs Apiary clothing.  Sale now on:

Go to the Bee Togs website at [www.BeeTogs.co.uk](http://www.beetogs.co.uk/) for some great deals on bee suit and bee jacket bundles, or call Martin on 07973 653575.

Martin Major

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| **Dates for your diary** |
| Monday  | 4th April | 7.30 – 9.30 pm | Nosema Clinic, Hersham | p. 1  |
| Wednesday | 6th April | 7.30 pm | First session Refresher / Basic Assessment course | p. 1 |
| Saturday | 16th April | Viewing 11 am, auction 12 noon | Reigate Auction, Mickleham | March Flyer |
| Saturday | 30th April | 2.30 pm | Summer Meeting, Michael Main, Weybridge. Swarms, oxalic acid | p. 2-3 |
| Sunday | 8th May | 10.00 am – 4.00 pm | Queen Rearing Workshop, East Surrey Bees | Feb. p. 3 |
| Sunday | 15th May | 2.30 pm | Summer Meeting, Peter Bowbrick, Disease inspection | Details later |
| Saturday | 21st May | All day | SBKA preparation for General Husbandry Assessment | Attachment |
| Monday | 30th May | All day | Surrey County Show, Guildford | March, p. 4 |
| Saturday | 11th June | 2.30 pm | Summer Meeting, Geoff Cooper,Queen rearing, super clearing | Details later |
| tbc | tbc June  | tbc | Disease Recognition and Treatment Day, East Surrey Bees | tbc |
| Saturday | 9th July | 2.30 pm | Summer Meeting, Chris Burnett & Sue Lawes, Top-bar hive, queen finding and marking | Details later |
| Saturday | 20th August | 2.30 pm | Summer Meeting, David Parker,‘Make-it’ session | Details later |
| Saturday | 3rd September | tba | End-of-season social event | Details later |
| Thurs - Sat | 27-29 October | All day | National Honey Show, Esher | March p. 4 and attachments |

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