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

***Editorial***

Well, the Honey Harvest part of the beekeeping year ended better than it appeared might be the case at the start of July. I hope that you have all had a reasonable crop. While it’s not our main reason for keeping bees, it always gives a good feeling if our season’s pleasure with the bees is capped with some honey as well. Now we must remember the words of my beekeeping teacher, “The 31st of July is the first day of the bees’ winter”. For us beekeepers, this means that we need to start to think about the winter stores in each hive by early September, our chosen method of varroa control and mundane things such as starting hive maintenance as well as the more interesting work of planning and preparing for next season.

**REPORTS**

**Garden Meeting on 9th July at Sayes Court Allotments, and Sue Lawes’ garden**

The first part of the meeting was held at the allotment site of Chris Burnett, where Chris had set up an apiary last year after completing a beginners’ course. Unusually, Chris had decided to experiment with top bar hives, due to difficulties lifting heavy objects (eg full honey supers !). The simply and cheaply constructed hives allow the bees to build their own comb (without foundation), having just a strip of wax on the underside of the bar to start them off. The spacing of the bars is 40mm, the same as conventional foundation-filled frames, and the bees create comb to fill the V-shaped space below. Hives must be level, otherwise distorted comb is built, and combs must always be replaced in the same position to account for variations in thickness. Removal of frames needs to be undertaken carefully, as the comb is not supported on side bars nor is it wired. Sometimes the comb is joined to the walls of the hive, in which case the wax is simply cut away using a kitchen knife. The bees start building at one end and continue sideways (rather then upwards) until the hives (either 2', 3' or 4' long) are filled. Chris has not yet had the pleasure of extracting honey, but this is done by careful uncapping and warming the comb to allow the honey to separate out.

We then walked across the park to the garden of Sue Lawes, where some hands-on hive inspection took place followed by pleasant afternoon tea on the patio.

The meeting was attended by 9 members, all of whom were fascinated by the concept of the top-bar hive, and many were able to offer helpful advice to Chris, who said that he was pioneering the concept on a trial and error basis.

For anyone interested in finding out more, Chris showed and recommended the book, "Top Bar Hive Beekeeping" by W. A. Mangum, an American beekeeper who commercially runs 200 top bar hives. The book was published in 2012 by Stinging Drone Publications, 410 pages.

Paul Bunclark

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

**Talk by Jamie Ellis in East Horsley - TONIGHT**

See page 2 for details.

**The 2nd Combined Guildford and Weybridge Divisions ‘Make it’ Session, Saturday August 20th**

Full details in the ‘Future Events’ section on page 2.

**Jamie Ellis talk, 1st August, 7.00 for 7.30 pm at East Horsley Village Hall**

Full details of the talk by this world famous professor from Florida are on the attached flyer. The topic of his talk, ‘Addressing the sustainability of beekeeping in the 21st century’, is of interest to every beekeeper. He is an excellent, entertaining speaker and this event should not be missed if at all possible.

Please let Sandra know if you intend to be there: rickwoodsbka@gmail.com, 01932 244326.

**Surrey BKA Training Day, Saturday 3rd September**

Details of this this training day were given in an attachment in the July Newsletter and are attached again.

 **FUTURE EVENTS**

**August Meeting, Saturday 20th August**

**The 2nd Combined Guildford and Weybridge Division’s ‘Make it’ Session**

David Parker will again be hosting a ‘Make It’ session at his house on the 20th August, starting at 1.30pm to 5pm. Thorne’s prices in brackets in the list below show how much you can save! This year the aim will be to concentrate on making a few simple things such as:

·         Crown Boards (£14.63)

·         Roofs (you will need to buy the metal part, Mannlake recently sold for £5, but a complete roof goes for £48)

·         Dummy Boards (£6.12), we can either make boards that fit into existing frames or that you just add a top bar to

·         Snelgrove Boards (£35.80)

·         Clearer Boards such as:

 Rhombus clearer boards (plastic Rhombus sold for £1 in the sale, the board goes for £23.60)

 Canadian Clearer boards (the five cones will cost you £2, the whole board £23.60)

·         Ekes

·         Entrance blocks (£3.83)  Timber from Champion will cost you circa 33p to make it!)

If you can bring some wood - great, if not I have spare wood, where from? Skips!  As you drive past a skip, do look, often there is beautiful 9, 12, or 18mm plyboard or OBF (looks like big woodchips) being thrown out.  Always ask the householder’s permission, but I have never yet been refused.  Also look out for extra large pallets, the long boards make great free timber for ekes.

I will also get in from Champions a stock of the bee space wood needed for the top bars of dummy boards and crown boards.  If you are intending to make Snelgrove boards please advise and I can pick up the 21mm wood for this, also does entrance blocks. As I have to pay cash for this wood there will be a small charge if you use it. The idea as well is for people to bring along other things they have made to help inspire others.

As usual, please let me know if you hope to come, and bring a contribution to the refreshments for the tea after. Drinks will be supplied, and parking is on the road.

davidparker@polymathconsulting.com, 01483 854611

Full address is 11 Horsell Park Close, Woking, GU21 4LZ

WARNING: if the weather is bad the meeting will have to be cancelled due to needing to run electrical machines outside.

 David Parker

**Ulster Beekeepers 2017 Anual Conference**

Please find attached a flyer promoting our 2017 conference which will be held on 10th to 11th March We do hope you plan to join us. Kind regards.

David McCartney

**Date and topic for the rest of the Summer**

Full details will be given in the September newsletter.

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| **Hosts** | **Date** | **Main Subject** | **Secondary Subject** |
|   | 3rd September | End of Season Social | Location TBC |
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David Parker

**ITEMS OF LOCAL INTEREST**

**Postscript to Howard Lawes’ talk**

Following his recent talk to our Division, and further contacts with him on associated weather matters, Howard has kindly sent the attached interesting rainfall map for the UK. In June, Surrey had the highest rainfall of any county in Britain; it was 246% above the 1981-2010 average amount for that month.

**Montenegro beekeeping**

Continuing the holiday theme, Richard Hignett has sent this note:

I recently had the pleasure of mountain biking in north Montenegro.

It was an amazing experience, quite stunning scenery.

What was most striking is how verdant it is up north, and Alpine in terms of meadows.

Also, every house has an air of self-sufficiency, wonderfully large and well maintained vegetable plots, chickens, goats, old style hay ricks and bees!

To view Richard’s photographs please go to the last 4 attachments.

*Please send me more short reports like the above of any holiday experiences related to beekeeping. – Ed.*

**ITEMS OF GENERAL INTEREST**

**Asian Hornet identified in Alderney, Friday 22 July 2016**

An adult hornet was found last week in Alderney by a States of Alderney employee and has since been positively identified by the UK's National Bee Unit as being a non-native Asian Hornet *(Vespa velutina)*. The nearby nest and larvae were destroyed as a precaution.

[https://www.gov.gg/artcle/155332/As...ed-in-Alderney](https://www.gov.gg/article/155332/As...ed-in-Alderney)

*Will we have the Asian Hornet soon?*

*Thank you to Anne Miller for passing this information on to us.*

**Creating a buzz: Using bees to pull people out of poverty**

An interesting article will be found on the BBC website by clicking on: [http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/business36702997?utm\_content=buffer1ac7d&utm\_medium=social&utm source=twitter.com&utm\_campaign=buffer](http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/business-36702997?utm_content=buffer1ac7d&utm_medium=social&utm_source=twitter.com&utm_campaign=buffer)

Describes how beekeepers are helping people in Tunisia.

*Details sent by David Parker*

**The Case Against Honeybees**

We have received a long article from our member Frank Crosnier which he described as ‘a provocative title but food for thought’. I imagine many will find parts of it extremely objectionable (or worse) to read in a beekeepers’ newsletter such as this. It is definitely thought-provoking and certainly gives another view on the special attention given to our beloved creature. It would be very interesting to have your own thoughts on the content of this article, a summary of which is printed below.

You can read the original by clicking on:

<http://www.atlasobscura.com/articles/the-case-against-honeybees?utm_source=facebook.com&utm_medium=bbcearth>

After reading this article, I have to admit that my first reaction was a reluctant, “Fair comment.”

The author (Cara Giaimo, an American biologist and science writer) feels strongly that too much attention is being paid to honey bees and that this gives them an unfair advantage in the big scheme of things. She points out that they are brought to our attention everywhere, being displayed as ‘large, fuzzy and tailed by adorable, big-eyed young that bear some resemblance to human babies’, whereas in reality they are ‘tiny, stinging and lay whole duplexes of wriggly larvae.’ She is not against honey bees *per se*, although very much against the appalling way they are treated by many US bee farmers and the many ways that they are presented as ‘cute’. She argues that it is the long and close association of honey bees with humans that has made us give them this disproportionate attention in comparison with other pollinators and other creatures in general. The author writes of the place of bees in history, where they have been shipped with humans over the world and have ‘remained a rhetorical tool, even as the agricultural shift made them an economic necessity’, leading to the present day, when ‘we have created a system where we need to bring in an outside pollinator. And the honeybee, being stackable, is what we selected.’

She concludes, ‘Humans took a bug across the ocean and used it to reshape a whole continent.’ ‘We’ve really been harping on that old question – what can they do for us. Maybe it’s time, finally, to ask what can we do for them.’ – and to her, one answer is not to overrate them.

Marion Cooper

**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 secondhand 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.

**Nucleus colonies and Api-Life Var**

I have a number of 4/5 frame nucs, surplus to our queen rearing programme, for disposal £10.00 / frame. They are all headed by one of our 2016 queens, marked white. They could probably be overwintered or used to re-queen an existing colony.

Surplus Api-Life Var @ £1.80 / pack, (2 packs required for each colony)

Contact :- Rob Chisholm, details at end of Newsletter.

**Apiary clothing for sale**

**Bee Togs Apiary Clothing - Clearance Sale Special Offer**

Special offer for the clearance of Bee Togs apiary clothing.  Suits £55, Jackets £45.  Contact Martin Major direct on 07973 653575 or email at BeeTogs@gmail.com. You need to contact me direct as these cannot be bought from the web site at this price.  Hurry whilst stocks last.

**Bees for sale**

We have available:

A number of COLONIES WITH 2016 MATED QUEEN (National Standard Brood Frames) Price for 1 brood box full with mated 2016 Queen, bees, brood at all stages and stores: £195 (Larger colonies will be available at extra charge). For more information, please contact me - details below. (Feel free to contact me if you wish to see the bees beforehand)

NUCS are ready now: 6 Frame Nucs (National Standard frames) with 2016 mated queen. Supplied in 6 frame Poly Nuc. Price: £140 + £30 nuc deposit which is refundable on return. 5 Frame Nucs (National Standard frames) with 2016 mated queen. Supplied in 5 frame Correx Travelling Box. Price: £145. The Nucs have a mated 2016 Queen, locally reared from our gentle breeding stock, together with a combination of her brood in various stages, and stores.  The Queens will be marked white.

**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**

**Bees and beekeeping equipment for sale from a past member of Weybridge Beekeepers**

Most of the equipment in Stephen Sore’s advertisment in the July issue has been sold, but the following are still available:

bees, to give away

extractor £500

2 settling tanks, offers

Contact Stephen, on Aquilasore@mail.com

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| **Dates for your diary** |
| Monday | 1st August | 7.00 for 7.30 pm | Jamie Ellis - “Addressing the sustainability of beekeeping in the 21st century” | p.2 and flyer  |
| Saturday | 20th August | 1.30 pm | Summer Meeting, David Parker,‘Make-it’ session | p. 2  |
| Saturday | 3rd September | tba | End-of-season social event | Details later |
| Saturday | 3rd September | All day | SBKA Training Day | p. 2 |
| Thurs - Sat | 27-29 October | All day | National Honey Show, Esher | March p. 4 and attachments |

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