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| logoSURREY BEEKEEPERS' ASSOCIATIONWEYBRIDGE DIVISION NEWSLETTER: January 2017[**www.weybridgebeekeepers.weebly.com**](http://www.weybridgebeekeepers.weebly.com/) |

***Editorial***

I am delighted to report that after several often frustrating years of investigating possible sites for the Division’s new club house, apiary and education centre, very significant progess has been made in recent weeks. To use popular jargon, a major breakthrough has been achieved. We must be very grateful to those who have been involved in this exploration. They have exercised great patience and initiative, but above all great optimism that our new beekeeping centre would eventually be realised. Each newsletter, from this one onwards, will contain a progress report on the project.

Meanwhile we must not forget to care for our bees. It has been a mainly mild winter. Do they all have enough stores?

**Potential Beekeeping Centre in Pleasant Place, Hersham**

Further to the presentation given at our AGM and the announcement in the last newsletter, the New Club House/Education Centre project team are planning to provide every month in the newsletter updates and information on where things are.  On December 12th an ‘open hour’ was held at the Pleasant Place site and some 15 members attended to view the potential site and the building; a further 9 members who would have liked to be present, sent their apologies.  Overall reactions from those attending were very positive both on the condition of the potential building and size of the site.  We are intending holding another open day once Council permission is obtained, although due to the fact that a Council employee needs to be in attendance it will again have to be on a weekday.

By the time you read this newsletter the full business plan will have been submitted to the Elmbridge Council and we hope to have a decision by March. As part of this process the Council will also be conducting their own survey of the premises so we will have a professional analysis of the current site, including the cesspit.

I am very pleased to say that a highly experienced builder and a designer/builder, both Weybridge members, have come forward and said they would be able to provide some support. Via another member, we also have promise of the services of a structural engineer.  We are, of course, still looking for more people who might be able to support, so if you have, or know anyone who has skills in the following areas, do get in touch:

–      Fundraising

–      Architectural/design

–      Specification of fittings and research of equipment/where to buy

–      Project management

–      Trades e.g. plumbing, electrician, etc. to oversee those we hire and to check work

–      Information Technology

–      Audio Visual

–      Education Material Design/Writing/Production

 David Parker

davidparker@polymathconsulting.com

**REMINDERS and notice of New Items**

**Beginners’ Course**

This years’s course, to be given by Andrew Halstead, starts on Monday, 16th January in the Hersham Community Trust Hall, Burhill Road, Hersham KT12 4BJ. If you know of anyone who would like to join, please ask them to contact Sue Lawes: slawes@hotmail.com.

**Winter Meeting, Thursday January 19th, 7.30pm, Hersham Community Trust Hall**

The details for this meeting have now been finalised, as follows:

1. *Our usual item – an account of some early beekeeping experiences by recent students from our Beginners’ Course.* The Cownley Family
2. *Oxalic acid sublimation.* *Presentation on some recent research and a (safe) demonstration of this method for controlling Varroa.*  David Parker
3. *More on beekeeping in Africa.* Richard Emmett

The Hall (recently refurbished) is the last building on the left in the straight section of Burhill Road, entered from beside St Peter’s Church in Burwood Road, Hersham. You will pass Back Green on the left, then a house or two, then a plant nursery, Woodlark Nurseries, and the Hall is the next building on the left. There is plenty of parking – outside the Hall, in the road and possibly in the car park of the Children’s Nursery opposite. The postcode is KT12 4BJ.

We look forward to seeing you there, at our first meeting of the new year. Marion Cooper

**Beekeeping Refresher Course / Preparation for the BBKA Basic Assessment**

As per last year we will again be running the above course starting end of January/beginning of February (dates to be confirmed).

The course will run for four weeks with an optional fifth week if you require a practical session. The sessions will be approximately two hours.

Based on feedback from last year’s students we will keep strictly to the syllabus for the first part of the sessions and then for the last 15 minutes there will be an optional question and answer clinic for any other items not covered in the syllabus.

The cost of the course will be £40.00 for the four weeks with the optional practical at an extra £10.00 If you wish to go on to do your Basic Assessment there will be an additional payment to the BBKA for this, last year it was £15.00 not sure if it will change for next year.

We will need a minimum of ten students to make the course viable so if this number is not reached the course, unfortunately will not be able to go ahead.

If you are interested in attending the above course please email Tim & Sally Hutchinson on :

info@beehappyproducts.co.uk

*It is worth noting that all who have attended these courses in the past have enjoyed them and that all candidates who took the Basic have passed, several with Credit. –Ed*

 **FUTURE EVENTS**

**Talk on Asian Hornets – Thursday, February 16th, 7.30pm Cobham Village Hall**

**The latest serious threat to our bees**

We are fortunate to have **David Kemp** as our speaker. He is a member of Guildford Division who spends about half of his time in France, where he has first-hand experience of Asian hornets - and still has bees!

This topic is obviously of current interest and importance, and there will be a need for all of us to be particularly vigilant in spring, when any hornets that are around will show themselves and start nest-building. Because of this we have invited the members of other Surrey BKA Divisions to join us, so have booked a more suitable hall. Please make a note of the date, if you have not already done so. There will be a reminder in the February Newsletter.

Marion C.

**Surrey Bee Day, Saturday 18th February 9.30am**

The flyer giving full details is attached again.

**A Quiz**

Farnham BKA are holding a quiz at Tilford Institute on Saturday 25th Feb 2017 and we would like to challenge neighbouring associations to field a team. Tickets are £15 to include supper of either fish and chips or veggie shepherds pie, both provided by the local pub. The quiz will have just 1 bee related round so it should prove interesting to all our non-beekeeping friends, too.

Full details on the attached flyer. We look forward to competing against you!!

Happy New Year!!!! Diane Cook

**ITEMS OF LOCAL INTEREST**

**A “Thank You” from Sandra**

To all the members of Weybridge Division, thank you for the beautiful flowers and the voucher that you gave to me at our AGM in November. The flowers lasted nearly two weeks. I have put the money towards a trip on the THV Patricia in August when it is working along the UK West coast.

Hopefully I will meet up with many of you in 2017 - - beekeeping as usual.

Once again, thank you and I wish everyone a successful beekeeping year in 2017.

 Sandra

**Removing a colony of bees from a tree in Staines**

“I have been referred to you by xxx. You are a beekeeper; yes?” So started the conversation at the beginning of December. My BeeSuit had just been carefully cleaned, equipment all packed away for the winter, after all, who needs stuff in the middle of December?

“We have a branch on a tree that is being taken down that has a bees nest in it. Can you help ?”– First thought: can I just leave the bees in place to spring and take the whole branch away? – “Not really you see it is about 1m high and 1m thick”.

Okay, now I know why the friend and fellow beekeeper sent them to me – two days earlier my chainsaw had come back from servicing and had a nice new blade. So equipment all piled into the car and a quick phone call to enlist help; cutting out wild comb I find much easier with six hands than two and Marion and Geoff met me in Staines by the river where the huge piece of wood was sitting on the towpath covered in a builders’ bag to stop the bees flying everywhere and inquisitive people coming too close.

30 minutes later, after some serious chainsaw work, we could start cutting the combs out. And it was a good size colony, ended up filling some 7 frames with bees and stores, although no capped brood seen easily. We reckon maybe around 5 – 8lbs of stores though.

Re-housed in a brood box we can but hope. We did not see a queen when transferring everything over, but as one might imagine it is not the cleanest or easiest job. I have fed with fondant and will shook swarm them onto proper foundation in the spring. And of course, now wash my beesuit again so it can go away clean for a few weeks.

David Parker

*See the 3 photos, attached. If not open, they are recognisable as ‘unknown.jpeg’.*

**ITEMS OF GENERAL INTEREST**

**A surprising video of colliding bees**

Do have a look at this intriguing attachment (labelled Twitter web player) showing the collision of two bees outside a hive. Is this clever film editing or ‘for real’? Let me know what you think.

*Thanks to Franck Crosnier for passing on this video.*

**At last: the real use for varroa**

This is clearly shown on the following:

(<https://twitter.com/Dadant_and_Sons/status/812365370745114624?s=03>)

(Note: to read the full caption, you may need to click on the picture raised from the website)

*More thanks to Franck. Now you can save your spare varroa mites for next Christmas.*

**Don’t take the name of honey in vain**

… ice creams and chocolate that claim to contain “honeycomb”. All too often there is not only a total absence of true honeycomb but also of honey. Instead the manufacturers use cluster toffee and attempt to pass it off as a natural product. If this is not a case for Trading Standards, then what is?

*Part of a letter to the ‘Daily Telegraph’. Contributed by David Parker.*

**A helpful small sheet on vapourising (sublimation of) oxalic acid**

When revising my knowledge of this topic before the latest treatment of my bees, I came across a very helpful and straightforward short item on the Universityof Sussex LASI website: www.sussex.ac.uk/lasi. This is restricted to one A4 sheet, and summarises all that the practical beekeeper needs to know about this method of dealing with Varroa. It is very good for those with no knowledge of the subject at all, those who feel so overwhelmed by the huge amount about it “out there” that they have shied away from it, or simply if you need a quick reminder of the “basics”, having not used it for a year. If you have not tried oxalic acid sublimation, remember that the association is able to provide the equipment, and several of our members have used it and would be happy to advise you. Those acquainted with the method have found it a very useful tool in the control of Varroa. Geoff C.

**Closing date for BBKA assessments / exams**

Please see the attached email.

 Celia Perry

**Bee Holiday? ApiRoutes in Slovenia**

I have been given details and a very attractive, colourful brochure about beekeeping in Slovenia. If you visit this country, the obvious interest in bees there could add an extra dimension to your stay. They run several different tours for anyone interested in bees. The main brochure is in French, but the details of the holidays are separate, in English. If you would like to see them, please ask me for them, or look on this website: www.apiroutes.com. –*Ed.*

**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.

**Bees for sale**

We will have various overwintered colonies for sale in spring 2017.

6 Frame nucs with 2017 mated Queen can be pre-ordered at any time from now. These are likely to be available from mid June 2017 onwards depending on the weather.

All our colonies and Queens are locally reared.

**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**

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| **Dates for your diary** |

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| Thursday | 12th January | 7.30 pm | Committee Meeting |  |
| Monday | 16th January | 7.30 pm | Beginners’ Course – First session, Hersham | p. 2 |
| Evenings | January/February |  | Beekeeping Refresher Course, Hersham | p. 2 |
| Thursday | 19th January | 7.30 pm | Winter Meeting, Short Talks, Hersham | p. 2 |
| Saturday | 18th February | All day | 12th Surrey Bee Day, Cobham | p. 3 |
| Thursday  | 16th February | 7.30 pm | Winter MeetingTalk on Asian Hornets, Cobham | p. 2 |
| Various days | 10-week Courses and single day Courses from 19th January to 3rd June  | See Nov. p. 3 and attached flyer | Courses at East Surrey Bees, near Croydon | See Nov. p. 3 and flyer |

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| Teaching Apiary ManagersTim and Sally Hutchinson - 01932 962094email: olddrone58@gmail.com | SwarmsMichael Main – 01932 849080 email: michaelfmain@hotmail.com  |
| Regional Bee InspectorDiane Steele - 01243 582612 Mobile no. 07775 119452email: diane.steele@apha.gsi.gov.uk | Beginners’ Beekeeping CourseAndrew Halstead - 01483 489581email: ahalstead44@btinternet.com  |
| Beekeeping Refresher Course / BBKA BasicTim & Sally Hutchinson**Email:** info@beehappyproducts.co.uk  |  |
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