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

***Editorial***

From some scale hive readings, some of us thought that a honey flow had started towards the end of May. However this was not supported by further readings. So May has come and gone, and from what I have seen there has been virtually no Spring Flow. See some scale hive measurements listed on p. 4. Our Chairman suggested to the student beekeepers that we are in the June Gap, a term that I have not heard used in recent years and thought that Climate Change had ended that idea. However, one of our members told me that he has already harvested honey this season; perhaps others have as well. Ah well, “Life is not fair”, as I have often said to my children and grandchildren when they complain about the apparent unfairness of something or other. What kind of spring have you had with your bees? Do let us know.

**Potential Beekeeping Centre in Pleasant Place, Hersham: Update 6.**

As with any project, things sometimes slow down and over the last month this is what has happened.  With change of personnel at Elmbridge Council we have a meeting this coming week with the new person who will be taking the project forward. We are also in the process of identifying the right person in Surrey Highways (any contacts please shout) as we have been advised that a key part of any planning application would be the impact on the local roads and traffic and we may need as part of the application to have a traffic survey carried out.  We expect things to start moving forward quickly after our meeting next week.

David Parker

**EVENTS IN JUNE**

**Apiary Meeting at Garson Farm, Saturday 17th June, 2.30 pm**

Peter Bowbrick, a Wimbledon beekeeper, has kindly agreed to host another meeting for us at his apiary on Garsons Farm, Winterdown Road, Esher KT10 8LS. Peter is a very experienced beekeeper and was for several years a Bee Inspector in our area; his meetings are always informative and well worth attending. This year, among other things, he will be demonstrating how to do a bee disease inspection and find, mark and clip queens. Please bring a plate of food to share at a picnic afterwards. Tea, coffee and milk will be provided, but please bring a mug; a flask of hot water would be useful as well, if possible.

Full details will be provided in the reminder that will be sent out later in the month.

**REPORTS**

**Nosema clinic, Tuesday 2nd May 2017**

Nosema is a serious but often unnoticed disease of bees, consisting of a parasitic fungus-like microbe that infects the digestive system of adult bees. Weybridge runs a diagnostic clinic every spring, to help members recognise the spores under the microscope and to advise whether they need to take action.

On a dull and chilly evening, about 20 members turned up at the Hersham Community Trust Hall at 7.30, as arranged, each carrying a sample of 30 bees from each hive, the bees having been collected and frozen.

Unfortunately, the hall was locked, and we could not make contact with the keyholder (who was running for election on the following Thursday, so maybe it was understandable). After some discussion, Marion and Geoff Cooper very kindly offered to hold the session at their home, which is nearby. Some members from Kingston Division also attended, but apparently the notice on the hall door blew away, so a few were left stranded. Lesson learned - fix notices better!

We checked 35 samples, dissecting the bees and crushing the abdomens using a pestle and mortar. A microscope slide was prepared and examined for spores; the results are shown below. They ranged from none at all to heavy infestation. Mine were quite bad, but it is better to know, so that something can be done to help. No medications are approved at present, but changing comb and/or performing a shook swarm can lessen the burden on a colony.

As always, Marion and Geoff were the perfect hosts, and the session went smoothly, with lots of discussion and scientific expertise. It was a very worthwhile evening, completed with tasty refreshments from Chris, and I would recommend it to all members for next year.

Results

nil low medium high

 8 10 11 6

Note that ‘low’, ‘medium’ and ‘high’ do not have precise quantitative meanings, they are simply comparative terms which attempt to give an indication of the seriousness of the infestation.

 Jane Hunter

*Thank you for the report, Jane.*

**Summer Meeting, Sunday May 21st  at Fairoaks Airport**

About 22 members had a great day out with David who was keen to show us some techniques for raising queens that some of us had not seen before, one being the ***Demaree*** method in which the Queen is separated from the from the flying bees.

With the ***Demaree*** method we opened up the bottom box to find the queen marked with a yellow number nine. The marking discs David uses are magnetic and, among other things, make it easier to pick the Queen up. The top box contained the brood.

Another technique we were shown was a ***Cloake board*** that also separates the Queen from flying bees.

David showed us his system of dating the brood comb frames, indicating how long they had been in use and when they had been cleaned before.

He also showed us how to successfully set up mating Nucs for raising and mating Queens.

When preparing a Queen cell you must first cut it out carefully and then trim it, it is bound with insulating tape to protect it from damage by the bees, and then wired with recycled frame wire to hang in the mating nuc.

Three days before the meeting, a cup full of nurse bees had been collected by shaking them off a frame and these had been put in the mating hives; David demonstrated how to do this. Fondant is given to the bees in the mating hive; David puts it in a paper potting cup that has been sprayed with water. The nuc box was then placed in a cool dark place.

The prepared queen cell was dropped into Nuc 11 and we opened Nuc 5 to check if the queen had hatched.

In Nuc 4 we looked for eggs but the queen had gone.

It was a great spot for the apiary and I think we all went away with a lot of ideas. I know I ordered a mating hive that night.

*Thank you for this report, Rob.* Rob Allen

**Surrey County Show**

Some of our regular exhibitors were away this year, but our Chairman (Andrew Halstead) and Secretary (Jane Hunter) represented Weybridge well, winning prizes in several classes, and also a trophy – congratulations to them both.

Here are the details:

Honey Biscuits 1st Jane Hunter

Block of wax (425g) 1st Jane Hunter This entry also qualified for the Ken Reed Trophy

Wax (3 small blocks) 1st Jane Hunter

Candle 4th Jane Hunter

Item of interest… 1st Andrew Halstead

I asked Andrew for details of his entry and he supplied the following:

My winning entry in the ‘Item of interest relating to bees or beekeeping’ was entitled ‘Britain's other bees’.  It featured a display case with pinned specimens of 25 solitary bee species, mostly collected during 2017, with notes on their biology.

The full set of results is available in the attachment.

**FUTURE EVENTS**

**Timetable of Weybridge Summer Meetings**

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| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Hosts** | **Date** | **Status** | **Main Subject** | **Secondary Subject** |
| Peter Bowbrick(at Garson Farm) | June 17th | Confirmed | Disease Inspection | How to Find, Mark and Clip a Queen |
| Paul and Helen Bunclark | July 22nd | Confirmed | Will depend on the colonies at the time | Varroa Monitoring, various methods |
| Chris Burnett  | August | Confirmed in principle, final date to be agreed | Demonstration of Top Bar Hives | Making an Asian Hornet trap  from a 2 Litre Pop bottle  |
|   | September |  TBC | End of Season Social | Location TBC |

**An invitation from Martha Kearney and Bill Turnbull**

Martha Kearney and Bill Turnbull invite you to join them at this year’s Bee Garden Party:  5-8pm on Thursday 29 June in the private gardens of Marlborough House, in London's Mall.  It will be a fun evening, focused on bees, with gin-fizz, wines and delightful food.  A wonderful opportunity to meet beekeeping friends. With kind permission from the household of HM The Queen, and in the presence of the Commonwealth Secretary-General, Baroness Scotland. Raising funds to support the Charity Bees for Development.  Tickets are £50 and available by clicking here [BBKA events](https://www.bbka.org.uk/news_and_events/bees_for_developments_bee_garden_party) or here [Bee Garden Party](http://www.beesfordevelopment.org/events-calendar/bee-garden-party-june-2017/), or call 01600 714848 to book.  Special rates for BBKA groups - please call.

Hoping to see you there!

Martha Kearney and Bill Turnbull

**National Honey Show, Sandown Race Course, Esher, 26-28 October**

Details in April Newsletter, page 4 and on the National Honey Show website.

**ITEMS OF LOCAL INTEREST**

**Fundraising**

A big thank you to the Weybridge branch of Waitrose and their customers.  In February they selected us to be one of their three selected charities and we have now received a cheque from them for £412.  This will go towards the fundraising for the proposed new apiary site, which we expect to be formally launching shortly.

We have developed a good relationship with the Weybridge branch of Waitrose and they have selected us to be one of their supported charities for each of the last three years.  There is no reason that we cannot establish similar beneficial relationships with the other local branches.  Very little effort is involved - telephone or send an email to the local branch to find out who their Community Matters coordinator is and send a letter explaining why our charity should be selected.  Then it's just a reminder every twelve months.

Anne Miller has kindly offered to establish contact with the Hersham branch but that still leave Esher, Cobham, and West Byfleet.  If you are local to one of these would you please consider acting on our behalf to help raise funds?  Please contact me for further information and so we can coordinate efforts.

                                                      Martin Major

**Reports from two scale hives in the Division**

Two of our members have been recording weight changes of their hives: David Parker on an Arnia hive, and Geoff Cooper on a mechanical balance hive (an old coal sack weighing machine, but with a sensitivity better than ± 1 oz.)

The Arnia results cover the period from 19th May – 31st May and can be seen below.



There is no chart for the balance, but a selection of the changes in weight of this hive are shown below:

**Date Cumulative Change**

8/5 zero

10/5 +0lb. 9oz

11/5 +1lb 0oz

13/5 +2lb 10oz

16/5 +4lb 2oz

25/5 +5lb 13oz

27/5 +9lb 12oz

31/5 +16lb 11oz

You will see some similarities in the trends in the two sets of results. The difference between maximum and minimum weights occurred over roughly the same period. The figures certainly don’t indicate a honey flow for May in Woking or Hersham! However, the last two readings show a glimmer of hope for the future.

If any other members are monitoring hive weights, please let the editor have your results for publication.

**Divisional Honey Extractor**

We are looking for someone to take over the storage and administration associated with the above. I have been advised to take things easier, so with this in mind my wife and I will be spending more time at our bungalow on the I.O.W. Therefore I will not be available during the extracting season.

The machine is ready for use this year, so can be collected before we go. As most members who have previously hired it will know it is not a particularly onerous task but you must ensure the extractor is “fit for purpose” before and after hiring out. On hand over, I will pass all relevant paper work to the new custodian.

Contact :- Rob Chisholm – 01483 715779

**A colony of bees to be given away, and the opportunity to purchase some second hand equipment**

I have decided to give up keeping my bees or any bees, so now I am looking to sell my equipment and give my bees to someone who could use them. The bees were given to me, so anyone who wants them is welcome to have them. Please ring or email me if you are interested in having the bees or any of the equipment. 01932 705183 ampjackson23@yahoo.co.uk

Ann-Marie Jackson

**Offer to host bees in a local garden**

*We have received the following:*

I am interested in hosting a bee hive in my garden, if that is possible. I like the idea of helping with bees but without getting fully involved. Do you know of anyone who is looking for a different site for one of their hives and are happy to carry on maintaining it?

If anyone is interested perhaps they can contact me by email (amanda.lees@talk21.com).

I live in the Hersham area.

Best wishes

Amanda Lees

**Donation of beekeeping items**

Phil Watkins, one of our members, has decided to stop beekeeping, mainly because of his failing sight. He has kindly donated several items to the association including bee suits, a Thomas manual extractor and some tools. Our thanks to you, Phil.

**Put out Asian hornet traps NOW**

Ever since the hornets were found in this country, it is obvious that they may appear anywhere, anytime; you could have the (doubtful) privilege of being the first to find one in our area. Since a hornet was found on a Tesco lorry in Scotland, we are being encouraged to install traps in the vicinity of our colonies because we are near the Brooklands Tesco depot.

**ITEMS OF GENERAL INTEREST**

David Parker has sent us the following websites:

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/av/business-39816288/ceo-what-i-learnt-from-bees>

What I learn from bees

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-south-yorkshire-39816267>

Bee stealing

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/science-environment-39783990>

Pesticides reduce queen development

Thank you, David, for making us aware of this information.

**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.

**Local bees for sale**

Available now, overwintered 6-frame nucs and 12-frame colonies of British-bred Buckfast bees with brood in all stages and headed by marked, 2016 Buckfast queens from Jed Marshall. The bees are strong, healthy, gentle and hardworking; they are on clean combs and have been treated for Varroa. Currently housed in Payne’s poly nuc boxes, but if preferred can be transferred to your own hive.

Nucs from £150, Colonies from £200. Cash on collection, please.

Call Arran (Weybridge member) on 07713 629189.

**Bees (to give away) and equipment (for sale) see details on page 5**

Contact Ann-Marie Jackson 01932 705183 ampjackson23@yahoo.co.uk

**Bees for sale**

**A number of established COLONIES (National Standard Hoffman brood frames) with a new 2017 mated queen will be available for sale**Our bees have a gentle temperament and are good foragers. All queens are locally reared from our gentle breeding stock. Price of each colony varies depending on the size of the colony (on number of brood and super boxes). Single brood box colony £175. For more information, please contact me – details below.

**NUCS - will be available in due course (probably in next few weeks) and can be pre-ordered**

**6 Frame Nucs** (National standard frames) with 2017 mated queen (marked yellow).

Supplied in 6 frame Poly Nuc. £150 + £30 nuc deposit which is refundable on return.

**5 Frame Nucs** (National standard frames) with 2017 mated queen (marked yellow).

Supplied in 5 frame Correx Travelling Box. Price: £155.

The nucs will have a mated 2017 Queen, locally reared from our gentle breeding stock, together with a combination of her brood in various stages and stores.

**Contact: Astrid Bowers-Veenman** (Hog's Back Bees and Bee Products)

Location: Ash Green (between Guildford and Farnham, just off the A31)

Distance from Weybridge: 12 miles (as the crow flies)

**[Tel. No](http://tel.no/).: 01252 330229 / Mobile: 07803 069798 / Email:** **astrid@coginternational.co.uk**

Feel free to contact me if you have any questions.

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| **Dates for your diary** |
| Thursday-Saturday | 8th-10th June | All day | South of England Show, Ardingly | May p. 3  |
| Saturday | 17th June | 2.30 pm | Summer Meeting, Peter Bowbrick, Garsons Farm, Esher | Details later |
| Thursday | 29th June | 5-8 pm | Bee Garden Party, Marlborough House, London | p. 3 |
| Saturday | July 22nd | 2.30 pm | Summer Meeting, Paul and Helen Bunclark | Details later |
| Thursday-Saturday  | 26th-28th October |  | National Honey Show, Esher | April p. 4, NHS website |

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| CONTACT DETAILS |
| ChairmanAndrew Halstead - 01483 489581email: ahalstead44@btinternet.com | SecretaryJane Hunter - 01932 857427email: weybridgebees.sec@gmail.com |
| TreasurerMichael Main - 01932 849080email: michaelfmain@hotmail.com | Newsletter EditorGeoff Cooper - 01932 242179email: coopergm56@btinternet.com |
| Rowtown Apiary ManagerRob Chisholm - 01483 715779email: robinchisholm102@btinternet.com | Burhill Allotments Apiary ManagerEdwina Wardle – 01932 702887 email: Wardle\_1@ntlworld.com |
| 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 Hutchinsonemail: info@beehappyproducts.co.uk  | Membership SecretaryPeter Webbemail: peterwebb@btinternet.com  |
| Education CoordinatorEdwina Wardle – 01932 702887 email: Wardle\_1@ntlworld.com |  |
| LOCAL BEE ADVISORS |
| Rob Chisholm - 01483 715779 | Geoff Cooper - 01932 242179 |
| Paul Hildersley – 07827 916186 |  |