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

***Editorial***

It seems to have been a mixed honey harvest this year with some local beekeepers (and others at the Honey Show) reporting a good harvest, and others a poor one. The general impression given by conversations with Surrey beekeepers was of a poor honey crop. We were among the latter with no spring honey to extract and a very poor summer flow. Our own crop was about half the usual. We were in fact having to feed three of our colonies as little as late as 3rd May to avoid starvation, and we heard of colony losses at that time.

The poor harvest was probably due to an almost total lack of rain (and hence nectar) at the right times, as shown on the following data taken from my rainfall records in Hersham:

March 7th to May 15th: 23 mm

The whole of April: 4 mm

First 27 days in June: 29 mm (of which 18 mm fell on the 5th)

The rainfall before for the main flow was also low with a total fall from June 7th to July 10th of 21mm (of which 15 mm fell on June 27th). Our local sweet chestnut was well in flower, but there was virtually no nectar going in to the hives.

How was your harvest? It would be nice to hear from members. If you would prefer to remain anonymous in the newsletter, please indicate this (as ever).

I noticed a few wasps hanging around the entrances to some of my hives today (2nd November). They were deterred by the bees in their attempts to gain entry. It’s a little late for wasps, but emphasises the need to reduce entrance widths in autumn. There was also a significant amount of pollen being collected.

**OVERDUE SUBSCRIPTIONS**

As stated in the October Newsletter, if you did not pay your subscription by October 31st, you will no longer receive BeeCraft or the BBKA News and, perhaps even more importantly, will you not be covered by the BBKA public liability insurance and your bees will not be covered by Bee Disease Insurance as you will cease to be a member of the BBKA.

All of these benefits will be reinstated if you renew your subscription – we hope that you will! A membership application / renewal form is attached.

 Michael Main (Treasurer)

**WEYBRIDGE DIVISION AGM, 2.30 pm, Saturday November 11th**

**The meeting will be held at the Community Trust Hall, Burhill Road, Hersham KT12 4BJ**

Please do your best to attend this important event in our calendar. It is greatly encouraging for the Committee if you show your support in this way.

***Refreshments*** Tea/coffee, etc. will be provided, but please bring a plate of food (savoury or sweet) that we can share for tea.

***Beekeeping Equipment*** Do bring any spare items of equipment that you have for sale or disposal. There is plenty of room in the hall to spread these out to make a ‘sales area’.

***Honey Tasting*** After the business part of the afternoon, we shall have our now traditional honey-tasting competition, devised some years ago by the late John Hudson. All beekeepers attending are asked to bring a sample of their own honey in an **unlabeled one-pound jar** – please note this, as in the past jars of various sizes have sometimes been used which could result in the identification of the member (for good or ill) - about an inch of honey in the jar will be plenty. Your sample will be given a random number, and the procedure will be explained. Colour, texture and appearance count for nothing in this competition – it is only the taste that will be assessed (by everyone present), and the Les Gray trophy will be awarded to the beekeeper whose honey attracts the most votes.

If you can't bring any of the above, just come anyway! We look forward to seeing you there.

**IMPORTANT:** **Warning of mislabeled Oxalic Acid Crystals from Thorne’s**

Please refer to the attachment for details.

**Potential Beekeeping Centre in Pleasant Place, Hersham: Update 11.**

This month I would like to report ‘steady’ progress; there is a definite feeling amongst the project team that we are in the home stretch with Elmbridge Council.  On October 3rd a visit was made to Pleasant Place by two Elmbridge Council cabinet members; Chris Sadler and Janet Turner, along with the three local Hersham councillors including Roy Green, Chairman of the Hersham Village Society and a Cabinet Member on the council.  They were met by Andrew Halstead, Michael Main and Marion Cooper; the sun shone and all the councillors were in a happy mood.   Overall the councillors seemed to be supportive of what we are wanting to do with the property and felt they obtained a greater understanding of the site and the work required.  The result of this meeting was there now seems to be new vigour in moving things to a conclusion.  At the end of the month Chris Sadler, Portfolio Holder for Resources met with the head of Asset Management to discuss some of our concerns over the current Heads of Terms.  In their own words they have come back to say, “We believe the points of difference can be bridged”.  The next step is in the next week or so a meeting between Councillors, the Asset Management Team and representatives of the Weybridge Beekeepers project team to work through the differences.

In the view of the project team, the timetable outlined in the last newsletter is therefore still viable:

Dec 2016 Business Plan Submitted

Jan 2018 Elmbridge Council HOT agreed

Feb/Mar Surrey Beekeepers Trustees approve HOT

 Detailed plans drawn up for costs and planning application

Mar EGM WBK Meeting for approval

 Planning application process

 Start Fund Raising

Jan – Sept Complete Fundraising and select contractor

Nov – Feb Carry out work

Jan 2019 Move Bees in

Feb Move in

April 2019 First practical course run

David Parker

**REPORTS**

**86th National Honey Show, Sandown Race Course, Esher, 26-28 October**

The usual range of equipment and lectures was enjoyed, and no doubt *‘Beecraft’* and the *‘BBKA News’* will be including detailed reports in the near future.

**Weybridge members who won prizes at the ‘National’**

I have gone through the long complicated list of prizewinners issued at the end of the first day of the Show.

Four of our members won awards; the details are given below (in alphabetical order).

Do please let me know of any errors or omissions so that I can correct the list next month. -Ed.

  **Class Name of Class Award**

Geoff Cooper 2 Two Jars Clear Honey Commended

 127 Honey Banana Cake 2nd Prize

 222 Two Jars Medium Honey 1st Prize

 228 One Frame suitable for Extraction 2nd Prize

Andrew Halstead 31 Two Jars Naturally Crystallised Honey 2nd Prize

 86 Interesting or Instructive Exhibit\* 2nd Prize

 224 Two Jars Naturally Crystallised Honey 3rd Prize

 225 Two Jars Liquid Honey 3rd Prize

 234 One Jar Naturally Crystallised Honey 1st Prize

Marion Malcher 64 Melomel Commended

 65 Cyser Very Highly Commended

Edwina Wardle\*\* 222 Two Jars Medium Honey 3rd Prize

\* Andrew’s exibit was a museum-type case of bee specimens, all collected by him.

\*\* This was the first time Edwina had entered anything in a Honey Show – and she won a prize.

Congratulations to everyone who entered from Weybridge. To many, showing honey and other products is ‘a bit of a game’ that they do not choose to play, and in some ways it is, but those who enter the classes will know of the huge amount of effort and time that is entailed in presenting an exhibit in as near a pristine condition as they can achieve. They also know the pleasure that success brings (and the disappointment of no success).

**Professor Dave Goulson - Talk on Wednesday 11th October in Walton-on-Thames**

Professor Goulson (University of Sussex) is well known as an excellent speaker, author, and critic of the use of neonicotinoids as a pesticide, and what he sees as the excessive use of pesticides in general. He told us that the NFU does not like what he has to say. He presented a very clear case in reminding us of many things that we have heard or read before on the damage ‘neonics’ are said to cause to honeybees (and probably other creatures) as well as mentioning other sources of their problems. He was very concerned to find a farm in Sussex which makes about 16 sprayed pesticide and fungicide applications (‘neonics’ and others) to oilseed rape crops during a season’s growth. He pointed out that 94% of the neonicotinoids used as seed treatments remain in the soil after crop removal, raising in some of our minds a doubt as to whether there was enough data being monitored during and after the two-year moratorium on its use (since there will be ‘neonic’ residues in the soil at the commencement and probably at the end of this two years). He also expressed concern at the presence of neonics in water courses and the possible effects on organisms there.

The professor had opened his talk with a sobering account of the events in Easter Island several hundred years ago, with which he drew strong parallels to the usage of resources in our own current world. That island was colonised, very successfully, but after several hundred years their disastrous management had stripped the island of all of its resources causing total collapse of the population due to starvation. He suggested several ways of helping to provide sufficient food for the world’s growing population using less chemicals. One of these was not to waste so much food… (Many people seem to regard the wasting of ‘surplus’ food as normal practice, and have similar thoughts about the wasting of precious energy, and advocate looking for other ways to produce more energy, regarding the idea of conserving both food and energy as heretical.)

 IPM (Integrated Pest Management) methods were widely discussed only 10 years ago but are now largely forgotten. By the end of his talk, I had the distinct feeling that here was a prophet crying out in the wilderness; I hope that some with influence were or will be listening to his message.

Whatever our views on what Professor Goulsonsaid, his talk, as always, was very thoughtfully, gently, interestingly and engagingly presented. It was very well received and some good questions were raised by the audience for him to answer.

Our thanks to Kingston Beekeepers for organising this event.

Geoff Cooper

**EVENTS IN NOVEMBER**

**Central Association of Bee-Keepers**

*Autumn Conference* Friday 17th – Sunday 19th November, in Kenilworth

Details and booking forms for this highly recommended event were in an attachment in October.

We now have the final detailed programme for this event which can be seen in the attachment.

**Bee Improvement for All** West Sussex BKA and BIBBA –Sunday November 19th all day.

Details September p. 4.

**FUTURE EVENTS**

**Surrey Beekeepers Association Annual General Meeting 2017**

This will be held on Saturday 2nd December 2017 at 2 pm at Trinity School, Shirley Park, Croydon CR9 7AT. It will be followed by a talk entitled ‘How to improve our green spaces for bees and other pollinators” by Karin Alton, a research fellow at the Laboratory of Apiculture and Social Insects (LASI) at the University of Sussex. All are invited to attend this meeting. For full details please see the attached flyer.

**"Making good use of your beeswax" Fri 9th, Sat 10th and Sun 11th** **February 2018**

*We have received the following invitation:*

Your members may be interested in this event to be held at Hampers Green Centre, Petworth GU28 9NL. It is being organised by Wisborough Green BKA, a Division of West Sussex BKA. Jim Ryan will demonstrate uses of wax. The same event will take place on each of the 3 days.

Details and an application form are attached, but do not hesitate to contact me if further details are required.

 Graham - Chairman WGBKA (grahammt@sky.com)

**Beekeeping Refresher / Continuation Course – January / February 2018**

As in several previous years, Tim and Sally Hutchinson will run this course if enough people sign up for it. Many of our new members tell us they would like more help, and other more established beekeepers tell us they would find some revision helpful. From past experience, we know that the course has been both informative and enjoyable. There are more details in the attachment.

**ITEM OF LOCAL INTEREST**

**A very nice note from our Seasonal Bee Inspector**

I wish to thank all beekeepers for their cooperation and help when I have called to inspect their hives. This was my first full season as the Surrey Bee Inspector and I have thoroughly enjoyed it. It has been a very busy season as some of you may have heard that there were outbreaks of EFB in the county which took up a lot of my time as beekeepers had to be followed up within the 5km radius of outbreaks. Therefore, I didn't get round to visiting all the beekeeping associations and meeting as many beekeepers as I would have liked. Never mind, there is always next season.

Enjoy the winter rest and look forward to seeing you next season.

Best Wishes, Hilary Hayward (Seasonal Bee Inspector, Surrey)

**ITEMS OF GENERAL INTEREST**

**Bee Wrapt™ Beeswax Infused Reusable Foodwrap**

The following gives information on the above product:

<https://www.beewrapt.co.nz/page/wax_cotton_foodwrap>

Paul Hildersley

**Information from the BBKA**

I have had some information on various topics that the BBKA has asked be distributed to the members.

You will find this in two attachments.

Jane Hunter

**Honey jar labels: a source for getting your own design printed**

*(what an interesting surname this correspondent has)*

I wanted to contact you and let you and your members know of a useful service for those that want to make their own Honey labels and have them professionally printed in small order quantities at a reasonable price.

The service is called Avery WePrint ([https://weprint.avery.co.uk](https://weprint.avery.co.uk/)), run by Avery labels, the company that have been making labels for 80 years. It is a pretty easy to use website with an online design tool where you can custom design your own labels or upload artwork. There are plenty of different sizes, shapes and materials to choose from. They have also written a good blog article rounding up all the relevant legislation for Honey labelling which your members might find useful. <https://weprint.avery.co.uk/blog/labelling-for-honey-jars>

As an amateur beekeeper I’ve been using the service for a few years now and have been pleased with the service so I thought I would  contact you to see if you and your members would like to try it.

There’s a special offer for all beekeepers of 25% off valid till December 4th  2018 – Enter Honey25 at the checkout to get 25% of an order.

PS You might be wondering why I am doing this? My favourite hobby is beekeeping and yes Honey is my actual surname! I am only three years into my journey with bees and still have a lot to learn. I’ve taken the beginners BBKA course but each year I realise just how much I don’t know!. My day job though is running a marketing agency and Avery is a client of mine. They are already making a lot of honey labels for people, including mine, so I thought it worthwhile to endeavour to help promote the service to other beekeepers. I don’t make any commission on the sales of these labels so it’s purely helping to spread the word so to speak.

Paul Honey  01202 203160, paul.honey@strangecorp.com.

Paul Honey

**Problems with Honeybees**

A website which should be of special interest to new beekeepers:

Big Data and Bees.

https://www.intel.co.uk/content/www/uk/en/it-management/caa-hub/save-bees-with-big-data.html?utm\_campaign=CCG-BIZ-EMEA-UK-amazingstories-Q317&utm\_source=LinkedIn&utm\_medium=social&utm\_content=LinkedInNature5image&cid=CCG-BIZ-EMEA-UK-amazingstories-Q317 Sent in by David Parker

**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, 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 Ged 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.

**STOP PRESS**

I have just received the following from Anne Miller and am putting it here as it is relevant to Prof. Goulson’s talk, which is reported on pages 3-4.

The *New Scientist* (14th October ) reported that scientists in Switzerland tested honey from every continent except Antarctica.  They found neonicotinoids in three-quarters of them; 48% of the samples contained pesticides above the minimum dose know to cause detrimental effects in pollinators.

<https://www.newscientist.com/article/2149597-neonicotinoid-pesticides-found-in-honey-from-every-continent/>

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| **Dates for your diary** |
| Saturday | November 11th | 2.30 pm | Weybridge Beekeepers AGM | p. 2 |
| Friday-Sunday | November 17th-November 19th | From 4.00 pm Friday to1.00 pm Sunday | CABK Conference, Kenilworth | October p. 4 + attachment this month |
| Sunday | November 19th | 9.00 am for9.30 am – 4.30 pm  | Bee improvement for all WSBKA and BIBBA | September p. 4 |
| Saturday | December 2nd | 2.00 pm | Surrey BKA AGM, Croydon | p. 4 + attachment |
| Monday | January 22nd | 7.30 pm | First session of Beginners’ Course (Theory) | Details later |
| Friday, Saturday, Sunday  | February 9th, 10th, 11th | 10.00 am – 4.30-5.00 pm | Uses of Wax Day, Tim Ryan, Petworth, W. Sussex | p. 4 + attachment |
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| 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 | Beekeepers Beginners Course - AdminSue Lawesslawes@hotmail.co.uk  |
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