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MVBKA NEWSLETTER



MAY NEWSLETTER

Editor Margaret Pallant

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Hello to you all.

Firstly I would like to thank everyone who was involved with the auction for all the help that they gave to make the day such a huge success. This year there were over 300 lots and the bidders went home very happy with their bargains. We were very lucky that the weather was good to us all day. Special thanks to the kitchen team who started early and worked hard all day keeping everyone fed and to those who donated wonderful cakes and soup. Thank you all for your support. Margaret.

NewBee aka 'the adventures of an inexperienced beekeeper'

May 2017 – Bee rollercoaster

Crikey – what a few months. Since the sadness of losing a hive at the end of winter, I'd taken note of early swarming going on across the south. So as soon as it was warm enough to start my regular inspections, I'd been keeping an eagle eye for Queen cells so I could do a split and get my apiary back up to 2 colonies.

I managed to spot the queen during one of my April inspections but to my surprise she was unmarked so they'd obviously superseded over winter. By the time I'd grabbed my crown of thorns and pen, she'd disappeared – gah!

Due to a combination of illness and bad weather I wasn't able to get to my hive for one weekend in late April (excuses, excuses – I know!) and at the next check, couldn't see the queen or unsealed brood and there were a number of sealed & unsealed QCs so I had a suspicion that the little blighters had swarmed.

But! Then checked the next week & there was new brood; I found & marked the queen (blue was the only pen I had to hand and I was still a bit wobbly so she now looks like an extra from Avatar); then did an artificial split. We shall see what happens next...

And among all this was our very successful Auction day – brilliantly organised by Margaret and stalwart club members who all stepped up to help the day run smoothly. We had lots of lots and it was fascinating to see the auctioneer at work – plus the chance for bagging some bargains, what's not to like.

I'm also revising for my BBKA Basic Beekeeping assessment which will happen in the next few months – since I started my learning with our MVBKA Beginners course hopefully there aren't too many bad habits to root out! I'm the only one from our club who wanted to take the Basic this year so tagged on to the Meridian Beekeepers revision session. Very welcoming bunch and fascinating seeing the differences & similarities in approach between the two clubs – you'll be relieved to know that cake seems to be a universal priority! I hadn't realised that part of the assessment is making up a frame in live conditions as well as inspecting a colony of bees. While my frame-making won't win any awards for speed, I'm determined it will be nailed to perfection

Janet

APIARY REPORT





On a beautiful sunny morning six members turned up for a general tidy and frame making at the Association Apiary.

Graham and David Sheehan cut the grass, raked it into piles and strimmed the nettles down. David Cleeve, Nick and Fleur spent the morning making frames and I tidied the shed and prepared for the first of the practical course sessions. Good bee chat went on all morning and everyone enjoyed the view and all the trees bursting into life.

The afternoon saw the first practical course session. Seven new members arrived, five of them anxious for their first look into a hive full of live bees.

Two of the members already had bees went with Gill to inspect a hive that we thought might be thinking of swarming – lots of bees on the outside of the hive. All was well, however, and the colony of very calm bees is thriving.

I took the other group of five to look into a hive with a new brood box, put on last Saturday. We were pleased to note that the bees had drawn nearly all the foundation and the queen had laid eggs into three of the new frames. Those three frames of brood together with seven in the lower box gives another good colony of calm bees.

YOUR APIARY NEEDS YOU from David Cleeve

Formal thanks for your help, and to Jean for holding it all together so far. Jean and Gill have kept their eyes on the colonies during the Beginner's Course, due to end on June 3rd, so we in the Apiary Team are looking for help at (probably) weekends from then onwards. Well, we could prob'ly manage without help, but we would be grumpy, which might be fun to watch, but otherwise unproductive!

You will all have holidays planned (I'm away for the 1st 3 Saturdays of June) and other times when you won't want to help but if "everyone" volunteered for a couple of weekend sessions, then it would be easy to arrange a rota, and maybe not taxing for anyone. Maybe some of the NewBees who have done the Course will want to polish up their handling skills... who knows?

What I'd love is for you all to say "I would like to do a session in mid-June" (or July or...). Then I can spend a happy 10 minutes (!) joining all the dots. But any response would be good!!! I can deal with folk who only want to help on a Thursday afternoon, or who can do Sundays, but not Saturdays (or any other combination!). As before, I will try to organise a loose pattern of folks/days, and confirm near to the time.

Tell me, also, if you don't think you want to help any more for the time being - I count that as a positive response...

Here's a list to think about: I only need to sort out June at this stage (before I skip away), but my spreadsheet runs on ahead...

w/e Jun 3/4 - Jean and Gill are finishing the Course - stand easy.

w/e Jun 10/11 - DavidC absent, and Jean and Gill may need a rest!

w/e Jun 17/18 - DavidC absent

w/e Jun 24/25 - DavidC at Bereleigh - Disease Day at Warnford on Saturday

w/e Jul 1/2 - DavidC at Bereleigh again (still feeling slightly guilty about June!)

w/e Jul 8/9

w/e Jul 15/16 - DavidC at Bereleigh - Apiary Meeting on Sunday 16,

w/e Jul 22/23

w/e Jul 29/30

w/e Aug 5/6 - Safari Day this w/e, so Adrian will supervise. Do the whole Safari with him, or just come to Bereleigh with a veil...

w/e Aug 12/13 - Stand easy, unless you're coming to the Extracting Day for newish BK.

I've now rambled too much, so will stop here. Regards from (Sunnier than usual) Alton. Hope your Home Bees are taking advantage, and not taking a holiday elsewhere!

DavidC (and Hazel)

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Bee Disease day – Saturday 24 June

If you haven't already signed up for this, please do so in the next few days.

We have planned two sessions – **9.00 (for a 9.30 start) till 12.30 and 1.30 till 4.30.**

David and Celia Rudland are leading the sessions. David was a seasonal bee inspector for many years and Celia a teacher. Both are established beekeepers who keep over 200 colonies and run many excellent courses. David is licensed to handle frames of EFB and AFB and will bring some along for us all to see.

The event will be held in East Meon Village Hall (Workhouse Ln, East Meon, Petersfield GU32 1PF).

The cost is £10 and includes a simple ploughman's lunch with homemade cake to finish. If you are on the afternoon session, lunch is provided for you before the start of your session. Refreshments throughout the day will be provided.

Please contact Jean at jeantery@uwclub.net to book your place.

Contact Number for BBKA

We have been asked to remind members to use the Members' Line to contact the BBKA **BBKA Members' Line Number 02476 698 620.**

(you may need your membership number to hand). This is not the 0871... which is for the public to report swarms and is very busy at this time of year.

OUR BEE INSPECTORS

Regional Bee Inspector **Kevin Pope**
kevin.pope@apha.gsi.gov.uk
Tel No:
Mobile No: 07775 119466

Seasonal Bee Inspectors

Adrian Kelly
adrian.kelly@apha.gsi.gov.uk
Mobile No: 07901 517983

A message from the National Honey Show Committee with a date for your diary

As you'll all know by now, we're delighted to be returning to Sandown Park for the 2017 National Honey Show from Thursday 26 to Saturday 28 October. The new venue means there's plenty of space to enjoy the fantastic display of all the classes including honey, wax, mead, photography and many others in the main Surrey hall, with the Traders next door in the same hall.

The atmosphere is fantastic so we encourage you all to attend. Our brilliant main lecture programme for this year includes lectures by Tom Seeley, Heather Mattila, Kim Flottum, Will Steynor and Peter Tomkins. There will be the usual series of Bee Craft Lectures on the Friday.

On Saturday there will be a special focus on the early years of beekeeping to help those starting out think about what to do next. The topics have been carefully chosen as being relevant to those new to the craft, with many of the things covered that beginners are often confronted with in their early years and will be delivered by experienced beekeepers.

Follow this link to see the main lectures and Beginners programme:

Hampshire Beekeepers Autumn Convention
Sparsholt College, Winchester.
Saturday November 4th

Please put the date in your diaries and watch our website and newsletters for more information about tickets.

We have lined up a very good list of speakers and hope to see many of you there.

Dan Basterfield - Anatomy of the bee
Tony Harris - Botany for beekeepers
Andrew Beer - Beekeepers and the law
Ian & Ruth Homer - IPM without chemicals
Dinah Sweet - Help I have queen cells

Would you like to enter your honey?

**Southern Parishes Summer Fayre
in Horndean - Saturday 24th June**

Flower, Vegetable, Honey and Photography Competitions

This is the first year and so to start with we are running FUN competitions.

Although the winner of each section will receive a prize, these competitions are not affiliated to any organisations or clubs.

Only one entry per person for each class please.

You may set your exhibit on display between the hours of 9am and 10.30am on the day of the show.

You must fill in an 'entrance form' at least 24 hours before the show opens and on arrival fill in a card and place it beside your display on the day before 10.30am – cards available in the Competition Tent from 9am.

All displays will be placed in their respective areas on trestle tables with white covers by

10.30am.

Judging will take place between 11am and 12 noon when the exhibit area will be closed to the public. Cards will be placed next to exhibits announcing first, second and third in each class. The general public will then be encouraged to visit the tent and view the exhibits. The exhibit area will close at 3.30pm.

You can remove your entries between 3.30pm-4pm

After 4pm all items left on the trestle tables will be auctioned for charity.

Please leave as much as you can for auction so we can raise funds for a local charity – this makes your entry really valuable whether it won or not!

Flower Competition Classes

Basket of Flowers

Roses – 1 stem

Roses – 6 stems (can be mixed variety and colour)

Vase of cut flowers

Vegetable Competition

All vegetables will be judged on quality, appropriate size and presentation

Presentation can be varied but area allowed is no larger than 35cm x 30cm

Beetroot x 3

Carrots x 3

Onions x 3

Rhubarb x 3

Honey Competition

Clear

Naturally Granulated

Cut comb honey

Photography Competition

You may place your photograph on a coloured paper to act as a frame.

You may mount these on the boards provided or lay them on the table.

No larger than 30cm x 30cm

Cat or dogs

Morning

Then and Now

Open class

Cake Competition

Cakes can be placed on a plate, board or cake stand.

Single cake up to 10 inches

Cup cakes

Under 12 years old

Children's competition

Miniature garden in a bowl – the garden can be growing or placed on the day.

Under 12 years old.



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