



**MONTGOMERYSHIRE BEEKEEPERS
ASSOCIATION**

The BeeHolder

Spring 2012



Spring inspection at the apiary

March 2012



Forthcoming Events

- May 13th **MBKA** Apiary Training Day
Sunday 10.00am Swarm Control and Making Increase
Gregynog Hall, Tregynon
- June 17th **MBKA** Apiary Training Day
Sunday 2.00pm Family Day – partners and children most welcome
Gregynog Hall, Tregynon
- July 21st **MBKA** Member's Apiary Visit
Saturday 2.00pm John and Joy Shearer's Apiary
Tregynon, Newtown
- August 19th **MBKA** Apiary Training Day
Sunday 10.00am Preparing to take off the honey
Gregynog Hall, Tregynon
- August 26th **MBKA** Member's Apiary Visit
Sunday 2.00pm Tom Brown's apiary
Melinbyrhedyn, near Machynlleth
- September 15th **MBKA** Apiary Training Day
Sunday 2.00pm End of Season and Pre-Winter Preparation
Gregynog Hall, Tregynon
- October 17th **MBKA** Meeting
Saturday 7.00pm A talk on swarm control by Dinah Sweet (TBC)
Plas Dolerw, Newtown
- October 25th – 27th **The National Honey Show**
Thurs, Fri, Sat see <http://www.honeyshow.co.uk/> for details
St George's College, Weybridge, Surrey

For the latest information, check the website – www.montybees.org.uk.

If you would like to suggest a speaker or a topic for a meeting, or if you would like to have an apiary visit held at your apiary next summer, do contact a member of the committee (see page 19).

Contents

Spring inspection at the apiary (photograph).....	1
Forthcoming Events.....	2
We Welcome as New Members.....	3
Editorial.....	4
Chairman's Chat <i>by Tony Shaw</i>	4
New Secretary.....	6
Gregynog Apiary Report <i>by Dave Bennett</i>	6
Freebies <i>by Roy Mander</i>	7
MBKA Christmas Meal	7
Reports on Meetings	8
<i>January 14th - Oxalic Acid Day by Julie Pearce</i>	8
<i>February 22nd - Annual General Meeting</i>	9
Beginners class 2012 (photograph).....	10
Microscopy class (photograph).....	10
Wild bees in a wild land (photographs).....	11
While canoeing up the Margret River <i>by Doug and Jane Wood</i>	12
DRAC Cartoon.....	12
Toby's Top Tip <i>by Toby Beavan</i>	12
Bees anyone?.....	13
An out of the way corner <i>by Trisha Marlow & Paul King</i>	14
Varroa Alert.....	14
Democracy and efficiency in an organisation.....	15
This year's programme.....	16
International reputation.....	17
The Electronic Age Is Upon Us <i>by Chris Leech</i>	17
Recipe Corner - Honey Ice Cream <i>by courtesy of ACT</i>	18
The MBKA Committee <i>by Jingo</i>	19
March Apiary training (photographs).....	20

We Welcome as New Members...

Thomas Weedall [Llanidloes], Keith Rimmer [Caersws], Phil Sharp [Newtown], Joy Jones [Welshpool], Gwyneth Beattie [Welshpool], Diane Hallet [Shrewsbury], Gareth Lloyd-Edwards [Newtown], Gareth Roberts [Newtown], Robin Brierley [Montgomery] and Neil & Barbara Hird [Bishops Castle].

Note that, to protect the innocent, the place names given are the post town rather than anything more precise.

Editorial

Doesn't time fly when you are trying to get things done! I won't write a list of excuses here, but I do apologise sincerely for the late appearance of the Spring 2012 issue of BeeHolder. I hope it is worth the wait.

Changing the BeeHolder issue dates to Spring, Summer, Autumn and Winter is to make it clear that we are producing a quarterly magazine, not to cover for the fact that I consistently miss the deadlines for the beginning of each month.

We would also like to take this opportunity to invite critics of our apiary at Gregynog to give it a good slating. Particularly the roof of the observation hut which is not yet complete after over a year!

Don't forget that this magazine (and a few years' back issues) are also available as pages on the web site, montybees.org.uk, with more colour and also as downloadable pdf files.

Chris Leech



Chairman's Chat

There is a great and long tradition of drawing analogies between the working of the Bee Hive and the working of human society.

To do is to be:

Socrates

To be is to do:

Jean-Paul Sartre, Plato

To be or not to bee:

William Shakespeare

Do-be-do-bee-do:

Frank Sinatra

Do be a Do Bee, don't be a Don't Bee. Miss Connie from Romper Room

Life should be one of constant self-examination. When one stops analysing one should admit to being nothing but a coffin-dodger. It is the same with organisations. Management or committee should constantly worry about progress. But if the workers or members do not give feedback as to how the organisation is working then the whole dies. If the workers do not give out the right pheromones in the right quantities then the queen does not function.

And many BeeKeeping Associations die because the members do not give sufficient feedback, or their queen has had its antennae cut so it is no longer able to pick up the pheromones being sent.

Much of 19th century Beekeeping was dominated by priests and preachers. What they saw in the hive reflected their vision of a perfect world. God in his heaven and the angels and people below in ordered subservience. Or a king with the nobility and peasants below. Or a Queen and the captains of industry and workers below. In each case there was a pyramid of power and control. And such beekeepers would tell their flock that they were the equivalent of the worker bees : happiness and fulfilment of the individual is gained by a total acceptance of the need to work hard for the regimented hierarchical structure. Doff your cap to the Queen and the Empire in all its glory will prosper.

We now know that all this is nonsense. But it is surprising how many organisations still run as though it were all still true. I have written a separate article in this BeeHolder (see page 14) about the organisation of the various BeeKeeping Associations in Wales and the dangers of having too little or too much feedback.

Those 19th century Priest/beekeepers did as much harm to the understanding of the beehive as they did to many in their congregations. Our present understanding of the hive relies, not on preconceived notions of the intrinsic value of order, but on discovering ways of measuring the sights, sounds, vibrations and smells within the hive, and our willingness to analyse these without prejudice. Nowadays we understand that the analysis of chaos is more important than the belief in order.

Great scientists are now becoming interesting philosophers; mathematician Steven Hawkins, geneticist Richard Dawkins and Beekeeper and Neurobiologist Robert Pickard. We are in discussion with Professor Robert Pickard to talk to us next year. Feedback please about how we should entertain him, where we should meet, how we can ensure that we get an audience sufficient for the status of this guy.

I was most upset to get a letter from an old MBKA member from the Machynlleth area saying he was not rejoining in 2012 because he felt we were ignoring old beekeepers and those who lived far from Newtown. The whole committee agonised about what to do. For at least 5 years there have been repeated pleas in the BeeHolder for old beekeepers to come forward and volunteer as mentors to the novices. How can we function without their experience and anecdotal knowledge? We cannot. We need some fresh ideas about how we can bring these experienced beekeepers back into active participation with the beekeeping community. It always amazes me that throughout the UK more than a third of all beekeepers do not belong to any BeeKeeping Association. How do they cope with insurance? Or don't they bother? How do they cope with information about problems of local bees, diseases and swarms and all those other things about being a responsible beekeeper? They must realise that bees are in trouble and that bees cannot survive without the help of an experienced beekeeping community. How do they reconcile their love of their own bees with a blatant indifference to those of others?

Comments and ideas please.

Tony Shaw
Chairman MBKA

New Secretary

After a year without a secretary in place, it is a great relief that Maggie Armstrong has stepped forward to assume the role. Tony has tried for the last twelve months to perform the duties of secretary and has made a decent job of it, but I am sure he is more than happy to devote his full attention to being chairman.

I'd like to ask everyone to give their full support to Maggie in what at times can seem an overwhelming job. And thanks also to Maggie and Noel for most of the photos which brighten this edition of The BeeHolder.

Editor



Gregynog Apiary Report

The Gregynog Apiary is coming into its own as a training venue, with monthly apiary training sessions planned for the year ahead. Oxalic acid treatment in January (see the report on page 8) and the two spring inspections in March and April were all well attended (April's meeting went on till 4pm!). The meetings are planned to run from 10am to 1pm, except June and September which will start at 2pm. See the forthcoming events page of BeeHolder or check the web site for the latest information on what is coming up at the apiary.

We lost two colonies over the winter, probably due to starvation, and we are currently monitoring closely for varroa as the oxalic acid treatment performed in January was during such a warm spell that the queens were most likely laying so some varroa could have been capped in cells and survived the treatment.

At the moment the bees are going backwards – the early clement weather led us to put supers on with the promise of a good season, but the recent downturn in the weather means that the supers are coming back off and the feeders going back on! With the oil seed rape nectar flow supposed to be starting soon as well. Let us hope that the weather picks up and the bees can get back to their foraging and build up good numbers for the summer ahead.

The apiary meeting in May promises to be interesting. The plan is to split three colonies, provided that they are still strong enough. So if you haven't been brave enough to attempt this yourselves, here is a chance to see how it is done and ask questions of Dave, John and the other experienced beekeepers who will be there. It is your apiary – take advantage of the training opportunities it presents!

Dave Bennett
Apiary Manager



Freebies

Most of us would like to get our hands on some freebies (or in this case, free bees). However we need to have a system in place if we are going to successfully collect swarms when told about them by the general public. Roy Mander, our swarm coordinator, has prepared the following. **Editor**

As Swarm Control Manager, I shall be collecting names of members willing to collect swarms for the 2012 season.

I shall be requiring names and location, do not require addresses just the town or village name, main and mobile telephone numbers, and how far you are willing to travel to collect a swarm.

If you are a new beekeeper without experience of swarm collecting, do you require assistance of a mentor? (how I hate that word)

It will be expected that you will have a hive ready to install the bees and have the equipment and facility to collect the swarm, more or less at a moments notice.

If you have had the opportunity to collect a swarm or swarms outside the scheme and no longer want to remain on the list please let me know.

Swarms will be allocated fairly and according to location of the swarm and the location of the members, and the distance willing to travel.

I shall not leave messages on answer phone, I require a firm acceptance in order that the informant can be kept in the picture. You will be provided with the informant's telephone number in order that you can liaise with them directly.

It is essential to keep the informants informed of what is happening.

If you are not at the next meeting you can contact me on email at roymander@aol.com or by phone at 01938 555834, you can leave the details required on the answer phone if I am not available.

Roy Mander



MBKA Christmas Meal

The MBKA Christmas meal was held on January 14th at Gregynog Hall. Those arriving early enough also enjoyed the oxalic acid demonstration (see page 8). A good number of members attended – too many to catch easily in a group photograph, as it turns out – and a good time was had by all.

In the absence of Graham Winchester, one of his specialty quizzes was presented admirably by Jessica and Tony. Quite rightly it ended in a tie between four competitors who agreed that the cash prize be donated to the apiary fund. Now we will not forget that it was Spike Milligan rather than Billy Connelly who said that nothing was worn under a Scotsman's kilt (it's all in perfect working order).

Editor

Reports on Meetings

January 14th - Oxalic Acid Day

On 14 January 2012 we attended the Oxalic acid treatment session arranged by MBKA at the apiary at Gregynog. Although we have had bees for a couple of years we hadn't ever treated our hives with Oxalic acid. John Beavan explained that as the last couple of winters had been very harsh, this might have lulled new beekeepers into a false sense of security regarding the need to treat for varroa in this way, as Apiguard treatment in the Autumn is not 100% effective. With a mild winter in 2011/12 he felt it was more important than ever that we all do the treatment. He brought some sticky sheets from his hive floors to demonstrate the number of dead varroa mites he had found after his Oxalic acid treatment, and some of them had a very high rate indeed.

Dave Bennett had the Oxalic acid solution all made up, and a syringe for each hive. The tricky bit was calculating how many seams of bees there were, particularly in hives with brood and a half, as often the brood had mostly descended into the main brood box and we weren't keen to break up the brood by removing the super. Having finally got brave enough to do that, the acid was applied at the rate of 5ml per full seam of bees. We all had a go at trying this, and it wasn't as easy as Dave made it look to apply quickly, evenly, and at the right angle, but we got there in the end.

Suffice it to say that we went straight home and treated our 3 hives with the ready made mix in syringes that we were able to buy from Dave. It couldn't have been easier. Many thanks to Dave and John for running the session.

Julie Pearce

For anybody who missed this meeting, there is a "You Tube" video showing a demonstration of dosing bees with oxalic acid by John Beavan. Set your browser to http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Mj_FV40DEwk

Editor

Slates wanted.

We have been unable to get a single big company to sponsor the roof of our apiary hut.

We could collect old slates ourselves and have a work party cut them to size and install them under the supervision of a builder.

Rough calculations suggest that if every member found and donated 5 old slates we could finish the roof.

But please donate more if you can. We could put up a permanent acknowledgement in the Shelter to anyone who donated a whole or half roof....Fame for 200years !

Slates, volunteers and suggestions all appreciated.

February 22nd - Annual General Meeting

The 2012 AGM for MBKA took place at Plas Dolerw on Wednesday 22nd February. A new record attendance of sixty plus shows that the Association is thriving.

Partly thanks to the circulation of reports prior to the meeting, the business part of the meeting was concluded with commendable brevity. This included the election of new officers in the roles of Secretary (Maggie Armstrong) and New Members Representative (Vicky Farrington). Many thanks to these two who will be bringing fresh ideas to committee as well as fulfilling their roles.

We wish Andy Brown - temporarily relinquishing the New Members Rep position due to illness - a speedy and full recovery.

Wally Shaw gave a very good talk entitled "The bees know what they are doing, but does the beekeeper?". This was less a scathing attack on bee keepers, more an amazing insight into the hows and whys of bee behaviour. Wally fitted an enormous amount of information into a forty minute presentation which, as Jim Crundwell said in thanking him, was understandable and informative on a level appropriate to everybody in the room.

The raffle for the starter hive was won by Dave Bennett, and a second raffle was held to raise money to send young Welsh BeeKeepers abroad (and bring them back again).

A feedback questionnaire and a skills audit form were handed out in an effort to better suit our events planning to the membership and to make sure that we are not overlooking any of our human resources. Many thanks to all those who took a few minutes to fill these in. Hopefully we'll put a similar feedback form on the web-site so that members who have signed up to the web site can fill it in.

Members stayed to help finish off the snacks and drink before the meeting closed shortly after 9:30. Hopefully the word will spread, and people will no longer fear the three letters AGM on the forthcoming events page.

Many will have been impressed by Wally Shaw's account of how they have managed to reduce imported queens and bees into Anglesey. Local beekeepers there are already experiencing the benefits of this policy. There is persuasive but not 100% evidence that importing bees can lead to trouble and should be discouraged. But we cannot police our members nor can we sanction against importing from abroad or other parts of the UK. However by offering a good deal we can make people think positively about buying local bees. **Why pay more when one can get local cheaper?** Of course the problem is many want immediate gratification and thus risk buying Nucs of dubious source or last year's queens. **See page 12 for details of buying locally produced 2012 colonies.**

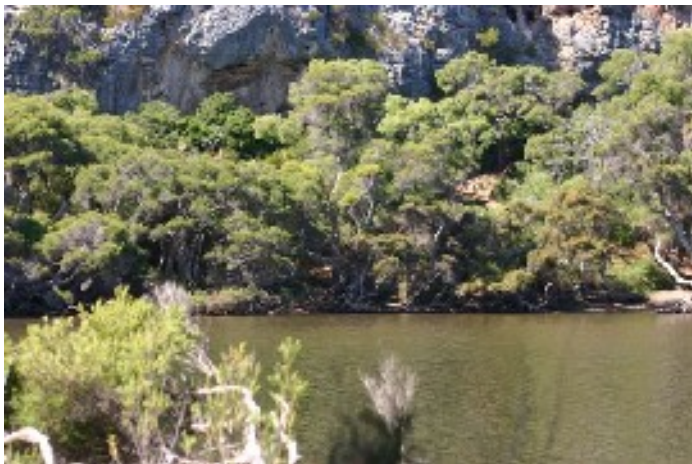


Beginners class 2012 with Brian Goodwin, far right, tutor.



Microscopy class – Roy has a eureka moment

Wild bees in a wild land. Canoeing up the Margret River in Australia (see article on page 12). Dramatic scenery and some quite magnificent combs. Are those Manuka bushes?



Look out for crocs.



If you have had any holiday experience with a “sting in the tail”, especially with pictures, please drop me a line for the next BeeHolder!

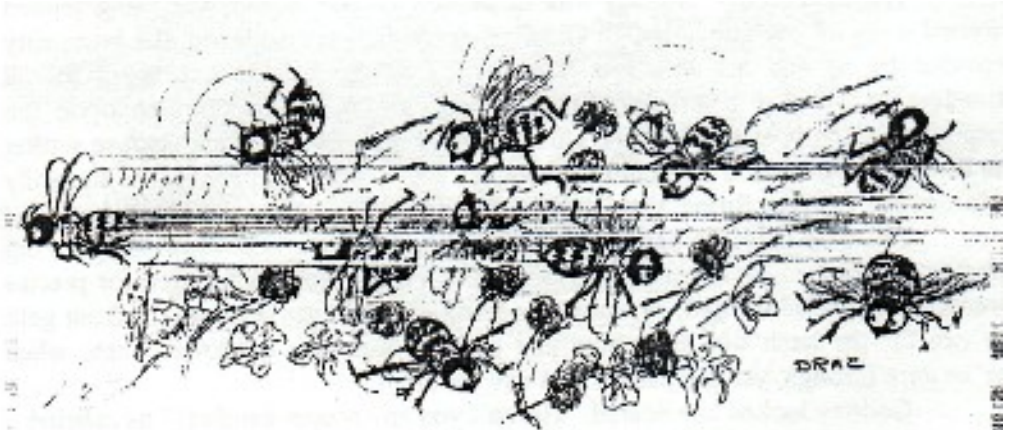
While canoeing up the Margret River

While canoeing up the Margret River in Western Australia, an area 120mils south of Perth , In the wine growing area (a very nice wine). Jane and I rounded a bend under a cliff very close to the bank of the river. As we came round the bend there was a distinct smell of honey and the unmistakable noise of bees. We pulled the canoe on to the bank and went to investigate, The bees were building their comb on the underside of an overhang on the cliff face.

The main body of the comb was in shadow, covered by the overhang, but as the nest increased and became lower it come out of the shadow and into the sun. The heat melted the bottom end of the comb and it was dripping to the floor at the foot of the cliff, there it was again collected by the bees and taken up and rebuilt into the comb only to begin the process again. The bees were very docile and I managed to get very close to take these pictures (see page 11), which I thought might be of some interest to the members of MBKA

Doug and Jane Wood

DRAC Cartoon



"HALLO - WHO'S BEEN FORAGING ON SPEEDWELL ?"



Toby's Top Tip

My bees needed feeding because they were big last month and haven't been able to fly much this month, its worth lifting your hives to see if they need feeding too.

Toby Beavan



Bees anyone?

This appeal has already been e-mailed around the association, so please bear with us if you have seen it before (see page 17 if you haven't). At this time of year many members search frantically for bees and in their enthusiasm sometimes buy from suspect sources. Those who follow various bee magazines know the current debate about whether we should allow bees to be imported from abroad. Indeed many would advocate not buying from more than 75 miles away in the UK.

Many Nucs for sale have been made up from queens imported from abroad. If you are offered a Nuc with a 2012 laying queen before May it is almost guaranteed that the queen will have been imported into the UK and plonked into a split UK colony, possibly a stolen colony. If you really want to be totally ethical buy from a local trusted source.

Your MBKA committee have negotiated a good deal with such a trusted source: a local commercial beekeeper who is working with the University of Bangor on a Welsh Queen breeding programme. These are 6 framed nucs, including a Nucleus box which can be expanded to 11 frames. Yes, you did read that correctly, 6 frames of brood in a box than can be expanded to take 11 frames!

We have secured delivery end of May to beginning of June depending on the weather. Whatever the weather you will not be able to buy local nucs from locally bred queens earlier than that. All queens will have been produced in west or east Montgomeryshire or within 10 miles of our county borders. The price of £155 includes delivery to our Gregynog Apiary for collection.

The nucs will be delivered to us only when their 2012 queens have proved their worth. The supplier states that *"the nucleus colonies are made in accordance with FERA Best Practice guidelines. This provides you with assurances of quality for the following:*

- *That there is a good standard of bees, brood, food and equipment provided.*
- *Instructions for the installation and care of your nuc are supplied on collection, you may contact us for further advice.*
- *Our bees and your nuc are regularly checked for disease e.g. varroa and treated where necessary. This is recorded.*
- *By operating a record system for sales, the National Bee Unit (NBU) is able to follow up any statutory disease situation."*

Please note that the Fera guidelines are even exacting than the BBKA guidelines.

Those who have ordered so far are guaranteed their orders, but there is an opportunity for us to order more.

To place an order, email or phone me, and then send a deposit of £80 to **School House, Y Fan, Llanidloes, Powys, SY18 6NP**. Cheques should be made out to **Montgomeryshire Beekeepers Association**.

Supply is limited and all orders from now on will be dealt with on a first come first served basis. Cheques will be returned as soon as we know that the stocks are finished. Act quickly as we are closing the order book on **10 May**.

An out of the way corner

One of the problems of living in an area of such low population density is that we have to travel relatively long distances to meet up. This is particularly true of residents living in the extremities of the county. Here is an appeal from a member at the Eastern edge of Montgomeryshire looking to hook up with other bee keepers nearby on a regular basis.

Editor

Dear Beekeeper,

Living as we do between three BKAs, Paul and I (with bees by Corndon hill) got to thinking that it was perhaps as good a time as any to test the water for a social and support group loosely based around the Church Stretton, Craven Arms, Bishops Castle, Clun & Montgomery areas and once we've identified two or three suitable hostelries, to rotate between them to start with. Other events are quite possible: suggestions very welcome.

After much debate, and so the group feels inclusive for all beekeepers within the area, we chose the name 9 Rivers Bees. The debate will no doubt continue but the idea was that nine rivers (or our local versions of rivers) have their source in, or run through, this area and without water there would be no forage. In time we might even have a logo to play with - how good is that!

9 Rivers Bees is not just for members of Ludlow & District, Shropshire and Monty BKA beekeepers but for any beekeeper in the area, partners and spouses. Just give me a note of their email so they can be added to the mailing list and kept informed of venues and activities.

Drop me an email (susbees@gmail.com) if you're interested with your preferred email address and any suggestions for good venues.

All the best for the new season,

Trisha Marlow & Paul King

Varroa Alert

As mentioned in the apiary report (see page 6), we had unseasonably warm weather around the time we did the oxalic acid varroa treatment. If you performed your own varroa treatments at the same sort of time, it is quite possible that the queen was laying and that a lot of varroa avoided the oxalic acid by being inside sealed brood cells. So be extra vigilant for these little beasties, especially while the bees are under a bit of food stress due to the poor weather we are currently "enjoying".

To check for varroa, use one or more of the methods proposed in this downloadable document (the link is to the Scottish BeeKeepers web site).

www.sbai.org.uk/varroamapping/Monitoring%20for%20Varroa.doc

If in doubt about your varroa situation, contact a bee inspector (see page 19).

Editor

Democracy and efficiency in an organisation

What torture the committee spares you.

Have you noticed that many articles in the BeeHolder come from the magazines of other Associations? Editors of many local Bee magazines share their works and get an opportunity to see how other BeeKeeping Associations (BKAs) are managed. When I was editor of the Beeholder I thoroughly enjoyed contrasting how various BKAs were organised. Indeed examining how other organisations were run was more fascinating than most bee articles. Similarly, as one of Montgomeryshire's representatives on the Council of the Welsh Beekeepers Association, I find the opportunity to compare and contrast our own MBKA with the other 18 BKAs in Wales far more interesting than the running of the WBKA itself.

Some Welsh BKAs insist that all their members are involved with every discussion and resolution of the Council of the Welsh Beekeepers Association. On the one hand this is an admirable piece of democracy. On the other hand it slows decision making because too many delegates are saying "I will have to go back to consult my members". I would not inflict compulsory attendance at a WBKA meeting on my worst enemy. It is torture. The only thing that keeps some awake is amusement at the incipient bitchiness of the formal part of the meeting. Chats over coffee are more interesting, friendly and productive.

I ask, not entirely rhetorically, whether we want our Montgomeryshire meetings to examine all discussions and resolutions of the Welsh Beekeepers Association. Personally I think it would drive many asleep or to drink or to ignore our meetings altogether. Those who want to follow discussions can always ask Maggie (secretary@montybees.org.uk) for a copy of the minutes etc of the WBKA to be forwarded to them. Similarly should anybody want to see minutes of our own MBKA committee meetings, Maggie will again forward them on. Our tradition in Montgomeryshire has been for members to trust committee members and for the committee to give plenipotentiary rights to representatives on the WBKA. I should put on record here that I received far more praise than criticism for having our AGM over in 10 minutes. Everybody had had the reports and documents weeks in advance and many took up the invitation to raise queries with the officers by email and phone rather than clutter up a meeting with points of clarification.

The survival of any bee colony depends on having the right ratio of foragers to nurse bees. If through bad weather, disease, bad husbandry or genetics the ratio is put out of balance then the hive fails. And so it is with BeeKeeping Associations. Too much communication about organisation rather than about bees and the Association will collapse. Too many decisions taken without monitoring and feedback from the members and the Association will similarly collapse.

Do moan and whinge and complain, don't hold back - but do suggest - and advise as well; and just occasionally say something nice to oil the wheels.

Tony Shaw



This year's programme

In response to members' requests we have put on far more training sessions this year. The Courses have all been sold out and there has been a good attendance of novices at all of the Gregynog apiary sessions. Note that the June and September apiary Meetings will start at 2pm rather than 10am, and at these meetings there will be shared teas as we have had in previous years. June's meeting, on the 17th, will be devoted to the whole family. We have been given a grant of £500 to buy protective bee clothing for children. Do bring your children and grandchildren along. There will be an opportunity for children to go into the apiary and handle bees if they want, or they can watch the proceedings from the apiary hut or the boundary net fence. No bouncy Castle this year, but we are going to encourage local schools to organise visits to the apiary that day. We want local kids to be asking their parents "Why cannot we go into the apiary like those other children?" Come along that day and help us push the idea of beekeeping in Schools.

There will be apiary visits to John and Joy Shearer on Saturday 21st July and Tom Brown's apiary at Melinbyrhedyn, near Machynlleth on Sunday 26th August. This has always been a popular venue with members in awe at the strong rapport that Tom has with his bees.

The Novice, Intermediate and Microscopy courses will be repeated next year. We are hoping that Brian Goodwin will continue the tradition of giving his inspired courses on beekeeping for novices and experienced beekeepers. The Microscopy course was a first for us and will be upgraded next year. Lecturer Jim Crundwell and his two assistants were excited about the potential of the video cameras used in conjunction with microscopes, screens and projectors. It was remarked that the three "tutors" learnt more and had more fun than the students.

A number of other courses were proposed in the questionnaire circulated by Michelle. Please note that indoor courses do need a minimum of 8 people attending. We have yet to reach that number demanding a Queen rearing course.

be informed, be up to date, be entertained

it must be

THE BEEKEEPERS QUARTERLY

the 64 page full colour magazine in its 25th year

view a sample at <http://www.bkq.org.uk>

£26 per year from Northern Bee Books,

Scout Bottom Farm, Mytholmroyd, Hebden Bridge HX7 5JS (UK)

sales@recordermail.demon.co.uk

<http://www.groovycart.co.uk/beebooks>

International reputation

We have been approached by a school in New York, USA to put a link on our web page to a commercial perfumery site with quite a large guide to bees aimed at children and adults. Link duly added and reply sent thanking for their co-operation.

Apparently this is all down to a teacher called Nancy inspiring a pupil called Amy to add value to our site as part of an after-school project. I will be passing the contact on to Vicky Farrington and, who knows, could this be the start of a trans-Atlantic bee connection for schools?

You can find the link on our links page <http://www.montybees.org.uk/content/links> in the "Bee Interesting" section.

Editor

The Electronic Age Is Upon Us

Like many organisations we are reducing the number of letters sent out. Apart from the price of stamps going up making them a better investment than gold, nearly 90% of our membership have given us their email address to use in communications. We are relying upon emails and the quarterly BeeHolder magazine to keep our members informed. There are those of you who have not yet shared your email address with us. We urge you to do so.

Your e-mail address will not be given out to third parties or even shared with the membership. Instead it will be added to the members' distribution list, members@montybees.org.uk. People on the list can send e-mails to the list, nobody else can. You won't get spam or anything else unsavoury by having your name on the list. People found abusing the list will be removed from it to protect all our interests. Primarily it is used by committee members to broadcast to the (majority) of the membership and is especially useful for late changes in event planning or information posts received by the secretary which she feels are worth spreading through the membership. It can be used by anybody on the list to send messages to the membership, but you are then exposing your e-mail address to everyone else. This is not a major risk as the mailing list is actively managed and restricted to only those members who have provided us with their e-mail addresses.

We would also like to encourage those who do not have an email address to sign up for one. You don't have to have a computer to have an email address. Your local Library or Resource Centre will help you with setting up an email address and it is free of charge. Also, please phone any committee member for advice on email communication and to learn how useful it is for keeping up-to date with bee information and how much money it can save!

Finally, if you are definitely going to avoid electronic communication completely, get in touch with another member who is a near neighbour and can keep you up to date with late breaking news. Contact a member of the committee for help in finding one, if you are not sure.

Chris Leech

Recipe Corner - Honey Ice Cream

Here is something to get you thinking of the coming summer, though unless you have access to an ice cream machine, this does look like it might be tricky to do.

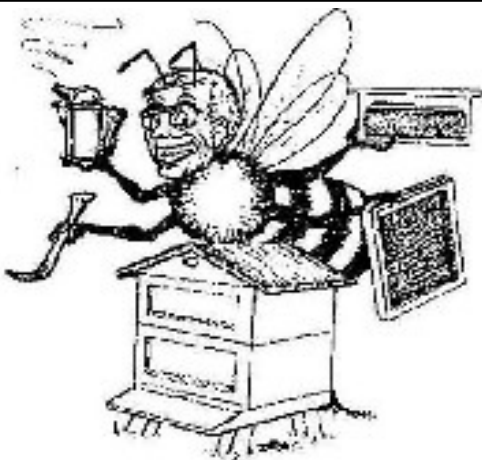
Ingredients

8 egg yolks
100g sugar
200g honey (or 6 1/2 tbs)
800ml cream
1 split vanilla pod

Method

1. Place the egg yolks and sugar into a mixing bowl and whisk until smooth. Place the honey, cream and vanilla into a saucepan and heat until it almost boils. Remove from the heat.
2. Strain the cream and add it to the egg and sugar mix. Mix well then return the custard to the heat. Stir the custard constantly over a low heat until the mixture coats the back of your spoon.
3. Remove from heat and churn in an ice cream machine. If you do not have an ice cream machine, you can hand churn by filling a large bowl with ice and rock salt. Place a smaller bowl with the cooked custard on top of the ice. Whisk by hand until thick. This can take up to an hour so have helpers at hand.

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BRIAN NORRIS

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To arrange for a visit by a Bee Inspector contact Frank who will make the necessary arrangements/

CENTRAL SCIENCE LAB: 01904 462510

Any of these contacts can be used to ask a Bee Question. They are here to help you



March Apiary training – none with the courage to face the camera



Some keeping a safer distance than others
(note the particularly large lunch boxes stored against the fence)

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