



**MONTGOMERYSHIRE BEEKEEPERS  
ASSOCIATION**

# **The BeeHolder**

**Winter 2013**



How to use an Observation Hut – get in there and have a good look  
(John Bennett in suit, Rosy on the far left – see article page 6)

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## We welcome as new members ...

This has been missing for a few BeeHolders now, so here is a list to catch things up. My apologies if you have joined recently and are not mentioned.

Peter Woolstenholmes (Llanymynech), Glyn & Kathleen Morris (Welshpool), Stephen Bowen (Welshpool), David Yaffey & Nicole Aarons (Llanidloes), David Davies (Llandinam), Warren Towns (Middlesex), Gareth Powell Owen (Llanidloes), Rebecca Nesbitt (Llangurig), Howard Morgan (Montgomery), Rob & Annie Drury (Newtown), Russel Colman (Carno) and Rod Blaine (Minsterley).

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

# Editorial

This may well be the last BeeHolder to roll off the presses at Llanidloes Resource Centre. A stalwart of Llani life, the LRC is having to close its doors at the end of November after providing computer, photocopying, printing, laminating and other services for the best part of two decades. There is a group of concerned residents trying to put together a rescue plan, but I decided for the BeeHolder that the safe thing to do would be to print off the Winter 2013 edition a few weeks early.

There have been some interesting developments with the Black Bee Breeding group (see report on page 7). The Stiperstones and Corndon Hill Country Landscape Partnership Scheme is a vast scheme with several millions of pounds of grant money at its disposal. A small part of this scheme is to re-introduce the black bee into the area (cunningly called Back to Black, nothing to do with Australian band AC/DC). MBKA has put in a bid for a small part in the scheme which could see funding for some breeding projects, mentoring of bee keepers in the area concerned (east Montgomeryshire on the Shropshire border) and perhaps some bee related training. It is too early to say for sure, but there could be some useful benefits for all of us in the association. Thanks must go to Heather Venis as principal mover in this, supported by several other committee members.

**Chris Leech**



## Toby's Top Tip



If you take the crown board off to apply oxalic acid and find the cluster of bees right at the top, it usually means they are low on stores and could be given candy (you can heft the hive to double check).

**Toby Beavan**

*Apologies for repeating last winter's top tip, but it is vital that our bees don't die out in winter for lack of attention. Ed.*

# Forthcoming Events

Some dates for the early events of next year. Some of the dates haven't been finalised yet, but there will be more information nearer the time and the web site will be updated as things become more firmly set.

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| <b>Jan 12<sup>th</sup></b><br>Sun 11:00am               | <b>Apiary Training Day</b><br>at Gregynog Hall, Tregynon<br>Oxalic acid treatment for Varroa. This is weather dependant, so contact Dave* a week or so prior if you are interested.  |
| <b>Jan 24<sup>th</sup></b><br>Fri 7:00pm                | <b>Annual Dinner</b><br>at Maesmawr Hall, Caersws<br>Last year the food was bee-autiful, so don't miss out this year! See page 14 for more information and the menu.   |
| <b>Feb TBD</b><br>Sat 9:30 – 4:30                       | <b>Beekeeping for beginners (course)</b><br>at Gregynog Hall, Tregynon<br>A one day course by Brian Goodwin** which will set you up for your first foray into the craft of bee keeping (see also page 9).  |
| <b>Feb 20<sup>th</sup></b><br>Thu 7pm                   | <b>Annual General Meeting &amp; Apothecary Bees</b><br>at Plas Dolerw, Newtown<br>There are several posts on committee to be voted on, plus after the AGM, guest speaker Jenny Hawkins from the Cardiff School of Pharmacy returns as promised to give updates on her work.  |
| <b>Feb TBD</b><br>and <b>Mar TBD</b><br>Sat 9:30 – 4:30 | <b>Intermediate Beekeeping (course)</b><br>at Gregynog Hall, Tregynon<br>A two day course by Brian Goodwin** which is restricted to bee keepers with at least one season's experience who want to progress their knowledge of the art (see also page 9).   |
| <b>March 20<sup>th</sup></b><br>Thu 7pm                 | <b>Making up Winter Losses</b><br>at Plas Dolerw, Newtown<br>Wally and Jenny Shaw will give a talk on strategies for increasing the number of colonies in your apiary. With winter losses becoming a greater influence on how we manage our apiaries, this is not one to miss. Those of us who have experienced a Wally Shaw talk in the past will certainly be at the front of the queue. |
| <b>Mar or Apr TBD</b><br>Sat or Sun                     | <b>Bee Breeding (course)</b><br>at Gregynog Hall, Tregynon<br>A course run by experts from BIBBA on breeding for selection of the native bee (see page 9). This fits nicely with our black bee breeding program is progressing ... watch this space.   |

Meetings at Plas Dolerw include refreshments, a chance to catch up with fellow beekeepers and the (almost compulsory) raffle.

\* Apiary training sessions at our Gregynog apiary are not usually followed by pool teas, but there is a cafe facility on the site. Please let Dave know if you are going to attend so that he is prepared for the number attending (tel 01686 626872).

\*\* To Be Confirmed.

## Chairman's Chat

It seems the general opinion throughout Wales that the bees are going into winter in better condition than for the last few years. Stores have been built up during September and the bees were taking down lots of feed during late September and October. Furthermore the varroa count seems very low this year. Optimism should always be tempered with vigilance. And what is true in one part of Wales may not be true in another. The (wild) west of Montgomeryshire is very different from the east and we all know that one hive will be taking down stores from the feeder whilst its neighbour a metre away will not be touching the sugar. In my last Chairman's Chat I mentioned the official Winter 2012/13 losses as given by the National Bee Unit were low as they didn't take into account those losses after the beginning of April:- that second cold snap - a second winter in fact, for which the bees were especially unprepared. To get a better picture, the MBKA are doing an on-line survey about winter losses. This will a comprehensive survey and will, we hope, identify what type of hive does best in different circumstances, and what feeding and medication strategy seems best. Furthermore we hope that our survey will identify what bees do best where we are. Please, please take part. We do need to tease out things that maybe just myths (albeit feasible ones) from hard core reality. For the sake of the bees just give a few minutes of your time. If you haven't got internet, please phone Maggie or myself for a hard copy of the survey. We'll even send you a stamped addressed envelope for its return. Anonymity is guaranteed.

Often the media exclaim that winter losses of bees are unsustainable. It is a bit of an unnecessary panic because many beekeepers are developing strategies to make up the losses. Learn about such strategies by listening to the talk by Jenny and Wally Shaw Making up Winter Losses, on the 20th March; an essential meeting for any beekeeper who wants to take the craft seriously. However, no matter how skilled we get at producing new stock our efforts will be wasted if the type of bee we are increasing is not adapted to the unique environment of our own apiary. Just as up to 40 or 50 years ago each Welsh valley had its own unique breed of sheep, so each valley would have had a stock of bees better adapted to that valley than the next. Ideally we should try to get back to that situation but the constant introduction of Mediterranean and Central European queens and drones into Britain means that our mongrel bees are drifting further and further away from the indigenous *Apis mellifera mellifera*. Are we sacrificing colony survival for a larger honey crop? To what extent are our own practices as beekeepers having negative effects on the survival of colonies belonging to our neighbours? These are questions that all beekeepers should be asking themselves.

On a lighter note, do come to the Annual Dinner...it's a good laugh! **Tony Shaw, Nov 13**

# Reports on Meetings

## September 14 - Dual Members' Apiary Meeting

This was a meeting spread over 2 members' apiaries, Bill & Carol Gough's and Roger Stone's apiaries in Aberhafesp – a first for MBKA. I wasn't able to make it myself, but by all accounts it was a good day out. The weather was fine, and the bio-security measures developed by Ian Hubbuck for the Gregynog apiary were deployed “in the field” and very ably policed by Noel Eaton. It is a credit to Ian's design skills that they were so easily adapted to an alien location. Perhaps there is a business opportunity here – Apiary Bio-Security Limited?

But a picture paints a thousand words, so see the photographs on pages 10 and 20 for a further 3,000 words.

## September 22 – Apiary training at Gregynog

It was a pleasant Sunday in September when I suggested to my weekend house guest, Rosy, that she might like to come on a drive up into the hills above Newtown (to go to Gregynog) so I could go to the Apiary Training morning. Luckily she agreed and said she'd be quite interested to listen in, even though she's not a bee keeper!

We were slightly early and were welcomed into the group of mentors who were deciding how to run the session and discussing Tony's ideas for inserting insulation on top of the crown board, but still allowing a rapid feeder to be in place (Autumn use). Our mentors were: Apiary Manager Dave Bennett, Roy Norris, Noel Eaton and Bill Gough. Also there was David Morris who, at a previous meeting, had inadvertently revealed himself as a beekeeper of 45 years experience and was inveigled out of retirement to be a mentor, and then there was first time mentor, Netty Batty, who was a new beekeeper in 2012 but having taken a temporary summer job with a commercial 'bee farm' she had had a steep learning curve in handling bees. When all the 'trainees' had arrived and disinfected their boots and put on over-gloves, we were split up into small groups and allocated a mentor. My group went with David Morris who was at pains to show that if you treat your bees gently and quietly they will remain calm (generally speaking) and be far less disturbed by anything that the bee keeper is doing. Of the two hives we were inspecting we decided that one was queen-less and that we hadn't managed to catch sight of the queen in the other hive but that there was evidence of her presence. Later in the session when there was a group chat it transpired that none of the queens had been spotted so we didn't feel quite so inept! Montybees are experimenting this season with 'Varroa

sticks' as a way of treating the bees. Previously Apiguard had been used but for that you need to apply while the temperature is above 15 degrees so that the Thymol can sublime and the whole treatment can take up to six weeks and also the bees may be put off feeding. The 'sticks' are organic and are called BeeVital Hive Treatment Stick or BeeVital Hive Clean and come in handy 15ml sealed tubes, each of which is sufficient for one hive. The contents are dribbled along the seams of bees between the frames, much the same as when doing oxalic acid treatment. The advantage of the sticks over Apiguard is that you can treat the hive at any time as it doesn't taint the honey or wax. Varroa floors were slid into place under the mesh bases to aid in the counting of the mite drop. Hive ventilation and Nosema were other subjects covered. Before closing up the hives each one was fed an autumn strength syrup using a variety of feeder types ranging from Miller 'trough' feeders to bucket 'contact' feeders.

Rosy and I then went to have a cup of tea and were later joined by Netty, Tony, Helen Woodruff and latterly by Dave Bennett. This gave us another opportunity to have an informal chat and to exchange bee experiences! We then set off for a walk around the lovely gardens – something I've never had time to do on previous visits and it was well worth it.

And here is Rosy's 'take' on the session:

Visiting the Gregynog apiary as a non bee-keeper was a fascinating experience. I was really pleased to have the opportunity to see the bees at work without having to wear protective gear. I knew a few things about bees, but the excellent observatory, set within the apiary was a mine of information about the bees themselves, the make up of a hive and what was on view. I found myself spending the whole time of the training session watching whilst the mentors went through the hives and showing me the frames of bees and explaining how the hives were being prepared for the winter. It was reassuring to be watching from behind the safety of the mesh walls! I wasn't the only visitor to the observatory that morning as another family with their children came along to watch as well. (*see picture on front cover. Ed*).

**Carol Whatley, Wintles Apiary, Bishop's Castle**

### **October 9 - MBKA Meeting Double Bill**

This was a meeting with talks on two topics at Plas Dolerw, Newtown. Firstly Noel Eaton gave an overview of the in house project "Bringing Back the Black Bee" followed by a talk by Emma Guy, Powys Biodiversity Officer, entitled "On the verge – 40 years and counting".

As most of you probably know, Noel, Dave Bennett and Roy Norris were impressed by a talk from Steve Rose about trying to re-establish the black bee that they took him up on an offer to go and see how to set about doing it. After a lesson on grafting queen cells, they got 6 out of

seven to take giving them two each. Only one survived – a nice healthy black queen – but unfortunately she must have mated badly by the look of her progeny. Dave and Roy both had two perfectly formed dead queens – this mishap was put down to the cells having been inadequately incubated during the transportation from N Wales. That was a lesson learned, but there is clearly going to be a difficulty getting queens mated with black drones.

There are a few candidate areas in west Powys in which it may be possible to saturate the mating range of one apiary with black drones. If all the surrounding beekeepers cull their mongrel drones and substitute with pure black ones supplied from outside, then the black queen(s) from the target apiary MUST mate with black drones. This needs lots of beekeepers involved as a bee will fly up to seven miles to satisfy its urges. It also needs an apiary where we can rear the black queens (Gregynog?).

The Stiperstones project in West Shropshire may be a useful ally in seeing this project through. We will try and keep members informed on developments through the BeeHolder and the web site.

Every spring people complain to Powys CC that their verge outside their house HAS or HAS NOT been cut. There are reports about verge management from 40 years ago and it is still contentious now. Powys has 5,492km of roads 2,536 of which are in Montgomeryshire (268 km of trunk and A roads, 1,018 km of unclassified). The verges of these make up a lot of semi-natural habitat with diverse topology, underlying geology and so on. For wildlife they offer a species rich habitat, good structural diversity and a long season pollinator foraging habitat. Opinion varies as to how valuable they are as wildlife corridors, but common sense dictates that they must be of some advantage.

However the verges must be managed to serve other functions such as fit in the landscape, as a refuge for pedestrians and horses in the absence of footpaths, aid surface drainage, somewhere to dump cleared snow, emergency stopping places and amenity value. Verges must be cut in order to maximise these benefits as well as to ensure adequate visibility, control harmful weeds, reduce fire risk and aid maintenance work on the highway/drains.

In the old days farmers and landowners maintained the road verges by making hay on them. When agriculture was intensified after the war, there was a loss of meadowland and verges were left as remnants. 90% of meadows have gone since WWII and are still going due to neglect and poor management.

Verge management now has to be targeted as the work to do far exceeds the man-power



available. The verges are managed to conserve the best examples at the expense of inferior ones. The Living Highway project went from 2000 to 2008 and Powys is still doing similar things (see <http://www.powys.gov.uk/index.php?id=3342&L=0>). There are 103 Road Verge Nature Reserves (RVNRs) across Powys with over 30 further candidates. Most are designated for floral diversity. They are still supported by wildlife trusts and volunteers, or they would not be possible. The management is usually different for each site, experts are needed to identify the site and resources are limited. It needs more support from the public to encourage PCC to allocate a bigger budget for the task – not easy in these austere days.

So if you are concerned about a verge near you, take a look at the website above, try and gain some support from neighbours or the parish council or the WI (or anyone) and try and present a case to propose a RVNR of your own.

I did not have high expectations for this talk – I mean, how much can you say about verges and be interesting? – but Dr Emma Guy far exceeded expectations. Reading these reports in BeeHolder is a very poor second to being there and hearing the speakers talk on their subject.

**LC Cheshire**

## **Training and exams**

I am happy to report that everyone who took the basic beekeeping assessment this summer has passed. Well done to all, and your certificates will be presented at either the AGM or the Annual Dinner (not yet decided). We are planning to arrange another assessment next year, and hopefully an intermediate assessment as well.

We are currently working on the training programme for next year, so if anyone has any suggestions or requirements then do get in touch (contact details on page 19).

Provisionally we are aiming for a Basic Beekeeping course in February for absolute beginners and a two day Intermediate Beekeeping course in February/March for beekeepers who have kept bees for a minimum of one season (no maximum requirement) and are keen to hone their skills. In previous years Brian Goodwin has given these courses and we will approach him again. The early production of this issue of BeeHolder means that we haven't yet finalised the arrangements.

Additionally there is the possibility of a course by instructors from BIBBA on bee breeding some time in early summer which compliments our efforts to establish a program to bring back the black bee to mid Wales.

**Julie Pearce**



Dual apiary meeting on September 14th 2013 ...



... held jointly at Bill & Carol Gough and Roger Stone's apiaries



Stunning colours at the Gregynog Apiary



# Christmas Trivia

Rather than our annual spelling bee, we thought that this year we would try a short trivia quiz with a theme of bees.

1. How fast does a honey bee fly?
2. The honey bee is not native to the USA but was imported by settlers. What do the Native American indians call honey bees?
3. How much does a queen bee eat per day (as a multiple of her body weight)?
4. What did people do in July 2013 in Oregon, USA, when 50,000 bumble bees were found dead in a carpark?
5. How far would a bee have to fly to collect enough nectar to make 1kg of honey?
6. Which brewery produces a beer called Waggle Dance?
7. How many bee stings does it take to kill an average person (who's non-allergic)?
8. Which 1970s and 1980s singer song writer had solo albums with "Secrets of the Beehive" and "Dead Bees on a Cake"
9. What do bees do at night?
10. How much energy (in units of ounces of honey) does it take for a bee to fly around the world?
11. (Bonus question) Which State in the USA uses the honey bee as it's state insect?

The answers are on page 17, and if I can work out how to do it, they will appear printed upside down.



## A Special Appeal

This year we would like Maggie and Heather to be able to enjoy themselves at the annual dinner without being encumbered by people paying on the night. I have to confess to being guilty of this myself at previous annual dinners. So please fill in a form (download from e-mail or web site, or you should find one in here if you do not have internet) and post it together with a cheque to the address given. Similarly rather than paying your subs at the meal, fill in the form which comes with the "Early Swarm" letter (on its way to you now), write your cheque and post them. Both Maggie and Heather do a lot of behind the scenes work and we should show our appreciation by making it as easy as possible for them.

**Editor**

# Gregynog Apiary Report

We have reached the end of another beekeeping season, which after a very slow start turned out to be very satisfactory for the majority of us. After the higher than average losses last winter, the number one priority in Gregynog has been to increase our colony numbers. At time of writing this we have ten colonies all fed and put to bed for the winter.

As a small bonus there we were able to harvest about 80lbs of honey which will hopefully find it's way into the Gregynog shop (delicate negotiations over size of jars and price per pound are still in progress). This will raise the profile of the apiary with visitors to Gregynog and also help to offset our feed bill.

Some of you will already know that I won't be apiary manager next year. Decisions will be made shortly as to how the apiary will be managed in the future and by whom. If you would like to be involved in running the apiary, or have a say in how it is run, let a member of the committee know (contact details page 19) and watch out for notice of meetings.



**Dave Bennett**  
Apiary Manager

## Honey Extractor



I've mentioned this before, but we have a splendid brand new shiny honey extractor available for use by the members. Several of you have already taken advantage of it this year. A non-refundable deposit (aka fee) of £5 is payable, which is very modest compared to the cost of buying an extractor (operator fee by negotiation). So

cross that little item off your Christmas wish list and ask for a remote hive monitoring kit instead! (see <http://www.arnia.co.uk> for more details).

Contact Bill Gough to arrange for use of MBKA equipment (details page 19).

*Please note that the honey extractor does not look anything like this illustration*

**Chris Leech**



## MBKA Annual Dinner



Friday January 24<sup>th</sup>, 7pm for 7:30

Maesmawr Hall, Caersws



Lightly Curried Root Veg Soup (V)

Trio of Melon Cocktail laced with Grand Marinier syrup (V)

Chicken liver and Brandy pate served with crostini

Warm salad of Pasta and Prawn in cream and white wine sauce



Roast Turkey with stuffing and chipolatas, stuffing and gravy

Roast beef with Yorkshire pudding and gravy

Baked salmon supreme with a hollandaise sauce served on a bed of bubble and squeak

Vegetable Risotto served with pesto (V)



Traditional Xmas pudding with brandy sauce

Sherry trifle (V)

Individual Banoffee pie (V)

Orange and passion fruit cheesecake with Chantilly cream



Coffee and Mince Pies (V)

V = suitable for vegetarians

This is open to MBKA members and their guests. To book your place(s) return the completed form with menu choices to the address given, enclosing a cheque payable to MBKA for the full amount (£22.00 per head) by January 14<sup>th</sup>.

### **WE CANNOT ACCEPT PAYMENT ON THE NIGHT**

Forms are available on the web site, by e-mail and, for those without computer access, there should be one in your BeeHolder envelope.

Ring Chris on 01686 413968 if you need help obtaining a form.

Surprise entertainment by Graham Winchester (V)

# An original Carol

I had read that long ago beekeepers decked their hives with holly on Christmas Eve. Then late at night, they'd slink into the apiary and wait. They did that, they said, because the bees serenaded them each year by quietly humming Christmas carols at the stroke of midnight.

To be honest, there was never a moment I believed the bees would hum carols, but I liked the idea of the ceremony, the tradition of honouring insect friends by being with them at a special time on a significant night. I admit also that I was curious about how a story like that got started. Is it possible that random beehive sounds "upon a midnight clear" could really sound like a glorious song of old? As when our brain tries to hear words and patterns from radio static or crowd noises? Perhaps, random buzzing, filtered through a mix of holiday spirituality and strong spirits, could sound something like "Adeste Fideles". I wanted to find that out too.

I suspected that maybe the story was just a beekeepers hoax, a way to reserve a quiet place away from others to think, drink, or meditate upon the season, but whatever the case, I intended to find out myself.

I stop a couple of yards away from the hives and notice how quiet everything is. On summer night, you can hear the buzz of a hive at any hour, like a miniature factory running 24/7, as the bees ceaselessly clean, form wax combs, tend the larvae, cool the hive, and dry the nectar into thick honey. On December 24th, though, because the bees have no reason to cool the hive and no nectar to dry, the hives sound more like the ghost factories of south Wales, not just silent but freakishly so.

I step forward and squat down next to the hive. Still no sound. It's almost midnight on Christmas Eve, and I don't want to have to wait another year to try again. So I gently brush my finger tips across the top of the hive, clearing off some dew and dirt, and gingerly lower my head, ear first, to the cold roof of the hive. And I do, I do hear something through the roof!

It's a different sound from the daytime hive, lower and more uniform, a steady, pulsing drone, like the sound of a ... what? It's familiar and soothing, but I cannot figure out what it sounds like.

Do the bees make any sound that could be interpreted as a Christmas Carol? I listen, the drone sounds on like a pulsing monotone, never changing rhythm or pitch, the bees flexing their wing muscles to generate heat. This doesn't sound anything like carols. I reluctantly have to admit that Catholic Monks singing a Gregorian Chant – even Buddhist monks droning "Om" - are more musical than a beehive on a Christmas midnight. Even if nursing half a gallon of mead, there's no way an honest beekeeper could claim to hear a Christmas carol from that.

I sigh, frankly surprised that I am disappointed. It's cold. I'm tired. My quest for knowing is over. I should go back inside. Yet I stay and listen to the sound. Then it strikes me. A beehive on a cold winter night, settled in for warmth, sounds like a purring cat. I suddenly realise that this purring existed long before house cats, or even humanity was there to hear it. Sabre toothed tigers and mastodons may have heard this sound. And the dinosaurs, they heard this sound.

The thought comes to me: it came upon a midnight clear, and it is a glorious song of old. In fact, this may be the oldest living sound I'll ever hear. So who needs Carols?

**Adapted by Tony Shaw from a story by Jack Mingo**

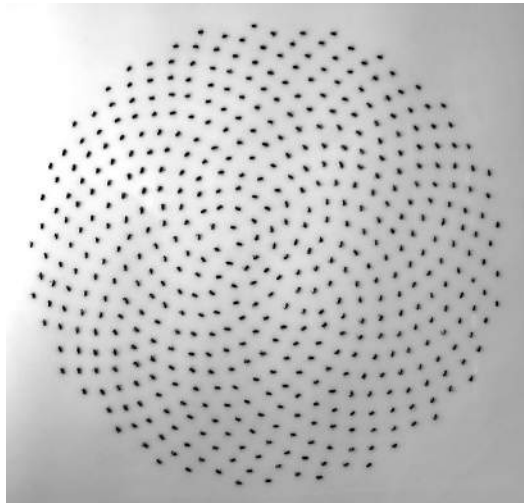
*This reminds me of the motto on our web site : "Montybees, we do it for the buzz". Ed*

## What to do with dead bees?

A Canadian visual artist called Sarah Hatton has taken thousands of dead honeybees and arranged them onto canvasses in mathematical patterns such as the Fibonacci spiral found in sunflowers. Hatton – who is also a beekeeper – decided to use bees in her work to spread awareness of bee colony collapse disorder to a broad audience in a conceptual way.

"Life often finds its way into one's art, and I had long been thinking of an artistic way to talk about the global decline of bees. I decided to use dead bees as the most direct visual way to represent this message, with the most emotional impact," she told Wired.co.uk.

One of the pieces, *Florid*, followed the Fibonacci spiral seen in the seed pattern of a sunflower. Two other pieces – *Circle 1* and *Circle 2* – use ancient patterns that have recently surfaced in crop circles. "Both of these patterns have symbolic ties to agriculture, particularly the monoculture crop system that is having such a detrimental effect on bees," she explained. "In particular, neonicotinoid pesticides, which are used in many countries on these type of crops, destroy bees' navigational systems."



Hatton says that when viewed in person, the works "produce a vertigo effect" which she likens to the bees' loss of ability to navigate when exposed to the pesticides.

The dead bees came from her own hives – she lost an entire colony due to natural causes in the spring. She glued them to wooden panels, coating them with epoxy resin to preserve them.

You can follow Hatton's work on her web page <http://sarahhattonartist.com/>

**Michelle Boudin, from an article on Wired.co.uk**

*Please make sure that your dead bees do not constitute a risk to other bees by transmitting disease after you have turned them into a sculpture or other work of art. Ed.*



## Answers to bee quiz

The bee quiz is on page 12. Please move your eyes there if you have not already attempted the questions. I ran out of time solving the problem of how to insert text upside down, spending the time instead on making sure that the units were not too confusing.

1. About 15 mph (24kph).
2. The white man's fly.
3. She eats 80 times her own body weight per day. That would be equivalent to an average 12 year old eating 6400 lbs (2900 kg) of food per day (or what a typical teenager actually eats per day).
4. They held a memorial service to raise awareness of bee deaths. The deaths were linked to the pesticide Safari on nearby trees which contains dinotefuran. It was banned for 180 days pending further investigation.
5. About 55,000 miles (90,000km) which is nearly 3 flights around the world (or just once around Uranus) which at 15 mph (24kph) would take 3666 hours (153 days).
6. Wells and Young brewery company and is made with honey. It makes a tasty Christmas gift for your bee-mad relative - hint. It comes in 500ml bottles. (Ed)
7. The lethal dose of honeybee venom is about 10 stings per pound of body weight (19 stings per kg) - that is over 1,200 stings for someone weighing 11st 11lb (75 kg). Bee venom may kill few people, but ounce for ounce (gram for gram) it's more deadly than cobra venom.
8. David Sylvian from the pop group Japan. The album Dead Bees on a Cake reached 31 on the album charts in 1999 (year of the rabbit, Chinese calendar).
9. It is commonly thought that bees don't sleep at all but remain motionless to conserve energy. Other researchers claim they do but have shown that the queen continues to lay eggs throughout the night in April and May.
10. One ounce (28g).
11. Maine.

**be informed, be up to date, be entertained**  
*it must be*

***THE BEEKEEPERS QUARTERLY***

***the 64 page full colour magazine in its 25th year***

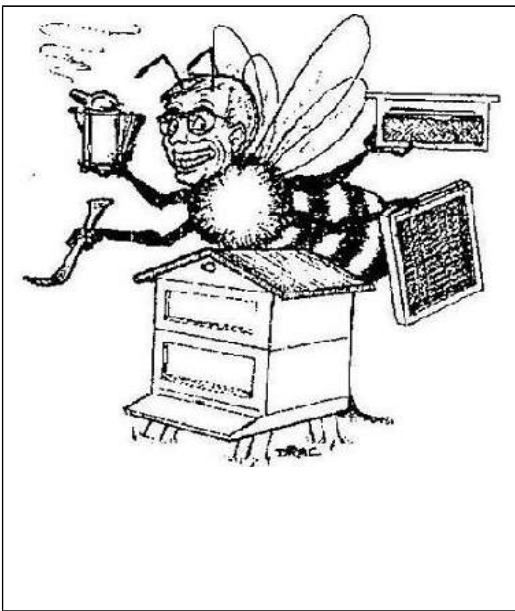
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MEMBERS

CATALOGUE AVAILABLE ON REQUEST

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## **The Bee Inspectors**

The Government recognises that bees are a vital national resource and hence take helping bee keepers very seriously. There are three Seasonal Bee Inspectors (SBIs) covering the county. Their areas overlap with other counties, so it isn't as though Montgomeryshire has 3 bee inspectors all to itself. Bee Inspectors are there to help you and should be called in at the first suspicion of any problem with your bees. The SBIs work from April to September.

If you know the name of the bee inspector for your area please contact him direct. You can find who your SBI is through Beebase (see link on our website). Just type in your post code. Otherwise contact the Welsh Regional Bee Inspector, Frank Gellatly, who will make all the necessary arrangements.

RBI Frank Gellatly tel: 01558 650588

francis.gellatly@fera.gsi.gov.uk

SBI Peter Haywood tel: 01758 721349

peter.haywood@fera.gsi.gov.uk

SBI Paul Aslin tel: 01341 251340

paul.aslin@fera.gsi.gov.uk

SBI David Coles tel: 01497 820419

david.coles@fera.gsi.gov.uk

Also of possible use is the phone number for the central science lab, 01904 462510, where any samples of bees taken by inspectors are sent for testing.



## **The MBKA Committee**

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Caption competition – choose from one below or come up with your own



a) Yes, beekeeping isn't all hard work.

b) Sometimes you get a chance to relax and have a chat.

c) Wow, is that the Acme supersmoker RB211d?

c) What! You keep wasps????

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