



BURTON and District BEEKEEPERS ASSOCIATION

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Newsletter: June 2017

Issue: No 3

Project to Develop a Training Apiary for Burton BKA

Intro by our Treasurer, Sam Hampton



In September your Committee began looking at what we need to do to develop a Training Apiary for the Association. A small project team was formed and we spent a whole day visiting four training apiaries in Leek, Stoke-on-Trent, Birmingham and Solihull.

We came away extremely impressed and much clearer in our views as to what we need, and aware of some of the pitfalls which are best avoided.

As a next step in the process I prepared a project plan. This has now been approved by the whole committee and we would now like to share it with the membership to keep everyone up to date with our intentions.

Costs and funding

The project has been costed and a set of proposals will be put to the members at the forthcoming AGM in January.

The association is not in a position to fund the whole project from existing resources, so a substantial amount will need to be raised from fundraising events and grants.

Much more will be communicated about fund raising in the coming months.

Please see the Appendix at the end of the newsletter for more info

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Committee Members and contact details:-

| | |
|------------------------------------|--|
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Club Meeting Dates for your Diary 2018



| | |
|--|---|
| Henhurst & District Recreational Club Henhurst Hill, Burton-On-Trent, Staffordshire, DE13 9TB | 15th January 19th February 19th March 16th April |
|--|---|

Events Programme : December 2017 - January 2018



December 11th 2017

**Christmas party
and**

January 15th 2018

**Presentation Night
AGM**

WHAT'S ON



BURTON BEEKEEPERS ASSOCIATION PRESENTATION & PARTY EVENING

**MONDAY DECEMBER 11TH 2017 7.00 PM FOR 7.30 PM
AT THE HENHURST AND DISTRICT RECREATIONAL CLUB**

**A FANTASTIC EVENING OF GOOD FOOD, GOOD COMPANY AND GOOD
ENTERTAINMENT PROMISED FOR ALL, KRIS KRENDO, UP CLOSE AND
PERSONAL MAGICIAN, ALSO A RAFFLE ON THE EVENING.**

£14 PER TICKET FOR A TWO COURSE MEAL, VEGETARIAN OPTION AVAILABLE

(NO TICKETS AVAILABLE AFTER 4TH DECEMBER 2017)

**BRING YOUR SPOUSE AND FRIENDS WHO DON'T HAVE TO BE BEE KEEPERS,
ALL WILL BE MADE MOST WELCOME, SOMETHING FOR EVERYONE.**



TICKETS AVAILABLE NOW FROM

**CATH AMBLER, THE PADDOCKS 49 ROSETREE LANE
NEWHALL DERBYSHIRE DE11 0LN**



GRAND RAFFLE

**TICKETS AVAILABLE FROM NOW UNTIL THE AGM ON MONDAY 15TH JANUARY
2018.**

**THE RAFFLE WILL BE DRAWN AT THE AGM AND ONE LUCKY WINNER WILL WIN
A NEW CEDAR HIVE COMPRISING OF:**

**STAND, MESH FLOOR, STANDARD BROOD BOX
QUEEN EXCLUDER, ONE SUPER, CROWN BOARD AND A ROOF.**

TICKETS ARE £1 EACH

**BUY AS MANY AS YOU LIKE, THE MORE YOU BUY, THE BETTER YOUR CHANCE OF
WINNING!**

**TICKETS AVAILABLE FROM ANY OF OUR MEETINGS OR SEND A CHEQUE
MADE PAYABLE TO**

“BURTON BEEKEEPERS ASSOCIATION”

WITH A S.A.E TO:

**CATH AMBLER, THE PADDOCKS, 49 ROSETREE LANE,
NEWHALL, DERBYSHIRE, DE11 0LN.**



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07973 369888.

Honey Show September 9th 2017

First and foremost, this article needs to start with a big **THANK YOU** to Show Secretary, Cath Ambler and all the members of the Association who work hard to arrange, promote, manage, organise and generally make this event happen. Being relatively new to beekeeping, and only in my 5th year, this was the first Honey Show I have attended. I arrived at 8:30am and was met outside the Octagon Centre by a hive of activity, it was our club Committee and members who were very busy bees, (pardon the puns!) taking in tables, displays and exhibits to put on show. So maybe I am a little lacking in having a wealth of knowledge and experience in how shows are put together. But, having attended on both days and being privileged enough to speak to other keepers, passers by, our general public and our honoured Judge Michael Badger OBE, I soon realised that behind every successful show is a huge amount of hard work and dedication. Once our display was set up, with clearly marked entries and tables laden with cakes and other goodies, the shoppers and passers by began to gather. I was met with a wave of interest, awe and curiosity, not just about the mead, comb, delicious cakes, pictures, frames and candles on show, but about the whole world of beekeeping.



One of the key exhibits was the observation hive and as Alan opened this up, almost immediately the public interest was peaked and so it continued throughout both days. Spotting the Queen was clearly a favourite amongst both young and old, learning about the waggle dance, seeing the difference between the drones and workers, something we beekeepers learn to take as routine, was clearly delightful to non keepers who enjoyed the opportunity to take a peep into the secret world of the honey bee and Thanks must go to Kevin and Kathy Shaw for supplying this display. Alongside this was the shop stall, where many of you will know we are able to sell our honey and wax products to the general public, which was well received by the shoppers visiting the centre. Last, but not least, were the displays of honey, over 109 entries this year ensured an excellent display of dark, creamed, set, light and heather honey.

What the Judge looks for :-

The show is a good opportunity to learn exactly what the judges look for. So what makes a good honey, a nice cake, a clean candle or a prize winning mead? I did pick up a few tips that might help the beginner. As an amateur, I took the plunge and tentatively entered a jar of light honey, and Dave Coates as my guide, some cakes, a photograph and a second jar of honey in the pro-am class. Following the judge round, I understood there are certain things everyone should consider. Basics, such as ensuring there are no chips or dints in jar lids that they are clean, polished and easy to open. Light honey should be clear, free from crystals at the bottom, or any tiny particles of wax floating on top of the honey, the judge then





His advice here was to ensure you give the jar enough settling time before displaying it. Clear the top of any debris and top back up... he was very keen on jars being full to the mark, no light should be seen between the glass and the lid... in Mr Badgers own words “a Yorkshire measure” was not acceptable”. Granulated honey should be naturally granulated, dry, and not fermented—the taste is powdery if it is fermented. Heather honey should be as pure as possible with very little crystal texture evidencing other nectars as present.



Cakes should have an even distribution of fruit, be evenly baked, a real honey smell with an even texture. He advised against being tempted to scrape out the bowl and dollop the last scoop of mixture on top of the cake when spooning it into the tin, this often resulted in air loss and uneven fruit distribution. Wax must be clean, and smooth, having a good colour, smell and feel to it. Candles should burn evenly, without sputtering as this may be a sign of impurities or water left trapped in the wax.

Mead should not taste medicinal, should have clarity and colour, a good nose and body and not be too acidic. Any novelty entries should be original, imaginative, the entrants own work and show variety. Cut comb honey should not be swimming in honey, be a good clean cut on fresh thin wax. The judge was very happy to give tips on just what he was looking for and what helped him select what he considered the best in the show from an excellent standard of entries.



Phew!! All this sounds difficult to achieve, the judge certainly took his job very seriously. But if he didn't, then the prize would not be worth striving for nor winning a reward. But if you don't enter...how will you ever know how to do it. It's fun and rewarding just taking part and it's not all for the moment when you get a little label that confirms your produce is as good as you'd hoped. It's as much about supporting your association, improving your harvest, extending your skills and simply enjoying the day.

Pictures :-

Honey stand ready for judging

Alan opening the observation hive

Checking for particles in honey`

Checking even fruit distribution in the cakes

Checking the colour and clarity of mead.

Candles and wax comb

Events Feed back :- September 2017—Talk on Varroa



This was an excellent and informative, in house, talk given by Alan Ambler and Sam Hampton who are both well known, long term members of Burton and District Beekeepers. The whole content is too extensive to include in our Newsletter but the following are key points of interest that those who were unable to attend. Varroa was first identified in the UK in Devon approximately 26 years ago, and an early, treatment was to use tobacco leaves in your smoker. This was certainly not a welcomed method by the bees and it is uncertain if it actually had any effect on the Varroa.

However, times have moved on and we are now aware that Varroa, although not directly killing bees, does shorten their lifespan. Through feeding off bees it weakens them, affected bees are smaller, under developed and lower in weight, making them more vulnerable to disease. Bees affected in the pupae stage have a reduced size hypopharyngeal gland which is used to produce brood food and so the long term knock on effects are weaker and weaker brood/ bees. Eventually a heavily infected colony will collapse. Along side this, the Varroa effect Drone vigour, Queen effectiveness and bee behavior, as well as being directly related to at least 8 viruses.

So what are we up against? An adult female Varroa lays eggs every 30 hours and can survive in the colony for 2-3 months during the summer and 5 months in winter. She will have around 7 brood cycles and consequently, just one Varroa can multiply into 610 Varroa in one season. In addition to this, they are very agile when it comes to attaching themselves to worker bees, which enables them to travel across the brood comb and between hives, therefore regular monitoring and control is vital.

Monitoring Varroa:

Popular methods include counting mite drop and numbers of Varroa found on uncapped drone brood. Opinions vary on the effectiveness of these methods whilst they do give a good indication of infestation levels, they may not always be accurate depending on the skill and experience of the bee keeper. Sam also gave a demonstration on how to count Varroa using the Alcohol shake method, this, along with the sugar shake method, is considered to give a more accurate reading. (More details about these methods can be found on Bee Base webpages.) Alan ended the talk with an outline on the use of Oxalic Acid, both the trickle method and sublimation were discussed. This is particularly effective as it is only applied in winter when there is no brood in the colony in which the Varroa can take refuge, mid to end December being the optimum time. As applying sublimation requires handling of potentially dangerous chemicals Alan kindly offered to talk and further advise anyone who was new to this method of Varroa control and was interested in applying it over the winter months this year.

The talk ended with a questions and answers discussion about the benefits and down falls of particular treatments, what the future may hold and the possibility of breeding bees that are Varroa resistant.

Alan and Sam were both thanked for their talk and everyone agreed it was a valuable asset to the Association to have members with such experience and knowledge who were willing to prepare presentations and share their knowledge.

Congratulations!

Alan Amblers and Sam Hampton for both successfully passing Module One of the BBKA Examinations.

Events Feed back :- October 2017 Talk on Wax production

Octobers meeting was a talk and presentation on Wax by Burton and District Beekeepers Association secretary, Dave Coates . Dave's talk covered tips for both the new and experienced beekeepers, starting with an outline of how the young bees in the colony produce wax and from the wax glands on the abdomen. Dave advised on the best way to encourage bees to draw out wax comb, by ensuring you have a good number of young bees, that they have enough carbohydrate available. Wax production takes up more energy and so they require a good supply of food either in the form of honey or sugar syrup. Once the bees have produced the comb, and in most cases, used it well, there is a need to ensure that it is replaced/renewed regularly (approx. every 3 years), to prevent build up of disease spores and detritus that may encourage wax moth to take up residence in your hives.

Dave then gave a demonstration of his own wax extraction method, showing samples of old comb and selecting which needed to be destroyed and which could have the wax recycled. Using twin ring stove and an electric Ban Marie he demonstrated how to remove wax from a frame, melting it slowly in the Bain Marie and, not allowing it to boil or come into direct contact with the main course of heat as this would spoil it. He explained how melting the wax allows all unwanted particles that are embedded to separate so clean wax can then be strained or just poured into moulds to cool. One tip was to always use rain water and not to be tempted to wash your wax cake in tap water, as the chemicals in tap water will damage the wax. The moulds used to collect the wax only need to be a simple container such as an ice cream tub, where the particles can then float to the top of the tub allowing the pure wax to settle and set below. The wax can be stored like this until needed. Dave followed this with details on the purity of wax, why candles sometimes spit or flicker due to water in the wax and tips from how to make both dipped wax candles and moulded candles, to the variety in wax colour and types of wick you can use.

A general and lively discussion completed the last half hour of the evening, where more advice was given on the use of Thymol crystals to help prevent mould growth, to different methods of extracting wax and the costs involved with the more commercial equipment that is available on the market. The talk ended with those present being invited to heft a hive that Dave had weighted to represent the approximate weight of a hive that was full of stores and ready for the colony to over winter. Everyone thanked Dave in the traditional way, with a round of applause and once again it was agreed that the knowledge and experience shared through out our membership group and beyond was greatly appreciated.



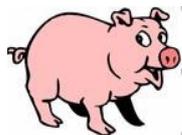
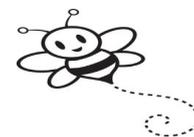
20th Novembers Talk - Microscopy by Guest Speaker Graham Royal



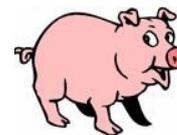
Graham has been keeping bees for over 25 years and holds both the BBKA Master Beekeeper qualification and the National Diploma in Beekeeping and is both a seasonal Bee Inspector for Cheshire and Chairman of Cheshire Beekeepers. His talk and slide show highlighted aspects of Bee keeping using a dissection microscope with digital camera images giving an incredibly detailed view of the Bees world through which Graham explained the importance of good colony management and health maintenance. He emphasised the need to regularly check your bees for diseases such as acarine and nosema, which can be done using microscopy. Microscopy also used for learning about bee anatomy and for pollen identification and Graham explained how the mounting board and the use of good equipment is key to getting clear images and views of your subject. Thanks were expressed to Graham for opening up a fascinating, detailed world of beekeeping and his sharing of knowledge on this subject.



Our First Apiary Fund Raising Event.



PIG RACE NIGHT AND PIE & PEA SUPPER



Useful websites:-

DAVE
CUSHMAN

www.dave-cushman.net

ROGER
PATTERSON

Honey recipes

www.honeyrecipes.org.uk

BEE
CONNECTED

beeconnected.org.au

BEE BASE

www.nationalbeeunit.com

<https://bibba.com>

BURTON
BEEKEEPERS
ASSOCIATION

burtonbka.org.uk



All members, friends and family are invited to join us for a fun and entertaining evening of Pig Racing. Never heard of it?come along and give it a try.

Hanbury Village Hall

Saturday 3rd February 2018

7:30pm—10:30pm

Tickets: £9 per adult (includes pie & pea supper)
£7 per child (includes pie & pea supper)



Please bring your own favourite drink or tippie to enjoy during the evening.



RAFFLE

Tickets Available from :
Dickie & Penny Ward :Tel: 07817500741
OR
Any member of the Committee

This event is a Fund Raiser for our Training Apiary



BURTON and District BEEKEEPERS ASSOCIATION

APPENDIX I

A Training Apiary for Burton Beekeepers

About Burton Beekeepers

Formerly known as the Burton Branch of the Derbyshire Bee Keepers Association our association was founded more than 60 years ago. In recent years the association has grown steadily. It began holding regular monthly association meetings a few years ago and late in 2016 the members applied to the British Beekeepers Association (BBKA) to be recognized as a separate association. It was granted independent status at a BBKA general meeting on 14th January 2017. The association is an unincorporated charitable association and has a hard-working committee of up to 10 members which normally meets six times a year to consider finances, and other association issues.

Constitutionally the Objectives of the Association are:

1. To promote and further the craft of beekeeping.
2. To provide education and assist members with all aspects of bee keeping, including bee health and keeping healthy bees.
3. To promote public awareness of the importance of honey bees and beekeeping.

In pursuit of these objectives we run occasional apiary meetings at members homes, study groups, and workshops. Members are encouraged to develop themselves in beekeeping skills and knowledge by practicing new techniques and taking exams run by the British Beekeepers Association. Occasionally we organize open education days which can be attended by beekeepers from other local associations. These days cover a variety of topics but disease recognition and management is high on the priority list. We also have a comprehensive library where members can have a book on loan, so education doesn't have to be expensive and out of reach for anyone.

4. To promote public awareness, we have a close relationship with Burton's Coopers Square shopping centre, where we keep (on the roof) a small apiary. We hold annual events in Coopers Square and regularly have stands at local country shows such as Ashbourne, Alrewas, Barton under Needwood. In common with many other beekeeping associations we advise members of the public on bees and are often called out to deal with swarms.

Decision to develop a training apiary

Most beekeeping associations have their own teaching apiary. Derbyshire (Burton's previous parent association) has one but it is unsatisfactory for Burton Beekeepers particularly as it is a considerable distance from Burton. It was not attended by Burton members. Becoming an independent association has meant that Burton Association Members cannot, as of right, attend classes at the Derby apiary without becoming associate members of the Derby Association.

Establishing our own training apiary follows naturally from our becoming independent from Derby, and is a key development need for the Association in 2018.



BURTON and District BEEKEEPERS ASSOCIATION

What are the benefits of having our own training apiary.

Anyone can of course start beekeeping by reading a book, acquiring some bees, and popping them in the orchard at the bottom of the garden. An experienced beekeeper will tell you though that the skill takes many years to learn, and there are lots of pitfalls along the way.

Controlling disease and avoiding malnutrition have become a special challenge in recent years and lots of experience and knowledge are needed just to keep a colony alive and well, let alone produce honey from it.

In common with other practical skills like Pottery, Sewing, and Painting, learning the craft of Beekeeping, is much easier in the company of more experienced people. This is because all the right questions come to mind when you are doing a key manipulation yourself with a tutor by your side. A training apiary therefore gives much needed “hands on” experience and leads to much better beekeeping, in a shorter time.

In addition:

- Many people are interested in learning about beekeeping but either don't have room for their own hives at home, or aren't sure whether to commit themselves by getting their own bees. Without the confidence which will come from working with an experienced beekeeper these people will quickly lose interest.
- Bees are venomous insects and a sting is quite painful. For some people there is a need to build up confidence over a considerable time before starting on their own.
- It is a sad fact that most beekeepers are older. Younger people need to be encouraged to take up the craft. For any young person, taking up beekeeping is more difficult than it is as an adult, because of the many things competing for their interest and the shortage of space at home. A good introduction through practical classes is an excellent way of getting younger people interested.
- The skills of experienced beekeepers may stagnate after a time. Teaching others is a strong stimulus to keeping up to date and honing skills which may have become rusty

Formation of this Plan

In September 2017 a small project team was formed from Committee members, we visited 4 training apiaries of different sizes in Leek, Stoke, Birmingham and Solihull. The range of facilities and activities undertaken at each is quite considerable, but the experience gave our project team very clear ideas about what our model apiary will look like and how it will be run.



BURTON and District BEEKEEPERS ASSOCIATION

Finding the right site

The economics of beekeeping are such that money just isn't available to acquire or rent land for this purpose. Most training apiaries are sited on unused land which has been made available by a local landowner.

Inevitably the final choice of site will be influenced by the opportunities which present themselves after the project gets fully under way but the key features which we will be looking for are:

- The site should be within reasonably easy reach of Burton
- Ideally it will be possible to park plenty of cars nearby
- The size of the site will be at least 300 – 500 M2
- It must have easy access to bring in and take away equipment (possibly also visitors in wheelchairs).
- It should be easy to keep tidy and secure from vandals and large animals (Cattle can sometimes destroy colonies quite quickly).
- Bees are venomous insects. The site's location should not create a risk to the general public.
- The conditions of our use will of course be what the landowner wants to lay down. This said, moving to another plot will be a significant undertaking and we would want to be reasonably confident that the association can rely on the free use of the plot for a reasonable time.

Other Facilities:

- We will need to erect a small building to store equipment
- Ideally there will be a water supply
- Toilet facilities and a place where we could hold classes are desirable but not essential.

Once this plan is completed and agreed by Committee, a small group will begin approaching local landowners and ask them to consider allowing the association to use a plot of their land for this purpose.

Organization and Timing

Until a plot of land has been agreed on and access granted, detailed plans regarding the further actions to be taken will have to remain very fluid. The Budgets and Project plan which will be the subject of discussion at the forthcoming AGM could therefore change, nevertheless they are strongly indicative of the approach which will be taken and the intended timing.

