



# CANTERBURY BEEKEEPERS



A branch of Kent Beekeepers Association

## EDITOR'S NOTES

Firstly let me wish you all a Happy New Year! Whilst there isn't much beekeeping work to be undertaken in January – other than reduction of varroa numbers in your hive by oxalic acid treatment – it's a good opportunity to plan the season ahead, and maybe study some new aspects of the craft.

The branch traditionally doesn't meet in January, and we will get together in early February for a "Show and Tell" meeting, where we hope you will all bring examples of your creativity in making/modifying things relating to beekeeping or product processing. Please contact us via email if you have something to talk about – big or small, we'd like you to share it. And if the bees are currently occupying your creation, then bring along photos instead!

In March, we will run a meeting discussing microscopy and disease

identification, and there will be an opportunity to use microscopes yourself.

We also want to renew the neighbourhood groups – it's an opt-in process, so if you would value discussions with nearby beekeepers, outside of the branch apiary meetings, email us (see p3), and we'll put the groups together.

In late November, the newly-elected committee visited and reviewed a number of apiary locations; we have agreed to create a new branch apiary in Bekesbourne. More news

about this will be posted in subsequent newsletters.

Finally, I have posted the minutes of our recent AGM on [the website](#) – the minutes won't formally be approved until the next AGM, but if you have any corrections or comments, please let me know.

Adrian

### Next Meeting

#### **Show and Tell – branch creativity**

Whitefriars  
Management Suite

**Wednesday 4th**

**February**

**7.30-9.30pm**

Joining instructions

– see page 2

## CBKA OFFICERS

**Chairman:** Julian Audsley

Briar House  
Waldershare Road  
Ashley, Dover CT15 5JA  
0776 183 9119

**Treasurer:** Joan McAllister

42 Canterbury Road  
Lydden, Dover CT15 7ER  
07824 668042

**Secretary & Newsletter**

**Editor:** Adrian Davis

24 The Grove  
Deal CT14 9TL  
07816 975286

**Membership Secretary**

Jan Soetaert  
90 Heaton Road  
Canterbury CT1 3QA  
07849 603168

**Committee Members**

Chris Bailes  
David Cockburn  
Jenny Cotterill  
Maggie McKenzie  
Michael Roberts  
Linda Smith

The easiest way to contact us is via the website, but you can also e-mail

**[cantbees@gmail.com](mailto:cantbees@gmail.com)**

Contact Newsletter editor  
to contribute articles

**JANUARY 2015**

## DATES FOR DIARY

26 January	Committee meeting, 7pm, The Old Gate Inn, 162 Dover New Road, Canterbury CT1 3EL
1-4 February (repeated daily)	Making Beeswax Products - a Workshop with Jim Ryan Petworth, West Sussex – organized by Wisborough Green BKA
<b>4 February</b>	<b>“Show and Tell – branch creativity” branch meeting, 7.30-9.30pm, in Whitefriars Management Suite, Canterbury CT1 2TF hosted by Chris and David</b>
5 February	Submit application for BBKA module exams to KBKA exam secretary
21 February	BIBBA bee improvement for all, Elham Village Hall, Canterbury Rd, Elham CT4 6SX
22 February	Submit application for General Husbandry/AdvHus exams to KBKA exam secretary
28 February	West Sussex BKA Convention, Watersfield, Pulborough
<b>4 March</b>	<b>“Microscopy and Disease” branch meeting, 7.30-9.30pm, in Whitefriars Management Suite, Canterbury CT1 2TF with Jan and Adrian</b>
7 March	Bee Trade Exhibition, Stoneleigh Park, Warks
16 March	Committee meeting, 7pm, The Old Gate Inn, 162 Dover New Road, Canterbury CT1 3EL
21 March	BBKA module examination day
<b>11 April</b>	<b>First Apiary meeting of the season, location tbc</b>
17-19 April	BBKA Spring Convention, Harper Adams University College, Newport, Shropshire

## INTRODUCTION TO BEEKEEPING COURSE

February – April 2015

Julian's course is now in its 7th year and is aimed at potential beekeepers. It covers all the needs of those thinking about keeping bees or who have just started.

*Starts: Wednesday 25th February 2015 - 7.00pm at Bishopsbourne Village Hall, CT4 5HT nr Canterbury.*

The course has 8 sessions both in class and an apiary. Cost: £75 including a course book, hand-outs and membership as a Friend of the Kent Beekeepers Association for the year 2014/15.

There is plenty of opportunity to handle equipment, assemble frames and ask questions. Download application form at [this link](#)

Julian Audsley



## OXALIC ACID SAFARIS

Neighbourhood Group Support

We encourage all members to practice integrated pest management for the control of varroa in your hives. Late December or early January is the ideal time to use the "OA trickle method", as there is little or no brood in the hive, so all varroa will be phoretic, and vulnerable to oxalic acid. Oxalic acid treatment is particularly important if you've used Apistan or Bayvarol in the hive previously; it is simple and doesn't bother the bees at this time of year, but you do need to get the formulation right and it doesn't keep once mixed.

Some of the groups have already met to apply OA (by both trickle and evaporation methods), but given the mild weather we've had throughout December, it wouldn't be a surprise if some colonies still have brood. You will have to judge whether your colony is in a quiescent state, particularly if you keep your bees in a heavily insulated box.

If you are not yet participating in the neighbourhood groups (previously known as mentor groups) or perhaps are a beginner and would like to have an early opportunity to see inside a beehive, here's a list of the areas covered, and the group leaders. Email [cantbees@gmail.com](mailto:cantbees@gmail.com) to be put in contact:

Canterbury/Faversham	Chris Bailes/Dave Cockburn
Deal	Adrian Davis
Herne	Michael Roberts
Folkestone/Ashford	Dougal Hendry
Womenswold	Julian Audsley/Joan McAllister

Dave Cockburn



## BEE IMPROVEMENT FOR ALL

One Day Event presented by BIBBA

Elham Village Hall, 21 February 2015



DDBKA, in conjunction with the Bee Improvement and Bee Breeding Association, have organised this one day event.

The purpose is to offer beekeepers the opportunity to learn about selecting their best colonies, and raising their own queens from these, to improve their own stock, and in the process inevitably helping to improve stocks of neighbouring beekeepers through the quality of the drones they raise.

It is now generally accepted that good locally raised bees are best suited to local conditions, rather than bought in, and (shudder!) imported bees. (the latter especially now that SHB has been confirmed in Italy).

This event is presented by leading authorities on the subject and is designed to be useful, interesting and relevant to all regardless of their level of experience.

Full details found by following the links on our [website](#)

Dick Bunting, DDBKA

## WINTER STUDYING

Preparation for BBKA modules

### THE BRITISH BEEKEEPERS' ASSOCIATION

Founded in 1874 Registered Charity No. 210325

#### EXAMINATION FOR PROFICIENCY IN APICULTURE MODULE 1 HONEYBEE MANAGEMENT

22<sup>nd</sup> March 2014 Time Allowed 1½ hours

Candidate Number:
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We've got quite a group of people who have passed their first level Husbandry certificate – but the step to the next practical assessment (general husbandry) is quite a large one. One way to bridge the gap is to study for BBKA module examinations. The areas of study are:

- Module 1 - Honey bee Management
- Module 2 - Honey bee Products and Forage
- Module 3 - Honey bee Pests, Diseases and Poisoning
- Module 5 - Honey bee Biology
- Module 6 - Honey bee Behaviour
- Module 7 - Selection & Breeding of Honey bees
- Module 8 - Honey bee Management, Health and History

More details of the syllabus for each paper can be found at [this link](#).

KBKA exams secretary  
Mrs A. Merritt  
49 Townley Rd.  
Bexleyheath,  
Kent DA6 7HY

If you are interested to know more, or perhaps are thinking of studying for a module, please contact Julian or Adrian. You'll need to submit applications to sit the examination to Angela Merritt of KBKA by 5<sup>th</sup> February, to ensure she gets you registered. The actual examination(s) will be on 21<sup>st</sup> March. If you are interested in doing the Basic Certificate in apiculture, we'll arrange that with KBKA in the Spring; if you are considering the General Husbandry or Advanced Husbandry assessments, applications need to be with Angela by 22<sup>nd</sup> February.

For those of you who don't want to sit examinations, the BBKA have recently introduced the ARK – Apiarists' Record of Knowledge, which covers the same study material, but is done at a pace that suits you, and involves no written tests. More about this on page 5.

Adrian

## BBKA APIARISTS' RECORD OF KNOWLEDGE

The Apiarists Record of Knowledge (ARK) is an aid to help support and develop training within the BBKA membership. ARK allows you to track your own progress through the BBKA's recommended curriculum in a similar way to a checklist, but being an electronic checklist ARK can also help you access relevant resources such as training courses/events, documents, videos and recommended reading. This ought to make ARK a valuable tool for all beekeepers, whether or not they wish to participate in formal evaluation schemes (such as the module examinations).



Beekeeping is predominantly a practical activity and competency is gained by working with honey bees, observing their activities, understanding their objectives and intervening where required. ARK is not an alternative route and cannot replace that experience. It is intended to provide a convenient record of the knowledge you will need when working with bees and should help you increase your understanding of what is known.

The individual competencies, or elements, have been grouped in the checklist into 7 subject areas and within each subject they are arranged by topic. Each competency has also been given a rating of difficulty, denoted by 1, 2 or 3 stars to help you approach the topics and subjects in an appropriate order.

The checklist allows you to record your progress at the level of each element. To do so open the element and in the current competency area select the appropriate level that you feel you have reached. The choices are Researched, Tried, Mastered or Verified. The latter is intended for you to show you have been formally assessed on this skill, probably as part of one of the BBKA Assessments or Modules.

The elements can have resources linked to them to help your understanding. It is planned that the resource list will be maintained and updated as ARK develops.

ARK has been created to support a range of devices including laptops, smart phones and tablets using standard browsers such as Google Chrome. The 'Help' buttons on each page will lead you through the features available.

To access ARK please follow this link:- [ARK homepage](#)

On first visit please use the 'Signin' button at the top left. You will need your BBKA website Members Area login and password and you will need to have a valid email address in your BBKA Members profile. You will be asked to create your own password for ARK. On subsequent visits you can log directly in to ARK using 'Login' at the top right of the screen using this password.

Why not take a moment to set up your profile in ARK so you can receive the most relevant information, then explore the checklist elements that match your level of experience. If you do access the ARK site, please let the BBKA membership know your experiences – using the BBKA forum ([here](#) - registration required)



## WEST SUSSEX BKA EVENTS



WSBKA have been assiduous in publicizing their winter events – comprising a Convention, a Beginners Day, and a whole day course on beeswax processing. In chronological order, here are the events. If you fancy going over, why not see if you can share the transport costs with someone local – match-make using the CBKA forum ([here](#) - registration required)

### Making Beeswax Products – a workshop with Jim Ryan

Hampers Green Community Centre, Petworth, West Sussex, GU28 9NL

*Sunday, February 1, 2015 - 4:30 pm, and repeated daily February 2-4*

Wisborough Green BKA has arranged this event and the Division is bringing over Jim Ryan from Thurles, Co Tipperary. Jim is well known as a very good demonstrator of making beeswax products. His methods are simple and he has a very good way of showing you how easy these items are to make, using minimal equipment. Demonstrations will take place on 1st, 2nd, 3rd & 4th February from 09:30 (for 10:00am prompt start) and plan to finish around 4:30 – 5:00pm.

Booking is essential: with Maggie Turner on email [maggie501@btinternet.com](mailto:maggie501@btinternet.com) or by telephone at 01243 545696 or mobile 07752 847631. Cost: £10 per person to cover expenses.

### West Sussex BKA convention

Lodge Hill Centre, Watersfield, Pulborough RH20 1LZ

*Saturday, February 28, 2015: 9.30 - 4:30 pm*

The West Sussex Beekeepers' Association is pleased to invite beekeepers and those interested in bees and beekeeping to the WSBKA Annual Convention. The event is designed to suit beekeepers of all standards. As well as the main lectures, the seminars offer a choice of more specialised topics. More info and registration [here](#)

Main Lectures:-

Read the Bees and Act Accordingly - Dan Basterfield

Natural Beekeeping - Serving the Needs of the Bees? - Heidi Herrmann

Swindon Bee Project - Ron Hoskins

In addition delegates have a choice of seminars, choosing one from each session:-

Seminar Session 1

- 1) Hornet Floors and the Latest Varroa Treatments - Max Watkins
- 2) Bee Sting Allergies - Dr Terry Allan
- 3) Queen Rearing Using Instrumental Insemination - Ron Hoskins

Seminar Session 2

- 4) Vertical Split Swarm Control - Dan Basterfield
- 5) Bee Friendly Flowers - Monica Lucas
- 6) Showing Honey and Other Things - David Sandwell

### Beginners' Day

Wisborough Green BKA, Village Hall, Lower Street, Pulborough, West Sussex. RH20 2BF

*Sat 7th March 2015. Assemble from 9.00 for 9.30-5.00 p.m.*

The course is suitable for those who wish to discover what is involved in keeping bees, but will also be suitable for those who have kept bees for some time. It will largely follow the syllabus of the BBKA Basic assessment, but with variations. This course is based on over 50 years experience, not just repeating what is in books. More information and booking form at their website [www.wgbka.org.uk](http://www.wgbka.org.uk)