



CANTERBURY BEEKEEPERS

A branch of Kent Beekeepers Association

EDITOR'S NOTES

Though I still have poppies flowering in my garden, and some enormous nasturtium plants, most of the leaves have been shed by my fruit trees, so we are deep into autumn, aren't we?! The honey shows are over, and the branch has just held its AGM so Christmas is just around the corner. Please look at page 2 for details of our Christmas party, which we would be delighted to see you all attending. We have seen a few changes in the branch committee so it's appropriate to acknowledge the efforts of those people who are standing down or changing role. Chris Bailes and Jenny Cotterill are planning to move to the Bristol area, so thanks to them for all their committee work, in particular their support for the BeeDays at Whitefriars, the Brogdale festivals, and many others of our meet-the-public events.

Julian Audsley is taking a well-earned break from chairing the branch, having served in that capacity for the last 3 years. This will give him more time to focus on the education activities which are so vital to the branch, and which set many of us on the right path for beekeeping success. David Cockburn is

stepping into the Chairman's role. More details about the new committee and the AGM can be found on p3 and in a separate AGM report. Our last meet-the-public event of the season went well on 17-18 October at Brogdale.

Honey sales were strong, lots of people attended our talks, and there was lots of discussion at our stand. Thanks everyone who helped out, and also to Brogdale for providing us with our own marquee in recognition of the importance of the educational side of our presence. Adrian

Next Meeting

Christmas Party

St Michael's Hall,
Roman Road, Upper
Harbledown,
Canterbury CT2 9AT

Friday 4th

December

7-10pm

Joining instructions

– see page 2

CBKA OFFICERS

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Magdalene Mei Halkes
Maggie McKenzie
Michael Roberts

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

cantbees@gmail.com

Contact Newsletter editor to contribute articles

NOVEMBER 2015

A newsletter for friends and members of Canterbury BKA

CHRISTMAS PARTY

We have organised a party for CBKA at St Michael's Hall in Upper Harbledown on Friday 4th December at 7pm. Beekeepers, friends and partners are all welcome: we'll be charging £10/head to cover food and hall hire. We are still finalising the details, but it will be a three course meal, with options for both vegetarians and omnivores. Magdalene Mei Halkes has kindly offered to organise the catering for us, so the price will be substantially less than what we might pay at a commercial location. Here's an approximate idea of the menu, which will expand dependent on the numbers attending

starters: cured ham, chorizo

tomatoes and mozzarella cheese slices

green salad leaves

mix vegs.

Main: Roast Duck

boiled gammon joint with cheese and pickles

prawns in two sauces

chicken drum sticks in sweet soy sauce

potatoes/squash dish

Veg. curry

Pudding: 3 or 4 cakes depending on number of people coming

If you want to bring along something stronger to drink, that would be very welcome! Please let us know that you are coming by Tuesday 1st December, so we can get the catering right. Email

cantbees@gmail.com or phone David Cockburn on 01227 457517. Ideally you'll pay by bank transfer:

Account name: Kent Beekeepers' Association/Canterbury Branch

Sort code: 30-91-60, Account number: 00371771

Alternatively, send a cheque payable to Kent Beekeepers' Association to our treasurer, Joan – whose address is on the front page.



DIRECTIONS

St Mary's Hall, Roman Road, Upper Harbledown, Canterbury CT2 9AT

By car Set Sat Nav post code to CT2 9AT

Coming out of Canterbury on the A2050, pass through the traffic lights at Palmars Cross Hill, and look out for a right turn onto Roman Road, about 200m past the lights. Try not to miss it, or you will end up on the A2, and have to go up to Dunkirk! Follow Roman Road for about 600m through Upper Harbledown. There is a left turn signed to "Boughton, Faversham, A2": the hall is on the right hand side at this junction. Parking is on the street – please be considerate of the neighbours and park beyond the "access to London Road" sign.



By foot / BUS

The 3/3B service from Canterbury to Faversham stops very close to St Mary's Hall, and takes about 10min from the Canterbury bus station.

MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL

Subs were due 1st October

Our new year started on the 1st October and you will have received by email information to enable you to renew your membership of the Kent Beekeepers Association. You will notice that the subscription has risen from £45 to £46, which includes Beecraft magazine, BBKA 3rd party insurance and the BDI premium for up to three colonies. KBKA members receive Beecraft at a 25% reduction to the price paid by other subscribers. Don't forget to GiftAid your membership – it costs you nothing, and enhances the value of your membership subscription to CBKA/KBKA by 20%.

The renewal forms are available from our website [here](#) – and if it is convenient for you, the transaction can be completely electronic, as we can accept BACS transfers into our bank account.

Jan

BRANCH AGM

18 members attended the branch AGM on 4th November, to review the 2015 CBKA year, elect the committee for the coming year, and discuss what the key activities for 2016 should be. We always struggle with the process for approving the minutes of the previous year's AGM, so this year I have included with this newsletter the DRAFT minutes of the AGM, so that more people can see them and comment on them. Please email me at cantbees@gmail.com if anything isn't clear, or there are errors of omission.

Of course, not all members were able to attend the AGM, so if you have suggestions for 2016 activities, please let your newly elected committee know – the contact details for the new officers are found on page 1 of this newsletter. Alternatively, you could use the CBKA discussion forum to share your thoughts, and the relevant discussion thread can be found [here](#).

Adrian

WEBSITE HONEY SALES TOOL

Now in Beta-Test!

If you follow the CBKA forum, you will see that I have been slowly working on a tool for the website that allows members to advertise to the public that they have honey to sell. At this stage it is still only visible to registered users of our website (i.e. members only), but I would like to get some more people to try the site out to see if it meets a need. Unfortunately, it's an off-the-shelf commercial tool, so any customization will likely be too expensive for us, but if there is sufficient interest after road-testing, then we can go public in a few months' time.

[This is the link](#) to the honey sales tool (you need to login to the website). I'd like you to pretend to be a honey seller and create your own entry. Instructions are found in [this document](#), but briefly:

- 1) login to website
- 2) navigate to wordpress dashboard (from black bar at top)
- 3) navigate to Store Locator Plus (left side bar)
- 4) create your first entry

If a few people could try it out, that would be really helpful. You don't have to enter "real" information; this is just for test purposes. The page is not available to the public, only to people who can login to the site. Give feedback via the links at the top of the honey sales webpage.



84TH NATIONAL HONEY SHOW

On Thursday 29th October I spent the day at the NHS in St George's College, Weybridge. It's a beautiful location, not too difficult to get to but with potentially confusing layout and signage balanced by competent stewarding. I had arrived early on the opening day to see if I could help with the setup of the trade halls but found that everything had been sorted in my absence. It had clearly been a difficult day on the Wednesday trying to divide the traders across two halls and I quite understand why some of them were unhappy with the arrangements made.



My first lecture was by Debbie Delaney and reported on market research she had done on, American, consumer preferences in labelling, jar sizes and shapes and product style. Well-presented and interesting; there is clearly a big problem with adulteration which we either do not have or which we are not aware of. A large proportion of honey sold is so well filtered as to remove all traces of pollen and thus evidence of origin and there is also a lot of 'honey' sold to which sugar syrup has been added. A situation made more difficult by the lack of a legal definition of Honey. Debbie showed how, in response, consumers are prepared to pay more for unfiltered, 'raw' honey which has not even been strained to remove bits of bee and wax. They were also prepared to pay more where honey was accompanied by negative information detailing the adulteration problem, which I find a bit depressing. American jar sizes and shapes are different to ours and consumer

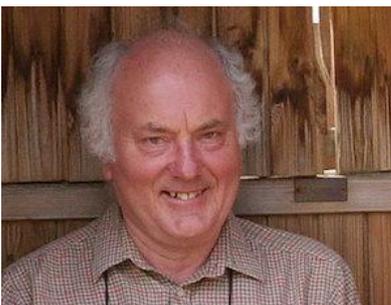
preferences were quite marked; novelty sizes and shapes being preferred to the usual ones.

This was a professionally conducted market research project backed with significant funding. Because the results were not instantly transferable to the UK it might well be worth the BBKA funding a similar project here.

Juliana Rangel gave a well-received lecture on honeybee mating including some beautiful pictures and dramatic descriptions of the action. The many questions and packed lecture theatre made clear the high level of interest.



The cafeteria space was much larger than in previous years and provided a good opportunity to chat and discuss the lectures while ploughing through lunch. The college was obviously used to preparing meals for a bunch of hungry teenagers so the quantities offered were too much for an old codger like me but the value was excellent.



I spent the afternoon at a workshop given by Roger Patterson on feral bees and what we can learn from them. Roger has taken over 200 colonies out of barns, tree trunks and elsewhere in his career stretching back over fifty years. He described how in pre-varroa days not only were there many more feral colonies but a much greater proportion were in tree trunks while recently the few collected were mostly from buildings. He said this was partly due to country people being much more relaxed about bees in buildings fifty years ago than now in addition to the general decline in feral colonies. Roger prefers anecdote to data so there was not much

fact to chew on but the pictures were dramatic and the analogy to the functioning of Warre hives was nicely presented.

Heroically I not only attended the opening ceremony but also the AGM of the NHS, which is held at the end of the day. In both cases the role of us delegates was to ratify the control of the organisation by the group of patient and conscientious people who ensure the show runs smoothly.

I managed to fit in visits to Thornes, Northern Bee Books and a few other trade stands to stock up on essential gadgets. I could see there were good crowds and substantial trade was being conducted right up to closure at 6pm. I then spent two hours sitting on the crowded highway in the drizzle to top off a mixed day.

David Cockburn