



CANTERBURY BEEKEEPERS



A branch of Kent Beekeepers Association

EDITOR'S NOTES

Although there may not be any direct evidence of change in your beehives on these cold and dreary February days, if you look around closely, you will see the early signs of Spring. Hazel catkins are "de-hiscing" and can be a source of pollen on a warm day for bees. I've also seen a few crocuses in bloom. And amongst the beekeeping community, things are also gearing up for Spring. There's a number of interesting-looking meetings in our area over the next 6 weeks starting, of course, with Stuart Andrews' talk about beekeeping in

Uganda with Bees Abroad on 15th February. On page 4, you will find details of other talks in the East Kent and wider Kent BKA area, which all look worth a visit. The first tradeshow of the season - Bee TradeX on 4th March at Stoneleigh - may be too distant to travel to for most of us, but if you didn't take

advantage of the winter sales, then the BBKA Spring Convention is your next opportunity for bargain hunting in early April. Our online calendar keeps track of most of these events, as well as our branch activities, so it's worth connecting your phone or mailbox to the branch calendar so you can see in an instant what is going

Next Meeting

Beekeeping in Uganda

Dr Stuart Andrews

Whitefriars
Management
Suite

Wednesday 15th

February

7.30-9.30pm

see page 2

on around the beekeeping world. Instructions can be found on p2.

As I sit writing this newsletter, there's forecasts of snow during the weekend, so it might be interesting to see just how warm a colony can keep its beehive. David and Adrian made some measurements at

our Bekesbourne apiary recently, and the results can be seen on p5.

Finally, if you are hoping for, or willing to collect swarms this year, we'd like you to register your interest on our website. More details on p3.

Adrian

CBKA Officers

Chairman: David Cockburn
34 Whitstable Road
Canterbury CT2 8DQ
01227 457517

Treasurer and Membership:

Joan McAllister
42 Canterbury Road
Lydden, Dover
CT15 7ER
07824 668042

Secretary & Newsletter Editor:

Adrian Davis
24 The Grove
Deal CT14 9TL
07816 975286

Committee Members

Julian Audsley
Simon Daniell
Magdalene Mei Halkes
Maggie McKenzie
Michael Roberts
Jan Soetaert

The easiest way to contact us is via email using the links above, but you can also use the contacts page on the website.

Contact Newsletter Editor to contribute articles

FEBRUARY 2017

A newsletter for friends and members of Canterbury BKA

DATES FOR DIARY: yearbook at <http://canterburybeekeepers.org.uk/calendar/cbka-list/>

Friday 10 th February	Closing date for application to sit BBKA examinations
Wednesday 15th February	Helping to relieve extreme poverty: practical experiences of beekeeping in Uganda Dr Stuart Andrews, vice-chair, Bees Abroad
Wednesday 8 th March	Committee meeting, Old Gate Inn, 7-9pm
Wednesday 15th March	Queen rearing principles – planning for queen rearing as a branch activity Julian, Joan and Adrian
Saturday 18 th March	BBKA modules examination day
Saturday 8th April	Apiary meeting, 2-4pm. Spring preparations. Location tbc
7-9 April 2017	BBKA Spring Convention, Harper Adams University
Saturday 6th May	Apiary meeting (bee safari), with SBI Kay Wreford

We keep a google calendar up-to-date with all branch meetings, and relevant other activities. You can integrate this with your own calendars using the following information:

- For use with a Calendar app such as Google calendar, Apple Calendar, Outlook or Thunderbird, the first thing you need is the public address of our branch calendar, and in some cases you may also need to reference our email address (cantbees@gmail.com):

<https://calendar.google.com/calendar/ical/cantbees%40gmail.com/public/basic.ics>

INDOOR MEETING, 15 FEBRUARY

DIRECTIONS

Whitefriars Conference room Canterbury

Free parking in the multi-storey car park. Collect your ticket and this will be processed during the meeting. Park on the 1st floor on the left and take the corridor down to the management suite at the bottom of the corridor on the left. Please car share if you can, since Whitefriars have to pay the cost of this on our behalf.

By car Set Sat Nav post code to CT1 2TF

Go around the ring road and at the roundabout opposite the Police Station turn through the city walls into Watling Street. Go past the bus station on your right and the Whitefriars multi-storey car park is straight ahead and right at the mini-roundabout. If coming from the south go down the Old Dover Rd and straight across the roundabout through the city walls.

By foot / BUS

Between the Bus Station and Whitefriars center there is an alleyway between Boots and Next. Here there is an entrance to the car park. Go to the first floor by lift and turn left out of the lift through double doors. The management suite is 20 yds along this corridor.





BRANCH NEWS



Swarm Collection and Receipt

Spring will quickly be upon us, so it's time to make preparations for swarming! As well as having a good plan for managing swarming in your own apiary, we like to help the local community deal with any swarms and casts that settle where they are not wanted.

We'd like you to register your interest in swarm collection, whether that is to help your local community, to get bees to increase your own hive count, or to get you started. If you aren't confident to collect a swarm by yourself but would like to use a swarm to start or increase your apiary, this is also the place to register.

The BBKA swarm collectors database is a national, publicly available system, which matches beekeepers to concerned members of the public who have bees requiring removal. By registering on the Canterbury database, you can indicate whether you wish to be listed publicly or not. If you want to indicate willingness to help in your locale, then select only "private listing" and opt out of the public BBKA list.

Login to our website and navigate to <http://canterburybeekeepers.org.uk/swarm-management/> in order to register your interest. Even if you did this last year, please re-register so that we know that you are willing to collect or receive swarms in the 2017 season.

Committee Email addresses

With almost all of our communications done by email, it's worthwhile to make sure that people can contact officers of Canterbury Beekeepers easily. With that in mind, we've created a series of email addresses that should be easy to remember, as they tie in with our website:

David: **chairman**@canterburybeekeepers.org.uk

Adrian: **secretary**@canterburybeekeepers.org.uk

Joan: **treasurer**@canterburybeekeepers.org.uk

committee@canterburybeekeepers.org.uk

membership@canterburybeekeepers.org.uk

newsletter@canterburybeekeepers.org.uk

Julian:

introductory.courses@canterburybeekeepers.org.uk

tbd: **apiary.manager**@canterburybeekeepers.org.uk

We will use these across the website, email and newsletter communications, and hopefully all our members will always be able to contact the correct person.



KENT BKA NEWS

Please do come and see Dr. Keith-Lucas's lecture on Pollen and Forensics - it's really fabulous! He will be giving examples of how pollen is used in solving crimes of fraud, theft, fire-arms offences, bombings and murder, and how pollen and spores disperse and arrive at the scenes of crime.

Saturday 18th February 2017 3.00pm

Baldwyns Park Clubhouse, Bexley DA5 2BA



Sidcup KBKA Presents:

'Pollen in Forensics'

Dr. Michael Keith-Lucas

Saturday 18th February 2017

3pm start & £3.00 entrance fee includes tea and cake.

david.rea@talk.21.com to reserve a place.

Baldwyns Park Clubhouse, Bexley, DA5 2BA

Free Parking

Dr. Keith-Lucas was formerly senior tutor in plant sciences at the University of Reading and chairman of the Mid-Berks region of the Wildlife Trust, BBOWT. He is president of Reading and District Gardeners Association, vice-chairman of Reading and District Natural History Society, and of Reading Tree Wardens. In his retirement - he has found a new career in Forensic Science.

Don't forget to reserve your place (£3) by e-mailing david.rea@talk.21.com.

EAST KENT BEEKEEPING

Thanet Beekeepers warmly welcomes members of Canterbury Beekeepers to the following free talks.

Sunday 19th February 2017 2.00pm

European Foul Brood (EFB) Identify, Avoid, Act

Talk on practical measures by Kay Wreford, Seasonal Bee Inspector for Kent. Taddy's Barn, East Northdown Farm, George Hill Road, Broadstairs, CT10 3BJ.

Taddy's Barn is a cafe and beekeeping supplies shop attached to East Northdown Farm & Garden Nursery. Look out for the TBKA sign on fence

Tuesday 28th March 2017, 7.30 pm

Queens & Queen Raising. The Theory with Bob Smith.

This talk on the theory of queen raising will be followed by a practical session with Bob in June to which visitors will be welcome, numbers permitting. Salvation Army Community Hall, 1 Tothill St, Minster CT12 4AG. This is a brand new hall on the main road into Minster from the Thanet Way. Look out for the TBKA sign on the railings

Dover and District BKA have these meetings upcoming at Alkham Village Hall, CT15 7BU:

Saturday 25th February, 2pm

Talk by Kay Wreford, currently a seasonal bee inspector for our area. Learn from a very experienced beekeeper who is a Basic examiner for E Kent. She will give pointers to opening hives with least fuss.

Saturday 25th March, 2pm

Talk by Derek Mitchell on Hives and Heating. He has presented this lecture to national and international beekeeping groups. How bees regulate and maintain their temperatures in the hive. Should we insulate or leave it to them?

THERMAL IMAGING IN THE APIARY

David and I were in the Bokesbourne apiary at the end of January, to finish off the oxalic acid treatments of the beehives there. The conventional hives had been treated by the vaporisation method, but it is hard to use this technique for a top-bar hive, so we planned to trickle an OA solution onto the bees, once we had located them in the hive. In a top-bar hive, locating the bees without significant disturbance is a challenge. As can be seen from the picture below, the top-bars provide

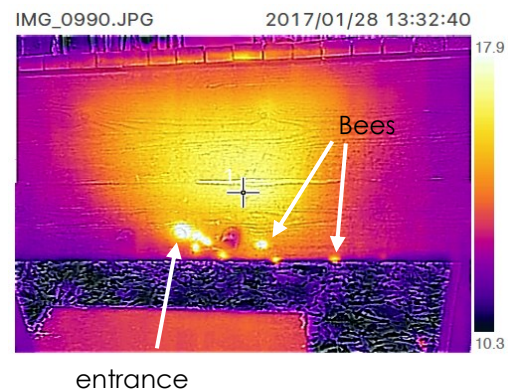
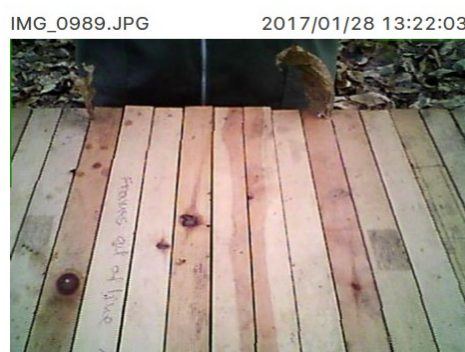
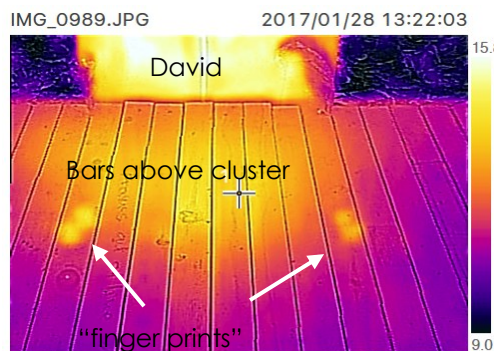
no gaps through which to spy the bees, so we resorted to technology to provide the solution. I have an iPhone-compatible thermal imaging camera, which as well as helping to locate poorly insulated parts of your house, is good for tracking down

the cluster of bees.

It proved remarkably simple to establish where in the hive the cluster was – the bars above the cluster are 2-3° C warmer, which is easy to detect with the thermal imaging camera. Once we'd marked which frames covered the cluster, then we carefully cracked them open a few mm, to squirt in the OA solution with a plastic syringe. In winter, we certainly wouldn't want to be trying to lift top-bars out of the hive – the wax is often connected to the sidewalls, and if the combs straddle two or more top-bars (as is the case for some of the bars), then a royal disaster could ensue. We could use the same thermal imaging approach for a conventional hive with gaps between the frames, but of course, you can already

see the bees, so the thermal image provides an interesting perspective, rather than something you can't detect by eye. What the image (right) does show is that the cluster is still well over 20°C, in the centre (the white parts of the image), illustrating the sophisticated temperature regulation system that the honeybee cluster achieves.

Finally, the most fun image was of the exterior of the top-bar hive – the entrance glows "white hot", as the cluster is right behind it. The few flying bees are also white-hot, which is the heat radiating from the flight muscles in the thorax of the bees. It is the "shivering" of these muscles by bees in the centre that keeps the cluster warm. The plumose hairs found on the bodies of bees are very effective at trapping air, and as the external temperature drops, the cluster gets tighter and tighter to retain more heat.



Beekeepers @ KSRC

STATUS REPORT

Beekeepers @ KSRC was established in 2012 with the aim of providing courses for "Improver" beekeepers in Kent. This was in response to the burgeoning numbers of people starting beekeeping which was stretching the resources of the 16 local groups and making it difficult for them both to teach new recruits and to help their 2-3 year members become more confident and proficient.

Over time the remit was expanded a little, to include "minority interest" topics such as skep-making and pollen microscopy and to welcome beekeepers from outside Kent. Initially all the courses were classroom based but with generous assistance from Patrick Murfet and David Rudland, hands-on apiary coaching has been on the menu for a few years.

Overall, 387 beekeepers have taken advantage of at least one of the 75 courses run during the 5 years.

Initially centred in the Kent Science Resource Centre (KSRC) on the Kent Science Park near Sittingbourne, it was a major problem when that excellent facility became unavailable. Other venues have been used with varying success but it has become increasingly difficult to fill available spaces on the courses which of course impacts seriously on their financial viability. The intention was always to run this enterprise as "not-for-profit" but lately it has not been possible to do more than cover facility hire charges and tutor expenses.

Consequently it has been decided to "mothball" the operation, perhaps for a couple of years, to see whether demand ramps up again.

We thank all those beekeepers who have participated in KSRC courses and thank them for their positive feedback; hopefully we will be able to assist Kent beekeeping again in a few year's time.

Bob Smith, Julie Coleman, Adrian Davis

Addendum:

1. While formal KSRC courses will no longer be advertised, Bob, Julie and Adrian remain available to support local groups with beekeeping education. If your group manages the venue and student recruitment, we will be happy to act in teaching roles; please simply contact us with your ideas.
2. The specialist courses (eg. Artificial insemination) run by Patrick Murfet and the Improver courses run by David & Celia Rudland (East Surrey Bees) are certainly recommended; please see their websites.
 - o www.bee-equipment.co.uk
 - o www.eastsurreybees.co.uk/courses-training

Bees & Honey 2017 ... at the



COMPETITION SHOW
BEES & BEEKEEPING DISPLAYS
BEEKEEPING EQUIPMENT SALES
SALES OF HONEY & HIVE PRODUCTS
TRAINING & MEMBERSHIP INFORMATION
OBSERVATION HIVE & DEMONSTRATIONS

We would be very grateful if you could forward or otherwise distribute this message and attachments about this year's Bees & Honey Show as part of the South of England Show just outside Ardingly in Sussex, to your Association's or Division's committee, Newsletter Editor, Webmaster and ultimately, to all you members please.

The Bees & Honey Show event is an extremely popular visitor attraction staged on 8-10 June 2017 within a marquee at the annual South of England Show organised by the South of England Agricultural Society. SEAS is a registered charity whose aims are to showcase farming, agriculture and the countryside ... perfectly aligned with the charitable aims of the BBKA and its Associations and Divisions.

- The Bees & Honey Show provides a perfect venue for introducing and informing a public eager to understand more about honey bees and beekeeping; by meeting, talking with and watching live demonstrations of beekeeping practices provided by beekeepers from throughout the region. Could some of your members help by passing on their passion for beekeeping to an enquiring public?
- The Bees & Honey Show provides a perfect venue for Associations and Divisions from throughout the South of England to promote themselves to potential new beekeepers and members amongst the shows many visitors, and to advertise their own beekeeping 'Taster Day' or 'Introductory Courses'. Can you provide promotional posters or flyers about your Association or Division for display and distribution at the show?
- The Bees & Honey Show stands within the marquee includes our Honey Sales stall, from where jars of honey, cut comb, and other products of the hive provided by Associations, Divisions or individual beekeepers are offered for sale on their behalf, with a modest sales commission donated to SEAS. Could you provide stock to be offered for sale?
- The Bees & Honey Show provides an excellent opportunity for beekeepers throughout the South of England to practice, develop and maybe hone their skills at preparing Competition Entries for the Honey Show Classes. Would you like to take part in the competitive Classes? <http://www.seas.org.uk/info/competing/competing-south-england-show/bees-honey/>
- The Bees & Honey Show organisers welcome offers of help or participation as stewards, with free entry to the entire South of England Show and time off the Bees & Honey stewarding duties to walk around the show-ground. See the Poster and the Show Schedule for appropriate contact details, or respond directly to beesandhoneyinfo@gmail.com

And of course, even if not able to participate directly, we invite your members to drop in to the Bees & Honey Marquee during the three days of the show, to say hello, see what we are doing and to perhaps visit the Paynes stand for some early summer equipment purchases.

Contact:- beesandhoneyinfo@gmail.com

Visit us at <http://www.seas.org.uk/info/competing/competing-southengland-show/bees-honey/>