



# CANTERBURY BEEKEEPERS

A branch of Kent Beekeepers Association

## EDITOR'S NOTES

A Happy New Year to all of you! Winter is finally upon us with frosts over the holiday period, and snow forecast at the end of this week. Ideally you will already have treated your bees with oxalic acid (Api-Bioxal or Oxuvar), to get the varroa numbers down.

We treat in late December/early January because we expect the amount of brood to be at a minimum. Having said that, it's unlikely that many colonies are broodless at the moment, given the mild weather that we've had until recently.

If you are registered on BeeBase (the NBU website), then you will have already received a warning about the possibility of colonies making higher-than-average use of food stores due to the un-seasonally warm weather. It would be advisable that you check your colonies and add supplements if required.

Fondant is the best option at

this time of year, not liquid feed. In my apiaries, most colonies have used about 3kg of stores through November and December, which is comparable with previous years.

As you will see from the highlight box, we are lucky to have Lars Chittka come to speak with us on 18<sup>th</sup> January about the work he and his

### Next Meeting

#### **Bumblebee Research**

Prof Lars  
Chittka, QMUL

Whitefriars  
Management

Suite

**Wednesday**

**18th**

**January**

**7.30-9.30pm**

team do to understand bumblebee behaviour and health. It promises to be a very interesting evening, so make sure to reserve it in your diaries!

Wintertime is a great time to learn more about beekeeping theory, ready for practice in the Spring.

Pp4,5,7,8 give details of upcoming courses. For those of you who are interested in the formal BBKA examinations and assessments, remember that signed applications have to be submitted via the KBKA exams secretary, Sharon Bassey, by 10<sup>th</sup> February.

Adrian

## CBKA OFFICERS

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Committee Members

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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

## JANUARY 2017

A newsletter for friends and members of Canterbury BKA

## DATES FOR DIARY

Saturday 14 <sup>th</sup> January	BBKA annual delegates meeting, National Beekeeping Centre, Stoneleigh (link to papers <a href="#">here</a> )
<b>Wednesday 18<sup>th</sup> January 2017</b>	<b>7.30-9.30pm, Lecture on Bumblebee Research, Dr Lars Chittka</b> , Professor in Sensory and Behavioural Ecology Queen Mary, University of London
Wednesday 25 <sup>th</sup> January	(tbc) Committee meeting, Old Gate Inn, 7-9pm
Friday 10 <sup>th</sup> February	Closing date for application to sit BBKA examinations
<b>Wednesday 15<sup>th</sup> February 2017</b>	<b>Queen rearing principles – planning for queen rearing as a branch activity</b> <b>Julian, Joan and Adrian</b>
<b>Wednesday 15<sup>th</sup> March 2017</b>	<b>tbc, talk on less familiar hive patterns</b>
Saturday 18 <sup>th</sup> March	BBKA modules examination day
Wednesday 22 <sup>nd</sup> March	(tbc) Committee meeting, Old Gate Inn, 7-9pm
7-9 April 2017	BBKA Spring Convention, Harper Adams University

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

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

More details on how to get this to work can be found in the [November 2016 newsletter](#). Several people have confirmed that this does now work, so go ahead and try it yourself!

## INDOOR MEETING, 18 JANUARY

### 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.



Lars Chittka



## BRANCH NEWS



### Queen Rearing

Having established a working apiary in Bekesbourne in 2016, our 2017 aims include extending the operation to undertake some small-scale queen rearing. We want to encourage people to keep **nice** bees, and to be prepared to quickly exchange bad queens for queens whose colonies behave better. We are lucky that we have also got access to funds from KBKA, as well as a windfall from the National Grid, which will help us set-up for this endeavour. A sub-committee of CBKA is forming to make plans for this activity; if you are interested to participate, please let one of the [committee](#) know.

### 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.

### Apiary Manager

The last of the email addresses above, for the Apiary Manager, is awaiting re-assignment! You will recall from our last newsletter than Martin Neame, who did such a sterling job to set up all of our apiary management processes from a standing start is unable to continue into 2017 due to other commitments. Therefore, we are looking for a new volunteer to inject their own enthusiasm into organizing branch members to look after our hives. Please contact [David Cockburn](#) or [Martin Neame](#) to discuss informally.

### Website and Subscriptions

We're past the point in the year where subscriptions are expected to renew, and I'm pleased to say that we have 54 renewals, maintaining the numbers seen in 2016. I try to make sure that everyone who is a member has access to the website, but there's no-one checking my work, so sometimes I do make errors! The Canterbury Beekeepers website carries a lot of information that is for members and non-members alike, but in addition, we have a few private pages, which require a login to access. These include our discussion forum (a supportive place to get advice), lists of people who want swarms, information about apiary management, and of course, our membership pack.

A good way to check if you can access all parts of the website is to click this link:

<http://canterburybeekeepers.org.uk/forum/>

You will encounter a login page; if you can't get past that, then drop Adrian an [email](#).

# Introduction to Beekeeping course in East Kent

**Tutor: Julian Audsley** Canterbury Beekeepers Branch KBKA



**Venue: Barham Village Hall Valley Road Barham CT4 6NX nr Canterbury**

Tuesdays 7.00 to 9.00 pm March 14, 21, 28 and April 18, 25 and May 2 - 2017

There will be 6 sessions in Barham Village hall and an adjacent apiary and an additional 2 practicals on weekends to be arranged during the course.

## Barham Village hall Valley Road, Barham CT4 6NX

The course has a mixture of indoor sessions and practicals and the 2 practical sessions on a weekend are arranged once you are on the course. Cost £80.

A course book is included for use during and after the course together with supplementary handouts and there is plenty of opportunity to handle equipment, assemble frames and ask questions.

The cost also includes membership as a Friend of the Canterbury Beekeepers for the year 2016/17 but details of all local associations will be provided.

### Purpose

This course is aimed at potential beekeepers and those with an interest in beekeeping. It covers all the needs of those thinking about keeping bees. Novice beekeepers will also benefit by attending this course. Not everyone becomes a beekeeper after the course but everyone will come away with a realistic understanding of the pleasures and practicalities of beekeeping today.

### Examples of course contents

- . Know how to start & manage a beehive.
- . The different types of hive and types and assembling of frames.
- . The costs and time involved.
- . Understand the life cycle of a honeybee colony.
- . How to manage swarming.
- . Be able to identify problems in the hive and prevent, or manage these problems when they happen
- . Know how to harvest products from the hive, including honey and beeswax.
- . Have enough information to decide if you would like to keep bees.

Applications form attached or enrol online at <http://www.canterburybeekeepers.org.uk>

further details Julian Audsley Email: [julian100@btinternet.com](mailto:julian100@btinternet.com) Tel: 0776 183 9119

If you are interested in attending Julian's very popular course, you can register on our website now:

<http://canterburybeekeepers.org.uk/spring-2017/>



## KENT BKA NEWS



**Sidcup KBKA presents:**

## RUDY REPKA

### 'KEEPING BEES AROUND THE WORLD'

Saturday 21st January 2017

Baldwyn's Park Clubhouse, Bexley, DA5 2BA

£3.00 entrance fee + tea & cakes

3pm start

[david.rea@talk21.com](mailto:david.rea@talk21.com) to reserve a place.

Rudy Repka is a retired engineer, born in Czechia (Czech Republic). Rudy came to the UK in 1969, after the Russian invasion. Having briskly redone his engineering degree, for a number of years he was teaching various engineering courses at the South Bank Poly, in Southwark and in Lewisham. Later, he moved to the private sector and until his retirement, enjoyed working for the Daily Telegraph and the Financial Times.

Bees became his great hobby over 25 years ago. Within a few years he was passing the modules exams and was selectively rearing 80-120 queens from his best, locally adapted, London mongrel bees.

When he started with bees, he never realised they would open so many windows to such an interesting world and open doors to so many interesting and often remote parts of the globe, making many good friends. Curious to see other, non European bees, and how others run their bees, with Lydia, his wife, he have been very fortunate to have been invited to quite a number of places to offer and share his knowledge and experiences.

Rudy's richly illustrated talk will reveal just a small taste of keeping bees in the different parts of the world.

To reserve your place, please email [david.rea@talk21.com](mailto:david.rea@talk21.com)



## BBKA NEWS

The 57th Annual Delegate Meeting (ADM) of the BBKA will be held at 10.30am on Saturday 14th January 2017 at The National Beekeeping Centre, Stoneleigh Park, Kenilworth, Warks., CV8 2LG

Canterbury Beekeepers are represented at this meeting by the KBKA ADM delegate, John Hendrie, who is a member of the Sevenoaks and Tunbridge Wells branch of KBKA, and also this year's BBKA President.

There's way too much material covered at the ADM to summarise succinctly in this newsletter, so I will simply point you at the relevant pages of the BBKA website, where you can download all of the relevant papers, including financial statements, association propositions, and nominations for various BBKA roles.

[http://www.bbka.org.uk/members/events/annual\\_delegate\\_meeting\\_2017](http://www.bbka.org.uk/members/events/annual_delegate_meeting_2017)

(note you will need to login with your BBKA member details)

For those of you who are new to the complexities of the running of BBKA, it is perhaps worth re-iterating that Canterbury Beekeepers is a branch of Kent Beekeepers Association. KBKA is the area association that is a member of BBKA. Each KBKA branch has two members of KBKA council, who become directors of KBKA (a limited company); currently Michael Roberts and David Cockburn represent our views at KBKA.

Discussion of the business that will take place at the Annual Delegate Meeting (ADM) of the BBKA begins back in the summer, and you can see KBKA Council's deliberations on this in the minutes on KBKA's website. For example, the minutes of the 279th Council meeting held on 24<sup>th</sup> September 2016 can be seen here:

<http://www.kentbee.com/kbka/bm~doc/kbka-minutes-24-09-2016.pdf>

There are a couple of important events that KBKA orchestrate, in addition to acting as the conduit between local branches and the BBKA. In the summer, KBKA hosts the Bee Tent and Honey Show as part of the Kent County Show at Detling, and usually in the late autumn, KBKA organises education talks ("the Lenham Lectures"), given in November 2016 by David Goulson and Phil Stevenson.

## BEEKEEPERS @ KSRC

Courses in Winter 2016/7

# Beekeepers @ KSRC



Through the winter, Beekeepers at KSRC will repeat its very successful "Improver Key Skills" course. It's a five session course as follows:

The five sessions can be booked together for £25 (non-refundable). Topics that will be covered:

- Bee & colony life-cycles, reading the colony, translating that into management actions
- Swarm control – an in-depth understanding of natural swarming, and its prevention
- Managing varroa – the key to healthy bees; monitoring and treatments, inc. non-chemical.
- winter management
- Health and Hygiene

The course **starts this week**, and will run over 5 evenings from 10 January – 7<sup>th</sup> February. This local course will be at The BeeBarn - the training centre that is part of Bee Equipment's facilities at Highland Court Farm in Bridge, near Canterbury. It has a modern, well-equipped meeting/lecture room, with room for 35 delegates.

All these sessions are not intended for novices; our target audience is definitely "Improvers" - those who have kept bees for a season or two and are keen to learn more, to improve their understanding and management of their bees. So, if you are interested, bookings may be made from the KSRC website - [www.ksrcbees.org.uk](http://www.ksrcbees.org.uk)

A number of Canterbury branch members have attended this course previously, and found it useful. Magdalene Mei Halkes offered this comment:

*I attended this course earlier this year and found it most informative, useful and refreshing. It is a good continuation course from Julian's beginner's course. I highly recommend it.*

Bob Smith, Julie Coleman and Adrian Davis

## Wisborough Green Division - West Sussex BKA

# Beekeeping Course

### Suitable for Beginners, Improvers, and Non - Beekeepers

At:- Village Hall, Lower Street, Pulborough, West Sussex. RH20 2BF.

Sat 11<sup>th</sup> March 2017. Assemble from 9.00 for 9.30-5.00 p.m. approx

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.

#### **Subjects covered will include:-**

How to learn about bees	Obtaining bees and equipment
Different kinds of bees	Where to site hives
How bees live naturally and how we can manage them	Protective clothing
What bees collect - nectar, pollen, propolis, water	Basic Colony Management
How bees store honey and pollen	Handling bees carefully
What happens in a beehive and where	Swarming and dealing with it
The 3 castes - queen, drones, workers	Dealing with the honey crop
How to start	Making colony increase
Choosing the type of hive and why	Feeding
Essential equipment	The colony in winter

**Course fee** £45. Second and subsequent attendees booked together £40\*. Under 16 with a paying adult £15\*. Price is per head to include lunch, refreshments, and our own booklet "Basic Beekeeping".

Please note: Those marked \* will not receive "Basic Beekeeping". Additional copies available on the day at £5. For existing, paid-up WGBKA members the fee is reduced to £35.

**Enquiries:-** Roger Patterson. [roger-patterson@btconnect.com](mailto:roger-patterson@btconnect.com) 01403 790 637 or 07976 306 492

**Booking:-** Gordon Allan, Stone House, High Street, Petworth, West Sussex, GU28 0AU. 01798 343 470, [petworthgordon@btopenworld.com](mailto:petworthgordon@btopenworld.com) preferably using the booking form on the website.

**Payment by:-** Cheque, Bank transfer or cash. See Booking Form for details.

Website [www.wgbka.org.uk](http://www.wgbka.org.uk)

## Prepare yourself for the coming season – NOW

Pulborough Village Hall is off Lower Street. Turn down next to the Oddfellows Arms, right to the bottom and turn right into the car park. If this is full then use the main car park immediately before it. We understand the main car park will be free for hall users.

An application form and other details can be found on the WGBKA website:

[http://www.wgbka.org.uk/Beginners\\_Day.html](http://www.wgbka.org.uk/Beginners_Day.html)