



CANTERBURY BEEKEEPERS



A branch of Kent Beekeepers Association

EDITOR'S NOTES

The pace of growth in April can be remarkable, now that we are well past the equinox. Whilst the weather is awful as I write this, we've have some beautifully warm days, and all the early blooms have caught up – whether it's the acrid yellow fields of OSR in full flow now, or the top fruit blossoms, which have come and almost gone. Horse chestnut candles are a few days from flowering, and sycamore panicles will soon be sticky with nectar. Many colonies will be getting ready to swarm, as the drones are appearing in good numbers. Make inspections a priority now. Two things should be on your mind – space and disease. Look back at your notes from our winter meeting on EFB with Kay Wreford or refresh your memory at the NBU [website](#).

Apiary Meeting

Bee Safari

Various apiaries
around
Canterbury

Saturday 5th May

11-4pm

Details on p2

Lack of space in the brood box is a well-known trigger for swarming, so make sure your colony has room to grow.

If you have old comb in the hive, or a colony that suffered from dysentery in the winter, May is a good month for comb changing, either with the Bailey [method](#), or the more aggressive shook swarm [process](#). Both work well, if you understand the

technique and make sure to feed and follow up [effectively](#).

We're putting the finishing touches to the itinerary for Saturday's bee safari, so make sure to reserve some time on Saturday, and look out for an email on Thursday 3rd May. Our "meet the public" events start this month with a Whitefriars BeeDay on 19 May, followed swiftly by the Strawberry Fair in June. Please sign up to help!

Adrian

CBKA Officers

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Julian Audsley
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Maggie McKenzie
Michael Roberts
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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

MAY 2018

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

Sat May 05	Branch Spring Safari (see below)
Sat May 19	Whitefriars Bee Day
Tue May 22	Committee meeting, The Old Gate Inn, 162-164 New Dover Rd, Canterbury CT1 3EL, UK
Sat June 02	Branch apiary meeting (Magdalene and/or Jan)
Sun June 10	Brogdale Strawberry Fair
Fri June 29	BBKA Advanced Husbandry assessments
Tue July 03	Committee meeting, The Old Gate Inn, 162-164 New Dover Rd, Canterbury CT1 3EL, UK
Sat July 07	Branch summer safari
Sun July 15	Brogdale Cherry Festival
Sat August 04	Apiary meeting (Steve and Malindi tbc)
Fri August 24	Complete application for BBKA microscopy certificate
Sat September 01	Apiary meeting (Debbie B tbc)

You can get our calendar, either as a google calendar (cantbees@gmail.com), or for other programmes using this URL: <https://calendar.google.com/calendar/ical/cantbees%40gmail.com/public/basic.ics>

APIARY MEETING

Various apiaries in the neighbourhood
Saturday 5th May, 11-4pm

We are still working on the final route map for our first Bee Safari of the season. Whilst we are keen to help out beginners, we would like to visit anyone who wants support, or just to be hospitable. Please contact the [Secretary](#) by the end of Wednesday 2nd May if you want to open the gates to your apiary to a few friendly beekeepers (typically <10 people at each stop).



I will send out a final itinerary for the day on Thursday 3rd May, and it would be great if you could respond if you plan to visit one or more of the apiaries on the Safari route.

Strict apiary hygiene rules apply – so please bring clean bee-suits, clean disposable gloves (no leather gloves), and wellington boots. If you need to borrow PPE, please let us know ASAP, so we can make sure to have an appropriate number of suits available at the correct location.



BRANCH NEWS

Bee Safari

Having been in Connecticut last week with work, I am a few days behind with the work of secretary to the branch. The safari is on for Saturday 5th May, but I need a little more time to put the itinerary together. So, if you had planned to volunteer to be visited by a few members of the branch, but hadn't sent me an email, there's still time. We originally emphasised bee-ginners, but anyone who would like a visit, or simply wants to be hospitable should contact me before Thursday

Meet the Public Events

We are running our famous Bee Day in the Whitefriars Precincts on Saturday 19th May from 10-4pm. Running the Canterbury Beekeepers stand is fun and rewarding, particularly if there's four or more people present to share the load. We are very grateful to any member who can give up a few hours to help out with our "meet the public" events. Don't worry that you don't know everything about beekeeping - you'll know more than almost anyone who comes to the stand, and enthusiasm is the single biggest asset at these events!

We need members to help us out in several ways - running the stand, talking about the observation hive, and bees generally, selling honey (and providing it), as well as the set-up and breakdown. To make sure we have enough people, can you make your commitment by Monday 14th May, so that we can be confident of a successful day. Please go to the website, to indicate your preferences - sign up [here](#). Any questions? Ask Michael Roberts and the show team by [email](#).

BeeDay is quickly followed by the Strawberry Fair at Brogdale on June 10th. Whilst this is more commercially orchestrated than BeeDay, and so has a different vibe, it's a good day out. In exchange for a couple of hours' work on our stand, you'll get free entry. More details will follow, once we've done the Whitefriars event.

BBKA swarm site

Last month I did say that I wouldn't mention swarm collection/control anymore. However, now that it is up-to-date, you may find it useful to have a look at the BBKA swarm site, as it's often a first port of call for people worried about bees on

their property. Take a look, to see who is your local collector!

<https://www.bbka.org.uk/swarm>

Facebook

Whilst Facebook has been in the news for negative reasons recently, there is a positive side to that website/social site/blog/whatever it is. In recent weeks, there's been discussion of new hive stands, disease testing with the SBI (fortunately negative for EFB), how to manage Asian Hornet, the perceived benefits of local honey for hayfever management, and much more.

If you haven't yet signed up, please try it out - it seems to be a little more convenient for most people to use than our website discussion forum has been. All members and friends of Canterbury Beekeepers are invited to join our FB page ([this link](#))

I try to replicate most of our email announcements there, so folks can comment.

Apiary Site in Blean

If you are looking for an apiary site near Canterbury, we've had contact from the people at Blean Village who run Keirs Meadow. As a courtesy please let [David Cockburn](#) know if you do contact Hazel to discuss the opportunity.

"Blean Village Hall has a large recreation ground and in the far left hand corner there is an opening into what was a field. We acquired it in 2005 and recently we have converted it into more of a nature reserve. The wild flowers last year were really good and that is when we had the idea of trying to get bees on site.

I am not sure of the exact size but it has fields, scrub, a line of mixed trees and garden surrounding it. I would be pleased to meet anyone there if someone wants to see it. If we have a hive then we would be able to an information board.

My phone number is 01227 471567 and you have my e-mail address. We have a website too. I hope to hear from someone.

Many thanks. Hazel"

hazel.blean@googlemail.com

<http://keirsmeadow.wordpress.com/>

BEES IN A TREE



The epilogue to the "Bees in a Tree" story last month does not have a happy ending. Whilst the bees were successfully relocated to a more accommodating neighbourhood, the small size of the bee-nest, and probably the poor weather in March meant that the colony dwindled to an unsustainable size and expired. Whilst disappointing, I think it was a great opportunity to practice rescue skills, and to see a nest in a "proper" tree hollow.

BEES AT WATERSTONES

Here are a couple of pictures of my skep being used as part of the display at Waterstone promoting a novel, the History of Bees. This apparently describes beekeeping in the 19th century, now and in the future.

"Imagine The Leftovers, but with honey." --Elle

"[The History of Bees has] been likened to Emily St. John Mandel's 2014 sci-fi novel Station Eleven, with good reason." --Minneapolis Star-Tribune

In the spirit of Station Eleven and Never Let Me Go, this dazzling and ambitious literary debut follows three generations of beekeepers from the past, present, and future, weaving a spellbinding story of their relationship to the bees--and to their children and one another--against the backdrop of an urgent, global crisis.



England, 1851. William is a biologist and seed merchant, who sets out to build a new type of beehive--one that will give both him and his children honour and fame.

United States, 2007. George is a beekeeper and fights an uphill battle against modern farming, but hopes that his son can be their salvation.

China, 2098. Tao hand paints pollen onto the fruit trees now that the bees have long since disappeared. When Tao's young son is taken away by the authorities after a tragic accident--and is kept in the dark about his whereabouts and condition--she sets out on a gruelling journey to find out what happened to him.

David Cockburn





KENT BEEKEEPERS ASSOCIATION

BeeCraft Survey

In our [February 2018 newsletter](#), I alluded to a somewhat heated discussion that broke out between Yalding branch and the Kent BKA council. It is a matter of fact that BeeCraft was started by and is still part owned by Kent BKA. David Cockburn and Michael Roberts have been representing Canterbury branch at the KBKA council, and have had to sit through some "passionate" debating about what should and should not be included in the subscription to KBKA that we all pay yearly.

As a result, all members of KBKA will have received an email last week inviting them to vote on the matter. That email was forwarded on behalf of KBKA Council, rather than the Canterbury Beekeepers committee. On the factual content of the email, the debate is not really about the price, rather the compulsion to buy BeeCraft. This has become a highly contentious issue as one branch has attempted to take unilateral action on this matter. For this reason the KBKA committee have arranged for an identical message to be sent to all members to gauge their views, so allowing the results to be combined.

The question is intended to be simple:

Should we keep BeeCraft as an integral part of the KBKA 2018/9 subscription or should we remove it from the subscription completely so that members who wish to continue receiving it can make their own arrangements with BeCraft directly?

We need to make sure our association continues to reflect what its members want, and so we encourage all full members of KBKA/Canterbury branch express an opinion in time for it to be counted at the next KBKA council meeting on 19 May. Full instructions for participation can be found in the email. If you did not receive an email (on 25 April) requesting participation in a survey, please check your spam folder first; if you think you should have received the email but did not, please [contact Adrian](#) before 19 May.

KENT BEE-KEEPERS' ASSOCIATION



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20 April 2018

KENT BEEKEEPERS ASSOCIATION ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

The Annual General Meeting will be held at Lenham Community Centre on Saturday, 19th May 2017 at 11.30 a.m. or thereabouts immediately following the Council meeting

AGENDA

- 1. Apologies for absence**
- 2. Minutes of the AGM held on 3rd June 2017**
- 3. Minutes of reconvened AGM held on 24th June 2017**
- 4. To elect a President**
- 5. To adopt the Annual Report and Accounts for year ended 30th September 2017**
- 6. To appoint an Independent Examiner for the Accounts in accordance with statutory requirements**

Jennifer Spon-Smith
General Secretary

Lesley Fancote, having served as President for two years, is eligible for re-election



BBKA NEWS

GDPR and new membership renewal process

UPDATE 14/4/18 - BBKA Spring Convention

There was an overview from Martin Smith of the BDI on the new fully GDPR compliant BBKA membership system that is currently being developed for local/county associations and the BBKA HQ. Some of the highlights are:

- Automatic transfer of relevant data to the BBKA and BDI for those associations who are members of both. Separate transfers of data for those who are members of one and not the other.
- On line renewal facilities for new existing members and a secure page for prospective new members to apply to join. (Linked through from the associations website)
- A built in commercial email application allowing secretaries and treasurers to use the system for routine mailings to members and other parties without having to maintain separate mailing lists.

The system will build on the success of eReturn. As it is implemented, additional modules will be made available on demand such as an online payment facility (via Paypal or similar). It was a packed room and many association membership secs made some great suggestions that were duly noted down. This service should greatly reduce memberships secretaries' workload and take away a lot of the potential issues related to the handling of personal membership data from associations. More on this soon...

Adrian's Note

I think the above is a great step forward for BBKA – think of all the branch membership secretaries who have been individually managing local processes; these will now be centrally orchestrated.

BBKA has recently issued some guidance about the new General Data Protection Regulations that come into force on 25th May. In fact, they've issued quite a lot of guidance! Over the next few weeks, I intend to digest this, and determine whether anything in our branch activities needs to change. In the meantime, if you have any expertise in this area, please take a few minutes to review the BBKA GDPR documentation at this website: <https://www.bbka.org.uk/gdpr>

Bee Positive – April 2018

Dear Members, - (Association and Branch Secs, please forward to your members)

Schools Project

At the last EC meeting we had a presentation from Howard Towl. One of the Trustees had set off to get to Stoneleigh at 4am that morning and understandably rather weary by the time we had the presentation. To give an indication of how good it was, he said to the group that it was worth getting up at 4am just to listen to the work being done with the schools.

It is surprising how many schools have apiaries and how they are willing to share their experience with other schools. There are many schools that want to get bees and ask for help from the BBKA. One important factor is that some children with learning or behavioural difficulties become better at managing after getting involved with beekeeping. I know that a schoolteacher who only taught 'difficult' children had a stand at the National Honey Show and was showing how the bees improved the lives of the children in his care.





As one disruptive child reported, he learned about the bees and had to keep calm and quiet when he was with them. This taught him some self-control and from a boy who had been excluded from five schools he is now at college and wants to go to university.

If the bees can do that for children with special needs how many potential Einstein's may there be at standard schools with the help of bees?

New Bank for the BBKA

We have had some difficulties over the past year with our CAF Bank account, payments not being made, difficulties in obtaining cash and other aspects. We researched the market place to find another supplier and I was amazed at how few banks were able to offer facilities to a registered charity. Of those who were interested, some of the monthly charges were high as well as transaction charges. We visited one bank on their premises only to be told that they were not suitable for what we needed and recommended another high street bank and even walked with us some way towards their location. Eventually, we settled on one bank and decided it would serve our purpose, it also pays a rate of interest on a current account, higher than CAF Bank paid on our savings account, so we are hoping that we are in a win, win situation. We have supplied all our details, each trustee provided identification and we are pleased to say that the account is now live and the transition from CAF Bank to Santander is now underway.

There will be a learning curve regarding internet banking but we now have a relationship manager on call and feel confident that we will be able to move forward to a more efficient banking system.

Would all Associations please note the new bank details:

Santander: Sort Code- 09-02-22 Account Number- 10694695

Queen Breeding

We have been asked to prevent the importation of bees into the UK. It would be great if we could do this but I do not believe it is something that we could do. However, an alternative would be to breed our own queens locally and to set up queen breeding centres. I know there are a few already but if we need to provide queens to meet the demand and thereby prevent imports we need to be better at it. BIBBA do have a programme for queen rearing and we will look at this in the coming months. We are also looking at setting up courses for queen rearing at Stoneleigh as part of the GH training, but also encourage beekeepers to get involved in their local branches and start to raise their own queens.

One thing that was mentioned to me about importation was that the queens are needed in early spring. My thoughts are that if we raised them in summer and overwintered them in nucs, then they would be rearing to go in the spring and could be sold on as early as the weather permits.

To do all this we need you, the beekeepers out there to help to drive this forward. I believe that we would all like have no imported queens, but we have to work at it together. If you are interested in taking part, I would be glad to hear from you, it is all in its infancy but 'from little acorns, mighty oaks do grow'.

Repeat of the Competition

It has been suggested that we cover one of the walls in the hall at BBKA HQ with photographs of people working in an apiary. So, if you have someone at your branch who is good at photography, get some pictures of what you are doing there. It can be an opening of a hive, an inspection, bees on the landing board, bees on top of the frames anything that has a connection with your apiary. We will collect the pictures and then ask a photographer to judge them and the winner will get a prize of £300, the runner up will get £150 and the third will get £50.

You will have to agree that we can use the photographs and the intention is to enlarge them to poster size with the name of your branch under your photograph. I have to say that we will not be able to return the pictures.



The closing date for the photographs is the 31st August 2018. Hopefully, by then you will have had a few good days where you can get some excellent pictures.

The Spring Convention.

This was very good. Traders and visitors alike commented favourably on the set up and attendance. I know on the BBKA stand we very often were overwhelmed with requests for goods. I believe that the lectures were well received and the traders were happy with the turnout. The BBKA News launched its latest special edition booklet on Swarming and the booklet on Advanced Husbandry was also launched. Glancing through them they look really good, so if you want some for your branch, ask your Link Trustee, this will save on postage and you will be able to order enough for your branch requirements.

The Schools back pack was also available. Sue Webster has assembled 100 ready for the convention. Getting them there was not an easy task, however it was achieved. Those at the convention were sold for £25.00 but future ones will be £45.00, which is still less than cost price. They work wonders if you are going into a school. There is everything in it including a sheet of instructions on how to use it.

At the show we were privileged to have the Master of the Wax Chandlers, Arthur Davey at the dinner. The Wax Chandlers support the BBKA in many ways and it was good to see them represented at the Convention. The dining room was packed and he was quite impressed by the number of beekeepers attending. Let's hope that our good relationship with the Wax Chandlers continues.

The Centre for Ecology and Hydrology (CEH)

The CEH is running a Pollinator Monitoring Scheme (PoMS) which beekeepers can take part in. The CEH had a stand at the Spring Convention which also detailed their honey monitoring scheme. You can take part in the PoMS by agreeing to monitor a 1km survey square and checking the various insects that visit it, they are recruiting volunteers. Email poms@ceh.ac.uk to sign up.

Their website has all the details and you can do a 10 min FIT count, this is great fun - see the YouTube video at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=luTiPEJl8rQ>

Are you aware that the CEH is also setting up a National Honey Monitoring Scheme? They need 500 beekeepers to give them two samples of honey in specially provided pots - they will use advanced analytical techniques to identify plant DNA and measure environmental contaminants. You will get your own result back but it will be used anonymously in any research. They have 250 beekeepers but need another 250 to sign up for the spring harvest.

<https://www.ceh.ac.uk/our-science/projects/national-honey-monitoring-scheme>

- Margaret Wilson

Vice Chair of BBKA