



CANTERBURY BEEKEEPERS



A branch of Kent Beekeepers Association

EDITOR'S NOTES

Sometimes you have to ride your luck in beekeeping. Having exhorted everyone to pay attention to their hives, and watch out for swarming, I struggled to follow my own advice, and finally got around to inspecting my hives properly in May during the Bank Holiday weekend just past. I had, at least, put a nuc

box with old comb up in a tree as a bait hive, as I could do this in the near dark, unlike with a proper inspection. When I finally got around to inspecting on Sunday, I found that my strongest colony had completely filled its super with honey, and also had 6 nice swarm cells, all but one of which was uncapped. I hastily performed a standard artificial swarm manoeuvre, taking the sealed and unsealed brood away, and allowing the

flying bees to join the queen in a new box with foundation. One day longer, and I might have been rescuing those bees from my bait-hive in the tree!

Apiary Meeting

Jan's Apiary

Bigbury Orchard

Bigbury Lane

Harbledown

**Saturday 2nd
June**

2-4pm

Details on p2

There's lots to do in these busy beekeeping months, as well as trying to keep up with bee husbandry. We'd love to have good support from all members of the branch for the upcoming day at Brogdale's

Strawberry Fair (see p3) and also have folks volunteer to have us visit during the rearranged and enhanced Bee Safari (see p3). And the summer Honey Shows are also underway, both in Kent (see pp4-5) and further afield (see p9). If you can make the time to support these events, particularly by entering the Shows, you'll have some fun preparing your products, meet some like-minded people and who knows, even win a teaspoon or two! Adrian

CBKA Officers

Chairman: David Cockburn

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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

MAY 2018

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

Sat June 02	Branch apiary meeting (Jan's apiary, Bigbury Orchard)
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
6-8 July	Kent Honey Show, Kent showground, Detling, ME14 3JF
Sat July 14	Branch summer safari with SBI Kay Wreford
Sun July 15	Brogdale Cherry Festival
Sat August 04	Apiary meeting (Steve and Malindi)
Fri August 24	Complete application for BBKA microscopy certificate
Sat September 01	Apiary meeting (Debbie B)
Tue September 04	Committee meeting, The Old Gate Inn, 162-164 New Dover Rd, Canterbury CT1 3EL, UK
Sun September 23	Apply for BBKA module examinations.
Wed September 26	East Kent Ploughing Match, Malmaims Farm, Waldershare, Dover CT15 5BG, UK
Wed October 07	branch indoor meeting, Barham Village Hall, Valley Rd, Barham, CT4 6NX wax production

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

Jan Soetaert's apiary, Harbledown

Saturday 2nd June, 2-4pm

<https://goo.gl/maps/CrsRKCQs8rq>
(51.276946, 1.029846)



Jan has invited the branch to visit his apiary this weekend, and there's lots to talk about. Apiary Hygiene will be top of the agenda as some of his hives were not very healthy in May. They have however been cleared of EFB and AFB. He also hopes to have some queen rearing ongoing by then.

The apiary entrance is on Bigbury Road, between Harbledown and Chartham Hatch. There's a big metal gate on the left with the sign "Bigbury Orchard". Across the road there is a wooden fence with the sign of the goat farmer. Please park cars on hard bit behind the gate. There's plenty of space for cars. His hives are straight ahead across the field.

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

The Bee safari scheduled for May was not as well supported as we'd hoped, and so we reverted to Bekesbourne for a meeting. It was useful for us to go back there for a second month, as the colony expansions were just starting. We're going to try to the safari format once again, in our July 14 apiary meeting. Hopefully the presence of Kay Wreford, our helpful and friendly Seasonal Bee Inspector will encourage more of you to volunteer to have the safari visit your apiary. Look out for a specific email, but you could also contact Adrian by clicking [this link](#).

Meet the Public Events

We had a very successful Bee Day in the Whitefriars Precincts on Saturday 19th May, and made record sales of honey – nearly £500 was sold. Thanks to Andy K, Peter G, Robert and Isabel, Simon D, Amber C, Norman, Karen T, Elisabeth T and Stuart for helping out on the stall, Martin, Adrian, Jan and David for supplying honey; special thanks to Michael Roberts for orchestrating the whole event.



We hope to have similar success when we go up to Brogdale Fruit Farm on **Sunday 10th June** for the Strawberry Fair. 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

Of course, we will need a similar level of support to BeeDay. 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 4th June, 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 Simon Daniels and the show team by [email](#).

Winter Program

It's almost heartless to start talking about winter when we've only had a few weeks of good spring weather, but that's the job of the committee – to plan ahead. We've got meetings covering October-January already scheduled – wax extraction, AGM, Xmas parties and a Q&A session are all booked in. We are still open to suggestions for February 2019, so if there's a topic you'd like to suggest, or person you'd like to invite, just drop the committee an [email](#).

We are planning to invite a commercial beekeeper in March 2019, so if anyone has a contact amongst the beefarming community, please let us know.

Bekesbourne Apiary

A small group of volunteers gave up some time last weekend to go back to Bekesbourne to do some general shed tidying, inventory management, and clearing of brushwood and woodland growth. Thanks to all involved – Siobhan, Andy, Magdalene and David Cockburn. David has placed an order to meet some of the equipment needs that have been identified, and that will need to be built/added to hive/shed. Bekesbourne is a great resource, particularly for folks without bees of their own, so please contact [David](#) if you'd like to get involved once or twice a month to help maintain the beehives in the apiary, or even locate your own hive there.

TURNING A NEW PAGE THIS SEASON

Magdalene Mei Halkes demonstrates the power to learn

I know my bees are stropky but my two colonies survived through winter.

I checked on them end of April and took some photos of the weak colony, see below. I showed them to Jan at our Neighbourhood meeting and he quickly pointed out the bald brood on the frame and suspected sac brood. He also pointed out 'my queen' in the photo (see photo on the right; a test for you all to find the queen). He suggested I called Kay (Wreford, our seasonal bee inspector) for an inspection. The next day, I went back, found my queen and marked it. This was a significant moment as I have never been able to do it all by myself.



SPOT THE QUEEN!

I told Kay that one of my colony was very aggressive as I have been stung a few times this year. I had the intention of replacing my queen and lined up to get a frame of nice bees with a queen cell from Rowena the night before Kay came to inspect my bees. It turned out the bees are healthy. Kay showed me something very valuable. To deal with aggressive bees I have to use a lot of smoke. While she was inspecting the frames, I was smoking away at them, keeping them down. After the first round of inspection, Kay could not find my queen. She was so kind and offered to show me how to find the queen. She showed me the pairing method, see the second photo, taking two frames out, then putting frames in pairs with a gap in between, then leave them for half an hour. On return, check the frames pair by pair, and surely the queen will be found inside one of the pairs. Of course, on that day we did not have 30 mins, but still, my queen was found and I marked her!

Then came a eureka moment. I noticed there was no bees flying around! They were calm. I was all prepared to find my queen and replace her. I asked Kay what I should do? She said, 'It's up to you!' Kay really showed me that I can have a chance to be calm with my bees. I closed my hive with my queen in it and told Rowena the next day that I no longer need her queen cell.



I went back for an inspection 12 days later, well prepared with my smoker. I smoked under the cover board before I removed it to announce my arrival. I smoked every time I removed something on the top. I kept smoking every time I took a frame out. It really worked. This is the first time ever I truly enjoyed my bee inspection. I am so thrilled that I kept my loyal Queen! Kay suggested I feed the weak colony and it is increasing in numbers steadily.

I thought it is a good idea to share my good news with all. Thank you so much for all the support from our club.

A TRICK TO MAKE FINDING THE QUEEN EASIER



KENT BEEKEEPERS ASSOCIATION

Report for Canterbury Beekeepers of council meeting on 19 May 2018

Notes prepared by David Cockburn

These notes outline items of interest to me from the KBKA council meeting of 19 May, the full minutes should be reviewed for more completeness and detail.

2. Chris from Yalding objected to the minutes from the last meeting as he felt they didn't fully represent the discussion but they passed anyway.

4. Finance. With the resignation of our treasurer and failure so far to find an alternate, John Hendrie has been reviewing our current financial situation. He states that we are solvent and in a cash position to pay our bills. Anomalies have been found however and it was agreed that John Hendrie would talk to James Cash and they would look for an independent accountant up to £1500 to prepare accounts for the June deadline with retrospective approval from the council.

5. BeeCraft survey. 150 voted to keep, 120 to remove with 53 votes rejected mostly because they were not registered members. If all votes were counted it would be 167 vs 155 to remove. After acrimonious discussion it was agreed to maintain the status quo but review before year end.

6 and 7. Subscription for 2018/9. It was agreed to remove the £3.50 members' subsidy as that is in contravention to our articles. However, this would have the effect of transferring money from the local level to the county level whereas our aim should be the opposite. It was agreed to set the sub for next year at £50 up from £46. There are at present at least 8 categories of membership to choose from, it was decided to task the executive with reducing this to 3 tiers and then distributing the sub equitably between them. Final decisions to be taken at the next committee meeting in September. Despite GDPR it was decided to retain addresses on the membership forms. BeeCraft is now £35 for a basic sub without discounts.

10. ByeLaws to be reviewed in September

11. County Show. 6-7-8 July. There will no longer be a live Bee demo for H&S reasons due to the change in location bringing it closer to the campsite. There will however be an observation hive.

Lenham Lecture 29 Sept. There will be two lectures one from someone from a West Country club speaking on the Asian Hornet.

Exams. Janet MacDonald, one of our branch, has passed her BBKA module. WELL DONE!! It was agreed to refund exam fees on passing.

GDPR. It is advised that treasurers use Dropbox and MailChimp to send emails and that membership records be kept for no more than 3 years after a member decides to leave. Next meeting 22 Sept.

Kent Honey Show

Can I impose upon you to send the attached to your members so that they may volunteer to be a steward at the Kent Show this year. The show dates are the 6th, 7th and 8th July with setting up on 5th July. The event is at the Kent Showground Detling.

Last year there were some branches that were unable to send any volunteers. I hope this year will be different!!!!I would appreciate an early reply from your members.

Please note that there is a different email address this year and address to which letters need to be sent to.

Once again thank you for your help.

Regards
Bob Smith

Chief Steward
Sidcup Branch

The invitation letter is shown overleaf. The following links provide even more information:

[Stewards Form with details](#)

[List of activities requiring stewards](#)

[Kent Honey Show Schedule](#)

[Kent Honey Show entry form](#)

KENT BEE-KEEPERS' ASSOCIATION



Chief Steward: Bob Smith, 28 Well Hall Road, Eltham, London SE9 6SF

Mobile 07714213738 e-mail bobsmith4945@gmail.com

STEWARDS FOR THE KENT COUNTY SHOW, DETLING

Friday, Saturday and Sunday 06, 07, 08 July 2018. Set up day Thursday 05 July

I would like to start by thanking all those who helped at the Show last year. I am now writing to ask for volunteers for this year's Show. If you can help please complete the form attached and return it to me. If you do not want to be asked again please tick the appropriate box on the form and return it to me.

Your attendance will be confirmed by the supply of entry tickets and duty rotas and these should reach you during the first week in July. The rota may well change between when I send it out and the Show itself, but if I have changed you to a different time I will let you know in advance. I aim to keep husbands, wives, partners and friends on the same time rota so they can enjoy their free time together. **You are expected to do ONE half day slot during the day and you will then have half a day to wander round the show.**

This year we are again in the Flower marque which is nearer to the front gate. Light refreshments will be available in our steward's area of the marque. These will be provided free of charge. We are unable to provide meals. You can either buy food on site or bring your own lunches.

I would also be grateful for any help you can give in either setting up the Show on the Thursday (arrival at 10am, don't forget to bring your own lunch but drinks will be available in the Pavilion), or dismantling it on the Sunday evening (but not before 5.30pm and anyone arriving just to clear up will not get into the ground until 6pm).

Please complete YOUR form with your preferences and I will do my best to keep to them, but I can't promise – obviously the earlier you reply the more likely you are to get the job you want. **I would appreciate it if you would remain at your post during your stewarding sessions. IT IS ALSO NECESSARY THAT YOU ARE ABLE TO ACTUALLY CONVERSE WITH THE PUBLIC – DO NOT WORRY AS IN THE MAIN YOU WILL KNOW MORE THAN THEY DO.**

I would appreciate the forms back ASAP so that I can work out the rota and order the relevant amount of tickets. I **NEED** the forms back at the latest by the **20th June 2018** but don't think that I won't accept your offers of help if you return your form after that date! If you know of anyone else who might be interested in stewarding, please ask them to contact me, or give me their details or send them copies of these forms.

Bob Smith, Chief Steward

May 2018

THERE WILL BE A HONEY SHOW AGAIN THIS YEAR SO DO PARTICIPATE IF YOU CAN. SHOW SCHEDULE WILL BE AVAILABLE SHORTLY. AS SOON AS I GET A COPY I WILL SEND IT OUT.

WE REQUIRE HONEY FOR SALE IN JARS, CUT COMB HONEY AND BEARS. DO NOT ATTACH TAMPER PROOF LABELS AS THE HONEY HAS TO BE VETTED. ALSO REQUIRED ARE WAX ITEMS. THESE CAN ALL BE DELIVERED ON THE THURSDAY TO THE BEE PAVILLION AT THE SHOWGROUND



BBKA NEWS

Positive Thinking

Dear Members,

Please note your June edition of BBKA News will be winging its way to you shortly and enclosed within will be your membership card so don't dispose of the wrapper without retrieving it first! Because of the addition of the cards, the magazine should land around the 1st of June.

I have also taken the liberty again of attaching to this newsletter another letter which could be used to send to your local council asking them to plant wildflowers in the central reservations on the roads. The letter should be self-explanatory and if you would like to use it you may find a difference in the roads surrounding the area in which you live.

We can only live in hope!

With best wishes

— Margaret Wilson, Chair of BBKA



Apiary

We are attempting to get the lease on the apiary at Stoneleigh extended, it is a 6-month rolling lease, but if we are to continue to develop the apiary as a centre of excellence we need to be sure that we have security of tenure.

Donations

George Brown our Fundraising Manager, told the committee that Joules has donated £25K from the sale of wellingtons with the honey bee design. I do have a pair of these and have enjoyed using them. Let's hope that they keep on manufacturing them and continue to support the BBKA.

Communications

Simon Cavil has been very busy with his own business and the IMYB project and has resigned from Chair of the Communications Committee. Thankfully, we have another Trustee who is up to speed on the internet etc., and Dianne Drinkwater has agreed to take on the task. I hope you join us in wishing her well, it is quite a busy role but I am sure that she will be an excellent choice.

Special Editions

Special Editions, again these are very popular and the next project will be 'Honey' from the comb to the end product in a jar, or even ready for presentation for a show. I think these books are great, they are specific and you can get to the information you want easily and their cost is minimal; a great way to learn and keep up to date.

We are also looking to create a laminated sheet to assist with queen rearing, showing timings etc. Again, a must for the novice rearing queens but also essential for its timings, even for experienced beekeepers. We are also looking at publishing another booklet on 'Queen Rearing' itself, but everything takes time, after all Rome was not built in a day!



This is all part of the desire to set up queen breeding in regions, we have had some interest, so to those who have contacted us, we are still trying to set out plans to make this all happen.

Editorial

I would like to say a personal 'thank you' to all those people who are members of the BBKA and who have given their time, expertise, photographs, editing skills, writing skills and general knowledge to create these booklets. Not one single person has asked for payment for the contributions, this is the only reason we are able to offer these to you at such low prices.

I would like to suggest that each Branch of an Association buys at least one book of each set. These can then be viewed by their members who would be able to judge which ones they would like to have on their own apiary bookshelf. The General Husbandry and Advanced Husbandry books are a must. If you are thinking of taking these assessments, they certainly got me through at my first attempt.

Banks, Interest payable

We have told you in the BBKA News and also in last month's letter that we have changed banks to Santander who pay 0.5% interest on our current account. If you are holding funds in your own branch/association, it may be worth your while investigating what your local Santander can offer to you. I have just changed my personal account to get the same deal for myself.

Committee meetings

At the last weekend, we had a busy time. On the Friday we started early with Finance, Governance, Research and then Education and Husbandry. Those meetings only ended at 8pm after an early start. On the Saturday we had the Exec meeting all morning breaking only to spend time with the family of James Hopkins who had kindly willed a legacy to the BBKA. They are a lovely family and were so pleased to see the tree dedicated in his honour in the apiary. The tree is a *Koeleruteria paniculata*, or a Golden Rain Tree using its common name, (much easier to say and spell). They were excited with our plans for the apiary and the schools project, we just have to get it all going, but within budgets of course. We had a photographer video recording the event, we are hoping to have this available on its completion.

We then returned to the EC meeting, which finished just before 4pm. Downstairs there was still a training course going on for GH assessors, so another full day. On the Sunday there were two training courses, using the apiary and the hall at Stoneleigh, some of the Trustees were involved with this and that again took another day, some of whom were training and some being trained.

Shows

On Monday we had the Shows Committee meeting, discussing Chatsworth and what we needed to do to get all the gear there. I only joined the Shows Committee half way through last year and I am astounded by the dedication and the efforts that all members of this team give to the BBKA. The First show of the year is at Chatsworth and the design had to be completed, the new entrance stand (much lighter to lift) is what we would offer to the public, what have we got for the children, especially as there were going to be several schools attending. Where are the volunteers going to stay, had we all been passed by RHS as attendee's for how many people were needed on each day, how many





volunteers from the BBKA would there be, the list goes on and on. I will be there, as will Stephen Barnes and Suzanne Bennett, we were all added to the list of volunteers, our days available are recorded and a rota developed to cover the show on all days. Before the public get there and after they leave, all the equipment has to be dismantled and stored for transport to and from Stoneleigh, none of those who are on this committee charge anything for their time, they willingly contribute this to the BBKA and I think they deserve a round of applause from every member. However, if you want to see this dedicated team then come along to the RHS show at Chatsworth, you will enjoy the day as well as seeing those people who toil away for your benefit. They are the ones telling the public how much support the honey bees need in order to survive and tell them how important plants are for pollinators.

Past Promise now made good

Some members may remember that Rowse Honey made a donation to the BBKA on condition that videos were produced about honey bees, this was all before my time but has been the subject of discussion over the past couple of years. We are now in the final stages of producing one of the videos. It takes an hour to view it and hopefully we will have it ready for the National Honey Show in October. Out thanks to Ken Basterfield for organising this, it is certainly long overdue.

Staff welfare

You may recall that Sue Webster, a valued Trustee, resigned in January as a result of the lack of support at the ADM for the office staff at Stoneleigh regarding bullying. The office staff also get abuse from some members of the BBKA when they receive phone calls in the office. This cannot and will not be tolerated. In order to counter this behaviour, we are having installed a voice recording system on all the telephone lines so that if this should happen, we have proof of the aggressive conversation and will be able to deal with it effectively. It is sad that we have to do this. We have over 27,000 members and 99.99% of those are lovely, but it only takes one to cause upset and the staff should not have to tolerate it.

Research

I have mentioned in my Chairman's letter about 'Posh Bee' and the delays incurred whilst registering for it. Pam Hunter, Chair of Research, after much persistence has now been able to complete all the details that the EU require. This has taken several weeks; however, it has been confirmed we are 38 out of 42 applicants and that we may be in line for 35K euros to give us an even bigger research fund. If we get this, I think Pam deserves a big vote of thanks and a very large G & T!

I am told that to have a document that is too long is not a good thing, so I am going to leave it for now and the other news will be in the issue for July.

Enjoy the weather, this may be all we will get for our summer.

- Margaret Wilson, Chair of BBKA

Bees & Honey 2018



at the...



Ardingly, West Sussex RH17 6TL

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

An annual event providing a unique opportunity for Associations and their beekeeping members throughout the South of England to participate; whether in competition, or in sharing passions for beekeeping with a public always asking "how are the bees?"

Cash prizes for each of the 24 classes.

Trophies awarded to the winner of the "Bounty from the Hive" class and for "Most Points in Honey Classes".

BBKA Certificate of Merit awarded for The Best Exhibit in the Honey Classes.

Any Exhibitor submitting 5 or more Show Entries will receive a **FREE Day Ticket** for any one day of the Show.

Other Exhibitors may purchase an **Exhibitor Day Ticket (£12)** for any one day of the show.

Full price Day Tickets are £21.

Get together with your fellow members to register entries on behalf of your BKA.

Be smart and arrange for one person to deliver all the entries from your Division or Association.

Honey Show Schedules and

Honey Entry Forms will be available to view and download from the **South of England Show** website by January 2018

Entries will be accepted up to the 2nd June 2018

Help as a Show Steward

for a day (or more) with the live demonstrations, observation hives, honey sales and information stands.

Contact:-

chief.steward@deodar.org.uk

Promote your Association

or Division with leaflets or notices about Membership, Training and Taster Days to display on the Info. Stand.

Contact:-

beesandhoneyinfo@gmail.com

Visit us at

<http://www.seas.org.uk/info/competing/competing-south-england-show/bees-honey/>