

steel one – a massive ‘Thankyou’ to Ian for doing that for us. Hopefully this will make the vandals think twice before trying again.

The last Wednesday of September saw the first of the Winter Talks, although it still felt like Summer! The talk was by Professor Stephen Martin, who is an international expert on the Varroa mite and also has considerable experience of the fast-approaching Asian Hornet, having worked for a number of years in Japan and seen it up close and personal. We are all worried about the Asian Hornet and the audience was completely silent whilst listening to Professor Martin.

The list of Winter Speakers, put together by Cath will keep us all meeting up regularly over the Winter – full programme shown below, as well as Apiary days (first Saturday of the month – apart from December when it’s the 2nd Saturday).

This month Robin Tomlinson has written a special article about lighting smokers. When working with beginners, I think this is the most asked question – How do you get your smoker lit properly? Well, read this definitive article and you won’t have a problem

And don’t forget, for those that fancy a bit of light relief, there is a group of beekeepers that get together at the Brown Cow and Dragon every Wednesday night.

Katey Slater
Chairman

FORTHCOMING EVENTS

4 th October	Apiary Day
8 th October	Winter Course
29 th October	LBKA Annual General Meeting
30 th /31 st October	National Honey Show
1 st November	National Honey Show
1 st November	Apiary Day
5 th November	Winter Course Talk
18 th November	LBKA Committee Meeting
26 th November	Winter Talk (See below)

NEWS ITEMS

LBKA Library - We are in the process of trying to drag our library into the 21st Century. Two requests please – firstly, if you have borrowed books from the library in the past and forgotten to return them (yes, I’m guilty too) please can you look them out and bring them back. Secondly, if you have any books at home that you could donate to the library, we would be very grateful to have them.

LBKA Equipment – From time to time, we all borrow equipment/books, etc. from LBKA. That’s fine and as it should be. But now we’re at the end of another beekeeping summer, can I ask you all to look around your homes and check that you’ve returned what you’ve borrowed. These could be microscopes, pollen centrifuges, books, gazebos, banners, etc. Many thanks.



Bee Stings – This photograph was taken this month by one intrepid Leeds beekeeper after a bit of a disagreement with a honeybee – some of those bees pack quite a punch!!

Allotment Apiary Site – An apiary site has been offered in North Leeds. Two or three allotments have been pooled together to create a new garden area, which is fairly secluded. The whole allotments are fairly secure, locked with large steel gates (members have keys of course). They now would like one or two colonies in their new garden area, principally to pollinate the fruit trees and plants on the allotments. Screens are not requested, though the beekeeper would really need to look at the site for suitability, adding "height raising" screens if appropriate. And I guess careful management to prevent swarms would be called for, as is always the case on allotments, to prevent undue nuisance.

Anyone interested should contact Cath Graham, our Secretary, who has their contact details. An on site inspection is offered. Bees would be welcome now or early next year (to maximise pollination benefits).

Small Hive Beetle - You may know that Small Hive Beetle has been found in Italy. Here is the latest on the BBKA website
http://www.bbka.org.uk/files/pressreleases/small_hive_beetle_2_25_sep_2014_1411635086.pdf

Under-supering/Nadiring - A lot is mentioned about putting a super underneath a brood box to overwinter but did you know there is a "proper" word for it - Nadiring. There is a thread on the BBKA forum that mentions it.
<http://www.bbka.org.uk/members/forum.php?t=7254&pg=0#post65531>

Observation Hive Extrordinaire!! - A nice link to a very impressive observation hive.
<https://www.flickr.com/photos/30915596@N00/sets/72157633203994477/>

LBKA WINTER SPEAKERS PROGRAMME 2014/15

<u>Date</u>	<u>Speaker</u>	<u>Topic</u>
Wed 29 Oct 2014	AGM/LBKA Members	Diseases Quiz
Wed 29 Nov 2014	Gerry Collins	Queen Rearing using Cloake Board, Jenter and Apidea Mininukes
December 2014	NO MEETING	
Wed 28 Jan 2015	Michael Badger	Heather Honey Production
Wed 25 Feb 2015	David Aston	Keeping Honeybees Healthy
Wed 25 Mar 2015	To be confirmed	

All meetings will be held at:

St Theresa's Church 'Newman Centre', Station Road, Crossgates, Leeds , LS15 7JY

The centre is located across the road from Crossgates shopping centre, there is free parking available on site. Access to the car park is via a steep path between the church and the Newman centre (the old school).

Public transport :Crossgates railway station - 3 minutes walk, bus No.40 stops outside, buses 56 and 64 stop on Crossgates Road close to the MECCA Bingo, 5 minutes walk

Time: 7.00-9.00pm (Doors will be open from 6.30pm and close at 9.30pm)

LIGHTING A SMOKER - AND KEEPING IT LIT!!!

Why do we Use a Smoker?

When you go into a colony of bees to manipulate them you should always light a smoker. On other occasions, i.e. putting a super on, attending to a nucleus, you may manage without, if a spray is handy. Smoking bees creates anxiety among them. They gorge themselves on honey just in case they have to move on. Gorging on honey distends their abdomens and makes it difficult for them to sting. It is also claimed it keeps them calm. That is the theory, but the reality is that smoking bees doesn't keep them calm; it terrifies them. They do gorge on honey and their abdomens do distend, but not all of them. Guard bees do not gorge on honey; their job is to guard the colony - and to guard the colony they have to sting.

A colony of highly strung bees, i.e. queenless, genetic trait which goes on a stinging frenzy when manipulated, smoke will not make any difference, in fact it could make them worse!

A smoker comes into its own when you are closing a colony down, putting supers on, changing boxes, etc., in other words anything you are doing where there is a possibility of crushing bees. You can move the bees by using the smoker. If a smoker calmed bees and stopped them stinging, there would be no need for protective clothing!

Fuels for the Smoker

Corrugated cardboard rolled up into a cartridge, fibre board, sacking/hessian, rolled up into a clump, wood - well rotted usually termed 'touchwood' from any rotten tree or stumps, shavings, bark chippings, dried leaves, pine cones, dried horse droppings! My choice of these is touchwood. Never use plastic, tar felt, polythene, wipes, packaging.

When you have decided on which fuel to use always light from the bottom or underneath, holding it in your hand. Use a gas lighter, i.e. oven lighter, or blowlamp; when you think the fuel is lit gently push it into the smoker, or drop pieces in as they are lit. Do not close the nozzle onto the body of the smoker, puff gently and leave open until you see a steady stream of smoke emitting.

Close the nozzle, you can then proceed to veil up. Use the smoker sparingly, but keep an eye on it, have some spare fuel to hand, some fuels smoulder away very quickly!

Always smoke gently across the frames of bees. Too near and you could burn the bees, too far away and you will probably end up coughing. When you have finished, empty your smoker and make sure what is left of the contents is extinguished. Never save unburnt fuel, either in the smoker, bag or box unless you are absolutely sure it is extinguished. I've had friends lost two colonies and other equipment in their apiary through the careless disposal of burnt fuel, also, a pal in Sheffield, lost his Volvo Estate car and all the beekeeping equipment in it when travelling with a lit smoker with a wooden bung in the nozzle from one apiary visit to another. He was a fireman!!! And he kept his job!!!

Maintaining your Smoker

Find a tin that will fit inside your smoker, punch some holes in the bottom, insert and before using on the bees 'burn in' especially if it is a printed tin. Using a tin insert makes it easier to empty your smoker and keeps it clean, you can also use a second tin, cutting the bottom out of it, as a sleeve for making cardboard cartridges and hessian clump.

The best way to clean your smoker is to use a blowlamp on the carbon that has built up, this will catch fire, go brittle and is easily scraped off.

The bellows should be cleaned with washing soda as and when propolis, etc., builds up. Always store your smoker securely in a box, metal or wood. Rodents can do a lot of damage to the bellows, as can hard or sharp objects dropping or rubbing against them.

Precautions when Lighting and Using Smokers

WHEN LIGHTING:

Never use accelerants, i.e. petrol, paraffin, spirits, diesel, firelighters, etc.

Never wear your Veil

Never pick up by the metal cylinder, even though you may be wearing gloves, particularly rubber or latex gloves.

Never let a child or person who is not competent light, handle or use it.

Never use it on anything other than what it is intended for.

Try not to end up being a firefighter, calling the Fire Brigade, or another Hospital statistic.

Contributed by Robin B

HOUDINI QUEEN!!

I was given an abandoned colony. The beekeeper had emigrated some 15 years or so ago. You can perhaps imagine the state of the brood frames – Black, Brittle, Truly awful. But the bees were thriving. They were strong. There were a couple of supers, full to bursting. Clearly though my first job was to get them onto new comb.

A brood box, full of foundation, was placed on top of the old brood box. They soon pulled this out into lovely, fresh comb. Once the queen was up there and laying I placed a queen excluder between the two boxes. Once the bottom brood box had fully emerged (three weeks) I would simply remove the box and destroy the old comb and frames. Simple...

But no - On next inspection the queen, supposedly "trapped" in the upper box, had somehow gone back into the old bottom box. I'd clearly erred and once again I placed her in the top box. Yes, you've guessed it, on next inspection she was once more back where she couldn't possibly be, wallowing in the mucky old combs in the bottom box. I carefully examined the boxes, the (new) queen excluder etc. for any possible means of escape. There were none.

I decided to try something different. I, once more, placed the queen in her nice new box, but this time placed it on the floor, then the queen excluder and the old box. Time was dragging on. I still had three weeks to wait for this new brood in the old box to emerge!

Sad to say it happened again. How on earth was she getting into there? This time I'd had enough. I simply shook the lot into the desired box and took away the mucky old one, brood and all! It worked.

So how come the queen was swapping boxes? Well, apparently these brown queen excluders (bought at Stoneleigh BBKA conference) were faulty. They allow slimline queens through!!! How are we poor beekeepers to know??

Guess what I'll be taking to next year's auctions

Contributed by Dave Barrett

BEE IMPROVEMENT FOR ALL - ONE DAY BIBBA WORKSHOP

Leeds Beekeepers Association are delighted to be teaming up with BIBBA (Bee Improvement and Bee Breeders Association) to run a one day workshop to help you improve the quality of your bees. BIBBA has developed an international reputation for its work in the area of bee breeding and improvement. They will run this workshop and will explain, in a straightforward way, how you can improve your bees.

The workshop will have something for everybody, whether you are new to the craft or with more experience. It will encourage the "ordinary" (that's most of us) amateur beekeepers to assess their colonies with a view to improving their bees using criteria you set yourself. This will doubtless include things like temper, honey getting skills, "swarminess" etc. Simple recording will give information about which colonies to cull and which to breed from. There is encouragement to make use of some of the opportunities given to us by the bees to rear queens using natural methods i.e. a swarming colony, as well as some of the simpler "artificial" methods that will suit the beekeeper or groups that need more queens. All suggested methods will be easily understood and suitable for all beekeepers, including beginners, improvers and the more experienced.

Amongst the topics covered will be

- rearing queens from local colonies to avoid buying them
- using naturally produced queen cells
- changing queens in colonies
- making up mating nuclei

And much more

(More details can be found on the BIBBA site at www.bibba.com)

Many beekeepers believe some of the current bee problems have been caused by the importation of bees and queens. This course will help beekeepers to rear their own queens from local stock and not rely on imports.

These workshops started in 2013 and feedback from attendees has been tremendous.

The workshop will be held in Barwick in Elmet Village Hall, Chapel Lane, Barwick in Elmet, Leeds, LS15 4EL on Sat 17 January 2015. It is close to the A64 and A1M. Directions can be found on Google Maps. The event will run from 0930 to 1630 with suitable breaks throughout the day. Refreshments will be supplied free of charge. However in order to keep costs down we will not be supplying lunch, so please feel free to bring a "pack up".

The cost of this fantastic day out is just £10 (£7 to under 18's). Places are limited and the event is bound to be extremely popular so we would urge booking early. To secured your place visit <https://webcollect.org.uk/lbka>.

So grab this opportunity to talk bees and learn in the otherwise beekeeping "down season".

Dave Barrett

NATIONAL HONEY SHOW

This year the National Honey Show opens on Thursday morning, 30th October, for the first two lectures (9.30 and 11am), the Trade Hall opens at 12.00 and the Show Opening Ceremony is at 14.00. The show then continues with lectures and workshops in the afternoon.

We hope you're having a bumper honey harvest this summer and as you admire the hard work of your bees (and yourselves, of course) do start to think about how you can further celebrate not just by eating it all. With stunning presentation walk away with prizes at both your local honey shows and also at the National Honey Show.

If you're new to all this, your local shows are a good place to start. Talk to all the other exhibitors, they are usually willing to share their tips for getting the last air bubbles out etc. etc. Offer to steward for the judges, and observe what they are looking for. The same goes for county shows and also the National Honey Show. We always welcome offers of help so do contact us if you are interested in stewarding! It's a good way to learn. The best judges have a long history of exhibiting, stewarding and willingness to learn as much as possible, and have a lot to offer.

When all the judging is over by Thursday (sometimes late) lunchtime, we still have the rest of the show to enjoy with the full programme of lectures and workshops, and the golden opportunity to browse the wide range of show stands, as well as collect any pre-ordered goodies, saving the cost of carriage. The Schedule should land on your doormat any minute now if you are a National Honey Show member. It's not too late to join you can download a form (and/or the Schedule itself) from the website. Membership also includes entry to the Show itself and attendance at any of the lectures for all three days.

Workshops, by their nature, have limited capacity. Our on line booking system will open as usual on 1st September <http://www.honeyshow.co.uk/booking> If you don't have access to the internet, ask at your local library, most libraries now have internet facilities.

Over the last two or three years, there have been some new entry classes. One of interest was the commercial honey beer class, which has attracted quite a few entries and we hope, inspired the industry to continue celebrating honey in this way. Another to try your hand at, introduced last year, is the microscopy class. The closing date is a little earlier for this class as we need time to prepare a larger exhibit for display. Were you inspired by the Quekett educational stand at last year's show?

57. ▲ One Microscope slide, 3" x 1", subject pollen or honey bee anatomy, labelled in accordance with instructions issued by entries secretary. Exhibits will be photographed by the National Honey Show for display purposes at the show. First: £10; Second: £7; Third: £5. (Sponsor: Bee Craft)

For 2014 we have two new classes: Class 6 for 2 jars of set honey; and Class 41 one bottle of sweet and one bottle of dry mead.

There are also many classes to tempt the artistic and inventive among us: label design, photography, needlecraft etc, and there is a wide selection of classes for juniors and schools: we'd love to see you there.

Time constraints prevent detailed judges' comments for every entry but two of the Gift Classes: Class 5: two jars of liquid honey and class 6: two jars of set honey will have judges'

feedback for every entry. Many of the judges stay at the show during Thursday afternoon, some for Friday and/or Saturday and would be happy to answer interested enquiries about the classes they have judged. Any exhibitor is free to approach any judges who are around after judging is complete.

Visitors to the Show will remember that the National Honey Show publishes a series of booklets on showing a range of honey products, pollen, judging, plus a short history of the National Honey Show. New editions of the complete range will be available during this year's show. We'd like to thank the many individuals (you all know who you are – thank you!!!) who have undertaken the task of bringing the various texts up to date, and BeeCraft magazine for their huge contribution in designing and laying out the revised booklets. The booklets will be on view for all three days in the Trade Hall so do come and browse.

Because we have such a full programme, many visitors are torn between which of the parallel lectures/workshops to attend. Eight of the 2013 lectures are available on the National Honey Show YouTube channel for you to revisit as often as you wish. We have been amazed and delighted at their popularity: they have had a total of over 98,000 views to date.

This makes us very much want to continue sharing our prestigious lectures with the rest of the world, but leaves us with a rather large funding problem. For 2013 we were fortunate in receiving a grant from the National Lottery. We are currently applying for grant funding for 2014, but these are one-off contributions. We would love the support of continuing sponsorship so do spread the word for this fantastic opportunity for 98,000 sponsorship acknowledgements. Anyone interested is most welcome to get in touch.

In the meantime we are dedicating the proceeds from the National Honey Show raffle to the video enterprise. To this end, we very much appreciate all support. If you have a local meeting, county show or other event before the end of October, please e-mail nationalhoneyshownews@gmail.com and let us know how many raffle ticket booklets you would like, and the address to send them to. The draw is held at the show on Saturday afternoon, but ticket stubs can be returned to Christa (at the address on the tickets) beforehand.

Back to the Show itself. It's a great event and good to see everyone from far and wide catching up on the year's news. We've a great series of lectures on the latest topics of international interest (full details in the Schedule and on the website) as well as the Saturday lectures for those new to beekeeping, and/or just interested in Yearly Beekeeping Activities, Swarms, Diseases, and Products of the Hive for Showing.

As ever, the National Honey Show relies on a large team of volunteers, and all offers of help are most welcome. Do contact us, - you can e-mail the Show Secretary at showsec@zbee.com and he will pass your offer to the right person – if you can spare some time at the Show to help.

We have a unique collection of displays, lectures and networking opportunities at the National Honey Show, and look forward to seeing you at the Show this autumn: Thursday 30th October to Saturday 1st November 2014 once more at St Georges College, Weybridge.

Contributed by
The National Honey Show

AUSTERITY HONEY BISCUITS

This is an adaptation of a wartime recipe, using honey, when of course, sugar was in very short supply.

Ingredients

2 ½ oz butter
1 oz sugar
2 tbsp honey
6 oz self-raising flour
1 tsp cinnamon
pinch of salt

Method

1. Cream the butter and sugar.
2. Add the honey and work in the flour, cinnamon and salt.
3. Roll out until ¼ inch thick
5. Cut into rounds and place on a baking sheet.
6. Bake in a moderate oven for 10 minutes.

(You may be tempted to add a little more butter, or you may fail to roll out the dough as thin as ¼ inch, but whatever happens, they'll taste delicious.

Don't forget – throughout the Winter months, we'll still be having a pint in the Brown Cow and Dragon every Wednesday night from about 8.30 p.m. So don't be a stranger – come along and enjoy a pint and have a laugh – yes even beekeepers have a laugh sometimes!

The following is a desperate plea for entries from the newsletter editor for any thing that is remotely related to bee keeping to be put in to next months superior LBKA September 2014 Newsletter edition:

Please send your contributions (articles, anecdotes, Photos, recipes, etc.) For the next newsletter to editor@leedsbeekeepers.org.uk