



Blagdon, Clevedon and District Branch
of Avon Beekeepers Association, Charity No. 271717

Branch Website: www.northsomersetbeekeepers.org

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Editorial:

What a great lecture Prof. Keith Delaplane gave us to celebrate our 60th Anniversary. He discussed whether honeybees are social insects or whether they should really be classed as a super organism His theory that they are, led us to wonder how we treat them as a colony - using our bodies as an example he attributed the liver of the colony as the wax in which any rubbish is stored and the uterus of the colony as the comb.....and what is that made of? Would we give birth to our babies in a dustbin? This struck me as the most stark fact of the night.

We must give our bees clean comb to raise their young.

So many people worked hard to make the evening a great success but the people in the kitchen with Peter Carter and David Welham our secretary, deserve especial thanks.

Earlier in the month Ivor and I went to quite a few National Trust properties in the SE and as a pilgrimage looked at their new beehives. (it is a National Trust policy now to keep bees in their gardens where possible) The bees are all quite accessible with warning signs which is a tribute to common sense and not health and safety over-cautiousness. But most were WBCs! We also visited Charles Darwin's house. There is an observation hive there but sadly no hives.

Do hope you can come to our 60th AGM on 24th November. Martin Tovey is the speaker and is the current BBKA President.

Finally, many thanks to everyone who sends articles and photos to me for the Newsletter. I am very grateful. Sadly, I haven't been able to include many of the Show photos you so kindly sent me for this one. I might make a sheet of unused photos later.

My best wishes



60th Anniversary Celebrations



Views of our 60th celebrations and of the lecturer Professor Keith Delaplane on Saturday when Ivor took him to see ss Great Britain. He thanked us for our welcome and for bestowing on him an Honorary Associate membership. Reg and Shirley Stevens cut the cake. Reg is our oldest member at 91 years of age (he is reducing the number of hives he looks after, he says) and has been keeping bees for 60 years –with Shirley's support.

Other photos are on the website.

Chair's Letter

I am writing this after a very successful Birthday Lecture given by 'our own' Professor Keith Delaplane from the USA. I can now call him 'our own' as he was made an Honorary Associate Member! His lecture attracted nearly 100 beekeepers from all over our region and beyond – the cake was superb, the food was great and all the wine went. We have decided to have yet another celebration of our 60 years with a pub lunch before our AGM on 24th November. More details overleaf.

What a year so far! BUT there will be no increase in the subs this year so some good news for you! Due at the end of October.

Following the international code for marking Queens - 2012 is **yellow**

Members' Corner

We welcome new member **Peter Dowse** and wish you happy beekeeping. Our meetings and the President's BBQ have been dogged by the 'summer' weather but thanks to everyone for their support. Not very celebratory weather for the BBQ but thanks to **Pat & Bob South** for the use of their lovely garden.

Congratulations to those who have passed their basic assessments: **Peter Butcher, Juliet Fowles, Kate Kennedy, Bob Kirkwood, Gail & Gerry Scott-Wilson & Russell Spooner.**

Neil Seymour (ABKA examination sec) wished to thank **Ashley Grist** for the loan of two hives for some assessments and stated that "he wasn't the only one impressed with the Langford Apiary!"

FORTHCOMING MEETINGS

Sat 24 Nov. 2.00pm 60th AGM

Churchill Memorial Hall

Speaker: Martin Tovey, BBKA President

Shared Tea

Lunch at The Plough, Congresbury at 12.15 pm.

Please tell Jan Davis 01934 832825 if you intend to come, by 10 Nov.

Menu on pub's website. Pre-ordering is recommended via Jan

Fri. 8 Dec. Christmas Meal @ Clevedon Golf Club

More information will follow

*Ffi: please contact Peter Carter 01934 820079 or the website
www.northsomersetbeekeepers.org*

2012 Village Shows

Portishead Thanks to **David Hounsell and Paul Fitzsimons** who organised this Show and the helpers. It took place on the weekend 21/22 July 2012. The entries for the Honey Show were disappointing with only 4 exhibitors entering a total of 10 exhibits. The winner of the George Sims Cup was **David Capon** with 21 points including 1 first. The runner up was **Paul Fitzsimmons** with 21 points but no firsts. Well done to both, the cup will be presented at the Blagdon AGM.

Tickenham BCD were asked to run the beekeepers stand this year on 18 August as Weston-S-Mare have given it up after many years. **Philip Clemente, Tom Salter, Helen Fordham and Bob Kirkwood** set up the stand. **Tom** provided the observation hive and **Kate Johns & Helen** set up candle rolling, which proved to be a great success. Just recently **Philip** received a letter from the Show Secretary to say '*Dear Philip & beekeepers, Thank you for helping to make Tickenham Flower Show a success. Kind regards, Ann*'. The Honey cup, presented by the Tickenham Show, was won by **David Capon** and the runner up was **Reg Stevens**. There was 10 exhibitors entering a total of 18 exhibits.

Winscombe Thanks to **David Welham** and all the helpers. Eleven exhibitors entered 19 exhibits into the show. Winscombe is an open show and six of the exhibitors were not members of the Blagdon Branch. The exhibitor with the most points in the show and winner of the Roley Hazel cup was **David Welham** with 14, runner up was **Mrs Claire Sweet** with 8 points- not a member of our Branch. If we do not get more members entering the honey classes as opposed to the cake, biscuits and fudge classes there is possibility that the cup will go outside the Branch.

Once again our local MP John Penrose and BCD member helped on the Winscombe Show stand.



Skep made by
Dave Avery



HMF

Ivor Davis

One of the mysteries of honey preparation is how we ensure that the honey is not spoilt whilst we process it from the comb into the jar.

Once the cappings are removed the honey is liable to pick up water from the atmosphere, it will lose flavour as the volatile compounds disperse and if it is left in the light it will also lose colour and the sugars in the honey will start to combine to make more complex sugars and other compounds. Air bubbles will get into the honey during the extraction process and any heating will also degrade the sugars and destroy enzymes in the honey. It sounds a disaster and that is why many prefer to buy honey in the honeycomb and are prepared to spend a premium in obtaining it. It is our duty to minimise the damage to honey and present it in as best condition as we can.

HMF stands for hydroxymethylfurfural. It is a compound produced when honey is heated but is more commonly seen when sugar is boiled to produce caramel. The EU stipulates that the HMF level in honey must be less than 40 ppm (parts per million). This measure is a way of ensuring that when honey is sold it has not been overheated and is a relatively simple procedure for Trading Standards to perform (unfortunately beekeepers are not able to measure this without sophisticated equipment). Some years ago our Branch sent samples to the local Trading Standards Office and they tested them for us. Most had HMF levels below 1 ppm so well within the limit set.

In order to keep the HMF level low, store honey in a cool dark area and during processing do not allow the honey to stay at high temperatures for long. What does 'high' and what does 'long' mean? As an example, if you heat honey to 50°Celsius for a week the HMF level will still be below 40 ppm. but if you heat to 70°Celsius the limit will be reached in less than 8 hours.

Many people warm honey to pass it through a fine filter to remove debris. Using a 200 mesh nylon filter will remove anything greater than 100 microns (nearly all pollen is smaller than this) but cold honey can take a long time to flow through the mesh. If the honey is warmed to about body heat (37°C Celsius) for 24 hours the HMF level is unlikely to reach 1ppm greater than before heating.

The lesson here is that honey should not be heated or exposed to light more than necessary but it is OK to heat honey for at least a day to body temperature, in order to help it flow through a fine mesh filter.

From our Treasurer, Richard Ellis.....As you are aware the Branch has been encouraging members to sign and submit a Gift Aid form. We are a registered charity which enables ABKA (Avon Beekeepers' Association) to reclaim tax –currently about 25% of some of the fees we pay (not inc Insurance). We can also claim some tax back on all income that is identified as donations. Some members this year have sold honey at shows and donated us 10% of their income. One member had a significant birthday and asked family and friends to give a donation to our Branch rather than have presents. We are saving all this income and it will go towards the project of having and developing our own apiary site to further the education of our members and the general public about beekeeping. With the increase and awareness of the public in beekeeping, our current Apiary is not best suited there being insufficient space, poor car parking and not central to the Branch area. This year the Blagdon & Clevedon Branch has reclaimed over £1000.00 as gift aid recovery from the Inland Revenue. Our Branch gains 75% of the total. 25% is used by ABKA for the greater Avon education programme. This year we have been paid £787.48. This will go into our Apiary savings fund.

What a positive way to help our Branch.

So this is a good reason why it is beneficial for the members to sign and submit a form. It costs so little and yet gives our Branch a big reward. The Branch AGM will be held in November and subscriptions will be due for the next year. This is an opportunity for all members to ensure they have signed and submitted a form.

Reclaim details:

Blagdon & Clevedon	£787.48	Bath	£722.25
Bristol	£540.00	Keynsham	£104.63
WSM	£108.38	ABKA	£754.24
TOTAL			£3016.98



In the apiary.....Oh dear, just when we thought it couldn't be any wetter we have had our second flood down at the Langford apiary. As a result a number of new bee keepers have already withdrawn their hives before the winter.

At this point you should be thinking of fitting your mouse guards, roof insulation and feeding as required. A number of members have indicated that despite their hives being under weight their bees don't seem to want to take syrup. My suggestion is to keep offering syrup but be prepared to add candy through the winter. I think this is going to be a difficult winter for most of us with losses to be expected in the new year. Keep feeding and fingers crossed for 2013!

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