



Bee Talk

Newsletter of The Blackburn and East Lancashire Branch of
The Lancashire & North West Beekeepers Association
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Registered Charity

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Editorial

DECEMBER 2004

WHEN THE CHAIRMAN'S AWAY . .

. . .the editors will play. Michael Birt is away for a couple of months so we are printing BeeTalk which means we can again print in glorious Technicolor.

OBITUARY

Sadly, we have to tell you that Maureen Holland died last August. We were not aware at the time, so our belated sympathy goes out to John and his family. Though Maureen was not a beekeeper she attended all our meetings along with John. Her happy face will be missed amongst us.

THOSE BUSY BEES

The article (Those Busy Bees) on page 8 is far to long to go into this issue, so it is to be concluded in the next one. I found it to be a very informative item. So I recommend you keep this Bee Talk safe, so you may read the article in full, it puts you right at the heart of the organisation of a bee colony. A world possibly only understood properly by a beekeeper. Read it two or three times it really is worth it!

HONEY SHOW SECRETARY

Pauline says it's time for her to bow out as honey show secretary and give someone else a chance to see how honey should be presented on the bench. Bridget Beattie agreed at the AGM to take the job on, with the assurance that Pauline would help her out until she got hold of the procedure.

NEW MANAGER

We have a new manager to run the association's apiary at Holden Clough. David Rayner ably introduces himself on page 6. David and the duty managers now to be called duty men though there is

one women amongst them (Judith Driver) have set out what should be a better use of the apiary.

A NEW PLAN (WITH CURRY)

The plan for 2005 is to artificial swarm all the hives using the "Curry Method" on the 3rd 4th or 5th day of May, this should mean that by the 15th there will be a lot of queen cells that have to be removed. These will contain top quality virgin queens and they will be available for the use of all members. If you should wish to re queen a colony or start a new colony, the 15th of May will be the date to work to.

Preparing a nurse colony to receive a queen may not be something you have done before. In which case get in touch with one of the apiary duty men or any of the committee members who will help.

Better still our first proper meeting of 2005 will take place at Joe and Ann Wrigley's home at Holden Clough and will be devoted to just this subject. You have all the time in the world to prepare to improve your stocks - don't miss the boat.

NEXT YEAR'S PROGRAMME

I think John Zamorski has the programme for next year more or less completed. I know he has the venues worked out. Just the subjects and speakers to work out, so if you want to influence him on any particular subject do it now!

Finally we would like to take this opportunity to wish you all a very Happy Christmas and a peaceful New Year.

DISCLAIMER

The views expressed in any of the articles in 'Bee Talk' represent the personal opinions of the contributors and in no way should they be regarded as the official opinions or views of the 'Lancashire & North West Beekeepers Association' nor of our local Branch of this association 'The Blackburn & East Lancashire Branch'

HONEY, HONEY, IN THE POT - IS IT SAFE, OR IS IT NOT ?

It's official, Chinese honey is coming back to the EU after a two year ban. So is the 'elixir of life' so revered by the ancient Egyptians, Alexander the Great, Aristotle, and so on, now safe? In a word 'NO'.



A b o u t
2 2 , 0 0 0
tonnes of
honey is
imported
into Britain
every year,
but there
are many
places in
the world
w h e r e
people are

selling 'dodgy' honey. We are all aware of the diseases that can befall our bees, so a responsible beekeeper will ensure a small dose of antibiotics is administered in order to combat any problems. The less scrupulous overstep the limits by dosing hives with excessive levels of banned drugs.

Quite recently, a Northumbrian beekeeper was prosecuted for bottling Argentine honey and selling it off as Scottish Borders' honey. Argentina is among a number of nations in recent years, suspected by EU and other industry sources of having laundered honey on a large scale. "Honey is often blended before sale" says Brian Butcher, operations director for Rowse Britain's biggest honey packer. "The problem is, once you spot a problem area, it moves elsewhere."

CONTAMINATED

In January this year, 14,000 jars labelled 'Produce of India' were stopped for testing at Felixtowe docks. The honey turned out to be contaminated with chloramphenicol, a wide-spectrum antibiotic banned in

food production in most countries. In susceptible individuals, it can cause a fatal blood condition, aplastic anaemia. And the country most associated with the use of chloramphenicol on bees is China.

CHLORAMPHENICOL TAINTED

China rejects this accusation. During the two- year EU ban, the disappearance of legal Chinese honey caused upheaval. For years it had been a basic ingredient in blended honeys because of its sweetness and cheapness; now packers worldwide turned to Argentine, Mexican and east European honey. Yet chloramphenicol - tainted honey kept turning up. In the export market there was a dramatic increase in honey on offer from Vietnam. A country not known as a significant honey exporter, it had suddenly thousands of tonnes for sale.

SINGAPORE "HAS NO BEES"

According to 'Bee Culture Magazine' Singapore "Has no bees" in the commercial sense. Yet in early 2002, just as Chinese honey was being banned by the EU, Singapore became the world's fourth biggest honey exporter, and the tonnage of honey sold to Australia, which in 2001 had been zero, leaped to nearly 1,500 tonnes.

Honey blenders and supermarkets, tested positive for chloramphenicol. In this period, it has been found in 14 consignments intercepted in Europe and the EU's "rapid alert" food safety system has been notified.

ULTRA FILTERED HONEY

Meanwhile, another phenomenon has been adding to the turbulence in the global honey market - ultra filtered or "UF" honey, first noticed in the US. It is honey with almost everything taken out, including the impurities.

This product is, according to most honey experts, not honey at all. Instead it is "a sweetener derived from honey" - honey that has been diluted with gallons of water, heated up to a high temperature, passed through an ultra-fine ceramic or carbon filter, and then evaporated down to a syrup again. In the process, every trace of impurity - including, some believe, traces of chloramphenicol - are removed.

"We believe that UF rather than contaminated honey, is now the real threat to the purity of honey internationally" says Bruce Boynton. Chief executive of America's National Honey Board. " It started coming in a year or so ago. It's got a yellowish cast, and it's a little thicker than real honey, and it doesn't taste like regular honey either.

LAUNDERING HONEY

The sting in the tail is, who needs to launder honey across international borders if you can ultra filter it instead ? A spokeswoman for the Food Standards Agency said: "We are not aware of 'ultrafiltered' honey entering the UK' and the process described would go against the spirit of the UK's honey regulations.

Brian Butcher says British packers have never encountered the stuff. "If UF honey does exist, I am certain we would be able to tell. I don't think it could be imported into Europe. By all accounts it is tasteless and colourless. We would know from the tests that something was wrong and we would not use it."



(Michael Durham - 'The Guardian '.)

A NEW YEAR MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIRMAN.

Whilst you struggle with the English Winter, Saipan and I are in Thailand with friends.



I know the society is in the capable hands of the committee and they will ensure that the editors don't spend too much time and money putting exotic colours in BeeTalk. (Whilst the cat's away !! Ed.)

We would like to wish you all the very best for the New Year and hope you get lots of honey and have a successful 1995.

BEE FACTS

Honey bees are entirely herbivorous when they forage for nectar and pollen but can cannibalize their own brood when stressed.

MY SWARMING PROBLEMS MAY 2004

The 2004 swarming season threw up some unusual occurrences, this is besides the early swarming which now appears standard. Hives 3 and 4 were involved.

Because I was taking a holiday from the 22nd may, I decided to use a Snelgrove swarm prevention method from mid May.

Whether I was to use Snelgrove method 1 or 2 depended on what I found in each hive.(Method 1 is used before queen cells are raised. Method 2 is for when queen cells are present)

MONDAY 10TH OF MAY.

The bee inspector visited my apiary. Queen cells found and all were destroyed in hive 4, the plan being to use Snelgrove method 2 in a few days.

FRIDAY 14TH MAY.

Whilst preparing equipment to use method 2 on hive 4, it swarmed, I watched it settle in next door's garden, but before I could collect it, it decamped. One lost swarm. On inspecting hive 4, I found in excess of 12 queen cells, even though only eggs were present when the previous queen cells were destroyed on the 10th. These cells must have been raised from fairly well developed larva and so all were destroyed, hoping that better cells would be raised on the eggs still present.

TUESDAY 18TH MAY

Swarm issued from the top box of hive 3, which was 3 days into stage 1 of Snelgrove method 2 i.e. queen in top box above a Snelgrove board with queen cells and bottom brood box with several empty combs plus one comb of sealed brood. I saw the swarm issuing, closed the entrance but was too late the queen was out. I retrieved the swarm, and the entrance was left closed until evening. Inspecting the top box I found one sealed

queen cell only and bubbling over with bees. The queen cell was destroyed. The brood frames in the bottom box were checked for queen cells then the swarm was hived into this box. The Snelgrove board entrance for the top box was changed over to reduce the number of bees in the top box I suspect the reason for the swarm was too many flying bees remaining with the queen in the top box for some reason. Maybe a few days poor weather.

THURSDAY 20TH MAY.

Final inspection before holiday, every thing going to plan with hive 4. The plan was to reduce to one good queen cell and hope for the best. However on the third frame, I found the marked queen. Looks like she returned, the hive had numerous queen cells, but she was laying out normally. Problem! What to do? I decided to artificial swarm, so new brood box placed next door with majority of brood and one unsealed queen cell. The queen was left on old stand in a new brood box, filled mainly with foundation.

FRIDAY 21ST MAY.

All OK, so fingers crossed for my holiday

SUNDAY 30TH MAY.

Back from holiday, every thing appears OK. Let's hope it stays that way.

SUMMARISING.

What's the moral of this story. Well bees do not read books, so always be prepared for the unexpected, This means, whatever the operation, having alternative arrangements available and the necessary equipment is a great advantage. Remember, you will always need spare equipment as time goes on. Good luck. *Ken G.*

NOBODY KNOWS THE TROUBLES I'VE SEEN

First, I would like to thank those gentlemen beekeepers who have offered sympathy. But, sadly, I have to report that my dealings with the female side of humanity have not improved.

A GRAVEYARD SWARM

In June, the police asked me to attend a swarm that was causing concern near a public footpath by a local churchyard. On my arrival, the situation was this. The path ran alongside a low wall that marked the boundary of the cemetery and a large swarm had landed on the branch of a



sycamore tree. As the swarm gathered, its weight had caused the branch to sag until it rested on the tombstone of Frederick Trenholm, b. 1748 d. 1799 (may peace be upon him).

A GRAVE SITUATION

The bees were clustered on the stone itself and, as we all know, getting bees off a flat surface is not easy. I scraped some into my swarm box but, as they were becoming agitated, I decided to leave the box on the grave in the hope that they would eventually go in of their own accord. I then returned home

HARPING ON

At about 9.00 pm, I put on my bee suit and was just about to leave to collect them, when the phone rang. A woman harping on about bumblebees in her garden shed.

THE CHURCHYARD

By the time I got to the churchyard it was quite dark but, on inspection, it seemed that the bees had, indeed, gone in. I put up my hood, knelt down and inserted styrofoam into the entrance to prevent their escape during transport. Then I slowly straightened up to take them to the car. At this moment, there was the most bloodcurdling shriek that I have ever heard - so much so that I dropped the whole thing, releasing 40,000 bees into the air with an angry buzz.



FURIES OF HELL

What had happened was that an 'Old dear' was walking along the footpath and saw what she must have thought was Lucifer rising from the pit, accompanied by the Furies of Hell. I immediately realised the situation and stepped forward to explain. Which, in retrospect, was unwise. From being frozen and transfixed, she was transformed into an Olympic sprinter despite, from her gait, indications of arthritis or the need for a hip replacement.

Now I am worried. Maybe she died of a heart attack before she had time to report it but I have heard nothing from the police and nothing has appeared in the local free newspaper - just think of the opportunity for my wife and her snooty friend from Cheltenham to blacken my name still further, should they get to hear of it.

And to think that all some beekeepers have to worry about is varroa and AFB.

Bee Craft • April 2004 Eric Ward

NOTES FROM HOLDEN CLOUGH

THE BEES NEED YOU!

Let me introduce myself, I am David Rayner. I have only been keeping bees for a few years, but have quickly learnt that however many books I read about bees - the bees have not read them and do just whatever they want. So having Holden



Clough available to gain practical experience, under the guidance of experienced beekeepers is fantastic, and I believe that it helped me pass the Basic Certificate of Apiculture, and

also is assisting me with the B.B.K.A. modules.

PLENTY OF TIME

Anyway that said, as a regular attendee at H.C., I have, for my sins, been appointed Manager of the Society's Apiary and I would like your help in preparing equipment and generally getting ready for next season. I know most of you will be saying that we have plenty of time? But really we haven't. After this year, where we were mainly 'fire fighting', what with swarming, lack of built up frames and the weather, we really were not prepared.

We have a small band of volunteers who have already been allocated jobs, which they have promised to do (once their arms have recovered from the severe twisting), but the more the merrier as they say, or many hands make light work.

I repeat, this is the Society's apiary, which means that it is YOURS, so please lets not be backward in coming forward.

THE NEXT SIX MONTHS

The Winter programme at H.C. will consist of working parties, any help gratefully received, to repair stands, sort out equipment and site maintenance. In Spring we shall be uniting some colonies, so there should be some spare Queens available, hopefully. Also approximately 1st week in May we will be carrying out Artificial Swarm Techniques using the Currie method.

It would be good if we could get eight volunteers to commit to one Sunday every two months to attend H.C. on a 2 weekly rota system, you can come more often if you want!

BEGINNERS HIVE

We intend to set up a hive especially for beginners to practice on, with the assistance of an experienced beekeeper, so that they can 'play' and gain experience in recognising the conditions in the hive

It would be good if we could get eight volunteers to commit to one Sunday every two months

and handling the bees, hand's on is better than just watching and is more fun.

We also want to expand the site, to set up areas for Nuc's and Mating boxes away from the main apiary. Negotiations in hand, watch this space.

ADOPT A HIVE

I also thought that members might like to 'adopt' a hive and we could run a competition to see which hive produces the most honey (any takers?), winners share the booty? ?

Lastly, I have given you some of my thoughts about H.C.; I would appreciate ideas and comments about YOUR Apiary.

GOVERNMENT CUTS IN THE BEE HEALTH PROGRAMME

Copy of a letter received by our secretary from Dr Ivor Davis, chairman of the BBKA.

Dear Secretary

We have recently been advised by DEFRA that the Government intends to reduce the funding for the National Bee Unit Bee Health Programme from 2007/8 as part of the Haskins Report into the Civil Service. A letter was received from DEFRA indicating that they would be deregulating Varroosis from next year and have plans to deregulate European Foul Brood in about three years time.

This is extremely worrying and, whilst it is prudent for us to plan with the NBU how we should work together to minimise the impact of this reduction and the proposed deregulations, we need your help to try to reverse the Government's mind on these cuts. Please will you ask your members to write to their MPs explaining the situation and the risks and to seek their support in attempting to reverse the Government's decision in respect of bee health? The cuts neither make economic sense nor protect the bio-security of our bees that is so important for the future.

We have recently learned that the Small Hive Beetle has been found in Portugal after the illegal import of queens and package bees from USA. This pest could have a more devastating affect on beekeeping in the UK than Varroa did in the early 1990s. This is yet another reason why we need to protect the National Bee Unit from any cuts and we must support their work in practical disease management and field support.

The key points that your members might include in a letter to their MP are laid out in the enclosed pre formed letter. Would you also ask your members to copy their letters to the BBKA so that we can track the campaign.

You may remember our last campaign in support of BDI was very successful and we understand many MPs raised the issues - so much so that the FSA eventually requested no more letters from MPs!

Yours sincerely Dr. Ivor Davis
Landi-Kotal, Brinsea Road, Congresbury,
BRISTOL BS49 5JJ

For those who are disinclined to write a personal letter to their MP, a pre-formed letter is to be found included with this Bee Talk. Just put in your name and address, the name of your MP, and send it to him at the House of Parliament.



Hi Folks

A photo of what camping in Italy is like in Autumn. Still not in the house but hopefully we will be within the next two weeks. However, we are nice and cosy in our Leaky Lunar.

Ciao,

Michael & Linda. Costello

(It looks cold in 'them thar hills'.

ED)

We've finally done it!!! Received the keys for the house yesterday. The holiday is now over and the work begins. The address is: Casa del Ghiro, Piana di Gazzo 79, 43032 Bardi, Pr. Parma, Italia.

THOSE BUSY BEES

How busy are they, and what are they actually doing? One of the earliest observations came in 1855 when Donhoff re-queened a colony of black bees with a yellow queen and observed her offspring. He saw yellow bees flying on their eleventh day of adult life but not foraging until the fifteenth. However, when ten days old they were seen in the brood area and building comb.

HIVE DUTIES

About fifty years ago Lindauer started work by observing the activities of one marked bee for long periods over twenty-four days, and for another marked bee that was watched continuously, day and night, for her eight days of adult life.

The result of these observations was to suggest that there is no clear sequence of hive duties, although one could consider three phases; a short period of cleaning duties, mostly in the first week, then a variety of work in the hive followed by the final phase as a forager.

However, with much variation, one marked bee was seen back on cell cleaning work at the age of twenty-two days; the full range of activities spread across almost the whole of this worker's life started on day twenty-one, except for foraging.

RESTING

An interesting feature of these observations is that the individual worker's main activity was "resting". On one day this took up seventy percent of her time and averaged about one-third of the time for which she was being watched. Another third of the time was spent in "patrolling", walking around the hive but not obviously doing anything.

We should remember that for some of this "resting" time the bee's hypopharyngeal glands may have been producing brood

food, or the wax glands making scales, so "resting" may not be a fair description.

The ability of an individual bee to perform particular tasks depends on the development of the relevant glands.

PROCESSING NECTAR

The hypopharyngeal glands will produce brood food for feeding larvae, or the queen, or they will produce the enzymes used for processing nectar into honey, but clearly not both at the same time. However, there is no simple fixed sequence of glandular development.

Experiments with very unbalanced colonies, many young bees, or many old ones, show that the glands can be adjusted to produce what is required; older workers can reactivate their hypopharyngeal glands to produce brood food if that is necessary, though the transition takes a few days.

These glandular changes are associated with the level of juvenile hormone circulating in the bee; this in turn must be influenced by the bee environment.

DANGEROUS ACTIVITY

So Lindauer suggested that the reason for the patrolling activity was to influence the bee according to the current needs of the colony. The exception to all this is foraging, which is limited to the older bees who do not get significantly involved in tasks within the hive. Foraging is the most dangerous activity and so is limited to the bees who are near the end of their lives and will not perform any of the essential in-hive duties.

Ribbands considers that the exchange of food by bees within the hive, sometimes referred to as trophallaxis, also has a part to play in making workers aware of the current needs.

To be continued in March 2005

BEE-KEEPING - ANCIENT EGYPT

"The God Re wept and his tears fell to the ground and were turned into bees. The bees began to build and were active on all flowers of every kind belonging to the vegetable kingdom. Thus wax came into being, thus was created honey from the tears of the God Re".

The first official mentioning of bee-keeping dates from about 2400 BC, in official lists of apiarists. The kind of hives depicted in reliefs are still seen in the Sudan today: woven wicker baskets covered with clay.



Cylindrical hives like the ones in the picture on the left from the tomb of Pabasa were made of clay.

The main centre of bee-keeping was Lower Egypt with its extensive cultivated lands, where the bee was chosen as a symbol for the country and one of Pharaoh's titles was Bee King. But even nomadic Upper Egyptians probably kept bees, as their use of honey in the production of green eyepaint indicates. There were itinerant apiarists in the Faiyum in Ptolemaic times and possibly also beekeepers living by the Nile who loaded their hives onto boats, shipped them upriver in early spring, and then followed

the flowering of the plants northwards as they were reported to do in the 19th century

The Egyptians seem to have valued wild honey very highly. Honey hunters, often protected by royal archers, would scour the wild wadis for bee colonies.

I appointed for thee archers and collectors of honey, bearing incense to deliver their yearly impost into thy august treasury.

Papyrus Harris, donation to the temple of Re at Heliopolis
James H. Breasted Ancient Records of Egypt

HONEY

Temples kept bees in order to satisfy the desire of the gods for honey and for the production of medicines and ointments. But demand far outran local production. Honey, like many other luxury goods was imported from Djahi, Retenu and possibly even further afield. Canaan, for instance, was called Land of Milk and Honey in the Hebrew tradition, and the probably fictitious Sinuhe waxed lyrical about the riches of Yaa, an unidentified Asiatic region:

It was a good land called Yaa. Figs were in it and grapes. It had more wine than water. Abundant was its honey, plentiful its oil. All kinds of fruit were on its trees. Barley was there and emmer, and no end of cattle of all kinds.

The Tale of Sinuhe
M. Lichtheim, Ancient Egyptian Literature

WHO WAS KEN PREEDY?

It occurred to Pauline Roberts as she was sorting out the cups at the Honey Show, that a large number of our members would wonder about the Ken Preedy Memorial Challenge Cup and indeed about the Ken Preedy Memorial Apiary, at Holden Clough. She asked me to remind folk about Ken.

So here goes with a lot of help from Keith Wilkinson who wrote Ken's obituary in early 1998

BIOGRAPHY

Kenneth Gordon Preedy was born in Cheetham Hill, Manchester on 22nd November 1926 and married In 1962.

Ken's interest in bees actually started when he was very young aged 5 or 6 and this fascination with bees, their habits and their instincts, remained with him throughout his life. Indeed while living in Manchester as a very young man, it is understood that he became a member of the Manchester Association even though he didn't keep bees at the time.

The great "outdoors" held a lifelong appeal for Ken and he was always passionately interested in Scouting and the Army Cadets, he was a competitive cyclist involved in time trials for many years. Later he became very interested in golf and by all accounts, was an excellent player.

RED BERET

As soon as he was able. He volunteered for the Army during the latter part of the war and was commissioned in the Lancashire Fusiliers. He later became a paratrooper, was trained at Ringway and donned the "Red Beret" an achievement of which he was intensely proud for the whole of his life. After the war ended he was posted to Palestine where he was involved with keeping the peace and in setting up the state of Israel.

PEOPLE PERSON

Following the war, Ken returned and took a job as a salesman with "Addies" selling textile sundries. For Ken this was an ideal outlet for his considerable talents, he loved meeting people and was always genuinely interested in what they had to say. He enjoyed travelling and he enjoyed "trading". Following the death of his employer, Ken decided to go it alone" and set up his own business as an agent for many textile sundry manufacturers, which took him to Germany, Italy, Belgium and Northern Ireland. He successfully built up and ran his business until he retired shortly before his death.

SHEILING APIARIES

Ken was the Chairman of the Central Council of the Lancashire and North West B.K.A. But we will remember him as the dynamic leader of the Blackburn branch of the B.K.A. and also the proprietor of Sheiling Apiaries.

I am sure that practically all Lancashire beekeepers will remember Ken in his shop in the back garden of his home resplendent in cardigan and always wearing a tie, cordially welcoming all who came even if it was only for a pack of frame nails. We would be engaged in all manner of conversation mainly about bees and the hours would pass by, hardly noticed.

DRIVING FORCE

Ken was the driving force behind our Association for over 10 years and it is largely due to him that we have such a lively Association. He was also well known in the local community for his talks to various organisations and schools. His community service in marshalling forces for the collection of swarms was invaluable. We would do well to carry on with the example that Ken set us. We will not find a better. *Ed.*



SMOKERS

Smokers are essential when working your bees. When bees sense smoke they think there is a fire and they react by filling their stomachs with honey, ready to flee the hive. And then, like us after a huge dinner, they don't want to fight they are too full! Also, some people think that the full stomach stops the bee moving her stinger into the stinging position. Either way, she is less likely to attack you if you have used smoke before you start examining the colony.

HOW MUCH SMOKE?

So, how much smoke and how to apply it? Check that the smoker is well alight and blowing cool smoke before you start opening the colony. Have enough fuel on hand to re-fill the smoker when necessary; it's no good finding out that your smoker has gone out when the bees are coming up out of the hive to see who is there. Finally, be careful that you don't let the smoker fall over in the grass and go out!

Judge carefully how much smoke to use. It is not a good idea to blast the bees with smoke or to blow smoke down between the frames. Instead, let smoke drift into the entrance and across the top of the frames before you start work. Wait for about three minutes before opening up the colony and use the smoker again once or twice as you are working. Too much smoke will make the bees angry, too little will have no effect, so go carefully and use as little as you can.

Make sure you extinguish the smoker when you've finished for the day - a cork or a plug of grass stuffed into the hole will do the job and if you lay it on its side on a nonflammable surface, that will help it to go out too. In fact, never store the smoker in the bee hut - make provision for it somewhere outside.

WELL, WHAT DO YOU KNOW ?

1. How many flowers must honey bees tap to make one pound of honey?
 - A. Two Hundred ☐
 - B. Two Thousand ☐
 - C. Two Million. ☐
2. How far does a hive of bees fly to bring you one pound of honey?
 - A. Over 25,000 miles. ☐
 - B. Over 55,000 miles. ☐
 - C. Over 75,000 miles. ☐
3. How much honey does the average worker honey bee make in her lifetime?
 - A. 1/12 teaspoon. ☐
 - B. 1/2 teaspoon ☐
 - C. Two teaspoons ☐
4. How fast does a honey bee fly?
 - A. About 5 mph. ☐
 - B. About 15 mph, ☐
 - C. About 25 mph. ☐
5. How long have bees been producing honey from flowering plants?
 - A. 40 - 50 Thousand years ☐
 - B. 10-20 million years. ☐
 - C. 50 - 100 Million years ☐
6. How many flowers does a honey bee visit during one collection trip?
 - A. 5 - 10 ☐
 - B. 50-100. ☐
 - C. 300 - 500 ☐

Answers at the bottom of page 20

BRANCH HONEY SHOW

Held at Castle Cement on Sunday 10th October 2004.

John, how can our branch thank you enough for once again organising the venue at your works. Every one must surely agree that it meets our needs in every aspect.

This year the number of entrants was up to 19, not as many as in previous years, but slightly better than last years 14. The exhibits totalled 64. Heather honey having a very poor showing due to adverse conditions this year.

Once again Mr. Denis Atkinson was our judge. He is really good and this comment comes from the back room. This year he requested a steward to help wash his test rods etc. Mr. Colin Hardacre was called upon at a minute's notice and did a wonderful job.

Mrs. Margaret Hardacre proved a very fair and efficient Guest Judge and we thank her for that.

Many Thank to you all for your support making the show such good fun.

Pauline Roberts

Show Results:-

Class 1	Mr. D Barrett
Class 2	No First
Class 3	Mr. M Birt
Class 4	Mr. K Gaiger
Class 6	Mr. D Barrett
Class 7	Mr. J Zamorski
Class 8	Mrs. J Ainsworth
Class 9	Mr. K Gaiger
Class 10	Mrs. A Hawkins
Class 11	Mr. K Winfield
Class 12	Mr. M Birt
Class 13	Mr. J Zamorski
Best in show Challenge cup	
Mr D Barrett	
Ken Preedy memorial Cup	
Mr. J Zamorski.	

WHY I WANT TO BE A BEE FARMER

An essay written by an 11 year old boy after a visit to his school by a bee farmer.

"When I grow up I want to be a bee farmer because it's a fun job and easy to do. That's why there are so many bees flying around these days. Bee farmers don't need much school, they just have to learn to read numbers so they can count all the money that they get from the honey. I spose they have to read road maps too so they can find their way home from their bees if they get lost."

"Bee farmers should be brave so they don't get scared if their bees start stinging other people. They don't get stung because they know how to hide behind the smoke. They have to have good eyes so they can see through the smoke and they have to be good at running."

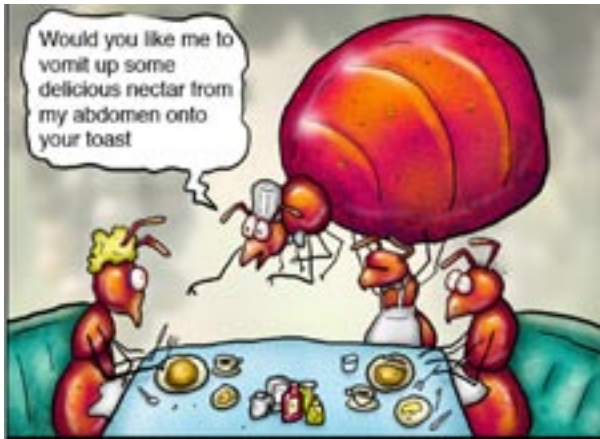
"The money bee farmers make is another thing I like. They make more money than they know what to do with. This is because most people think beekeeping is dangerous, except bee farmers don't because they know how easy it is."

"I hope I don't get stung because I don't like being stung, and if I did get stung, I couldn't be a bee farmer, and then I would have to go to work."

From the Beefarmers Association Bulletin Dec 1989

HONEY

So how exactly is honey made? The bees swallow nectar into their crop, regurgitate it, add enzymes (spit), chew, swallow and repeat many times. Not a pretty picture, but it does make for a funny cartoon or two. Beekeepers get very defensive about this aspect of honey. One told me "Honey is not a regurgitant. Regurgitation is a digestive process." Ok, well, whatever you call it they still swallow it and spit it back up. And they do partially digest it, so I don't see how it's not a digestive process. He went on to tell me "If you have a problem with nature's processes perhaps you should stay out of nature," which makes me wonder why he has a problem with me pointing out nature's



processes to others. The bottom line is that beekeepers get mad that I mention how honey is made, because it's something they'd rather you not think about. With one exception, this aspect of honey production is not used as a marketing tool. You can't even find out how honey is made at the National Honey Board's website!

SECRETARIES REPORT 2004

It has been an unusual year for Beekeeping in this part of Lancashire. Some of you are reporting great crops and others not so good. My bees did OK through the summer but nothing at the heather in fact both colonies I took, swarmed, but at least I didn't have to feed them.

Meetings this year have been very well attended and there have been some great speakers. The Bar Bee Q was popular as ever and seems to have become an annual event like the open day. Membership remains strong with new ones overtaking those who have left.

At this point I would like to wish good luck to John Tracey who is emigrating to New Zealand early next year. Thanks for your help on the committee. Also good luck to David Rayner who is also off to New Zealand, but only for six months, to work on a Bee Farm with 7000 hives. He should be an expert when he gets back.

The Honey Show was another great success. Thanks to all who entered or just came to watch. Have a go next year.

Thank you to all the kind people who allowed us to use their homes to hold our meetings. Without you we would not be the great branch we are.

As I close let me remind you we are again having our annual dinner at the Hillcrest Tea Rooms in Mitton. It is booked next year for Wednesday 30th March so start making plans because it only holds about 30 people and we are very close to that number every year.

Merry Christmas and a happy new Bee-keeping year to you all *John Zamorski.*
(I don't know about Dave coming back as an expert but with 7,000 hives and high Summer over there, he'll probably come back bow-legged. However, he did gift to Holden Clough a large amount of sugar to get things going in Spring - 'Good-on-Yer' Dave. Ed)

THE PULLED QUEEN

This is a technique that was shown to me many years ago by a senior beekeeper, and is one that I have used occasionally, finding it increasingly useful. Not many text books mention it, even the generally comprehensive volumes.

If you open a hive and find queen cells, but cannot find the old queen, nor is there any unsealed brood present, then the colony has probably swarmed. There might be one queen cell already open, indicating that one queen has already emerged, and she will be quite difficult to find in a big colony. Most people react to this situation by destroying all remaining queen cells to prevent the issue of casts, but if the emerged queen has already left in a cast then the colony will be rendered queen less, and will not be able to rear more queens as there are no young larvae present.

The solution is to select two or three good sized mature cells, that can be identified by the thinning and darkening of the cap, and carefully break open the cap with a sharp pointed instrument (a pin for instance - it is surprisingly tough) so releasing the enclosed queen. Then you can go ahead and destroy the remaining queen cells. The colony will not swarm unless there are one or more queen cells left in the hive, and only one, of the emerged or released queens will survive to head the colony.

Graham F Rendall Courtesy of BEES

SMALL HIVE BEETLE

With reports that the Small Hive Beetle has been found in Portugal, I am more than ever convinced that where honey bees go, their pests and diseases will follow and that this is just a matter of time. It is true, that effective actions taken can delay their arrival and give beekeepers and scientists time to prepare, but sure enough, they will arrive.

A correspondent commented to me that this may not be true and gave the example of the Africanised bee and its spread being limited by rainfall. But although an Africanised bee may be a pest, it is not a bee pest or disease. Many bee species are limited in their distribution. But their pests are not. They go where the bees go

My advice to beekeepers is to prepare for the worst and start by reading up all you can about the beetle. There is an excellent article in the last edition of Bee World which summarises the facts about the beast and the methods of combating it. And when it does come, we will be able to continue with our beekeeping

Ask a new beekeeper about varroa and he or she will regard it as just another pest to be fought. Beekeepers who were around when it arrived regarded it as the end of the world. Read the old beekeeping magazines of the 90s. It will be the same with the beetle. We simply need to get ready for it, and cutting out the seasonal bee inspectors is not exactly the right way of doing this. Predictable, but wrong. **Write to your M.P.**

BEE FACTS

Worker honey bees live for about 4 to 6 weeks in the spring or summer but up to 6 months during the winter.

The queen may lay 600-800 or even 1,500 eggs each day during her 3 or 4 year lifetime. This daily egg production may equal her own weight. She is constantly fed and groomed by attendant worker bees.

The brain of a worker honey bee is about a cubic millimeter but has the densest neuropile tissue of any animal.

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THE ITALIAN CONNECTION

JENI'S JOTTINGS OCT. 31ST 2004

As I write, the real Autumn rains have arrived. Much needed as it's been an extremely dry Summer here. Not even the odd thunder storm to freshen things up. Just the opposite in England I hear, it's usually the way, when wet here its dry there and visa-versa. The temperatures although high at times were not as extreme as last year thankfully, but the lack of rain did put paid to a bumper crop of honey, unfortunately.

BUSY BEES

After the first good extraction in July there were no real major flows, the bees kept busy but there were very few days when they were 'roaring', and not enough about for the supers to be filled in August. The alfalfa (herb medica) flowered but it obviously needs moisture to produce nectar.

WELL DOWN

Again I have been very fortunate in having Michael and Linda Costello helping me with the extracting. We did the clearing of the supers at the beginning of September, there seemed little point in leaving it any longer. A lot of supers were very light and the overall taking was 150kgs., well down on last year, but not to be sniffed at. As Michael pointed out maybe doing the first extraction earlier or putting the second supers on earlier may be important. Problem is I've not enough supers for the big hives. Anyway it's something to think about next year.

WOBBLY WHEELBARROW

I have been spending some-time mulling over how to take the back-ache out of some of the jobs. The main one being the removal of full supers to the extracting room. One way would be to make wider gates and use the tractor and trailer, instead of the Italian wheelbarrow which is always falling over just when you don't need it to. You only have to take your eyes off it for a second and it will do this 'trick'.

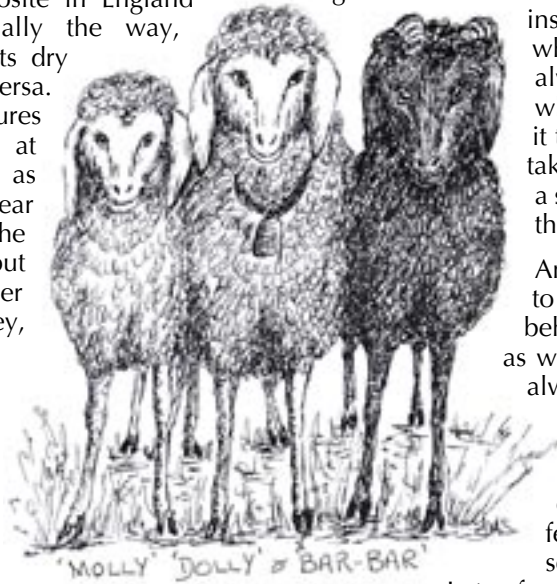
Another project is to make flat paths behind the bee hives, as working on a slope is always difficult. A start on the worse part has been made. Then there's the old chicken wire fence to replace, so the list goes on.

Lots of projects for the winter months but as to how many get done will depend on the weather as much as anything.

GRASS CUTTERS

I now have three grass cutters, in the way of sheep, to keep the apiary tidy. They are a long outstanding debt, well one of them is. Years ago Jake helped a chap who'd heard about Jake's rock climbing skills to come to the rescue of two sheep that had fallen down a cliff, onto a small ledge and been stuck for some time.

As Jakerefused paymentthechappromised a lamb which never materialized. Earlier this year while cutting the long grass around the hives I was interrupted by a friend and I happened to make a light hearted comment about needing a couple of sheep for all this work.



JUNGLE DRUMS

The next thing I knew was the chap Jake had helped turning up and asking if I still wanted a couple of lambs - Jungle Drum in action - everything here is by word of mouth, there's no local rag, no notice boards



for things wanted or for sale. If you want something or have something to sell it's a question of putting the word out. Bardi market day is full of people, mainly men, doing business just like that.

UP HILL AND DALE

Going for the sheep was quite an adventure in itself. Up over the mountain two valleys away, then up again following a twisting narrow road up the steep side of Val Lecca to a small village perched high up above the river Lecca.

On arriving at the village I met a farmer's wife who was surveying her arid potato plot "Come for the sheep?" she said (Jungle drums again) and then bellowed out "Eugenio!" which echoed not just across the valley but up and down as well.

He surely couldn't miss that! After chatting to the lady about the dryness and whether the moon was right for digging potatoes, Eugenio appeared looking as though he'd just surfaced after a night out with the 'lads'.

SWISS BEEKEEPER

Just as we were about to set off to look for the sheep, a man turned up with a young turkey in a cardboard box. He was introduced to me as the 'expert' (Swiss bee-keeper) helper. He then proceeded

to tell me how he'd just been to Bardi to get a hard chemical treatment for the varroa from the chemists.

I made no bones about what I thought of it, especially as his 'boss' has for many years arrived to 'borrow' oxalic acid and thymol off us! Makes me wonder if he is using any of the treatments properly.

BLACK SHEEP

Anyway the outcome of the excursion, after a lot of running around was a lamb of this year, it's expectant mother and an old black sheep with horns and a twisted mouth, the result of a wolf attack, all in the back of my small van which I very gingerly drove home. They are now happily keeping the grass down in the apiary. The only problem being they are clumsy beasts and apt to shift the hives about. Next on the jobs list, tie the hives down!

I hope that the bee keeping season hasn't been too disappointing for you all and that some very good honey was harvested.

Very best wishes to you ALL.

Tanti Salute Jeni.

BEE FACTS

Honey has been used for millenia as a topical dressing for wounds since microbes cannot live in it. It also produces hydrogen peroxide. Honey has even been used to embalm bodies such as that of Alexander the Great.

Fermented honey, known as Mead, is the most ancient fermented beverage. The term "honey moon" originated with the Norse practise of consuming large quantities of Mead during the first month of a marriage.

MEMBERS SERVICES

Bayvoral £3.10 per pack of 4 strips
Thymol crystals £2.20 per 100 g
Beekeepers quarterly Annual subscription from the publisher is £24 - from our treasurer only £16.00 with a slight profit to our society.

The publication has just been expanded to include another publication - 'Beebiz'.

Talk to Ken Gaiger phone. 01282 778887.

Library. There is an extensive range of bee books etc. that may be borrowed.

Our librarian, Brian Jackson brings some with him to our meetings. Contact him on 01535 634503 for special requests.

FROM THE TREASURER

Subscriptions for 2004 were due 1st November. The new full membership rate will be £14.00 and £2 for each additional family member. Associate membership remains at £4.00.

The rates for Bee Disease Insurance (B.D.I.) are:-

First 2 hives £1.60 covered by subscription
 up to 5 hives £2.40
 up to 10 hives £5.65
 up to 15 hives £8.15
 up to 20 hives £9.90
 up to 25 hives £11.50

Above 25 hives see Treasurer.

CHEQUES SHOULD BE MADE PAYABLE TO L. & N.W.B.K.A. AND SENT TO KEN GAIGER, 2 HIGHAM ROAD, PADIHAM, BURNLEY BB12 9AP
 Telephone 01282 778887

ARE YOUR HIVES VARROA FREE?

Scrapings from hive floors can be sent to :-
 Diagnostic Services
 National Bee Unit
 Sand Hutton
 YORK
 North Yorkshire YO4 1YW
 They will send you a report and the service is free of charge

COMMITTEE MEMBERS CONTACT DETAILS

Michael Birt	Chair	01706 222849
Bill Ainsworth	Vice Chair	01282 614015
John Zamorski	Hon. Sec	01200 427661
Ken Gaiger	Hon. Treas.	01282 778887
Bridget Beattie	Honey Show Sec	01257 452990
David Rayner	Manager Holden C.	01200 426898
Brian Jackson	Librarian	01535 634503
Brian Jackson	Education Officer	01535 634503
Robert Bradshaw	Member	01254 261216
David Bush	Member	01200 428152
Joe Wrigley	Member	01200 447621

DELEGATES TO THE CENTRAL COUNCIL

John Zamorski	Hon. Sec	01200 427661
Ken Gaiger	Hon. Treas.	01282 778887

APIMONDIA 2005

This is the equivalent of the Beekeepers Olympics. A spectacular six day event for beekeepers from all over the world. In 2005 it will be in Dublin, probably as near to us as it will be for many years

If you have internet access, take a look at the website <http://www.apimondia2005.com>. It really does look to be a magnificent international event.

FOR OUR BEGINNERS

Brian Jackson, our librarian and education officer is appealing for beekeeping magazines, periodicals etc so they can be distributed to new members.

The age of the material isn't important - after all very little changes in beekeeping.

INFORMATION ABOUT 'BEETALK'

Planned Publication Dates: March 2005, June 2005, September 2005, December 2005,

LATEST TIME FOR COPY - 2 WEEKS BEFORE THE MONTH OF PUBLICATION.

Please contact Bill Ainsworth, 296 Scotland Road Nelson BB9 7YS Telephone 01282 614015 .
Good, crisp photographs or line drawings are always welcome

PROGRAMME OF EVENTS

DATE	TIME	VENUE	SPEAKER	SUBJECT
Wed 30th Mar	7.30pm	Hill Crest Tea Rooms		Annual Dinner
Sun 24th Apr	2.30pm	Holden Clough	One of our own	Preparing to receive Queen cells
Sun 22nd May	2.30pm	Mr & Mrs Brian Jackson's	Ian Molyneux	Shook Swarms
Sun 20th Jun.	1pm	Towneley Hall	Everyone	Annual Open Day

ANNUAL DINNER

This will be held at the Hillcrest Tea Rooms in Mitton on Wednesday 30th March. Make a note in your diary and remember there is only room for about thirty people.

The restaurant is now licensed so we are no longer able to take our own drinks

MAKE A NOTE - **NOW!**

The rates for Bee Disease Insurance (B.D.I.) have been increased and the new amounts are shown on Page 18.

The new insurance fee should be included when you pay your subscription which WAS due at the AGM on November 3rd. Your third party liability insurance is a part of your subscription. PLEASE NOTE you are not covered until your subscription is paid

Scrapings

BEESWAX FAX

Beeswax is produced by bees in the form of tiny scales which are "sweated" from the segments on the underside of the abdomen. To stimulate the production of beeswax the bees gorge themselves with honey or sugar syrup and huddle together to raise the temperature of the cluster. To produce one pound of wax requires the bees to consume about ten pounds of honey.

At normal hive temperature of 37C (100F), wax can support a considerable weight and yet still be moulded by the bee's jaws. Beeswax melts at 64C (147F).

Beeswax has a high resistance to the passage of heat but if cooled quickly will become pale in colour, more brittle and liable to develop cracks due to rapid contraction. For this reason wax for exhibition is cooled as slowly as possible to preserve the texture and colour. To preserve the aroma of fresh wax it should never be raised more than a few degrees above melting point and then only for a short period. Whilst stories abound of last years exhibit being left to soak in honey over the winter to retain the honey aroma, fresh wax and low temperatures are an unbeatable combination

IMPORTANT: When melting beeswax always use a water bath by placing the container of wax - probably a small saucepan - inside a larger pan of water. Never place a pan of wax directly on a hot plate or gas ring. Beeswax can easily become damaged by localised overheating and if it ignites can burn more ferociously than any chip pan fire. Beeswax does not boil - it just gets hotter and hotter until it ignites.

A very satisfactory floor finish can be made by melting a pound of beeswax, and while it is cooling, stirring into it some turpentine. An exact proportion of the two ingredients is not necessary - in fact some workmen prefer the paste thick, others want it thin. When cool, if the mixture is too thick it is a simple matter to thin it by working in more turpentine.

The Roman Catholic Church uses large quantities of beeswax in the form of candles. The Church does not tolerate paraffin, ceresin, nor any of the mineral waxes, all of which give off an offensive greasy odor while burning, whereas candles made of beeswax leave a delightful perfume.

Moreover, the burning of mineral wax causes a deposit that injures pictures, while beeswax mellows and preserves them.

Certain grades of blacking, harness oils and lubricants require pure beeswax in their manufacture. A blacking containing beeswax will withstand more dampness than that made of any other substance.

The electrical-supply business is a consumer of beeswax. The windings of the wire are soaked in paraffin or beeswax - preferably the latter, because it seems less affected by extremes of heat and by moisture. Pattern-makers also use beeswax. The profession of dentistry consumes large quantities of pure wax every year to take impressions in the mouth.

Last, but not least, the beekeeper is a large consumer as well as a producer of wax.

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON PAGE 11 = C; 2 = B; 3 = A; 4 = B; 5 = B; 6 = B



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