



40th Bee Market & Auction

This year's second major event for the Association took place at Brinsbury Campus, Pulborough on 14th April. Although the Auction was earlier than previous years interest was still high and very well attended with visitors coming from as far away as Staffordshire and Essex for the event.



Photo courtesy of John Glover

Sales were brisk despite the chilling north-easterly wind blowing across the campus with over a hundred buyers bidding on more than 240 lots of everything from bees to brood boxes. Roger Patterson (attending his 40th Auction!) again did a sterling job as auctioneer ably supported by an army of volunteers from the West Sussex divisions. Buyers and sellers were pleased with the prices paid and the sales commission raised funds for the WSBKA exchequer.

Sarah and John Scrace raised £85 through Worthing's tombola and Sheila Abraham's cake stall and Sue Cooper's plant stand were, as always, very well supported. The members who manned the refreshments table throughout the day turned in a healthy profit and although the demand for 'cold' drinks was low tea and coffee sales hit an all time high. It's an ill wind.....!

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Alan Byham, Regional Bee Inspector, was on hand during the morning to answer questions and Payne's Southdown Bee Farms did brisk business throughout the day.

As I said last month, an event such as this would not be possible without the active support of Association members. The first aim of the Auction is to provide a service to its members (and non-members), but if we can make a contribution to WSBKA funds so much the better. We achieved both again this year so I would like to say a very sincere THANK YOU to all of those who gave so willingly of their time in the lead up to the event and throughout the day.

But we should not be relying on the same 'willing hands' year after year. We have over 400 members across the three divisions, but there are still plenty of opportunities to be involved. So, SEE YOU NEXT YEAR?

Graham

Bee Health & Disease Recognition Day - 14th June

Wisborough Green Division is extending an invitation to all Divisions to attend a training day in Loxwood with Alan Byham, Regional Bee Inspector, on bee health and disease recognition.

These sessions have been devised as hands on events to help beekeepers recognise bee diseases, and the exotic pests that are now notifiable. There will be samples to show you (subject to availability). It is most important that all beekeepers are aware of disease and can recognise both EFB and AFB. This is particularly relevant at the present time, as last year several instances of EFB were identified in our immediate area. Around 80% of cases are spotted by the Bee Inspectors. If foul brood is spotted by the beekeeper it is usually in a very advanced state that could have spread infection to surrounding colonies.

Alan Byham will provide a morning lecture which is suitable for anybody who has not attended a previous bee health session, but it is suitable for all – whatever your ability level.

The afternoon session will extend to other disease related subjects, but is only open to you if you have attended a previous bee health session. You should not book on to this if you have not been on a previous session.

Please note that prior booking of a place is essential so please contact me preferably by email: glover.fetchingshollow@gmail.com or phone 01403 751899. Please indicate 'am' or 'pm'.

The morning session will commence at 9:30am and the afternoon at 1:30pm, both at The Chapel, Spy Lane, Loxwood.

John Glover

Secretary Wisborough Green BKA

Around the Divisions

All Members are welcome to attend any Divisional meeting, but please advise the organiser if you plan to attend.

Chichester Division

Tuesday 15th May - 'Maintaining a healthy colony, including the shook swarm method of wax changing' - Alan Byham, Regional Bee Inspector. Meeting at the Boxgrove Village Hall, The Street, Boxgrove, 7:30pm.

Further details from Christine Stevens: secretary@chichesterbeekeepers.co.uk or the Division's website: www.chichesterbeekeepers.co.uk

Wisborough Green Division

Sunday 20th & Wednesday 9th & 30th May - Apiary meeting at Dounhurst Farm, Wisborough Green. Saturday meeting - Beginners & Intermediate at 12:00, Advanced at 2:30pm. Wednesday meeting's start at 6:30pm for all abilities.

Details from John Glover: glover.flethingshollow@gmail.com or website: www.wgbka.org.uk

*'Share your Division's
activities with readers of the
County News'*

Worthing Division

Sunday 6th & Tuesday 15th May - Apiary meeting at 2pm. **Sunday 20th May** - Visit to Len Lewis's apiary at Shoreham-by-Sea at 2pm. **Saturday 26th May** - BBKA Basic Assessment study session at 2pm. Further details from Phil Carter: philange5180@btinternet.com or website: www.worthingbeekeepers.org.uk

Vita funds ground-breaking varroa control research



Vita (Europe) Ltd is helping to fund innovative varroa control research to try to turn the mite's natural defences against itself. The 'gene knockdown' research has just started at the University of Aberdeen in Scotland and will involve the UK's National Bee Unit.

Dr Max Watkins, Technical Director at Vita, said: 'Vita hopes that an effective and environmentally sensitive treatment can eventually be developed at a cost that is affordable to beekeepers across the globe.' Read more about the research on the new Vita website:

www.vita-europe.com/new-money-for-research-to-halt-honey-bee-killer/

Floral Fringe Fair at Bignor Park 19th-20th May



A special event in a hidden setting. 11 acres of garden to explore. 5 miles south of Pulborough. Entrance £6, under 14 free. Dogs on leads. Details www.bignorpark.co.uk. Phone 07939 272443
Email: jeanjackman@hotmail.com

South of England Agricultural Society Show



As reported last month the South of England Show will be held this year at the Ardingly showground near Haywards Heath on 7th, 8th and 9th June. There is still time to enter exhibits in the Honey Show.

For details of the Honey Show schedule visit the Society's website: www.seas.org.uk or contact the Entries Secretary, Pauline Sparkes on 01293 862063. Entries close on 11th May and a small fee is now payable.

International Apimondia Congress

The organizing committee of the XXXVIII International Apimondia Congress has announced the start of registration for full delegates to the Congress that will be held in Kyiv from 29th September to 4th October 2013. The full delegate fee for super-early registration is €150 and registration at this price is available until June 2012.

Download the registration form at: <http://apimondia2013.com.ua/registration>



London Honey Show

It has just been announced that the second London Honey Show will be held on Monday 8th October following the success of the first ever London Honey Show last year.

The show is promising to be even bigger and better than last year. Details from www.londonbees.com/london-honey-show/



More from Moore - Conventions and Carpentry!

Chairman, Tom Moore, shares his thoughts from his apiary in West Sussex.

What a difference a month makes! When I wrote last month's notes it felt like summer, and everything was going well, colonies building up fast and lots of supers on the hives in anticipation of an early flow. Now we have had a long spell of cold and damp weather, and some of those strong colonies are verging on starvation, as there have been only brief periods when the temperature has been enough for serious foraging; this despite all the blossom and oilseed rape around us. Attending the BBKA Spring Convention on 20th and 21st April, the same story was heard from many different areas. The way things are as I write this, we wonder if there will be any early honey crop at all – but as long as we keep the hives fed now, things can turn round very fast in a warm week or so.

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This year the Convention was at a new location, which gave more room for the trade show and was supposed to help with space for the lectures. It was a good venue, but as at Stoneleigh, there were again problems with lack of capacity in many of the lecture rooms, and I was unable to get into half the talks I wanted to hear. Such a shame. There are excellent speakers, great subjects, and too many people wanting to hear them. Maybe we can get one or two to our own West Sussex Convention early next year.

Meanwhile, preparations have continued at home for the summer's activities at the apiary, and in particular for queen rearing. Last year we had a lot of failures, which we put down largely to the drought conditions in May/June. We were all ready to start in April, but have delayed queen-rearing operations as it seems a bad idea to be doing it in cold and hungry times. To make a good queen, and get her mated well, we need good weather and a steady flow of nectar and pollen coming in.



Special crown boards for use in queen rearing by the Wilson method

We are going to use some simple and straightforward queen-rearing methods this year, as well as trying to get better at grafting. One that we will use is called the Wilson method, where a couple of new queens are raised above the parent hive, meaning it is all done on the one stand. It does require some adapted crown boards, and although I am not a carpenter by any stretch of the imagination I have managed to make up some boards to do the job for us (see picture). The 'standard' Wilson method involves using a hive that you can divide in two, but I have adapted it to use two nucleus boxes instead, and we will raise a queen in each, while retaining the mother below. This seems to me to show one of the side-effects of beekeeping. When I assembled my first hive I swore 'never again' as I couldn't even hammer a nail in straight. Now I don't think twice about it, and could even say I have some very basic, rough and ready carpentry skills! You never know where beekeeping will lead you.....

Tom

MEMBERS' COUNTY NEWSLETTER

Thanks to all this month's contributors. If you don't have access to the internet and want further details of anything in this newsletter, please contact the County Secretary. Likewise, if you would like to contribute to future newsletters please send articles and photographs to:
Graham Elliott, Hon. Secretary, no later than the 20th of the preceding month.

grahammt@tiscali.co.uk

We're on the web:

www.bbka.org.uk/local/westsussex

For those of you with a Smartphone scan our website's QR Code

