

# High Wycombe and District Beekeepers Association

Registered Charity No. 299638

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## *Newsletter - March 2007*

### Diary

#### Forthcoming Events

- 3rd March - Bucks County Seminar at Memorial Hall, Wendover.
- 7th March - Start of Beginners Classes
- 30th March - Beekeeping - An observational Team Sport - Norman Hughes
- 21st April - BBKA Spring Convention - Stoneleigh

#### Saturday 3rd March - Bucks County Seminar

Please note that this actually takes place on 3rd March not 2nd as has been repeatedly published.

#### 7th March - Start of Beginners Classes

This year's all seven of the weekly classes are on Wednesdays, starting on 7<sup>th</sup> of March. Last year we were able to give the students a much improved 'launch' by arranging for some of our existing beekeeper members to be on-hand at Tea Break (~8:30). We talked about our hobby from a 'real-life' perspective. It is great fun and makes them much more likely to take up our interest. We hope to do the same thing this year, so please come along for half an hour, to meet, greet, and bee-chat with them. If the entrance door is shut, key in 7958 to open it. Later, you can get involved with the helping during the practical apiary work sessions. By that stage, we also hope some of this year's beginners from the Beginners Beekeeping Course at Burchetts Green College will be joining us. The full programme is included later in the newsletter

#### 30th March Monthly Meeting

We have Norman Hughes coming to talk to us on the theme of 'Beekeeping - An observational Team Sport'. Norman is a former BBKA Chairman, and an excellent lecturer. Another meeting that you shouldn't miss!

*Clive Hill*

#### Recent event Reports

#### 23rd February - Dr Sara Robb - Toiletries and Cosmetics from Hive Products.

Sara is originally from Iowa, U.S.A. She gained a PHD from Hershey, Pennsylvania, and then took a post-doctoral research position at Dundee, Scotland where she met her future husband. She had always had an interest in soap-making since her early school years, but had never had the opportunity to try until she was on maternity leave.

Now living in London, a neighbour gave her a jar of Polish honey, which she decided to use as a new ingredient in her soap. The first time Sara used the soap on her daughter, she could not believe how soft it left her daughter's skin.

Sara has since experimented with various honeys in soap, as well as other items made from bee products, including creams and scrubs, culminating in taking 3<sup>rd</sup> place at last years National Honey Show in the 'Home Produced Goods' class.

Sara passed around a number of soap samples and explained that different honeys can give different properties to the soap, and

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### Chairman's Chat

Spring must be coming. On the last three afternoons we have had two honeybees working a pot of flowering hyacinth bulbs we've put out into the garden. They are collecting nectar and small amounts of pale green pollen. The bulbs are so highly scented we get headaches if they are in the house; but have a lovely fragrance outdoors. Imagine putting your sensitive bee antennae into such a strongly scented flower! Perhaps it gives bees an addictive headache too!

#### Help with Bee Education / Publicity Material at The Environment Centre

It would be very useful to get a new mind-set involved, helping to devise some simple new Education & Publicity material for our display bench at The Environment Centre. This area is a huge draw to the public, particularly children. We would greatly welcome some fresh ideas and a little help. Please give me (526557), or Sylvia Chamberlin (522082) a ring if you could help us.

#### Auction of Promises

The Environment Centre have just held a fund raising Auction of Promises. We Beekeepers provided two of the items on Auction. It will at least raise our profile at the Centre even further: and perhaps it will also bring us some potential new members.

#### February Meeting.

For this meeting, we were in the Exhibition Room, downstairs, because the High Wycombe Society had a large 'Quiz Night' in our normal room. We had advised that the evening could be of particular interest to lady members, partners, daughters etc; and they gave excellent support - so HWBKA had a 'full house' too. Tim Fountain's report starts in column 1.

#### HWBKA Website

Committee member Keith Wood has been working up a purpose designed HWBKA website. A small steering group held a meeting to review progress earlier this week. The site is designed to act as a point of contact for potential new members; and a ready source of information for existing members. The site is called [www.hwbka.co.uk](http://www.hwbka.co.uk) and we hope to go 'live' asap. Many thanks to Keith for all his hard work, and Stewart Thorburn who did the initial scouting exercise.

Bucks BKA Seminar 3rd March. Sylvia Chamberlin has organised an excellent day for us again: her Swansong as County

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even that some crystallized honey can work as a gentle exfoliant. Wax and additional fragrances may also be added, as well as pigments for colouring. These are the same as artist's colours.

A question was asked whether bees would follow someone who had used some of her honey soap. Sara didn't know, but would be interested in any particular experiences!

Making cosmetics for sale is quite complex in terms of legal requirement, but it can be very satisfying making items as gifts. Fragrancing is not required, and many combinations of oils can be used.

Soap is made using natural oils, such as olive, sunflower or coconut, in combination with a sodium hydroxide solution. Sodium hydroxide is otherwise known as caustic soda, and great care must be taken when handling. The mixture when blended with the oils in the correct proportions is perfectly safe however, as the oils are converted in to soap and glycerine and no caustic element remains. These kinds of soaps are softer than commercial soaps as the glycerine is retained, where in commercial soaps it is removed.

Sara proceeded to give us a demonstration of making one of her favourite soaps.

Wear gloves. Weigh 250 grams of water in a large glass jar. Sara uses Volvic mineral water as it is very low in calcium which means much less scum in the end product. Rain water or distilled water could also be used. Add 125 grams of sodium hydroxide, and stir with a wooden spoon. This mixture, known as lye, is now very caustic so great care should be taken not to splash. This will get very hot, and should be left until the lye goes clear. Take 350 grams of olive oil and 250 grams of sunflower oil and put in to a large ice-cream tub. Coconut oil is solid at room temperature, so melt 400 grams in a microwave and add to the other oils. Coconut oil gives a good bubbly soap.

Add the clear lye slowly while stirring gently. When all the lye is added, use a whisk or hand-blender. The mixture will become cloudy as the lye begins to convert the oil to soap, thickening to resemble custard. As the mixture thickens to a batter consistency, stop whisking and add the additional ingredients if desired; in this case blobs of honey and small pieces of wax strips or foundation. Up to 30ml of fragrance or 15ml of essential oils can be added, but care needs to be taken with essential oils, as some are not suitable to be used by some people; pregnant women, for example, should avoid contact with certain oils.

The soap can now be covered, wrapped and left to heat up and cure, or it can be poured in to shaped moulds at this stage before wrapping. Sara uses the ice-cream tub as it is easy to get the soap out and then cut it to size. The mixture will turn to a gel from the centre to the outside, and this stage was reached by the end of the meeting. At this point, the soap can be uncovered to hasten cooling, or left to cool slowly. Be gentle, as the soap can 'break' if handled roughly. When the soap is fully cool, pop it out and cut as required. There are many soap recipes to be found, but Sara gave two principles to follow:-

- There must always be more oil than lye, so that all the lye is used in the conversion process
- DON'T add anything, such as honey, to the lye before it is added to the oil, even if the recipe says so!

At the end of the meeting, Sara also briefly described making bath bombs:-

2 parts sodium bicarbonate, 1 part citric acid, 'a little' honey, 'a little' sunflower oil, 'a little' water to bring all the ingredients together form all the ingredients in to a ball and allow to dry.

Clive Hill has a small number of other recipe ideas left by Sara if you would like to know more.

For another view on making bee cosmetics for sale, the March 2007 issue of BeeCraft has an article by another cosmetics maker on dealing with the legal side.

*Tim Fountain*

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Secretary. We will give you a short resume in April. Don't forget to bring along those surplus items for the Bring & Buy Sale.

### **Stoneleigh Bee Convention**

Don't forget to send off and buy your ticket in advance. This Convention is a wonderful day out – and if you've not been before, will greatly expand your beekeeping horizons. See BB-KA News, or Beecraft for further details.

### **'Frame of Honey' Competition**

In the last few years HWBKA has stopped holding it's Annual Honey Show. As a consequence, we are losing the necessary skills of preparing and exhibiting: and such changes are quite widespread over the country. Bucks County Association want to try encourage Showing, so we have decided to introduce a small competition for 'Best Frame of Honey'. John Crick will sell marked 'Top Bars' at the March and April Meetings. Members are invited to use these to make up a super frame, which they can get their bees to draw and fill. The competition will be held at our September meeting, where the frames will be judged by our very own Honey Judge, Vivienne Brown. A useful prize will be awarded. Come on, all you recent recruits, see if you can win!!

*Clive Hill*

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## **INTRODUCTION TO BEEKEEPING**

The 2007 course starts on Wednesday 7th March at the Environment Centre at 7.30 pm. The syllabus is:-

March 7th Bee Identification and honey bee castes

March 14th Hives and personal equipment

March 21st Within the brood body and record keeping

March 28th The beekeeping year, swarms and nuclei

April 4th Pests and Diseases

April 11th Honey extraction and hive products

April 18th Marketing and Health & Safety

Any member who would like a refresher on any of the subjects is welcome to come along for an evening and rest assured that I have invited other speakers to come in and present several of the evenings. I would appeal for help\_ in the first two weeks to assist with registration and organisation and for all of the weeks in talking to the students during the mid-session interval.

### **NAVIGATION**

In the fascinating world of the honey bee, one of the most challenging areas of understanding is 'how do they navigate?' Von Frisch started off the research by describing the bee dances and our Rothamstead researchers have proceeded with fitting up bees with transducers and using radar to plot their flight paths.

An Australian researcher is now using the bees precision flying system to design the robotic aircraft navigation equipment which could be used on tiny aircraft. It is claimed that this technology could be used to monitor the situation on the battlefield in advance of approaching troops and also to do close proximity viewing to support space exploration.

Whilst a human can use the images from their two eyes to give stereo viewing, the eyes of a bee are too close together to be effective in this way. Instead they appear to observe how rapidly objects appeared to move on the retinas in their eyes - if they moved quickly, the object was close; slowly and it was far away. This type of signal is much easier to enter into a computer input. If our bees need to fly 90,000 miles in order to produce one pound of honey this sounds like a mighty high powered computer they need in their sesame seed sized brains.

*John Crick*

## Venerable Members Rewarded

Congratulations to two of our most venerable members Vic Gee and John Parslow on being awarded the BBKA Award for 50 years of service to beekeeping. Ivor Davis President of the British Beekeepers Association will present the awards on March 3rd at the Bucks Seminar in Wendover Memorial hall. The following passages make it clear why they are such worthy candidates for this honour.

### John Parslow

It was in his teenage years that John became interested in beekeeping when, as a rural lad, he was invited to help an older man. He soon acquired his first hive and helped and guided by Mr Tweedie, the County Beekeeping Instructor, quickly increased the number of colonies he kept.

Working on the Carrington Estate, John extended his interest in beekeeping after he married Joan. Facilities were meagre and operations such as extraction were carried out in the kitchen of their farm cottage but John was undaunted and rose to the challenge of running over forty colonies in order to join the Bee Farmers Association. By the early 1970's he was deeply involved in the trips to the Derbyshire heather moors. In the early 1980's his youngest son, Barry, who entered the business in a full time capacity, helped him. Rapid increase then took them to more than 300 colonies. During this time John continued to work when both his knee joints gave up and had to be replaced. Throughout his career he has supplied members of the High Wycombe BKA with beekeeping supplies including honey jars at bulk cost price.

As retirement from his farming life loomed John was able to devote all his time and energies to lighter duties in sales and marketing with his stalls at local Farmers Markets.

His great knowledge is readily offered to customers and beekeepers alike and a growing number acknowledge that it is due to his help and contagious enthusiasm that they pursue their interest in beekeeping.

### Victor Gee

Vic Gee, having been discharged from the Army, 70% disabled, became one of the founding members of High Wycombe BKA, when it was established during 1944 in an atmosphere of "Dig for Victory". He lived at "Trees" in Hazlemere where he still lives to this day at the age of 94, in one of the then few houses built just before the War on the edge of Hazlemere Park (a very good bee forage area) and not far from one of his mentors Tim Bowler. Tim Bowler an already established and experienced beekeeper was a very strong character and teacher of metalwork at Mill End Road School and will still be well remembered by a few members in the High Wycombe Association. Beekeeping must have run in his family as he used to import a gentle variety of queens, directly through the post, from his brother in the US. Tim Bowler incidentally made Vic's first motor powered extractor, with a diameter of about 4 feet, which he used for many years before it ended its days as a water collection tank, not being made of stainless steel. Vic seems to recall that the HWBKA Chairman at that time was a London jeweller who had evacuated to the Chilterns from the bombing.

Vic was an active member of the High Wycombe BKA and Secretary for several years in the 1950's. The then monthly newsletter now seems very primitive compared with the sophis-

ticated systems we have today, its being prepared either by typing or writing on to a wax stencil and then reproduced on paper using a roller over a fine mesh and tubes of ink! A very messy process. Any alterations being shown in the final format unless one was very careful.

Newsletters by the Internet would have been inconceivable then!

He helped and encouraged new members including another Hazlemere resident George Browning, a master in divinity at the RGS who later took over the HWBKA treasurership.

There are of course many amusing stories of his collection of swarms of bees over the years from very awkward places and Vic also tells of one scary event in his early beekeeping career in the late 1940's when a neighbour called on him to sort out what he thought was a nest of wasps – these actually turned out to be large hornets well up a tree and he undertook to deal with them one night when supposedly they would be quietly at rest, whilst the neighbour, who was a dentist, promised to supply some poison!

The task involved climbing a ladder to reach the nest but these hornets apparently did not rest at night but instead were extremely active and to Vic's horror, the poison supplied was a bottle of liquid cyanide! He however managed to complete the task without losing face or gassing himself in the process.

Another story remembered by the older Hazlemere villagers which occurred in the 1940's (Hazlemere was a much smaller and closer community in those days) and involved Vic's late wife Rene. A large swarm had been reported to her as being on a gate post in Grove Road – this would have been on the present HWBKA Secretary Christine's route to and from her first school – Vic was working in Oxford during the week and could naturally not perform, and there was much concern that the swarm be "dealt with" before the children returned home. Children of course could luckily walk everywhere then.

Rene loyally therefore undertook the job herself without veil or gloves and with a dustpan & brush, trying to reassure what turned out rightly to be sceptical onlookers, that bees that had just swarmed never stung, as she had heard in one of the talks she had attended.

There were regular Association summer meetings in which he was involved and one of the most popular venues was that of Colonel Fenwick, of the old school of gentlemen, who had a large house and estate in the Wendover area. The grounds contained a large hexagonal brick and tiled bee house – the walls being covered in shelves full of dated honey jars going back for years and years. The weather always seemed to be fine and the teas fantastic. Another popular location was Terriers House through Bob Hunter's connection with another memorable Beekeeping character "Bill" Pope, as was also the home of a previous HWBKA President Henri Jean-Maire at Beaconsfield. Henri Jean-Maire had an outstanding collection of clocks!

Vic and Rene's home "Trees" was also a base for regular summer meetings for many years.

Much of the Association's instruction was carried out by Mr Tweedie the CBI known affectionately as "Tweedie Bee", an extremely popular and colourful character based at County Farm, now a large housing estate, and later on his retirement by Bob Neil. Classes being held there or at meetings in High

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Wycombe or at members' homes and apiaries as they are today. There was of course a large variety of visiting speakers over the years on specialist aspects of the craft as we have now.

Vic fondly tells of one of the earlier lecture sessions in a laboratory at Rothamsted, on the subject of drifting, that was always remembered with amusement by Rene and Tim Bowler's wife. It was a warm summer afternoon and bumble bees were gently going to and from their nests within the benches and they of course both drifted off to sleep in the process!

He visited the High Wycombe Environment Centre for the first time last year and was highly impressed with the facilities.

He was a regular exhibitor and prize winner of both honey and mead at High Wycombe Show – in those earlier years the honey extracting always seemed to be much later than it is today presumably before the onset of what has now, perhaps unfortunately, become two plantings of oilseed rape.

In the early days of the High Wycombe Association, of which in recognition of his many years of service he was made a life member some time ago, beekeepers were entitled to extra sugar rations for winter feeding and it was suggested that some only took up the craft because of this. I don't think that this can be said of Vic because he earnestly carried on for the next 50 years or so and still continues through his interest in his son Christopher's activities after he eventually took the family hives over to his home at Bledlow Ridge. "Trees" Hazlemere also continues to be an outlet for the Bledlow Ridge honey for Vic's regular customers of many years.

*Sylvia Chamberlin*

## COLONY COLLAPSE

Unfortunately, one of the things that we have grown accustomed to is the death of a colony of bees at this time of the year. It is something that we have always put down to starvation as the weather warms up, brood rearing commences and the remaining stores are consumed or are out of reach of the winter cluster. The signs are always recognisable by the sight of the bodies of the dead bees left head first in the cells.

In very recent years we are encountering a different situation where, without warning, the bees are absconding from the hive, leaving behind stores and possibly the queen. This is being described as Colony Collapse Virus and Norman Carreck, ex Rothamstead, has experienced watching his bees walk out of the hive and drop into the grass before walking away to die..

If any of you are unfortunate enough to encounter colony losses this winter / early spring will you please try to classify the numbers into identifiable causes and let our secretary, Christine Haxel, have the results. This can be our input into the research being carried out.

## BEES AVAILABLE

We regret the recent death of John Cook, a long time member of our Association. John has left ten colonies on Nationals and WBC's the outer boxes have seen better times but the frames are in good order. The bees are alive and we will soon be able to assess their health. If anyone is interested in buying them please contact Bob Hunter for details 01494 716379

At the County Seminar this Saturday Bob will be selling off other equipment in addition to a number of WBC supers with good combs.

*John Crick*

## Beekeeping Magazines for Sale

We are now offering back numbers (from around 1985 to 2005) of these magazines, for sale at nominal prices; e.g. 12 copies of the black and white A5 Beecraft for £1.50; 12 copies of the coloured Beecraft for £1.00. All proceeds to Beekeeping Charities.

**BeeCraft** An A4 production now produced in full colour since by keen experienced beekeepers and owned by the BBKA County Associations that each hold shares in the company. [£20]

**Beekeepers Quarterly** An A4 production now produced in full colour is published by Northern Bee Books. Articles are written by knowledgeable beekeepers. It has recently amalgamated with Bee Biz a magazine for bee farmers and it takes a more global view of beekeeping. [£24pa.]

**Beekeepers News** A5 published by Thornes. until 2003. Had some excellent articles. Free to customers.

**BBKA News** This is essentially a bimonthly newspaper (rather than a magazine). It is published by the BBKA and is now sent free to all members both to keep them in touch with the organisation and current legislation and to provide helpful information on all aspects of beekeeping.

**The Scottish Beekeeper** Produced monthly for Scottish beekeepers for their members and is included in their £15 membership fee.

**The Welsh Beekeeper** (in English) Produced quarterly for members of the Welsh Beekeepers Association.

**Beekeeping** Produced by Devon Beekeepers A5 10 issues per year usually in Black and White. Free to their members but markets at about £1.00 per issue. A high quality local production.

**Beekeeping and Development** The magazine produced by the charity Bees for Development to provide relevant information to beekeepers in the developing world. It keeps them in touch with others with similar problems to solve; it gives simple technical advice and basic scientific information. The magazine is circulated free to beekeepers operating on subsistence level in all parts of the world. This is paid for from money received from their sponsors like ourselves. Supporters may receive a complimentary copy.

**Bee World** This 'meaty magazine' (in black and white) was published 4 times per year by the International Bee Research Association and contained articles and features of an analytical nature on the scientific, economic and cultural aspects of beekeeping. About £30pa.

**Journal of Apicultural Research** published by the International Bee Research Association 4/5 times per year. Each contains about 10 current research papers on topics related to apiculture. Serious stuff! Cost about £30 pa.

**Apicultural Abstracts** aims to give a complete survey of research and technical developments concerning bees and beekeepers throughout the world. Again an IBRA publication. 5 copies per annum about £95.

The IBRA publications are open to offers. The magazines will be on sale at the Bucks Seminar and subsequently at other beekeeping meetings. However if you have any particular requests please get in touch with Raymond and Sylvia Chamberlin 01494 522082.

# Seasonal Tips and Reminders

## March 2007

Keep an eye on alighting board.

Look out for pollen & water collection.

Once weather set warm, remove mouse guard & adjust entrance.

Install Varroa floor.

Monitor the daily Varroa mite drop rate.

Get organized for comb replacement when spring really arrives.

There has been some bee flight activity in the last few days. But I doubt the bees have been able to fly very much for several weeks; and apart from residual hazel catkins snowdrops and some early daffodils, there are still not many flowers for them to work. However, the chalk streams have started flowing again, so a repeat of last year's drought looks unlikely. Lets hope we get a good spring honeyflow!

Once the weather opens up, the bees will get active, flying for parts of most days. Look to see pollen being taken in - a sign of brood rearing actively underway and that the colony is queen right. The early bee forage will be wild cherry plum (looks like blackthorn, but flowers significantly earlier) then pussy willow (sallow) catkins, which bees love. male willow catkins give fluffy golden pollen and female ones can give useful quantities of early nectar. At ground level the lesser celandines and wild violets will then also start to flower. All these will be followed by blackthorn and eventually wild cherry, then other spring forage - much of it tree flowers.

Apart from pollen, the other hive necessity at this season is water, used to liquefy stored honey. Foragers collect this from damp grass, pond margins and puddles. You can provide your own source - like wet peat from a growbag- but if it's placed too near the hive, don't be surprised if the little blighters forsake it for another "tasty" source at a distance from the hive which they can communicate more accurately. A bee returning with a load of water will have it's legs dangling down in flight.

Inside the hive, another sign of brood rearing is that the crown board above the centre of the cluster will feel decidedly warm. The bees will be very active inside the hive too, but they'll cluster tightly to save heat if the weather goes cold. If a cold snap is prolonged, expect to see white pupal remains at the hive entrance for a few days. These will be from brood that perished from exposure to cold at the edges of the nest, when the cluster contracted tightly to maintain blood heat at the centre.

Once the weather is consistently warm enough for the winter cluster to break, and for the bees to be fully mobile within the hive; then remove the mouse guard. Assuming you winter colonies on a full width entrance: reduce this to smaller dimensions - say 8 x 1 cm. Clean and replace the floorboard. Prudent beekeepers should now work on the basis of minimizing the threat of Varroa, not expecting to eliminate it: so Varroa screen floors will be the norm.

If you have wintered the colony on a solid floor, replace it with a Varroa screen floor and check the Varroa level by measuring the natural daily mite drop rate. Do this by putting the debris

catching board in position beneath the mesh. Assess the colony for the level of Varroa infestation by checking the natural mite drop down rate over a couple of weeks. The DEFRA 'Managing Varroa' booklet (PB10859) explains the technical background. Remember that we now have pyrethroid resistant mites these in our area, so Varroa control can no longer be by using Bayvarol or Apistan and we have to use Integrated Pest Management (IPM) as routine instead. This means drone comb removal, thymol based treatments etc.

Late February, March and early April is a time of heavy stores consumption. Check your hives for weight (heft them) if they feel light and there's no nectar flow, be prepared to feed close to the cluster. Use a patty of baker's fondant, supermarket ready made icing sugar, or even a bag of wetted sugar placed over the feed hole. (Cut a slit in the side of the packet, put water in to fill the voids between the sugar grains, and then place the bag in position - slit towards the cluster. If it's a real starvation emergency, sprinkle some syrup over the bees first, to start the revival - then feed as above.

Now, to disease control. If you're concerned about brown splotches of bee faeces over the hive front, check for Nosema and look up the treatment routine in your bee guidebook. If there seem to be many crawling bees, consider the presence of Acarine, or a virus disease.

Finally, a "planning matter" to think about. A year or three back we had Malcolm Blake talking to us about comb quality and the Queen's worker cell needs at peak season. It's time to start planning your "old brood comb replacement policy" - you'll soon be able to start replacing them.

*Clive Hill*

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## Please Note

The e-mail address for the newsletter has changed yet again. This time it should be permanent.

It is now

[newsletter@hwbka.co.uk](mailto:newsletter@hwbka.co.uk)

The website is still in development  
but can be visited at

[www.hwbka.co.uk](http://www.hwbka.co.uk)

Items for publication will be accepted as hard copies (typed, printed or handwritten) as long as they are totally legible. Normally the closing time for material will be 7am on the 1st of the month. Send them (preferably unfolded) to:

Newsletter, 22 Claremont Gardens, Marlow, SL7 1BS.  
E-mails (**without attachments**) can be sent to:

[newsletter@hwbka.co.uk](mailto:newsletter@hwbka.co.uk)

Website: [www.hwbka.co.uk](http://www.hwbka.co.uk)

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# The slings and arrows . . . . .

I spoke to Bob Hunter the other day who was inspecting his apiary after returning from holiday. The bees were flying well on such a mild day and one of his bees stung him despite the fact that he was minding his own business. This reminded me of a poem printed in the, now defunct, British Bee Journal on March 4th 1954.

*Phil Wiggins*

## To A Fussy Bee

HEY! I didn't bump into you,  
There's no need to act quite like that.  
T'was not my intention to get in your way.  
So don't knock a hole in my hat!  
There's no cause to kick up a fuss,  
Like some spoilt tempestuous child,  
T'was merely by chance that our paths had to cross  
T'is silly for: you to get wild.

This morning I looked round the hives,  
Just strolling at leisurely pace,  
When quite unexpectedly, out Of the blue,  
You hit me right full in the face.  
Of course I said "sorry" at once  
Although I'd done nothing amiss,  
But unruly insect, you got blazing mad;  
And chose, to dive-bomb me like this.

A fine way your owner to treat !  
Your actions are just downright rude.  
And after the many things I've done for you,  
Such hastiness really seems crude.  
Your sisters quite happily wing,  
With song that's no querulous whine,  
But of this collision, though no one's been hurt,  
You're swearing the fault's wholly mine.

But you have a few thousand eyes,  
Remember I've only got two.  
And when it so happens that we should collide.  
I'm no more to blame, bee, than you.  
And so I'll walk slowly along.  
But if you stab me with your dirk,  
It surely will hurt you a lot more than me,  
So buzz off to some useful work.

Thos. H. Hallam