

High Wycombe and District Beekeepers Association

Registered Charity No. 299638

Chairman: Clive Hill 01494 526557

President: Will Steynor 01494 881205

Secretary: Sheila Borwick 01494 729315 shejont@waitrose.com

Treasurer: Edward West 01494 520874

Swarm Officer: Bill Bendyshe-Brown 07527 798659

Newsletter - November 2008

Diary

Forthcoming Events

- 28th November** - **Monthly Meeting - Ian Gourlay - Beekeeping Past and Present**
30th January 2009 - **Monthly Meeting - Norman Carreck - Update on Colony Collapse Disorder**

28th November 2008 – Ian Gourlay – Beekeeping Past and Present - Environment Centre

Ian is a Past Chairman of Oxfordshire Beekeeping Association and Oxford Tree Club. He maintains hives for Bridewell Organic Gardens, an award winning charity based in a charming walled garden and an adjacent 5 acre vineyard in Wilcote near Witney.

30th January 2009 – Norman Carreck – Update on Colony Collapse Disorder - Environment Centre

Recent Event Report

31st October Clive de Bruyn – The Joys of Raising Queens

Clive has spoken to HWBKA on several occasions, and this evenings discussion was more of a winding trek than a casual stroll through his beekeeping world – informative, entertaining and thought-provoking, but ultimately leaving you in need of a sit-down. Even though we were already sitting down!

To begin with Clive stated that the more beekeeping experience he gained, the less he seemed to know, leading to his comment that after 39 years of beekeeping, he is convinced that he now knows absolutely nothing. One thing that he did recommend however, was that “if something works for you, stick with it”. He spoke about beekeeping “rights of passage”; stages that all beekeepers must go through.

In respect of this evenings talk, swarm control was the stage in question.

He advised trying to work with the bees, as the odds are about 60000 – 1!

As a guide, bees start to swarm when the lupins are in flower. The timing of this may vary from year to year but the association remains. As an aside, he stated that he also does his first inspections around the time that the flowering current comes out.

Raising new queens allows a beekeeper to select which queens to use in order to replace old queens in the apiary. Old queens are the cause of many hive problems, and young queens with their strong pheromones are good for the hive.

If you only have one colony, then it is obviously your best. If you have more, then you have the option to choose where your new queens will come from. Perhaps your most prolific or quietest hives depending on your requirements.

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Chairman's Chat

This Newsletter is the last for 2008. I've have held back publication by a few days so that we could tell you how the Beekeepers March at Westminster had gone. As you will see, a great deal has been going on in the last month, so I have much to mention. I've put the items into roughly chronological order.

Reminder: Sub Renewals

Ed West, our Treasurer tells me that some subscriptions are still overdue. He has sent reminders to those members he knows keep bees, but is not at present sure of the present beekeeping status of most of the folk who joined via the 2008 Beginners Course. If any of these do not yet have bees, but wish to remain as members, they can do so at low cost by taking out Associate membership of HWBKA, together with Country Membership of BBKA – which means that they will continue to get BBKA News. Such membership does not include the BBKA Insurance cover. If you are likely to become a Beekeeper, you might still wish to take out a subscription to Beecraft, a truly excellent magazine. We have included a further Subscription Renewal form with this Newsletter.

Felice Pigram

Felice Pigram, a former long-term Secretary of the Association is in Hospital. She suffered a fall in her garden and was whisked into Stoke Mandeville Hospital, where she has been for about three weeks. We have received occasional news of Felice from her sons and her sister Daphne and have sent her a couple of Get Well Cards from the Association. If any of our members would like to send a further card, we feel sure that Felice would be delighted. Address: Mrs F Pigram, c/o Ward 2, Stoke Mandeville Hospital, Aylesbury HP21 8AL.

Dewey Caron Talk on DVD

Kenn Shearer has been very busy editing the raw recordings into DVD format. The final version is now being checked. We hope to have copies available for Members to purchase at the November meeting.

Bucks County AGM

At the October 15th AGM, held at the North Bucks BKA at Bletchley, Milton Keynes, John Crick retired as President and

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Clive recommends feeding pollen supplements in the spring as a protein boost. This helps hives increase faster.

If you have had to make an artificial swarm from one hive, it is possible to use one half to raise queens from your selected colony. Ensure that there are no eggs, queens or queen cells in the artificial swarm box, then add in a frame of eggs from your selected colony. The bees should raise a number of queen cells that can then be introduced to queenless nucs or apideas to then produce mated queens.

Clive's preference is to create a nucleus in to which grafted eggs, taken out of a selected hive and placed in a row of artificial cells, are introduced.

He uses a deep nucleus or swarm box, with space under the inserted frames so that the bees he shakes in are not squashed when frames are inserted on top of them. Ensuring that you haven't got the queen (see below), shake in bees from 8 frames. Clive's technique is to support each frame lug by one hooked finger only, with the heel of the thumb over the top of the lug. Lift the frame rapidly then hit hard down on top of the lug with the heel of the thumb as the frame is coming up. This should give a "double impact" enough to dislodge the youngest bees. He also recommended practising in front of the mirror a few hundred times first, and having a water squirter handy to "gently calm" the bees afterwards if needed.

Add 3 frames with nectar, 2 with pollen + empty frames, leaving room for the grafted eggs. Leave in a cool place for 3 – 10 hours, presumably while you graft your eggs.

Before adding the grafted eggs, give the box a good bang (yes, he did mean bang) to knock the bees back off the frames, then add the grafted eggs.

Nine days later, move the queen cells to prepared nucs or apideas, give candy or sugar sprayed with water and lock them all in. Move to a new site if possible the following day. In any case, keep cool and dark for two days then open the entrance at night to allow the queen to leave and mate. When pollen is seen being taken in, this is a good sign of egg laying.

Clive suggested that having a cell raising unit such as this may be useful against varroa, as it takes old frames and varroa out of hives and can be treated all year if necessary as no honey will be produced from it. Clive recommended replacing old frames as a "treatment" to reduce diseases.

During his talk, Clive digressed to discuss other areas of interest as well as give a few hints and tips.

Finding the queen:- Know where she isn't by knowing where she is!

Beware of supercedure whereby you could have two (or possibly more) queens to look for.

Clive marks and clips all his queens in April.

Practice on drones, then workers then queens.

Smoke the bees down to keep them calm

Think positive!

Take one or two frames out and put in to a spare nuc box – the queen is unlikely to be on these, but will be still be safe if she is. Look between the next frames for a "running" queen. "Move the gap" between the frames across the box as you search.

When you find the queen, put her in a cage in the hive lid, not in your pocket. That way you find the cage before you end up taking her home in your pocket!

Queen Introduction:- He has no 100% guaranteed method but suggests the following may help or hinder success

<u>Positives</u>	Hive state	<u>Negatives</u>
Queenless		Queenright
Laying worker		
Colony small	or	Strong Colony
Nuc (June – Aug especially)		
Healthy Stock		Under stress

Bob Hunter took on the role. The other officers were unchanged. In a short acceptance speech Bob said he intended to visit all the Bucks Associations during the coming year; to help increase the links between them. North Bucks Beekeepers were excellent hosts, providing a fascinating talk, by Peter Tomkins (formerly of Rothamsted Bee Department), followed by a lovely spread of food and the chance to chat with beekeepers from the north of the county. The meeting was held in a restored medieval house, complete with carved beams and bread ovens – all unexpected in modern Milton Keynes! From this AGM, Mid Bucks Beekeepers (based in Wendover) are now fully back in Bucks County Beekeepers Association and BBKA. Elsewhere in this newsletter you will find the key Annual Review statements from the AGM.

The National Honey Show.

There was much to see and do at 'The National' again this year. The new venue, at St George's School Weybridge, was a great success. It was within a short distance of the M25, had excellent parking and good access. Visitor numbers were up and there were 25 more exhibitors than last year. Vivienne Brown, our active Honey Judge says the exhibits were of very good standard, despite the poor summer. She was particularly impressed with some outstanding display entries from the Ukraine: and particularly liked the flavour of some of their honey which was from Buckwheat. Two of the lectures were by Prof. Dewey Caron. I managed to attend his talk on CCD. This was based on material he'd used at HWBKA in September. I was amused to see he was using a picture of Bernard Wells' apiary to demonstrate links with English Beekeeping! As well as the honey show and talks there were the usual well patronised stands by Thornes, Sheriff, The Central Association, Northern Bee Books, IBRA, etc. Dr Sara Robb, who gave us a fascinating demonstration on soap-making last year, ran a workshop session on making toiletries and had a stand of her own again. Her business has now expanded to having a shop and her small daughter, Jasmine, now has a four month old little sister. On the BBKA stand they had the petition, held in 17 thick yellow ring-binders.

HWBKA October meeting

This was another excellent and busy evening. We commenced with a short formal Presentation, when the new Bucks County BKA President, Bob Hunter gave a memento to John Crick, who had been unable to attend that AGM. John's gift was a framed photo of himself in full Beekeeping kit and taking part in a communal Apiary event: something to remind him of the prolonged pleasure he has had from his Beekeeping; and his involvement in Bee-Teaching. Clive de Bruyn then held his audience captivated with his talk entitled "The Joys of Queen Raising". The salient points from the Talk are being reported by Tim Fountain.

"Smokers at Westminster" Beekeepers March – 5th November

Thanks to much hard work by Scott Rutland, who organised the Coach, our group of beekeepers from HW, Mid-Bucks and Chalfonts provided a very useful part of the turnout for this event. We all enjoyed ourselves; and we managed to achieve a significant interest from the press and MPs. See my separate report for further details and some links to video reports on the event.

Env Centre AGM

The Environment Centre is holding it's AGM on Saturday 15th November at 11:00 am. As in previous years, I will make a point in attending to represent HWBKA; as do Raymond and Sylvia

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Young bees		Old bees
	New queen	
In lay		Travelled queen
Sedate		Nervous
Hungry		
	Environment	
Flow on		Robbing
Good weather		Thunder

It is more difficult to introduce a light queen in to dark bees.

Miscellaneous:-

When reading a frame, remember- an egg for 3 days – double that – a larva for 6 days – double that – a sealed cell for 12 days. It is possible to mix bees from many colonies/swarms without a fight, as there are so many different smells, nobody knows who the enemy is.

He treats his stored combs against wax moth with acetic acid.

He always uses top bee space in his nucs and apideas, adapting them if necessary.

The best time to replace a queen is when you have another queen to replace her with!

A vicious colony will generate drones which carry bad traits, and should not be tolerated.

Clive does not go round hives in an apiary in the same sequence each time. This helps to identify followers.

At the end of the evening Clive chose to reiterate the title of his talk as “The JOYS of queen rearing” – not necessarily the success!

Tim Fountain

“Smokers at Westminster”

Report on 5th November Beekeepers March at Parliament

Preparation

What a successful, but mad rush it has all been! Let me explain ... The whole “Bee Research Funding Campaign” campaign started at the BBKA Spring Convention at Stoneleigh, back on 19th April. Following this I was involved in two local Radio Interviews and we’ve had many weeks of collecting signatures for the petition. The October edition of BBKA News told us the campaign for signatures was to end on October 31st followed by a Beekeepers March on Wednesday November 5th. During this we were to present the petition to the Government at 10 Downing Street and then go to Parliament to lobby our MPs. As Westminster is not too far away, HWBKA decided to have a presence at the event.

We publicised the event in our October Newsletter. Scott Rutland took on the task of organizing a coach. At the Bucks AGM it was decided that the cost would be borne by Bucks County BKA and that it would be for members from the Wycombe, Mid-Bucks and Chalfonts Associations. While all the details were being worked out, I made contact with the Wycombe MP, Paul Goodman, who said he would meet us. It quickly became apparent that other local MPs would need to be lobbied too: so Bill B-B took on the task of organizing that; and simultaneously John Catton, the Bucks County Chairman carried out both a general ‘steering role’ and made contact with the Amersham MP, Cheryl Gillan.

The Petition

The Environment Centre quickly came on board to help collect signatures for the petition and over the last few months have

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Chamberlin: but The Centre is trying to achieve a wider attendance and they will be delighted if any of our members were able to spare an hour or so to come along and join in. Further details will be found if you follow the link below. www.ecobuzz.org.uk/docs/2008AGMinvitation.pdf

The Winter Sales

If you need some extra equipment at good prices, look out for details of Thorne’s Winter Sale. The sale goes ‘Live’ about the 2nd January, but check details in Beecraft, or on their website: <http://www.thorne.co.uk> They have a considerable range of bargains, many of them serviceable ‘seconds’. Last year’s list included frames, hives, extractors, protective clothing etc. You can buy on-line, or by telephone. Although the sale is nominally for the whole month of January, expect it to sell-out quickly. An alternative source could be Maisemore Apiaries, whose sale products are reputed to be of higher intrinsic quality. <http://www.bees-online.co.uk/>

A “Must Read” Book from Santa?

Suggest to Santa that you would love to have a copy of “A World without Bees” by Alison Benjamin & Brian McCallum. £9.99. ISBN: 978-0-85265-092-9 This is an informative and beautifully written book about Colony Collapse Disorder and puts it into context with other large-scale bee colony death events from the past. It explores the back-history, technical detail, ongoing detective work and environmental implications of the loss of honeybee pollinators on our food crops and in the wider environment.

New Newsletter Compiler from the January Edition

At his request, this is the last newsletter to be compiled by Terry Kelly, who has had this role for a good many years. We sent our grateful thanks to Terry for all this hard work and wish him well for the future. From the January 2009 edition the compiler will be Kenn Shearer, who has agreed to take on the role. We will continue to use the current arrangements of publication deadline of the 4th of the month; with material for publication sent in via our website: but Kenn is expecting to make some adjustments to the Newsletter (photos etc) so these baseline settings may evolve with time.

MPs Invited to our January Meeting

At our January meeting, Norman Carreck is to give us an update from a UK perspective on Colony Collapse Disorder. The Beekeepers March has meant that we have established links with all the local MPs. Since our members live and keep their bees in several of the local parliamentary constituencies, I intend to build on this by asking each of them if they would be able to attend our meeting and continue their Beekeeping Education.

The last Newsletter for 2008

Since this will be the last Newsletter for 2008, it is also the place where I can wish our members ‘Happy Christmas’ and ‘Heavy Supers’ in the 2009 season to come. Let’s hope we get a drier summer and a proper summer nectar flow, in 2009, like we used to!

Clive Hill

FOR SALE

Double Electric Boiling Rings Unit -

Virtually unused £20

Heavy Duty Plastic Honey Tank complete with Lid and Valve 150lb Capacity – as new £30

Call Phil Wiggins 01628 482110

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gathered a massive 2094, some 94% of the 2224 which HWB-KA sent up to BBKA HQ. A local side-effect of the campaign has been the ability to track where visitors to the Centre come from: and this should be very useful background information for future funding bids by the Centre. Our other signatures were collected directly by members, mainly at events. The final BBKA tally when handed in to Downing Street was over 140,000 signatures.

The Day

The coach arrangements went like clockwork. We started at Wycombe, went on to Wendover and finally to Chalfont. There were 18 from Wycombe, 12 from Mid-bucks and 6 from Chalfonts. It was really good to have the Mid-Bucks group on the coach: the first BBKA event they had been able to take part in since recently they re-joined the BBKA fold. Margaret Simmons, who had been instrumental in collecting most of the signatures at The Environment Centre came along as our guest: so we provided 37 to the overall total. The news coverage of the event reckoned that there were some 300 people present: but Norman Carreck has heard that the total count was some 480. It stayed dull but dry and not too cold all the time we were demonstrating.

We gathered on a green opposite Parliament and met beekeepers from many locations. The Home Counties were well represented, but I met people from Norfolk, Yorkshire, Shropshire, Somerset, Devon, Cornwall, and the Welsh Borders. People were impressed we'd laid on a coach. Nearly everybody was dressed in a white bee-suit. There was every age from Toddler to very mature years and a large proportion of women. Scott had organized some placards and there were a good many others and also eye-catching things being carried to catch the press's eye. One person was wearing a fantastic and stunning bee costume.

The press was out in force, with photographers and several news crews very busy. Scott and Will Steynor were interviewed. When all were ready, we were given instructions by Tim Lovett (BBKA President) and an MP: then we "marched" as a long crocodile across the road to Parliament and on up to Whitehall. Many people carried smokers and there was much smoke in the air – and some good natured singing and chanting. The Police were enjoying the spectacle as much as we were! When we got to our destination opposite Downing Street, we waited while a deputation of mixed ages delivered the petition to Number 10. That done, we marched back to Parliament, where we were held in a queuing system, to get through the security checks and see

our MPs. This took simply ages, so not all of us were able to meet with them – despite having appointments. But I believe that all the local MPs were lobbied.

At 4 pm we left London to begin the journey home. It had been a long, enjoyable and very successful day and we were all elated at having taken part. The weather changed to constant rain during our return journey and it had been wet in Wycombe for most of the day – so we had been very fortunate weather-wise. Other Charities: we took a Poppy Appeal kit with us and the collection on the coach raised them £26.83; and The Environment Centre have been delighted with the £23 we raised for their Stirabout Sunday Christmas Pudding Draw.

Overview

We all enjoyed ourselves; and we managed to achieve a significant interest from the press, passing members of the public and MPs. The total number of signatures gathered demonstrates massive public support. There were so many beekeepers present that we totally jammed up the entry system to Parliament for several hours: which must be a real marker of political involvement. Our local MPs all supported our cause and the Conservative Party has adjusted their policy to fit with BBKA's projected expenditure needs. The only (but big) downside was that on the day chosen, most of the media interest was on the Presidential Election results from the USA, when Barrack Obama was elected. But we still managed to get reports in at least The Times, The Daily Telegraph, The Daily Mail and other newspapers. The event was reported on Virgin News, at least one Regional News programme (probably BBC South Today) and on BBC Radio 5 Live. Unfortunately, despite being lobbied in preparation, the Bucks Free Press didn't turn up for the arranged photo opportunity that had been arranged at Chalfont: and only carried a short text article on the event.

Further information

I took a good many photos during the event, as did other members. I intend to have these running as a Slideshow during Tea Break at our November meeting, so that Members can gain a better appreciation of the event. In the meantime those with Internet access might like to explore the following links:-

Virgin Media News Clip

http://latestnews.virginmedia.com:80/news/video/2008/11/05/beekeepers_swarm_westminster

YouTube Interview

<http://uk.youtube.com/watch?v=w8wkLLPqf1s>

Clive Hill

Seasonal Tips and Reminders November 2008

Key Tasks this month:

1. Ensure Queen can't lay in wild (drone) comb
2. Fit Mouse guards.
3. Ensure hive positioned to drain forward.
4. Ensure hive secured against winds.
5. If necessary, install armour plating to keep woodpeckers off.
6. Keep an eye on hive weight by 'Hefting'.

As the Association doesn't have a December Newsletter, these notes are designed to cover the routine maintenance jobs necessary for November, December and early January.

So far we have had a mild but rather wet autumn, with little a little snow too! A good proportion of the leaves are now off the trees, but there are still the remains of those lovely autumn

colours. Except for that day of snow, all pretty much at the time of year you'd expect. Honeybees will still be flying on mild days for quite a while yet. They will be checking the location of home, taking cleansing flights, searching for late forage, and perhaps later on for water. The colonies will have started to form winter clusters - loose clusters, but a definite change. In the Nov. / Dec. / Jan. time period we are interested in, hives ought to be heavy with stores: you'll find them very heavy to "heft".

Where can the queen get to?

If you leave a tank feeder on the hive, or wild comb in an empty Super or an eke, make sure there is a queen excluder underneath it before the queen can get up into it. I've a little 'hard learning'

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story for you about this one autumn I left a tank feeder (Ashforth / Miller) on the top of a hive because after taking down their syrup, the bees had built wild comb in the tank, then filled the comb with ivy honey; which had gone solid – as it does. So I left the feeder on, thinking that the cluster could use the honey over the winter, and save me the messy job of cleaning it up. They did too: but when I did a Spring Check and tried to remove the feeder, to my horror I found the queen was up in the wild comb; and there was brood in the wild comb; and nearly all of it was drone brood! Ever tried finding the queen amongst fixed in position wild comb? Impossible: but I smoked her down. It was at that point I realised I should have had a queen excluder under the feeder.

Keeping out Mice - fitting Mouse Guards.

Remove any entrance blocks from a National or Commercial Hive, to give a full aperture entrance. Then fix a metal mouse guard (zinc or aluminium) completely across the entrance. A Mouse guard across a full aperture entrance will allow the bees to get in and out, even if there is a significant build up of dead bees on the floor behind it. Use 3 or 4 large drawing pins to hold the Guard in place. Push the pins through the metal, into the woodwork, and fully home. It needs to be secure against strong winds! For WBCs I'd use a pair of scissors to cut the mouseguard so it fits in the entrance slide way in place of the wooden slides; then, to keep mice out, bung-up any gaps behind it (at the ends) that are 3/8 inch (9mm) or more across, or high, where it fits into the slide way. Put a mouse guard on even if your hive is on rails well above the ground. In the winter of 2000, mice got into an un-protected hive of mine on hive rails with the entrance at knee height. It held the colony back for months the following year!

Ensuring good Ventilation and Drainage + Securing against the wind.

Make sure the hive ventilation and drainage systems are working. You're aiming to prevent dampness accumulating in the hive over winter. It is wet conditions that kill colonies, not cold. For hives with a solid floor, I followed the "through ventilation" wintering ideas recommended by Manley in his book *Beekeeping in Britain*. They worked well for me over a good many years: but with a varroa mesh floor, things can be a bit simpler.

The Manley system was to raise the back edge of the floorboard with a 1 to 2 cm thick wooden block at either side. The floor then slopes forwards a little, allowing any liquid water to run freely out of the hive. His system was also to remove the roof and loosen the crownboard, then put a few pieces of broken matchstick between the crownboard and the top edges of the broodchamber. Aim to leave a small (2 mm) air gap between the crownboard and the hive body at the back and along part of the sides. The bees will propolise it in position, leaving a small air gap and this will allow gentle air movement through the hive.

If you are using a Varroa Mesh Floor as standard practice, this will radically improve the ventilation of the hive. You need to be certain that there will be a modicum of air movement within the body of the hive, not a 'howling gale', since this will hold the bees back once the brood nest gets established, late in the winter. I still slope the hive forwards slightly, but I now leave the crownboard fully attached.

Make sure the roof won't blow off in strong winds. If necessary weight it down. Make sure the hive (and if necessary the Hive Stand) won't rock about either. In a very windy location you could use a Hive Strap if necessary to secure hive to stand, and roof to hive.

Making sure that Woodpeckers can't get a foot / beak hold.

Although my bees are close to a large wood, with plenty of Green Woodpeckers, I've never had the hives attacked. At the Association's Hughenden apiary and our former one at Widmer End, hives have been raided each year - often wrecked! Our Apiary Managers have found that wrapping hives in thick polythene sheet (builder's damp-proof membrane), stapled into position, is an effective preventative. You can even slit the sheeting into strips, so they blow in the wind. As an alternative, it is effective to enclose the hive in wire mesh, spaced an inch or two off the hive surface to prevent the birds getting a foothold.

After all these chores, you can settle down and enjoy a period of beekeeping peace and quiet for a few weeks. However, do take a look at your hives on mild days. I've seen my own colonies flying well on Boxing Day, New Years Day and other mild days in January in the past.

That's all for now, talk to you again in the New Year. Happy Christmas.

Clive Hill.

Reports from County AGM

County Secretary's Report 2007 – 2008

The County Executive Committee has had two full meetings this year. The main items under discussion were:-

1 BBKA Annual Delegates Meeting

John Catton was our representative at the BBKA Annual Delegates Meeting. Our Executive Committee discussed the various propositions which had been put forward by affiliated BKAs, and decided which of these John should support or reject on our behalf.

2 County Seminar

Final arrangements for the extremely successful 2008 County Seminar were made.

Arrangements for another excellent County Seminar, to be held on March 7th 2009 are well under way.

3 Education

Local Associations have been very successful with their Beginners' Courses. Unfortunately, there were no candidates for the

Basic Assessments from the current three county branches, which probably means that there will not be members doing Modules this year. I hope we shall be able to improve on this next season. However, Mid Bucks is to be congratulated on having seven successful Basic candidates this year.

4 County Honey Show

The possibility of arranging a County Show was discussed, but nothing could be arranged for this year. We shall try again when Mid Bucks has joined us.

5 Integration of Mid Bucks into the County.

We are all extremely pleased to welcome Mid Bucks into the County Association. Mid Bucks has been a County member since October 1st 2008. Because of an unfortunate clash of dates, Mid Bucks members are unable to attend this meeting. This will not happen next year!

*Beulah M Cullen
Hon. County Secretary*

Chalfont BKS Annual Report For the year September 2007 to August 2008

Presented to County Members at the AGM, Wednesday 15 October 2008

Chalfonts Beekeepers' Society continues to maintain membership at a high level. At the end of 07/08 we had 85 members including 10 Associates and 4 Honoraries.

One of our longest standing members, Bill Fisher, has this year taken over as Chairman from John Catton, who continues to be very active within the Society and also compiles the comprehensive newsletter that helps keep all members up-to-date. Richard Simpson stood down as Secretary this year but still assists with the editing and production of the newsletter.

The Society's beginner's course is advertised and promoted as widely as possible. This year's successful beginners' course was led by Sr Mary Christa Stanton. An outstanding take-up by 33 participants resulted in 26 new members, with at least 16 becoming active beekeepers. Experienced members are present at each lecture to answer student's questions and all novice beekeepers are allocated a mentor who provides advice, support and encouragement. Three visits to separate apiaries were organised over the summer months and all were well attended despite the often, inclement weather.

In May, a practical Integrated Pest Management workshop, with our RBI Ian Homer was attended by 16 members. The day, organised by Sheila Borwick, was very instructive and informative. Development of members skills through the BBKA Modules examination system also continued - three members took four modules; two passes were achieved. No members took the Basic Assessment this summer but positive steps are being taken to ensure assessments are completed next year.

The monthly meetings attract healthy attendances, with a varied and instructive programme of speakers, including Claire Waring. A member's practical evening in July with a quiz, cake competition, demonstration of microscopy, honey creaming and queen rearing techniques proved both social and extremely enjoyable. Several talks have also been presented to a variety of outside organisations, schools and voluntary groups. In addition, the Society has been represented at nine local shows and events through the 2007/2008 season. As a Charitable Society part of our remit is to support the practice of beekeeping, to this end the Society donated £100, from a previous fund raising project, to Bees Abroad to help their work in Malawi. Education is also central to our charitable status - our observation hives, taken to several events, help us inform young people (and adults) about bees.

The Society's website at www.chalfontbees.org.uk has generated enquiries from far and near and is being further expanded and developed.

The 2007 Honey Show at the Chalfont St Giles Country Show attracted a record level of 103 entries enabling us to earn and present a BBKA/NHS prestigious "Blue Ribbon" for Best in Show to Eddy Gadd. Our continuing presence at this event helps to maintain contact with the community and the showing of honey and hive products promotes the value of beekeeping to the local environment.

In the National Honey Show (County classes), our association earned the greatest number of points in Bucks classes for the third year in succession; Beulah Cullen took the Cadman Cup for

the highest individual points total. We continue to urge greater participation amongst our members at national level.

Our six swarm collectors have been kept busy throughout the season. Swarms have been numerous - occurring from April to August - and it has not been uncommon for swarms to swarm within a few weeks, and queens often being replaced in weeks not years!

Winter losses were severe with experienced members losing colonies - one member lost all nine hives! Luckily, there were those for whom losses were minimal. Problems with excessive swarming has had an effect on the honey crop - although one keeper collected over 100lbs per hive, the crop has, for many, been substantially reduced this year.

The Society has given support to the BBKA "Research Funding Campaign", and pressed the case with the public by collecting over 3,000 signatures for the national petition.

This has been a positive and proactive year for the Society, but was once again a difficult and unpredictable year for our bees and beekeepers - old and new.

Jennie Wood (Hon Secretary: Chalfont BKS)

Report from North Bucks Beekeepers' Association. 2007-08 17th August 2008

The past year has been one of consolidation and advance. The Committee has met regularly, there was a full programme of autumn and winter get-togethers, a well attended course for beginners, the monthly Newsletter, as well as the beginning of a substantial upgrade of the NBBKA apiary at Newport Pagnell. Our AGM is to be held tonight and we have offers from the existing Committee for the positions of Chair, Secretary and Treasurer, should the members be agreeable. Our membership stands at forty and we have had enquiries from several people who are interested in joining; indeed, one potential incomer has just telephoned to say that he will be coming to the AGM tonight!

There were twenty one people registered for the Beginners' Course and several of these have already joined the Association and have bees. Chris Jay, the Course Co-ordinator was himself a beginner four years ago and he was assisted at the practical sessions by Bob Sibley and other experienced members. The problem with the evening practical sessions has been the weather and it is the intention next year to have these sessions at the weekend with the instruction and teaching being shared, hopefully, by a larger group of experienced members. We haven't entered anyone for the Basic Assessment this year, but, encouragingly, several members who obtained that qualification last year are beginning to make enquiries about the next stage of examination preparation.

Over £800 was spent on bee suits, frames, foundation, wire excluders and hive parts, so that beginners were able to see hives maintained and managed in top-line, as they should be. It was interesting to see beginners, including two youngsters, well versed in the varroa control of dusting the bees with icing sugar. We are also looking for one or more sites to open as apiaries, one of which would be for beginners to keep their own bees. Another advance will be to obtain some pure bred queens, so that we can begin our own breeding programme and improve the stock generally in the North Buckinghamshire area.

The programme of get-togethers, organised by Libby Culshaw offered members a range of speakers: Dr. Robb - soap making; Martin Buckle - beeswax; Pam Hunter - bee navigation and foraging; Ian Homer - swarm control; Robin Dartington - the

Dartington hive and Roy Cropley - beekeeping in foreign lands. Some very different styles of delivery and all interesting, with something for the beginner as well as those with years of experience. The Bee Safari was held for the second year, with Seasonal Inspector, Margaret Holland, leading. Once again, we had a layout at the Stoke Goldington Steam Rally and Sue Bird and Mike Bensley made a presentation at the "Chemistry In Action" schools event.

We look forward to hosting the County AGM in October, as we still need to develop closer links with the County Association. We had only one representative at the High Wycombe AGM and the two Committee meetings. However, County Officers have kept in close contact with NBBKA by telephone and email via our President and vice versa. Ken was presented with the BBKA "Fifty Years in Beekeeping" award at the Bucks County Seminar, in March.

The newsletter production is being taken over by Libby Culshaw. The regular, monthly production of the newsletter is enjoyed by members, measured by feed back from some, to the Editor. It has been the glue which has bound the Association together.

We look forward with confidence to the coming year.

*Ken Gorman
President*

BUCKS COUNTY BEEKEEPERS' ASSOCIATION

Registered Charity No. 297335

Income & Expenditure Account for the year to 30th September 2008

INCOME				EXPENDITURE					
<u>2006/7</u>			<u>2007/8</u>		<u>2006/7</u>		<u>2007/8</u>		
£	M's		£	M's	£		£		
<u>Affiliation Fees</u>				<u>Affiliation Fees</u>					
1168.50	57	Chalfonts – 2007/8	1153.74	79	1782.00	BBKA	3770.26		
831.50	44	North Bucks -2007/8	765.12	56		Nat Honey Show	30.00		
					<u>1782.00</u>	Sub Total	<u>3800.26</u>		
734.00	63	Wycombe – 2006/7	622.50			<u>Administration</u>			
		- 2007/8	1241.90	86	39.98	Secretary/treasurer	52.93		
<u>2734.00</u>	164	Sub Total	<u>3783.26</u>	221	20.40	Hall hire	19.10		
						Year Book	152.25		
					<u>60.38</u>	Sub Total	<u>224.28</u>		
		<u>Grants and Donation Received</u>				<u>Sundries</u>			
143.95		NBU Research	54.52		312.00	NHS Bucks Classes			
100.00		Leaving Presents			24.00	NHS Prize Sponsorship	44.00		
<u>243.95</u>		SubTotal	<u>54.52</u>		98.75	NBU Research Fund	54.52		
					85.60	Donations - BBKA Res	100.00		
		<u>Interest</u>			<u>75.25</u>	AGM Speaker	<u>45.00</u>		
237.63		Deposits	191.07		595.60	Sub Total	<u>243.52</u>		
						<u>Seminar</u>			
680.00		Admission charges	870.00		280.00	Speakers	290.00		
35.00		Commission on sales	46.00		200.00	Hall hire	180.00		
		Raffle	161.00		148.10	Catering - food	177.20		
					60.00	Catering - honorarium	60.00		
					20.00	Secretary expenses	65.68		
					25.00	Sound hire	25.00		
						Raffle	161.00		
<u>715.00</u>		Sub Total	<u>1077.00</u>		<u>733.10</u>	Sub Total	<u>958.88</u>		
		<u>Tax Recovery</u>							
402.80		Refunds	573.93 *						
					3171.08	Total	<u>5226.94</u>		
		* Tax reclaim form awaited from NBBKA			<u>1162.30</u>	Surplus on Year	<u>452.84</u>		
<u>4333.38</u>		Total	<u>5679.78</u>		<u>4333.38</u>	Balance	<u>5679.78</u>		

Balance brought forward from September 2007 - 5485.77
 Surplus on year 2007/8 - 452.84
 Total Current / assets at September 2008 - 5938.61

Assets made up of:

Current Account 801.88
 Deposit Account 5,136.73
 Carried Forward to 2008/9 5,938.61

The tangible assets of the County Association were valued on 21st February 2001 at £13,295. By a decision of the County Executive dated 12th September 2001, it was decided to discontinue insurance cover. Other actions have been taken to safeguard the assets.

Mike Leon, Treasurer

October, 2008

Having examined the relevant books, vouchers and accounting records of the Bucks County Beekeepers Association for the year 30th September, 2008. I find they are in accordance with the above Income and Expenditure Account.

Reg Farmborough, Auditor

October, 2008

Bucks County Beekeepers' Association Treasurer's Report for 2007/08

The cumulative membership of our affiliated associations has continued to show an increase year on year, and no doubt benefits from the running of beginners' classes in all our areas, and increased awareness of beekeeping generally. The tax recovery is in respect of Chalfonts and High Wycombe. I am in touch with Norths Bucks to receive their data. Interest from the deposit account is in respect of three quarters. There was more support for the March Seminar. The raffle in aid of the C.B Dennis Trust was well supported. The Seminar made a surplus of £118. BBKA affiliation fees covers two years. A donation of £100 was made to the BBKA Research Campaign.

High Wycombe & District Beekeepers Association

Founded 1944

Registered Charity Number 299638

The High Wycombe Beekeepers Association (HWBKA) is affiliated to the Buckinghamshire Beekeepers Association (BucksBKA) which is in turn affiliated to the British Beekeepers Association (BBKA). The HWBKA democratically elects members to represent it at a BucksBKA co-ordinating committee, which represents the interests of its District Associations to the BBKA. The BBKA is concerned with National and European issues as they affect Beekeepers generally. Affiliation fees to the Bucks BKA and the BBKA are paid as part of a member's subscription to the HWBKA

BBKA has introduced two additional levels of membership for '07-'08. This makes our subscription form more complicated as we incorporate these changes. We have divided the subscription form into 3 sections, BBKA & Bucks County, HWBKA & BDI, and optional BeeCraft subscription and Donations (BBKA Research),

The official journal of the BBKA, BeeCraft, is available through the HWBKA at the reduced (- 10%) subscription of £19.80 for 2008; the subscription year runs from January to December. Will members please let me have their subscriptions by December 1 to catch the January edition.

Bee Disease Insurance Limited (BDI purchase is a condition of membership of BBKA. The minimum £2 premium has to be paid for each Association member. Scheme A covers beekeepers with up to 39 colonies. Beekeepers should ensure they pay sufficient to insure **all hives (excluding 'apidea' or similar hives) containing bees regardless of size of the colony**. The scale for scheme A for the 2008/2009 season is unchanged from 2007/2008 and is as follows: -

These are the Total Amounts Due for the Colony numbers

For 0 to 3 colonies: a premium of £2	For 4 to 5 colonies	£4.00	
For 6 to 10 colonies	£7.25	For 11 to 15 colonies	£9.75
For 16 to 20 colonies	£11.50	For 21 to 25 colonies	13.10
For 26 to 39 colonies	Add £0.50 for each additional colony		

BBKA Registered Membership is compulsory for HWBKA members keeping bees under the auspices of this Society, but is not compulsory for Associate Members. BBKA make thee minimum BDI (insurance against hive destruction as a consequence of infection) of £2 mandatory for members of any association

To help you choose the correct level of BBKA membership: consult the table below

- Registered Member: a regular Beekeepers member - will cover the majority of members
- Partner Member: as the name suggests; lives at the same address as Registered Member
- Country Member: Non-beekeepers who nonetheless wish to support the BBKA, (same as HWBKA Associate Members)

Please select one from each of the classes below:

BBKA Membership summary

Benefit	Class of Membership	BBKA News	3 rd party Public Liability & Product Insurance	Events & Advice	Representation & Facilities	
Registered Member		√	√	√	√	£14.00
Partner Member		X	√	√	√	£9.33
Country Member		√	X	√	√	£7.00

Bucks County

Bucks County						NIL
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High Wycombe Beekeepers Association HWBKA Membership

1	BEEKEEPER MEMBERS: Annual subscription for members who keep their bees under the auspices of this Society For the purpose of purely local club activities, spouses are treated as included under the single member subscription.	£12.50
2	ASSOCIATE MEMBERS: 2/3 of the HWBKA Subscription a) Beekeepers who keep their bees under the auspices of another Beekeepers association and pay for BDI insurance via that Association. b) Those interested in the craft of beekeeping who do not keep bees	£8.34

Bee Diseases Insurance (BDI)

Minimum premium of £2 as condition of membership covers up to 3 colonies. Select the premium for your total stock from the table above	
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Other optional items

1	<u>BeeCraft</u> Subscription	£19.80*
2	<u>BBKA Research voluntary contribution</u> - £5 is suggested	
	Cheques payable to High Wycombe Beekeepers Association (HWBKA) TOTAL	

High Wycombe & District Beekeepers Association

Founded 1944 Registered Charity Number 299638

SUBSCRIPTION RENEWAL FORM FOR 2008/2009

Name:.....

Address, email and phone number, only if different from previously given (please print clearly): -

Subscription: BBKA - agreed at National Level

Bucks BKA – Notified by Bucks BKA Treasurer

HWBKA - recommended by your committee to remain as last year.....

BDI for colonies

Compulsory minimum for membership £2.00

BeeCraft - £19.80 through the Association

Voluntary contribution to BBKA Research Fund - £5 is suggested .

If you currently pay tax on direct income, savings or investments, we can reclaim the tax.

TOTAL _____
(above)

Tick here if you want us to reclaim tax on your subscription

Please tell us if you take The Beekeepers Quarterly ? YES / NO

If we can gather together a group of 14 or more subscribers, we will be able to obtain a SIGNIFICANT discount on the individual subscription price.

Please send this completed form to our Treasurer –Ed West, Beechwood, The Common, Downley, High Wycombe, Bucks. HP13 5YL Tel: 01494 520874

Subscriptions are due from September 1st.

Please pay your subscriptions promptly in order to retain your BBKA accreditation