

High Wycombe and District Beekeepers Association

Registered Charity No. 299638

Chairman: Clive Hill 01494 526557

President: Will Steynor 01494 881205

Secretary: Christine Hazell 01494 531599 chazecamber@yahoo.co.uk

Treasurer: Edward West 01494 520874

Swarm Officer: Stewart Thorburn 07966 956477

Newsletter - September 2007

Diary

Forthcoming Events

8th September	-	Ian Homer - Integrated Pest Management for Varroa Day
28th September	-	AGM
6th October	-	Presidents' Supper
18th - 20th October	-	National Honey Show
26th October	-	Monthly Meeting

8rd September

"Integrated Pest Management for Varroa Control" Day

North Dean Village Hall, 10:00 am until ~4:15 pm

Ian Homer is the CSL Bee Inspector for the Southern Region. He really knows his stuff and is an excellent communicator. Ian is bringing a small team of Trainers with him, to coach us in the techniques necessary for 'living with' Pyrethroid Resistant Varroa mites. This is an **essential day** for all our new members and the rest of us who are not yet up to speed on IPM techniques.

There will be no charge for members of HWBKA.

We will be at North Dean Village Hall, a bit up the road from Hughenden. OS Map reference is about SU853983

To get there, follow the Hughenden Valley Road past the Cryers Hill and Naphill turn mini-roundabouts; keeping straight on following the road to Speen. As you leave the houses of Hughenden Valley, the Harrow Pub (where will have lunch) is on the RHS. Some half a mile or so further on towards Speen, is North Dean. The Village Hall is on the LHS.

We may be a bit tight on chairs, so if you can please bring a folding chair, in case we need a few extras !

Lunch will be at the Harrow Pub: where we will have our pre-booked choices from their menu.

We have about 25 people booked already. If you haven't yet done anything about coming, please ring Christine to book your place. 01 494 531599

28th September AGM, Talk & Honey Frame Competition

Judging will be by Vivienne Brown, our own National Honey Judge. We aim to achieve a balance between discrimination and inclusiveness. *It is important that all 21 entrants bring their frame along to the AGM evening.* It doesn't matter how 'imperfect' the frame is – that is the bees fault, as much as your own! So bring it along even if they never even drew out the foundation; or made you a wobbly sided frame; or only part filled it.

We will gather the 21 frames together, make sure it is impossible to identify who submitted them: then hand them over to Vivienne. She will then group the frames into one of three categories:- 1. Frames suitable for extraction. (1st, 2nd & 3rd prize cards can be awarded.)

Continued on page 2 column 1

Chairman's Chat

Our summer activities have not included an Apiary Tour this year: but on 11th August, a good number of us visited John Hamer's Blackhorse Apiaries, in Surrey, for their Open Day. This was my first visit there, and it was quite an eye-opener. I hope to have some photos on screen at the AGM. I've never seen so many nucleus colonies and full sized colonies so close together. There were bees everywhere, and very little bee protective clothing in evidence: but I heard of very few stings. One small colony had been chosen for a 'gather-round' type demonstration, so we could see how steady on the comb and astonishingly docile the bees were. There was:- Gentle free flight for the bees. Ladies in bare-shouldered sun-tops at two feet: no anti-bee measures and no stings! It seemed un-real; and certainly made me think about some of the aggressive colonies I have known in the High Wycombe area. John Hamer puts it all down to bee genetics and rigid selection.

Very many thanks to those members who have given assistance with honey crop gathering and processing. In the last few weeks it has become vividly clear that we **MUST** make significant changes to our Apiary arrangements: because we cannot cope with the workload. We will discuss the situation in Committee, but I envisage at least reducing to one site, the current Marlow Apiary; and possibly also reducing the number of colonies the association runs. It is also clear that we must strongly review the swarm and bee problem help service we provide to the community. Please read Stewart Thorburn's Report in the AGM material: and reflect on how we active beekeepers should all have been of more assistance to him.

I have heard little detail, but I believe that the wet summer has resulted in many poor honey yields. For those of us with bees close to borage, the yields have been better: but still under pressure. In circumstances like this the retail price of honey can be expected to increase. I envisage that prices in the region of £3.50 per 454g jar will become the norm, rather than 'top end of market' prices. If you have honey to sell, please take care to follow the legal labeling requirements; ensure your product is well presented: and don't undercut the market to get rid of honey and make space.

Continued on page 2 column 2

Continued from page 1 column 1

2. Frames whose contents are very beautiful, but set, or otherwise not suitable for extraction. (Again, 1st, 2nd & 3rd prize cards can be awarded.)

3. Frames suitable for Educational use and Learning.

After the judging, Vivienne will explain how and why she has made the prize decisions; and she will discuss the frames in category 3, so we can learn about them, and their contents (or lack of contents!) and begin to understand both the judging process; and the intricacies of getting a frame for honey drawn and filled.

6th October Presidents Supper at Frieth Village Hall

Club Awards & Supper

After dinner speaker

Capt. Tim Orchard (ex Concorde Captain)

Cost £12.50 per person

Soft drinks included, please bring your own wine/beer

To book either Email: willsteynor@hotmail.com
or write to

Will Steynor, Moor House, Moor Common,

Lane End, High Wycombe, Bucks. HP14 3HR

When booking please state how many tickets you require and inform me of any specific dietary requirements.

Numbers are limited. Please book your places soon!

18th -20th October - National Honey Show

Although staging does not take place until 17th October, ENTRIES MUST BE IN BY 19th SEPT: or else you can pay a £5 late entry fee, and send entries in before 12th October. You will find further details at the schedule on the National Honey Show Web-site <http://www.honeyshow.co.uk/> Entries must be made on the official forms.

26th October Monthly Meeting

Clive Hill

Letters to the Editor

Bees in the Electromagnetic Jungle of To-day

Colony Collapse Disorder is already a very serious problem for bees in the USA and apparently also a problem for bees in Europe. The Federation newsletter No. 612 reports that electro-magnetic effect on bees is currently being researched by our German colleagues at the University of Koblenz-Landau.

It appears that developed countries may have brought CCD problems on their bees by human disregard for adverse effects of radio waves on wildlife. Particularly the insect world of bees, butterflies and moths that rely on their antennae.

Apiaries positioned near to high voltage power lines are well known to have very 'unhappy' bees. But are they not also 'unhappy' in a world now rapidly filling up with mobile 'phone networks, Internet transmission (wi-fi), radio controlled watches, hi-tec hearing aids, TV remote controls etc?

Continued from page 1 column 2

Later this week we are to have an IPM Day, with Ian Homer and two of his Seasonal Bee Inspectors there to help him. A Rolls Royce training session that is likely to be another of those highly memorable 'paradigm shifting' occasions, like visiting John Hamer's place! Do come if you can: and be prepared for a strong learning experience.

Scott Rutland is organizing a beekeeping display for Speen Fete on September 9th. I am sure he would welcome a few extra hands to help him. If you can, give him a ring on 01 494 717032. September is the time for renewal of our subscriptions but I would like to draw your attention to the donations to research. I'm sure you will have read of the recent BBKA Colloquium on Bee Research: so the topic and need for better funding will be clear to you. As part of your BDI payment there is some support for our national research of bee diseases: but some years ago the committee decided that we would ask all of our members to make a donation to the fund set up by BBKA for further research. The recommended donation has been a minimum of £1.50 for some years. How about increasing this to at least £2.50 this year? I hope you will all support this proposal.

Please make every effort to come along to our September meeting. We will probably start the evening with a short talk by a Physiotherapist on Back Care and lifting heavy objects – something we beekeepers do all too often at this time of year. This will be followed by our AGM, for which all but one of the detailed reports are provided in this newsletter. The missing item is the detailed Treasurer's Financial Report, copies of which will be available both on-screen and in hard copy. Then we will move on to hear about Vivienne Brown's review and judging of our Frame of Honey Competition. During the evening we also plan to hand out the certificates to this year's Beginners – and welcome them to the fold of newly established beekeepers.

Training

We will shortly be establishing the Training Programme we will offer for the coming year. The Beginners Course will be coordinated and led by Clive Winslow. We expect to offer the BBKA Basic course again: and also hope to continue with the BBKA Intermediate Modules. I hope to have outline details available at the AGM. We are not trying to turn everyone into highly qualified 'boffins' but we are very aware that in the present environment a degree of knowledge is becoming essential.

President's Supper

After a slow start to the bookings, we now have sufficient interest to be certain that the Supper will be going ahead. Please see the separate entry for further details.

Clive Hill

After 65 years, all happy, keeping bees I am no longer a keeper, but I shall always remain a carer. For all keepers and carers our motto must be 'Happy Healthy Honeybees', especially in a rapidly changing technological era.

Could it be that the answer to CCD lies in much better knowledge of insects' antennae, as yet very little researched? One of the few scientists who has acquaintance with electromagnetic effects is our own Prof. Robert Pickard. His excellent article is to be found in the wonderful Illustrated Encyclopaedia of Beekeeping edited by Ted Hooper (UK) and Robert Morse (USA); on page 244 may be found "Magnetic and Electrical field Effects on the Honeybee".

Perhaps at the National Honey Shop on 18th October Prof. Pickard could tell us what he thinks may be the cause of CCD

Seasonal Tips and Reminders September 2007

Making Sugar Syrup

How much Stores needed ?

Varroa Control

September, the honey crop is off, Varroa treatment started so, what is to be done?

Completion of feeding and varroa treatment. Starting preparation for winter. Removal of varroicide and checking that it worked! Selling honey.

The remaining bee forage. The summer nectar and pollen flow flowers are now over. On recent trips from home I've seen some residual willowherb and quite a few hawkweed flowers on the verges. Also a little white clover. Himalayan Balsam and Japanese Knotweed are also in flower at the moment. These, and late summer garden flowers such as Golden Rod, Michaelmas Daisies etc, the bees will work avidly. The only significant nectar flow yet to come will be from ivy. This usually flowers in October, but nowadays can start significantly earlier, and I've already seen ivy flowers open in several places!

Preparation for winter. Honeybee colonies are now shrinking in numbers by natural wastage. This leaves a population of younger "winter bees" to go through to spring. A useful thing the passing "summer bees" can do is to use their time and enzymes to work up sugar syrup feed and turn it into winter stores. Working-up syrup to stores is slow process: you need to allow time for the enzyme induced inversion of the sucrose, and the reduction of it's water content to 18% - like ripe honey. But how much syrup do you need to feed? and what is the best way to do so?

Lets start with some facts and figures about sugar syrup. The "standard concentration" talked about in beekeeping books is 2 lb. of sugar to 1 pint of water: but you don't need to be accurate - the bees won't notice. In the simplest format, put some granulated sugar in a container; add enough water to fill the air gaps between the sugar crystals; then stir to dissolve. Hot water or cold won't matter, but you need to stir longer to dissolve the sugar with cold water.

8 lb. sugar gives 1 gallon of syrup, which weighs approx. 13 lb. The water content of this syrup is 38.5%, the sugar content 61.5%. The specific gravity (density) is about 1.3. A gallon of this syrup, when fed to the bees, will produce approx. 12 lb. of stores and this will be equivalent to 10 lb. of honey stores.

If you think in metric quantities, then a rough metric equivalent to 2 lb/pint (but a little stronger) would be 1 kg sugar to 600 ml water. Scaling this up, 5 kg sugar plus 3.0 litres water gives 6.1 litres. 5 litres of this syrup will produce approx. 6.0 kg of stores and this will be equivalent to 5.0 kg of honey stores.

Feed syrup as early as possible during September. When you feed it, give it in the evening, and keep the hive entrance small. Feed all the hives in the apiary, even if it is just a little for some colonies, because this will help prevent robbing. A small entrance will help the guard bees to protect the colony from prowling robbers, or wasps.

A colony needs access to some 35 - 40 lb. (16 - 18 kg) of stores to overwinter successfully, but may only use 20 - 25 lb. (9 - 11 kg) in some winters. (It is not an exact science!)

The traditional way to check hive weights is by "hefting" them - lifting them gently and guessing the weight. (They should feel significantly heavy!) However, a better way is to use a spring balance to weigh the hives and so check more accurately that they have enough stores. Position the balance midway on either side of the floorboard. Round head screws located in the centre at either side of the floorboard will help you to locate the

balance. Use a piece of string, to link balance hook to the screw. Lift from both the left and right sides in turn, noting the balance reading when the floorboard is just eased off the hive stand. Add the two weights together to give the total weight.

To have the recommended 45 lb. (20 kg) of stores, the following total weights should be achieved. (These figures include floorboard, crown board, brood box, combs and bees.) National Brood Chamber - 68 lb. (31 kg). National Brood and a half - 77 lb. (35 kg) National Double Brood 85 lb. (38.6 kg) Commercial 16" x 10" - 75 lb. (34 kg)

If you have a WBC, you can still weigh the hive as above, but since these hives vary widely in the type and thickness of wood used, the empty weight and correct target weight required is rather more problematical. Here is a way round the problem You need a spare floor, brood box porch lift and coverboard. Put a carton onto the bathroom scales, then load it with bricks to 50 lb. in weight - this allows 10 lb. extra for frames and bees. Put the loaded carton into the hive, then test it's weight by hefting, or by using the spring balance as before.

Varroa Control / Treatment. In August I stressed the need for Varroa control - to ensure healthy bees for the over-winter period. There is still time to treat the colonies, if you missed that time window: but if there are significant numbers of mites, or (with Apiguard) if the night time temperature dips for long below 10°C, since this reduces the thymol vapour level inside the hive; you'll not get such good colony strength in the spring. If you are still using Apistan, remember, it is vital to remove the strips at the end of the 6 - 8 week exposure period. Wrap the used strips, then discard them with the domestic rubbish.

All this assumes that the mites present were vulnerable to the pyrethroid varroicide present in the strips: but we now know resistant mites are commonplace in the area. So it is essential that you use a Varroa Floor (open mesh floor) to monitor the colony's mite drop rate during the treatment (to see that it is working) and again after treatment. If a significant number of mites are still falling after treatment with a pyrethroid, then you have Resistant Mites. In these circumstances you must treat either with a Thymol type treatment, such as Apiguard, or Exomite apis; or with a suitable organic acid type treatment; or decide to chance that the colony will get through to the spring and then use Integrated Pest Management (IPM) type controls with associated mite level monitoring. The CSL DEFRA booklet 'Managing Varroa' (PB10859) June 2005 explains how to do this. HWBKA has a small stock of these at The Environment Centre, so ring me on 01 494 526557 to get one. Otherwise you can view the text on-line at the CSL NBU website <http://beebase.csl.gov.uk/> or get your own copy of the booklet from CSL.

Finally, do make the time to sit beside a hive and wonder where they're finding that pollen!

Clive Hill

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 4th 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

Website: www.hwbka.co.uk

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AGM

SEPTEMBER 28TH at 7.30PM

HIGH WYCOMBE & DISTRICT BEEKEEPERS ASSOCIATION

(Reg. Charity No 299638)

63rd Annual General Meeting Friday 28th September 2007

AGENDA

1. Apologies for Absence
2. Minutes of AGM 29th September 2006
Minutes of EGM 26th January 2007
3. Matters arising from the minutes
4. Chairman's Report
5. Secretary's Report
6. Treasurer's Report
7. Reports on :
Apiaries
Librarian
Swarm Officer
Minor reports - as published.
8. Adjustment of Constitution to allow fit with new BBKA Membership Categories.
9. Election of Officers
10. Election of Committee Members
11. Election of Independent Examiner
12. Any Other Business
13. Date of next AGM - Fri. 26th September 2008

HIGH WYCOMBE BEEKEEPING ASSOCIATION

Minutes of the Annual General Meeting held on Friday 29th September 2006-09-30

Present: Clive Hill (Chair); Christine Hazell (Minutes); Ed West; Sylvia Chamberlain; Jim Early; Pat Field; Christopher Gee; Raymond Chamberlain; Will Steynor; Scott Rutland; Felice Pigrim; Daphne Hole; Sheila Taylor; Lance Free; Julian Parker; Tim Fountain; Phil Wiggins; Ron White; Tim Shields; Clive Winslow; Stewart Thorburn; Ian Wright; Bernard Wells; Roy Martin; John Cochrane; Caroline Cochrane; Terence Williams; Bo Dizon; Donald Thomson; Keith Wood; Paul Hurley; Bob Hunter.

Apologies: Stan Grierson; John Crick; Simone Capell; John Chudley; Steve Harrison; Amy Fenge.

1) Minutes of the AGM and EGM 2005 read and approved.

Proposed: Will Steynor

Seconded: Clive Winslow

2) Chairman's Report read and approved.

Proposed: Jim Early

Seconded: Stewart Thorburn

3) Secretary's Report read and approved

Proposed: Will Steynor

Seconded: Clive Winslow

4) Treasurers Report read and approved

Proposed: Ron White

Seconded: Clive Winslow

It was noted from the floor that the hire of the extractor needs to be publicised in the newsletter.

5) Reports from

Swarm Officer

Vice Chair

Apiary managers – Hughenden: 2 hives produced 310 lb honey this year. The bees are healthy.

Librarian – good use was made of the library by members taking exams and by beginners

Proposed: Clive Winslow

Seconded: Stewart Thorburn

6) Election of Officers

President: Will Steynor

Proposed: Clive Winslow

Seconded: Vivienne Brown

Chair: Clive Hill

Proposed: Will Steynor

Seconded: Felice Pigrim

Vice Chair: Clive Winslow

Proposed: Christine Hazell

Seconded: Stewart Thorburn

Secretary: Christine Hazell

Proposed: Christopher Gee

Seconded: Sylvia Chamberlain

Treasurer: Ed West

Proposed: Clive Winslow

Seconded: Don Thomson

Apiary Manager: Bob Hunter

Proposed: Ron White

Seconded: Jim Early

Librarian: Stan Grierson

Proposed: Clive Winslow

Seconded: Vivienne Brown

7) Election of Committee Members: Bill Bendyshe-Brown; Scott Rutland; Duncan Tampsett; Keith Wood

Proposed: Christine Hazell

Seconded: Clive Winslow

8) Election of Independent Examiner: Christopher Gee

Proposed: Bill Bendyshe-Brown

Seconded: Sylvia Chamberlain

Note: It was moved that the current year-end be changed from June to end August – this change may involve a change

date from September to October. Insufficient notice had been given to discuss this change at the meeting, therefore it was agreed that this would be discussed at the next committee meeting and moved forward from there.

9) AOB

Thanks given to those retiring from the committee and to those continuing: thanks given to the newsletter organiser; thanks given to John Crick for his support to new beekeepers.

Support requested for a donation to Bee Research in memory of Dennis Pigrim.

Meeting concluded at 8.15pm.

High Wycombe & District Beekeepers Association

Registered Charity Number 299638

Minutes of the Extraordinary General Meeting 26th January 2007

Background details:-

1. At the AGM on 29th September 2006, our Treasurer and Independent Examiner announced that they wished to change the Association's Financial Year from the current "1st July until the following year's 30th June" to "1st September until August 31st of the following year". (This was to position the consequent financial review generating workload at a more suitable time period.)

There was no objection to this being done: however according to our Constitution, insufficient notice of this change had been given. The AGM accordingly agreed that the matter would be deferred to a specially convened EGM at a later date.

2. The Committee has since decided to recommend that we make another small change to the Constitution, regarding those members of the Executive Committee who shall be recognized as Trustees.

The association is a Registered Charity, and the Charities Commission needs to know who the Trustees of HWBKA are. At present our Constitution states that the whole of our Executive Committee are the Trustees.

We propose that we change this section of the constitution, so that the Trustees are limited to the Chairman, Vice-Chairman, Hon Secretary, and Treasurer.

Extraordinary General Meeting

At the start of the meeting on 26th January 2007, at The Environment Centre, we held a short EGM, to make the above modifications to our Constitution.

OLD WORDING

10.1 *The financial year shall be from July 1st. to June 30th.* Proper books of accounts shall be kept and subject to independent audit as required. An *Auditor* shall be appointed, not necessarily a member of the Association.

NEW WORDING

10.1 The financial year shall be from September 1st to August 31st. Proper books of accounts shall be kept and subject to independent audit as required. An *'Independent Examiner' (Auditor)* shall be appointed, not necessarily a member of the Association.

Proposed by : Don Thomson Seconded by : Vivienne Brown

Motion carried unanimously : 30 members present.

OLD WORDING

3.2 The Executive Committee comprising of a Chairman, Vice-Chairman, Secretary, Treasurer, Librarian, Honey Show Secretary, Apiary Manager (s), and up to five Ordinary Committee Members elected from the floor at the A.G.M. shall be responsible for the organisation and management of the High Wycombe and District Beekeepers' Association.

The Executive Committee shall be recognised as the Trustees of this Association.

NEW WORDING

The Chairman, Vice Chairman, Hon Secretary, and Treasurer shall be recognized as the Trustees of this Association.

Proposed by : John Chudley Seconded by : Sylvia Chamberlin

Motion carried unanimously : 30 members present.

Signed by : Clive Hill (Chairman)

26th January 2007

1. AGM Reports Compendium. 2007

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT Clive Hill

Reflection It is both encouraging, and daunting, to reflect on how busy we have been during the last year. Our monthly Lecture Meetings featured an excellent selection of speakers and subjects and were as well attended as ever. The woodworking day was another great success, in both output and socially; and will be repeated next year. We used group buying power again, to allow both members and beginner members well priced key purchases. On the varroa control front, our members have moved to mesh floors, drone comb trapping and thymol based treatments this year. Shortly before the AGM, Ian Homer, our Regional Bees Officer has given us an IPM Training Day, to teach us to manage our Varroa infestation levels.

Administration. We had six committee meetings during the year, and all of us have been busy: but several non-committee members also work hard for the Association. Our then President, Jim Earley, retired last September and was replaced by Will Steynor. Christine Hazell is coming to the end of her term as Secretary and has yet again been full of initiatives. She has also arranged an excellent programme for the coming year. Ed West, Treasurer; and Clive Winslow, Vice Chairman have been very active and hope to continue in these posts. Bill Bendyshe-Brown has agreed to take on the role of Swarm Officer. Our thanks go to all these hard working people: and I would also like to extend our thanks and best wishes to my predecessor as Chairman, John Crick, whose severe health problems have led to him withdrawing from leading our Beginners Course.

Education The 2007 Beginners Course and other aspects of Education have been extremely successful. This year our training has encouraged 15 new people to take up beekeeping as a hobby; a further seven members successfully completed the BBKA Basic Assessment; and group led by tutor Phil Wiggins studied the first of the BBKA Intermediate modules: and three of them passed. Sylvia Chamberlin and her team have been introducing bees and beekeeping to hundreds of children at school. Keith Wood has created our long anticipated Association Website. It has already proved valuable as an information resource for the public, a new way of communicating with us; and an accessible archive for our key information.

Thanks I would particularly like to record our debt of gratitude to the following people: Stewart Thorburn, for his long term dedication to the Swarm and Bee problem service. Clive Winslow, for his work with Beekeeping Education for our Beginners and at BBKA Basic level. Scott Rutland, who has been a tower of strength on apiary matters. Phil Wiggins, for short projects and taking on Tutor role for BBKA Module 1. Sylvia Chamber-

lin for leading the School links. Terry Kelly, for his continuing expertise with our Newsletter. Keith Wood for his amazingly fast work with the Website; and for postal distribution of the newsletter. Tim Fountain, for his concise but detailed reports on meetings.

Warning I must end with a warning. Some of our success has unfortunately been achieved with the imposition of an unacceptably high workload for key people. The underlying cause is that we have had too small a volunteer base. If we are to continue to be so active we must widen this base and so reduce the individual workloads – particularly relating to Swarm Collection and Apiary Management.

But, as I come to the end of my first term of office as Chairman, I thank you all for your support with helping to run this otherwise healthy and excellent Association.

SECRETARYS REPORT Christine Hazell

Events: We have had a variety of both national and local speakers at our member's evenings, including Michael Badger, Will Steynor, Norman Hughes, Margaret Holland, Andrew Gibb and Sarah Rob. Subjects covered ranged from queen rearing; tips on practical beekeeping; a quiz on pests and predators; and a demonstration on soap making using hive products. We had another successful woodworking day at Holmer Green School, where members assembled a great many mesh floorboards, cut to order by Scott Rutland, and Thorne's flatpacks. We had a presence at North Dean village fete in July and will also attend Speen Show in September. Sixteen members had a lunch followed by a visit to John Hamers apiary in August, which was an enjoyable day at a well-run apiary/teaching centre. In September we have an 'Integrated Pest Management' day scheduled, run by Ian Homer, to which 25 members have signed up so far. In October, Will is holding a 'Presidents Supper' with a non-beekeeping speaker.

Next years members programme has been arranged and will include a local physiotherapist talking on safe lifting, Ged Marshall talking of the work of commercial beekeeping, Pam Hunter, Roger Patterson, 'Hives Saves Lives-Africa', Terry Clare on bee breeds and June Hughes on encaustic art. A couple of talks on beekeeping have also been arranged at Hazlemere and Hughenden and will be given by Ian Wright. All the events the past year have been well attended and appear to cater for the member's needs/wishes/interests.

Education

BEGINNERS COURSE This year, a good effort was made by several members to support this course, which consisted of 17 potential beekeepers and 4 'refresher' members, who'd taken the course the previous year. 15 of these 'students' now have bees, 5 feel they need more time before having their own bees and 1 person is moving abroad. This was a superb effort by the members who supported this course and also gives a boost to the association of new energy and ideas. An issue, which arose during this course, is that Marlow apiary was designed to cater for the lifting ability of a tall person. Several of the current membership, both men and women, are unable to lift safely at that apiary – if we are to use Marlow as a teaching apiary, it is vital that we adapt it to suit all lifting abilities.

BASIC COURSE Seven members took this course, led by Clive Winslow, and all passed – congratulations.

INTERMEDIATE COURSE –Module 1 (of 4) – Honeybee Management. Six members took this course, led by Phil

Wiggins – 1 member passed and 2 members passed with credit – congratulations also.

Resignation In the spring 2008, I will have been secretary for the association for 3 years; therefore I am formally tending my resignation, to be effective in the spring. I will still be actively involved in the association; however will be concentrating more on practical assistance to new beekeepers.

TREASURER'S REPORT Ed West

The accounts for the year 2006/2007 have not yet been finalised and will be presented together with the Independent Examiner's report at the AGM in September. Copies of the examined accounts will be available for members. The signed copies of the accounts will be presented for formal approval at the AGM. The accounts will show a small addition to our funds at the end of the year

The Introduction to Beekeeping course this year included in the fee membership of the Association, Bucks and BBKA. As a result, in spite of losing some of our existing members we have a total membership of 80 this year, compared with 64 last year. Quite a few of these beginners have obtained hives and bees and we look forward to their continuing membership. We had another successful woodworking day for members where various items were made (Varroa floors, Nucleus boxes etc) using timber pre-cut by Scott Rutland and Clive Winslow. I think, in the end, we may have covered our costs with a little to spare!

Sales of honey from the Association's two apiaries have again provided a valuable source of revenue. The sales this year were £300 down on last year, which reflects a lower honey crop in 2006 and more bulk sales. The Apiary Managers are due a large vote of thanks for taking the honey as are the small group of members who have made most of the sales. I would like, again, to acknowledge the generosity of those members who donate fees for lectures and from the swarm collections coordinated by Stuart Thorburn.

The Association provided a service to members through the bulk purchase of Honey Jars and Apiguard at advantageous cost. Some items of equipment were bought at discount at sales for resale to beginners and members. Not all items have been sold, so represent potential income not specifically identified in the accounts.

The Association's reserve funds held in Charities Investment accounts have, as shown, provided a useful income. The funds held in stock market linked investments have continued to make a significant recovery. On the payments side expenditure was slightly higher than last year.

Subscription forms for 2007/2008 will be very different from last year, reflecting the changes in categories of membership of BBKA. Our Association's membership categories are largely unchanged. There is no change in our own subscription. I would remind members that our subscription income is given a very welcome boost when they tick the **Tax Reclaim** box on the subscription renewal form. Forms will be available at the AGM, so have your cheque books with you!

SWARM OFFICER'S REPORT

Stewart Thorburn

I am pleased to submit the following report for the 2007 season. A total of 119 swarms were reported that have been taken and re-hived. Some 24 reports came in which were bees in chimneys. These are beyond our capabilities, so we recommend the callers to contact a Pest Control Company. Over 20 calls came as a result of Bumble Bees. Most of these were left in place. After talking to the client it was agreed that the best thing for

them and for the bees was to keep them and let the children watch them come and go. Clive Hill housed two colonies and one is in my garden doing very well.

The week from hell came on the week commencing 18th June, when we had 53 swarms reported that week. Clive Winslow and Scott Rutland collected 12 between them, Clive Hill took one, Christine Hazell took the biggest one from Amersham Road; and one or two other beekeepers took two others. A young lad (James Mathews) from Thame came all the way over to Lane End to collect a swarm, even though he was in the middle of his A level's. 35 swarms were collected by a friend from Ascot and myself (in one week) and we re-hived them over in Berkshire. Had it not been for the unselfish help from Clive Winslow and Scott Rutland the job of Swarm Officer would have been impossible. I must record my thanks to these two gentlemen. The main areas of concern are the Town Centre of High Wycombe, Bourne End, Lane End, Marlow and Totteridge.

So many beekeepers said they would help but then cried off when the call came. As a result of that, my own bees got forgotten and swarmed just as I was collecting a swarm from a garden or tree on the other side of town. As a result of that, I have decided to leave the Association and carry on without it's help and the many friends I have made over the years. Bill Bendyshe-Brown is to take over as Swarm Officer next year. I hope he will get the support of all beekeepers and not just the handful of "usuals" who make such a difference. I wish you all the best and I hope the association grows as it deserves to.

SCHOOL VISITING TEAM *Sylvia Chamberlin*

This year over 400 children ages 4-7 in this area have been introduced to bee biology and the value of bees in the environment through our school visiting team. 8 primary schools had visits and 2 groups of brownies/cubs came to the environment centre for presentations. Bob Hunter and Ron White made their regular annual visits to their local schools. Sylvia Chamberlin assisted by Raymond or newcomers to the team made a further 6 visits and Scott Rutland made up his excellent observation hive when required.

Princes Risborough Secondary School Beekeeping Project.

An exciting new development has come from Princes Risborough Secondary School who would like to include beekeeping in their enrichment programme on Wednesday afternoons from 3 – 4 pm. We have been given some equipment for them and Raymond and Sylvia have made 4 visits to talk to staff and some of the pupils who want to take part. We hope to be able to get a small colony of well tempered bees next April but the group will be meeting weekly to prepare for this. We aim to give basic beekeeping information, and to plan and prepare the site and equipment. Towards Christmas we hope to do some work with beeswax and maybe make candles as a fund raising effort to help with costs. Members who have any other ideas to suggest or who can offer help on some Wednesday afternoons please contact Sylvia. sylvia.chamberlin@zen.co.uk

WEBSITE www.hwbka.co.uk *Keith Wood* + Introduction - Clive Hill

Keith Wood, who is an IT professional, joined our Committee last AGM and quickly turned our dreams of a Website into reality. He achieved this in an amazingly short space of time: and it has since proved it's value by giving us links with the IT literate public. Potential new members, journalists and people with Bee Problems have all used it to contact us. We continue to add new types of material and edit the site.

The HWBKA has been an ongoing project of the Association for some time. It was finally completed and launched around Christmas 2006 and began to be listed in the internet search engines

roughly 8 weeks afterwards. The website has been seeing a steady increase of traffic over the first months of its use, with the pages on "Types of Bees" proving to be particularly popular. It is also proving to very useful for providing contact details for members of the public to use to contact the Association - actively increasing the membership of the association. The downloads area is proving quite popular with people too - averaging over 30 downloads of the current newsletter every month (this is in addition to the email distribution that is automatically sent to members who request it). The website has recently had a section added in the "downloads area" called 'Best of Seminars'. This makes available reports which have appeared in our newsletter in past years on Speaker's Talks on a range of important beekeeping topics. The overall traffic to the website saw a slight dip last month, but I suspect this is simply due to the holiday season. The site has now had over 600 direct visitors, and many more via the BBKA.

APIARIES

We have a total of ten hives, six at the Marlow apiary, four at Hughenden. The colonies have been used for honey production, teaching purposes, and helped source bees for Beginners. They have produced some 200 – 300 lbs of honey. All the colonies are being treated with Apiguard and are on Mesh Floors. At long last Bob Hunter has retired as Apiary Manager for Hughenden. John Crick, for health reasons had to retire from Marlow. Bill B-B and Scott Rutland started to look after the Hughenden site; and Scott then tried to cope with Marlow too: and preparing colonies for Beginners. Clive Winslow, Phil Wiggins and others have also had significant involvement. The workload on Scott, together with his own hives, business and family life has been much too much: and it has become clear that we MUST make rapid and significant changes to the situation.

ENVIRONMENT CENTRE The Centre has recently put in a bid for Funding to the National Lottery. We wish them every success. Our own excellent relations with the centre continue, and we are still it's most active group. Our Committee, Lecture, Education, and Beginners Course meetings are held there and we have a set of keys to the place.

The Observation Hive is still the Centre's fundamental Visitor Attraction, many people coming in specially to see the bees. The colony gained strength rapidly in the spring and swarmed on two occasions. We have recently had a second tube installed through the wall to allow free flight by a small bumblebee colony. The "Bumblebee Conservation Trust" provided educational material to support this. Having the two types of bee colony present simultaneously greatly extends the educational impact of both colonies, the displays about Bees, Beekeeping and HWBKA. Honey is on sale at the Centre, also our Honey Cookery Books.

NEWSLETTER

We have now eased the Press deadline to allow a better fit against Meeting dates. Most of the circulation is by email, but Keith Wood handles the postal Circulation of the Newsletter, and enters the files on our Website. Tim Fountain prepares the Meeting Reports: and makes an excellent job of them. Several members are now contributing material to the Newsletter. It has been praised as "full of useful information".

LIBRARY The Library is now located in our new Cupboards at The Environment Centre. It has had little use this year, but remains a significant potential resource for members – particularly now that BBKA study modules are being followed. Stan Grierson has been the Librarian. We managed to mislay some titles, but have relocated many of them. Stan has recently started to adjust the book layout and accessibility: and plans to continue this.

THEATRE TRIP & BULK BUYS *Phil Wiggins & Clive Hill*

Sonning Mill Theatre Trip This year's showing 'Barefoot in the Park', a comedy by Neil Simon, was enjoyed by everyone of the 29 members who joined the trip. The ticket at £29.70 included Ample Free Parking, Two course Meal including coffee, And 1 Free Programme between two. We were also offered an Anniversary free Tour of the back stage before the show, but unfortunately the date selected by the Committee turned out to be the first night, so this tour had to be cancelled as backstage chaos was envisaged!

Thornes January Sale Items We anticipated a need for hives etc. for the coming Beginners Course, so bought some Flatpack hives, Frames and Beekeepers Smocks with veils. The total cost being £629.10

Jars at Discount prices 13 participants ordered the following: BS 1lb jars:- 27 ½ gross. 9packs (84 jars /pack) of 12oz hexagonal jars. 50 packs (36 jars/pack) of 8 oz hexagonal jars. Total Value of jars ordered: £1406

Discounted Apiguard Varroa Control We had 23 orders, buying 40 boxes from Wynne Jones at £15.30 each. This was enough material to treat 200 colonies. The total cost of £612 compared to Thorne's list price of £893.20, so we achieved a 31.5% discount.

BEE DISEASES The CSL Southern Region bee inspection service for Bucks is run by Ian Homer, who is based in Dorset. Dr Pete Kennedy is our local Seasonal Bees Officer. No cases of EFB or AFB have been found in our area this season. Varroa is of course endemic in all honeybee colonies in our area. Last year pyrethroid resistant mites were found to be present, so now we only recommend the use of Thymol based Varroa control, and Integrated Pest Management (IPM). Bee Disease data is available on the NBU website <http://beebase.csl.gov.uk/>