



WINCHESTER AND DISTRICT BEEKEEPERS ASSOCIATION

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www.winchesterbeekeepers.org.uk (Ctrl + click to link)
President: Ron Broadway
Chairman: Hugh Sykes

NEWSLETTER - FEBRUARY 2010

BOB's BIT

While clearing the snow from my hive entrances, I breathed on my hands to warm them and thought of when "Dick the shepherd blows his nail and milk comes frozen home in pail" while Greasy Jane was safely at home keeling the pot. Being cold-blooded anyway, bees presumably do not have to warm their hands before doing anything, such as tending the queen. If they did, where would they begin?

I thus began musing on the matter of legs, of which I am an interested observer. As a registered arachniphobe, my guiding mantra is "two legs good, eight legs bad". There is no logic to this (I read that it is all in the genes), and Shylock gave several instances, including the one that always produced sniggers in the back row: "And others, when the bag-pipe sings in the nose, Cannot contain their urine: for affection, Mistress of passion, sways it to the mood Of what it likes or loathes." (I have never felt like that about bagpipes, though they are an ill-wind that nobody blows good). The point is that I can happily have my hands covered in bees, whereas if it were spiders of the same size I would be most uneasy. Though I've never met one, I expect there are people who are revolted by contact with a bee.

At present, there is small chance of being in contact with a live bee, it needs about 10C and some sunlight to tempt them out to "void". You may find a bee on your wet washing while having a drink. It is probably low on fuel, and unable to make it home, so it is pleasant to don the mantle of St. Francis and feed it a small blob of honey on a pencil tip. Watch its tongue come out as it refuels and presently flies off home, leaving you with that warm glow from helping God's Little Creatures. It will be noted on your record.

NEXT MEETING
Tuesday February 9th
7.30 pm at Itchen Abbas Village Hall

Honey Marketing - Teresa Waterworth

Teresa is a honey farmer in the Petersfield area and a member of WDBKA.

Directions: *Itchen Abbas is on the B3047 between Kings Worthy and New Alresford. When coming from Winchester the entrance to the Village Hall is on your left in the centre of the village, immediately after a sharp right-hand bend. If you are coming from Alresford, it is on your right after 'The Trout' inn.*

THE AGM, Tuesday January 19th

The meeting had been postponed a week from the originally scheduled date, due to the weather conditions, so it was pleasing that were eighteen members present to provide an ample quorum for conduct of the formal business of the meeting.

The Chairman reported on the mixed fortunes of the past year. This had been much improved on 2008, but still not as good as many previous years. He thanked the committee and officers for all their work for the Association during the year. In particular he thanked George Hand, who was standing down after nearly twenty years on the committee, including ten years as Newsletter Editor. He also thanked Pat Loftin, who has had to stand down for family reasons, for all her hard work as Secretary.

The changed meeting date meant that Pat was not able to be present, so the Chairman read her report. It summarised the many successful events which had

been held throughout the year, and thanked all concerned for their support.

The Treasurer reported on a satisfactory year. Although the Association had invested several hundred pounds in educational equipment, including an observation hive and a 'virtual' hive, the year-end closing balance was still higher than last year at just over £2,600. In addition, the Association's charitable status was now recognised by HMRC, enabling Gift Aid to be reclaimed on subscriptions, amounting to some £500 now due for prior years. In view of the satisfactory financial position it was proposed and agreed that the small increase in capitation fee required this year by the HBA could be absorbed and there would be no increase in WDBKA subscriptions.

With the exception of those standing down, the officers and committee were re-elected *en bloc*. Stephen Tompsett was elected Programme Secretary (details of the programme for the coming year will be included in next month's Newsletter). Angela Forder-Stent was elected Secretary, but please note that Pat Loftin will continue *ex committee* as the point of contact for exam arrangements.

To spread the swarm co-ordination work-load, particularly in the Spring, by cunning use of technology the task will be distributed among a number of members. But please note that members are generally expected to collect their own swarms. New beekeepers should be assisted by their mentors.

Two new committee members are now required to make up the strength and to ensure a continuing flow of fresh ideas. Anyone interested in joining please contact a member of the committee.



Tim Ellison, Robin Leonard and Cathy Crawley enjoying the Chairman's generously provided wine, mead and cheeses – very many thanks Hugh .

SUBSCRIPTIONS

Your annual subscriptions are now due and the necessary form is attached with this Newsletter. Please fill it in now and send it with your payment to Robin Leonard, to get to him no later than 1st March.

HBA AGM – February 26th

7.30 p.m. at Itchen Abbas Village Hall.

Annual reports will be presented and the officers and Executive elected. All members are very welcome.

BBKA MODULE EXAMINATIONS - 2010

There is still just time to apply for this year's exams. Entries must be in by 10th February for the exams on 20th March. Please contact Pat Loftin.

(secretary@winchesterbeekeepers.org.uk),

FOR YOUR DIARY

At the March indoor meeting (March 9th) Robert Carpenter-Turner will be talking about "Other People's Bees". This will describe some of his experiences in his first year as a Bee Inspector. It will be a light hearted talk and members of the audience will be encouraged to ask questions. Be sure to be there.

SOUTH HANTS SPRING BEEKEEPING CONVENTION

Pat Loftin has tickets available for this convention, to be held this year at Portsmouth on March 13th. They are £10 from Pat now, or £12.50 on the door.

NEWBURY BKA ANNUAL LEAVER LECTURE Friday 12th March. 7.30 p.m.

'What future for honeybees?' - Max Watkins

Dr Max Watkins is research and development director at Vita (Europe) Ltd. Existing products include Apistan and Apiguard. The lecture will be held at the Sutton Hall, Church Road, Stockcross, RG20 8LN.

Please note, our Regional Bee Inspector is now Nigel Semmence. 01264 338694

nigel.semmence@fera.gsi.gov.uk