



WINCHESTER AND DISTRICT BEEKEEPERS ASSOCIATION

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www.winchesterbeekeepers.org.uk (Ctrl + click to link)
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NEWSLETTER - NOVEMBER 2011

BOB's BIT

The ever-mounting public interest in bees has now surely reached its zenith, in the fashion pages of the Top People's Sunday supplement. Here we find an attractive and intelligent fashion model photographed on her roof garden, negligently dangling a smoker in her ungloved hand. Where next? It is not widely known that there is a hive in the garden of No. 10 (alas it's a WBC) and that the Duchess of Cambridge is getting a copy of Ted Hooper for Christmas. You read it here first!

Which reminds me, why is there not a Master of the Queen's Bees? HM has a pigeon loft and enters races, so why not an apiary on the roof of Buck House?

The weather is mild, and the bees are flying, but there is nothing to DO. Frustrated, I went bee-bothering with a dispenser of icing-sugar. The bees accepted the intrusion with their customary courtesy, but if I thought it would produce an increased fall of varroa then I was disappointed. In fact there was no varroa on the board at all, which seems unlikely at this time of year. I suspect that little predators, ants or wasps, are carrying off the fallers and ruining my statistics. So I am now going to apply a liberal band of grease around the edge of the false floor, to frustrate the grave-robbers. (SCATS have a cheap grease in the horse department).

If you haven't entered anything in the HBA Show, then shame on you. There are so many classes that you must be able to enter *something*. A cosmetic with a smidgin of beeswax, or my old favourite - beeswax polish - and you'll have the class to yourself. Once when I was the only entry, the judge churlishly refused to award a first prize, so I was denied a red card for my trophy wall.

EVENING MEETING
Tuesday 8th November @ 7.30 p.m.
Itchen Abbas, Village Hall

Brains Trust

Chairman, Hugh Sykes with Gerry Fry (Vice President Meon Valley BKA), Bob Geary and Ron Broadway.

Please send your questions in advance to:

chairman@winchesterbeekeepers.org.uk

or telephone on: 02380 254521

EVENING MEETING 11th October

The Basic Assessment in Practice

David Nield from Portsmouth BKA (former Education and Training Officer for the Hampshire Beekeepers Association) gave the twenty five members present, an excellent overview of the purpose and scope of the BBKA's Basic Assessment of beekeeping competence.

David emphasised that the Basic Assessment is important for all beekeepers, even those with many years experience. It's not just for new beekeepers. The process is entirely practical/oral and informal and is about showing awareness and knowledge of the basic facts and information that beekeepers should know, and demonstrating their ability to inspect and handle bees with care.

When David had given a brief run through of the syllabus, Russell Fairchild showed slides of a Basic Assessment process in practice at Fleet BKA's

training apiary. This gave the audience a feel for what it is actually like on the day – an enjoyable and very informative one hour ‘Master Class’ with a highly experienced beekeeper, in this case John Hanks from Romsey BKA.



WDBKA's Eddie Elms (right) chatting with Master Beekeeper John Hanks during his Basic Assessment in August.

By the end of the evening nearly half of those present had registered their interest in taking their Basic Assessment next year. If you weren't one of them and would like to join the WDBKA group which Amanda is co-ordinating for next year, please contact her as shown below.

Education Matters From Amanda Trigg

Basic Assessment

Firstly congratulations go to Robert (Eddie) Elms who passed the Basic Assessment this summer. He was our only member to enter this year BUT next year looks very different.

Following our September meeting a sizeable group have declared their interest in doing the assessment in 2012. By putting your name on my list you are not committed to entering but it does give some indication and helps the Hampshire Education Secretary in planning. If you are not sure then have a look on the

BBKA website or contact me (see below). For those interested, I will be organising an optional get-together to look at support materials and chat about any points which might need clarification. The final date for applications will be April 30th 2012 and the cost is £15, which, if successful, will be refundable against the following year's membership of the Association.

Module Examinations 2012

Anyone thinking of entering for module exams needs to be aware of the following deadlines:

Modules 1,2,5,7: exam on 24th March, closing date 10th February

Modules 1,3,6,8: exam on 11th November, closing date 30th September

Each module exam costs £20 and you must hold a Basic certificate to do these.

Past Successes!

I have been asked by Hampshire Beekeepers Association to provide them with information as to who holds which qualification, and who might be thinking of entering for future qualifications. I hold no past records of such, so am reliant upon your good will to contact me! Please, please, let me know no matter how far back in time.

Amanda Trigg atrigg@waitrose.com or 01962 852279

HBA CONVENTION AND HONEY SHOW Saturday 12th November - Final Reminder!

Tickets are £13 on the door, inclusive of hot lunch and refreshments during the day.

For full details of the Convention programme and Honey Show go to:

www.hampshirebeekeepers.org.uk/events/hba-autumn-convention

EQUIPMENT FOR SALE

Ray Gorman still has equipment for sale including an extractor, settling tanks, National supers and brood boxes, two smokers, hive tools and bee suits. Contact him by e-mail: at: ray.gorman@btopenworld.com or phone: 07802394580 or 01962 880525, to view. Any reasonable offer will be accepted!