



CBKA Newsletter

November 2013

Year 28/ 3. Download our Newsletters from www.teesbees.co.uk

Chairman's Note

Following the AGM in October there have been a few changes in duties of some committee members, these will shortly be displayed on the website together with contact details. Please contact any committee member if you have any suggestions or complaints regarding the association and we will do our best to answer them.

Our next years programme is now being finalised and although I know it is a bit early, could anyone who is interested in a trip to Chain Bridge Honey Farm, Berwick, on Sunday 29th of June please let me know as soon as possible so that transport arrangements can be made in good time. This is open to members and partners and non beekeepers are welcome to come and enjoy the trip.

The December meeting will be our last one this year and will be the usual format of a short film or talk followed by pies and peas (vegetarian option available). Please book in advance so we can order enough pies and peas. Tickets from Derek Passmore at £3 each. *By Rob Andrews, Chairman*

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In the Apiary

It's time to reflect on the year's beekeeping and take a break. Go and examine your hives every so often, make sure the entrances remain clear and the mouse guards haven't fallen off.

As you tidy up your spare hives and frames you will come across comb which is badly damaged, badly drawn, or black and very old. You will want to keep as much good drawn comb as you can of course, but be ruthless and be prepared to write off comb in bad condition. There is little point in trying to melt wax off old black brood comb as they are mainly silk cocoons held together by propolis, there is very little wax there. Remove the comb and burn it to get rid of disease. In due course scorch the frames and scrape them clean, ready for new wax foundation.

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Adventures in Beekeeping - Part 2

It was the middle of June 2012 in the worst beekeeping year of the century, and I got a swarm call from the Head grounds man at my local cricket club. They had a colony of bees that had moved in a couple of years previously into an ash tree. Up until recently the bees had not been a problem, but they

had recently swarmed and landed on a neighbouring house, panicking the owners, so could I remove them please? I arrived and was shown the tree. The hole the bees were using was behind the suckers at the base of the trunk, and once they were cut back you could clearly see the entrance. "We need them out by the weekend as we have a big charity event on". I advised that this was not going to be a quick extraction and at that point I wasn't even sure how I would remove them. Luckily the weather in the summer of 2012 put paid to the charity event so I had plenty of time to work with! A search of the internet found a bee keeper in the USA removing a colony in exactly the same circumstances on YouTube:

(<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DgkC2NE1Eyc>)

The method involved making a mesh cone with a hole at the tip which was placed over the entrance to the colony that acted like a one way valve so that the bees could only come out of the colony, but could not go back in. Then a nucleus box full of drawn comb was placed next to the tree for the bees that could not get back in.



A sheet of mesh was purchased and a cone made. It was placed over the entrance to the colony along with some foam to seal the edges and a nucleus box placed alongside. After a few days a couple of issues were found. The hole at the end of the cone was just the right size for workers to leave, but

it was not large enough to let drones out so that the cone was clogged with drones, so I widened the hole slightly. The second issue I found was that although the nucleus was filling nicely with drones the workers were just clustering on the tree. I solved this by just turning the nucleus box so that its entrance was next to the trunk of the tree.

This was not a quick extraction as it took about eight weeks to get all the bees out and into the box. Unfortunately I didn't get the queen. I was hoping that because the colony had recently swarmed the new queen would leave the colony for a mating flight and return to the nucleus box. Either I wasn't

quick enough in getting the cone over the entrance or the queen didn't come back from the mating flight. As I didn't get the queen, eventually I united the bees with one of my own colonies.

By Steve Jacklin

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Teesside Hospice Beekeeping

In August 2011 one of our Teesside Hospice Charity Shops opened its doors to a generous donation of a couple of beehives and a selection of beekeeping equipment and suits! Cleveland Beekeepers Association were approached at the Middlesbrough Town meal with the thought of swapping the hives for some honey to sell. Graham Clarke came to view the hives and suggested that a couple of people complete the beekeeping course in the Spring with a view to producing our own honey! All staff and volunteers were informed of this opportunity and the only person who came forward to take up the challenge was one of the van drivers. I decided that I would give the course a go as it would be good to produce hospice honey! What a revelation the course was! I was hooked from day one. Our hives were "cleaned up" for us and we were given a colony and so began our first year's beekeeping with Graham Clarke housing our bees on his allotment whilst he acted as our mentor. In June this year Graham asked if we had anywhere we could put the hive as we were ready to go "solo" as beekeepers. I thought that the rooftop terrace at one of the shops would be excellent as it



had space, access and a great viewing window for anyone who was interested in watching us tend to the bees.

Rooftop beekeeping was an unknown entity to everyone involved, but the bees settled very well and the colony was thriving throughout the summer. Our shops are run by managers and supported by volunteers, and so many volunteers have expressed an interest in

beekeeping and a number of managers have also visited, such is the popularity of the bees!

We managed to get 3 half pound jars of honey from the hive and this will be auctioned to raise as much money as possible for the hospice.



In September we were contacted by the artist Cath Key who was commissioned to make "modern beehives" in the shape of iconic buildings from Middlesbrough and the surrounding area. The structures are beautiful pieces of artwork and also working beehives. Teesside Hospice were delighted to be chosen as recipients of one of the hives. The structure is Steel House, Redcar, the office building that was built in 1977 and is still in use today.

Once again the Cleveland Beekeepers Association are using their skills and experience to make small adaptations to the hive and it will be going on to our rooftop terrace above the charity shop in the Spring. We are aiming to install a "bee cam" which will enable people to view what is happening inside the hive and hopefully one of the CBKA summer meetings could be held at the shop so people can have a close up view of the hive in action!

Teesside Hospice exists to enhance the lives of local people suffering from life limiting illnesses. We need to raise £4600 each and every day of the year to keep the hospice running and we raise this through the sales in the charity shops, fundraising events and the weekly lottery. By Tracy O'Donnell

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Membership Fees 2013-14

Thank you to those that have already paid their membership fees. These were due from the 1st of November. Please fill in a membership renewal form, it makes administration a lot easier.

By Sal Mancina, Membership Secretary

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Happy beekeeping!

Secretary: Derek Herring, 8 Wardale Avenue, Acklam, Middlesbrough. Tel 01642 282030

Winter meetings (September to April) are held on the 3rd Monday of the month at 7:15pm in the:

Middlesbrough Bowling Club, Cornfield Rd, Middlesbrough TS5 5QL (Near the Little Theatre). Visitors and new members welcome.

BEEKEEPING SUPPLIES

Allan, Tony & Richard Jefferson

Stonelea Apiaries, 1 Dalehouse Bank, Staithes, Cleveland, TS13 5AN

Tel 07749 73 1945 or Tel/Fax 01947 893811

tony@stoneleabees.wanadoo.co.uk

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See website for more details