



CBKA NEWSLETTER

Available online at
www.teesbees.co.uk

Year 30/3
November 2015

CHAIRMAN'S RAMBLE

Only a short ramble this month as I'm busy studying hard for my Module 3 exam, and by the time you read this I will have gone through the torture of the exam.

As I sit writing this, the sun is shining, the Bees are bringing in the pollen and it's hard to think it is November, but it looks like the winter storms are now fast approaching. I sometimes think I harp on too much about the weather, but it is a big factor in the management of our bees.

We need to be checking the weight of our Hives every couple of weeks. With the warm temperatures the Bees won't have clustered yet which will be causing the bees to eat more of their winter stores than normal. What we need is cold weather so they cluster more tightly so that they use fewer of their stores. If your colonies are beginning to feel a bit light just put a slab of fondant over the hole in the crown board. *Steve Jacklin*

NORTHERN BEEKEEPERS QUIZ

Cleveland Beekeepers won the annual Norther Beekeepers Quiz in 2014.

Whilst some of the questions are on bees and beekeeping the majority are general. The 2015 Quiz will be held at [Bede](#)

[Lodge Social Club, Finchale Rd, Durham, DH1 5HL](#) on of Wednesday, 2 December at 7:00 pm for a 7.30 start. A donation toward the cost of food is requested.

Can you help us to win the Trophy back again? Please let [Sal Mancina](#) know if you can join us for an enjoyable evening representing Cleveland Beekeepers.

2015 HONEY SURVEY

The results of the 2015 BBKA Honey Survey have now been published.

Across England and Wales it shows an average yield of 21lbs of honey per colony this year, a substantial 34% drop on last year's 32 lbs per colony. The figure for the North East is 17.4 lbs per colony compared with 28.5 lbs. This is a worse than average drop of 39% and doubtless comes as no surprise to members, although there may be surprise at the reports that the South East, South West, Wales and North West had even lower averages.

The survey is not all bad news as 25% of those reporting said they had an increased production with 10% saying they had abundant forage. Unsurprisingly it was 'good queens' which gave best yields.

The finger of blame for the shortfall is pointed squarely at the weather - excessively windy and with too few prolonged warm spells with bees not foraging and reports of an effect on queen bees with inefficient mating and subsequent poor production of workers.

Have you paid your dues?

A minimum of one 1 lb jar of Heather Honey per colony is owed by those who used the site at Comdonale

HEATHER SITE



Cleveland Beekeepers Christmas Social Evening

At Middlesbrough Bowling Club

7:15 pm on 14 December

Including Pie and Peas

Guests welcome

Tickets @ £3.50 from [Sal Mancina](#)

Have you planned your winter jobs yet, or is it to be a trip to somewhere warm? If you haven't got your list ready yet here are a few ideas to help. Some of them may be even useful for hints to those asking you for suggestions for Christmas presents.

WINTER WORK

The weather—Are your hives properly strapped or weighed down? Does the hive slope gently forwards so that rain will not run into the entrance?

Animals—We don't seem to have woodpecker problems here but deer and badgers will soon have a hive over, and urban deer are increasingly common.

The Garden—Is your garden fully bee friendly? Have a look at the seed catalogues for forage ideas.

Smoker—Give it a service! Tighten the bolts, check the bellows and give it a 'de-coke'.

Food—Make sure you have enough fondant. Our recipe will be included in next month.

Graham Clarke needs final orders for CBKA kit at the

November meeting. He is ordering Sweat Shirts, Polo Shirts and Fleecees all in Blue with the CBKA Logo.

LAST CHANCE

NATIONAL HONEY SHOW

their County Honey Show.

The show is much more than a honey show; there are lectures and workshops for both new, intermediate and experienced beekeepers as well as a Trade Show with stands from almost all the main suppliers, some smaller ones and others such as the National Bee Unit.

Even if you can't get to the show itself many of the lectures are posted on YouTube <https://www.youtube.com/user/nationalhoneyshow>. Although this year's lectures are not posted yet, previous years' ones are there. The 2014 series includes *The Small Hive Beetle*, *Basic Life Cycles of Wasps and Hornets* and *Pollination*. This year's topics included *Honey Bee Pests*, *The Biology of Mating* and *The Biology of Swarming*. A future newsletter will let you know when these come on line and give the links. The winning video entry was *Making Dipped Candles*, 10 minutes which makes candle making look far easier than most of us find it! There is also an excellent first prize winning slide display on *Pollen* which may be an interesting follow up to the November meeting

I needed to be in London for work earlier that week so decided to stay on and go to the show. I was mostly interested in seeing the standard of the exhibits and attending some of the workshops and events, but also decided, as I was going, to submit some entries. I met two of our members at the show and congratulations must go to Shirley Bond who won a number (ten by my counting) of prize cards.

One of the classes in the show is for 'Practical Inventions'. Two of these particularly drew my attention. The first is designed to help a colony to defend itself, something which many people I spoke to at the show had been important



this year with serious wasp problems being common. The design, by Lyndon Corbett of the West Midlands, builds on the principle that wild bees defend an entrance in a tree which is not a straight line into the base of the colony, but at an angle or irregular pathway. The attached illustration shows four different patterns of entries which can be achieved. The first three probably require a router, but the rear most one can be achieved with a traditional saw and chisel technique. These were cut into off cuts of oak, which I was reassured are cheaper than similar pieces of western red cedar and just as weather resistant, although heavier.



The second idea was simpler and deals with those mis-fitting supers where hive tool damage or irregular boxes lead to a space which is exploited by wasps or robbers. Use a 20" cycle inner tube from a pound shop. Remove the valve, cut it in half and place over the joint between boxes. Let us know how these work for you. *John Canning*

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Find us on



Cleveland Beekeepers has a Facebook Page. Why not [follow us?](#)

George Eames is running a training course at Finchale College, Durham starting 1000 on Saturdays November 21, 28 and December 5. There will be

a double session on each day to save travelling. The days should finish at about 1430. The cost of the course is £90 per person. Please contact George directly on beeseames@btinternet.com.

GENERAL HUSBANDRY

BAKE OFF'S BACK!

The Great British Bake Off 2016 team are looking for the next batch of bakers and have asked for help to find potential contestants. If you, or someone you know, can turn out terrific bakes then get in touch. www.thegreatbritishbakeoff.co.uk

Subscriptions for 2016

The Annual Subscription, due on November 1st is £26 of which £19 is paid to the BBKA. Subscription forms have been emailed or posted to all members. Please return them to the [Membership Secretary](#).

If you don't Gift Aid your subscription but are a taxpayer and could do so please could please email or speak to the [Treasurer](#).

Subscriptions received after 1 January are subject to a late payment fee of £5.

The Association AGM in October was attended by

COMMITTEE 2016

more than 30 members. Steve Jacklin remains as Chair, with John Canning as Vice Chair. Carol Anderton is about to move to Lincolnshire so was unable to continue as Treasurer, fortunately Lynn Taylor was a willing volunteer to step into the rôle and she was duly elected as the new Treasurer.

The Committee are pleased to welcome Jim Turnbull and Kate Brennan who were elected at the AGM.

Cleveland Beekeepers Association

Secretary: Iain Makinson Tel 01287 634995

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.