

NORTHERN LIGHTS

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE NORTH DEVON BRANCH
OF THE DEVON BEEKEEPERS ASSOCIATION

DECEMBER 2011 / JANUARY 2012



www.northdevonbees.org



WISHING YOU ALL
A VERY
MERRY CHRISTMAS
AND A HAPPY NEW YEAR



Editorial: committing yourself to North Devon Beekeepers could be seen as a bit of a hassle but as is obvious from the new officers list and Barbara's Chair Chat, we are not short of commitment or support! In fact, like Barbara, I am amazed at all the good will and help we are offered. As we come to the end of the year, we wish Barbara and her new team well! and wish you all a very Happy and Peaceful Christmas and New Year. *Sylvie*

CHAIR CHAT

My thanks to Chris Tozer for all the hard work he has done for the club and the committee over the last three years. Chris has agreed to stay on as a committee member, so we will still have all his knowledge backing us up. I start my term just as everything is in 'close down mode' so there is very little to say about the apiary. We have the new committee up and running and before we close on Dec 6th the AST will be set up as well.

We did an amazing amount of work this year at Horestone; I started to make a list of people to thank and found it impossible. At the AGM, Chris thanked the members for doing their set jobs so very well, and we all appreciate the hard work they do for us.

So instead I have listed a few behind the scenes things we have to be thankful for-

*We never run out of loo rolls, coffee, sugar, tea and milk; we are treated every week to an amazing collection of cakes and biscuits.

*Our laundry gets done; not just the hand and tea towels but this year all the bee suits have been regularly washed and mended

*Our water pump got fixed. We now have water on tap in the club house sink.

*Club house floors have been regularly swept and washed

*Supplies of all that we need arrive on time. Sugar for 'bee feed' was organised, collected and delivered to B4Bs

*Every week gardening gets done, and maintenance teams turn up to lay slabs, cut grass and chop wood for the fire.

*Posters are printed

This list is not complete, it's just a sample of all the things that our band of 'behind the scene workers' get done. Without you all we would not have a club. So thank you all.

As this is the last NL this year, I take this opportunity to wish you all a very Merry Christmas and a very happy and good New Year.

Barbara

NEW BRANCH OFFICERS

At the recent AGM and subsequent Branch Committee Meeting the following elected officers and appointed positions were filled.

Chair Barbara Carlyle

Secretary Martin Pollock

Treasurer Derek Hunter

Vice Chair Sylvia Barber

Shows and Social Events Co-ordinator Jeff Orr

Education and Examinations Officer Jack Mummery

Committee Members Chrissie Preece, Mel Wing, Chris Tozer, Cliff Davis, Denise Oldaker, Cathy Backway.

Membership Secretary Denise Oldaker

Newsletter Editor Sylvia Barber

Apiary Quartermaster - Albert Cannon

Microscopist Chris Utting assisted by Kay Thomas and Julie Elkin.

Branch Representatives at DBKA EC meetings

Barbara Carlyle and Martin Pollock.

Webmaster Ruth Blake

Spray Liaison Officer Chris Tozer

Swarm Liaison Officers areas and members will be signed up to help the swarm collection process in the New Year.

Appointed members of Apiary Support Team

Barbara Carlyle, Peter Warrilow, Kay Thomas, Mel Wing. Co-opted AST members Julie Elkin, Sylvie, Jeff Orr, Chris Utting and Peter Auger.

HUSTWAYTE PLATE

A photograph of the much-coveted Hustwayte plate headed the Honey show Schedule published recently and it inspired me to record what I know of its history.

Soon after I became a Braunton Beekeeper in the early 70s I met the incumbent of the small parish of Saunton. He and his wife lived in an idyllic red brick bungalow with a veranda along its entire length overlooking Braunton Burrows. As you approach the village, the signposted cul-de-sac leads to a small grassy car park at the rear and from there you can visit St Annes Chapel

The chapel was built in 1895 on the site of the original Seamen's Chapel used by them I think as they walked from Bideford towards Bristol looking for work. There is a sister Chapel at Appledore which I have never visited and don't in fact know where it is. The Saunton St Anne is a gem and well worth a visit.

The Reverend and his wife could have walked straight out of Trollops Barchester Chronicles, she, a well read, educated woman, slight in stature with wavy white hair, usually wearing something pink, a gentle character and all in all a Will O the Wisp. He also was gentle, a man of God, willing to help people in any way, especially giving his time to Beekeepers. Short and portly always in his Vicars habit, the bib stained with traces of meals gone by, a perfect foil for each other. They could understand and quote Latin and I imagine he was very knowledgeable in both Botany and Entomology. Together they presented the branch's most valuable trophy, the solid silver Hustwayte Plate, awarded, as one might expect, for the cookery section. They both died in the late 70s. Their beautiful home and garden looks rather neglected now and I doubt that it still belongs to the church

In the 80s the chapel was vandalised and the windows broken, it was suggested by the Reverend Bernard Tinsley (our Branch Chairman at the time) that the branch should help to pay for two windows to commemorate them both and his association with bees. On my recent visit I studied them again, they both represent various forms of wild-life living on the burrows, Rabbits of course, Snipe, Ducks, the green and sand of the burrows with the sea just visible in the distance, her name is at the base of this one, -Corallie Mallet's His, on the other side of the aisle, is a closer view of garden inhabitants, Butterflies, Birds, flowers and at the top a WBC hive with bees flying around.

If ever you go to Saunton, do call in; the stained glass window of St Anne is beautiful too. Very close to the road and yet it is an oasis of peace.

Kay Thomas

Presentation of Trophies won at the Branch Honey Show

At our recent AGM, Chris presented the trophies to this year's Branch Honey Show winners with his congratulations.

The Hustwayte Plate was awarded to Chrissie Preece.

The Croyde Cup for Run Honey went to John Hoyle, Jeff Orr was awarded both the Bernard Pritchard and Chris Utting Trophies. Jack Mummery received the Branch Trophy, the Pam Yeo Jenne Trophy, the Beryl Rose Bowl, the Weaver Trophy and The Blue Ribbon.



Jack Mummery



John Hoyle



Jeff Orr



Chrissie Preece



Remembering Friends

The weather was very kind to us when Jean and friends met at Horestone to unveil the plaques in memory of Dave Morris and Mel Browne.

We planted aconites around the tree and all appreciate that we have a quiet place to sit and remember our friends and enjoy the apiary.

Hello from your new Events Co-ordinator, Jeff Orr

With much excitement and perhaps a little trepidation, I've taken over from Barbara Carlyle as your events coordinator. Events are important to the Branch for a number of reasons: they raise public awareness of bees and the branch; help recruit new members; promote our bee keeping courses; and, thanks to the huge effort put in by Barbara and her helpers, can contribute significantly to branch funds. Events can also offer members an outlet for any spare honey and wax.

Although we haven't agreed next year's event list yet, we will no doubt be hosting our Branch Honey Show at St John's as usual but it is likely to be in September to fit in with the Barnstable Horticultural Society's change of dates. We may also be going to the North Devon Show and events at Rosemoor and Dowland.

However, I would like to try some different events next year but my idea of going to the Chelsea Flower Show was perhaps a bit ambitious. So I'm looking for suggestions for other events we could attend, preferably in North Devon. Of course, any offers to help would also be very gratefully received.

Please e mail me ideas or offers of help to jeffjorr@aol.com or come along to Horestone and have a chat.

Notes from Horestone

This time last year we had to close the apiary on 23rd November as the snow and ice of winter had already set in. This November the weather has been wet and mild so what will our bees be doing so are they eating their way through their stores? We have already hefted the colonies and checked that they are protected against the worst of the weather, mice guards are on and the grounds have been tidied.

We have already started our plans for 2012 so reflecting on what we have achieved and learned in 2011 and what we could do about those aspects we think could be improved. Our team leaders for the new season will be Peter Warrilow for the White Team, Kay Thomas for the Blue Team, Barbara Carlyle for the Green Team and Mel Wing for the Red Team. Julie will be looking after a Beginners corner and next years QR by Jeff Orr. All the team leaders will have assistants. We plan to share out other necessary work so that we all get the chance to learn and develop our beekeeping skills as well as feeling we are part of something rather special. We hope next year to have a social/work afternoon on the last Sunday of every month starting on Sunday 25th March at about 1.30pm. Hopefully those of you who cannot make Tuesday's could join us then instead. It will also be an opportunity for you to use the library.

Next week will be Mince Pie Tuesday, our last meeting of the year. We don't plan to do much in the way of work, just a few mince pies and a chat by the warmth of the pot bellied stove. About 1.30 pm ish.

Weather permitting we will start our Tuesday afternoons again on 10th January. If the weather is bad please check your emails that morning to check that we haven't had to cancel.

THE LIBRARY AT HORESTONE

Barbara and I did finally manage to do a stock take in early November and update all the library records, new Author and Subject catalogues available to help you choose.

The downside of a stock take is realising that some books have gone missing and we've had to write 3 books off as irretrievable which is a pity. Thanks to people who admitted to losing a book and have kindly replaced it.

The librarians do have to assume that the last name on the card is the person who had and has mislaid a book

We have added 10 new books this year including Prof. Tom Seeley's latest book about Honeybee Democracy, a fascinating read.

Please make full use of the library and contact Barbara or me if you have any queries.

Julie

SUBSCRIPTION RENEWAL

Its that time of year again for the renewal of your membership. It would save your membership secretary, and the magazine distributor a lot of time and trouble if you renew promptly. It also ensures that your insurance and other benefits run without a break.

**Best wishes and a very Happy Christmas to all
Derek Hon Treasurer**

North Devon Branch of the Devon Beekeepers Association (DBKA)

UK Registered Charity Number 270675

Membership is open to anyone keeping bees or having an interest in the craft of beekeeping. It is usual for membership to be through one of the branches. Membership of DBKA also gives automatic membership of the British Beekeepers Association (BBKA). The annual subscription is payable in advance and runs from January 1 to December 31.

Full BBKA membership benefits include - information and advice on beekeeping, public and products liability insurance for members, the BBKA News and Brood Diseases Insurance through BDI Ltd.

Full DBKA membership benefits include - ðBeekeepingø(the Association journal), local honey labelling scheme, representation at BBKA. The DBKA encourages and supports its members to participate in the BBKA examination structures.

Branch membership benefits include - access to the branch library, hire of equipment held by local branch, apiary meetings and winter lectures (all subject to availability).

Membership Classes - A summary of classes are as follows:

1. **Full, Registered Members** - for those who keep bees and wish to take a full part in all aspects of the DBKA.
2. **Partner Members** - for those who reside as a second member of the same household as a Registered Member. Partner Members enjoy all the rights of full membership, but will not receive the BBKA News or ðBeekeepingøjournal.
3. **Associate Members** - for those who are generally interested in the craft and wish to support the DBKA. Associate Members will not be registered as beekeepers with the BBKA and not receive BBKA News or ðBeekeepingø
4. **Country Members** ó for those who wish to belong to a branch, but do not require BDI, or BBKA public and product liability insurance. Country Members do not have any voting rights, but will receive copies of the BBKA News and ðBeekeepingøjournal.

Bee Diseases Insurance (through BDI Ltd) covers losses due to notifiable bee diseases. Insurance for three colonies is included in your subscription. Members with more than 3 hives are required to increase the insurance component of their subscription as per list (shown overleaf); in any case, Members are advised to read the terms and conditions of this insurance before subscribing to ensure that the cover and terms are appropriate for their situation.

Gift Aid

As a registered charity DBKA can arrange for members to Gift Aid their subscriptions and other donations to the DBKA. This is a considerable financial advantage to branches as it adds over £6 to every full membership subscription paid under the scheme. The whole of this sum is returned to the Memberø branch. To qualify for this scheme, you simply sign to say that you have paid UK tax (to cover the tax the charity will reclaim) and wish your subscriptions and any donations you make to be treated as Gift Aid donations until you notify otherwise.

Privacy

Subscribing as a Fully Registered, Partner or Country Member will (by definition) mean that you will go on the list of registered beekeepers held by the British Beekeepers Association. In addition, your name and address will appear in the DBKA Yearbook. Please indicate on the form if you would like to exclude your email address from the DBKA Yearbook or do NOT want to have your details passed to the National Bee Unit for registration on Bee-Base.

Registration on BeeBase entitles you to free guidance sheets and automatic notification of notifiable bee diseases in your area.

DEVON BEEKEEPERS' ASSOCIATION

Registered Charity Number 270675 – Founded 1875

North Devon Branch Membership Combined Subscription and Gift Declaration 2012

(PLEASE COMPLETE IN BLOCK CAPITALS)

Name

Address

..

Postcode Telephone

E-Mail

Please tick here () to exclude your e-mail address from year book

Full Member - (Name) £33.00 * £

Country Member (Name.....) £21.00* £

Joint Member: - (Name) £15.20 £

Associate Member: - (Name) £ 3.30 £

Extra Bee Disease Insurance for additional hives (see chart below) £

Voluntary Contribution to North Devon Branch funds £

Voluntary Contribution to British Beekeepers Association (BBKA) £

Total £

* includes BDI for up to 3 hives.

Please tick here () if you do not wish your details to be passed to National Bee Unit

Signed..... Dated.....

Additional Bee Insurance

Bee Disease Insurance (BDI) covers losses due to modifiable diseases. Insurance for three (3) colonies is included in the Registered & Partner Members' subscriptions. Use the table below to calculate the additional premium payable if you wish to insure more than three colonies. Special terms are available for members with forty or more colonies.

Number of colonies	Additional cost	Number of colonies	Additional cost	Number of colonies	Additional cost
4 - 5	£2.00	11 - 15	£7.75	21 - 25	£11.10
6 - 10	£5.25	16 - 20	£9.50	26 - 39	£11.50 plus 50p per colony over 25

Gift Declaration (for those who have not already gift aided their subscriptions) **Aid**

I pay income tax at the standard rate and wish my subscription and any donations I make to be treated donations until I notify you otherwise.

Signed..... Dated.....

Please return completed form with cheque payable to DBKA North Devon Branch to Membership secretary 6 Richards Close, Bideford EX39 3EN or hand to Branch Treasurer.

BEES AND BRITISH AIRWAYS

A British Airways jumbo jet was flying from Singapore to London Heathrow ó doing this route the plane flies quite a long way north where the curvature of the earth is less.

There were several sealed boxes of bees on board, possibly having come originally from Australia. They were stowed in the hold of the aircraft along with the passengers' luggage and the rest of the cargo.

When the aeroplane was over Siberia the 'over heating/fire in the hold' warning lights came on - which means that the sprinkler system would also be activated. The crew were alerted and they did all the necessary checks which showed nothing untoward, so thinking it must be a false alarm they carried on. Some minutes later the same thing happened again and it's against air regulations to ignore two fire warnings, so then it was necessary to land somewhere and investigate properly.

It's difficult to find a airport in Siberia which has the length of runway needed to land a jumbo jet, but finally a suitable one was found although it was a military airfield. They landed the jet safely and opened the hold to find out what the problem was ó the bees of course - keeping themselves warm in their boxes and so sending the general temperature in the hold up and therefore activating the 'fire in the hold' light!

Unfortunately a fully loaded jumbo jet is too heavy to take off on the length of runway available, so a smaller plane had to be sent for and the passengers needed to be unloaded. The military airfield had no steps that would reach the doors of the jumbo jet so to get the passengers off the plane they had to use a cherry picker to unload them one by one and let them wait in a hanger ó unheated and with very few facilities! Needless to say the passengers were very fed up.

The whole operation took some time and finally after 6 hours the replacement 747 aeroplane arrived, the passengers were boarded and it flew off towards London. The jumbo jet, now without its passenger load, took off and as it flew faster than the 747 it arrived at Heathrow with luggage, crew, and bees safe and intact, some hour and a half before the replacement plane got there!

Chrissie

Aminopyralid still active?

taken from Garden Organic

(we were discussing this at Horestone the other week, and yes I know bees don't consume herbicides directly and there is no proof that they harm them!?! But it is the fact that it emphasis just how we are being misled by the chemical manufacturers about the persistence of all these toxic products. Julie)

Aminopyralid

Over 4 years ago, maybe even five, I took delivery of a load of farmyard manure at my allotment. The farmer had used aminopyralid weedkiller on his pasture, as I quickly found out! Since then the heap has not been covered and I have gradually used it up by spreading it in autumn to allow the winter rains to do their work. This year, I have planted potatoes where the heap used to be and the tops have come up deformed! That is far longer than I was led to believe it was active.

E. Jones, by email.

Silent Killer Still At Large

Over the past few years, manure contaminated with the extremely persistent weedkiller, aminopyralid, has been damaging vegetable crops on allotments and gardens across the country. Users of horse and cattle manure need to be aware that the problem still exists. If you have an old heap of contaminated manure, grow a test crop of tomato seedlings on it before risking it on the land. Talk to your manure supplier before you purchase any this winter. For more information, go to gardenorganic.org.uk/tow

Bee Poem

I am stripey and I am wipey
When I am visiting the flowers
I dust and dive,
My wings sing buzz
For hours
And ours
Is a happy old hive.
I live in a colony.
I like to get all polleny.

This poem comes from a poetry book by John Hegley. It would make a good Christmas present for someone! I think it's called 'My Dog is a Carrot'

Nigel Slater's classic hot toddy recipe

The antidote to man flu

(Nigel Slater, The Observer, Sunday 13th March, 2011)

As Victoria Moor puts it in *How to Drink*, 'The vitamin C for health, the honey to soothe, the alcohol to numb'.

This steamy mixture of whisky, cloves, cinnamon, lemon juice and honey is the perfect answer to man-flu or the end of winter cold and is far more palatable than those bitter over-the-counter potions.

The Recipe:

Put 1 tsp of honey and a measure of whisky in a mug or heatproof glass. Add two cloves and half a cinnamon stick then top up with just-off-the-boil water. Stir in a slice of lemon and just enough lemon juice to balance the sweetness of the honey. Drink as soon as it doesn't burn your lips.

The Trick: go easy on the cloves. Use water that is just off the boil. Putting a spoon in the glass will prevent it cracking as you pour the water in. Use a lightly flavoured honey so it doesn't make your toddy taste like cough mixture. Drink while it is still quite hot it will be more soothing that way. Do not take at the same time as any other medicine.

The Twist: Some people suggest rum as an alternative. A couple of crushed juniper berries will add an aromatic citrus hit. Try a slice of apple in the drink. It will soak up the flavours, soften in the heat, and can be eaten when you get to the end a bit like mulled cider. Allspice berries can be included with the cloves.

Winter Lecture

Ruth Neal from Holsworthy, joined us and gave a lively and interesting talk on the history and present day DBKA Bees and Honey Marquee at the Devon Show. Ruth has been keeping bees for 7 years and has been the Chairman of the DBKA Show Committee for the last 2 years she plans to continue for one more year before handing the job over. She will be a very hard act to follow as her energy and enthusiasm is enormous.

The ethos of the County Shows are competition - for each area to achieve the most excellent of standards. To achieve an award at the Devon County Show is the highest accolade and the Bees and Honey Marquee has, for the second year running, won the Gold Medal for the Most Attractive Showground Feature.

Ruth described the different features that take part in the event, ie Taste of Honey, Honey Sales, Information, Candle Rolling, Observation Hive plus all the area entries for Show classes. Ruth praised the hard work and dedication of the teams who set up and run the Marquee and finally return the marquee to its pristine state before packing the equipment away till the following year.

Ruth described hosting a visit from Kirstie Allsopp, the camera crew and production team for a Chanel 4 Show. Kirstie enjoyed herself and despite arriving in a very attractive dress not at all suitable for beekeeping, managed to squash it all down into a beesuit to try some hands-on beekeeping.

We finished the evening with a bit of role playing - how to respond to the enquiring public in a way designed not to put them off all things beekeeping. One or two of our role players should think about a career on the stage, and the rest should just stick to beekeeping.

It was a very enjoyable evening and we were left amazed at the sheer scale of the endeavour at the Devon County Show and full of admiration for those who organise it. The next Show in 2012 is 17th-19th May. If you would like to join the team and help out please contact Ruth or her husband Barry - email address is in the year book.

Sylvia Barber, Foxpark, Waddicombe, Dulverton, Somerset, TA22 9RX (01398 341624)

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All contributions welcome, copy by 23rd of month for publication in following month's newsletter.

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