



**FEDERATION OF
BERKSHIRE BEEKEEPERS ASSOCIATIONS**

President: Miss Margery Cooper

July 2004
Number 577

Hon. Secretary
William Napper
56, Lamorna Crescent,
Tilehurst, Reading.
Berkshire. RG31 5WF.
Tel: 0790 6903413

The Federation, its Council and its Officers cannot be held responsible for the views expressed in the Newsletter or possible errors.

E-mail:- berksbees@btopenworld.com

Hon. Editor
R.F.Crocker
25 Shiplake Bottom
Peppard Common,
Oxon RG9 5HH
(0118 972 2315)

Future Events

17 th -18 th July 2004	Devon Weekend Exeter	
30 th September 2004	Federation Lecture & Honey Show. Charvil (Claire Waring)	

You are invited

To The

**Berkshire Federation Lecture
And Honey Show**

Speaker: Claire Waring

Where?

CHARVIL VILLAGE HALL,
CHARVIL

When? September 30th 2004

Time? 7.30pm

Admission?

Put it in your diary now! Show schedules and entry forms, which include special classes for children under 14, accompany this Newsletter.

THE APIARY IN JULY

Show time is approaching so now is the time to select your entries as you extract. Have your show schedules available to make sure that your entries comply with requirements. The normal advice is "Know your judges", this information should be in the schedule which should be included with this newsletter, if it is not, contact Hazel Blackburn on 01189 479450

FROM THE FEDERATION GENERAL SECRETARY: -

At the Federation Council Meeting on 18th May, the subject of newsletter distribution came up for discussion. If you would prefer to receive your newsletter by e-mail rather than by standard post, please make your request through your Association Secretary. Although e-mail and postal newsletters would be sent out at the same time, the main advantage would be a reduction in your Association's postal costs each month, which can't be bad.

You may have noticed in your copy of BBKA News for April that the BBKA now have on offer a series of warning posters to give notice to the general public of the "potential danger of bees in the vicinity". These signs could go some way towards covering you in these days of litigation as it "may well negate or minimise any claim about neglectful beekeeping". The downside is that it would draw attention to the presence of member's out-apiaries leaving them open to the threat of potential theft or vandalism!

The next Federation Council Meeting will be on August 17th, so if you have any items which you would like to be brought up at the meeting, please let us know.

Finally don't forget the Federation Honey Show on September 30th at Charvil. Your attendance and participation will make all the difference.

William Napper

Your Regional Bee Inspectors are: -

Southern Region: - Mr. Ian Homer.

Fax/Telephone number: 01308 482 161

South Eastern Region: - Mr. Alan Byham

Fax/Telephone number: 020 8571 6450

FROM THE EDITOR

The NBU are conducting a very useful survey into bee viruses. We know about nosema or should do, but now, by taking part in the NBU research, we can have our bees examined for the presence of any adult bee viruses FREE OF CHARGE. Extracts from the NBU website are appended below. <http://www.csl.gov.uk/science/orga n/environ/bee/>

Ron Crocker

TAQMAN VIRUS SURVEY

Would you like to take part in some original research?

The NBU are launching an investigation into the occurrence of viruses in honeybee colonies throughout England and Wales, using a novel method for virus detection called **TaqMan®**. We aim to survey honeybees from all around this large geographical area, and would like beekeepers to help by taking samples of adult bees, then sending them to the NBU.

What is involved?

The procedure is very simple. You are provided with a small plastic bottle containing a small volume of 70% alcohol. All you need to do is to scoop between 10-20 bees into the bottle, then send it to the NBU. There is also a short form to fill in.

Will I get to know the results?

The results for each beekeeper will be sent to them, so they know which viruses were present in the sample submitted. Any feedback will include which viruses were tested for and whether they were present or not. However, due to the nature of the experiment, you may not receive the results for a few months, but you will be told what we find.

If there is a positive result, does this mean my bees might be subject to disease controls?

No. None of the viruses are currently notifiable, so there are no statutory controls. Your bees will only be tested for the viruses, not for any other disorders.

I would like to be involved. What do I do now?

All you need to do is notify the NBU that you would like to take part in the experiment. (If you receive your News by e-mail you can [click here](#) to send an e-mail), stating your **name, address** and **NBU identification number** (if known). You will be sent a sampling bottle (or more if requested), a form and full instructions. If you have any questions, just contact us at the same address.

SLOUGH AND DISTRICT BEEKEEPERS' SOCIETY

Incorporating Windsor, Maidenhead and adjoining communities.

Arrangements have been made to hold the Society's 60th Anniversary Supper on 14th August at 7.30pm at Maidenhead Rowing Club, River Road, Taplow (near Maidenhead Bridge). The price is £18 per head and this provides a four-course menu. Details are set out for members and friends in the enclosed flyer. Members of other Associations will be most welcome to join this celebration and should contact Michael Sheasby on 01753 642656 before the end of July.

Really not a lot to report from the apiary except that we have had to carry out swarm control on just about all the colonies. The Dartington colony appears to be building up fast and now has 2 honey boxes added. Interested members should come to an apiary meeting to see this new hive design in operation and judge the benefits for themselves. The dates for the remainder of the year are 11th and 25th of July and the 8th of August. If you have not been there before, Jim will be pleased to give you directions, just call him on 01628 783228.

July sees the 100th Annual Show of the Royal Windsor Rose & Horticultural Society, which this year is being held at St George's School, Windsor Castle (entrance in Datchet Road) on 17 July. This includes five Honey Classes with sections for light, medium, dark and granulated or creamed honeys and for a honey cake to a specified recipe. Schedules from Mrs Garrett, telephone 01753 852352. Will there be a Royal Visitor at this 100th show? This is your chance to put into practice the tips learnt at our Honey Show.

The annual Windsor Allotment and Home Gardens Association show and fete will be held at Gardeners Hall, St Leonards Road, Windsor on Saturday 28th August 2004. There will be nine honey classes here and schedules are available from Mr Grant, telephone 01753 853657.

Newsletter items: Joy Dodson Burnham (01628) 664091
Secretary: Michael Sheasby Farnham Common (01753) 642656

READING and DISTRICT BEEKEEPERS ASSOCIATION

On Sunday 23rd May Members and friends of Reading BKA met at Firgrove Manor near Eversley where Robert Kiff and Steve Blinstrub have a joint out-apiary in near ideal situation behind secure locked gates in the manor's currently non-productive orchard in a district of woodlands, small holdings and thinly spread residences.

The logistics of this joint venture are excellent with each box and frame clearly marked as to ownership, some good choices having been made on equipment with Commercial brood and wire excluders etc. As members arrived a cry of "swarm, swarm!" was heard, indeed a modest swarm was circling the area, settling apparently fairly firmly high-up in an oak, where it stayed long enough for a hopeful bait hive to be placed and to be photographed but had gone again by the time we had finished our work on the five hives under inspection. There has been some swarming this season, and a swarm had been hived-off recently with little sign of the queen getting into action. Another colony had an interesting history as it began last season when Robert and Steve collected it from a ventilation space inside the walls of a house in Reading, tying the combs onto frames, the string being successfully withdrawn later. This colony had brood and eggs and was looking good, work was done to move the original frames towards outer area of the of the Commercial brood box as they are National deep frames and eventually will be replaced. A super of honey was taken from here and our demonstrator showed the advisable way of removing frames suspected of being rape-honey just before full capping to reduce risk of granulation in the comb. Other colonies inspected will require re-inspection in 7-9 days to solve the issue of a suspected drone layer or laying worker and to check the possible need for eggs to be introduced to a colony which may or may not have a virgin or non laying queen, no brood being evident.

We completed our morning with refreshments and a tour of the grounds of the 17th-18th century Firgrove Manor, currently owned by a member of Steve's family who is improving the multi occupancy situation of the house and grounds which have a large fishing lake, a dew pond, a lime tree walk, stables in fifteen acres of sparsely occupied parkland. What a super site to have an apiary!

With many thanks to Messrs Kiff and Blinstrub and to all who attended.

Our July meeting is the highlight of Reading BKA's summer programme, when Tim and Hilary Whitaker open their gardens to us at Mapledurham on Sunday 11th July at 11.30 for apiary inspection followed by a much anticipated barbecue. Members or friends requiring more information or a lift please contact the secretary Robert Kiff, Mike Blackburn or Jon. Davey.

Secretary: Mr. R. Kiff, 114 Silverdale Road, Earley, Reading RG6 7LU Tel. 0118 966 5358

WOKINGHAM & DISTRICT BEEKEEPERS ASSOCIATION

Rosemary's Book of the month

"Beemasters of the Past"

Nearly all our books about beekeeping refer to the history of the craft and the men who patiently studied bees over the centuries and the ingenious inventors who helped to shape things as they are today.

Who were these guys? Why did they do what they did? Victor Dodd's little book, "Beemasters of the Past" has the answers.

Nearly half the book is about the early pioneers who were keeping bees at the start of the scientific age and who wanted to know what really goes on in a hive as opposed to all the folklore that was believed at the time. He tells you about Charles Butler who wrote the first book about beekeeping in English in the early sixteen-hundreds, about Swammerdam's incredibly accurate drawings of the bee's anatomy, about Huber who was blind but was nevertheless the man who established that the queen mates outside the hive with the drones in hot pursuit

There is a chapter on Langstroth and his friendship with A.I. Root and their place in American beekeeping, and the book moves on to the turn of the century and William Broughton Carr who invented the WBC hive and Samuel Simmins whose writings guided so many beekeepers in this country at the time.

The book is an interesting tribute to all the people who have contributed to the development of beekeeping from a clumsy village craft based largely on myth and superstition to the sophisticated science it is today.

Apiary visits

Members are invited to inspect David Geen's hives on Sunday 27th June from 3:00pm. Please call 0118 978 7979 to confirm attendance and for directions.

Members are also invited to Bob Loades' hives on Sunday 11th July from 3.00pm. Please call 0118 961 9631 to confirm attendance and for directions.


Secretary John Edwards 0118 934 0238

Newsletter "Deadline": - - Contributions, this includes **E-mails**, to arrive with the Editor by the **FIRST POST** (Around 10.00am) on the First of the Month for the Following Month

To enable the Advertisement Manager to place adverts with the Editor for the 1st of the month deadline; adverts should be sent well before this time.

ADVERTISEMENT ENTRIES: - 2 Lines for £1.00. Commercial, £1.00 per line, together with your cheque made payable to FBBKA. To be sent to the Advertisement Manager: -
Mr. Michael Blackburn, M.B. Photography, 41 Prospect Street, Caversham, Reading, RG4 8JV. Telephone: - (0118) 947 9450/5451

Honey for sale, surplus to requirement in 30lb containers at £1.25 / lb Telephone. 0118 9479450

	BERKSHIRE MOBILE WELDING <i>Carrey Salvous</i>	Mobile: 07951 138512	
		RESTORATIONS M.O.T. WORK PANELS FITTED	LIGHT FABRICATIONS REPAIRS, GATES & RAILINGS SHOT BLASTING



NATIONAL BEE UNIT - SOUTHERN REGION

Around and about the region

June 2004

I had never intended this slot to be solely about the weather but, once again, we cannot allow the last few months to pass without comment. Never before have I seen blackthorn in flower over 5 separate months (Jan – May inclusive) and many people have commented that they have never seen so much blossom before. One beekeeper told me yesterday (May 30th) that he had so far extracted 350lbs of honey from just 8 colonies and this in an area that is not blessed with oil seed rape. We may grumble about our weather but at this rate our main problem is going to be getting the honey extracted quickly enough!

But do remember that old enemy "The June Gap". The flow surely cannot continue as it has and when it does ease, do make sure that there are sufficient stores to get your bees through to the summer flow.

Ian Homer

A New Approach to EFB.

Modified procedures are being introduced this season to deal with European Foul Brood (EFB). Until now strong or lightly infected colonies have been treated with oxytetracycline (OTC), while small or heavily diseased colonies, unlikely to respond to treatment, have been destroyed.

Modern analytical techniques are becoming increasingly sensitive and recent work has shown that OTC residues remain detectable in honey substantially beyond the usual eight-week standstill period. Whilst these residues are not considered harmful to human health, legislation does not permit any detectable residues to be present in honey offered for consumption. In order to limit the scope for antibiotic residues in harvested honey entering the food chain, new procedures have been adopted which will still maintain effective disease control.

Inspectors will offer three options if EFB is identified, though the suitability of each option will depend on the time of year, level of infection in the affected colonies and colony strength.

- Option 1. Compulsory **destruction for severely infected or weak colonies:** Infected apiaries will be placed under standstill for six weeks, after which a follow-up inspection will take place to ensure there is no recurrence of the disease.
- Option 2. Application of **“shook swarm” without antibiotic:** Trials on the efficacy of the shook swarm technique, although not yet concluded, have indicated it to be a

promising method of control. The procedure will involve removing and destroying all the infected brood combs (a potential source of re-infection) from a colony and shaking the remaining adult bees on to fresh wax foundation in new or sterilised brood boxes. Infected apiaries will be placed under standstill for six weeks after which a follow-up inspection will take place to ensure there is no recurrence of the disease.

- Option 3. Conventional **OTC treatment with modified standstill, honey-harvesting and storage arrangements:** OTC will be applied in the normal way. If EFB does not recur within six weeks after treatment, the standstill will be lifted allowing colony movement. The withdrawal period for the honey produced on treated colonies will be extended to six months to allow residues to breakdown before consumption or sale. Licences may be made available to harvest honey on colonies in infected apiaries prior to OTC treatment. The NBU will issue instructions about separate extraction and storage of honey. Affected beekeepers will themselves be responsible for arrangements to ensure that any honey removed from treated colonies is labelled, kept separate and stored for six months before use. Bee inspectors will make spot checks and penalties could ensue if licensing conditions are not followed.

The bee health inspectorate is on hand to provide practical advice on the appropriate options for your situation to deal with EFB, minimise spread and the risks of disease recurrence.

Southern Region Associations Day 2004

“Worth giving up a Sunday for” was one comment heard after the event and the fact that every delegate said “yes, do it again” is a measure of just how valuable and enjoyable the day proved to be.

An eclectic mix of beekeepers new and old fully involved themselves in discussion of a variety of topics including the new procedures for dealing with AFB and EFB this year, the value and role of the Disease Liaison Contact scheme, the possible threat posed to UK beekeeping by the Small Hive Beetle and the range of current research activities at the NBU.

By popular demand however, some changes will be made for next year – the event will be held in March rather than April!

Going Out at the Top.

Nasser Hussain, one time England cricket captain, reportedly retired because he did not want his career to become an anti-climax.

And so it is with bee inspectors. At the end of this season, Brian Roberts, England's longest serving bee inspector, will be retiring (judging by the number of cases of EFB Brian is still finding, he is probably also England's top scorer!).

Brian first took up his hive tool professionally way back in 1962 and has untiringly served the beekeepers of Dorset and surrounding localities ever since.

To mark Brian's long career, we will be holding a social event towards the end of September and all beekeepers, current and former bee inspectors are invited to attend. The details have yet to be worked out but will be passed to all associations with whom Brian has contact as soon as they are confirmed. Further information can also be obtained by contacting me directly.

Pyrethroid Resistant Varroa

During this season, pyrethroid resistant varroa mites have been found in more new areas. They are apparently well entrenched in an extensive area of Somerset and have very recently also been found in the Sandwich area of Kent. However, we are unable to confirm reports that they have been identified in the Dorchester area of Dorset; the National Bee Unit have received no report forms or sample material which would enable us to confirm this and our enquiries to date suggest that the reports are as a result of a misunderstanding.

This does not of course mean that resistance is not present in Southern Region - all beekeepers should, in addition to routinely monitoring to assess mite populations, aim to sample at least a proportion of their colonies to detect resistance. Only by doing this will you be able to ascertain what varroa treatment will be appropriate – continued use of pyrethroids after resistance has developed will be a waste of both your time and your money. Most association secretaries have monitoring kits available but if your association does not have any, please contact me and I will make one available. The NBU website (www.nationalbeeunit.com) contains more information about pyrethroid resistance, including distribution maps showing the location of all confirmed cases.

Ian R. Homer, CSL Regional Bee Inspector – Southern Region,
5, Maltes Cottages, Litton Cheney, DORCHESTER, Dorset, DT2 9AE
Tel/Fax: 01308 482 161 Mobile 07778 846 335 e-mail: i.homer@csl.gov.uk
www.nationalbeeunit.com