



# FEDERATION OF BERKSHIRE BEEKEEPERS ASSOCIATIONS

President: Miss Margery Cooper

September 2003  
Number 568

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

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Hon. Editor  
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## Future Events

13th-15th November 2003	The National Honey Show	
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## From the Federation General Secretary:

### The Federation Honey Show Oct 11<sup>th</sup>:

Schedules and map are included with this Newsletter. Staging of exhibits commence at 10.00am

The afternoon lecture, by Dr. Rose Cooper of the University Of Wales Institute, Cardiff, on the healing properties of honey, including recent clinical findings and planned future research, is scheduled for 2.15pm.

Please see the Programme and map at the end of the Newsletter.

What? Enter a show, and show my honey  
 Come on now, don't try to be funny  
 You know I just don't have the time  
 All that preparation and pantomime  
 I've got to make sure it's good enough to sell  
 Yes, I know if it's that good I could show it as well  
 Yes, I've some in the comb, some set, some runny  
 And some swarm catching photos that are pretty funny  
 O.K. ! Maybe I could find time to bake

A "stick to the recipe" honey cake

Alright! Alright! I'll give it a go

If it'll keep you quiet, I'll enter the show



Who knows? I might even win!

WJN

With this month's Newsletter you should receive a leaflet entitled  
"Beekeeping In Berkshire".

This leaflet is intended to promote beekeeping in our area and to be  
made available at shows, in libraries etc.

Your particular copy has been sent to you for two reasons: -

1. To read through it yourself and pass back any comments to our Newsletter Editor regarding content and layout.
2. To pass the leaflet on to any colleagues or friends who may be interested in beekeeping, in the hope that the leaflet will do the job it was produced for.

Also sent with this month's newsletter is a flyer for our own Autumn Event on October 11th, with programme timings, map etc. Mark it on your calendar, write in your diary and tie a knot in your hankie.

I look forward to seeing you there.

Sandra Napper

## IN THE APIARY: SEPTEMBER

**THIS MONTH** - As I write this my supers are full for the third time and it looks like a bumper crop. I must hurry to get this lot off before I treat against Varroa. I shan't extract it all at once but I do need an empty super on each hive (to give plenty of room while I am treating). Whilst I had no swarms in July there is still the outside chance of setting one off. There is also probably a trickle of honey coming in and it is worth having something for them to put it in. Now that the pressure is off we can take stock and make plans for the winter.

-Bring home any weak colonies from out apiaries so that you can unite or feed them now and supervise them conveniently during the winter.

-If you operate single small brood chambers take supers off while feeding and make sure that you feed enough to fill all the spare space in the brood chamber. You don't want any ivy honey in there (see later).

-Varroa treatment should have reduced counts to the absolute minimum, such that you shouldn't see any mites. If you do, check for pyrethroid resistance. Your Association secretary should have the necessary test kit and instructions.

-Wax moth is still active. If you have any brood combs in store make sure that they are protected with PDB crystals or, better still, mothballs. Any PDB crystals that you add now will have evaporated by next spring. Crushed mothballs will still be there and can be reused for several years.

**MAIN TOPIC Late Honey.** Over the last few years our autumns have been becoming wetter and warmer. 2002 was typical rather than exceptional. We had a small crop of honeydew in late August and early September and after that. I got six full supers of ivy honey.

A small amount of honeydew darkens the main crop honey and, if there is sufficient to extract separately, will give you some fresh dark honey to show (how many of those jars of dark honey on the show bench do we suspect have been there year after year?).

Ivy honey can be an absolute curse since it sets so quickly we wonder how the bees get time to regurgitate it. I virtually had to chisel my crop out of the frames this year. Nevertheless, we are going to get it whether we like it or not so we might as well make a virtue of it. We don't want it rock hard down in the brood chambers so the only other place is a super. After the main crop sort through the used combs and concentrate all the unevenly drawn, old, discoloured, moth-eaten frames in a minimum of supers. These you ought to throw away but they might as well have one last moment of glory. Put them immediately above the queen excluder and pile the rest on top for the bees to clean out. The cleanings will be taken down into the brood chamber and the dry supers can then be removed leaving a single super of tat in place.

The honeydew will be stored here and can be extracted if there is enough. If not, the ivy will be stored with it and can be removed as late as the third week in October. By this time it will be rock hard and the whole lot can be hacked out and melted down on the uncapping tray.

Of course it will set again, almost immediately, but the set is very fine and is ideal for seeding summer honey at the rate of one part ivy to two parts summer. Clear any coarse set honey from the summer crop, and then gently heat the ivy honey until it is still opaque but can be thoroughly stirred. Mix both and jar up quickly. Make sure you don't leave any small lumps of ivy honey. These have a distinctly different colour and flavour and will rise to the top of the jar and cause some complaint.

Garulus.

#### **From the Editor:**

We are currently looking for a replacement for "Garulus". If have at least four years practical experience and an ability to crib from other beekeeping sources (without infringing copyright) then please contact the Editor, the General Secretary or your own Secretary. Alternatively, suggest someone who you think could do the job but are too modest to come forward.

Where can I get queens? I have three strong colonies that are queenless and with no brood.

Answer! Your bees are probably not queenless but may have ceased laying to reduce the hive population for the winter. Take advantage of the situation and do your Varroa treatment now while there is no brood in which the mite can enter. Join your local Association where you will find members keen to help.

When I forecasted a hot August and an accompanying clover honey flow I did not anticipate the high temperatures that we have had. This, of course, has resulted in the clover drying up, consequently the flow is reduced, and indeed in many cases the clover and many other sources of nectar have died.

R.F.Crocker

#### **Obituary: Dickie Bird.**

The death of "Dickie Bird", as he was affectionately known, occurred in July.

I first met him in the 1950's as he was taking up beekeeping being encouraged so to do by his employer who owned and ran a wholesale pharmaceutical business. Dick was his boss's "right hand" man. On his boss's retirement the firm was taken over by Vestric – a national company, Dick becoming manager of their Reading branch.

Dick soon became involved in both Reading and County Associations. At various times he was Chairman, later President of Reading and Secretary of the Berkshire Federation for quite a few years.

He lived and kept his bees at Three Mile Cross, a purely domestic beekeeper with four or five colonies at the most. He supported shows, most of his honey being dark he achieved success in the appropriate classes. He also excelled with sections and frames of honey. Dick went on to become a well-respected judge of honey at local shows.

Dick's wife died some years ago, he continued to look after himself, doing his own shopping and washing etc.

He is remembered as a true gentleman, not one to push himself forward but reliable and dedicated in all he did.

George Hawthorne

**Your Regional Bee Inspectors are: -**

Southern Region: - Mr. Ian Homer.

Fax/Telephone number: 01308 482 161

South Eastern Region: - Mr. James Morton

Fax/Telephone number: 020 8571 6450

**Appointed Bee Inspectors: -**

Mr. David Purchase: - Hampshire &amp; Berkshire:

Telephone number: 01256 781288

Mr. Will Messenger: -. Oxfordshire &amp; South Bucks:

Telephone number: 01608 674429

**Disease:****FOULBROOD July 18th 2003**

Number of infected apiaries in 10km squares

[Number in brackets ( ) = Number of infected colonies]

SU29 Buscot	SU39 Stanford in the Vale	SU49 West Abingdon	SU59 Dorchester <b>A 2:2</b> <b>E 1:1</b>	SU69 Benson	SU79 Stokenchurch	SU89 High Wycombe	SU99 Amersham	TQ09 Rickmansworth
SU28 Bishopstone	SU38 Letcombe Regis	SU48 East Wantage	SU58 Blewbury	SU68 East Wallingford <b>E 1:2</b>	SU78 Henley on Thames <b>E 2:4</b>	SU88 Marlow	SU98 North Slough	TQ08 Uxbridge
SU27 Aldbourne	SU37 Lambourn	SU47 Chieveley	SU57 Yattendon	SU67 Pangbourne	SU77 Reading	SU87 White Waltham	SU97 Windsor <b>E 2:6</b>	TQ07 Staines
SU26 Great Bedwyn	SU36 Inkpen	SU46 Newbury	SU56 Thatcham	SU66 Burghfield Com- mon	SU76 Shinfield	SU86 Crowthorne	SU96 Ascot	TQ06 Weybridge
SU25 Ludgershall	SU35 Hurstbourne Tarrant	SU45 Litchfield	SU55 Kingsclere	SU65 Basingstoke	SU75 Hook	SU85 Farnborough	SU95 West Guildford	TQ05

18.07.03

**SLOUGH AND DISTRICT BEEKEEPERS' SOCIETY****Incorporating Windsor, Maidenhead and adjoining communities.**

**Apiary report from Jim Cooper:** The bees have worked well in the recent nectar flow and from the 7 colonies we estimate there to be 14 supers for extraction, although not all of these are completely full. However the honey is ripe and the flow has finished. Therefore, at the meeting on the 10<sup>th</sup> of August, the clearer boards will be put in place and the extractor primed! The newly created colonies appear to be strengthening, with young queens laying well. However, a close eye will be needed to ensure that they have sufficient stores to go into winter with and, of course, once the supers are off the Varroa strips will be going in.

My thanks again to Jim, I would add that we have two colonies that have done extremely well, and at the last apiary meeting the bees were, unusually, guarding their stores with a great deal of vigour! We beat a tactical retreat – so the removal of the supers should be quite interesting for those of us who have volunteered to transport them to the extractor.

Don't forget our Honey Show on the **14<sup>th</sup> of October**, which follows the **Federation Honey show (Oct 11<sup>th</sup>)** as advertised in the newsletter. We are looking forward to a good turn out again, with lots of entries. So try to enter the Federation show and then bring your entries to our Show and the National honey show.

For newcomers, although you may not have tried exhibiting before, you can enter any of the classes. The judge at our show gives comments as each exhibit is inspected and any faults will be pointed out, so we can all learn from each other's mistakes. Schedules will be distributed in good time and the numbering system keeps your identity confidential, so no embarrassment! Do give it a try; it is well worth the effort. You are invited (or rather expected) to enter the Federation Show and it can be arranged to get the exhibits there if you really cannot attend. However, it is a worthwhile day out and this years lecture promises to be very informative on the role of honey in medicine.

Before that, though, the first winter meeting is this month, on the 9<sup>th</sup> of September, held as usual at the All Saints Parish Hall, on the corner of Frances and Alexandra Roads, Windsor. Join us for the start at 8pm, when we shall be reviewing the year so far at the apiary and hearing of each other's experiences during the season.

All are welcome at our meetings, so do bring along anyone you know who has an interest in bee keeping. They may even like to become a "friend" of the society.

There will also be a number of surplus library books for sale at the meetings this year, following a drastic reduction to make it more manageable, so it is hoped to have the library available again at all meetings too.

Lastly, the committee is attempting to bring an inventory of all equipment owned by the society up to date. Memories being what they are, it would be appreciated if anyone could let us know if they are holding an item for safekeeping. In particular, we would like to trace the original extractors for both Slough and Maidenhead, functional or not, or perhaps, who they were passed on to. Also, if you have knowledge of anything being scrapped in the past, do please let us know.

Newsletter items: Joy Dodson. Burnham (01628) 664091

## **WOKINGHAM & DISTRICT BEEKEEPERS ASSOCIATION**

### **The Association Apiary Beekeeping equipment**

We still have some remaining second-hand equipment for sale at very reasonable prices. A few supers, two manual extractors, two settlement tanks, an observation hive and boxes of interesting knickknacks are available for inspection. Contact the Secretary on 0118 934 0238.

### **BBOWT Open Day at Woolley Firs, Maidenhead**

Wally and Sylvia Smallbone represented us at 'Animal Magic' on 6<sup>th</sup> July. The event was well attended and our two members were kept very busy with considerable interest shown in the observation hive. Honey sales were consequently brisk. Other attractions at the event included bat talks, nest-box making, pony rides, pond dipping, rural crafts, plant sales and a Scottish dancing demonstration.

### A Really Useful Beekeeping Guide

Clive de Bruyn's '*Practical Guide to Beekeeping*' is a rare sort of technical handbook: it is a pleasure to read. You look up something about frames or supering and you find you read on because it is so enjoyable. Nevertheless, what is it like as a source of information?

Like most writers on the subject, de Bruyn has been a beekeeper for some time, which has given him personal experience. He is also a lecturer in this country and at conferences abroad as well as being an Education Officer with the Bee Farmers' Association.

I think it is this need to communicate with beekeepers at every level, and the need to make clear and concise responses to their questions that has polished his style of organising and expressing what he has to say.

The book covers every aspect of beekeeping and for useful quick reference there are brief lists that summarize what he says, 'What Makes Bees Angry' or 'Suggestions to Deter Bees from Swarming'

There are comprehensive chapters on Pests and Diseases with good instructions on how to notice if anything is wrong. In the chapters on hives he goes to some length to describe the pros and cons of each type (Langstroth and Modified Commercial suit his own needs best).

The black-and-white illustrations and diagrams are clear and appropriate. The loveliest part of the book is the set of colour photographs of honeybees at work on some of our flowers.

This practical guide is one of the most important in our Association library - have a look at it!

Secretary John Edwards 0118 934 0238

## READING and DISTRICT BEEKEEPERS ASSOCIATION

### Report: Of the photographer and the exited bees!

On Sunday 20<sup>th</sup> Members of the Reading association had the pleasure of being invited To Ted and Glenys Conway's apiary in their garden at Woodley, full of planting and interest, which terminates at the river Loddon. The river is looking very beautiful at this time of year with its rushes and the large drifts of Indian balsam with purple flowers loved by the bees. However in the last wet winters the river has risen and threatened the apiary in 2001 the Conway's had a hive carried away by the flood despite building up the heights with bricks etc.

The hives are whitewashed nationals each with an alighting board and look well inside their own compound which has another useful feature which other beekeepers would do well to emulate, a steel-bin with removable lid set-up as a wood fuelled boiler for cleaning and sterilizing frames and recovery of wax.

One of this years swarms had done well and we obtained 15 frames of capped honey, the brood box had wall-to wall brood in some frames all worker brood, with scarcely any drone. We left the largest colony 'till last and what with removing capped honey frames and a thorough examination with discourse on what appeared to be a cell with signs of stone brood or sac brood we had a couple of thousand or so exited aerial bees happily mingling with the beekeepers in the sunshine. Michael Blackburn having exchanged his demonstrator's hive-tool for his digital camera was taking close-ups of brood frames with his hood thrown back!



Afterwards, while enjoying the tea provided by Glenys further-up the garden we were reviewing the pictures which are for a 'Beekeeping in Berkshire' pamphlet Michael is designing we could see that there were close-ups of flying bees in some frames, presumably including the two which gave him a sting on the nose and on his trigger-finger'!

With many thanks to Glenys and Ted and for the good attendance.

### **Programme for September:**

Ted and Glenys Conway will be promoting Reading beekeeping at the Woodley Horticultural Show, which will be at the memorial field and Coronation Hall in Headley Road, on Saturday 6<sup>th</sup> September starting at 2 pm. Please give them your support. If any Reading member would like some jars of honey sold for them please contact Ted and Glenys in good-time on 0118 954 0634

As a part of our summer programme Reading Association have a section in the Horticulture and produce tent at The Wokingham and Reading show held at Spencers Wood on Sunday 7<sup>th</sup> September. Reading members will receive schedules and entry forms through the post, please send in your entry forms promptly, it only costs 20 p per entry and there is prize money to be won! Plus, a trophy for the Reading member with the highest points. The show is a good day out with good access and traditional agricultural show attractions. Any others wanting a schedule please contact Jon Davey on 0118 975 0734.

Honey Extractor: anyone requiring the use of the association's new radial extractor, during August please contact Jon. Davey on 0118 975 0734.

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

The Editor having upgraded his operating system can no longer use his Windows 98 HP Scanner. It is available for a contribution to the Thames Valley Air Ambulance

**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 1<sup>st</sup> 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

**FEDERATION OF  
BERKSHIRE BEEKEEPERS ASSOCIATIONS**

**Federation Family Event and Honey Show**

TO BE HELD AT

St. Joseph's Church Hall, Berkshire Drive, Tilehurst.

ON

SATURDAY 11<sup>th</sup> OCTOBER 2003

Admission Fee - £5.00 Adult  
(Reduction to BBKA Members on proof of membership)  
Under 14's Free

**PROGRAMME TIMINGS:**

**10.00 – 11.30 Staging of Exhibits**

**11.45 Introduction and welcome to our first Speaker by Our Chairman  
Mr. Derek Porter.**

**1.00 Lunch Available**

**2.00 Judging of Exhibits by appointed Judges**

**2.15 Introduction and welcome to our second Speaker by Our Chairman.  
Dr. Rose Cooper “Honey and Healing”**

**3.45 Teas available**

**Show open for viewing when judging is completed.**

**4.30 Raffle  
(Approx)**

**4.45 Presentation of Cups and Trophies by Our President  
(Approx) Miss. Margery Cooper**

**Removal of exhibits will be under the supervision of the Show Secretary**

**Spare schedules available from Show Secretary Mrs. Hazel Blackburn Tel:  
0118 947 5451**

**Further details available from Federation Secretary Mrs. Sandra Napper Tel: 0118 945 5094.**



