



**THE LEEDS BEEKEEPERS ASSOCIATION
BRANCH OF THE YBKA
AFFILIATED WITH THE BBKA**



“The Leeds Beekeeper”

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Well the ladies have been out in force, not a dandelion was left untouched! But where to store all their spoils? The comb building department have been working harder than a picker at Amazon to keep up with demand as Queen Camilla leads her loyal subjects into another Summer season. Now just to keep an eye out to make sure Camilla hasn't made "travel" plans.

CHAIRMAN'S NOTES

The clocks have gone forward and so starts British Summer Time, Spring is now here! This early Spring time is a difficult and busy time for the bees. The bees that have seen the colony through the long hard Winter are now coming to the end of their lives. The increasing number of new worker bees will relieve the pressure on the last surviving Winter bees. The queen will respond to the increase input of pollen and nectar by laying at a greater rate.

April is the time to do your first full inspection. This inspection is very important because you will have a chance to assess the colony properly and decide how to manage it for the season.

So pick a nice warm and still day the temperature should be around 18 degrees centigrade. The 5 main things to look for in this first inspection are:

- (the most important one in my opinion) Is there a laying queen? Are there eggs and larvae in different stages; all signs that the colony is queenright. *Now that the colony is at it's lowest in numbers of bees this is the ideal time to find the queen and mark her because believe me a marked queen is far easier to find than an unmarked queen later in the season.*
- Is the brood pattern good? Is the queen laying in even pattern?
- Are there enough stores until the next inspection?



*A dandelion a day,
keeps the doctor away.....*

- Is there enough space for the queen to expand the hive?
- Finally is there any sign of disease?

Always work systematically through the hive holding the frames in the correct way and make sure that your smoker is always lit. Put what you see on your record card. Move old and dirty comb to the outside of the hive for removal at a later date and be replaced by new clean foundation.

The bee season has just about started so good luck to those members that have got their bees through Winter and commiserations to those who didn't.

Regards

Duncan

BEES ON A PLANE

An American Airlines flight from Miami airport was delayed after thousands of bees took residence on the wing of the aircraft. Due to the location of the bees it prevented ground staff from safely loading the hold with cargo before departure meaning it was necessary to seek backup.

Fortunately for the bees it wasn't a United Airlines aircraft and rather than been removed with force a local beekeeper was called to coax the bees from the wing and allow the flight to continue on its journey scuppering the bees' Summer holiday plans.



*Taking wing walking to the next level...
©Jonathan Gilinskii*

<http://www.atlasobscura.com/articles/bees-swarm-plane-delay>

APIARY SITE

We have been offered a garden in Leeds 8 as an apiary site, if you are interested please contact David Haigh direct (Haighd@sky.com).

SWARM COLLECTION

Now I am not sure this is straight from page one of the "Swarm Collection Manual" but it seemed to work for them..... **Standard don't try this at home warning**

<http://www.kcci.com/article/no-stings-woman-helps-beekeeper-roundup-swarm/9231883>

HISTORY OF TEMPLE NEWSAM APIARY - LEEDS

The Leeds Beekeepers' Association's first known apiary was situated in Golden Acre Park in the autumn of 1957. The idea of having an association apiary came about through the bequeathing of apiary equipment from the late Professor Hagen of Leeds University who left instructions with his executors for the establishment of a teaching apiary. This was an idea of Alfred Hebden who had recently acquired the National Diploma in Beekeeping (NDB). At the time, the Leeds City Parks' Superintendent George Knights was well acquainted with the association and its hierarchy through its involvement with the now defunct Roundhay Flower Show.

The apiary was kept intact for a good number of years but the honey crops year on year were marginal. As Golden Acre developed, we were eventually forced to move to a new site which was at Major Lupton's estate at Beechwood, adjoining Roundhay Grange. We were there for a number of years until the Summer of 1974 when due to the change of farm tenant, we were forced to find a new site without delay. Fortunately on account of the resourcefulness of the late Terry Pearson, he moved the bees lock, stock and barrel to a temporary site at one of his own apiaries at Kirkstall. That gave us time to find a new site over the coming Winter months.

At about this time, the head of the Leeds Parks' Department was the late John Dunstan, a member of the association who arranged for the bees to be moved to the Red Hall Nurseries in the Spring of 1975. This was a prime site that allowed the growing teaching classes to prosper, with attendances averaging 20 people from the beginning of May until they finished in mid-July. The resident nurseryman Bill Smith was also a beekeeper; this set fair the apiary and the teaching classes until 1983. Once again changes were afoot and a new regime took over the management of the nursery, but bees and beekeeping were not part of the changes.

At a committee meeting, the idea came from Bill Parkinson that we should move to Temple Newsam, as the grounds there ran into hundreds of acres and there surely must be a corner we could have for an apiary site. In the November of that year and during a Yorkshire Beekeepers' Association delegates' meeting at St. Williams College York, Terry Pearson and Bernard White decided to steal themselves away from the heavy proceedings and go directly to Temple Newsam to seek a site for a new apiary. Encountering Gordon Kirby the resident nurseryman, luck was on hand and a site was soon chosen amongst the rhododendron bushes about a 100 metres from the present apiary site. Without further ado, Terry and Bernard moved the bees from Red Hall to their new berth the following week. The bees wintered marvellously in the quiet and sheltered spot, ready for the forthcoming season. Sadly for the association, Terry Pearson had to relinquish his involvement with the apiary management in 1984. (Terry was to return albeit, with limited involvement until moving away to Hornsea in 1991, where he died in 1994)

Once again, the Leeds Parks' Department underwent a change of management and the whole of the apiary area was remodelled into the complex we know so well today. The late Alan Hawes asked me to use my friendship with John Tinker (the newly appointed Director of Parks) to see if he would let us have a new apiary site in the new set-up that was being rapidly expanded. Fortuitously, Phil Jenkin (a LBKA beekeeping stalwart) was at the 1984 Great Yorkshire Show in his capacity as the driver for the Leeds Parks' Department's heavy horse turn-out in the main show ring.

(Leeds City Council at Temple Newsam had a number of heavy horses that were used extensively for such competitive events but they did not have anyone who could drive a heavy turn-out which required consummate skill.) The timing was perfect. Mr Tinker was there too and readily agreed to meet Alan Hawes and me at Temple Newsam the following week.

The arrangements were duly concluded with the present location being decided upon, always provided that we took the whole of the enclosure. For our part we were asked to provide two public demonstrations each year in return for having the facility. It was also a great help that we did not need to move the bees immediately although it was essential for them to be moved the following Spring.

In view of the extensive refurbishing works going on at the Home Farm in 1985 / 86, I approached Mr Tinker for financial assistance to build the present pavilion. He readily agreed, providing that we did not press with funding from both central and local government for the building of the pavilion, as he would readily undertake this for us; otherwise any sum awarded to us would come off the funding he had already obtained. In addition, the building, for planning reasons, had to have an agricultural flavour about it otherwise it could not be built. In the Summer over three Tuesdays, we laid the concrete paving from the orbital pathway down to entrance of the apiary site. Starting at the top and moving downwards, at the last slab we encountered a large Yew tree stump that had been covered over with soil. A quick decision had to be taken because it was too large to dig out, so we laid the slab over it and made a step down and continued. In those days mini-diggers were not commonplace otherwise we would no doubt have pulled it out!

Michael Badger

Second part to follow in May's edition



Current pavilion building begins to take shape
© Michael J Badger

COUNTRYSIDE LIVE, 17TH & 18H MAY - VOLUNTEERS NEEDED:

Leeds Beekeepers are joining forces with Barkston Ash Beekeepers at the annual event, 'Countryside Live' which is an agricultural show for schoolchildren. Dates are **Wed and Thursday 17th & 18th May**, the venue is **Ledston**, just off the A1.

We will be in our own marquee and will receive groups of about **25-30 children for about 25 minutes**. There will a maximum of 9 groups in a day.

The session will start with an introductory short presentation covering

- a) Welcome
- b) What are honey bees
- c) The importance of honeybees for pollination, and producing honey and wax

The children will be divided into 4 groups. After the introduction they will visit 4 stations in turn, (about 5 mins per station),

Station 1 - Honey tasting

Station 2 - Observation Hive

Station 3 - Beekeeping equipment

Station 4 - Dressing up in beekeeping suits

Each station will have a single person who is taking overall responsibility for the set up and management at the event but all volunteers can move from station to station to give variety to the day.

LBKA are looking after the honey tasting station but we also need additional helpers to assist at the other stations with the Barkston Ash beekeepers. This is a very rewarding event, the children learn such a lot from it and clearly enjoy being there, no matter the weather. Volunteers also have an opportunity to visit the other participants marquees and to watch the activities in the event arena - the 'sheepdog' ducks are not to be missed!

If you can help out on either day from 9.00am to 3.30pm I would love to hear from you. Anyone can do it - you will see from the 4 stations that only a rudimentary knowledge of beekeeping is required.

Please contact me by e-mail at malcath@btinternet.com or text 0788 757 3611

Cath Graham, Apiary Manager

BEVERLEY BEEKEEPERS AUCTION

This year's auction will be held on Sunday 30 April 2017, this is always a good day out. Their annual auction attracts hundreds of items for sale. They have both new and old equipment which ranges from National brood boxes, floors, supers etc. – to occasional extractors, warming cabinets (one went for just £1 last year) and veils. I'm sure that you get the picture.

They also have colonies and nucs of bees for sale – and prices vary wildly from year to year.

It's an indoor event so no worries about the weather. And there's a popular kitchen selling teas and coffees alongside bacon baps and sandwiches.

It is a good way of creating space if you've got surplus kit. Equally it's good for buying the odd bargain. It's useful though to have a supplier's catalogue if only to make sure that you're not overpaying for goods. Last weekend at Lincoln we witnessed Beekeepers paying more, far more, for goods than we charge for new in the LBKA shop.

Chris Barlow and I are planning to go, so there are at least a couple of friendly faces to “talk bees” with. The Auction is held in Woodmancy Village Hall which is a couple of miles outside of Beverley on the Hull road. Full details are at <http://www.beverleybeekeepers.co.uk>

Hope to see you there.

Dave Barrett

SUMMER MASTERCLASSES RETURN

A great evening on the 5th April at the Temple Newsam apiary on what was our first Wednesday evening meeting of the season. We are now open every Wednesday evening from 6.30 pm till dusk (or 9pm whichever comes sooner) throughout the season. The boiler will be on, so bob down for a cuppa and to discuss your beekeeping issues and successes. Pictured is Duncan Brearley delivering a master class on the Pagden Method of swarm control to members. It was a great refresher for the coming swarming season and it was good to see so many Leeds members attending.



Pagden swarm control

PACKED YOUR COMPASS?



Which way is north?

sacrificed, dissected into heads, abdomens and thoraxes and small pellets of this material were made up to be tested via a superconducting quantum interference device (SQUID). This clearly showed no evidence for ferromagnetism in pellets made from thoraxes and heads but clear evidence of magnetisation in the abdomen pellets.

The team then exposed another group of bees to a magnetic field several thousand times stronger than the earth's magnetic field. Again these bees were pelletised. Again the abdomen pellets showed evidence of magnetisation, but these were more strongly magnetized than pellets made from bees that had not been exposed to a magnetic field.

Lastly to see how magnetisation may affect the ability of live bees to navigate to a food source a group of bees were trained to find a food source in an environment which contained magnetic fields created by electrical coils. Half of the trained bees were then magnetised and the procedure repeated. The researchers found that the magnetised bees were now unable to find the food source suggesting disruption of the bees magnetoreceptors.

<http://rspb.royalsocietypublishing.org/content/284/1851/20162873>

HOW TO AVOID EXTRACTION

Ever thought that extraction is just too much effort? Well why not get the bees to put their honey straight into jars for you?

<http://simplecapacity.com/2017/04/a-guy-invented-homemade-beehive-to-save-the-bees-and-its-going-absolutely-viral/>

BEE HEALTH DAY

There will be a bee health day at Bradford University on Saturday 27th May 2017, 10am to 4pm. Talks and workshops provided by staff from the National Bee Unit, Fera Science and Bradford University aimed at helping beekeepers maintain healthy and productive colonies of bees.

Topics will include:

- The Asian Hornet
- Comb Changing Techniques
- Controlling Varroa across the year
- Practical comb workshop
- Microscope Diagnosis of Nosema
- Forage and Bee Health

This event is open to all. The cost is just £6 and includes refreshments and a sandwich lunch.

Programme available [online](#)

To book your place please send £6 with your contact details, including email address, to:

Bradford BKA, 104 Hall Lane, Leeds LS18 5JG, Cheques payable to Bradford BKA please.

Or Book online at [Bee Health Day](#)

For further information email bill.cadmore@ntlworld.com

FIFTY SHADES..... OF POLLEN

As the temperatures warm and the bees begin to raise brood once more, keep an eye out for which flowers they have been visiting by looking at the colour of pollen they are bringing back to the hive. Obviously as the months go on and the flowers change these colours will vary, but see below for some common flowers the bees will be visiting at the moment.



Crocus
Dandelion
Cherry



Apple
Oilseed Rape
Bluebell

ASIAN HORNETS RETURN

As some of you may already be aware an Asian Hornet was discovered in mid March in Central Scotland, how it came to be there is still unclear – with the chances of it overwintering likely to be slim suggesting it arrived via freight or similar. This has been followed up with two further sightings in the Channel Islands in recent days. As only fertilised queens over Winter, it is likely that these are indeed queens looking to set up a nest for the new season. The message from BBKA is to remain vigilant, with beekeepers in affected areas advised to put up traps.



A new bee menace?

Please find a link below to details of how to make your own Hornet trap.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CR6MUekAjMo&sns=em>

And meanwhile now may be a good time to start swotting up on what they look like

<https://www.qzr.com/c/quiz/384667/can-you-spot-an-asian-hornet>

And lastly should you spot one on your travels, BBKA have just unveiled a new App to make reporting sightings easier.

https://www.bbka.org.uk/news_and_events/new_app_to_report_asian_hornet_sightings



One lump or two?

EVERY LITTLE HELPS.....

Tesco are running a trial in the South West where sugar from split bags or surplus from instore bakeries is given to local beekeepers to use when making syrup, rather than been thrown away. The waste sugar will be used to help feed bees bred and reared by the Bee Improvement Programme for Cornwall (BIPCo). Obviously any sugar containing artificial sweetener must be avoided as it can be harmful to the bees, similarly brown sugar must also be avoided as it can cause

<https://www.theguardian.com/environment/2017/feb/08/supermarkets-waste-sugar-to-help-feed-bees>

ASK THE BEEKEEPER

"Last year upon my first Spring inspection the frame marked in green, had been drawn out with comb but had gone mouldy over the Winter - I put this down to a lack of ventilation, replaced the frame and used Duncan's matchstick method over this Winter. However upon my first inspection this year, same frame, same problem, all other frames fine, is there something else I could be doing to avoid this happening"

Difficult to answer without seeing it, but here goes.

First of all it is on the outside edge of the brood box. The bees will tend to neglect these end of box combs unless/ until they're forced to do so in the height of Summer (with the need for space for brood and nectar). So if any frame is going to get damp and mouldy during Winter it'll be this one (though I've never experienced it myself).

Moving now to what was in the comb. Sealed honey would be unlikely to go mouldy. If it contained unsealed nectar then it would be susceptible to attracting moisture and fermenting. Again not mouldy. Not pleasant, and likely to give any bees bent on cleaning it out a touch of dysentery, but not mouldy. So I'd like to bet that there was either plenty of pollen in the comb in question or it was completely empty. Pollen tends to go hard when unused or neglected. But, in the absence of a more plausible reason, I'd put a modest sum on betting that it contained lots of pollen which has "gone off" during Winter.

Giving the bees plenty of ventilation during Winter would help. Those of us with solid floors might well use Duncan's tip of putting match stalks under the four corners of the crown board during Winter. However if you use mesh / varroa floors during Winter you don't need to use match stalks - there's plenty of ventilation coming from underneath.

Whatever the cause, what do you do with this frame? I'd say simply "bin it". Cut out the comb if you want to extract the wax and or clean and recycle the frame. If though it's a particularly new and well drawn out frame you could replace it with frame fitted with new foundation and give the mouldy one to a swarm. We are in Yorkshire after all 😊 Swarms are really efficient at cleaning out and re using combs like this.

Hope this helps?

Dave Barrett

Have you got a burning beekeeping question that you want an answer to? Then please send it to editor@leedsbeekeeper.org.uk and we will do our best to find you an answer!

12OZ HEXAGONAL JARS

Hopefully your bees have been busy and you now have lots of honey and not enough jars to put it in.... fear not LBKA have the answer! 12oz (340 g) hexagonal jars with lids are available in the shop at a bargain price of 23p each, they come loose so you can buy as many as you require. Please bring a cardboard box to carry them home in. If you require a large quantity, please email Duncan thebeeman@hotmail.co.uk or ring him on 07855 308143

Got an article for the next edition? Please email to editor@leedsbeekeeper.org.uk by 30th April.

FORTHCOMING EVENTS

April

Saturday 1st - Apiary Day – 10.00 a.m. – 12.00 noon

Wednesday 5th – Apiary Meeting with Masterclass – Swarm Control – Pagden Method

Friday 7th – Sunday 9th – BBKA Convention

May

Saturday 13th - Apiary Day – 10.00 a.m. – 12.00 noon

Saturday 13th – Taster Day

Wednesday 17th – Thursday 18th – Countryside Learning 2017