

CHALFONTS BEEKEEPERS' SOCIETY

Charity No. 1121231
www.chalfontsbeekeepers.co.uk

NEWSLETTER – September 2011

Editor: John Catton

Assistant: Richard Simpson

Shows, shows and more shows!

The first one is our “own” show which was held on 3rd Sept: “Great show...” was the immediate response from our judge, Nick Grey, “because of the high quality and the number of exhibits (121)”. It was particularly good to see so many really good exhibits from the beginners. I can predict some serious competition from a few of them in the coming years (Nick Fairweather perhaps? Ed). If I was, though, to highlight one recurring weakness it is that members must ensure they fill the jars to the specification. This is important for showing and very important when selling. Showing with even a hint of short measure may lose you a prize, but when selling it may earn you a visit from Trading Standards! A huge amount of effort goes into the planning and execution of the show, so we must thank Nick for judging and Derek Taylor and Dave Carter for stewarding. And Graham Burford for making the new staging; it will next be used at the County Honey Show in a couple of weeks time on Saturday 24th September....



....and Deborah Campbell for co-ordinating the following keen helpers on our stall: Eugenia Eagle, Fiona Mattheson, Philip Peace, Jane and Philip Butterworth, Paul Burke, Richard Archdeacon, Melvyn Dunn, Helen Cave, Eilleen Tanner, Kate McNish, Rosemary Southam, Nick Fairweather and Alan Cunningham.

County Honey Show **Saturday 24th September**

Attached to this newsletter is the **County Honey Show Programme**. The Show Schedule and Rules are on the County Website, <http://www.buckscountybeekeepers.co.uk/2011-honey-show/> Scroll down to see all the info.

On this occasion it is not *just* another Honey Show. While the judging takes place there will be practical demonstrations followed by a discussion forum on topics of current concern.

All entry forms must be completed and returned to Beulah Cullen, the Show Secretary, by Wed 21st September. If you want to enter, but are unable to attend, contact either Sue Carter or Bill Fisher who will arrange for your exhibits to be taken and returned. I know many of you did this at the end of the CBS show.

Exhibits can also be delivered directly to the **Memorial Hall, Wharf Road, Wendover**, between 08:30 and 09:45. Judging commences at 10:00 prompt.

Next meeting: Cooking with Honey **Tuesday 27th September at 7:30pm**

How often, when someone says how lovely your cake / fudge / biscuit tastes, do you say, "well, its got *my* honey in it"?

If it is not that often you really must come to our first talk of the autumn on **27th September** when local cooking celebrity Katie Caldesi will be offering tips and techniques on how to enhance your cooking with your honey.

Read all about Katie on:

www.caldesi.com/la_cucina_caldesi/katies-kitchen

The meeting will be held in our usual venue: **St. Joseph's, Austenwood Lane Chalfont St. Peter** at the usual time of 7:30pm.

Congratulations Sue!

Sue Carter, our Membership Secretary, has recently taken and, I'm delighted to report, passed, the BBKA's **General Husbandry Certificate**.

This is a two hour practical assessment, where the beekeeper has to demonstrate a broad range of husbandry skills, queen rearing, disease recognition, swarm control and finally the extraction and processing of the honey in an hygienic manner with "due regard" to all legal requirements.

The assessment, held at the candidate's own apiary, is designed for beekeepers who have kept bees for at least 3 years and passed the Basic Assessment.

CBS Honey Show: who won what?

Congratulations must go the following:

Blue Ribbon (best exhibit overall):

Bill Fisher

Welford cup (best wax exhibit):

Bill Fisher

Allen Mitchell trophy (best beginner):

Nick Fairweather

Class 1: Two jars of light honey:

1st Sue Carter VHC Ian Cochrane

2nd Bill Fisher HC Melvyn Dunne

3rd Beulah Cullen C Derek Taylor

Class 2: Two jars of medium honey:

1st Mary Chris VHC Melvyn Dunne

2nd Beulah Cullen

3rd Gordon Cutting

Class 3: Two jars of dark honey:

1st Mary Chris VHC Sue Carter

2nd Bill Fisher

3rd Jane & Phillip Butterworth

Class 4: Two jars of naturally set honey:

1st Beulah Cullen VHC Eileen Tanner

2nd Mike Tucker HC Bruce Boshier

3rd Bill Fisher C Sarah Peterson

Class 5: Two jars of creamed honey:

1st Bill Fisher

2nd Beulah Cullen

3rd Penny Benford

Class 6: One jar judged on flavour only:

1st J&P Butterworth VHC Beulah Cullen

2nd Sue Carter HC Gordon Cutting

3rd Alan Cunningham C Melvyn Dunne

Class 7: One frame – the work of the bee:

1st Bruce Boshier

2nd Derek Atkinson HC Eileen Tanner

3rd Gordon Cutting

Class 8: one cut comb:

1st Bill Fisher 2nd Beulah Cullen

Class 9: Two 1oz blocks of beeswax:

1st Gordon Cutting VHC Bill Fisher

2nd Sue Carter HC Margaret Roberts

3rd Eileen Tanner C John Roberts

Class 10: One cake of beeswax (200 / 250g):

1st Bill Fisher

2nd Sue Carter HC Margaret Roberts

3rd Gordon Cutting C John Roberts

Class 11: Three identical beeswax candles:

1st Bill Fisher

2nd Sue Carter

3rd Eileen Tanner C Mary Chris

Class 12: Three home produced items:

1st Margaret Roberts

2nd Sue Carter

3rd Eileen Tanner

Class 13: One honey cake:

1 st Sue Carter	VHC Mike Tucker
2 nd Helena Haywood	HC Ruth Brogden
3 rd Ian Cochrane	C Gordon Cutting

Class 14*: One jar, run honey:

1 st J& P Butterworth	VHC Sally Morgan
2 nd Meriet Duncan	HC Eugenia Eagle
	C Fiona Matheson

Class 15*: One jar naturally set honey:

1st Nick Fairweather

Class 16*: One jar run or set honey:

1 st Sally Morgan	VHC Meriet Duncan
2 nd Eugenia Eagle	HC Helena Haywood
3 rd J& P Butterworth	C Anita Southwell

* Classes open to 1st and 2nd year beginners only

The trophies will be presented at our AGM on Tuesday 22nd November.

A prize that got away

One hears all sorts of "excuses" for not winning, but the saddest tale must surely be how Meriet Duncan missed out on even entering class 13 (the Honey Cake) at the show. Meriet had made the cake, but knowing she would be unable to get it to the show in time for judging, asked a friend to take it for her. Her friend collected it on the Friday, took it home and left it (in its tin) in her larder ready for the show next morning. Later, her son come home and, looking for something to eat, alighted upon the cake and.... took a slice out of it! Meriet had the news softened by the gift of a bottle of champagne, but I'm afraid she will have to wait another year before the Ian Grant Memorial Salver* can be displayed in her home.

* The trophy was presented to the Society by the widow of one of our members, Ian Grant, who won the cake class far too often!

Getting to know your committee 30 second interview

This month it's the turn of Mike Tucker, our librarian. He was elected to the committee at the AGM in 2007 and, amongst other things, is responsible for maintaining the Society's library. In this, the ninth of our interviews with committee members, we ask Mike what makes him tick, want to keep bees and what else he has time to do.



Q: How long have you been keeping bees?

MT: For about six years now; I saw an advertisement for the Beginners Course and decided it was the right thing to do if I wanted to keep bees.

Q: Why did you start beekeeping?

MT: They have fascinated me for a long time, probably since I was about seven or eight when I noticed at a local fair a beekeeper's tent was allowing free flight from a couple of hives and that the bees had created a swarm around a captive queen on a tree. I volunteered to put my hand into the swarm and, when I withdrew it, it was completely covered. The bees were, as I remember, very warm and suprisingly heavy. Needless to say I only told my Mother after the event as I was allergic to bee and wasp stings and still am, but to a lesser degree.

Q: What type of hives do you use?

MT: I once had a National; it is now an observation hive for the Society; all the others are Commercial hives.

Q: How many hives do you have and how many do you want?

MT: It has varied this year, between seven and nine. The ideal number for me is six as I have limited space.

Q: What's your worst beekeeping purchase?

MT: I know others have mentioned the bee brush and I agree, however I have to also mention a pollen trap, as I have never used it.

Q: Do you have a favorite beekeeping gadget?

MT: apart from the hive tool it would have to be the auto igniting blow torch as it keeps my smoker alight.

Q: What have been your best beekeeping moments?

MT: The first extraction of a meagre 13lbs of honey in my first year, but also whenever my store room smells strongly of filled supers.

Q: Where do you keep your bees?

MT: One hive is at Maple Cross; all the others are at the bottom of the garden; but I am looking at another out-apiary.

Q: Do you have a favourite beekeeping book/manual?

MT: Most recently it is D. Woodward's "Queen Bee Biology Rearing and Breeding" but it doesn't follow that I am good at it.

Q: The next best thing to beekeeping?

MT: I keep a couple of hens and find it relaxing to sit in the garden with a drink and watch them scratch about.

Seasonal thoughts

(Richard Simpson)

Honey off, varroa treatment begun and maybe even finished. It is quite alarming to measure mite drop while your chosen treatment is still active, but soon afterwards is a good time to get an estimate of the remaining mite level. This will determine whether your colonies are at risk without further treatment. The NBU Varroa Calculator advises that a natural mite drop in September of 4/day is indicative of a total mite population of 200. According to German research this is the maximum overwinter that should be considered 'safe'. Personally, I treat all colonies with oxalic acid solution at Christmas, as well as Apiguard now, to ensure varroa is kept below that critical threshold.

Himalayan balsam is now dying back and the last crop will be coming in in about a month – the dreaded, or sought after, ivy. Opinion is divided: is it a late season boon or a dangerous nuisance, owing to its hard granulation. When it is coming in, it certainly stimulates brood rearing, which is a good thing. It can even be taken as a crop if there is enough of a flow. One year I got a couple of supers from Maple Cross, where the site is surrounded by woodland. Difficult to extract and quite a strong taste and pungent aroma, which many people dislike, but it mellows nicely over 2-3 years.

Have you started planning for spring? Not as crazy as it sounds. Have a look at your equipment stock in case you need any more. The autumn sales are on us now.

I worry that this year there might be an abnormally high number of colony losses attributable to queen failure. This summer was not good for mating and I have heard of several cases of drone layers or queen disappearance already. If you have a weak colony, less than four frames occupied, amalgamate it with a stronger one (provided both are healthy). It will probably die out if you do nothing.

For feeding, aim to have it done by the end of September. Strong syrup, 2lbs to 1pt, or metric equivalent, is your aim. Total stores +/- 40lbs. (A full National brood frame contains about 5lbs across the two faces). Details are in the current issue of BBKA News.

Don't stop at the "Basic"

Beekeeping is essentially a fair weather craft. So by the end of September you'll have bottled all your honey and prepared your colonies for winter. After that, how to fill those empty hours? One way is to increase your understanding of apiculture by studying for one or more of the 7 Module exams designed to take you through all aspects of beekeeping, from bee biology and behaviour to breeding and diseases.

Mary Chris, our Education Officer, suggests you visit the BBKA website to view the syllabus and see which you would like to tackle. They are open to any beekeeper who has passed their Basic with at least 2 years practical beekeeping experience.

Beulah Cullen has very kindly agreed to tutor 2 Modules: Honey bee Management (No 1) and Selection & Breeding of Honey bees (No 7) on Thursday evenings at Holy Cross. If you are interested in either of these, or indeed studying for *any* of the other modules (in "self taught" style groups with other members under the guidance of an experienced beekeeper) please call Mary Chris: on 07746 560280 or....

education@chalfontsbeekeepers.co.uk



And the biggest Show of all: the **80th National Honey Show** is being held from Thursday 27th to Saturday 29th October at St Georges College, Woburn Hill, Addlestone, Weybridge, Surrey, KT15 2QS

Even if showing is not your thing it is well worth a visit (it's less than an hour's drive) as there are lectures, workshops and trade stands to visit and learn from.

Danish queen rearing expert Keld Brandstrup, Thomas Seeley from Cornell University, USA and Eric Osterlund, editor of the Swedish beekeeping journal 'Bitidningen' will be among the international experts presenting lectures. Speakers from nearer home include Michael MacGiolla Coda, Professor Robert Pickard and Dr Nigel Raine.

Full details are available on-line and this year you will even be able to book workshops online.

www.honeyshow.co.uk

If you do want to enter please contact Bill Fisher who will explain all and take your exhibits to and from the show. As with the County show, I know several members, have already done this.

Irish National Honey Show **Chalfonts members triumph again!**

Yes, *another* show! But this time one that was held at the end of July - during the Gormanston Summer School (see Feb newsletter), an event attended by several Chalfonts members. Whilst there Beulah Cullen, Sue Carter and Bill Fisher entered the Irish National Honey Show and did very well; Beulah especially, winning "Best Exhibit in Show". Below are the *just* the "Firsts" they won:

Beulah Cullen:

- Best Exhibit in show (light honey)
- 1st Three jars light honey
- 1st Two sections of cut comb
- 1st Beeswax polish



L:R Sue Carter, Bill Fisher, Beulah Cullen, John Gamble (Mr Beulah Cullen)

Sue Carter

- 1st Honey Fruit Cake
- 1st 6 small biscuits or cookies
- 1st Photographic class

Bill Fisher

- 1st 3 jars chunk honey
- 1st 3 jars naturally creamed honey
- 1st 5 x 1oz blocks of beeswax

Felice Pigram 1929 - 2011

It is sad to report that Felice Pigram, a longstanding member of the local beekeeping community died in August.

She was Secretary of High Wycombe Beekeepers for about 20 years and Secretary of the County Association for a good many years as well. Her husband, Dennis, died some 6 / 7 years ago; he too was on the County Committee, as Education Secretary.

Bucks County Agricultural Show

The County Show (the largest one-day show in the Country, I'm told) was held at Weedon, just north of Aylesbury in 1st September.

Two of the four county beekeeping Associations took part; Mid Bucks Beekeepers were there in an educational capacity and North Bucks were busy selling honey in the Waitrose marquee.

Dates for your diary

Saturday 24th September

Bucks County Honey Show.

Memorial Hall, Wendover 10:00am to 1:00pm

Tuesday 27th September

Cooking with honey

Katie Caldesi will be explaining the many uses honey has in cooking.

Thur 27th to Sat 29th October

National Honey Show, St. George's College, Weybridge, Surrey

Wednesday 2nd November

Bucks County AGM. We will be hosting this annual event.

Tuesday 22nd November

Chalfonts AGM and social

December

No Meeting

Unless otherwise stated all our monthly meetings and the Beginners course are held at: **St. Joseph's, Austenwood Lane, Chalfont St. Peter, SL9 8RY** and start at **7:30pm.**



Programme

Bucks County Honey Show

24th September 2011

9.45	All entries to be in place
10.00	Judging Begins
10.15 – 11.15	View practical demonstrations on:- Swarming (without the bees!). Bee microscopy – “The tools of the honey bee”. Queen rearing with Cup-kit and Apideas. Pollen down the microscope.
11.15 - 11.30	Coffee
11.30 – 12.30	(or until judging is complete) Forum- type discussion groups on topics of general interest. e.g. Bee Disease Insurance (BDI) Importation of queens
12.30 approx.	Vivienne will talk about the exhibits
12.40 – 1.00pm	View exhibits
1.00	Collect exhibits and depart.

Trophies will be on display but they, and the prize cards, will be presented at the County AGM.



BUCKS COUNTY BEEKEEPERS' ASSOCIATION

Registered Charity No. 297335

Honey Show 2011

To be held at the Wendover Memorial Hall, Wharf Road, Wendover, HP22 6HF

On **Saturday 24th September 2011**

Judging will start at 10:00 am. All exhibits must be in place by 9:45 am.

Judge: Vivienne Brown

Honey Show Secretary – Beulah Cullen 01895 234704

TROPHIES to be awarded

- Tweedie Silver Skep:** to the BCBKA branch whose members gather most points in the show.
- Peggy Cup:** for the BCBKA member gaining the most points overall.
- Margery Parker Trophy:** for the best honey cake in class 14.
- John Raven Award:** for the best honey exhibit in classes 1 to 5.

SCHEDULE of CLASSES

1. Two 1lb jars of light honey.
2. Two 1lb jars of medium honey.
3. Two 1lb jars of dark honey.
4. Two 1lb jars of naturally crystallized (not stirred) honey.
5. Two 1lb jars of soft-set honey.
6. One jar of liquid honey judged solely on taste and aroma (to be shown in a transparent 1lb jar).
7. One frame of capped honey for extraction (may be granulated).
8. One carton of (unwired) cut comb to be judged by appearance only.
9. One bottle sweet mead.
10. One bottle dry mead.
11. One cake of beeswax 200-255g (7oz – 9oz).
12. Two matching beeswax candles in holders. To be lit by the judge.
13. Beginners class: One 1lb jar of honey.
14. One honey cake – see recipe below.

Recipe for honey cake – class 14.

Ingredients: 5 oz butter, 6 oz exhibitors own honey, 4 oz soft brown sugar, 2 eggs, 7 oz self raising flour, 1 tablespoon water or milk.

Method: Place butter, sugar, honey and water into a saucepan and heat until the fat has melted, stirring all the time.

Remove pan from heat and allow contents to cool to blood temperature. Gradually beat in the eggs. Add sieved flour and mix until smooth.

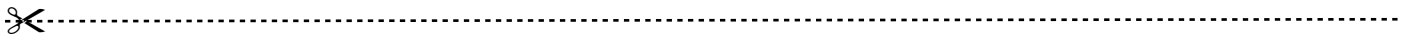
Pour mixture into a greased and lined 7" (180mm) cake tin and bake for about 1 hour until risen and firm to the touch. As a guide, oven temp. 350°F/Mark 4/180°C

BUCKS COUNTY BEEKEEPERS' ASSOCIATION

Honey Show Rules 2011

Failure to follow these rules may disqualify the entry or points may be deducted

1. All exhibits in classes 1-14 shall include or be the produce of the entrant's own hives.
2. An exhibitor may make multiple entries in each class but may receive only one award for that class.
3. Honey is to be exhibited in traditional 454g (1lb) BS 1777 squat jars with metal lacquered screw lids and flow-in seals. For classes 1,2 and 3, BS 1656 filters will be used to determine the colour of honey (available for use on day of show).
4. Where two jars of honey are required, they should be matching in colour and consistency.
5. Class 7: Each frame must be submitted in an undecorated bee-proof showcase. The full comb must be visible from both sides and the frame capable of being lifted out of the case.
6. Class 8: Cut comb is to be exhibited in standard 8oz rectangular containers with transparent lids.
7. Class 11: Beeswax may be exhibited either polished or unpolished, in a suitable container with a transparent lid or on a plate in an unsealed plastic bag.
8. Class 12: Candles may be rolled, dipped or moulded. Candles must be displayed in stable candleholders.
9. Mead must be in clear colourless bottles without fluting or any decoration. The bottle should be between 20-30 fl oz (591-887 ml) and filled to within 1" (25.4 mm) of the bottom of a cork stopper with white plastic flange.
10. Class 13: a "Beginner" will in be their first or second year of beekeeping.
11. Class 14: Cake to be displayed in a plastic bag which can be removed for judging.
12. Labels for each exhibit will be provided by the show secretary immediately prior to the show and should be placed on each exhibit as follows:-
 - Jars (honey/mead) - label to be placed horizontally half an inch (12mm) up from base of jar
 - Frame - label to be placed on top of frame and one on showcase, top right hand corner
 - Cut Comb - label to be placed at top right hand corner of lid and one on side of the container
 - Wax - label to be placed on plastic bag or container or on base of block
 - Cake - label to be placed on plastic bag and one on plate
 - Candle - label to be placed on card in front of exhibit



Honey Show Entry Form 2011

To enter, please complete the entry form below and forward to the honey show secretary, [Beulah Cullen, 26 Sweetcroft Lane, Hillingdon, UB10 9LD](mailto:beulah.cullen@virgin.net), or e-mail: beulah.cullen@virgin.net
Entries to arrive **no later than Wednesday 21st September**. There is no charge for class entries.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14

Mr / Mrs	
Address	
Association	
Tel. Number	