

1923 - 2017



Medway
Beekeepers
Association

Celebrating over 90 years of support for beekeeping
And beekeepers in and around the Medway Towns



Newsletter December 2017

Chairman's Message:

Your committee and I wish you a Happy Christmas and a prosperous New Year in anticipation of a good beekeeping year in 2018. From what I have been told, for most people this has been a good year, with both a better supply of honey and their colonies in better heart for the coming cold weather. So I hope that your winter preparations are now in place, especially as this is written after the first true ground frost of the year. While there is less to do outside, please think about coming along to some of the winter meetings advertised in this newsletter.

John Chapman

Past Events:

The National Honey Show

Thursday 26th to Saturday 28th October 2017

Venue: Sandown Race Course, Esher, Surrey, KT10 9AJ



This year's show was held at the stunning Sandown Park Racecourse in Esher. This was the 86th show and included a large variety of Beekeeping Lectures and Workshops. The ground floor of the main grandstand was laid-out with the show and the trade hall was conveniently next to the show. The lectures and workshops were going on in rooms on the first floor and made a very impressive display. These were well attended and covered an interesting range of topics. If you would like to catch-up with the lectures you can find videos of them, as well as photograph of the show on the NHS website. For another view of the show why not talk to Sheila Stunell, Jen ferry or Terry Clare about their experiences.



There were more exhibits than in 2016 from more exhibitors, most of whom entered just few classes, so why don't you have a go next year.

Four of your fellow beekeepers from Medway entered, some for the first time.

Results from the National Honey Show gained by Medway Beekeepers: -



Paul Lawrence receiving his cups from John Chapman

John Chapman won a Second in Naturally Crystallised Honey, a Fourth in the Dry Mead classes for NHS Members; as well as two firsts and a second in the Kent classes. He also gained a Highly Commended for honey from an apiary on a National trust property.

Paul Lawrence won the Bee Cup for the Novice class in the Kent classes.

Tony Edwards won the Smith Cup for a Frame for extraction in the Kent Classes.

Sue Chapman received a VHS in class 36 (open classes to all comers) for Two Square Sections.

John Chapman

Saturday 18th November 2017

Kay Wreford talking on the topic of Bee Diseases



A group of 18 members gathered to hear Kay talk about 4 key viruses that can affect our bees as well as hearing the latest Asian Hornet update.

There are 18 known viruses that affect honeybees worldwide but in the UK there are 4 key ones:

- 1) Black Queen Cell Virus this is associated with Nosema and the key indicator is queen-larvae that turn black in their cells. The most important action to follow an outbreak is not to raise queen cells in an affected hive.
- 2) Sacbrood Virus: This results in a failure of the final (5th) moult. Affected larvae appear initially as a liquid inside a 'sack' and later dry to a scale, often described as a 'Chinese slipper'. Look for perforations of the brood cappings and a pepper pot appearance to the brood frame. Colonies seem to cope quite well with small numbers and this is not uncommon. However, if it becomes an issue, re-queening with a queen with different genetics is the only solution.
- 3) Deformed Wing Virus is a worldwide problem and is associated with varroa infestations. The varroa mites' feeding habit distributes the virus and exacerbates the problem. This virus can be transmitted via a drone to a queen and then to her eggs. Drones in infected colonies tend to be less fertile and the best way to avoid it is to control Varroa!
- 4) Chronic Bee Paralysis Virus, this can be detected in all life-stages, has a 7 day incubation period and only shows symptoms in adult bees. Bees with this virus are shiny-looking. They are hairless, have dislocated wings (described as 'K' wings) and their abdomens are either bloated or small and pointed. Affected bees stand still and are constantly shivering and trembling. Their wings often have notches in them where the other bees have been harassing them. In the very worst cases you will find large numbers of dead bees inside the hive on the floor and a pile of dead and sickly bees immediately outside of the hive. Infected bees will sit on the top bars of a brood box and not move down when smoked. The virus is transmitted from bee to bee via close contact through broken hair cuticles. It is seen mostly in spring and early summer after a long spell of rain or poor forage, when the bee population is increasing rapidly and the bees are forced to stay inside for long periods. Clean comb helps and as does providing the bees with plenty of room. Feeding sick bees will often help them to recover more quickly.

After tea and cakes Kay gave us all an update on the Asian Hornet situation in the West Country. She described the great work done by both the bee inspectors and the local beekeepers and particularly the problem that they had identifying colonies that are not registered on Bee Base.

One example she highlighted was having to go flog up and down a high street searching in local shops and looking at honey labels to ascertain addresses of local beekeepers. The message is clear 'Make sure your hives are registered!' She also described how one beekeeper fitted a skirt around his hives to stop the hornets hiding under the floors and to help him get a better photograph of the hornets in flight.

She described how the inspectors took several compass bearings of the hornet's direction of flight and then triangulated this information to find a nest in a residential street, but a few feet from a busy road. The nest was above a garage roof quite low down in a hedge. Much different from those found high up in the tree canopy.

DNA testing is helping to find the relationships between the different colonies found so far. But the jury is still out as to whether or not there is a hidden colony somewhere and hence if the situation is under control. The general message is be vigilant and be prepared with traps and get to know what to do in case of a siting.

Our thanks go to Kay for giving up her time and talking to us in such an informed and personal way about these important issues; as well as giving us an insight into the ways the bee inspectors and beekeeping fraternity can come together in times of need.

Paul Lawrence

The December Meeting:

Saturday 16th December 2017

Bob Smith – A Review of Varroa Controls

Time: 2pm to 5pm

Venue: Wainscott Community Hall, 16 – 18 Holly Road, Wainscott, ME2 4LG

Future Events:

Saturday 20th January 2018

Topic: Extracting and Cleaning Wax, making candles.

Time: 2pm to 5pm

Venue: Wainscott Community Hall, 16 – 18 Holly Road, Wainscott, ME2 4LG

Wednesday 24th January 2018

Bee Chat

4th Wednesday of the month at The Pier, Lower Upnor, ME2 4XA, at 7.30pm.

Saturday 17th February 2018

MBKA Annual General Meeting

Time: 2pm to 5pm

Venue: Wainscott Community Hall, 16 – 18 Holly Road, Wainscott, ME2 4LG

Beekeeper's Bazaar:

The following items are available for sale:

Ladies (size small) short white jacket and hood - £10

Beekeepers gloves (small) - £10

For more details, please contact Mai Monk on: 01634 581647

The Honey Bee Inside out – Paperback (2nd Edition)

Written by Celia F Davis – in excellent condition - normally £25 - yours for just £15.

For more details contact Paul Lawrence on: 01634 365067 or email:

paul_lawrence@blueyonder.co.uk

Also available:

Do you fancy a set of past magazines? Simon Marshall has 10 years worth of BBKA and Beecraft magazines, which he doesn't need anymore. Would you like some or all of them? He would also be happy to bring them along to the next meeting if anybody wants them.

Simon lives in Rainham so you can call round if interested. Please contact Simon on: 07761656925.

A Letter from Margaret Wilson, Vice Chair, BBKA

This letter is number 3 in Margaret Wilson's series of Positive Thinking.

To read this latest addition **Click on the link:** www.medwaybeekeepers.co.uk/latest-news

You will find the letter under: General Information and Alerts.

Winter Meetings:

We look forward to seeing you at this winter's meetings. A list of the meetings is shown below, or you can go to: www.medwaybeekeepers.co.uk/events

11 December 2017	Study Group- 3	Wainscott Comm. Hall	7.00pm	7.30pm start.
16 December 2017	Indoor Meeting	Wainscott Comm. Hall	2-5pm	Bob Smith - Review of Varroa Controls
8 January 2018	Study Group - 4	Wainscott Comm. Hall	7.00pm	7.30pm start.
20 January 2018	Indoor Meeting	Wainscott Comm. Hall	2-5pm	Extracting wax, cleaning, making candles
22 January 2018	Study Group- 5	Wainscott Comm. Hall	7.00pm	7.30pm start.
24 January 2018	Bee Chat	The Pier, Upnor	7.30pm	
5 February 2018	Study Group- 6	Wainscott Comm. Hall	7.00pm	7.30pm start.
17 February 2018	Indoor Meeting	Wainscott Comm. Hall	2-5pm	AGM
19 February 2018	Study Group- 7	Wainscott Comm. Hall	7.00pm	7.30pm start.
28 February 2018	Bee Chat	The Pier, Upnor	7.30pm	
3 March 2018	Apiary Site	City Way	10 -noon	Clear-up morning.
5 March 2018	Study Group- 8	Wainscott Comm. Hall	7.00pm	7.30pm start.
17 March 2018	Indoor Meeting	Wainscott Comm. Hall	2-5pm	Second hand equipment sale
19 March 2018	Study Group- 9	Wainscott Comm. Hall	7.00pm	7.30pm start.
28 March 2018	Bee Chat	The Pier, Upnor	7.30pm	
13-15th April 2018	Spring Convention	Harper Adams Univ.	all day	3 day event organised by BBKA

MBKA on Social Media:

If you would like to join us on Facebook please go to:
www.fb.com/medwaybka and click 'like'.

And Finally:

I would like to wish you all a very Happy Christmas and a successful New Year. Also, a big thanks, to those of you who have contributed so much to the Newsletter this past year.

Whether you are old or new members, if you have any news, ideas, amusing stories or comments about the website or for any future newsletter, please get in touch with me, Paul Lawrence at the address shown below, we really do appreciate your input.

Contact Details:

Chairman

John Chapman
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Newsletter and Website Enquiries

Paul Lawrence
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PS: As I had a little spare room this month I have added below a little time waster for one of those dark winter evenings!



Beekeeping Wordsearch



P F N V C K L S I A T E N R O H W S V X
 H O L A R R V A T M L Q G J Z L D R Y X
 J N S R I R H F N A Z Q G N I T F A R G
 T D R R B S E I M O N W A X I G T J F N
 A A E O M M A T V Q I D Y W X T C N W U
 N N P A O F O C L E S T C P J V S E G Q
 E T U Y T D E C U I L G A R Q F C C D I
 U X S I S B W T L A F A R N P D S T R S
 N V C Q S I R Z M M C G N W D D S A O M
 E W U L U S R O O W Z C I G P X K R N O
 L V J G U T W I O T H H O C S D E A E K
 O O R N B D S F F D G P L B A T P I S E
 M J C O E Y E A W J R B A I W Q R T U R V
 Y L E G T L O R F O F K N P E Z R O Q V
 H D L L H C L H P K R E Q P I V I E T P
 T X L O Q X A O O P C K E U B A Y X T H
 V Q S V G F L R P N P U E D E A R T A Z
 N S S E I I N U T A E T B R E E R Y F U
 M H R S S C F N C X Y Y U X S R N J P C
 S O V C Y N O L O C E R C P Q P V B I E

APIARY	GLOVES	QUEEN
BROOD	FILTER	SUPERS
BUCKFAST	FONDANT	SKEP
CARNIOLAN	GRAFTING	SMOKER
CAUCASIAN	HIVE	STAND
CELLS	HONEY	STING
COLONY	HORNET	THYMOL
COMB	LANGSTROTH	VARROA
DRONES	NATIONAL	VEIL
EXCLUDER	NECTAR	WASP
EXTRACTOR	POLLEN	WAX
FEEDER	PROPOLIS	WORKERS

