



Newsletter February 2018

This winter has again been generally mild so don't forget to heft and check hive weights then feed fondant if you think your bees are getting low on food. Don't forget to pay your subs and to put the AGM date into your diary.

Past Events:

Saturday 20th January 2018

Topic: Extracting and Cleaning Wax, making candles.



JC with his secrets.

This meeting was the perfect antidote to a wintry, January afternoon, 3 hours spent in the company of MBKA, being regaled by our resident expert, John Chapman, on all things waxy. Kicking off with a slide show, John led us through the mysteries of what wax is (with not too much science!) and continued revealing some of his award winning secrets. For those of us who've always wondered exactly what one can do with wax, this was the gig for you.



Moulded Candles



Now you all have a go.

Then with practical demonstrations, Jen Ferry and Sheila Stunell guided us through the fascinating alchemy of candle making-both moulded and dipped. Several members took the opportunity to make their own candle and also to create 'Luminaires' (wax bowls to hold tea lights). This involved dipping water filled balloons in molten wax; what could possibly go wrong! Thankfully nothing.



So many moulds!



Steady!

23 members enjoyed this very edifying meeting and most were reluctant to leave. Who knew that beekeeping could be such fun!




Luminaires

Roma Potter

Editor's Note: Jen promised to let everyone know two things after the meeting

1) The title of the book she uses is 'Beeswax Alchemy' by Petra Ahnert - available from most online books store under £15.00.

2)  5L Stainless Steel Juice Steamer – available online from a number of suppliers for around £30

February's Events and Meetings:

Saturday 17th February 2018

MBKA Annual General Meeting

Time: 2pm to 5pm

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

Please note: In order to take part and to vote at this meeting all subscriptions must be paid in full and be with the Treasurer before the 17th February. Also note that no subscriptions will be taken at the meeting, as John Hendrie will unfortunately not be present.

REMEMBER: NO SUBSCRIPTION PAID AND CASHED BY THE TREASURER MEANS, NO VOTING RIGHTS AT THE AGM.

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

Wednesday 28th February 2018

Bee Chat

Future Events:

Saturday 3rd March 2018

Apiary Site Clear-Up

Time: 10am to Noon

Venue: You can find the apiary at 215a City Way, Rochester, Kent ME1 2TL

Saturday 17th March 2018

Sale of Second Hand Equipment

Time: 2pm to 5pm

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

Please note that the following rules will apply at this event:

1. Equipment for sale to have been cleaned and scorched prior to the sale.
2. No used frames will be sold, any that arrive will not be allowed into the hall.
3. Any surplus equipment in the flat should state if the fixing nails and instructions are included.
4. You must book-in the things you have for sale with the committee member on duty.
5. If you are selling the items, fix a price prior to the sale. The price will be then marked on the goods.
6. Any items, which you are willing to donate, will be shown without a price mark on them and we will just ask for a donation towards the Association funds.
7. Any goods sold will have 10% of the sale price deducted towards the Association funds.
8. At the end of the sale any booked-in items, that have not been sold, will be booked-out and returned to you.
9. At the end of the sale, please take any of your items of equipment that remain. The committee will not want to be making trips to the tip with uncollected items.

John Chapman (Chairman)

In July we have an extra outing on offer:



A Visit to Chapel Down Winery

Sunday 22nd July 2018, at 11.00am.
Small Hythe, Tenterden, Kent, TN30 7NG

Are you a wine buff? Do you know your Chardonnay from your Shiraz? Join us for a tour of the vineyard and processing rooms at Chapel Down Winery. Here we will learn about the history of English wine and how they produce, amongst others, their award-winning sparkling wine. The tour will be followed by the opportunity to taste a selection of wines - so brush up on your slurping skills!!!



Following the tour, which will take about an hour and a half, we can relax outdoors in their Herb garden - why not bring a picnic? Alternatively, if you prefer, you can book into the Swan Restaurant on site for lunch (please note that a separate booking is required). Nearby Tenterden also boasts a host of eateries to suit most tastes.

Following feedback from several of you - the most popular day for us to visit is Sunday 22nd July 2018, and the time will be 11.00am. Apologies to those who responded for whom this was not a day or time when you were available, but we went with when most people could make it.

If you would like to join us on this visit, the cost is £10 per person (non-refundable), partners & friends welcome. To book places please contact John Hendrie to pay and copy me in so that I can add you to the list. For bank transfers please contact one of us if you need bank details but if paying by cheque, John's address is 26 Coldharbour Lane, Hildenborough, Tonbridge, Kent, TN11 9JT. In this case will you also let me know you are coming so that I can keep an accurate list.

Chapel Down Winery is at Small Hythe, Tenterden, Kent, TN30 7NG and their website is <https://www.chapeldown.com/>

I'm looking forward to the tour and I hope you are too. If there is anywhere else you think would make a good location for us to visit, please do let me know.

Jen

jen.ferry@medwaybeekeepers.co.uk

Beekeeper's Bazaar:

The following items are available for sale:

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

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

An excellent book, ideal back ground reading for courses.

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

paul_lawrence@blueyonder.co.uk

2) 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.

Beekeeper's Bazaar: (cont.)

3) Dickie Andrews has the following equipment for sale. Any reasonable offer will be accepted.

20-frame extractor, 6ft long uncapping tray and equipment, Dadant lifts and supers.
If you are interested in any of the above equipment contact Dickie on: 01634 252892

4) After nearly 60 years of beekeeping David Hopper is planning to downsize on the number of hives he looks after. Consequently over the next few months he will be looking to dispose of a variety of WBC and National Hives and other equipment.

If you need any equipment please have a word with him, either at one of our meetings or you can phone him for further information on: 01634 280622.

Swarm Collection Service 2018: We need your help!

As you will know, last year the Council pulled out of our long standing co-operation regarding the collection of swarms within the Medway Area. So, we as an Association decided to go it alone, in a year, which proved to be challenging, to say the least.

Unfortunately due to the small number of personnel collecting honeybee swarms the workload was at times excessive. So this year we are changing back to our 'old system' model. Using a central "Swarm Phone". Only this number will be given out on our website and collectors will be allocated to individual 'Medway Postcode Areas'.

The model will work as follows:

The swarm phone holder will man the phone for a week, he or she collects the calls and passes them out to people willing to take swarms and to deal with other issues, e.g. Bumbles and Wasps. The Swarm Collectors will be allocated to Medway Postcode Areas in order to keep travelling to a minimum.

Collectors may claim expenses from the householder for making a visit and responding to a call. It is suggested that collectors base the cost on their mileage with a maximum charge of £20. A receipt must be given to the householder for any expenses paid. When taking swarms we will follow the BBKA guidelines, the details are on the BBKA and MBKA websites.

However, any system which is going to prove a success, ultimately requires manpower. We need to greatly increase the number of people who are willing to collect swarms within their area and people willing to accept some of the swarms that have been collected.

The more we have the less of a burden it will be on everyone.

If you are able to help with this vital task please contact either John Chapman email: john.chapman@medwaybeekeepers.co.uk

Or myself email: paul.lawrence@medwaybeekeepers.co.uk

Please help us make this work for the benefit of both ourselves, and the residents of Medway.

Thanking you in anticipation
Paul Lawrence

OLD MUGS WANTED!

Of the variety you drink from... We have been using single-use polystyrene cups for refreshments at association meetings. It would be environmentally better if we went back to reusable ones for our events but the hall only provides small cups and saucers. I was wondering if any of you had any mugs that you do not use that you could donate to us. If we could collect an assortment of mugs I could bring them to all meetings and we would reduce our waste considerably. We can, of course, buy mugs cheaply, but I just thought I'd see if any of you had one or two that are not in use that could be recycled and pressed into service. If you have, please bring them to the AGM or any other association get together be it study-sessions or Bee Chat as I'm bound to be there!!!

Many thanks,

Jen Ferry

Winter Meetings:

We look forward to seeing you at this winter's meetings. A list of the meetings can be viewed by going to: www.medwaybeekeepers.co.uk/events

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:

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
john.chapman@medwaybeekeepers.co.uk

Newsletter and Website Enquiries

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