

1923 - 2017



MBKA

Medway
Beekeepers
Association

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



Newsletter June 2017

The new season is now in full swing as you can see from this bumper edition! However, the weather has been somewhat problematic. So keep checking for signs of congestion and don't forget to put on those supers when necessary. Wasps are now about so set traps where necessary.

Past Events:

29th April 2017

A practical session with Tony and Mark

This was a well-attended session, with 26 members including 6 new beekeepers and 2 juniors, one of whom was only 6 years old!



Everyone put on their bee suits and went across to the hives. The purpose of the session was to locate frames containing drone bees. Members could then practice picking up the drones by their wings, transferring them to the other hand and holding their legs, using thumb and forefinger. This is a good way to practice, avoiding stings from a worker and not putting a queen in danger of being squashed! Several people commented after holding the drones on how much vibration they could feel. Everyone then marked the thorax of the bees with paint using a grass stem.

After a break for tea Mark and Tony showed us how to assemble both brood and super frames. Unfortunately this was interrupted by the persistent attentions of one bee! So Tony had to complete the demonstration with his veil up.

We were also shown how, to set up a hive and frames to accept a swarm, to set up a bait-hive and how to use swarm lure. This was finished off with some information on the use of contact feeders.

The comments on the session were very favourable. Our thanks go to Mark and Tony for the efforts they put in to help make this a worthwhile exercise.

Peter Pavely

13th May 2017

Monthly Apiary Open Day

During the previous meeting on the 29th of April it was noted how hives were getting a little congested. This was confirmed when the hives were opened again during this session and it

was considered prudent to act as both hives were showing signs of an intention to swarm.

Each of the apiary beehives are based on a brood and a half National hive under the queen excluder, with a honey super on top.

Jen and Sheila started on hive (1). Elaine was recording notes in the hive log.

The roof was removed and placed upside down on the ground then the supers complete with the crown board were placed on top of the roof. The wire frame queen excluder was carefully removed checking that the Queen was not on the underside.

A frame rest was used to hold one of the brood frames, to give more room for manipulations. The contents of the frames, including queen cells, stores, brood, eggs, and pollen was recorded in the hive log.

This process was repeated for both top and bottom brood boxes. Hive 1 was then reassembled and the inspection continued in the same vein on Hive 2.

After a break for refreshments while Sheila and Jen considered how to proceed. A used brood box and super was scorched with a blowtorch and several frames of foundation were made available.

Hive (2) was left to it's own devices and will be checked for queen cells at the next inspection.

The decision was made to create a new brood and a half hive (Number 3) and two nucleus boxes. The two honey supers were split between the Hives (1) and (3).

The marked queen from hive (1) was put into hive (3) on a frame of brood. A frame of stores were also added to Hive (3) and a clean queen excluder and honey super were placed on the top. Followed by a crown board and roof.

A queen cell was selected in Hive (1) and any other frames containing queen cells were removed. New brood frames of foundation were added and the queen excluder, honey super, crown board and roof fitted together.

A brood frame with a charged queen cell and a frame with stores were placed in each of the two nucleus hives. Bees were then shaken into the nucleus boxes and new frames of foundation were added to each one.

So, this was a very busy day in the apiary and covered a whole range of issues. This does highlight the necessity of regular inspections and the work that this can sometimes involve. But it should never be put off.

Thanks to Elaine, Jen and Sheila for making this, such a worthwhile experience.

Peter Pavely

We still need more members to help inspect and maintain our apiary bees and it is a very good way to learn whilst working with a more experienced beekeeper.

This has been a particularly trying year. But this is all part of the general management of our Apiary. Elaine Laight performs this role admirably, but she is only able to do so much and needs help and support from a whole range of people to make our Apiary a success as a teaching environment for new beekeepers. If you would like to help please contact her for details at: elaine.laight@medwaybeekeepers.co.uk

Editor's Comment

Next Outdoor Meetings:

Saturday 27th May 2017 A visit to Mark Ballard's Apiary

Time: 3 to 5pm

Venue:

The lodge Boughton Lane, Boughton Monchelsea, Maidstone, Kent ME17 4NA.

From Maidstone take the A229 towards Hastings, then pass the Wheatsheaf P.H. on your left, past the Fire Station on the left, past the row of shops on left, then bear left into Boughton Lane just before the Swan P.H.

Travel up Boughton Lane for about a mile, past Oldborough Manor School also known as Five Oak Green or Tiger school on the left. Turn in just before the long ragstone wall on the left (the yellow Medway Beekeepers Board will direct you)

Saturday 17th June 2017 A visit to Jen Ferry's Apiary Making up Nucs

Time: 3pm to 5pm

Venue:

Buckhole Farm, Buckhole Lane, Cooling Road, High Halstow, Rochester, Kent ME3 8SE


There will be parking beside the farm and members will have to walk to the hives. It is possible to get cars up to the apiary but it is a grass track around 3 sides of a field and only those cars with good clearance will get through. We will ensure signs are up. This is a field so there are no facilities!!

If you require any further information please contact Jen on: 07990 581858

Future Events:

7th – 9th July Kent County Show 7th July Kent Bees and Honey Show

See below for details of the 2017 Honey Show, to be held at the Kent Agricultural Showground, Detling on 7th July.

If you wish to exhibit please remember that entry forms with **S.A.E.** must reach the Show Secretary by the Friday 16 June 2017. 

Can you help steward at the show?

Contact Bob Smith: phone 0208 3001807 or email bsmith12@ntlworld.com

John Chapman

RULES

- 1 All exhibitors must be members of Dover, Kent, Medway or Thanet BKAs and the honey and wax must be the produce of the exhibitor's own bees.
- 2 Entry forms with **S.A.E.** must reach the Show Secretary by the Friday 16th June.
- 3 Exhibitors may make more than one entry in any class, but will **only receive** one award per class. Awards for classes 1 to 15 will be counted for points for Challenge Trophies.
- 4 Honey must be exhibited in clear 454g (1lb) squat jars of British Standard Pattern with standard lacquered or plastic screw tops (gold or white). Labels will be supplied and must be affixed to exhibits as follows:
jars and mead bottles – 15mm (½ in) from the bottom
comb – one label on the top bar and the other on the glass of the case.
candles – one on each candle fixed near the base of the candle.
blocks of wax – a label on the top of the block and one on the container.
photographs – mounted colour print photograph about bees or beekeeping, for the general public (non-beekeeper). There should be a title or caption. Photographs to have been taken by the exhibitor and mounted on plain card of any colour (160gsm grade), A4 size. Photographs to be labelled on the bottom left-hand corner of the mount.
cakes – a label on the top of the cake and the other on the plastic bag.
biscuits – a label on the plate and the other on the plastic bag.
- 6 Beeswax must be plainly moulded and not exhibited in boxes. All entries will be placed in a display case.
- 7 Mead to be shown in a clear punted bottle with little or no lettering or ornamentation containing approximately 750ml (27 fluid oz). Only cork stoppers with white plastic flanges to be used (supplied at the show).
- 8 Candles must be displayed upright in a suitable holder.
- 9 Cakes and Biscuits will be exhibited on a white paper plate in a plastic bag. Exhibits will only be accepted at the Show from 2pm – 6pm on the day prior to the Show opening or delivered to the Show Secretary during the week. They will be staged by the appointed stewards. **Judging starts at 10.00am and exhibits may only be removed after 5.30pm on the last day of the Show.**
- 11 All exhibits except those in the Gift Classes will remain the property of the exhibitor. All reasonable care will be taken with the exhibits but the Show Committee cannot be responsible for any loss or damage.
Any points not covered in the above rules will be referred to the rules applying to the National Honey Show. A copy of these rules will be available for scrutiny.
- 13 Any appeals should be addressed to the Show Secretary by 4pm on 7th July 2017.
- 14 A Novice is any exhibitor, who has never won a First Prize at the Kent Honey Show.
Points awarded: First – 6, Second – 5, Third – 4, VHC – 3, HC – 2, C – 1

CAN YOU HELP AS A STEWARD AT THE SHOW?

Please contact Bob Smith

02083001807 or bsmith12@ntlworld.com



Kent Bees and Honey Show

Organised by the Kent Beekeepers' Association
in conjunction with Dover, Medway and Thanet Beekeepers'
Associations

**Friday, Saturday & Sunday
7th, 8th & 9th July, 2017**
(entries close 16th June)

**Kent County Showground
Detling, Maidstone**

Judge:

Mr. M. Duffin.

Show Secretary:

Mr. John Chapman
28 Wallace Road, Rochester, Kent ME1 2TB
01634 400570

SCHEDULE OF CLASSES

OPEN TO ALL BEEKEEPERS

Entry forms must reach the Show Secretary by Friday 16th June 2017

OPEN CLASSES

- Open to any Kent beekeeper:
- 1 Two jars of Light Coloured Honey.
 - 2 Two jars of Medium Coloured Honey (Sponsored by Thomes) First – £15, Second - £10, Third - £5.
 - 3 Two jars of Dark Coloured Honey.
 - 4 Two jars of Naturally Crystallised or Soft Set Honey
 - 5 Six jars of one type of Honey (Light, Medium, Dark, Crystallised or Soft Set), labelled as offered for retail sale including Country of origin and best before date (*Rule 4 does not apply. Tamperproof labels, if used, will be broken for judging.*)
 - 6 One Comb of Honey, any size, suitable for extracting. Must be wired on wired foundation. (Sponsored by Blue Bell hill apiaries) First – £15, Second - £10, Third - £5.
 - 7 One cake of Beeswax, weight between 200-255g (7-9oz) and not less than 20mm ($\frac{3}{4}$ in) thick.
 - 8 One bottle of Dry Mead (*Rules 5 & 7*)
 - 9 One bottle of Sweet Mead (*Rules 5 & 7*)
 - 10 3 Beeswax Candles. Candles need not necessarily be the same size or style. The display will be judged on its artistic merits. They will not be lit. (*Rules 1 & 6 do not apply*)
 - 11 Three Plain Beeswax Candles, not patterned, up to and including 38mm(1.5in) in diameter. One to be lit by the judge.
 - 12 Two Beeswax Models, moulded, matching in all respects.
 - 13 Six 27g (1oz) Wax blocks.
 - 14 Exhibition Class. A display of Honey and Wax Products – any 4 items to be selected from the following list -2 jars of Clear Honey of any colour, 2 jars of Naturally Crystallised or Soft Set Honey, Frame for Extraction, one cake of Beeswax (as for entry to class 7), bottle of Mead, Honey Cake, Polish or Furniture Cream, Cosmetics. Displayed at bench level in an area not to exceed 500mm X 500mm and 350mm high.
 - 15 Mounted Colour Print Photograph with Title relating to Bees or Beekeeping. Picture can be of any size, but must be taken by the exhibitor and mounted on plain card any colour (160gsm), A4 size. Digital images are permitted.
- NOVICE CLASSES.**
- 16 Open to Beekeepers who have never won a First Prize Card in the Kent Honey Show.
 - 17 NOVICE CLASS for Clear Honey. Two jars of Honey, any one colour.
 - 17 NOVICE CLASS for Naturally Crystallised or Soft Set Honey. Two jars of honey.
- HONEY GIFT CLASSES.**
- 18 Clear Honey. One jar of clear honey of any colour.
 - 19 Naturally Crystallised or Soft Set Honey. One jar of either.
(For classes 18 and 19, Please supply one of your own labels in an envelope with your entry number, labels will be applied when the honey is sold.)
 - 20 Gift Class. Date and Honey Tea Loaf. Exhibits must be made to the recipe on the opposite page. Cakes are to be displayed on white paper plates inside a plastic bag. Labels to be put on the top of the cake and on the bag. Cakes will be donated to Catering after judging.
 - 21 Gift Class. Honey Biscuits. A plate of six biscuits made to the exhibitors own
Recipe. The recipe to be displayed with the biscuits.

BRANCH OR ASSOCIATION APIARY CLASSES.

- 22 Branch or Association Apiary Class. Two jars of honey of any one colour. (Sponsored by Freeman & Harding Ltd.) First - £10.

SPECIAL AWARDS

The Agricultural Society's Trophy.

Exhibitor with the highest points in classes 1 – 15.

Clive Watson Memorial Trophy.

Winner of Class 2 for Medium Coloured Honey

Mead Cup.

Overall Winner of classes 8 and 9

Reginald Tower Rose Bowl

Best exhibit of candles
(Classes 11 and 12)

Subscribers Cup

Exhibition Class (Class 14).

Novice Cup.

Overall Winner of classes 16 & 17

Branch or Association Apiary Class.

Geoffrey Dixon Trophy.

Best Honey Exhibit in Show.

(Blue Ribbon may be awarded for the Best in Show)

Best Exhibit in the Cookery Classes.

Margaret Calder Plate.

Branch or Association Winning the Most points in Classes 1 – 15.

Central Division Cup.

Date and Honey Tea Loaf Recipe for Kent show in 2017.

Ingredients: 170g/6oz plain flour, 30g/1oz margarine, 30g/1oz sugar, 90g/3oz dates, 1/2 level teasp. bicarbonate of soda, 5 tablesp. boiling water, 6 level tablesp. honey, 1 egg.

Preparation: Chop the dates, pour boiling water over them and leave to cool. Grease a 1lb loaf tin. Rub the margarine into the flour. Dissolve the bicarbonate of soda in the date mixture. Make a well in the centre of the flour mixture, add all the other ingredients and mix well. Pour into the tin and bake at 180 deg. C/350 deg. F/gas mark 4 for approx. 40–50 minutes. Allow to cool for 10 minutes before removing from the tin. Cool on a wire rack.

**KENT COUNTY BEEKEEPING EXHIBITION
AND HONEY SHOW 2017.**

Entry form must reach the Entries Secretary by the 16th June.

Steward use		Class no.	CLASSES	Classes entered X
IN	OUT			
		1	Light honey	
		2	Medium honey	
		3	Dark honey	
		4	Crystallised or Soft Set honey	
		5	Six jars of one type of honey	
		6	Comb of Honey on wired foundation.	
		7	Cake of Beeswax.	
		8	One bottle of Dry Mead	
		9	One bottle of Sweet Mead	
		10	3 Beeswax Candles	
		11	Three Plain Beeswax Candles	
		12	Two Beeswax Models	
		13	Six 27g (1oz) blocks	
		14	Exhibition Class	
		15	Mounted Colour Print Photograph	
			End of Open Classes	
		16	Novice – Honey, any colour	
		17	Novice –Crystallised or Soft Set honey	
		18	Gift – clear honey	
		19	Gift – Crystallised or soft set honey	
		20	Gift – Date and Honey Fruit Loaf.	
		21	Gift – 6 Biscuits.	
		22	Branch or Association honey.	

I declare the above entries conform to the Rules by which I agree to abide and that my honey and wax exhibits have been produced by my bees.

Class labels can be posted if a sae (1st class) is enclosed.

I will bring my entries on Thursday afternoon/ sending my entries with DELETE AS APPROPRIATE.

PLEASE USE BLOCK CAPITALS

Branch/Association.....

Name.....

Address.....

..... Postcode.....

Phone Number Mobile

Signed..... Date

Kimber's Corner:



Hi Everyone.

As mentioned in my last column things are getting interesting as swarming is now the buzz-word sorry about that, couldn't resist it.

During my last two inspections I noticed a few queen cups and now queen cells are appearing. Happily, so far they have not been occupied. But it is now time to think about swarm control and maybe increase my stock at the same time. It would be great to go into next winter with a second hive, as there is no back up with just one.

At my last inspection I found all frames were covered with bees and the space for the queen to lay was reducing quite quickly. I added a super only a few weeks ago and it has filled up rapidly. To give the bees more space I added another super a few days ago.

I bought a second hive at the beginning of the year and it is probably now going to be put into use. I will need to find the queen and mark her to start off the process. So I have arranged for an extra pair of more experienced eyes to help me! It will also be good having someone in attendance, able to reassure me when I try to perform an Artificial Swarm for the first time!

However, during my hive inspection I noticed there were a lot less bees in the hive and several capped queen cells. They had swarmed! I should have acted sooner!

So a change of plan was needed. With no queen in residence I took down all the queen cells leaving two nice looking ones and marked the frame with a drawing pin. I then reassembled the hive and will now have to wait for seven days to see if the queen emerges from one of the cells. Then I'll need to wait until she mates and comes back into lay. Fingers crossed! I am finding that you sometimes need a lot of patience in this hobby. But hay ho, on the up side I noticed that one of my supers is looking quite spectacular. Should get some honey soon!

I'll let you know how I get on next month.

Peter

Do you need an outlet for your honey or a home for some bee hives?

We have had a call from Andrew Lingham, at Court Farm, Halling. He farms the surrounding land and also undertakes some of the management of the Ranscombe reserve.

He has a butcher's shop at the farm and is looking for a supplier of local honey. They would like honey in 1lb jars and to take delivery of about 10 jars as needed.

If you are interested call: 01634 240547 and ask to talk to Mike or Billy.

They are also happy to site hives on the farm.

If you are interested contact Andrew Lingham on: 07785915580

Sue Chapman

Bee Chat:

The next gathering will be on 28th June (4th Wednesday of the month) at **The Pier, Lower Upnor, ME2 4XA, at 7.30pm** come and share your stories and hear everyone else's!

Next month's date is, 23rd July.

All members new and old are very welcome, and if any of you want to collect a box or two of Honey jars from me while you are in the village then this can be arranged too!

Please call Jen Ferry for further details. 07990 581858.

See you there.
Jen Ferry

Swarm Collection in the Medway Area

The Swarm Rota still needs more help from members. The few that are out collecting risk being overrun with bees! If you would like to help with collecting or want swarms please let us know.

We are trying to provide cover in Medway postal areas and wish to place members in their own areas to avoid travelling and over use of personnel.

Please contact John Chapman or Jen Ferry if you are willing to help us in one or more of these regards. The more we have the less each member has to do.

Beekeepers Bazaar

Special Purchase:

As a service to members and a fundraiser for the Association we have purchased a bulk order of traditional 1lb Honey Jars from Freeman & Harding.

These are now available to members at £25 per box of 72 jars. (Freeman & Hardings price is £31.50). These will be sold on a first come first served basis - payment by cash, cheque or BACs all accepted!!

If you would like to secure a box or two (or more!) please contact Jen Ferry on 07990 581858 or email jen.ferry@medwaybeekeepers.co.uk.

The boxes are at Jens home in Upnor and can be collected by arrangement.

The association has also purchased a small quantity of foundation, at favourable prices which are available if you would like some (14 x12 & supers only left).

Jen Ferry

The 2017 summer meetings program is on the website:

www.medwaybeekeepers.co.uk/events

Many thanks, to all of those who have contributed to this newsletter.

Looking forward to seeing you at this summer's meetings.

Are there any other beekeeping products / accessories you might like us to purchase in bulk?
If you have any ideas please let us know.

Whether you are old or new members, If you have any news, ideas or comments about the website or for future newsletters, 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

Paul Lawrence

paul.lawrence@medwaybeekeepers.co.uk