

1923 - 2017



# MBKA

Medway  
Beekeepers  
Association

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



## Newsletter August 2017

As it looks as though this could be a very good year for our honey crops, why not enter some into this year's Honey Show. Time to think about varroa treatments too.

### Past Event:

#### 7<sup>th</sup> July Kent Bees and Honey Show:

#### **KENT BEEKEEPERS ASSOCIATIONS Kent Beekeepers Honey Show at Kent Agricultural Show 2017**

This year, the Kent Beekeepers moved into the Flower Tent, we therefore joined 'The Kent Federation of Horticultural Societies, Floral Art and the Plant Nursery Displays'. The tent exhibits now cover the story of vegetable and flower production including the role of bees in pollination. As a result the tent has been renamed as "Garden Life".

With a new path leading from the car parks through the woodland to the back of the Garden Life tent, the public now come from the woodland area, past the Live Bee Demonstrations and straight into the 'Beekeeping Section'. Visitors can then go on to look at the remaining exhibits or out to see the rest of the show.



Over 80,000 people visited the show this year and this was reflected in the increased footfall seen by the Beekeepers. The Live Bee Demonstrations were very well attended, as were the exhibits and stalls. The shop did very well and at times we were not sure if we would have enough honey and wax products to sell. Many thanks to all those who arranged to get extra supplies.

The Honey Show, although smaller, still caused a lot of interest with the usual questions being asked by our visitors, such as why are the honeys different colours?

We would like more entries for next year, so please think about entering especially if you have success at your own local show. Our Judge, Mike Duffin, who is a National Honey Show Judge, was impressed with the overall quality of the exhibits.

### The winners of the Cups and Trophies were:

**Agricultural Societies Trophy for the Exhibitor with the highest points in classes:**  
Paul F Abbott (Sevenoaks and Tunbridge Wells)

**Clive Watson Memorial Trophy (Winner of Class 2 for Medium Honey):**  
Mrs. Leslie Fancote (Gravesend)

**Robert Geering Challenge Cup for Mead Cup:**

Paul F Abbott (Sevenoaks and Tunbridge Wells)

**Reginald Tower Rose Bowl (Best exhibit in candles):**

Mark Woollard (Whitstable and Herne Bay)

**Margaret Calder Plate (Best Exhibit in Cookery Classes):**

Paul F Abbott (Sevenoaks and Tunbridge Wells)

**Subscribers Cup (Winner of Exhibition Class):**

John Chapman

**Best Honey Exhibit in Show (Certificate of Merit):**

John Chapman (Medway)



**Novice Cup** (open to any exhibitor who has not won a first place card in the Kent Honey Show): Anthony Edwards (Medway)



**Geoffrey Dixon Trophy** (honey from a Branch or Association Apiary):  
Medway Beekeepers Association.

**Central Division Cup** (Branch or Association Winning the Most Points in classes 1 – 15): Medway Beekeepers Association.

Thanks must go to all the show committee, who supported the move into the new area, and to all of you who helped to steward the stands, demonstrated and helped set-up and dismantle the bee areas. Also those, who helped in any way to make this show a really great success, particularly as this was a major move for the beekeepers. We are now keen to build on this experience for the future.

John Chapman

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## The Outdoor Meeting and Event for August:

**MBKA Apiary Open Day**

**Saturday 12th August 2017**

**Time: 3pm to 4pm**

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

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**MBKA BBQ**

**Saturday 19th August 2017**

**Time: 3pm onwards**

Venue: 127 Berengrave Lane, Rainham, Kent, ME8 7UJ

Simon Marshall and his family have again, kindly agreed to be our hosts.

The cost of food will be £4 per person (pay on the day), for BBQ meat or vegetarian option, along with some soft drinks. If members would provide salads, desserts and anything boozy that they require, as well as a raffle prize, it would be appreciated.

Please reply to Simon ASAP with your preferred BBQ choice, he needs to order food etc.

You can call him on 01634 234066 or email: [themarshall5@blueyonder.co.uk](mailto:themarshall5@blueyonder.co.uk)

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## Future Events:

### MBKA Honey Show

9th – 10th September 2017

Venue: Elm Court Garden Centre

It has been a very good year, so why not have a go and put an entry or two into this year's show. The schedule and entry form are on the website:

[www.medwaybeekeepers.co.uk/latest-news](http://www.medwaybeekeepers.co.uk/latest-news) (They will also be emailed out via a circular at the beginning of August 2017).

There are twenty-one classes to choose from and if you are just starting or you have been unlucky and your bees haven't produced a surplus for you this year there are always the cookery, craft and photographic classes, so do have a go.

Sue Lang from Bedfordshire is our judge this year. She is a successful exhibitor at the National Honey Show and a judge in training, so it would be good to keep her busy with lots of entries.

Nearer the time we will need offers of help to set up (from 3pm on Friday 8<sup>th</sup> September for about an hour) and to 'man' the sales table and to talk to visitors.

The show is open during the garden centre opening hours which are Saturday 9am - 6pm and Sunday from 10.30am until we start to clear up at about 4pm. There will be the chance to sell honey and hive products (usual 10% to association funds).

Any queries please get in touch: [susan.chapman@care4free.net](mailto:susan.chapman@care4free.net) or phone: 01634 400570. This is important, especially if you need to buy a few 1lb jars or borrow a frame case. The Association owns three frame cases that are available for loan, on a first come first served basis.

Sue Chapman

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## Autumn Bee Fair:

This year we are hoping to hold an **Autumn Bee Fair** at Wainscott Memorial Hall on Saturday 14th October.

The idea is to show off as many of the hobbies and crafts associated with beekeeping as possible. It is planned that this could be open to the public as well as the Association.

The suggestions so far are candle making (including moulding, dipping and rolling), honey extraction, mead making, photography, microscopy, baking, art and craft products (with a bee theme), preparing hive products for a honey show, bee friendly plants, a kid's corner, cards and soaps & cosmetics.

We are calling out to the whole membership to set up a small working party that represents a wide interest base to create this fair. If this is something you would like to get involved in please contact me and come along to the first meeting that will be 2pm, 16th August, 32 Moat Lane, Lower Upnor. ME2 4GP, phone: 07990 581858.

If you have any ideas but don't have the time then please also let me know.

Jen Ferry

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## Kimber's Corner:



Hi everyone,

Well I thought that I had it all sorted, a new queen and larvae, job done! But for some reason my queen decided to depart with even more of my bees following her. This is what I now know as a 'cast swarm', on checking my records, what I thought was a back up queen cell has proved to be a problem.

It seems that as the second queen emerged the first one departed. When Kay, the Area Bee Inspector contacted me, asking to inspect my bee's for the possibility of diseases, I thought "Well a second opinion is always good", particularly as the number of capped brood and larvae has been slowly decreasing over these last two weeks. During the inspection I informed Kay of these past events. She checked through the hive and at first it was looking a bit grim as we thought the colony might be queen-less. However, on checking through a second time Kay found a queen, excellent news! The queen was very black and totally different to the first one. It took me ages to spot her, even when she was pointed out to me (should have gone to spec savers). I should have moved her cell into a Nuc, another lesson learnt. It was also suggested that I should remove the super and feed them, as the number of bees was getting a little small. Feeding would also help to stimulate the queen into laying. So fingers crossed I can get the colony building up again soon.

Talk to you all next month  
Peter

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## Winter Study 2017:

For the last few years, the Association has run a Winter Study group under the guidance of Bob Smith and facilitated by experienced beekeepers. This year, rather than doing one of the BBKA Modules we are considering running one of the non examined BBKA 'Course in a Case' courses. Terry Clare covers Beginners and much of the Novice course and so it is the Improvers Course that we will be running if there is sufficient interest.

It is proposed that the course be run over the winter, one evening a fortnight for 10 sessions starting late October. The topics covered are Apiary Location & Management, Natural History and Biology, Foraging, Pests and Diseases, Honey Removal, & Processing, Swarm Prevention and Control, Other Products, Nuclei and Packages and Advanced Beekeeping Procedures, with a final Review & Discussion session. This course is aimed at those beekeepers who have grasped the fundamentals in beekeeping i.e. those who are at or above the Basic assessment standard.

The cost will be kept to a minimum, approximately £10-£20 in total, with the Association paying for the room hire.

At this stage I am looking for expressions of interest from any of you who would consider undertaking this course. The courses in the past have provided an excellent learning environment and have enabled those participating to not only become better beekeepers, but to forge new friendships with other like minded people.

If you are interested, in the first instance please email me by 20th August at: [jen.ferry@medwaybeekeepers.co.uk](mailto:jen.ferry@medwaybeekeepers.co.uk) so that we can assess if there is enough demand to proceed. If you would like to discuss this further, please call me on 07990 581858 or speak to any other committee member.

Jen Ferry

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## 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 available to members at £25 per box of 72 jars. (Freeman & Hardings price is £31.50). There are only a few left so if you want some be quick - 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](mailto: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 is available if you would like some (14 x12 & supers only left but more is on order).

Jen Ferry

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### Bee Chat:

The next gathering will be on **23rd August** (4<sup>th</sup> Wednesday of the month) at **The Pier, Lower Upnor, ME2 4XA at 7.30pm**. Next month's date is, 27th September.

Please call Jen Ferry for further details. 07990 581858.

See you there.  
Jen Ferry

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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, amusing stories 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](mailto:john.chapman@medwaybeekeepers.co.uk)

#### Newsletter and Website Enquiries

Paul Lawrence  
[paul.lawrence@medwaybeekeepers.co.uk](mailto:paul.lawrence@medwaybeekeepers.co.uk)

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### And finally see below:

The International Meeting of Young Beekeepers: a message from Margaret Murdin:





10<sup>th</sup> July 2017  
GM 11 2017

Dear Association Chair

Over recent weeks many Area Associations (AAs), Branches and individual members have written to me or emailed seeking clarification concerning the financial arrangements for the International Meeting of Young Beekeepers (IMYB). Most asked for copies of the accounts or bank statements. Some asked for lists of sponsoring companies with the amounts sponsored, others for the final cost to the BBKA. Some, in fact threatened censure if I did not send the information to all AAs. I was spending considerable time writing a variation of the same letter in response to each request. This was the backdrop to our letter of last week.

IMYB finished on Sunday 9<sup>th</sup> July. It was a great success. There were 57 young beekeepers from 19 countries and Ruth and Ian's organisation ensured a smooth event which, as far as I could see, was enjoyed by all. So, I would like to thank Ruth and Ian for the hard work they have carried out over many months.

Other thanks are due. I would like to thank Margaret Wilson for the valuable work she carried out on the budget and finances. A special thanks must go to our Press Officer Diane Roberts. Diane arranged extensive media coverage.

BBC television's Countryfile were filming (to be shown on 23<sup>rd</sup> July)  
Radio 4's Farming Today's coverage was aired on 10<sup>th</sup> July  
Radio and TV Times magazine interviewed and will publish a feature.  
Radio Wiltshire carried out interviews (aired on 10<sup>th</sup> July), as did a regional television programme called Points West.

We are all hoping that the coverage given to IMYB will encourage more young people here in the UK to become involved with beekeeping. If that happens it will be a fitting legacy.

Many of you will be aware from BBKA News that we are just launching our Schools Membership, again to encourage young beekeepers. It is proving extremely popular and we are hoping the IMYB coverage will make it more so.





Some of you have written to me thanking me for the letter of last week and the clarification it afforded. Others have written asking me why I sent it. I hope it provided the financial information many were seeking. The IMYB was certainly a success for all who participated. The accounts are yet to be finalised but at the moment they appear to be positive.

Thank you again to the many Associations, Branches, Divisions and individual members who have supported us.

Best wishes,

Margaret Murdin NDB

This letter is being sent by email to all Association Secretaries.  
Due to the holiday period it will also be sent by email to all Branch Secretaries so hopefully all BBKA members will be notified about the IMYB feature on country file before it airs.

