



**JANUARY  
2017**



# Aberdeen and District Beekeepers' Association (SCIO)

*- promoting the study and development of apiculture, and advancing the heritage, culture and science of beekeeping amongst its membership and throughout the wider community*

## Meet the ADBKA Committee members

Your committee members have recently redistributed the tasks they undertake on a voluntary basis and we thought it is important for the membership to know who they are and what they do within the association. Over the next few issues of the newsletter we will run a series of articles to introduce the committee members to you.

### David Morland

– Committee member since May 2014, Vice Chair and now Acting Chair.

After many years as Chair, Newsletter editor, Apiary manager and latterly Manager of association beekeeping supplies Graham Torrie has decided to take a well-deserved rest and I now take over as acting chair until the annual general meeting in May.

Graham's many responsibilities have been shared within the committee and supported by many of our ADBKA membership. The association has over 200 members and to enlighten our membership to our new roles within the committee we thought it would be appropriate to outline the new tasks some of our committee members now share, and introduce ourselves. Many of the existing committee members are continuing to offer sterling service and continue to hold key roles within our association and their contribution is much appreciated and we rely on them greatly.

I joined the ADBKA in the year 2000 and the same year I started keeping bees with two colonies that I got from Jock McGregor which were in Smith hives. My apiary has now grown to eight colonies in National hives which I keep on reclaimed landfill sites. I have tried different types of queen over the years and have found the Buckfast surprisingly well adapted to our climate, although I know there is keen interest in increasing the Native black bee population in the area.

I have been a committee member since May 2014. I have studied and passed the Scottish Beekeepers Modules 1, 2, 3, 5, 6, 7, and Microscopy and intend to sit Module 8 and the practical test.

My main reason for keeping bees is to promote beekeeping, preserve honeybee stocks and enjoy the pleasure of working with them and learning about them. Honey production is an occasional reward.

My Grandfather was Head of the Bee unit at Rothamsted Research, in the 1930s, which is one of the oldest agricultural research institutions in the world, having been founded in 1843. My father kept bees for some years until my youngest brother poked one of the hives with a stick and was very badly stung in his hair and on the face, with the result that he had to go to the hospital.

### Erling Watt

– Committee member since May 2015, now membership secretary.

This is my fifth year of keeping bees and being a member of the association. This is not however my first brush with beekeeping as my grandfather kept bees and I used to help him with them as a teenager back in the 70's until I joined the army.

I never lost my interest in them but by the time I came out of the army my Grandfather had given up beekeeping and I had a wife and a young family to look after. My interest in beekeeping remained and now I have the opportunity to keep a few colonies, my only regret is that I put it off for so long.

In addition to being the membership secretary I help Joan with the association supplies and can offer bee food and honey jars together with the loan of association equipment to members within the Peterhead area.

I sat the basic bee master this year and intend to take further S.B.A module exams every other year.

#### *President:*

Mr R Wood  
Forests Road  
Banchory

#### *Acting Chair:*

David Morland  
Middle Ardo  
Udny  
Ellon  
AB41 6QX  
Tel. 07768244420  
e-mail:  
david.j.morland@virgin.net

#### *Hon. Secretary:*

Rosie Crighton  
29 Marcus Cres.  
Blackburn, AB21 0SZ  
Tel. 01224 791181  
e-mail:  
aberdeenbeekeepers@gmail.com

#### *Hon. Treasurer:*

Leona Lowe  
70 Pittodrie Place  
Aberdeen, AB24 5QT  
Tel. 07966026564  
e-mail:  
leonalowe@hotmail.co.uk

## FUTURE ARTICLES

MEET THE  
MEMBERS

PRINCES TRUST

MY BEEKEEPING  
YEAR  
(Murray McGregor)

SCOTTISH NATIVE  
HONEY BEE

We have had issues with our printers this year and haven't yet received the membership cards. Please accept our apologies for this - we hope to have them soon and will send them out immediately.

David Morland

## Members' Events



The next diet of SBA Module exams are on the 18<sup>th</sup> of March 2017. Modules 1,2,3,5,6,7 & 8 will be offered.

All applications should be submitted to the S.B.A. by Saturday the 30<sup>th</sup> of January.

The Scottish Beekeepers website gives all the details

### **Talk:** **Dr Ewan Campbell of Aberdeen University**

Talk about varroa, and an update on the knock-down research, and to give an overview of other research.

Ewan has been kind enough to write a synopsis of his work and his talk on the 21<sup>st</sup> which can be found on page three of this newsletter.

**Saturday 21 January 2017 at 2.00pm**  
The Kinellar Community Hall,  
Fintray Road, Blackburn AB21 0SS

The venue of the Microscopy workshop on 1<sup>st</sup> & 2<sup>nd</sup> April 2017, has had to change from SASA, Edinburgh to the University of St Andrews - Biomedical Sciences Research Complex, North Haugh, University of St. Andrews, KY16 9ST.

Alan Riach

### **The Scottish Native Honey Bee Society**

Launch meeting  
on Saturday, 1 April 2017  
from 10.00 to 16:30  
Lovat Hotel, Perth

Kate Atchley has been kind enough to prepare an article for February edition of our newsletter.

### **Talk:**

The Talk that was to be presented by Ian Craig has had to be postponed.

Details of a replacement speaker on the 18<sup>th</sup> of February will be announced soon.

**Saturday 18 February 2017 at 2.00pm**  
**The Kinellar Community Hall, Fintray Road, Blackburn AB21 0SS**

### **SPRING 2017 LECTURE SERIES**

To be held at Aberdeen Grammar School Skene St, Aberdeen AB10 1HT.

- 16 February: The biology of the bee
- 23 February: The beehive
- 02 March: What do I need to keep bees?
- 09 March: The products of the hive
- 16 March: Help! There's something wrong with my bees!
- 23 March: The beekeeping year

Starting each evening at 7.30pm, the six-week programme will cost £15, payable on the first evening of attendance.

The programme is ideal for those thinking about starting out beekeeping, but would also be of interest to novices preparing to take the next step, or even experienced beekeepers wishing to update their knowledge.

It is our intention to offer attendees the opportunity to take part in hands-on beekeeping sessions at our Crathes apiary on the conclusion of the programme.  
**No need to book. Just turn up.**

## Varroa mites, honey bees and viruses – an intertwined relationship

As beekeepers you will be aware that global apiculture is currently facing a deep crisis, characterized by increasing parasite and pathogen pressure, exposure to a cocktail of agrochemical products and a rapid loss of biodiversity. Not to say that the “beemageddon” as shouted about in the press is true, but our bees are under severe pressure from many different sources!

In Europe, the spread of the parasitic mite *Varroa destructor* has led to a situation where colonies have to be treated with acaricides in order to keep losses at an acceptable level. At the same time, sustainability of the European beekeeping industry is reduced by a strong contraction of its genetic basis. At least two of the European subspecies of the Western honeybee (*Apis mellifera*) are acutely threatened by disappearance. In addition, the population size of most others is rapidly decreasing. I currently run 20 research hives in Aberdeen and also have 25 of my own hives so am aware of the annual fight against Varroa mites that we, as beekeepers, have to undertake.

Our research group at the University of Aberdeen has been working on Honey bee health for nearly a decade now and we currently have projects with partners across the globe including the USA, EU and Africa. Research always moves in fits and starts and often involves intertwined projects with different organisations, aims and objectives. Our lab currently has four PhD students working on different projects including Emma Bradford; looking at viruses in mites and honey bees, Ali Hroobi; studying DWV prevalence in Saudi Arabia, Renaud Heckle; studying beekeeping social demographics in Kenya and Craig Christie (part funded by the SBA) developing tools including an artificial feeding system to maintain and breed Varroa mites off the bee host in the lab. In addition to these student projects, myself and Dr Bowman are involved in Europe's largest honey bee research project; SMARTBEEs.

SMARTBEEs aims to stabilize beekeeping within the EU, by characterizing what is left of honeybee diversity, and catalysing the involvement of local breeders in its conservation and improvement. The package of work that Aberdeen is involved with will advance knowledge on the interactions between bees, parasites, and viruses. The project period of four years is about half way through and we are all starting to get exciting results.

So the main focus to our research is the Varroa mite and associated viruses. Dr Bowman spoke to ADBKA a number of years ago when we were developing a new treatment using gene knockdown to kill mites. Over the past five years we have successfully tested and trialed a number of targets to knockdown and kill the mites and at the completion of the project we patented the targets and technology and are currently in discussions with companies to take it further. The regulations on such technology are rightly very strict and so we have a lot of work still to do.....but the concept and proof are very much done!

DWV replicates (i.e. reproduce by making new copies of themselves) both in honeybees and Varroa. When Varroa mites suck hemolymph from honeybees, DWV are injected along with saliva. This way Varroa works as a vector for DWV. Relatives of the Varroa mite are known to manipulate the immune system of their hosts. To study the effects of varroa saliva on the bee and on viral replication, we have developed a method to collect saliva from the tiny Varroa mites and have injected this saliva or DWV into bee larvae and pupae from a Varroa free colony with no/very low DWV and are now analyzing their immune response and DWV levels.

At my talk on the 21<sup>st</sup> January I will present bits and pieces of our research from these different projects but will focus on the research of our PhD student Craig Christie as well as on some exciting results from our SMARTBEEs project on DWV and the mite saliva!

Please come along and find out more about the weird and deadly interactions between mites, bees and viruses.

Dr Ewan Campbell, University of Aberdeen

### Aberdeen Bee Supplies

Jock McGregor is the local agent for Thorne Beekeeping Equipment.

Contact him on 01224 790468 or e-mail:  
[aberdeenbeesupplies@hotmail.com](mailto:aberdeenbeesupplies@hotmail.com)

**9-FRAME RADIAL EXTRACTOR** (electric) – FOR HIRE £10 per hire period

**STEAM WAX MELTER** – available ON LOAN £10 deposit

Both items available from: Jock McGregor, 11 Marcus Road, Blackburn. Tel. 01224 790468

We are always interested in new articles for the newsletter, if you have an idea for an article then give me a call. I am happy to travel to you and write the article and review it with you prior to publication in the newsletter.

The adverts section is underutilised so if you have an article for sale or loan or if you want an article then make use of the adverts section, there is no cost to advertise.

Similarly if you are available to help other members or want some help yourself then why not use this section to advertise what you want or what you can offer. Many members struggle to move bees to the honey crops on their own and it may be interesting for you to offer assistance and meet another member and learn how they manage their bees at the same time for example.

The adverts together with your contact details appear on the internet as part of the newsletter, if you want to advertise to members without your details being published then let me know and I can put your advert out as a separate page to the newsletter.

**If you have an item for the newsletter, please contact Lindsey Macaulay on 01224 315276, or by e-mail at [lindsey\\_macaulay@lde.nu](mailto:lindsey_macaulay@lde.nu)**

**Distributing the newsletter by e-mail realises significant savings for the ADBKA. If you wish to receive your copy by e-mail, please let me know.**

### BEEKEEPING SUPPLIES AND FREE EQUIPMENT LOAN FOR ADBKA MEMBERS ACROSS THE NORTH EAST

Honey extractors; Heather honey press; Mini-melters;

Wax extractor; Wax foundation press

Contact: Sandy Gordon 01224 484540  
 DANESTONE AB22 8AJ

Heated uncapping tray; Electric uncapping knife;

Heather honey press; Wax melter;

Universal lightweight 9 frame radial extractor

Contact: Joan Gilbert-Stevens 019755 81369

[craigmill@btinternet.com](mailto:craigmill@btinternet.com)

MUIR OF FOWLIS AB33 8NX

Heated uncapping tray; Electric uncapping knife;

Heather honey press; Wax melter;

Unimel stainless steel 3 frame tangential extractor

Contact: Erling Watt 074294 54572

[watterlingg@aol.com](mailto:watterlingg@aol.com)

LONGSIDE AB42 4XQ

### DISCOUNTED SUPPLIES

contact Erling or Joan

#### PRICE LIST

RAGUS Bee Candy 2.5kg	£5.50
Box of 4	£22
Fondant 2.5kg	£3
Box of 5	£15
Syrup 14kg	£15
Jars (1 lb and ½ lb, incl. lids)	
Gross (144)	£50
½ Gross (72)	£25
Bag of 25 lids	£3

Combimel stainless steel radial 9 frame extractor; Heated uncapping tray; Electric uncapping knife; Refractometer; Candle-making kit are available at Crathes Apairy. For further information contact Joan Gilbert-Stevens.