



Newsletter

November 2016



# 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

Established 1910

Scottish Charity Number SC031754

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## 2016 HONEY SHOW AWARDS

A complete list of class winners is enclosed with this month's newsletter

	Awarded for	Winner
The Bill MacKenzie Quaich	Best exhibit of Ling Heather Honey	Graham Torrie
The Thorne Trophy	Most points in the show	Jenny Lewis
The ASCD Trophy	Best exhibit in the show	Graham Torrie (Med/Dark Liquid Honey)
The Cut-Comb Trophy	Best exhibit of cut comb	James Friend
The President's Trophy	Best exhibit in the Industrial section	Yvonne Seed (Honey Tea Loaf)
The Anne C Beddie Trophy	Best exhibit in the wax section	Jock McGregor
The Henry Simpson Trophy	Best exhibit in the medium/dark honey Member's class	Graham Torrie
MTM Construction Shield	Best exhibit in the light honey Member's class	James Friend
The Captain Manson Trophy	Most points in the Industrial Class	Yvonne Seed
SC Rae Memorial Trophy	Best Frame of ling heather honey	Jock McGregor
Jim Tocher Trophy	Most points in the Novice Class	Jenny Lewis
ADBKA Junior Shield	Best exhibit in Junior Class	No entry
Gift Table	Best exhibit in the Gift Class (Not judged)	Gifted to Muirhead Nursing Home, Muir of Fowlis
John D Walker Trophy	Best exhibit in the creamed /soft set honey class	Terry Daniels

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**We had another great turnout from members at this year's honey show, which was judged by beekeeping legend Willie Robson of Chain Bridge Honey Farm.**

In a break from the traditional judging format, Willie offered to conduct his deliberations in the presence of members. We were enlightened and entertained by his commentary on the characteristics of the various honeys, meads and wax products, both good and bad. And if anyone should know, it's Willie Robson, who has been a professional bee farmer since 1962 when he joined the business started by his father, William Selby Robson, in 1948.

Thanks go to Rosie Crighton and Barbara Cruden for pulling the whole thing together, our guest judges in the industrial and photography classes, and to the host of other members who contributed to another hugely successful event.



The beautiful 'Shop Window Display', entered by Olga MacAulay

**SKEP-MAKING WORKSHOP**with **BRYCE REYNARD**

Saturday 19 November 2016 10AM - 4.30PM

Kinellar Community Hall  
Blackburn AB21 0SSNow fully  
subscribed!**ADBKA SOCIAL EVENING****- A BEE...TLE DRIVE!***- plus the presentation of Honey Show trophies*

Saturday 26 November 2016 at 7.15pm

Kingswells Village Hall, Kingswells, Aberdeen AB21 0SS

*This is the last members' event of 2016. As with previous years, this evening will be organised along the lines of an "American Supper". Members are invited to bring along some food and drink which will be laid out for all to share.***CONGRATULATIONS**

to the following ADBKA members who have recently passed Scottish Beekeepers' Association modular exams:

Philip Barlow, David Morland, Helen Gooday, Ian Mackley, Malcolm Watson, Rosie Crighton and Kitta Potgieter  
In addition, Malcolm Watson has been awarded the Intermediate Module Certificate for successfully completing four modules.If you want to find out what it's all about, go to <https://www.scottishbeekeepers.org.uk/learn/exams-dates-fees/modules>**BEEKEEPING SUPPLIES AND FREE EQUIPMENT LOAN FOR ADBKA MEMBERS ACROSS THE NORTH EAST**

Honey extractors; Mini-melters; Heather honey press; 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**

Combimel stainless steel radial 9 frame extractor; Heated uncapping tray; Electric uncapping knife; Refractometer; Candle-making kit

Contact: Graham Torrie 013398 82038

[adbkanewsletter@btinternet.com](mailto:adbkanewsletter@btinternet.com)**CRATHES AB31 5QJ****DISCOUNTED SUPPLIES***- contact Erling, Joan or Graham*

## THE ONES THAT GOT AWAY

Following on from our recent article on swarm collection I thought it may be interesting to some of the readers to recount some of the honey bee swarms we were not able to recover.

We had responded to numerous calls from members of the public, local schools and businesses all of which were being invaded by swarms of millions of bees, which turned out to be bumble bees, wasps, mason bees and in one case to a homeowner who wanted me to repair their property where bees had entered many years previously and now had long since departed. To effectively screen the calls and therefore respond to the most likely honey bee swarms we decided we must compile a list of 'sensible' questions to ask the homeowner before we even decided to respond and load the car with tools and equipment.

Armed with our list of questions we received our first call from a local senior Gent. He called to say a swarm of bees had settled in his garden and he had called the council who in turn had advised him to give us a call. To eliminate small clusters of ten bumble and mason bees I asked my first prepared question; 'How many bees are there'. There was a long pause on the phone and then he said 'Well I dinna stan there A day and coont them; Ye ken' (Well I don't stand there all day and count them; you know). These were mason bees that had settled below a concrete step.

The next call we received sounded like it would warrant further investigation. I asked the elderly gent if I could have his house number and postcode for my SatNav; the gent gave me the details I requested and followed up with a long list of directions and a description of his property because as he said 'SatNav is fine but you still need to ken (Know) how to get here'. These were a nest of bumble bees.

We received a call from a concerned couple in Torry who had bees entering a vent below their property. I asked them 'What do the bees look like' to which there was a long pause and then they said 'Well they have one body, two eyes, two wings and are fleeing about here' (flying about here). These were bumble bees.

I decided most people have the internet and digital cameras so in future I'd ask the caller to send a picture of the 'invading' bees. I received a call from a lady who when walking along riverside drive in Aberdeen came across a swarm on a flight of steps. I asked her to send a picture to my e-mail and she sent me a cluster of about thirty honey bees clustered together on a step. I guessed they were a cast from a passing swarm as we had something similar in our garden.

The final call of the swarming season we received was from the Abbot Bar, Provost Watt drive, Kincorth in Aberdeen; which we received on Wednesday the 7<sup>th</sup> of September. We were particularly excited about this swarm because it must have been one of the last swarms in Aberdeen and according to the caller they had settled on the sign of the bar. I immediately thought this would make an excellent picture and had various lines of thought regarding a caption in mind and who knows, we may have been rewarded with liquid refreshment for our efforts? We arrived at 3:00 p.m. expecting to find the bar in chaos with the patrons long gone; to our surprise the bar was full and peaceful with the residents deep in contemplation whilst staring into their glass of amber nectar.

When we walked in with our bee suits and beekeeping equipment we caused quite a stir; one patron looked up from his beer and asked 'are we under nuclear attack?' The swarm was indeed on the bar sign outside but unfortunately had left minutes before we arrived and when we inspected the sign there was only a few straggling honey bees milling about.

We'll refine our list of 'sensible' questions in preparation for next year's swarming season.

Olya & Lindsey Macaulay



*A swarm in a teacup?*



*Koompassia excelsa with Giant Honey Bee nests*

The Guardian website features the story of the Malaysian honey hunters who climb 289ft-high *Koompassia excelsa* trees to harvest the honey of the Giant Honey Bee, *Apis dorsata*. With the bees playing a role in pollinating up to 70% of the plants in the rainforest where they live, the traditional methods used by the hunters ensure that the population is sustained.

See some stunning pictures and read about the exploits of the Malaysian honey hunters at:

<https://www.theguardian.com/global-development-professionals-network/gallery/2016/oct/21/malaysia-honey-hunters-in-pictures-rainforest>

*Thanks to Ian Mackley for this item.*





### 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

Dumfries-based bee farmer and Scottish Director of the Bee Farmers' Association, John Mellis, has called for government support for people wishing to take up professional bee farming. In a report in the Herald, he says, "There are very few people making a living keeping bees in Scotland. It is a tiny number of people producing something that is very important to the shops – the heather honey is what the tourists want to buy and there are only a few of us producing it." His verdict on this summer's honey crop: a "virtual total failure". Read more at

[http://www.heraldscotland.com/news/1481823/2.The\\_lack\\_of\\_Scottish\\_bee\\_farmers\\_makes\\_the\\_taste\\_of\\_honey\\_a\\_rare\\_and\\_expensive\\_commodity/?ref=rss](http://www.heraldscotland.com/news/1481823/2.The_lack_of_Scottish_bee_farmers_makes_the_taste_of_honey_a_rare_and_expensive_commodity/?ref=rss)



Last month, the Committee for Medicinal Products for Veterinary Use (CVMP) of the European Medicines Agency (EMA) recommended the granting of a marketing authorisation in the European Union (EU) for VarroMed, a **new Varroa treatment** that combines oxalic acid dihydrate and formic acid to be applied by the trickle method during periods when honey is not being produced.

The effectiveness and safety of the product in the protection of honey bees against *Varroa* mites was tested in laboratory and field studies in different European climate conditions. VarroMed was effective in killing more than 80% of mites, which is below the effectiveness level of 90% recommended by the CVMP *Varroa* guidelines. However, CVMP agreed that a lower level of 80% could be accepted when integrated *Varroa* control techniques are put in place. Repeated treatment of VarroMed might also result in increased bee mortality, and careful dosing is recommended to avoid overdosing.

The CVMP opinion will now be sent to the European Commission for the adoption of a decision on an EU-wide marketing authorisation.

From:

[http://www.beeeculture.com/catch-buzz-new-organic-acid-varroa-mite-medication/?utm\\_source=Catch+The+Buzz&utm\\_campaign=6021dd0365-Catch+The+Buzz+4+29+2015&utm\\_medium=email&utm\\_term=0\\_0272f190ab-6021dd0365-256255705](http://www.beeeculture.com/catch-buzz-new-organic-acid-varroa-mite-medication/?utm_source=Catch+The+Buzz&utm_campaign=6021dd0365-Catch+The+Buzz+4+29+2015&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_0272f190ab-6021dd0365-256255705)

## According to.....

..... Mayster Fitzherbarde in his 1534 *Book of Husbandry*, "And in June and July they do most commonlye caste, and they wolde haue some lowe trees nyghe vnto them before the hyue that the swarme maye light vpon; and whan the swarme is knytte, take a hyue, and splente it within with thre or foure splentes, that the bees maye knytte theyr combes therto; and annoynte the splentes, and the hyue, with a lytell honye. And if thou haue no honye, take a swete creame, and than set a stole or forme nyghe vnto the swarme, and laye a clene washen shete vpon the stole, and thane holde the smalle ende of the hyue downward and shake the bees in-to the hyue, and shortly sette it vpon the stole, and turne vppe the corners of the shete ouer the hyue, and to leue one place open, that the bees may come in and out: but thou mayst not fight nor stryue with theym for noo cause; and to laye nettyls vpon the bowes, where as they were knytte, to dryue them from that place; and soo watche them all that daye, that they go not away; and at nyght, whan al be goone vp into the hyue, take it away and set it where it shall stande, and take away thy shete, and haue claye tempered to laye aboute it vpon the borde or stone, where it shall stande, that noo wynde comme in, but the borde is better and warmer. And to leaue an hole open on the south side, of three inches brode, and an inche of heyghte, for the bees to come in and out. And than to make a couerynge of wheate-strawe or rye-strawe, to couer and house the hyue about, and set the hyue two fote or more from the erthe vpon stakes, soo that a mouse cannot come to it, and neyther beastes nor swine."