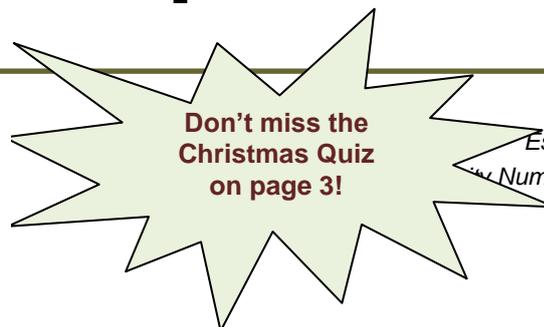


Newsletter

December 2012

Aberdeen and District Beekeepers' Association



Established 1910
Number SCO31754



Merry Christmas!

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Apiary News

Ever since we took over the current apiary site on a one year rolling lease we have known that our stay there would be temporary because of the CALA housing development at Craibstone. We have actually been there several years longer than was first intimated, but we have now been told that CALA are beginning to move and that we should not expect to keep the site beyond the end of 2013.

The committee is in process of finding a new Association apiary site, and herewith is the current position.

A possible alternative site at Craibstone, within a mile of the current site, on land that has not been sold to CALA, is being looked at, and we await details of what length of lease and what level of rent would apply to that site. Decisions on these issues are made in Edinburgh, not Aberdeen, and this has slowed down the flow of information somewhat.

In addition to that site we have also made enquiries about possible apiary sites to the following organisations: National Trust Scotland; Forestry Commission Scotland; Aberdeenshire Council; Aberdeen City Council; Aberdeen University; The Robert Gordon University and The Rowett Research Institute. The Rowett has no land available and The Robert Gordon University has not yet responded, but we have had replies from the others and are in the process of following their leads. The most promising responses to date are from National Trust Scotland and Forestry Commission Scotland, and the committee will be visiting and assessing sites in the coming weeks and months.

In addition the possibility of a site near Clinterty has been identified, but no first contact has yet been made.

Once the committee has secured a suitable site, the next step will be to make it a first class apiary facility. This will first mean assessing what the site needs to achieve that aim, and then to raise funds to produce what is required. Before we have a site and have assessed what the site needs there is no point in applying for funding, but initial research is being done on possible sources of funding and a range of promising possibilities have been identified. They include The Lottery, Scottish Natural Heritage, the Aberdeenshire LEADER Programme as well as several Trusts. In Aberdeen there are also bound to be several companies and firms which might be persuaded in due course to make donations to our new apiary facility. The most likely major expenditure that may be needed would be a good quality sizeable building for storage, teaching and other purposes.

Before the end of the year the committee will continue to follow up existing leads, and in the New Year intends to continue briskly with the search for an apiary site, followed by funding applications.

If any member has any ideas or suggestions about either possible apiary sites or possible sources of funding please get in touch with me on 01224 637774 or by email at j.cooper@clara.net.

John Cooper. (Chair)

Members' Events

FILM:
**THE MYSTERIOUS CASE OF
 THE DISAPPEARING BEES**

Saturday 26 January at 2.00pm

The Kinellar Community Hall
 Fintray Road
 Blackburn AB21 0SS



More than
 just
 Honey Jars!

For more than 20 years, the ADBKA "Honey Jar Store" has been run by Sandy and Lillian Gordon at their home in Danestone. If you haven't yet had occasion to visit, you're not only missing out on the reduced prices on offer as a result of bulk purchasing on behalf of our members. You're also passing up on the chance to chat to Sandy and learn from one of our most experienced and respected beekeepers.

Sandy can also provide you with the following items of equipment, loaned to our members free of charge:

- honey extractors
- mini-melters
- heather honey presses
- wax extractor
- wax foundation press

A returnable £10 deposit is required, with the maximum length of loan being two weeks.



At Persley Bridge (Tesco) roundabout turn onto Laurel Drive. Continue for about ½ mile. Look for Laurel Place on your right (it is a semi-circle so take the second entrance into this street).

Now turn left into Laurel Avenue. Danestone Market Garden is signposted, on the left, about 100 yards along.

The store is open between 6.30pm and 8pm on Wednesday evenings and at other times by arrangement with Sandy Gordon (Tel: 01224 484540).

Miss Christie and the residents and staff of YthanVale Care Home in Ellon wish to thank the Association for donating the items from this year's Honey Show 'Gift Table'. Long-standing members will remember Miss Christie as a central figure in the ADBKA for many years.



In a fine close to our 2012 events programme, ADBKA members gathered on 24 November in the Kinellar Hall for a good moan about the rotten summer and the dearth of honey. We cheered ourselves up with an 'American Supper' and listened in envy to Jock McGregor describe an impressive heather honey harvest, which he managed to pull off whilst simultaneously taking an extended holiday in Australia! Jock shared his good fortune by donating a stunning frame of heather honey which was auctioned in aid of association funds.

Thanks are due to our Secretary, Rosie Crighton, and those other members of the committee who pulled together a great programme and who put in a power of work in delivering the various events throughout the year. A special thank you goes to Stephen Palmer for presenting this year's beginners' lectures. Their efforts ensured that the ADBKA was able to continue in its laudable objective to "promote the study and development of apiculture and to promote the craft of beekeeping".

**Honey Jar Store Price
 List -**

Ragus Candy £5.00 (2.5 Kg)

**Apistan - 10 strips,
 sufficient for 5 hives: £18**

**Ambrosia Syrup - 12.5 Kg:
 £16**

**Honey Jars with Lids - per
 gross: £45**

**Mesh Floors - National size
 (wire only): £3**

**Hessian Squares for
 smoker fuel: £1**

A study conducted at America's Johns Hopkins University School of Medicine has shown how honey bees can 'switch genes on and off' depending on the role that they are required to play in the colony. Bees that had reached the stage of being foragers were tricked by the researchers into reverting to 'nurse bee' duties.

Read how the story was reported by New Scientist at <http://www.newscientist.com/article/dn22273-worker-bees-reboot-brain-genes-to-suit-the-task.html>

Christmas Quiz

The answers to the quiz are on page 4. (No peeking!)

- Q.1 The WBC hive was so called because those were the initials of its designer – what was his name?
- Q.2 What is an alveary?
- Q.3 Honey is said to be ‘hygroscopic’. What does that mean?
- Q.4 Take 3 parts fat-free soya flour, add 1 part brewer’s yeast, then mix into a paste with some honey. What do you get?
- Q.5 Who was the Austrian scientist credited with decoding the honey bee ‘waggle dance’?
- Q.6 Many ADBKA members will harvest honey made from the nectar of *Brassica napus*. What common name do we know this plant by?
- Q.7 How many eyes does the honey bee have?
- Q.8 What was the name of the Fife-based company that produced the Wormit Hive?
- Q.9 What is *Apis mellifera ligustica* more commonly known as?
- Q.10 What will be the accepted colour for marking queens reared in 2013?
- Q.11 Foraging honey bees will collect four things: nectar, pollen, water, and what else?
- Q.12 If you find *Galleria mellonella* in your hive, you’ve got a problem. What is it?
- Q.13 *Varroa destructor* is described as being a “phoretic” mite - what does that mean?
- Q.14 What is a refractometer used for?
- Q.15 Who was the bespectacled entertainer from the 1940s, 50s and 60s who sang: “Bz bz bz bz, honey bee, honey bee; Buzz if you like, but don't sting me!”?

An argument has broken out over the allocation of EU funding to support beekeeping. The story, including a fascinating video of nomadic beekeeping in Romania, can be found at <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/finance/financevideo/9680543/Nomadic-Romanian-beekeepers-get-EU-money-and-the-honey.html>

Thanks to Ian Mackley for this item.



A question of taste....

Scientists at the University of Queensland in Australia have taught bees to associate either an abstract Picasso or impressionistic Monet print with a sugary reward.

The bees learnt to tell up to five different pairs of paintings apart, even when presented with pairs of pictures in black and white.

Can you see the implications of this? Neither can I, but you can read the report at

<http://www.iol.co.za/scitech/science/news/bees-learn-art-of-telling-picasso-from-monet-1.1410695>



Researchers at Sheffield, Canberra and London have revealed how “epigenetic” changes might work in honey bees. These are changes that emerge differently in individuals that carry the same genetic code – such as the development of a queen from an egg that equally could have produced a worker.

Find out more at

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/science-environment-20667948>

Thanks to Andy Walker for this item.



Talking Bees

Our Chair, John Cooper, is giving a number of talks on bees and beekeeping in January:

15th - The Zonta Club

23rd - Ruthrieston WRI

On 28 November, Graham Torrie gave a talk to the Ballater and District Probud.

The involvement of our members in giving talks on bees and beekeeping is an indicator of the level of interest in our activities amongst the local community. If you are giving talks or presentations, let us know and we'll put it in the newsletter.

Researchers at Queen Margaret’s University in Edinburgh have been looking at the antibacterial properties of honey from Portobello, the city’s beach resort on the Firth of Forth. Early results indicate that the locally produced honey is as effective at combating bugs as manuka honey from New Zealand.

The Scotsman reported the story at

<http://www.scotsman.com/news/honey-from-portobello-bees-may-be-used-in-treatment-of-mrsa-superbug-1-2648158>



Notice Board



Several double-walled **WBC hives** available free of charge.
If interested, please contact John Cooper on 01224 637774

John Cooper still has a pair of reading glasses left behind at last month's Honey Show.

Contact John on 01224 637774

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

Aberdeen Bee Supplies

Jock McGregor is the local agent for Thorne Beekeeping Equipment.

Contact him on 01224 790468 or e-mail:

AberdeenBeeSupplies@hotmail.com

Circulated with this month's newsletter is your membership renewal form. The completed form, along with your 2013 subscription, should be sent to our Treasurer, Louise Forbes, in January. You'll get all the information you need on the form.

As well as detailing the great programme of members' events we have planned, your 2013 membership card will also allow you to access a wide range of benefits, including:

- ✓ Monthly Newsletter
- ✓ Regular Meetings
- ✓ Practical sessions
- ✓ Free loan of honey extraction equipment
- ✓ Free loan of beekeeping books and videos
- ✓ Insurance cover
- ✓ Discounts on honey jars and bee healthcare products

Please note that the deadline for submitting next year's renewal subscriptions will be 31 March 2013. Don't leave it that long, though.

QUIZ ANSWERS

- Q.1: William Broughton Carr
Q.2: It's another name for a beehive
Q.3: It absorbs water from the surrounding atmosphere
Q.4: Pollen substitute
Q.5: Karl von Frisch
Q.6: Oilseed Rape
Q.7: Five: two compound eyes and three simple eyes or 'ocelli'
Q.8: Steele and Brodie
Q.9: The Italian bee
Q.10: Red
Q.11: Propolis
Q.12: Greater Wax Moth
Q.13: It refers to the fact that the mite uses the honey bee as a means of transport
Q.14: Measuring the water content of honey
Q.15: Arthur Askey ("Big-hearted Arthur") - give yourself an extra point if you remembered the tune!

According to.....

.....the British Bee Journal of 1 November 1878, "Under the auspices of the East of Scotland Bee-keepers Society, a combined show of honey-bees and flowers, open to the Deeside district, was held in the Town Hall, Banchory, on Saturday, Sept. 14. On account of some difference of opinion in the committee of the Banchory Horticultural Association, the exhibition which used to be held annually, died two years ago, and up to this time has not been brought again to life. Encouraged by their success at the parent society's show in Dundee, the Inchmarlo bee-fanciers started the idea of forming a branch for Deeside. On previous occasions we have attempted to point out what must be patent to everyone who takes the trouble to study the subject, that bee-keeping can be made a profitable pursuit if a systematic course of culture and management, such as lately a few of the more experienced breeders in our district have followed with success, be carried out. No better proof of the need of enlightenment in this science could be had than the exclamations of surprise by casual visitors at seeing the frames and hearing explanations as to the habits of this most industrious insect."