



**OCTOBER
2018**

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

CHAIR:

DAVID MORLAND

Middle Ardo
Udny, Ellon
AB41 6QX
Tel. 07768244420
e-mail:
ADBKAChair@
gmail.com

HON. SECRETARY:

**MALCOLM
WATSON**

Ebrie Lodge,
Auchnagatt, Ellon
AB41 8YL
e-mail:
aberdeenbeekeepers@
gmail.com

HON. TREASURER:

JOHN ADAMS

5 Baillieswells Drive,
Bieldside, Aberdeen,
AB15 9AT
Tel. 01224868402
e-mail:
treasureradbka@
gmail.com

**MEMBERSHIP
SECRETARY:**

ERLING WATT

23 Winding Brae,
Longside, AB42 4XQ
Tel. 074294 54572
e-mail:
adbkamembership@
gmail.com

FUTURE ARTICLES

The Association's new
collection of model
beehives and
beekeeping equipment

Experiences with
removing swarms from
inaccessible places

Contributions from
members (perhaps!)

HONEY BEE BEHAVIOUR – HEALTHY BEES PROGRAM 2018

Tony Harris NDB and Ann Chilcott, both Qualified Scottish Expert Beemasters, delivered the Honey Bee Behaviour Course - The Healthy 'BEES' (Bee Education in Scotland) Project Courses which are heavily subsidised by the Scottish Rural Development Programme, Knowledge Transfer and Innovation Fund, these courses are aimed at improver and advanced beekeepers and have been held in various locations in Scotland. The overall aim of the project is to improve honeybee husbandry, beekeeping skills and honey bee health which will secure a sustainable and healthy population of Scottish honey bees.

This course was held at Pitcairngreen Village, Perth on the 29th & 30th September and offered a great opportunity for both novice and experienced beekeepers alike to enhance their knowledge and understanding.

After a welcome cup of coffee, the initial round of introductions revealed a diverse set of thirteen students, some from the north east of Scotland, Central Scotland, Sutherland and as far south as the borders with beekeeping experience between two and fifteen years and students managing between two and twenty plus hives.

It almost goes without saying that everyone expressed a motive for attending as, "to become a better and more knowledgeable beekeeper", and, for some, the course was part of their preparation for the imminent November modular exams.

The course was classroom- based with lectures and discussion sessions allowing all attending a comprehensive insight into the subjects covered. Some of the information was almost entirely new to some of the students, whilst for others it allowed the chance for discussion of theories not yet proven.

A superb lunch of homemade soup and sandwiches was followed by a choice of tray bakes with tea or coffee provided on both days and this gave everyone a chance to engage in interesting conversations whilst learning a little more from each other's experiences, and building future friendships with likeminded people.

The course had something for everyone and all appeared to enjoy the weekend. Whilst one might, over time, learn and see most of what was covered by reading books, magazine articles, research papers or working within your local association apiary and/or with a mentor, there were definitively great benefits to be gained from a classroom- based, subject- focussed approach. There was also plenty of time and opportunity allowed within the course structure for discussion under the guidance of our expert tutors.

Further details of these courses can be found on <https://www.moraybeekeepers.co.uk> and course details for 2019 will be published in December.

Sarah Hayes



BEE INSPIRED



At the beginning of this year, I was approached by Angela Joss from Aberdeen Inspired to ask whether she and a couple of people from Alcohol & Drugs Action would be able to attend our yearly Beginners Classes in order to start keeping bees in the city. I have always felt that Beekeeping is one of those hobbies that can help folk to overcome depression and take them out of themselves and could work in the same way for those in recovery from addiction.

Once the course was over, all those who had decided to keep bees were eager to get going and obtain their bees, including the new ADA Beeteam.

Coincidentally Lynne MacFarlan from His Majesties Theatre asked whether it was feasible to keep bees on the roof of the theatre. I duly went to survey potential locations. The first one involved climbing a vertical ladder, through a door onto the roof, and across several airconditioning ducts. I could just see the problems carrying a hive of bees up, and then honey supers down again!

The site we settled on was outside the restaurant with good views from there and the corridor, and access was easy, from a lift close by.

So HMT and Aberdeen Inspired formed a partnership to manage the bees, planters were installed and hives bought.

We held a practical class at one of my apiaries with the Beeteam and the best colony was chosen, based on their docility and ease of handling. At this time Angela invited a couple of students to make a film of the project and they started then, appropriately kitted up, and



standing at a respectful distance.

The colony was then moved to HMT, much to the interest of the staff there, including the chef who began making plans for the menu in the restaurant.

Throughout the following weeks the Beeteam made weekly visits to inspect the colony and gain experience in handling bees - of course there were stings and other adventures along the way!

May 20th was World Bee Day and a convenient date was chosen to launch Aberdeen's first Urban Bee Project, with stakeholders and media in attendance.

As their mentor, I was honoured to receive a specially commissioned artwork depicting me as Obi-wan Kenobee, and a bottle of honey liqueur, Glayva.

The colony went on to produce 2 supers of honey, about 40lb, which was successfully extracted by the Beeteam in Angela's kitchen - proceeds will go to charity.



At the beginning of September, the Beeteam were very pleased to receive the David Welch Memorial Award from Keep Scotland Beautiful.

Next year it is hoped that the Urban Bee Project will really take flight with new Beeteams being formed and colonies located on roofs in the city.

MAY THE FORCE BEE WITH YOU

David Morland

MEMBERS EVENTS

OCTOBER, 20TH,
Saturday, at 2.00 p.m.
ADBKA HONEY SHOW,

Kinellar hall, Blackburn AB21 0JQ
Details sent with previous (corrected)
newsletter and available on website.

NOVEMBER, 10TH,
Saturday, at 10.30 a.m.
SBA EXAMS,

venue : Westhill Library, Westhill Drive,
Westhill, AB32 6FY
invigilator : Hugh Donohoe

NOVEMBER, 17TH,
Saturday, 10 a.m. until 6 p.m.
ADBKA CONVENTION 2018,

Kinnellar Hall, Blackburn AB21 0JQ
Details sent with previous (corrected)
newsletter and available on website.

WANTED

Articles for our newsletter

We are always looking for interesting articles from our members for the newsletter.

Since it has been an astonishing year for most beekeepers with early queen cell production, plentiful swarms and almost unmanageable crops of honey, I am sure that members and in particular new members who have had their first heady experience of keeping bees, will find something that will interest our readers.

We want to hear those stories, whether the disappointment that beekeeping is not for you, the realisation that there is still much to learn, or hopefully the discovery of a new passion which will keep you interested for the rest of your life.

David Morland

ASSOCIATION SUPPLIES

Syrup - 14kg containers at £15.50

Fondant - 2.5kg packs - with 5 x packs being in a box - cost each is £3 pack or £15 for the box of 5 packs

Candipolline Gold Pollen in 1kg packs - £4 for 1kg pack or if anyone wants a box of 12 x 1kg packs that is slightly cheaper at £42 for a box of 12 x 1kg packs

Regus Candy in 2.5kg tubs at £6 tub or £24 box a box with 4 x tubs

Contact: Joan Gilbert-Stevens
019755 81369

craigmill@btinternet.com

MUIR OF FOWLIS AB33 8NX

or

Erling Watt 074294 54572

watterlingg@aol.com

LONGSIDE AB42 4XQ

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;

Unimel stainless steel 3 frame tangential extractor

Contact: Erling Watt 074294 54572
watterlingg@aol.com

LONGSIDE AB42 4XQ

Combimel stainless steel radial 9 frame extractor;
Heated uncapping tray; Electric uncapping knife;
Refractometer; Candle-making kit are available at
Crathes Apiary.

For further information
contact Joan Gilbert-Stevens.

Aberdeen Bee Supplies

Jock McGregor is the local agent for

Thorne Beekeeping Equipment.

Contact him on **01224 790468**

or e-mail: aberdeenbeesupplies@hotmail.com

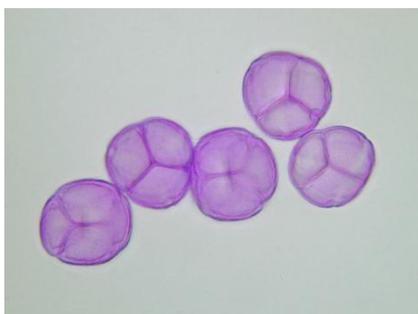
PLANTS AND NUTRITION COURSE

On 18th and 19th August a strong contingent from the association attended a plants and nutrition course at Kinellar Hall. This was presented by Tony Harris and Ann Chilcott as part of Moray Beekeepers' Healthy Bees project.

We revised our basic botany, including the parts of the plant that are of interest to honey bees. The characteristics of bee-friendly plants were discussed, including the features that plants have evolved in order to attract pollinating insects. Do you know your asteraceae from your lamiaceae ? These are the daisy family and the herb family - we learned how plants, like animals, are organised into a family tree structure with individual species at the bottom. Tony explained that different plants in the same family tend to have similar properties and sometimes it can be useful to identify a plant's family even if you do not know exactly what it is.

Having raided gardens and hedgerows beforehand, our first practical task was to dissect a flower in order to expose the reproductive parts. Even with the benefit of a microscope this is harder than it sounds, especially if you have been unwise and picked something with small flowers. Sarah, Joan, and Jenny had done some microscopy work before, but for Maria, Yvonne, Jamie, and Malcolm this was all new.

It was a fine sunny day and everyone enjoyed a "plant walk" around Blackburn. Divided into two teams, the idea was to record as many plants and their families as possible within 45 minutes. We benefited from some expert local knowledge because Jock McGregor had previously recommended the best places to look. Both teams identified more than 130 plants, which was pretty good going when you work out that's roughly a new plant every 20 seconds !



heather pollen under the microscope

For me the most interesting part of the course was pollen extraction and slide making. The pollen from each species has different properties such as size, shape, colour, apertures, surface appearance, etc and with a microscope and a guide book identification is possible. Heather is particularly recognisable. Some beekeepers like to build their own collection of pollen slides, and Jenny had brought a large collection of flower specimens that she had preserved in alcohol so that she was able to make up lots of samples.

Ann explained what bees need for proper nutrition. Yes, we all know that carbohydrate come from nectar and protein from sugar, but there's a bit more to it than that. Different pollens have different constituents so it would not be healthy for bees to live in a monoculture area even if the plants were in flower all the time which of course they are not. And did you know that a strong colony can use 20kg of pollen a year ! That's a lot foraging flights.



Ann Chilcott explains honey bee nutrition



team photo

Our final task was to analyse the pollen content of our own honey samples. A standard amount of honey is mixed with water and spun in a centrifuge in order to concentrate the solids at the end – these can then be examined under a microscope. This is called melissopalynology and is the technique that trading standards can use to check if named source honey (eg. Manuka) really did come from the plant claimed.

A number of members have benefited from the Healthy Bees course throughout this year. Tony and Ann's programme will also be available in 2019, and I would recommend those who are interested to find out more (see Moray Beekeepers website).

Malcolm Watson