



**DECEMBER
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

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FUTURE ARTICLES

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

Experiences with removing swarms from inaccessible places

Beginners. Briefly
(Ian Mackley)

ADBKA Annual Convention 2018

Members will remember that last year's Convention has held in the summer on one of the hottest days of the year, and in the middle of the swarming period, so it was decided to move the event until later in the year.

On 17th September we welcomed Pam Hunter and John Hendrie, both of whom are BBKA Trustees, and also involved in setting and marking the Beekeeping Modules - the same ones as the SBA exams here in Scotland.



After refreshments and a short introduction, Pam gave a very engaging talk how bees perceive the world – The Senses of the Bee. She compared the anatomy and biology of the bee with our own, showing that the bees external skeleton is completely covered with different sense organs which provide it with comprehensive information about the environment.

After a short break, John then gave a talk about communication in bees, leading naturally on from Pam's subject. The sense organs of the bees are all over the body of the insect but there is a higher concentration of them in the antennae and these are therefore one of the most important receptors of smell, touch and vibration. Pheromones produced by glands situated in the head, body and feet, essentially hold the colony together with the queen, and are responsible for driving all the activities in the hive.

Sandwiches and nibbles were provided for lunch, giving members time to chat and meet the speakers. I understand Pam's background in the pharmaceutical industry prompted some discussion about antibiotics!

Pam then spoke about the history of Beekeeping using the writings of many scientists to show the influence they had on the understanding of beekeeping..

She included a fascinating section about the belief for many years that that colony was headed by a king rather than a queen (in modern times some patriarchal societies still find this hard to come to terms with). It was also thought that imprisoning a dead bullock in a small room for a period of time would produce a swarm of bees (Bugonia). In fact these are more likely to have been hover flies!

A short break (with more tea and coffee provided by Margaret!) was then followed by the final talk by John on Spring Management which brought us back to the practicalities of beekeeping, and included some useful tips from his many years experience.

The speakers were then joined by Enid Brown, from the SBA, for 'Beekeepers Question Time'. (Incidentally Enid has recently been appointed as the first Director of World Beekeeping Awards, following dubious practices in the last Apimondia in Turkey!)



A number of questions from the audience were answered by the team, with some good natured disagreement along the way, as is normal for beekeepers!

Honey Show trophies and exams certificates were presented to successful members who were present on the day.

Hugh Donohoe gave a demonstration of wax melting and cleaning which was of interest for members wishing to trade their wax in for fresh foundation, or for entry into honey shows.

David then showed how a domestic vacuum cleaner with associated collection bin could be used to extract colonies of bees from difficult places, with tales of how it had been successfully used over the season. Members suggested improvements to make the experience less stressful for the bees.



The Association's collection of Beehive and Beekeeping models were on display all day and generated a lot of interest. A future article will describe these in detail.



A full and varied day was enjoyed by all, and thanks go to our two speakers for making the long journey up to Aberdeen.

Members should note that the SBA Convention 2019 is being held in Aberdeen and the next ADBKA Convention will therefore be in 2020.

David Morland

BEST WISHES

On behalf of the committee, I'd like to wish all our members a very enjoyable festive season, when you can put your feet up, think of the beekeeping year ahead and perhaps read some beekeeping books.

You may like to visit The Apiarist website - <https://theapiarist.org> - where you will find a wealth of beekeeping information. It is the work of David Evans who will be visiting us towards the end of next year to give a talk about DIY for Beekeepers.

Don't forget your bees and carefully check they have sufficient accessible stores. If you use candy or fondant, make sure it is positioned over the cluster.

David Morland

MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL

Members are reminded that ADBKA subscriptions become due on 1st January. The rates for 2019 are unchanged at £20 single, £25 household, and free for under 16s. An updated membership form is available from the association website : this includes revised gift aid wording and a new section about data protection. We are also inviting members to state their occupation (or former occupation) – this information will help the committee to understand where special skills exist around the membership, that we may occasionally need to consult. Please renew your membership now, and complete the gift aid section if you are able to do so.

Malcolm Watson

BEGINNERS, BRIEFLY...

An occasional article aimed at helping the novice through the beekeeping year.

There are a couple of things to think about this month:

Varroa Treatment. The amount of brood is at a minimum in mid-winter so most of the varroa mites are on the bees and not in cells, and thus vulnerable to treatment. Most of the chemical strip treatments either take too long or are ineffective at lower temperatures, so a common treatment is Api-Bioxal (oxalic acid), administered in late December or early January by either the trickle or sublimation methods. Trickle is easier and safer, although does involve opening the hive. Sublimation requires special kit, has more HSE considerations, but the hive remains closed and there are reports suggesting it is perhaps the more effective method of the two. We will be demonstrating both methods at the apiary in January.

With an eye to the January sales, it's worth reviewing your beekeeping year just past and developing some thoughts about what you would like to achieve next year. If you need more equipment, then you'll be ready to look out for it in the January sales run by most of the main suppliers. The sales are usually good for second-quality frames and hive parts, small items such as escapes, queen cages, bee brushes etc., and honey processing equipment. In particular, think about what swarm management method you intend to use next year. Nearly all methods require at least a spare brood body and frames, and the popular Pagden method needs a spare floor, crownboard and roof too. The nucleus method with a poly-nuc is a cheap option.

Finally, if you want to read more about the natural history of the honeybee, put 'The Honey Bee Around and About', and 'The Honey Bee Inside Out', both by Celia Davis and about £25 each, on your Christmas List. The former covers foraging, nectar and honey, and disease and the latter covers anatomy, breeding and communication. Both are excellent books, strongly recommended for those doing SBA Modules, and are available from www.northernbeebooks.co.uk as well as from those beekeeping suppliers that sell books.

Ian Mackley

'AN INTRODUCTION TO BEEKEEPING' COURSE

We will be running our usual spring lecture series starting on 19th February next year at a new venue, the University of Aberdeen's MacRobert building.

Current members of the Association can attend the course at a cost of £10. Details including the link for enrolment can be found on our website at:

<https://aberdeenbeekeepers.net/annual-introduction-to-beekeeping-course/>

Please spread the word. If you have any friends or colleagues who you think might be interested in attending, please encourage them to have a look at the website above, or else email their contact details to educationdbka@gmail.com



Ian Mackley

ASSOCIATION SUPPLIES

As a service to our members we have available a purchased stock of candy, fondant, syrup, pollen and jars. We endeavour to have stock available on a seasonal basis to meet anticipated requirements. In order to ensure that the pricing is reasonable we purchase items in bulk and pay in advance of their delivery. When onward selling a profit is realised providing an income stream which is a direct benefit to the association.

It is understood that in these days of internet shopping individuals may wish to purchase items directly from the suppliers. In order to help with this find below our supplier contact details enabling the opportunity to purchase stock directly at a cost which may be less than available from the association.

Wyfield Apiary – Fondant, Syrup & pollen Tel No 01874 754 412

Pont Packaging – Jars - 0141 423 3066

BAKO – Ragus Candy (minimum quantity of 100 boxes (400 tubs) require to be ordered - 0191 378 0088

We hope that the majority of you will continue to use the service provided by the association and see this is a direct benefit in your beekeeping ventures.

We will continue to monitor the pricing of the items we provide and if improvements can be made we will ensure these are onward passed. We are also happy to accept advance orders for any specific item which would help us in our stock control and ordering quantity. This should be of particular interest if members wish to order a large quantity of syrup/fondant or a quantity of 12oz hex jars for which there is normally only a small number purchased. Any advance orders for larger quantities can be placed with Joan directly if required by sending an e-mail to craigmill@btinternet.com

Joan Gilbert-Stevens

MEMBERS EVENTS

JANUARY

Sat 12th at 2pm at Crathes.

Demonstration - Winter Varroa Control
by Ian Mackley.

FEBRUARY

Tue 19th at 7:30pm at MacRobert Building,
King St. Evening class begins.

MARCH

Sat 23rd at 10am at Westhill library.

SBA Exams

Sun 24th at 2pm at Kinellar Hall.

AGM plus lecture – Bumble & Solitary Bees
by Murdo MacDonald.

APRIL

Sun 7th at Kinellar Hall.

Classroom Day - Swarm Control with Tony
Harris (details to follow, booking required).

FOR SALE

Kevin Milne has approx. 30 Smith hive boxes available for sale in Westhill.

There is also a large home-made heather press. Well used condition. Prices to be negotiated.

If interested call Kevin on **07918 070928.**

