



Somerset Beekeepers' Association



NEWSLETTER

July 2017 no.130



Please send any copy for the October edition to me by 15th September.

Email: friend.elizabeth@gmail.com

This is your newsletter so feel free to send me any comments you have about it and any ideas you have to improve it. And please send in articles!

Letter from the Chairman.



This is the time of year when beekeepers - and their honeybees - are making the most of warmer temperatures and summer forage. I hope you've harvested a good spring crop and your colonies are staying put!

It is also the season when more and more Somerset beekeepers are unzipping their veils to share their passion and expertise with the public through local events and honey shows.

At the Royal Bath and West Show our President, Ken Tredgett, and his dedicated team, staged a stunning feature, which included a giant beehive for children to explore.

In the competitions' section at the other end of the pavilion, Somerset beekeepers' showed their prowess and managed to win the prestigious Royal Bath & West Challenge Shield awarded to the county with the most points.

Elsewhere the talk is also of bees and beekeeping as more Divisions get involved with community events. SBKA has awarded grants towards the cost of show gazebos and marquees to Exmoor, South East and Yeovil Divisions.

Forthcoming honey shows – Taunton and the County Honey Show, the Mid-Somerset Show, Somerton and Exmoor Honey Shows amongst others – offer us beekeepers a chance to compare notes as well as to engage with the public.

In a similar vein, SBKA is developing a new website. A small team – Matthew Winwood from Quantock, Secretary Dr Richard Bache, Treasurer Chrisi Kennedy and me – drew up the specification. We want a website which utilises the latest technology and enables Divisions and SBKA officers to update their own sections.

Originally we planned to work with a commercial company but, very fortunately, Neil Cook, a member of South East Division, heard about the plans and volunteered to build and manage the site. Thank you Neil!

But we need your help! Have you taken photos of honey bees and beekeeping which we could use on the new website? If you have, please send them to me.

Anne Pike: chairman@somersetbeekeepers.org.uk

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If anyone wonders where the money they pay to the SBKA goes to.

This is a message from the Treasurer

Financial Overview of SBKA funds and benefits to members.

Members currently pay £5.50 per annum to the SBKA- so what do they get for their money?

Figures shown are estimates based on past years.

Education/ Development:

Annual Lecture Day with topical speakers (free to members) usually covered by out of County delegates, raffle and BDI grant (currently no cost to SBKA) – refreshments at cost

Occasional Special Lectures at cost

Development Day at cost to cover speakers- usually low cost as local bee inspectors/speakers used.

Disease Recognition Day at cost to cover speakers- usually low cost as local bee inspectors used

Support with Beekeeping examinations and refund of costs if you pass £500 pa

Members Services including opportunities to exhibit honey and bee products

Annual General meeting with a relevant speaker (free to members) £150pa

County Honey Show and county trophies awarded grant up to £150

Rose Bowl awards engraving £65

Bath & West Show support £200

Year book and newsletters £500 pa after offset of advertising costs

Website and social media communications £500pa

County Admin Costs and other support costs for members/divisions

Council Meetings - room hire £120pa

Secretary and Treasurers Honoraria £120 each pa

Gift -aid collection of monies – all redirected back to divisions for their funds keeping local subs lower

Insurance for trophies and engraving £300pa

Subscriptions to national bodies e.g. National Honey Show £150pa

Ed: I think you might agree that we do get a lot for that £5.50

However, if you disagree or have any questions to ask of the Treasurer or suggestions as to how the money might be better spent then do please contact Christina Kennedy

ckennedy@projectconsultants.co.uk

The SBKA is your organization – it depends on YOU making suggestions as to how to change things to improve the organization.

EXAM UPDATE

From the Exam Secretary.

5 people passed Module 1, congratulations go to Joe King, Fred Clarke, Eric McLaughlin, and Stewart Gould from Somerton, and Mike Sealey from Quantock. I do have their certificates to be presented at a suitable opportunity.

I have had only two people apply to do their Basic. If anyone else wants to do this, they need to get their applications in by the end of July.

Bridget Knutson

FORTHCOMING EVENTS



THE COUNTY HONEY SHOW and the TAUNTON HONEY SHOW

Friday & Saturday 4th & 5th August 2017

Will be held at
Taunton Flower Show, Vivary Park, Taunton.

Entries from all Somerset's 12 Divisions are sought for the County competitions. There are 31 classes which include all the products from the hive as well as craft, cookery and floral art.

The schedule is available from the SBKA website:

<http://www.somersetbeekeepers.org.uk/tauntonhoney.html>

Entries close on Wednesday, July 26.

Staging of entries takes place either on the Thursday evening 6-8 pm or before 7.30 am on the Friday. There is no need to pay to enter the showground to bring in your exhibits. Entry to the Flower show is much reduced after 4pm on Saturday so have a look around before picking up your exhibits after 6pm when entry is free.

Total prize money exceeds £100.

Schedules and entry forms will be available from:-

Entries Secretary - Mrs Jenny Gammon, 500 Cheddon Road, Taunton, TA2 7QX

Tel No: 01823 270465 and will published on the SBKA website.

Entries close 26th July 2017



The Mid Somerset Show

Sunday 20 August 2017

Cannards Grave Road, Shepton Mallet, Somerset BA4 5RT

Central division will be hosting the Bees and Honey tent at the Mid Somerset Show as usual this year.

As this is also the division's annual show we would love to see other divisions taking part. Even if you have no honey to show, there are plenty of other classes for you to enter. The Bees and Honey tent is a very popular venue at the Mid Somerset show and will include candle making, information displays, a virtual hive and an observation hive. Sales of honey and honey products are always brisk and you are very welcome to drop by for a bee chat.

Schedule and entry forms can be downloaded at

<http://www.somersetbeekeepers.org.uk/midsom.html>

Where Town meets Country

The Mid Somerset Show is a traditional one day agricultural show with livestock and equestrian classes. Entry to the show is free with a £10 charge per car for parking, and is billed as having something for everyone. The numerous craft and trade stalls sit alongside cheese awards, cider championships, poultry, arts and crafts, flower show, floral art, classic cars and vintage vehicles. This year there will also be a unique falconry on horseback display.



THE NATIONAL HONEY SHOW

Thursday 16th October – Saturday 28th October

At Sandown Racecourse KT10 9AS

The schedule will be publicised in August

The main lecture programme for this year includes lectures by Tom Seeley, Heather Mattila, Kim Flottum, Will Steynor and Peter Tomkins.

Details are on the website

<http://www.honeyshow.co.uk/lectures-and-workshops.php>

Workshops: Bookings open 1st September

On Saturday there is a lecture programme specifically for beginners with lectures by Roger Patterson, Meg Seymour, Pat Lehain and Daisy. “The topics have been

carefully chosen as being relevant to those new to the craft, with many of the things covered that beginners are often confronted with in their early years and will be delivered by experienced beekeepers. It is strongly recommended that beginners attend all presentations.”



Somerset Beekeepers Annual Lunch 2017



I have booked Long Sutton Golf Club for our SBKA Annual lunch again this year after receiving such positive feedback from those who attended again last year. The range of members attending from across the county was very diverse last year from new beekeepers in

their first year to those that had been beekeeping for sixty years, teenagers to octogenarians.

It will be held on Sunday 15th October, arrival from 12-30 to sit down and eat at 1pm. The address is Long Sutton Golf Club, Long Sutton, TA10 9JU

The lunch will be two courses with a Carvery of up to 4 meats and a choice of deserts. There is a vegetarian option available on the day. The total cost will be £13.50. Tea or coffee can be purchased individually after the meal if you wish.

I do hope you can join us this year. They have said they can only cater for fifty and we nearly met that number last year, so too avoid disappointment please book early.

Please send me your bookings (and the numbers who would like the vegetarian option) along with cheque made payable to Somerset Beekeepers by Monday 2nd October at the very latest.

Suzy Perkins

Tengore House, Tengore Lane, Langport, Somerset, TA10 9JL

Tel: 01458 250 095 Email: apicrepe.tengore@talktalk.net

PAST EVENTS

THE ROYAL BATH AND WEST SHOW 31st May – 3rd June 2017

Report from Bernie Perkins

Somerset cup Winners 2017



Ken Tredgett (R) receiving the Challenge Shield from Chris Rawlings

I am pleased to say that Somerset just managed to wrestle the Royal Bath and West Challenge Shield back from Wiltshire this year but it was a close run race with Somerset just managing to pip Wiltshire at the post with 393 points versus Wiltshire 390 points.

It was also interesting to note that Somerset beekeepers gained most of their points in the Honey Classes. We also had more exhibitors from Somerset entering a small number of classes whereas Wiltshire had a smaller number of entrants who entered most classes.

This just goes to show having a larger number of exhibitors entering a small number of classes

is perhaps more effective than relying on two or three exhibitors entering every class. This was certainly the reason why Somerset won the Challenge shield back from Wiltshire this year. Food for Thought - So the next time you say I only have one or two things I can enter just remember every entry is valuable and makes a difference.

The Mc Nab Perpetual Silver Rose Bowl – most points classes BH6 -BH11 (Honey) David Peace – Taunton

The Fred Hebditch Perpetual Challenge Cup – best exhibit classes BH23 – BH24 (Mead) – Suzy Perkins – Somerton

The Horstmann Perpetual Cup – Classes BH38 – BH40 (South West Counties) - David Peace – Taunton

The Somerset Perpetual Silver Cup – Somerset Beekeeper who obtained the most points - David Peace – Taunton

The Royal Bath and West Challenge Shield – For the County Association gaining the most points in Show – SOMERSET. This was a close run thing



Chris Rawlings (L) and David Pearce

*Bernie Perkins
Chief Honey Show Steward - Royal Bath & West*

Thank You



Thanks must also go to the many stewards who gave up their time to man the stalls during the Show. Their interaction with the visitors is so important and was, I am sure, much appreciated by everyone. I hope the stewards, both experienced and new, enjoyed their time at the Show and will look forward to returning next year.

Mention must be made of the Somerset members who also gave up their time to dress and run the stand and their efforts in talking to the general public, encouraging new members to Somerset.

Once again the children's area was much appreciated and thanks must go to the hard-working members who were kept busy during the four days.

Thank you from Ken Tredgett. (photos courtesy of Anne Pike)

Once again I should like to thank all the loyal team of helpers who so generously gave up their time during the Bank Holiday weekend to help in setting up this year's display and returning on Saturday evening to dismantle the stalls. Without their hard work and invaluable assistance the Bee & Honey Marquee would be incomplete.



David Pearce (left) with Ken Tredgett

David Pearce was again successful in the Honey Show, in winning with the most points in classes 6 – 11 and also the most points overall of any Somerset bee-keeper displaying their wares. Again many thanks to all those members who partook in one way or another in making this year's Show the success it was.

The County Shield was awarded once again to Somerset – as we all know it was only on loan to Wiltshire in 2016!

Ken Tredgett

Thank you from Chris Rawlings, Chief Steward and Chairman of the Bees and Honey Section Royal Bath and West Show

We had a fantastic Marquee this year, full of interest, excitement, intrigue and interaction with the public.

It was great to see so many old friends returning as volunteer stewards from all over the southwest of England, and to meet so many new beekeeper volunteers. The happy smiling faces of you all help to create our unique atmosphere in what has become the 'biggest and best agricultural show exhibit of Bees and related subjects in the country.' (According to Bees Abroad.) Fantastic exhibits this year from Counties, Avon – thanks Ann Rowberry and her helpers, Wiltshire and Geraldine Lenert, and Somerset and their group including Stewart Gould.

Over 100 volunteers helped over the 4 days of the show and it all started 3 days prior to that at 8.30 am to set up. A big thank you to members of Frome, Somerton, West Wilts and any others for that early start as the tables were in place and mostly dressed by early afternoon under the directions of my Stewards Bernie Perkins and Ken Tredgett and of course layout steward Susy Perkins.

The Honey Show itself had nearly 400 entries but unfortunately not all were staged. The outcome was very exciting as the most points gained were between 2 Wiltshire exhibitors and they were only 10 points apart in Angus Boyd's favour.

The County Shield was even closer Somerset 393 and Wiltshire 390, the tactic of getting more people to exhibit rather than relying on a few certainly paid off this year. Well Done Somerset. Once again I would like to thank all those who helped in any way, however small, by putting on a display or selling or demonstrating or just helping out. Thank you to the committee who put in a lot of work behind the scenes and during the show.

A very big thank you to my second in command and the Honey Show steward and Bath and West Steward, Bernie Perkins. Also thank you to the Somerset volunteer steward organiser and Bath and West Steward Ken Tredgett.

Thank you all- till next year

Chris Rawlings

Wildflower seeds for three Somerset apiaries.

SBKA has distributed three bags of wildflower seeds donated by Burts Bees to Quantock, Somerton and Taunton to plant a new pollinator patch in their apiaries.



from left to right, Suzy Perkins (Somerton), Lynne Ingrams (Taunton) and Barry Hulatt (Quantock) with wildflower seeds donated by Burts Bees

Burts Bees, together with the BBKA, is on a mission to create more pollinator-friendly habitats across the country and aims to grow more than 100 million flowers.

The bags contain 26 different seed types, most of which are traditional British wildflowers, selected to provide a pollen or nectar rich diet for honeybees. The mix also has a few seeds from cultivated plants such as borage, which have been chosen because they provide a very rich source of pollen.

The seed planting campaign is an initiative under the BBKA's Adopt a Beehive scheme, which raises funds for environmental and educational projects.

NEWS FROM THE DIVISIONS

Ed. If you have anything of interest to say about what you've been doing in your divisions then please let me know. It's always useful to share information and we can always learn from what other people are doing.

Central

Central division has joined with Tesco in Shepton Mallet to make use of spent/ split white sugar that might otherwise have been thrown away. Tesco was inspired to approach us by a similar scheme running in Cornwall and Devon, where ten Tesco stores donate sugar to a local bee conservation charity.

We've had three deliveries now and the sugar is being used to support the divisional apiary, as well as individual beekeepers with nucs and swarms that are in danger of starvation. Some of the spent sugar has previously been used to roll doughnuts and it smells heavenly!



English Country Garden Festival at the Bishop's Palace, Wells

9 – 11 June 2017

Central division was delighted to be invited to host a bee information and honey display over the three days of the above event.

This was the third English Country Garden Festival at the Palace and was filled with talks, stalls, hands-on demonstrations, live entertainment, top gardening personalities, inspirational ideas, plants and refreshments.

We enjoyed our time there and it was great to meet knowledgeable gardeners who took an interest in our display and who were very aware of the importance of the honey bee and insects in general.

The only downside for us was that sales of honey were quite low, which we attributed to a lower footfall than we are accustomed to at the Mid Somerset Show

Wedmore and Cheddar

We continue our programme of Around My Hive meetings.

So far Jonathan Friend is ahead of Bridget Knutson in having the apiary with the most diseases in it!! Fortunately nothing too serious. The two of them do like to show people things of interest!

Message about soda crystals from Jonathan Friend:



I clean used frames by boiling them in washing soda, which is also known as soda crystals (Sodium carbonate), and rinsing them in fresh water, before stacking them to dry.

I had always bought the Dri-Pak Soda Crystals, which contains sodium carbonate decahydrate because this product is readily available and it works perfectly well.

Short of stock, I bought a packet of Tesco's soda crystals and it was a disaster. The frames would not come clean and the liquid left a chalky paste on the frames, which required a lot of scrubbing to remove. Clearly an additive was messing things up.

No ingredients are listed on the Tesco packet and none on Tesco's own website, but the packet information directs you to *productingredients.net* where the contents are listed as,

- Sodium Carbonate Decahydrate
- Magnesium Hydroxide
- Silica

So, it's not just soda crystals, and it's no use for what I wanted it for. Unless other people have had a better experience with the Tesco product I suggest that it is avoided.

Dri-Pak soda crystals are fine.

Somerton:

Somerset BKA had three roller banners made up for the Bath & West Show Bees and Honey Tent..

They have two of a blue banner with photos and descriptions of what SBKA do, and a yellow one which reads 'Beekeeping. Interested? Ask here'.

To go with this banner there are 10 tabards which read "Beekeeping. Interested? Ask me".

All these banners are 2 metres tall and very useful for public events and honey shows.

SBKA also has a 32" television, which is ideal for showing beekeeping videos, or photo presentations when linked to a laptop.



Finally, there is a 1200mm x 1200mm WBC hive, which stands 1750mm high and has access for children at the front and for concerned parents through a transparent sheet at the rear. It houses two 'frames' of eggs, brood, pollen and stores.

Photo left of the Bath & West stand with WBC and one banner.

All these publicity resources are available for all divisions to borrow.

Should you want to take advantage of them please contact Stewart Gould on 01749 860755 or 07739 345271, or by email somertonbees@btinternet.com.

Any other Somerton Division committee member will be able to help you as well.