



THE LANCASHIRE AND NORTH WEST
BEE-KEEPERS ASSOCIATION

**Liverpool and
Merseyside
Branch**

Newsletter

January 2016

Hello Beekeepers and Happy New Year!

Now that the last crumbs of the Christmas cake have gone (mine doesn't last long) we look forward to our next event -

Annual Branch Dinner

This will be on 12th February at Blackburne House and you should get a copy of the menu with this Newsletter. If you would like to come along please let me know as soon as you can and send me your menu choices. Feel free to bring along a partner or friend. This is always a great night, with good food, good company and flowing wine. I hope lots of you will make it.

Meetings

I am also sending with this an updated version of the 2016 Calendar of events and a list of Wirral Branch meetings, which, as members of BBKA you are all entitled to attend. Do also keep an eye on the website for the most up to date information, as we will be adding to the calendar as the year progresses.

For our first meeting of the year, on 9th January, Peter Wass presented YouTube clips of skep beekeeping - very different from hive beekeeping! At least we don't have to knit our National hives... If you missed it there is a short write-up on our website by Cliff Porter or try searching Heathland Beekeeping to watch the YouTube clips. It was great to see so many members there and hopefully we can maintain this momentum for future meetings.

Our joint meeting with Wirral Beekeepers, to take place in Thornton Hough on 19th February should be most interesting, with a talk on the controversial subject of Zest Beekeeping. The speaker, William Summers, will be travelling from Dorset especially for this event, so let's make the most of it.

Don't forget also that Dave Harrison will be running hands-on sessions at the Woolton Branch Apiary monthly, starting on 23rd January with an apiary clean up and then on 13th February there will be a session on cleaning hives and frames. These sessions are mainly aimed at new beekeepers but open to all. You will want to wear old, warm clothes to take part.

Beginners' Course

We also start the year with the ever popular Beginners' course running over two Saturdays at the end of January. There are still places available, so if you know anyone wanting to start beekeeping ask them to contact us through the website or to send an email directly to contact@liverpoolbeekeepers.co.uk.

Assistant Apiary Manager required

The Committee would like to appoint an Assistant Manager for one of our apiaries. You would be able to keep your bees at the apiary and in return would be expected to help in looking after the equipment and Branch bees and to support any less experienced members with bees kept on the site. If you are interested in this role please contact the Committee via contact@liverpoolbeekeepers.co.uk.

Happy Birthday Arthur!

Our longest-standing and most experienced member, Arthur Gillett, celebrated his 97th birthday this week. Many of you will have been trained by Arthur and we all continue to learn from his vast experience and pragmatism. Having enjoyed a good lunch out Arthur spent his birthday evening at our Committee meeting! There's dedication! Many happy returns Arthur!

Winter worries

As highlighted by Cheshire Beekeepers there is a real risk this year of starvation amongst our colonies. Do heft your hives when you can and add fondant if they are lightweight. Check our website for a recipe for making up fondant from our old Handbook, provided by Sheila Myron.

We have been finding lots of dead bees underneath our strongest and most lively colony this winter. It is hard to believe this can be accounted for by normal winter losses, though apparently that is a possibility. The dead bees are mainly under the hive, not in front of it. We had a mouse guard on but the weather had been mild and the bees were flying like mad. Were the bees struggling to get into the hive on return from their flights? I noticed that lots of bees were clustered underneath the floor toward the front. Were they hanging on there while the entrance was busy with other bees coming and going, finally dropping off and unable to lift off due to exhaustion and weighed down with forage? The entrance did not seem to be blocked with dead bees. Has anyone else experienced this?

Finally, your Branch Committee, amended 3rd December 2015

<u>Officers</u>		<u>Central Council Delegates</u>
Chairman:	Peter Wass	Sheila Myron
Vice Chairman:	Doug Jones	Andrew Stephenson
Treasurer:	John McCann	Stand-in: Rob Myron
Branch Secretary:	Tracey Seddon	
Membership Secretary:	John Heath	<u>Committee Members</u>
Education Secretary:	Cliff Porter	Arthur Gillett
Branch Apiary Managers:	Dave Harrison	Paul Hitchiner
	Eric Graham	Simon Kember
	Alec Hill	Karyn Libecans
Honey Show Secretary:	Rob Myron	David Thornton
Librarian:	John Mooney	

Tracey Seddon

Branch Secretary

contact@liverpoolbeekeepers.co.uk

www.liverpoolbeekeepers.co.uk