



THE LANCASHIRE AND NORTH WEST
BEE-KEEPERS ASSOCIATION

**Liverpool and
Merseyside
Branch**

Newsletter

February 2016

Hello folks!

Well the Annual Dinner was great! And largely thanks to the many of you who came along buzzing. I think the food got a big 'thumbs up' from everyone, it was lovely to see some of our new members there and good to have the space to mingle a bit. There were plenty of raffle prizes, donated by Committee members, the star one as far as I'm concerned being Karyn's gorgeous hand made cake, snapped up by our Chairman, Peter, and very deservedly so!



Beginners' Course/New members

The Beginners Course ran smoothly, thanks to the immense and unstinting efforts of Peter Wass, John Heath and John McCann. The following participants completed the course this year:

Peter Barron
Patricia Curran
Karl Hart
Jeff Hughes
Rob Jones
Bernie McConville

Jenifer Melia
Katie Mooney
Louise Speed
Brian Swanwick
Geoffrey Todd
Liam Williams

These are all now members of the Liverpool and Merseyside Branch, with the exception of Jeff, who is a member of a neighbouring branch and Katie, who will hopefully become a full member next year when she reaches the minimum joining age!

Well done all and welcome to the Branch!

Training and Qualifications

BBKA Basic Assessment

If you have been keeping bees for a year, then you should be thinking of taking your BBKA Basic Assessment. It is carried out by a BBKA assessor at a suitable apiary (not your own) and has two parts. A practical assessment (colony inspection and making a frame) followed by answering some questions with the assessor. The fee for the assessment is £18. It does need a reasonable amount of knowledge, so it is a very worthwhile undertaking. We will be running a course to prepare people for the assessment and this will consist of some correspondence-learning. We email you questions and then give feedback on your answers. So you can fit it in with your other commitments. We could also run group sessions or practice assessments if there is a demand.

Those of you who are interested in taking your basic, or just want more information, please contact Cliff Porter (Education Officer) using <mailto:contact@liverpoolbeekeepers.co.uk> and we will get the ball rolling. A full syllabus for the Basic Assessment can be found on the BBKA web site at:

http://www.bbka.org.uk/learn/examinations_assessments/basic_assessment

BBKA modules

If you have your Basic Assessment and are interested in taking some of the module examinations or the husbandry qualification, then also contact Cliff. Depending on demand, we can organise suitable sessions or support. Modules can also be done through correspondence courses via the BBKA. The modules cover: Honey bee Management; Honey bee Products and Forage; Honey bee Pests; Diseases and Poisoning; Honey bee Biology; Honey bee Behaviour; Selection and Breeding of Honey bees; Honey bee Management, Health and History. For more information on the modules, see http://www.bbka.org.uk/learn/examinations_assessments/modules.

Cliff Porter
Education Secretary



Meetings

The latest update of the 2016 Calendar of events is attached. Don't forget, all details are on the website too - just roll the cursor over the calendar at the middle right of the web page.

The talk last week on the Zest Hive, with Wirral Beekeepers at Thornton Hough, gave lots of food for thought. Bill Summers' impassioned claims for his invention of cheaper hives with better thermo-regulation, easier and more effective colony management and varroa-free beekeeping raised a lot of questions which we did not have time to discuss fully. Bill's concept certainly warrants further investigation. We were also introduced to Dr Latha Raly Vellaniparambil, who talked about her imminent post-doctoral research into honey bee forage and health. Some of us will be helping Latha with this research. She is still looking for volunteers to provide her with colony data and honey samples in return for information on colony health and which plants your bees have been visiting. Latha will be repeating her talk at our meeting on 21st March when we also have Graham Royle, our Seasonal Bee Inspector, talking about colony decision-making.

Not many members have so far turned up for the apiary sessions with Dave Harrison. But a few willing hands have made an impact, with the perimeter tidied up and a little more space made available around the hives last month and hives and frames cleaned this month. Details of the sessions planned for March and April will be circulated shortly.

BeeCraft Hangouts

Since 2014 BeeCraft has been running regular 'Hangouts'. These are informal online discussions by a group of experts. You can listen in to the live conversation from 8pm to 9pm and ask questions beforehand or as the discussion goes along. See www.beeecraft.com/beekeeping/hangouts/. The next one is on **16th March**, topic to be confirmed. You can also view previous hangouts, with the benefit of being able to fast forward through parts less relevant to you. Previous topics include Beekeeping Examinations, Beekeeping with Children, Beekeeping Photography, Honey and Natural Beekeeping, as well as the usual beekeeping subjects covering diseases, swarm control etc.

Could you help manage a branch Apiary?

We are still looking for an Assistant Manager for one of our apiaries in L34, off the East Lancashire Road. You would be able to keep your bees on this very secure site 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.

For Sale

Two used polystyrene National hives complete with floor, brood box, queen excluder, two supers and roof. £50 each. Please contact Doug Jones if you are interested at doug@bees-r-us.co.uk.

For Free

I just got some shiny new pans.
What's that got to do with beekeeping??
The old ones have not yet got into the bin. Anyone need any for wax-working activities? You have one week before they get ditched...

See you on 21st March, 7.30pm, St Helens Bowling Club!

Tracey Seddon
Branch Secretary
contact@liverpoolbeekeepers.co.uk
www.liverpoolbeekeepers.co.uk