



Newsletter

January 2017

New Year, Same Old Setbacks!

Are you ready? Has your stored equipment been sterilised? Anything needing repair? Have you done that maintenance on the apiary?

We recently acquired an infra red temperature guage and immediately set to, checking the temperature of the outside of our hives. In early December we measured about 6°C on the outsides, then took the roof off each to check food stores and measured about 14°C on the crown boards. But one hive showed the same temperature inside as outside, still only 6°C. That didn't seem good. So we had a look inside. Of course, the colony had died out although not isolated from its abundant stores. What happened?

Winter has been unseasonably mild so far. Remember that this might mean the bees keep flying, the queen keeps laying and all the food stores disappear. Keep checking the weights of hives and be prepared to give some fondant (not liquid feed) if necessary. And come to the meeting this weekend...!

Meetings and Events

We get going this Saturday 14th January, at St Anne's Millenium Centre, Rainhill, with a panel-lead discussion of how to make sure your bees make it through the winter. Clearly too late for one of my colonies already, but I'm hoping to tap into some of the countless years of expertise to figure out what happened.

The following meetings are taking place in our wider area over the next month:

Fri 13th Jan **Wirral** – Wirral Beekeepers AGM, Thornton Hough Village Hall

Sun 15th Jan **East Lancs** – Choosing your first microscope + Coming out of Winter, John Zamorski, 2pm Blackburn Fire Station

Mon 16th Jan **Ormskirk** – Asian Hornet, Graham Royle + Q+A, 7.30pm Church House, Church St, L39 3RD.

17th Feb **Wirral** - Bees in Your Garden, Arthur Gillett, 7.30pm Thornton Hough Village Hall

19th Feb **East Lancs** - Planting for Bees, Peter Foley, 2pm Acres Block, Hanson Cement, Ribblesdale Works/West Bradford Rd, Clitheroe BB7 4QF

20th Feb **Ormskirk** - Wax, followed by show tips, John Goodwin, 7.30pm Church House, as above.

Don't forget our dinner on 24th next month at **Blackburn House** and contact us to get your name down. And can I have your menu choices by early February please. I am not asking for a deposit, you can pay in full on the night, but please remember that if you cancel less than a week before the date you may still need to pay in full.

Details released for Spring Convention, 7th-9th April 2017

BBKA has now published details for Spring Convention 2017. See the website to for details of lectures, workshops, courses, trade show, accommodation and more - http://www.bbka.org.uk/members/spring_convention_2017

Tickets are on sale from 16th January.

BBKA members: £22 in advance, £25 on the door

Public: £28 in advance, £32 on the door

Trade Show only - £5 on the door

This is a good opportunity to stock up on kit at special show prices.

Let us know if you fancy making the trip by coach on Saturday 8th April. It will cost £15 or less per person and a deposit of £5 will be required by 24th February (at our dinner) to secure your place.

Spotlight on ...

SHEILA MYRON

As a new feature of the Newsletter, each month we will share a profile of one of our members.

This month, we meet Sheila, one of our most experienced members, with 30 years getting in and out of beesuits. She is a retired teacher and was inspired by a colleague who discussed bees with her and encouraged her to join Arthur Gillett's class at North East Technical College. She duly did the course and bought her first colony and hive from Arthur. While she currently has just four colonies in her garden, at one point she operated a small scale bee farming business with 20 colonies.

Sheila has made a huge contribution both to our Branch and to the Association (North West Lancashire). She has previously held the roles of Chair and Secretary at our Branch and for some time she has been our Branch Delegate to the Central Council, reporting back on Association business and maintaining a

valuable link with our parent body. She also help's husband, Rob, in running our Honey Show. At the Association she was the first Membership Secretary, the recorder for the Honey Show and jointly produced the printed handbook. She also helped to deliver our Beginners Course for several years. I remember well from when I did it, the personal insights that she brought to her presentations, her relaxed style and also the friendly but constant heckling from Rob and John McCann that she withstood with good humour!

Her inspiration in this fantastic beekeeping world has come from Arthur Gillett, John McCann, Don Heady and David Thornton. In return she has given loads of help to others starting out in beekeeping, myself included.

Sheila says she takes most satisfaction from "*watching the bees and learning that we are never experts but always learning.*" Don't we know it! By taking the time to just watch her bees she has noted differences between types of bees' behaviour and how the weather/climate affects them. Through this quiet, thoughtful approach she has "learnt respect for their surprising intelligence." She enjoys her "rather wild" garden where she grows flowers and veg. As a result she has learnt much about forage through the year, and the rest of us benefitted when she used to report on what plants the bees were going to in her Newsletters as Secretary. I do miss that.

Beekeeping is in many ways more challenging now than when Sheila started, given the unpredictability of the weather and the huge impact of varroa, but she feels the increased awareness of bee behaviour, needs and problems is a big positive to balance against the difficulties.

Thanks for all your support over the years Sheila!

Have you paid your subs yet??

Subscriptions for 2017 were due on 1st November 2016. Thanks to those who have paid up promptly. But if you haven't got around to it yet could you please help our Membership Secretary, John Heath, by arranging payment now please. There are a number of ways to pay as follows:

1. Pay in person at the next branch meeting.

Sat 14th Jan, 2.30pm at St Anne's Millenium Centre, Rainhill L35 0LE

2. Send a cheque made out to LNWBKA and posted to:

John Heath, 77 Leyfield Road, West Derby, Liverpool. L12 9EY

3. By bank transfer to the following account (but please send e-mail confirmation to jc.heath@outlook.com so we know who the money that appears in the account is from!):

- Sort Code: 09 01 51
- Account No: 90159405
- Account Name: Lancashire and Northwest Beekeepers Association

Subscriptions for 2017 remain the same as for 2016 i.e.

- o Registered Member with three hives or less £25.00
- o Registered Member with up to five hives £27.00
- o Registered Member with up to ten hives £30.25
- o Registered Member with up to fifteen hives £32.75
- o Registered Member with up to twenty hives £34.50
- o Partner Member at the same address £17.50

Thank you!

Got honey to sell?

We sometimes get requests from members of the public through the website asking where they can buy local honey. If you would like to be put in touch with potential customers, who usually want just one or two jars, please let us know. We will create a small email group to which such requests can be forwarded. Also, if you have wax or any other surplus products of the hive that you would be happy to supply, let us know and we will likewise create a group for any enquiries.

See you soon.