

## USEFUL CONTACTS

**Chairman :** Andy Coles  
Tel. 01823 325503

**Secretary:** Barbara Drakeford,  
Chorlton,  
Lillesdon,  
North Curry,  
Taunton TA3 6BY  
Tel: 01823 490811  
[drakeford@lillesdom.fsnet..co.uk](mailto:drakeford@lillesdom.fsnet..co.uk)

**Treasurer :** Jenny Gammon,  
500 Cheddon Road,  
Taunton. TA2 7QX  
Tel: 01823 270465  
[tauntontreasurer@somersetbeekeepers.org.uk](mailto:tauntontreasurer@somersetbeekeepers.org.uk)

**Show Secretary:** Neil Trood

**Newsletter Editor :**  
David Morris,  
'Cranford',  
Halse,  
Taunton. TA4 3AB  
Tel: 01823 432686

**E-mail:** [d.g.morris@btinternet.com](mailto:d.g.morris@btinternet.com)

**Social Secretary :**  
Rosemary Burgess  
Tel: 01823 283482

## TAUNTON BEE-KEEPERS E Mail FORUM

[tauntonbeekeepers.org.uk/joinlist.html](http://tauntonbeekeepers.org.uk/joinlist.html)

**TBK can also be viewed on Facebook  
and Twitter**

**SBKA website at :**

[www.somersetbeekeepers.org.uk](http://www.somersetbeekeepers.org.uk)

## FUTURE MEETINGS

Saturday 16<sup>th</sup> July

### PRESIDENT'S AFTERNOON

2.30pm Heatherton Park

We welcome **David Packham**, a  
new speaker/demonstrator to  
our apiary.

David hails from East Devon and  
is a seasonal bee inspector.

**A good tea is guaranteed.**

5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> AUGUST

### TAUNTON & SOMERSET COUNTY BEES AND HONEY SHOW

Held in conjunction with the  
TAUNTON FLOWER  
SHOW

at Vivary Park Taunton

The practical beekeeping  
course continues throughout  
July, August and September.

All members welcome

## BEE LINES

**NEWSLETTER OF THE TAUNTON & DISTRICT BEEKEEPERS**

July 2011

Number 72 Vol 10



It was eyes down at the apiary earlier this year when Adam Vevers, our Regional Bee Inspector and Simon, one of our seasonal inspectors, gave the bees the 'all clear'.

I don't think the apiary has ever been so well maintained as it has this year. Whilst Malcolm Drakeford has been busy on a regular basis keeping the grass cut and the perimeter tidy, the health and strength of the bees owes much to the work done by Jayne Bevan.

In the absence of Andy through ill-health, Jayne has stepped into the breach admirably and we owe her many thanks. I am sure she would also like me to add our thanks to the committee members who have regularly given her support.

Ed

# TAUNTON & COUNTY BEES AND HONEY SHOW

5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> August at Vivary Park

This is one of the major events in the beekeeping year for the Taunton Division. We hope that many of you will try and put in a few entries this year particularly those who have yet to show. The two Novice classes are only asking for one jar of honey. It is surprising how many first time exhibitors surprise themselves by winning a prize card or two. The schedule that can be found in the middle pages of the year book or from **Jenny Gammon 01823 270465** has 44 classes covering cooking, mead, photography, craft as well as honey and comb. Surely there is something for everyone.



There are a number of ways that you can get involved with the show besides showing. On 30<sup>th</sup> July the staging will be collected from Heatherton Park at 2.30pm and taken to the park for assembly the same afternoon. You will be allowed to take your car into the park. On the show days, if you can give a few hours of your time for stewarding it would be much appreciated. Contact Neil Trood the Show Secretary **01458 241368** for any further information.

Finally, entries to be with Jenny by **WEDNESDAY 27<sup>th</sup> JULY**.

## Spot the Queen

I went beekeeping this morning – began to take off the supers – and then found to my dismay that there was brood in the super frames. For the beginners this can mean that when you took off your queen excluder you either did not:

- a. **Check to see if the queen was on your excluder –put it the same side down onto the super you had previously taken off instead of reversing it –brood side upwards.**
- b. **Zinc excluder had a tear in the slots**
- c. **Zinc excluder had a bump of wax under and had widened the slot.**

I realised that I had to find the queen and put her downstairs. Took off another super and got down to the zinc queen excluder and there she was –good as gold-walking across the queen excluder , just waiting for me to pick her up and return her to the brood box.

It is not always like that. Most times you have to check and flick each super frame in turn into the brood box which is quite labour intensive, especially at the moment, with the number of supers being put on the hives.

I then went through the brood box to see if the bees had brought up any queen cells. They had and each frame had to be checked carefully so that the next time I go to the hive I do not find that the colony has swarmed. As far as the bees were concerned the queen was not around.

This was the case of having a spare queen excluder to replace the one taken off. That one's slot had stretched. But wasn't I lucky that the queen was so helpful?.

This is something that most beekeepers have experienced at one time or another.

Jenny Gammon

*Thank you for this Jenny. Every beekeeper, beginners as well as the 'old hands' experience this at some time. It also happens with my wired, (Waldron) excluders when one of the wires becomes bent or lifts. What is surprising, is that it has been known for the queens to return to the brood chamber thus remembering the route she took in the first place! Ed*

## EDITORIAL

We have had some well attended meetings at the apiary recently. That the speakers came from out of the county could mean that this is just what those members, who have experienced having their own bees for a few years, are seeking.

Both Adam and Glyn gave us a stimulating afternoons. I have mentioned them a few times in this **BEELINES** and I would like to bring to your attention the fact that you can get more information on hygienic bees on the Devon web site and from Tom Glenn on Glen Apiaries.

This is the time of the year when the BEES AND HONEY show demands our attention. A lot of preparation goes into making the show a success. The best way of appreciating that work would be to put in one or two entries. Entries can be staged on the evening of 4<sup>th</sup> August and you can drive your car into the park to be almost adjacent to the tent. Again you can drive in on the Saturday evening at the close of the show.

It is good to see more members from our Division taking the Basic Exam of the BBKA. This is being reflected countywide. The half dozen of us who undertake the role of examiners are pleased to be inundated but wish at the moment there were more hours in the day! It's still not too late to apply. Contact Bridget Knutson on 01934 742187 for details.

**David Morris Editor**

## HIVE WATCH

Looking at last year's July copy of BEELINES, I reminded members that the spring was three weeks later than normal. This year the reverse is true as the oil seed rape and other plants were flowering three weeks early. The message from all this, is never assume there is a regular 'beekeeping year'.

The signs are that the clovers and blackberry are early and we must bear this in mind when assessing the need for additional supers. Swarming is very unlikely when there is a nectar flow on. The need for sufficient space in the brood chambers up till now will switch to sufficient space in the supers. A colony can fill a super in under a week if the conditions are right. With the rain in June, conditions could be just perfect for a heavy flow in July should the days remain dry and humid. If you can't get to sleep at nights because you are too hot and sticky, just think of the nectar that will be pouring in next day.

If you are short of super frames, you can still use foundation. Inter-mixed with drawn comb using wide or narrow spacers, the bees will draw them out if there is a heavy flow.

Placing new supers above or below existing supers will depend upon the beekeepers preference. What is vital, is not to miss out on any bumper crop because you are too late with the additional supering.

**Enjoy the restless nights!**

**Editor**

## BEE DRAWINGS, PAINTINGS AND VOICES - AN ART PROJECT by Kate Lynch



I first met Eleanor and Rosemary Burgess two years ago when giving a talk about my project 'Sheep – from Lamb to Loom', which documented Somerset shepherds and other people working with sheep. Afterwards Eleanor asked me what I had in mind next and I said that I thought it would be interesting to go out with beekeepers. 'Well come and visit us' she said enthusiastically. And so I did.

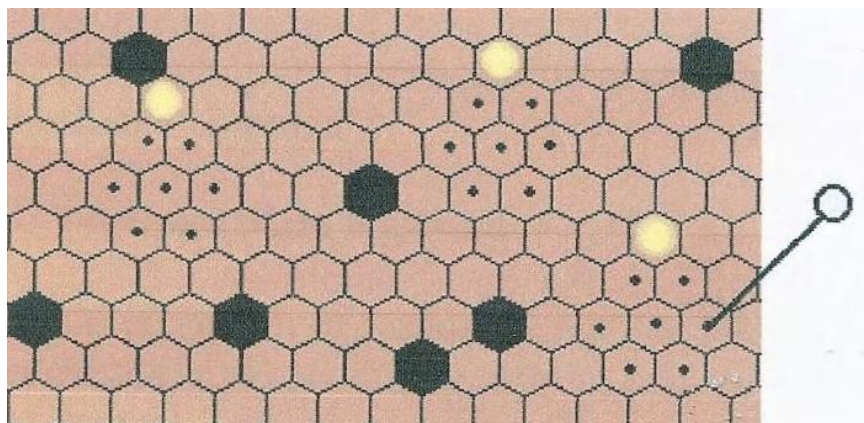
They invited me to the Taunton apiary in December when there was an 'oxalic acid treatment' meeting. I was made very welcome. I took my drawing pad and made sketches of the cluster of beekeepers in white suits and veils, other-worldly congregations. In April they invited me to the first opening of their hives and from my sketches I made a painting of Eleanor and Rosemary examining frames.

*There is to be an exhibition of Kate's work next year at the Rural Life Museum. Ed*

## A Rapid Test for Hygienic Behaviour in Honeybees

There are several methods for testing hygienic behaviour. They are all based on the removal of sealed brood which has been killed behind the capping. The freeze kill is the most accurate and preferred for scientific work. Liquid Nitrogen can be used to freeze kill the brood in a few minutes. Alternatively, a piece of comb can be cut out of the comb and frozen in a freezer. The pin prick method is less accurate but more convenient. It's the easiest method to start checking the hygienic behaviour of bees.

Cappings of newly sealed brood cells are punctured with a fine pin to kill the larva underneath. After 24 hours the number of cells uncapped and cleaned out are counted and recorded. After several replications under different environmental conditions, colonies which have cleaned at least 90% of the cells within 24 hours are considered hygienic. This form of hygienic behaviour has been shown to be a significant factor in resistance to Varroa as well as AFB and especially Chalkbrood



- 1) Mark a cell directly above three groups of seven newly sealed cells. Use quick drying paint or marker ink. Also mark the top bar.
- 2) Kill all twenty-one larvae by pricking them with a pin through the cappings. Use the same hole to prick the larva several times at different angles.
- 3) Twenty four hours later count how many cells are completely uncapped and cleaned out. Colonies which have cleaned 19 cells (90%) are considered hygienic.

Glyn Davies 20th July 2008

*The following method was standardised by Tom Glenn, Glenn Apiaries, USA repeated here with Tom's support. Reproduced from DBKA web page*

## Surfing suggestions !

Thanks to Anne Halpin, we now have a number of references to Taunton beekeepers on our computers as well as our e mail forum.

- Facebook:  
<https://www.facebook.com/TauntonDistrictBeekeepers>
- This is a page that people can interact on and ask questions.
- Twitter:  
[https://twitter.com/#!/TD\\_Beekeepers](https://twitter.com/#!/TD_Beekeepers)
- This is a news feed and basically to update people on latest news / events, but you can also send direct messages if you have comments or questions.
- Taunton Beekeepers website:  
<http://www.somersetbeekeepers.org.uk/Taunton%20Division.htm>
- Has links to both twitter and facebook and also has contact numbers and a copy of the program (you have to scroll down a bit).

## Extracting Equipment for Hire

An Extractor and settling tank can be hired by contacting Jason Wallis on 01823 667338

## SNIPPETS

### PRESIDENT'S DAY SPEAKER

**David Packham** is on the SW inspection team. He has also been a seasonal bee inspector in the Southern Region and has worked with some of the large bee farmers in that area. He is also part of the team that sorted out the AFB on Jersey. He keeps approx 30 hives of his own.

### 'Colonies are reluctant to draw foundation if they are headed by a virgin queen'

Some words of wisdom from Adam Vevers as he was opening up hives at Heatherton Park.

### On a personal note

June 1961 was when I took my Preliminary Exam, now called the Basic Exam, in the rain at Heatherton Park. The examiner incidently remained in the hut and I had to bring the frames with bees, to the window to confirm the presence of brood etc. !

Ed

