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TAUNTON BEE-KEEPERS

E Mail FORUM

tauntonbeekeepers.org.uk/joinlist.html

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

SBKA website at :

www.somersetbeekeepers.org.uk

FUTURE MEETINGS

SATURDAY 28th JANUARY

QUIZ NIGHT

7.30 pm at the
Merry Monk

Monkton Heathfield

Carvery £8.25

Bookings please with Rosemary by
20th Jan at the very latest

WEDNESDAY 15th FEBRUARY

DR. JEAN NORTH

from **BIOVITAL RESEARCH**

will give a talk on **Pollen**

7.30 at the Air Cadets Hall.

This promises to be an interesting evening

SATURDAY 10th MARCH

**SOMERSET BEEKEEPERS
ASSOCIATION**

A.G.M.

to be held in the Exmoor area

See latest SBKA Newsletter for details

SUNDAY 25th MARCH

AUCTION

RUISHTON VILLAGE HALL 2.30 pm

BEE LINES

NEWSLETTER OF THE TAUNTON & DISTRICT BEEKEEPERS

January 2012

Number 76 Vol 11



Photo D.G.Morris

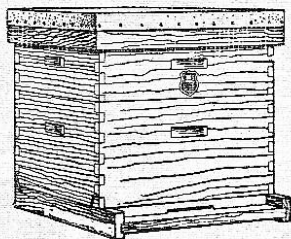
Oxalic treatment must be completed before the end of this month. As the days lengthen, the queen will be laying more and more eggs each day thus providing the brood required for the varroa mite to take advantage and thus increase in numbers.

An apology

In the last issue we published an item *How to Light a Smoker*. This should have been attributed to Stuart Ching's (Notts BKA) publication *The Eke*.

HIVES: TAUNTON W.B.C. SIMPLICITY SOMERSET ETC.

Standard and Shallow Frames, Sections, Crates for same, Comb Foundation,
Honey Extractors, Honey Ripeners, Wax Extractors, Honey Bottles and Tins,
Smokers, Queen Excluders, Feeders, Veils, in fact—



EVERYTHING FOR THE BEEKEEPER

*Our "Simplicity Hive" is specially recommended for working
the "Snelgrove" Non-Swarming System.*

Illustrated Catalogues on request.

FREE ADVICE AND INSTRUCTION

We shall at all times be pleased to advise and assist beekeepers in any way possible.
If in doubt or difficulty at any time, write, call or phone 2176, and our experience will
willingly be at your service.

From the Bradburys' 1948 catalogue.

Bradburys was a long established firm that had a seed shop in North Street opposite what is now Debenhams. The shop was taken over by Harrisons in 1953 and later by Asmer Seeds in 1965 by which time they had further outlets in Priorswood and Bridgwater. In 1986 they became known as Deane Garden Shops Ltd. For many years they had a full page advert on the back of the Somerset Beekeepers Association (S.B.K.A.) Annual Year Book and continued advertising until 1995 by which time David Pearce had become well established as the source of beekeeping equipment in the Taunton area.

The shop would have been the only outlet for bee keeping equipment and the fact that they were designing and producing a hive named after the town could only mean that business was good. Another point to observe is that the hive is of the National design at a time when the most common hive was the WBC. Note also the recommendation as being ideal for working the 'Snelgrove' non swarming system. Snelgrove at this time was President of the S.B.K.A. and had written his three books on aspects of swarming and queen rearing.

My thanks to Malcolm Drakeford for lending me the catalogue and encouraging me to seek further information. Editor

SOCIAL EVENTS

There were over 50 members sitting down this year to our Christmas meal and 'get together'. Held at the Taunton Vale Golf Club, the meal and the surroundings ensured this was one of the best events for some years. Thanks were conveyed to Rosemary and Eleanor for the arrangements and for organising once again the mammoth raffle that would have helped to increase the Heatherton Park development fund.

Our next event is the annual Quiz Night to be held on 28th January at the Merry Monk. There will be a Carvery costing £8.25 per head. Please book with Rosemary by January 20th.

You will recall from the last BEELINES that David Trump has arranged to give a talk on his travels from Wiveliscombe to Cape Town at 7.30 pm on Saturday 18th February at the Silver Street Centre, Wiveliscombe. David informs me that he will be repeating the talk on 25th February. Limited tickets are on sale at £7 in the Wivey Community Office, The Square, Wiveliscombe. All proceeds go to the development fund.

Subscriptions

2012 subscriptions are now due and an early renewal would be much appreciated or an indication if you are not continuing with membership. As you will see from the list of Officers on the back page of BEELINES we now have Chris Pollard as our new Treasurer and Sarah Merchant as Membership Secretary. We are very fortunate to have the responsibility shared in this way. Both of them have experience in this field.

Both live at; Fern Cottage, Brompton Regis, Dulverton TA22 9NP.

tel no. 01398 371127 or e mail at :

tauntontreasurer@somersetbeekeepers.org.uk

Thanks to the persistent, and at times disheartening, efforts of Adam Robbins, the support for the new building at Heatherton Park is still progressing. Following on from the donation from the Co-op and Waitrose we are now being supported by the Somerset Community Fund. It is hoped to make a start on construction in 2012.

EDITORIAL

When a new year begins it is often a time, to look back. It being 2012, it is now 40 years ago that I wrote my first piece for a 'bee magazine'. It was printed in the British Bee Journal (BBJ) for September 16th. The BBJ at this time was published fortnightly. Over the following years I had over a dozen articles published, submitting them when time allowed. This was before the BBKA News and the SBKA Newsletter were in existence. The BBKA News title was promoted by David Charles in 1978. Until then it was more of a news sheet produced to coincide with the centenary of the BBKA in 1974. The SBKA Newsletter did not appear until 1977 and was a duplicated sheet of foolscap. The BBJ ceased publication in 1998 and the title was incorporated into BBKA News in April 2011.

I have reproduced an abridged version of that first article which like many aspects of beekeeping never appears to become dated. Perhaps I can persuade you to start your own step into Beekeeping Publication by submitting an article in **BEELINES** in 2012.

David Morris Editor

HIVE WATCH

Even though it is January, there are still some jobs we could be getting on with in preparation for the year ahead.

The first thing to have ready is the format and method of recording your visits to your hives/apiaries. Your first entry should already be recorded if you gave your bees the oxalic treatment earlier this month. I have included a copy of the basic notes I hand out on this subject for your guidance.

Moving bee hives to new permanent positions is something that should be undertaken now, preferably when there is a 'cold snap'. Prepare the new site in advance by clearing any unwanted undergrowth and placing the stands securely in situ. A good job cannot be done without the use of a spade and spirit level. Sticking bits of wood or flat stones under corners of hives later on in the year, because the hives with the extra supers are tipping/wobbling at precarious degrees, is to be avoided!

Next month it is a good idea to change the floors or reverse them if you use solid floors. Later on, you may want to change the brood chambers. Clean brood chambers and floors well scorched can make the manipulations easier.

Finally you can start putting any new frames together but leave the foundation out until March or when required.

Editor

DON'T NEED ONE OF THOSE!

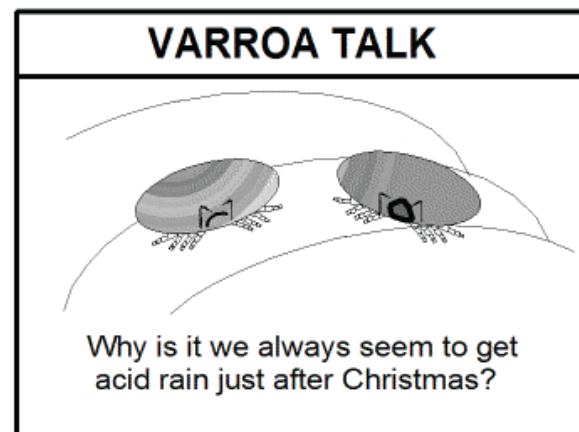
Peter Edwards (*Stratford upon Avon newsletter via E bees*)

I am not sure who invented the dreaded metal (now plastic) end, but I do remember walking to work for many years past the Waldron factory in Great William Street and hearing the thump of the press as it stamped them out. I have a feeling that these ends probably originated with the WBC hive which needed them in order to prevent bees accessing the space between the inner and outer walls - not that they even did that very well!

So what is wrong with metal or plastic ends? If used in the brood box they do a good enough job of spacing when clean and new, but as they become propolised the spacing inevitably increases a little and it is not possible to squeeze the frames up with a hive tool as the ends will deform or break. If placed on the end of the lug they are liable to drop off during manipulations and if some get pushed part way in then spacing is lost completely. Some prefer to push them right onto the lug so that they are up against the side bar, but this encourages propolisation and they also then sit on the runner and raise the frame a little - losing or increasing top or bottom bee space.

The answer is to throw them away and use Hoffman self-spacing frames in brood boxes with a dummy board at one end of the box; this gives perfect spacing as the frames can be squeezed together to maintain correct spacing. In the supers 'ends' are even worse because they all have to be removed when extracting - and then replaced afterwards. Because of propolis on the lugs, this is difficult and dangerous with metal ends - many a finger has been cut - and the plastic ones often break. Throw them away and use 9-slot castellations in your supers!

Something else you can test to find which is best for you. Editor



Cyril Davis Warwick BKA Dec 2011 Via E Bees

REMINDER

INTRODUCTION TO BEEKEEPING

Our annual set of courses designed for those wishing to learn more about the craft begin on **Wednesday 29th February** and continue weekly until **Wednesday 28th March**. All sessions commence at **7.30pm** at the **Air Cadets Hall** situated to the right of the Castle School campus. A final session will be held on **Saturday 31st March at the Apiary**.

Please inform anybody that you believe may be interested

SUCCESSFUL SYSTEM by DAVID MORRIS SOMERSET

The one-and-a-half brood-chamber ($1\frac{1}{2}$ BC) system is widely used by beekeepers in this country today. By one and a half I refer to the use of one normal size deep brood chamber and a shallow super, usually placed on the top.

Just over half of my colonies are on the $1\frac{1}{2}$ BC system. The advantages as I see them are:

(i) There is an enlarged brood nest, easing one of the swarming conditions, namely, lack of laying space, at a time when it is needed, for the queen.

(ii) Allows more room for the bees to cluster at night and on dull days: Thus reducing the swarming impulse due to congestion. (I further overcome this by giving more super room by adding at least two supers at a time).

(iii) Allows more room for winter stores of honey collected by the bees. (I am of the opinion that honey is a more natural food for bees than sugar).

And (iv) The $1\frac{1}{2}$ BC system enables a quicker and simpler method of checking for queen cells without adding greatly to the disturbance of the colony. By tilting the top half of the brood chamber (the half in most cases) up and looking underneath along the bottoms of the upper frames queen cells will be found there if they are any.

I wonder how many beekeepers have examined the lower part of the brood chamber, which ever combs may be near the floor, as I have done. About a half to two thirds of these lower

combs are not visited by the queen during the late spring or very early summer. Instead she confines her activities to the top half of the lower combs and the combs above because this is the warmest part of the brood nest.

To have unused laying space in a hive is a waste, so four or five weeks before the main flow in my area is due I reverse boxes. This usually means putting the half brood chamber on the floor board. Common sense about the weather is needed when doing this operation to avoid chilling brood by bringing it onto the floor and near the entrance.

Now I have brought the unused cells to the middle and warmer part of the hive where the queen will continue her laying in them. This will get the bee-keeper the maximum number of bees from the maximum area of laying space and may also alleviate any desire on the part of the bees to swarm at this critical period-just before the main flow.

During the above-mentioned manipulation I give anything from two to four fresh sheets of foundation to replace either old combs or combs of brood taken to make up nuclei. The foundation also helps to reduce swarming by giving the bees something to do. Bees also draw the new combs right down to the bottom bars when the combs are in the top brood chamber.

From BBJ Sept 1972 see editorial



Bees on winter cleansing flight

Courtesy of Konrad, Edmonton, Alberta, Canada (via e Bees)

WELCOME

We welcome the following new members whom we hope will be 'raring to go' after attending our Introductory Courses.

Michael Dillon – Wellington

Evan Lewis – Durleigh, Bridgwater

Julie Husband – Nynhead, Wellington

Louise Bancroft – Runnington,

Wellington

Peter McArdle

