



Newsletter April 2022

Committee members:

Tina Harley (President), Lionel Horler (Chair), Ken Jeanes (Vice Chair),
Richard Harris (Treasurer), Anne Collyer (Secretary), Jane Jeanes (SBKA Delegate),
Tony Johnstone (Programme Secretary), Jeremy Lee (Apiary Manager), Guy Clothier, Adam Morka,
Dennis White and John Wood

Welcome to the April Newsletter and I hope that this finds you and your bees well. April can be a tricky month for beekeepers and looking on the internet, I found this poem by Robert Frost which I thought summarises April weather perfectly!

The sun was warm but the wind was chill
 You know how it is with an April day
When the sun is out and the wind is still
 You're one month on in the middle of May.
 But if you so much as dare to speak
 A cloud comes over the unlit arch,
 A wind comes off a frozen peak.
And you're two months back in the middle of March.

Robert Frost

The Annual Division Dinner, held this year at The Orchard Galhampton, was a great success and many thanks to Tony for organising such a successful and enjoyable event. You will see later in the newsletter that there is a very comprehensive programme of events during the year with something for everyone.

Anne Collyer, Divisional Secretary SESBKA

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Beginners Course - Frame Building.
It was good to see so many of you at the recent practical session preparing frames for the new apiary. After all the hard work we were rewarded with tea and cakes baked by Jeremy C.



(He has kindly allowed me to feature his honey lemon cake creation in this month's recipe corner!)



SESBKA are offering a FREE basic first aid training course to those who are willing to commit to attend at least one apiary visit/lecture during the year as the nominated first aider. Jane Jeanes, a very experienced first aid trainer and Red Cross member, has kindly volunteered to run the course which is expected to last about two hours. Venue and date to be confirmed but please let me know if you are interested.

Anne Collyer Secretary SESBKA amcollyer838@gmail.com or 07803 243643

Lionel's April Bee Notes

For further information please contact Lionel: email lhorler934@talktalk.net

Every year our weather pattern is different than the last, although we always expect to get a normal year when the temperature is predictable and the bees fly from spring to autumn with no checks caused by cold spells or incessant rain. Then the flowers all produce nectar and pollen at the times we expect.

This year has been different again and it's only April! I was asked by one of our members to look at a colony on the 20th March and we found two sealed queen cells and a queen cup. There was some unsealed and sealed drone brood and plenty of worker brood sealed and unsealed with a few eggs and plenty of stores. I concluded that these were supercedure cells so we put the hive back together and hoping for the best, will look again in three weeks time.

As the temperature was consistently above 15` in the daytime I thought it was safe to look at my own bees. I found that some had increased enough to require an added super but some were still building up and could be left until the next inspection. I noticed that I have lost one Queen.

Several days have now elapsed since I wrote the above and the weather forecast is for a drastic drop in temperature with frosts at night so any thoughts of weekly inspections will be put off until it is more settled. I'm glad I checked the hives when I could and found them with plenty of stores so they should be safe for a few weeks.

On 17th March some twenty members were entertained by Bridgit Knutson when she showed us all how to make flowers, in this case roses, from the wax we get from old super frames. We all had a go, some more successful than others, but all agreed it was easier than we thought and we are all going to practise through the year and put up a good lot of entries at the honey show in October.

Are you interested in learning more about bees but do not want to commit to taking exams?

SESBKA are planning to run short courses for those who would like to gain more knowledge in subjects such as Queen Rearing, Reading the Colony, Swarm Control and Prevention, Bee Diseases, Handling workers and Queens for Marking and Clipping. If you would like to find out more, please contact Lionel: email

lhorler934@talktalk.net



Honey Lemon Drizzle Cake



For the Cake:

170gm baking spread
170gm castor sugar
3 eggs
Finely grated zest of 1 ½ lemons
170gm Self Raising Flour

For the Drizzle Topping:

Juice 1 ½ lemons
2 tablespoons honey

1. Heat oven to 180°C or fan 160°C/ gas 4. Beat together all the ingredients until well combined. Line a 1lb loaf tin with greaseproof paper and spoon in the mixture.
2. Bake for 40-45 minutes until a thin skewer inserted into the cake comes out clean. While the cake is cooling in the tin, mix together the lemon juice and honey. Prick the cake all over with the skewer and pour the lemon juice and honey evenly over the cake. Leave to cool completely in the tin and the juice will soak into the cake.
This keeps for several days in a tin and also freezes well

Southeast Somerset Beekeepers Association

2022 Events programme

Programme Secretary: Tony Johnstone email: tmj67@hotmail.co.uk Tel: 07973341557

Hello everybody,

As usual the April update contains some changes and additions so, please take the trouble to read it all. Our guest speakers and host members take a lot of trouble to ensure we have a worthwhile meeting or visit so please come along and support them. I hope, in addition, to add events where we can take along our gazebo and promote not only beekeeping but our division and to attract new members. As ever, we will be looking for volunteers to man our stand.

2022 Super-frame competition. This is a " Serious Bit Of Fun"

Participants need to register a super frame containing foundation which is then inserted into one of **their** colonies where, hopefully, the bees will draw it out and fill it with capped honey. All you have to do then is bring it along to our Honey Show for judging, and to collect a handsome prize. I will be at the meeting **on April 14th** where I will indelibly mark and register frames and again at the EatCary Festival **on 30th April**. If these dates are not convenient then please contact me or Lionel who can also register your frame.

Thursday 14th April

7.30 pm At The Market House Castle Cary By Maggie North of The Taunton Division

A hands-on talk and demonstration by a really interesting and knowledgeable person on what to look for and recognise in your hive in the coming months.

This will be particularly useful to beginners as well as to the more experienced

Saturday 30th April EatCary Festival

An all-day event, back in Cary for the third time. This year we are located under cover in the Undercroft of the Market House which makes setting-up and clearing-up easier. I need a small team of volunteers, please, to man our pitch between 9.00am and 5.00pm either all day or for half-a-day. Please let me know that you can help and for how long.

Saturday 14th May @ 2.30pm An apiary visit to Jeremy Lee's Apiary

Jeremy has taken over the management of our new divisional apiary at Hook Valley and is an experienced beekeeper. Details to follow

Thursday 2nd to Saturday 4th June Royal Bath & West Show Shepton Mallet Showground

Although we have not yet had any details I'm sure we will get a call soon for volunteers to help out in the Bee tent. The usual arrangement is that if you volunteer to help for half a day, you will get free entry to the show on the day and you can spend the other half of the day looking around the show. I cannot promise this will be the format this year but if anyone would like volunteer, please let **Lionel** know which half days you are offering and we will take it from there.

Saturday 11th June @ 2.30pm A visit to the Shillington's Apiary at Quarr Farm Nr. Gillingham

Once again, they have kindly agreed to host us on what is always an interesting and informative day. Details to follow

Saturday 2nd July- All Day Our Annual Bee Safari

Eleanor Burgess, a National Bee Inspector, has kindly agreed to be our facilitator for the day

Starting with a visit to Jane Grimes' apiary at Fifehead Magdalen followed by a visit to Richard Brain's apiary in Charlton Musgrove and concluding with a visit and for tea at Brian Martin's apiary in Bourton
Location addresses and timing details to follow

Saturday 13th August @ 2.30pm A visit to James Butt's apiary in Milborne Wick

James is a relatively new member who has been keeping bees for some time and who, by not being afraid to experiment, has had great success. This promises to be a really interesting visit.

Details to follow

Tuesday 13th September 7.30 pm At The Market House Castle Cary

A Talk And Demonstration by Suzy Perkins- National Honey Judge

All you need to know on how to handle, store and sell your honey and how to prepare and present honey for Honey Shows and what the judge looks for. So, lots of entries please in our Honey Show!!

Saturday 22nd October

Our Annual Honey Show At The Market House Castle Cary

Set-up on Friday 21st Details to follow

Our Division's AGM

A Date in November Details and location to follow

SESBKA Division Apiary – Hook Valley Farm

The winter storms seem an age ago now but just after submitting my missive for the last newsletter, Storm Eunice appeared. Prior to our half term trip to Cornwall, I purchased some very heavy concrete blocks from Wincanton in order to secure the lids of the hives. Once again, I braved the slippery slope to the site but this time manage to find a gentler gradient up the slope and didn't need to call for reinforcements.

Upon returning the following week (after 5 days without power at home) I was dismayed to find that whilst all lids were secure, one of the stands had collapsed and Lionel's hive was splayed all over the ground in complete disarray. Naturally, being the very organised Apiary manager, I had no bee suit. Lionel's little darlings were alive but suitably grumpy (he informs me that's a good thing!) I managed to right the hive and gingerly piece it back together in short bursts to avoid their ire. Just proves what survivors they are and after 5 days of being lashed with rain, the colony appears fine and is thriving a month later. Of the 5 colonies we installed in March, 4 are doing well but the 5th (which was very small) has dwindled away. There is plenty of Oil Seed Rape in the environs and on my last visit, lots of bright yellow pollen was being taken in.

Later this month we will assess which colonies to split/make nucs with to bolster the colony numbers. Casa Lionel has been ordered and we hope to take delivery of brand new 25' by 10' shed in late April with a grand opening in mind hopefully in May.

Jeremy Lee, Divisional Apiary Manager

Bees For Sale

Colony plus hive £300 - floor, brood box, super, crown board and roof.

Stand also included but a bit wonky!

Colony £220

Nuc £150

For details please contact Mel Smith melsmith0106@btinternet.com or 01963 440310

Honey Show Saturday 22nd October – Trophies!



Planning has begun for this year's show with ideas for new classes, including a children's section, new recipes in the baking section and a cake stall. We would also like to be able to award more trophies and so are asking if any of our members would like to donate a trophy (cup, vase or similar) for the following categories:



Beeswax products from own bees – most points from 3 classes

Cakes, Jams and Preserves – most points from 5 classes

Super Frame Competition

Any individual class that is of particular interest to you.

Children's Classes combined.