

# The Newsletter

**Celebrating the official opening of  
Our apiary**



**Volume no 25 Issue 4 May 2018**

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

## **Grand Opening** **Saturday 21st April 2018**



The apiary was officially opened by David Charles, ex president of the BBKA. On the following pages is a précis of his opening speech, interspersed with salient photographs.

'The Somerton and District Division of Somerset Beekeepers' Association (SBKA) was established about 80 years ago. For much of this time we have relied on certain of our members to act as hosts at our summer meetings. Although interesting, informative and an important part of our annual programme, they have no structure, yet Somerton Division is in the forefront of organising structured courses both in theory and practice. Names such as **Gerald Fisher** and **Mike Milton** immediately spring to mind in the running of classes. For practical bee-keeping we relied, for many years, on the goodwill and generosity of **Suzy Perkins, Joe King, Andrew Pugh** and others, who allowed their apiaries to be used for instructional purposes. At various times we have had our own apiary but not our own site.



Gerald Fisher in conversation with Diana Robertson, and Anne McCubbin talking to Jackie Mosedale

It has long been our aim to have our own premises. About six years ago, when the late **Trevor Adams** was chairman, a nucleus of determined committee members emerged, who felt that it was essential that we endeavour to establish our own apiary as soon as practically possible. Notably, **Stewart Gould, Joe King**, supported by **Trevor** and **Steve Horne**, our Treasurer, began the quest for a suitable site. The committee received valuable guidance from **Ken Edwards** who had established a centre for Quantock Division. By



Joe King addressing the throng

a stroke of good fortune one of our members and his wife, being convinced that an apiary on land we own was essential, put by the sum of £10,000 for us to purchase land for this venture. The only condition of this generous gift is that the donors remain anonymous. We are standing on this



Steve Horne



Stewart Gould welcoming members  
& introducing David Charles

land, the cost of which was £10k and we took possession in March 2016. Officially it is owned by SBKA with Somerton Divisional members among the trustees.

The funding to transform this landfill site and to erect a building, has been raised by a generous grant from a local charity, some smaller grants, fund-raising by our own endeavours, hedging plants donated by the Woodland Trust, but most of

all by monies raised as the result of a brilliant initiative by **Ken Edwards** who had the knowledge and expertise to set up a scheme with the FURTHER EDUCATION FUNDING COUNCIL in conjunction with Cannington College. Between 2002 and 2009 this division received a total of £28,436.76. We are grateful to **Ken Edwards**, who for those years was the Association's Special Funding Officer. Many people, including **Gerald Fisher** and **Eddie Howe** did much work in managing the necessary administrative procedures to secure this. In addition, we subsequently received a further £3,000 from that part of the total income held by the parent association and allocated specifically for the purpose of establishing a divisional apiary. Without this money we would not have had the substantial bank balance that enabled us to proceed.

Money alone would not have created what you see around you today. We are indebted to a few key people and many members and their families who have created this in just eighteen months. We are grateful for considerable help from **Alex Skidmore**, the Planning Officer on South Somerset District Council, to our contractor, **Mark Curtis** Roofing and Building, Ltd of Alhampton. Of our members I mention in particular, **Stewart Gould** whose enthusiasm and input is beyond measure. Key contributors include our current chairman, **Fred Clarke**, **Joe King** who has pressed on despite health issues at times, taking personal responsibility for creating the 'bee meadow', nurturing existing wild-flowers and planting new. **Penny Covington**, who has made the banks, the result of levelling the car park entrance, then landscaping, planting, pruning wherever possible. **Jeff White** who supervised things when Stewart was in

Australasia, to **Russell Greenslade** and **Naomi Spencer** who accommodated our hives before the move to here, to **Ray Pattemore** who planted the hedgerow, to **Jordan Mattock** for his ongoing work in laying the existing hedge, to **Mark Caldwell** for the entire electrical system and to **Nick Clarke** for his plumbing and tiling ex-



Anthony Devine talking to Fred Clarke



Penny Covington

pertise. **Glyn Stenson**, with the help of his wife, June and grandson, the enthusiastic **Anthony Devine**, set about building a dry-stone wall around the pond. Last, but not least I pay tribute to **Catherine Fraser** who does a mountain of work as our apiary manager.

Many other members, too numerous to mention individually, have spent innumerable hours getting the apiary to its current state. Their help has been invaluable. Thank you to anybody who has contributed but not been individually named.

### ***David Charles***

The day has been pronounced a tremendous success. There was rain and thunderstorms all around us, but we bathed in the sun. Around 110 people turned up on the day, including County chairperson Anne Pike, county President Ken Tredgett and many other divisional chairs. David Charles planted a commemorative Korean bee tree, just inside the entrance.

The Hog Roast provided by Hogs 4 All was very popular and was accompanied by some succulent salads prepared by members. As the afternoon wore on tea and cake were served by Alison Dykes' trusty crew, including Sally Lye, Pauline Clarke, Liz Gould & Suzy Perkins.

More photos follow.





Some of the 110 guests  
enjoying the sunshine and food



David Charles, Jim Thorley, Joan Adams,  
Jackie Mosedale & Liz Gould



Alison Dykes, Pauline Clarke and June Stenson



Pat Lehain, Karen and David Rose



The dry stone wall crew - June Stenson, Anthony  
Devine & Glyn Stenson



Catherine Fraser & partner Alan



Eddie Howe and David Morris



Ex Somerton chairman Alex Morrice & Somerset president Ken Tredgett



Brian Parsons being served from the hog roast



David Charles introducing Anne Pike - county chair



Andy Bonney keeping the customers satisfied





Just some of the cakes



Tom Done



James Morris and younger daughter



Chairman Fred Clarke



Ex county chair Jonathan Friend, Bridget Knutson, Ken & Joan Tredgett



Lizzie Reynolds talking to Sue Newell with Seasonal Bee Inspector Meg Seymour in the background



Relaxing in the bee meadow



A younger member of the King clan enjoying the cake



Mark & Alex Hawkins making the most of the hog roast



John Speirs and his wife, with Sarah Griffiths and Alison Clewes, chilling by the pond



The photographs were taken by Dave Reynolds who won this year's Vita Europe photography competition, and he has kindly consented to share them with us. If you would like to see all of them, they are available by following this link, or you can cut it and paste it into your browser.

URL: <https://www.dropbox.com/sh/wegbwiw8omocdjs/AABYsscO-JX09Rdro1KUjr4Ea?dl=0>

### **A note from our chairman**

To thank all those who helped make the opening of our apiary possible and for making it such a special day would require a small booklet. Our newsletter is just not big enough. So will all those who contributed, you know who you are, from the inception of the apiary to the official opening, please accept this short note as a big, big thank you for all that you did.



I wish I could shake you all by the hand and tell you how proud I am of what you helped achieve. Finally, could I please ask you to continue to support future developments at the apiary.

Your very grateful Chairman,  
***Fred Clarke***



### **Open Garden for Somerset Wildlife Trust**

On the 26 & 27th of June Charles and Charlotte Sundquist are opening their garden for the Somerset Wildlife Trust, and Steve Horne has been invited to have a Bee Stand as he did last year. Needless to say it would be great to see any of our beekeeping colleagues. We are open in the afternoon on those days.

***Charles Sundquist***

Hillcrest, Stoke St. Gregory, TA3 6JA

## Ivan Chick

Ivan was a member of Somerton Beekeepers for many years. At the age of 5 Ivan got his first colony of bees in 1939. Along with WW2 came panic to Montacute, where Ivan kept his bees. Cries of "Swarms", "We will all be stung" and "Get rid of the bees" went around the neighbourhood. Don't forget, Ivan had an allowance of sugar to feed his bees. What with that and his first honey harvest, well, if he had run for mayor he would have won hands down.



In 1948 Ivan moved to Ashford, Middlesex, taking his bees with him. Later he moved to West Molesey where he joined the beekeepers club. He was a co-founder of the Mole apiary, which is today called the Twickenham apiary.

Ivan did quite a lot of showing in his time, winning trophies and cups at the National Honey Show.

Around 1988 Ivan came back to Somerset, and of course the bees came with him.

It was about 4 years ago Ivan and I met up; I regret it was not sooner. Amongst his hobbies he collected bee coins and enamelled coins. On the latter he produced a book. Many a cup of tea got cold while I listened to his bee yarns, of which I never tired.



Ivan passed away in February this year at the age of 90. Through his years of beekeeping, 79 in all, he had seen many changes including having to make pieces of kit to get a job done.

**Eddie Howe**



## **Note from Bob Smith NDB - who spoke to us on Thursday 8<sup>th</sup> March**

Dear Joe,

many thanks for the warm welcome at Somerton last night, it was a pleasure for me to talk to such engaged beekeepers.

I was thinking on the way home about one of the questions raised, regarding the extraction of honey from brood comb - this isn't something that has been raised before (I've done that talk twice previously) and I don't think I gave a particularly satisfactory answer.

As I say, I was thinking about it and my response remains that I have no concerns in doing this - bees are incredibly clean and hygienic within their hive, the queen will only lay eggs in cells that have been scrupulously cleaned and polished by the workers and workers will not store their precious winter food supply in any other than a meticulously cleaned cell. In both cases a very thin coating of propolis is used to line the cell and this of course has bactericidal properties. So no, I have no issues with extracting honey from combs which have previously been used to raise brood. (and in flavour, aroma, colour terms, it is indistinguishable from super honey) If you get the opportunity, I'd be grateful if you could pass this on...?

Nightmare journey home! The A303 was closed and the diversions signs hard to follow on unlit narrow roads, we were soon hopelessly lost and the satnav just wanted to take us back to the closed A303. Eventually plotted a course through Gillingham, Shaftsbury, Wilton and back to join the A303 at Stonehenge. Then the M3 was closed J7 to J6 so we did the grand tour of Basingstoke; at least the diversion signs were easier to follow on lit streets. Overall, some 7 or 8 major roadwork programmes going on taking us down to one lane - we did see a lot of cones last night!! Finally home at 02.40 and a wee bit dazed this morning!

All good fun - regards to all in Somerton,

**Bob**

## **Somerton & District Beekeepers' Association**

### **JOB SPECIFICATIONS**

It is often difficult to know who to contact when there is a problem relating to the Association and this sometimes leads to confusion. In an attempt to resolve this the committee has identified the roles of designated individuals. It is these individuals who should be contacted about a problem that falls within their described role.

If all our members do this, the running of our Association should become much smoother. I therefore ask all members to read the job specification list posted in the Apiary building and act as outlined above when necessary.

Many thanks,  
***Fred Clarke,***  
Chairman

### **HONEY SHOW, SATURDAY 22<sup>nd</sup> SEPTEMBER 2018**

The winter bee losses appear to be high, so to make our Honey Show “the best in the west” is going to be a real challenge.

We need in excess of 300 entries to surpass last year’s total. Can we do this? Of course we can, so please start your planning now. It would be great if we could compliment the opening of our Apiary year with a great Honey Show finale.

What are you going to do to ensure our show remains “the best in the west”?

**David, Alison and Fred**  
Honey Show Committee



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The Apiinvert can be fed as a 'gee up' in the spring, emergency feeding during the 'June gap' and of course at the end of the season when preparing for winter

**Apiinvert.** 1 - 4 boxes @ 16 Kg £23 each, 5 + boxes £22 each

**Apifonda.** 1 x 2.5 Kg bag £4.75, 1 box 5 x 2.5 Kg £22, 2 + boxes £21 each

**Eddie Howe.** email:- [redrascal@tiscali.co.uk](mailto:redrascal@tiscali.co.uk) Mobile 07812 738793 Telephone 01458 2721144

## **Bee of the month**

"Almost red hot on the heels of a snowy end to the most miserable of winters, and a delayed start to our British Beekeepers', all important, spring, is this month's bee of the month, " *Bombus polaris*" (part of the subgenus *Alpinobombus*). A social bumble bee found in the Arctic Circle (including parts of Alaska, Canada,



Russia and Northern Scandinavia), it is adapted to survive in the harshest of conditions. It is recognised as a major pollinator in the Arctic and feeds on pollen and nectar, just like most bees. It is armed with a thicker coat than most, can vibrate muscles to raise body temperature, and is known to take a crafty rest in sheltering flowers that unwittingly act as heat traps. Thus, it is able to fly at lower temperatures than most bees and also raises larger than average broods to compensate for the short Arctic breeding season. The brood is incubated internally by the queen and matures quickly in an insulated nest, also helped by extra heat produced by the queen and workers. When food gets short, or the going gets even tougher, these special bees can go into a form of suspended animation, until things change for the better. At the end of the social cycle the new queen is the sole remnant of the old colony- a true survivor in a very challenging climatic environment."

***Jeff White***

### **Bees and hives for sale**

4 hives of bees for sale - all on single brood boxes - £200.00 each.

6 supers each with 11 frames with foundation, mostly drawn - £35.00 each but I would be interested in offers for the lot.

3 English feeders at £15.00 for the 3 and 2 rapid feeders at £10.00 for both.

4 flat packed Thorne brood boxes that are new.

All the above are to fit a British National hive.

Contact Candy     **mail@starcandy.co.uk**



## **Charity Plant Sale**

Jackie Mosedale is hosting a charity plant sale on Sunday 20<sup>th</sup> May at 2.00 pm at:-

**Catcombe Farm, Ricksey Lane, Somerton  
TA11 7JH**

Proceeds from the plant sale will go to the Chernobyl children's visit and The Hubb, a local project helping young people.



**It will also be supporting the continued work of Sorooptimist International, Yeovil, Sherborne and District.**

**For information, donation of plants, children's clothing etc. contact**

**Jackie Mosedale 01458 241146**

**or by email - [jackiemosedale@gmail.com](mailto:jackiemosedale@gmail.com)**

## **More Bees for sale**

Jonathan Harrod, who is retiring from beekeeping because his job requires him to be at sea most of the time, has two healthy commercial hives for sale including the honey crop now pouring in. He also has spare supers, brood boxes, heated uncapping tray and water heating tank plus various other items.

Contact Jonathan on the following email address for full details

**[jj.harrod@btinternet.com](mailto:jj.harrod@btinternet.com)**

**Dates for your diary**

**Beginners' Practical Course  
second Session**

**Saturday May 5<sup>th</sup> - 10.00 am**

**Divisional Apiary**

Downslade Quarry, Downslade Lane,

**Queen Rearing Course**

Conducted by Roy White

**Now fully booked**

Sat. May 26<sup>th</sup> & Sun. May 27<sup>th</sup>

Contact Joe King for details on

**01749 890357**

**Preparing entries for the Honey Show**

**Somerton Parish Rooms**

**TA11 7NB**

Thursday July 19<sup>th</sup>

7.30 pm

**Somerton Divisional Honey Show**

**Saturday September 22<sup>nd</sup>**

**1.00 - 5.0 pm**

**Long Sutton Village Hall**

**Martock Road**

**Long Sutton**

**TA10 9NT**

**President**

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**Chairman**

Fred Clarke

01278 722830

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01823 698204

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Steve Horne

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**Librarian**

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Sally Lye

Sarah North

Keith Sturgess

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Catherine Fraser

01935 824711

**Extraction Equipment Loan**

John Speirs

01458 241831