



YEOVIL BEE NEWS

December 2017

Welcome to the newsletter of the Yeovil & District Division, Somerset Beekeepers' Association. See also our website:

www.somersetbeekeepers.org.uk

Next Meeting – Divisional Christmas Social

7:30pm Saturday 2nd December

at The Phelips Arms in Montacute

Our annual Christmas social gathering is a Skittes evening with a cold buffet and plenty of social and beekeeping chat.!

The evening starts at 7:30 in the Phelips Arms. It is mainly a social evening with with a cold buffet served soon after 8:00, when we have all worked up an appetite with some skittling!

All members and their partners are welcome as this is a social event. The cost of the buffet is £8, payable on the night. The cold buffet will consist of rolls, chicken drumsticks, beef, salad and chips (hot!).

If you will be coming, please contact Marvin to book the buffet. Names need to be with Marvin by November 22nd. Your booking is your commitment to pay for the buffet, even if you cannot eventually make it to the evening.

Don't miss out on this social evening!

To book your place contact Marvin on :

Tel: 01935 421623

Email: marvin-susan.collins@outlook.com

The Phelips Arms is in the centre of Montacute. Parking is in the square opposite the pub.

SATNAV : use post code TA15 6XB.

Divisional AGM; Summary of Meeting

The Divisional AGM was held on Tuesday 17th October. The minutes will be distributed later but below is a summary of the officers elected at the meeting:

President: Nic Bard

Chairman: John Carnegie

Vice Chairman: Marvin Collins

Treasurer: Sharon Blake

Secretary (joint): Steve & Marie Attrill

Newsletter Editor: Nic Bard

Librarian: Jacqui Taylor

Website Editor: Toby Rutherford

County Delegate: Malcolm Blake

Deputy Delegates: Jacqui Taylor, Andy Dobson

Committee members: Malcolm Blake, Jacqui Taylor, Andy & Lorraine Dobson, Trish Manning, Bill Paterson, Neil Cook, Phil Hocking, Toby Rutherford.

(You will see that Fred Horne has stepped down from President after many years of holding office. See later in the newsletter for more information on how much Fred has done for Beekeeping in the County as well as in our Division.)

The Divisional subscription was kept the same as last year. See the "Subscriptions Due" article later in this newsletter.

Mite Drop Check

If you were treating this autumn, you should now check your mite drop to ensure that you have reduced the mites to a viable level.

Assuming you are using a mesh floor, the easiest way to estimate the mite levels is to count the mite drop on the insert. It is best to add the insert for 7 to 14 days and count the mite drop. Divide the number of mites by the number of days the insert was in place and you have the mite drop per day. If this is less than 3 per day, they should be OK until the spring. Any more than 6 and you should consider immediate further treatment, such as oxalic acid trickling in December.

Bear in mind that if you have a small colony or Nucleus, you will need to scale the mite drop numbers and treatment threshold down appropriately.

I have included this reminder as some of my colonies have a very high mite drop in spite of Thymol (Apiguard) treatment in September.

Thank You to Fred Horne for His Contribution to Beekeeping

Fred has taken the difficult decision to retire from his role as President of the Yeovil Division of the Somerset Beekeepers Association (SBKA) after at least 41 (recorded) years. Fred joined the Yeovil Division of SBKA in 1976 when it was then known as the Southern Division. Previous entries to 1976 are not recorded although I suspect Fred has much more pre-recorded history and many 'dits' to tell.

Fred's name first appeared as an entry in the SBKA Yearbook in 1977 and within 2 years was acknowledged as the Divisional Treasurer, a post he held for the following 3 years. An active Council member, he became the Divisional Secretary for 7 years and became the Vice-President in 1991. He became SBKA vice-chairman in 1985 & 1986 becoming SBKA Chairman in 1987, 1988 & 1989 and becoming vice-President in 1990. Fred continued to



empower the Division as a valued Committee member therein (circa an additional 28 years of service to the beekeeping community). He has undertaken the hefty responsibility of President of the SBKA, Yeovil Division from 2002 to the current year i.e. 15 years, becoming an elected SBKA Honorary Member in 2010. This long period of service to the County has enabled the Division to change with the times (not that the bees cared).

Modest of mind and the epitome of a skilful mentor, Fred offers a masterclass example of how to communicate. Good mentors, like good teachers are rare to find in our lifetime and when I think of Fred he certainly fits the category well. His empirical knowledge of bees, inspired, encouraged and motivated. Not one for gaining qualifications and post nominals, Fred made you think logically, rationally and reminded us that bees are doing what they want to do (usually for good reason) and that we need to sometimes just watch and listen and sometimes leave them to it. Fred, like some other rare individuals has clearly mastered the art of communicating without necessarily talking, and is yet able to effectively impart his knowledge at a level commensurate to both the individual and the complexity of the many questions; why, why and why? You cannot put a value on this kind of deed and often you don't realise that you have lost something special until it is no longer there. Luckily for us all, Fred remains on the Yeovil Committee and so he hasn't quite yet cut the apiculture ties, probably to the angst of his wife Julie (they recently celebrated their 60th wedding anniversary).

Only now, three years after my wife and I starting beekeeping, do I realise the value of having an extraordinary mentor and such a living encyclopaedia available, as opposed to YouTube and the internet - more understood and vastly more appreciated by the older generations I suspect. As an inexperienced beekeeper, I learnt so much, and more importantly, limited the potential damage that we could have done to the precious bees by seeking his council. By having this sound knowledge base available, either in person, or at the end of the telephone, beekeeping became a greater joy. We have had the privileged to know and seek the President's advice at times when apiculture was proving demanding to us and each and every time, his wise and thoughtful words made sense and clarified the mire. The value and importance of a skilled mentor should never be underestimated.

Having read many (many!) books and other published articles, sometimes the solution to a 'bee problem' was not obvious and was often contradictory. The adage that if you 'ask 10 beekeepers a question you will get 11 answers' springs to mind. I could always rely on Fred, to ground the situation, share and understand the challenge ('read the bees') and thereby make sense of the chaos presented before us, which invariably concluded in us leaving with an advised plan of action; more often than not his wise words and council worked a treat. I am no longer surprised by the results of his hard-earned experience and take it for granted that Fred's wise words should be closely listened to. As a "new bee" beekeeper of only three years, the most important lessons I have learnt have come from Fred; most of all is the articulate, reassuring words that exudes confidence, enthusiasm and integrity from this remarkable trusted individual. I can only offer him our sincere appreciation and deep gratitude for all his efforts. Having inherited our original bees from Fred, I feel a strong sense of bonding to our (now) former President but feel compelled to keep him updated on their progress (usually an excuse to ask him for yet more advice!)

One key quality of Fred is his ability to understand and to be understood. A proverb is that it is better to walk in the dark with a friend than walk alone in the light. A real friend is always one who walks in when it seems as if the rest of the world has walked out (or doesn't answer the telephone/email!); Fred has been this individual. We should always remember that the most valuable 'antiques' (don't take this literally) are our dear friends. The strong sense of bonding with effective strangers (when we started) is not a balanced equation; friendship is not always about giving and taking in equal shares. Instead, friendship is grounded in a feeling that we all know who exactly will be there for you when you need something no matter what or when. I have telephoned Fred at the most inconvenient of times and yet he has always found the time and presence of mind to calm the situation, convey his wisdom and resolve the situation. Unless you have been in this situation, it is truly difficult to appreciate the worth or value of this.

Fred has now decided to step down as President and passes on the baton of responsibility to Nic Bard – another well-seasoned individual who I am sure will follow in Fred's footsteps around the apicultural network. As a Division, our goal should now be to pursue and maximize the importance of utilising the plethora of experience and talent available, through knowledge, preparation, and rehearsal by surrounding ourselves with the wider beekeeping community. Survival and Wisdom come through teamwork; just ask the bees.

A poignant proverb: One swallow will not make spring, nor one bee honey.

We all wish our former President, Fred (and of course Julie) a very happy reduction in bee-related responsibilities and our very best wishes for the future. He can now perhaps get on with household chores which the rest of us deliberately ignore, due to the bees (an excuse perhaps), whilst mindful that we still know where he lives and how to contact him, should the need ever arise.

My thanks to Marvin Collins (Vice-Chairman, Yeovil Division) and David Charles for their ability to provide such a detailed profile of our Fred's apicultural history.

Steve Attrill

Coming soon ...

Event	When	Where	Details
Division Christmas Meeting	Saturday 2nd December	The Phelps Arms, Montacute	A xmas buffet, skittles and natter.
West Dorset & East Devon BKA joint meeting	Thursday 11th January 2018	Whitchurch Canonicorum Village Hall	Roger Patterson talks about "Dead Bees don't Buzz"
First Divisional meeting of the year	Tuesday 16th Jan 2018	East Coker Village Hall	Talk by Ken Basterfield on "Tools & Tricks to make Beekeeping Easier"
SBKA Lecture Day	Saturday 17th February	Edgar Hall, Somerton	A full day of lectures. Get your tickets from Andy.
Divisional meeting	Tuesday 20th Feb	East Coker Village Hall	Talk by Lynne Ingram

Subscriptions for 2018 are now due

Subscriptions for 2018 are now due. The cost remains the same as last year, £32 for a full member, to include BDI cover for three colonies. This is £19 for BBKA, £5.50 for SBKA, £2 for BDI, £2 to the research fund and £3.50 for Yeovil Division. If you have more than three colonies you will need to add the following amount for BDI cover:

Total number of colonies up to 3	nil
up to 5	£2.00
up to 10	£5.25
up to 15	£7.75
up to 20	£9.50
up to 25	£11.10
up to 30	£13.60
up to 35	£16.10
up to 39	£18.10

The cost for Partner members is £23.50 and Associate members £6.

Any queries about this please phone Sharon Blake on 01460 242124

I will be at the social meeting on 2nd December and happy to collect subscriptions then or if you prefer to send your subscription by post please make your cheque payable to "SBKA Yeovil Division" and send it to:

Mrs Sharon Blake, Stratton Court, Over Stratton, South Petherton, Somerset TA13 5LQ.

Chairman Carnegie

Hello Yeovil Beekeepers,

What an exciting year it has been in lots of different ways with lots of things to look forward to and lots of things to safeguard against. Our three main enemies are the Varroa mites, the Asian hornet and our own laziness. Of the latter I count myself first in the list!

The blanket treatment for the Varroa mites is to treat them whether they suffer from them and in what degree. There is a growing movement to make us all to do a count on a regular basis at treatment time and only treat the ones that need it. There is increasing evidence that treating the bees actually makes them weaker. There we are between the devil and the deep blue sea.

The Asian hornet does seem to be on its way and we should be vigilant. There was an interesting article in Bee Craft about the proprietary attractant to put in hornet traps and the writer described how totally ineffective that was, and that when he put rotten cod in his trap they flew into it with great glee! I've heard this fish story before from beekeepers in France so it may well be credible. I bought two Asian hornet traps in France and hope they stay in my van and not out in the field.

Laziness? We all lead very busy lives and one of things we find hardest is dragging ourselves out to be at a meeting at 7:30 PM. Nonetheless, it is a fact that every meeting I've been to has provided me with new information to use when dealing with bees. I would urge all of you to try to get to meetings if only to engender camaraderie because after all we are all on the same side.

Me, I'm on doing a forward plan with regards to the honey show display units. I know we have Christmas to go but you will be very surprised how quickly time will fly after that. I have two carpenters who are on the case and I would like the units to be collapsible as few of us have room to store such things unless they are flat packed. I'm just waiting for measurements and pictures of the ones we borrowed from West Dorset.

What we got to look forward to? I look forward to December 21 when I know all my bees will stir and shiver with excitement because they know that from then onwards the days will get longer. I look forward to the Yeovil show and hope it is as good as last year and it will be difficult to better that. I do hope we can muster the energy to go to the Sherborne Castle fair because I have been invited there under the umbrella of Bees and Honey. There are people I know who have little tents and go to many shows just to show the flag for their division and beekeeping in general.

I've got the beginners to look forward to in January and I'm already up to 15 which may be too much for Chapel Cross tearooms. Time will tell. One of the things we really must get together is to put the beginners in touch with people in their area who are already beekeepers. We should also have the time to run taster/practical courses in March and April. I have 3 bee suits for adults and Sharon Blake has many spare veils. If you are happy to look after some of these beginners do let me know. Just to give you some perception some live in Dorset and some in the Taunton area.

Our next meeting is at the Phelps Arms on December 2nd at 730. Look on the revamped website because it is such a pleasure compared with what we had before. Thanks Neil.

John Carnegie

Chairman

Study for Exam modules

I am going to be doing module 2, "Honeybee products and forage". I will be joining Joe King at Somerton with a group of other people so that we can ginger each other up. I only do it because it is good for my brain and I enjoy studying in a group.

So if you fancy joining our enthusiastic group learning about beekeeping, do contact me and I will forward details on to you

John Carnegie

New SBKA Web-site

The SBKA web-site has been re-designed and brought up-to-date with some new material and better links to the original material. It also includes dedicated areas for Divisions which they can update themselves and an active calendar showing all the local events.

Please try it out here: <http://www.somersetbeekeepers.org.uk/>

Neil Cook, one of our Yeovil beekeepers, took on the updating task and, I am sure you will agree, has made the new web-site user-friendly and very slick.

The Yeovil Division area has its own area which will be maintained by Toby Rutherford. If you have any queries or any information that you feel needs to be included, please get in touch with Toby on tobyutherford@hotmail.com.

Lecture Day

Lecture Day is the annual County day of beekeeping talks. Next year it is on Saturday 17th February and will be held in Somerton. Tickets are essential. They cost £5 including teas and coffee throughout the day, but bring your own lunch.

The full programme can be down-loaded from the SBKA web-site here:

<http://www.somersetbeekeepers.org.uk/uploads/1/0/8/1/108127969/scan0001.jpg>

Tickets can be purchased from Andy and Lorraine. Please contact them to book your ticket on:

dobsons.bees@gmail.com or phone on 07825 912274.

Yeovil Beekeepers Polo Shirts

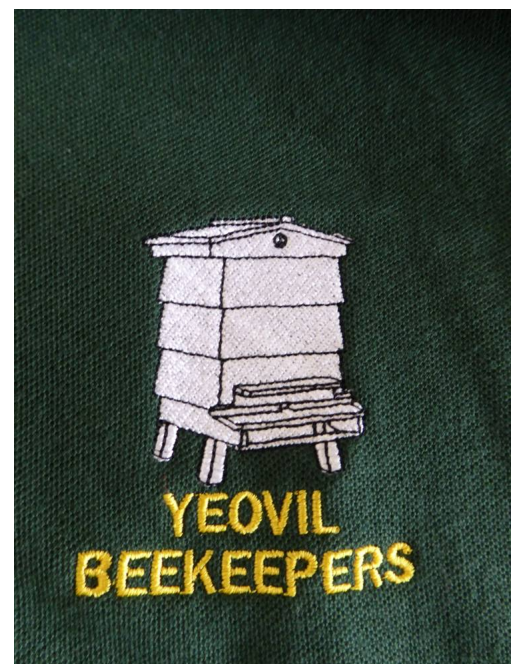
We have some green poloshirts with the Yeovil Beekeepers logo. They are good quality with a stitched logo captured in the photo here.

If you would like one for £15, just get in touch with Bill Paterson on:

0778 969 3203

or by email on:

patterson_32@sky.com



Beginners Course

Yeovil Division are running another beginners course in the early spring next year. It is organised by John and he will be running the majority of the lessons, but aided by some of the other committee members.

Full details are in the attached course document and on the web-site, but here is a list of the course contents. Please pass the form on to anyone you think may be interested. The course is filling up well already!

- Week 1. Introduction- General, What is a Honey bee, Importance of beekeeping, Local and National support.
- Week 2. The Colony- Queen, workers and drones. Division of labour within the hive. Individual lifecycles.
- Week 3. The Hive- The bees' nest. Hive components. Supers. Practical frame making.
- Week 4. History - Origins of Honeybees. Honey hunting. Skeps. Langstroth. W.B.C., Smith, National, Nucleus and other odd hives.
- Week 5. Beekeeping Year- Preparation for winter. Spring management. Inspections. Summer build up. Harvesting.
- Week 6. Queens . In depth understanding. Queen rearing. Mating of. Marking and Clipping.
- Week 7. Swarms . Reasons for and types of. Swarm control, Swarm prevention, Swarm collection.
- Week 8. Pests and Diseases. Pests, brood diseases, adult diseases, varroa. Statutory requirements.
- Week 9. Bees, Plants and hive products- pollination, nectar and honey. Local forage crops, wax, propolis and pollen. Selling honey.
- Week 10. Getting Started- Association Membership of Full and the implications. Sources of kit for beekeeping. Setting up and apiary. What happens next.

The course application for is attached to this email or can be viewed here: <http://www.somersetbeekeepers.org.uk/beginners-courses.html>

East Devon & West Dorset BKA Joint Meeting

These two beekeeping groups have an anual joint meeting just as we do with the SW Division. I am sure you would all be welcome to attend.

Their next joint meeting is on Thursday 11th January 2018 at 7:30. It is held at the Whitchurch Canonorum Village Hall. This is a small village near Bridport. The meetings are always very popular so you are recommended to get there early. The post code is DT6 6RF.

The subject of the meeting is "Dead Bees don't Buzz", a talk by Roger Patterson

Asian Hornets

I understand that the nest at Wollacombe has been contained so the worry from this quarter is over for this year.

BUT we must all keep on our guard next spring and review the excellent articles written in BBKA News recently.

Divisional Honey Extractor

If you still have the Divisional Honey Extractor, please contact Bill Patterson and arrange to return it. You can contact Bill on 0778 969 3203 or by email on: patterson_32@sky.com.

What is This?



I was tidying up some boxes of beekeeping equipment and found several of these. They have a broad spring nestling in the wooden block. The block is about 4 inches (10cm) long. They do have some propolis on them, so must have been used in the hive.

I have no idea what they are or what they were used for.

Any ideas, suggestions or guesses to the editor please?

Divisional officers

President	Nic Bard	01935 421623	Treasurer & membership secretary	Sharon Blake	01460 242124
Chairman	John Carnegie	01935 851234	Librarian	Jacqui Taylor	01963 220329
Vice-Chairman	Marvin Collins	01935 426153	Newsletter editor	Nic Bard Nic_bard@hotmail.com	07877 284545
Secretary	Steve & Marie Attrill	01935 475964	Mentor Liaison Officer	Vacant	
Divisional Web-Master	Toby Rutherford	tobyutherford@hotmail.com	County Delegates	Malcolm Blake Jacqui Taylor Andy Dobson	

The Yeovil division secretary email address is : yeovilbee@gmail.com.

Please contact any officer with your beekeeping or organisation comments and suggestions.

Please send any suggestions, articles or comments or ideas to share with our other members in the newsletter directly to the editor at nic_bard@hotmail.com.

Yeovil 2017/18 Programme

2017

2nd Dec '17 – Skittles social evening, The Phelps Arms, Montacute

2018

16th Jan '18 – Ken Basterfield at East Coker Village Hall

20th Feb '18 – Lynne Ingram at East Coker Village Hall

20st Mar '18 – David Maslen at East Coker Village Hall

April to August outside apiary meetings start at 2.30pm

Winter indoor meetings start at 7:30pm unless otherwise stated