



The Quantock Quest

Issue 14

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A Division of Somerset Beekeepers Association



Whenever I speak to someone “in their golden years” they always say “I’m busier than I ever was before I retired”. How can this be? I used to think to myself, how can retirement from a full time job not suddenly give you hours of free time?

Now that I am there myself, “in the golden years” I totally get it—suddenly the days fly by, it’s the end of the day before I know it and the weeks and months just seem to merge into each other.

No new hobbies taken up (no time), no extra duties, in bed and up at reasonable times, yet that clock appears to travel at twice the regular speed, and “free time” seems to have become a thing of the past!

I seem to spend more hours in front of the computer than I did in gainful employment, the phone never stops and the diary is always full.

Have it any other way? No fear! I am loving every minute of ‘retirement’!

Jackie

Dates for your Diary



Wed 11 Oct —7.00pm **Drop In** at the Apiary

Sat 14 Oct—2.00pm Honey & Cider Harvest with Barry and Trish Hulatt at Berhill.

Sat 21 Oct —2.00pm Practical 8—Winter Closedown at the Apiary

Sun 22 Oct 9.30am—Microscopy 5 (Apiary)

Tue 01 Nov —Beginners 1

Sat 11 Nov —2.00pm—Handling Scrap Wax and Foundation Making at the Apiary

Tue 14 Nov—Beginners 2

2017 Rent-a-Hive—a great success!



This year’s Rent-a-Hive has been our most successful yet, with 14 members each looking after their own hive throughout the summer. This is a great way to learn practical beekeeping—being in charge of your own hive but with the support of experienced beekeepers always on hand.

At the end of the season, when our novices have turned into new beekeepers, they have the option of taking their hive home for a modest fee. And by remaining members of Quantock Division, they will still be able to tap our experienced members’ knowledge! And, of course, our monthly Drop In gives all beekeepers the perfect opportunity for plenty of “bee chat”!

Brymore Open Day

We had a lovely time on our stall at this year’s Brymore Open Day in June. Supporting Brymore Bee Club we had honey tasting—once tasted our visitors were delighted to be able to buy some! We did candle rolling, where visitors could “have a go” then take their candle home with them, and our Observation Hive proved as popular as ever, as did the virtual hive we took along.

Of course, there was no lack of “bee chat” throughout the day!

All in all, a grand day and QBKA are proud to support Brymore.



Bee Power!



Of course, it had to happen—a swarm of bees took up residence in Europe’s largest building site—and our Ken drew the short straw to go along and extract them!

But first, Ken had to undergo strict security checks before being allowed to enter the huge building complex at Hinkley Point. The deed was quickly accomplished and a great many construction workers breathed a sigh of relief.

This must be one of the more unusual swarm collection sites we have encountered this year!

Drone Congregations



We had an unusual but very interesting topic at the Apiary earlier in the year, when we learnt more of the Queen’s dalliance with her drones.

Many thanks to Peter West and Richard Simpson of Devon Beekeepers who talked about what happens when the Queens are mating with drones, this can be up to 3 miles away and 30 feet high. Specialised equipment meant that we were able to observe a live demonstration of drone congregations.

Don’t forget—our meetings are open to all beekeepers and Divisions, free of charge. If you are not a member of QBKA and wish to come please contact me on 01278 671544 so that we can open up our extra Car Park.



A single honey bee may collect 1/12 teaspoon of honey in her lifetime.

Are you Connected?

The website of Bee-Connected brings farmers and beekeepers together, and keeps beekeepers notified when a neighbouring farmer is applying insecticides to their crops.



beeconnected

Farmers and spray contractors can register on the website, then when insecticide spraying is planned, particularly one that may present a risk to bees (for instance on a flowering crop, or where the field has a conservation buffer strip), details of when and where the spraying will take place can be logged, and a notification will be sent to any neighbouring beekeepers who have also registered.

Beekeepers can enter the position of their hives on an easy - to - use mapping system, selecting their choice of maximum distance up to 5km and they will then receive notifications from registered farmers when they are planning to spray their crops with the selected range.

Learn more on www.beeconnected.org.uk

Don't let them starve!



There's not a great deal of nectar about now but the hives are still full of bees needing food.

If you haven't done so already, heft your hives as soon as possible to check on weight, then get that sugar syrup into the feeders—you'll probably be amazed at the amount of food they will get through!

And—don't just feed them once and think that'll do for the winter—keep a close eye and top up the feeder as soon as it's needed.



Bridgwater Flower Show prizewinners

Well done to our winners and thanks to all who entered the Bee-keeping section of Bridgwater Flower Show. Big thanks as well to our judge Susie Perkins, who had the unenviable task of placing the entries!



Results were:

1 jar of Light, Medium or Dark Honey

1st Andrew Robertson 2nd Mike Sealey 3rd Ken Edwards

1 jar of Crystallised Honey

1st Mike Sealey 2nd Andrew Robertson 3rd Elaine Falkingham

1 item made from Beewax

1st Mike Sealey 2nd Elaine Falkingham

Photo "The Bee"

1st Elaine Falkingham 2nd Gina Mear
3rd Mike Sealey



Well done to Mike Sealey who took the Best in Section cup with his Crystallised Honey. After judging Mike brought in his observation hive for all to see just how the bees work.



Have you taken part in the 2017 BBKA Honey Survey yet?

You have until 9th October to log your honey harvest results, and this year, the survey is being extended to Scottish, Welsh and Ulster beekeepers for a truly national result.

Last year's survey showed that an average of 26.1 pounds (11.83ks) per hive was harvested.

The Survey can be found on the BBKA website (www.bbka.org.uk) and should take just ten minutes to complete. You will then be entered into a draw to win BBKA Spring Convention tickets, Sophie Allport mugs or Burts Bees gift sets.

Results will be provided free to each beekeeping association.



Time to fit the mouseguard!

Beekeeping equipment to sell? Looking for something in particular?

Let us know and we will place your bee-related ad in Quest—free of charge to members.



Hi, Q-Bee here...

Ferretting around in the dusty archives to find interesting tit-bits...

** To make 1 pound of honey, bees may need to fly 50,000 miles **

** Bees will disconnect their wings allowing them to pump their wing muscles to create heat **