



THE FEDERATION OF BERKSHIRE BEEKEEPERS ASSOCIATIONS

The Federation, its Council, and its Officers cannot be held responsible for the views expressed in the Newsletter or possible errors.

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Editors Corner



As all is pretty quiet in the apiary at this time of the year, I have been delving into my recipe books for interesting things to make over the Festive Period that includes honey. I have pulled together a series of recipes that cover most parts of the traditional English Xmas fayre – including turkey, ham, brussel sprouts, dessert and of course, cake and I have shared them with you in this newsletter.

The winter meetings are in full swing and South Chilterns and Wokingham have both had their honey shows during November. This month also sees part 2 of the interesting report from a Wokingham Association member on bee-keeping in India.

You would not generally expect to be called to remove a swarm in November, but that is just what happened to John White and Felipe Salbany from South Chilterns – read on for the challenges this brought!

If you are still thinking of what to buy your beekeeping friends and relatives you might be tempted by the books which Lorraine Godenzie from Slough, Windsor & Maidenhead as provided.

There is a significant Federation update this month as there are a series of proposals for the Federation delegate to vote on at the BBKA's Annual Delegate's meeting on 10th January 2015. The have been sent to our four association committees, but you can also give your personal vote which can be included in the overall voting preference table for the delegate.

I wish you all a peaceful and happy Xmas and New Year.

Sue Remenyi

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Federation News

National Honey Show

Many of you visit this each year. Did you know that each individual association could be a Corporate sponsor which means that it receives two free entry tickets to the show?

A number of years ago the Federation used to be a Corporate Sponsor, which meant that it received two free entry tickets to the show. At our next AGM in February 2015, we will be asking each of our four associations if they want the Federation to join again.

If you feel strongly as to whether the Federation should join and/or your own association should join then please let them know.

BBKA's Annual Delegate's meeting on 10th January 2015

As always there are a series of proposals for your delegate to vote on and these are summarised below. Each of the four associations committees have already been asked how they would like your delegate to vote.

If you would like your personal vote to be considered, please send it to membership@scbka.org by 31st December 2014 and I will include it in the overall voting preference table for the delegate. If anyone would like to see the full proposals, let me know and I can email them to you, together with the agenda and other supporting documents.

The proposals: *Do you vote yes, no or abstain to each one of these? Please let me know!*

1/2015

BBKA's Executive Committee proposes that your fees (capitation rates) should increase for the year 2016 as follows:

		The 2015 fees were increased to
Members up £1	(£18.00 to £19.00)	£18.00
Partners up 54p	(£12.00 to £12.54)	£12.00
Country up 50p	(£9.00 to £9.50)	£9.00
Junior up 50	(£9.00 to £9.50)	£9.00

2/2015

That the BBKA Trustees install a whistle blowing policy based on external best practice at the earliest opportunity.

This is as a result of the BBKA versus Basterfield issue (allegations of dishonesty between trustees)

3/2015

That the BBKA requests the Examinations Board to review the marking structure and feedback to candidates for the BBKA Basic Assessment, in particular to consider giving candidates graded results (i.e. pass, credit or distinction, as with BBKA Modules) or to give them their achieved mark.

The next four are about neonicotinoids

4/2015

When the findings of the EFSA review of neonicotinoids and the proposed recommendations for the future of neonicotinoids in the UK are known (likely to be late 2015 / possibly even early 2016) the Executive undertakes to hold a meeting(s) open to all BBKA members to consider the results of the review, other documentation and discuss BBKA policy towards neonicotinoids in the light of the findings and proposed course(s) of action regarding the future of neonicotinoids in the UK.

5/2015

The BBKA has adopted a neutral position on the controversial topic of neonicotinoids which may differ from many members' expressed views. We therefore request that all BBKA members be polled concerning whether the BBKA should support a ban on neonicotinoid use. If the poll results show that the majority view differs from that of the BBKA executive, BBKA should adjust its public position to reflect the majority view.

6/2015

That the BBKA should adopt the "Precautionary Principle" when policy on the use of neonicotinoid pesticides is being considered.

7/2015

That, until there is convincing independent scientific evidence that Neonicotinoid pesticides are not harmful to honey bees, the BBKA will support the continuation of the EU moratorium on their use.

8/2015

That the BBKA conduct a representative (it is suggested 2%) and random poll of BBKA members to determine as to how acceptable a system of compulsory registration of beekeepers and apiaries on the existing NBU BeeBase would be to BBKA members. The results should be published in the BBKA News and reported back to the 2016 ADM.

9/2015

That the Examinations Board be instructed to review and revise its education and examination policies and programmes to enhance the value of the qualifications and training to the wider community, allowing the members to benefit through demonstrable knowledge skills and competencies that could be useful in the wider employment and community environments.

10/2015

It is proposed that the technical committee of BBKA investigate whether there are usable regulations, along with the associated enforcement bodies already in existence, which prevent sugar waste being stored so that it is accessible by honey bees and other nectar feeding insects. The outcome should be published in the BBKA News. If no such regulations exist the BBKA should use their good offices with the government, possibly through the Bee Health Plan, to argue that appropriate regulations should be formulated by the government. Regulations already exist for honey waste and storage.

11/2015

That a clear account be given as to the costs and expenses incurred in producing the BBKA monthly newsletter.

12/2015

The BBKA should offer full and country members the option of receiving BBKA news by email instead of post, and should reduce the capitation fee for those members to reflect the reduced cost, which at a minimum would be the savings in postage.

13/2015

That the BBKA Constitution Rule 14.2 is amended in respect to Registered Member Voting from "each Delegate to record one vote for every Registered Member and Partner Member" to "each Delegate to record one vote for every Registered Member, Partner Member and Country Member"

14/2015

That the tasks performed by recipients of honoraria shall be listed and the sums received by those individuals and their support to the BBKA clearly identified.

15/2015

That the BBKA Constitution be amended as follows: Paragraph 16.2.8 currently reads: "Meetings of the EC shall be recorded with agreed actions and decisions made". This paragraph should be amended to read: "Meetings of the EC and subcommittees shall be properly recorded to show a true record of proceedings with (as a minimum) those present noted, notes on topics discussed, agreed actions and decisions made, and those records made permanently available to members via a suitably secure area of the BBKA website".

16/2015

Following the discovery of Small Hive Beetle, *Aethina tumida*, (SHB) in Italy in September 2014 this ADM instructs BBKA to urgently seek a ban on the importation of bees and unprocessed bee products into the UK.

17/2015

We propose the BBKA lead the selection and implementation of a centralised member record system to ensure data consistency and to aggregate sufficient data to make the exercise cost effective.

The potential for standardised records and improved rigor to ensure members' data is secure, that they are correctly BDI covered, and that Gift Aid claims are compliant is clear and although potentially time and money expensive to implement we would see a drop in the burden of record keeping as we remove several levels of data gathering, verification, recording, re-recording in different formats for different outputs, and reconciling.

The proposed approach is in two parts. First is an exercise to identify the optimal solution, and second its implementation.

We first propose the low cost polling of all BBKA affiliates to:

- agree a common data set required from BBKA affiliates; and
- ascertain if any Association has already implemented a member database system which meets our requirements and can act as referee for its qualities and so provide a proven solution on which to build; or
- ascertain if the recently advised BDI system developments could be considered to offer a BBKA system solution given the BDI's range of customers is broader; or
- decide if a bespoke system is required.

The implementation process can be agreed on the basis of the findings of the first part.

18/2015

That Oldham and District Beekeepers' Association be admitted as an Area Association

19/2015

The Northumberland Beekeepers Association welcomes the efforts being made by the BBKA trustees to modernise the way the business of the BBKA is undertaken. This will take time to bed in. When that has happened NBKA would like the trustees to consider introducing a method of selecting trustees that ensures that all the regions of England and Northern Ireland always have representation on the board of trustees

Caroline Bushell, Federation Chair



John Belcher
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'Tis the season to eat honey!



Like many of you, I have had a reasonably good honey crop this year and so I have been looking for ways of using it. I thought it would be fun to see how many parts of the traditional Xmas fayre can include honey and came up with the following set of recipes, which I hope you will enjoy trying out! I have to confess that haven't had time yet to test the turkey or the sprouts! So if you give them a go, any feedback is welcome. If you have any favourite recipes that you make with honey and would like to share them – please send them to me and I will publish them in future issues.

Turkey roasted in honey

1 capon or small turkey, with giblets

2 tbsp olive oil

1 medium onion, peeled and finely chopped

large handful of parsley, finely chopped

1 tart eating apple or ½ a cooking apple, peeled and chopped into small pieces

75g/3oz raisins

1-2 lemons, rind and juice only

75g/3oz ground almonds

75g/3oz gluten-free breadcrumbs OR ground rice OR, if you do not want to use nuts use 150g/5oz quinoa (dry weight) boiled for 10 minutes in salted water and then drained

1 tsp ground ginger

1 tsp salt

½ tsp black pepper

1 egg (optional)

2 tbsp honey

50g/2oz butter or dairy-free spread

1. Remove the giblets from the bird. Chop the liver and discard the rest.
2. Heat the oil in a pan and gently cook the liver, onion and parsley until the liver is firm and the onion soft.
3. Take off the heat and add the apple, raisins, lemon rind and juice, almonds, breadcrumbs (or ground rice/quinoa), ginger, seasoning, and egg if you are using it.
4. Mix it all well together and stuff the bird at either the neck end or at the body cavity.
5. Secure the bird with skewers and put it in a roasting pan.
6. Melt the honey with the butter or dairy-free margarine and spoon them over the bird; as it cools it will cling to the skin.
7. Leave the bird to marinate in the honey, uncovered, in a fridge or cool larder, for 24 hours, spooning over any excess mixture.
8. Roast the bird in a moderate oven (170C/350F/Gas 4) for 20 minutes to the pound, basting frequently with the honey and butter/spread mixture. The skin will gradually turn dark brown and shiny in contrast to the white meat below.
9. The bird is cooked when the juices run clear when a skewer is inserted into the thickest part of the thigh. Rest the bird for 15 minutes and serve.



Honey glazed ham

1 piece of Smoked or unsmoked ham – whatever size you require

Sufficient Ginger ale to cover the ham in a large saucepan

Bay leaves

Bouquet garnis

For the glaze

Cloves

Soft brown sugar

Runny honey

Dijon mustard

1. Put the ham in a saucepan and pour over the Ginger Ale. Bring to the boil and then turn down up to the simmer and cook for 20 minutes per 500g. You can tell when the ham is cooked when the rind starts coming off easily.
2. Remove the ham from the saucepan and allow to rest for one hour. Remove the rind while the ham is still warm, leaving as much fat on as possible. Score the fat into diamond shapes and push a clove into each diamond corner.
3. Mix 350g brown sugar, 200ml thick honey and 1 tablespoon Dijon mustard and use a pastry brush to spread the mixture all over the ham.
4. Bake in a pre-heated oven set at 180°C /Gas mark 4 for 25 minutes approximately or until caramelized. You will need to baste the ham every ten minutes, to get a good colour.

Pan-fried sprouts with thyme, honey and salted almonds

(source: Waitrose magazine, November 2014)

15g unsalted butter

50g flaked almonds

½ tsp salt

2 heaped tbsp. thyme leaves

1 small garlic clove

2 tbs honey

4 tbsp olive oil

1 lemon, zest and juice

500g brussel sprouts – trimmed and halved lengthways.

1. Melt butter in large frying pan over medium heat. As it starts to bubble, add almonds and salt and toss for 1-2 minutes until golden. Transfer to plate to cool.
2. Crush thyme with pinch of salt in a pestle and mortar – add garlic and bash into a green paste. Stir in honey, 2 tbsp oil, lemon zest and half the lemon juice – you should have a bright green dressing.
3. Heat remaining oil in the pan and add the sprouts. Fry for 2-3 minutes shaking the pan occasionally until golden. Add 2 tbsp water, season and cover the pan, turn the heat to low and leave for 2-3 minutes until the liquid has evaporated and the sprouts are tender – but still al dente. Pour over the remaining lemon juice and swirl everything in the pan.
4. Transfer sprouts to a serving dish, sprinkle over the almonds and drizzle the dressing before serving.

Caramelised clementines (or satsumas) with honey ricotta

These keep well in the fridge for a couple of days.

12 tbsp water

7 tbsp granulated sugar

pinch mixed spice (or just use ground cinnamon or nutmeg)

splash orange liqueur or brandy (optional)

6 clementines peeled



Gently heat the sugar and 5 tbsp of the water in a saucepan until the sugar has dissolved (do not allow to boil). Once the sugar has dissolved, bring the liquid to the boil and continue to boil until it has reduced and turns a dark caramel colour. Carefully add 1 tbsp water (it will spit slightly at first), then add the rest of the water and stir well. Add the spice and a splash of orange liqueur or brandy if using. Remove from the heat, pour over the fruit and leave to marinate for an hour before serving.

For the honey ricotta,

400g/14oz ricotta

1 tbsp runny honey

icing sugar (optional)

50g/2oz flaked almonds, lightly toasted on a baking sheet in a moderate oven for ten minutes

Beat the ricotta with the honey, then taste. If you'd like it sweeter add either a little icing sugar, if the honey has a strong flavour, or a little more honey if it's mild. Fold two-thirds of the almonds into the mixture and scatter the rest on top.

Honey Saffron Cake

I have made this cake a couple of times and is one of my preferred Christmas cake recipes. It can be marzipanned and iced or decorate with whole almonds before baking.

225g softened butter
2 tbsp brandy
pinch of saffron
225g golden caster sugar
4 eggs
225g plain flour
50g ground almonds
1 tsp baking powder
300g raisins
300g sultanas

100g glacé cherries, halved
85g mixed peel
50g whole blanched almonds,
roughly chopped
50g whole blanched hazelnuts,
roughly chopped
50g walnuts pieces

To soak

3 tbsp brandy
2 tbsp honey



1. Heat oven to 160C/fan 140C/gas 3. Butter and line a round, deep 20cm cake tin with two layers of baking parchment. Tie a few sheets of newspaper around the outside of the tin, level with the top of the baking parchment.
2. Heat the brandy in a small pan, then add the saffron and leave to infuse off the heat for a few mins.
3. Beat together butter, sugar, eggs, flour, ground almonds, baking powder and a pinch of salt until creamy and smooth. Mix in the fruit, nuts and brandy saffron and stir well.
4. Spoon into the prepared tin, smooth the top and make a slight dip in the middle. Bake for 1½ hrs, then cover loosely with foil to stop the top over-browning. Turn oven down to 140C/fan 120C/gas 1 and cook for 1 hr more until a skewer comes out clean. Leave to cool in the tin then, while it's still warm, prod the cake all over with a skewer.
5. Mix the brandy and honey together and spoon over the cake. Wrap up well in foil and keep in an airtight container until Christmas, feeding.

Sue Remenyi



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Badgers and Hives

Does anyone have any experience with this? Are they a problem for you and if yes can you share what you have done to resolve the problem.

Winter swarm



On a damp November day John Knight and Felipe Salbany from SCBKA went to fetch a swarm discovered in a tree in Ewelme. "When we initially started cutting the branch of the tree the bees started going after us a bit" tells Felipe, "so we cut, stepped back, cut some more and stepped back. It was amazing how the bees just returned to the nest and left us alone. We used my crutches to support the one end of the branch while John sawed the other end".

Eventually everything was brought down and placed it in a box. A sheet was then used to gently fan the branch and tree for about 15 minutes, after which there were no bees left and they were all in the box.

Despite the fact that a significant number of bees were, one way or another, deposited in the box, there was some surprise that when lifted the box weighed very little, so the bees were really on their last stores.

A little carpentry was required to modify an eke to cope with the branches that were protruding out the sides. After some measuring, Felipe cut up an old National brood box and made rests for the branches so as to disrupt the bees as little as possible. They are now safely inside something that resembles a hive (as we would see it). "I am sure no-one has ever seen a passenger in a Fiat500 with a box of bees on his lap, but that is how we came home" said John.



Wokingham and District Beekeepers Association

Bee Keeping in India – Part 2

On our recent travels around southern India my husband and I were struck by the number of bees we encountered both in the cities and in the countryside. Aside from the giant rock bee (*Apis dorsata*), another very prevalent bee was (we believe) *Apis cerana* – the Asiatic or the eastern honey bee. They have been in India for millennia and in folk medicine their beeswax is used to treat and heal wounds.



They are very similar to our own western honey bees although are smaller and have smaller comb cells. They also have a foraging range of only about 1 km and their honey yield is less, because they form smaller colonies.



In the wild the bees prefer to nest in small spaces, such as hollowed-out tree trunks but the Indians predominately keep them in miniature versions of our national hives.

The down sides of keeping this bee is its tendency to migrate/abscond, abandoning the current nest and building a new nest in a new location where an abundant supply of nectar and pollen is available. Absconding will start when not enough pollen and nectar are available so after the last brood emerges, the adult bees fill their honey stomachs from the hive's stores and swarm to establish a new nest at a new location.

These bees usually do not store great amounts of honey, so they are more vulnerable to starvation if a prolonged shortage of nectar and pollen occurs so beekeepers in India need to be very vigilant if they want to keep their bees.

It has been fascinating seeing and finding out about some of the different bees species on this planet.

Wokingham Club 2014 Honey Show Congratulations

Many thanks to everyone who entered items into the different categories at this year's honey show. A great time was had by all and congratulations are due to the following winners:

Best Photo in Show -	Nigel Perkins
Best Mead in Show -	Lorna Rivett
Best Bake in Show -	Robin Roberts
Best Runny Honey in Show -	Robin Roberts
Best Set Honey in Show -	Derek Porter
Best Wax in Show -	Robin Roberts
Best Comb for Extraction in Show -	Garth Matthews

Garth Matthews

South Chilterns Beekeepers Association

The third South Chilterns Beekeepers Association Honey Show was held in the Woodcote Community Hall on the evening of the 19th November and was well attended with 35 or more members present.

Our Chairman, Max Vine, opened the show but had to impart some worrying news; our President, Ron Crocker, is unwell and in hospital. Max expressed his concern and best wishes, sentiments with which the member whole-heartedly agreed. He also reminded us that subscriptions for 2015 are now expected and, whilst the old tried and trusted methods are still available, members could now use a funky new on-line method.

Max then introduced our judges, who didn't really need introducing, but who briefly reminded us of the criteria they were using to judge entries. Reg Hook, judging the honey, said he would judge solely on the quality of the honey. He remembered ancient times when honey shows were marquees crammed with trestle tables stacked high with jars of honey, many of which were never judged because of some minor infraction of the presentational rules. He thought this had put people off showing their honey. But not in our show – every jar would have its contents judged. Jemima Hume-Humphreys and Kate Malenczuk, judging cakes and biscuits, said the criteria were appearance, texture, conformity to the recipe, taste and possibly one other, momentarily forgotten. Caroline Bushell and Jessie Grimond, judging the artwork, said the criteria were relevance to bees or beekeeping, technical accomplishment, particularly for photographs, skill, originality and quality of the work



There were a total of 68 entries and so judging took an hour (- an hour of eating honey!), during which the members gossiped, drank tea or coffee and ate cake. The results, announced by Margaret Moore, were as follows:

Class 1 (16 entries)

Light Clear Honey

Best Christopher Bergman, *Second* Mario Manini, *Third* Caroline Bushell, *Highly commended* Jemima Hume-Humphreys, *Commended* Duncan Brown

Medium Clear Honey

Best Tim Selwyn, *Second* Dave Moss, *Third* Max Vine, *Highly commended* Rowena Redhead, *Commended* Sue Abbott

Class 2 (14 entries)

Light Set or Creamed

Best Jessie Grimond, *Second* Tim Selwyn, *Third* Sue Remenyi, *Highly commended* Richard Guy, *Commended* Nicky Phillips

Medium Set or Creamed Honey

Best Steve Radford, *Second* Linda Edwards, *Third* Dave Moss, *Highly commended* Jemima Hume-Humphreys, *Commended* Colin Davies

Class 3 (8 entries)

Beeswax Candle

Best Max Stone, *Second* Sue Remenyi, *Third* Sue Sandford, *Highly commended* Joe Stone, *Commended* Helen Walkington

Beeswax Block

Best Max Stone, *Second* Dave Moss

Class 5 (4 entries)

Honeycomb

Best Dave Moss (it's the scientific approach), *Second* Duncan Brown, *Third* Sue Remenyi, *Highly commended* Chris Bergman,

Class 6 (7 entries)

Honey Cake

Best Sue Sandford (holds the coveted wooden skep for a year, *Second* Helen Walkington, *Third* Dave Moss

Class 7 (6 entries)

Honey Biscuits

Best Steve Radford (having learnt that an uneaten entry has a better chance of success) holds the wooden cup for a year, *Second* Helen Walkington, *Third* Colin Davies

Class 8 (5 entries)

Photograph

Best Steve Duncan Brown for his photo of comb making bees hanging from a frame, *Second* Sue Remenyi for her photo of jars of delicious looking honey, *Third* Linda Clarke for her photo of the spiritual side of beekeeping.

Class 9 (8 entries)

Artwork: Caroline explained that no matter how rigorously they applied their judging criteria two entries had enough Wow! factor to justify a joint first place:-

Joint Best Rowena Redhead for her amazingly carved bread and honey board and Helen Walkington for her stunning watercolour of a bee, *Second* Linda Clarke for her tapestry of a bee, *Third* Sue Sandford for her lovely quilt.

Overall Best in Show and holder of the Silver Platter for a year was Max Stone.



All winners of a best in class or category were rewarded with a bottle of wine, beer or a box of chocolates.

Reg Hook closed the evening by saying he was surprised how consistently excellent the honey tasted and therefore SCBKA member's honey is highly recommended. He also thanked Margaret Moore and Linda Clarke, and anyone else who helped organise the evening, for their mighty efforts. So, I might add, do all those who participated.

Richard Guy

Reading and District Beekeepers Association

On Tuesday 14 October at our usual Caversham Heights venue, Reading Beekeepers assembled for the first of our winter meetings with a talk by Master Beekeeper & Chairman of Mid Bucks Beekeepers, Sean Stephenson, who has been an examiner of BBKA basis beekeeping exams taken (successfully) by some Reading beekeeping members.

The talk was based on 'Training & Learning 'at Mid Bucks. Beekeepers' which Sean advocates has highly organised and varying levels of learning programmes to suit potential and new beekeepers as well as training to help established beekeepers progress. Mid Bucks have about 150 members. In his talk Sean reviewed the current BBKA programme, i.e. basic, modules, practical going towards queen rearing, advanced bee husbandry etc., which he considers rather 'structured', although he does strongly advocate the programme for the Basic Certificate. However, in his association a programme is offered to beekeepers based on:-

- 1) A basic grounding.
- 2) Support for members and newly interested non members with information, materials etc.
- 3) Offer support with the BBKA's learning programme through study groups.
- 4) Running apiary sessions comparing different approaches to relevant aspects of beekeeping.
- 5) Running workshops on key aspects of beekeeping e.g. honeybee behaviour.
- 6) Include relevant articles in The Newsletter.

Sean gave some descriptions of the Mid Bucks Basic grounding programme and of the number of members doing BBKA basic & modules. The Association have had consistently higher numbers passing BBKA exams since commencing their parallel learning programme as above. A mock basic exam is available to members about to take the BBKA exams. Study groups are offered for beekeepers working on modules and a fuller BBKA correspondence course is available and used. Key modules (1,2,3 &6) are led by a co-ordinator with mock exams.

Mid Bucks as part of their learning and training for the BBKA modules offer practical applications e.g. themed association apiary meetings, special events covering different aspects of beekeeping e.g. 'safaris', association apiary activities over the season e.g. queen rearing.

Sean gave a rundown of typical practical activities through the season, familiar to most Reading beekeepers in attendance and a good number of questions from the floor were answered comprehensively.

All in all this was a splendid and challenging talk which our member's responded to with positivity. With very many thanks to Sean and all who attended.

December's meeting is at our usual venue on Tuesday 9th. This is an important talk on identifying honey types and origins by pollen analysis from Dr Michael Keith-Lucas. All of us who sell our honey are subject to food standards requirements as to claims of origin and source of what we might sell. Given that our urban and sub-urban bees forage on many non-indigenous 'exotics' in parks and gardens we'd better be there to improve our knowledge. As we know Michael Keith-Lucas is a world authority on pollen analysis and is a consultant to many police forces on pollen in forensics.

Slough Windsor and Maidenhead Beekeepers' Society

On Tuesday 11th November we were delighted to meet and receive a talk by Jane Moseley, Operations Director and General Secretary of BBKA. Jane spends most of her time away from the BBKA's headquarters at Stoneleigh developing relationships with stakeholders, both current and prospective and she told us about the facilities and services that the BBKA offers members.

Our members enjoyed her wide ranging talk covering many aspects of bees and beekeeping. She described how the BBKA executive works in the interest of beekeepers and emphasised the contribution made by the many unpaid volunteers. Jane issued a plea for all beekeepers to get more involved at all levels within the beekeeping world as 'many hands make light work'.

This adage was particularly relevant as the talk was followed by the Society's AGM when our own hardworking members stepped forward for a year of service. Our thanks go to them all for their dedicated work.

Congratulations!

Two members of the Society were successful in achieving the Basic Assessment in Beekeeping this year so our congratulations go to Eva Jacobs and Richard Raynham who will soon be sewing their badges onto their bee suits.

Winter Meetings 2014

Our winter meetings are held at All Saints Parish Hall, Alexandra Road, Windsor SL4 1HZ. The meetings are usually scheduled on the second Tuesday of the month beginning at 8 pm and refreshments are available.

The December meeting to be held on Tuesday 9th starts at 8.00pm with a timely talk on the subject of winter control of varroa mite, given by Hasan Mohammad Al Toufailia, a PhD student from the Laboratory of Apiculture and Social Insects based at the University of Sussex.

The talk will be followed by our annual 'Pot Luck Supper' so please bring along a small plate of food for all to share.

Books for Christmas

Lorraine Godenzie from Slough, Windsor and Maidenhead Beekeepers' Society has kindly provided reviews of two books that might make interesting Christmas presents. The first, Lorraine says, is more of a compilation of online reviews of the book, but the second is her own personal review.

If you have read any interesting books that you think our readers would enjoy please send me a short write-up and I will publish them in future newsletters.



The Bees

Laline Paull, Published by Fourth Estate. ISBN HB 978-0-00-755772-1

'The Handmaid's Tale' meets 'Watership Down' in this brilliantly imagined debut. Born into the lowest class of her society, Flora 717 is a sanitation bee, only fit to clean her orchard hive. Living to accept, obey and serve, she is prepared to sacrifice everything for her beloved holy mother, the Queen.

Yet Flora has talents that are not typical of her kin. And while mutant bees are usually instantly destroyed, Flora is reassigned to feed the new-borns, before becoming a forager, collecting pollen on the wing. Then she finds her way into the Queen's inner sanctum, where she discovers secrets both sublime and ominous.

Enemies roam everywhere, from the fearsome fertility police to the high priestesses who jealously guard the Hive Mind. But Flora cannot help but break the most sacred law of all, and her instinct to serve is overshadowed by a desire, as overwhelming as it is forbidden...

Laline Paull's chilling yet ultimately triumphant novel creates a luminous world both alien and uncannily familiar. Thrilling and imaginative, 'The Bees' is the story of a heroine who changes her destiny and her world.



The Beekeeper & the Bee: Paintings, drawings and the voices of Somerset beekeepers

Kate Lynch, Furlong Fields Publishing, ISBN 978 0 9544394 4 6

I came across this book at the bi-annual Quennington sculpture show, FRESHAIR, a celebration of contemporary sculpture in the riverside gardens of Quennington Old Rectory, Gloucestershire.

The pool house housed a pop-up gallery exhibiting items on the subject 'Birds and Bees' and some of Kate Lynch's paintings were on display.

The attractive book cover pictures a beekeeper adding a super in spring, inside there is a foreword by Martha Kearney, the broadcaster and a passionate beekeeper. The book takes us on a journey through the beekeeping year with Somerset beekeepers telling their month-by-month stories. Each contribution is accompanied by Kate's wonderful illustrations in oil, charcoal and pencil.

This is a book to be enjoyed in the comfort of the armchair on a chilly evening when the bees have been settled in for winter and perhaps you are missing them a little.

Lorraine Godenzie

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Did you know

Australia's European honey bees (*Apis mellifera*) are at risk of breeding themselves into extinction by mating with the invading Asian honey bees (*Apis cerana*). The Western Australia Farmers' Federation says beekeepers are being warned about the risk of unnatural matings with a new study showing honey production and pollination services could be at risk due to the presence of Asian honey bees in Queensland. The mating makes the European bees' eggs unviable and as the Asian honeybee becomes more widespread, the inter-specific mating will increase, resulting in fewer worker bees.

The BeeCraft Hangouts are back!

BeeCraft magazine is re-launching their online discussions called 'Hangouts' on Wednesday, 19th December at 8.00pm with a discussion on the Small Hive Beetle.

Jamie Ellis, Associate Professor of the University of Florida, will be the guest. He graduated in 2004 with a PhD in Entomology from Rhodes University in South Africa with his thesis on the Ecology and Control of Small Hive Beetle.

It will last for approximately one hour and all you need to do is click on this link:

<http://www.bee-craft.com/beekeeping/hangouts/>

This will take you to the Hangout page where you can join in the live webinar hosted by James, the BeeCraft Marketing Manager. You can email questions to the team before the Hangout, or watch it live and ask questions on the page. In case you can't join in live, it will be recorded for later viewing.

For your Diary

Date	Topic	Event Host	Contact
9 December	Winter control of varroa mite by Hasan Mohammad Al Toufailia	Slough, Windsor & Maidenhead	http://swmbks.weebly.com/
9 December	honey types and origins	Reading	http://www.rbka.org.uuk

	by pollen analysis from Dr Michael Keith-Lucas		
10 December	Christmas meeting	SCBKA	http://www.scbka.org
19 December	Hangout on small hive beetle	BeeCraft Magazine	http://www.bee-craft.com/beekeeping/hangouts/
1st week of January	Thorne's sale begins	E.H. Thorne (Bee- hives) Ltd	www.thorne.co.uk

Association websites

All four Federation member association websites have a lot of information – some of which may only be relevant to that association, but there is also quite a bit that is useful to us all. Here are the links for your reference:

Reading & District Beekeepers Association: <http://www.rbka.org.uk/>

South Chilterns Beekeepers' Association: <http://www.scbka.org>

Slough, Windsor & Maidenhead Beekeepers' Society: <http://swmbks.weebly.com/>

Wokingham and District Beekeepers Association: www.wokinghambeekeepers.org.uk/

Useful Links, Advice and Information

<http://www.apinews.com/> This website is a mine of information from around the world. You can subscribe to their newsletter.

<http://www.dave-cushman.net/bee/newhome.html> This website has a lot of really useful information for the beekeeper.

<http://www.beekeepingforum.co.uk/> This is a portal for all things beekeeping.

<http://www.bbka.org.uk/> The British Beekeepers Association.

<http://hymenopteragenome.org/beebase/> Beebase is a comprehensive data source for the bee research community.

NBU Advice for Obtaining Bees:

Join Beebase - By joining BeeBase you can access beekeeping information and ask for advice or help from the Bee Unit: <https://secure.fera.defra.gov.uk/beebase>.

Your Regional Bee Inspectors are:

Southern Region: Nigel Semmence at: nigel.semmence@fera.gsi.gov.uk,

The main website is: <https://secure.csl.gov.uk/beebase/public/Contacts/contacts.cfm>

National Bee Unit, Central Science Laboratory, Sand Hutton, York YO41 1 LZ, tel: 01 904 462 510, email: <mailto:nbu@fera.gsi.gov.uk>.

South Eastern Region: Mr Alan Byham, fax/tel: 01306 611 016

Contributions to the Editor are always welcome as long as they are signed. Anonymous letters and letters not in English will not be published. The Editor reserves the right to withhold names.

Contributions, including emails, to arrive with the Editor by the 20th of the month for publication by the 7th of the following month. Contributions received after this may be held over for a later month.

Advertisement entries, to be received by the Advertisement Manager in advance of the 20th of every month. Rates: 2 Lines for £1.00; Commercial rates: £1.00 per line. Please make cheques payable to FBBKA. To be sent to the Advertisement Manager: Mr Jon Davey, 107 Northcourt Avenue, Reading RG2 7HG. Tel: 0118 975 0734.