

BOURNEMOUTH & DORSET SOUTH BEEKEEPERS ASSOCIATION



Newsletter

March 2024

David Aldersey

Paul Mann

10th February 1930 – 21st December 2023



I am sad to announce that Paul Mann, one of our longest surviving members, died last December aged 93. He was born in Birmingham in 1930 but, shortly after taking early retirement in 1983, he moved to Poole. He started keeping bees when he was 12 and one of his first colonies was set up in an observation hive in his bedroom! After studying and taking exams over a seven year period he became a master-beekeeper in 1978. He was our Chair no fewer than three times and organised and delivered our beekeeping courses for over 25 years. Helga and I were taught by him and we shall always remember lively and idiosyncratic methods of teaching. He had a ready and slightly ironic sense of humour which he used effectively to help make sure you were taking on

board what he was saying. One of his favourite sayings, which was particularly appropriate for teaching a practical craft such as beekeeping, went along the following lines. To hear some-one explain a procedure was helpful, to watch them demonstrate it over a hive was even better but by far the best way to learn was to try it out yourself. I am sure a lot of us will have our own memories of Paul. He will be missed.

“Notes from the Chair”

For this edition of our newsletter I am going take off my badge of office and replace it with my Education Officer Hat! It seems to me that we are experiencing an abnormally early spring. We have had periods of very warm weather followed by spells of cold. The winds have been extremely strong, often for days at a time. Flowers are out early and certainly our bees have reacted by starting spring build-up early. This means they are consuming stores faster. The last couple of weeks have been very wet which will have limited foraging time. I would urge you all to be extra vigilant in checking that your colonies have sufficient food. Make sure you have fondant to hand. Because of the early build-up if the current bad weather continues into March there will be a greater risk of starvation. In any event be generous with the fondant and give your colony an early Easter present. Off with my hat and briefly on with my badge! Our next meeting at St. Andrews Church Kinson is on 19th March at 7.30pm (fondant will be available!). Lesley Morton our speaker's secretary has done us proud. The speaker will be Marin Anastasov NDB. He is a leading light in the BBKA, an academic in the subject of beekeeping and in my experience a very interesting and expert speaker. His talk is entitled “The mind of the honeybee”. Please do make the effort to attend. I am sure you will not be disappointed.

Cup presentations following the Honey Show



Re-roofing of the Shed

Many of you will know that the roof of one of the two sheds we have at Highmead, has been leaking badly. Charlie Rowell designed and pre-fabricated a new roof in sections. On a cold gloomy day in January the construction team assembled under Charlie's direction. The roof sections fitted perfectly, and were then covered and sealed with roof felt. The weather held and the job was completed by lunchtime. Great achievement. Thank you team...





Association Diary Dates 2024

**Evening Meetings: St Andrew's Church Centre,
MILLHAMS Road, Bournemouth BH10 7LN**

Above location till further notice. 7:00pm to 10pm

19th March "The mind of the Honeybee"
Marin Anastasov

16th April "My 50 years of Beekeeping"
our very own John Chudley

Please feel free to contact me if you have any questions or need any additional information.

Thank you.

Lesley Morton

Speakers secretary

speakers@bads-bka.org

14th April Wannabee Day

21st April Beginners Course starts

21st April Basic Assessment Course starts

Bee shelter for Skeps



Visiting Forest of Dean and came across this unique 1840s bee shelter at Hartpury in the churchyard.

The bee shelter was originally located in Nailsworth and was moved to the grounds of Hartbury Agricultural College in 1968, before being relocated to the churchyard of St Mary's Church in 2002. It was constructed by the stonemason Paul Tuffley, a member of a prominent Gloucestershire family of masons, stone merchants and quarrymasters.

Joanna Bellis

Letting Bees grow their own comb v. using prepared wax sheets

If bees draw their own comb, the cells are not of the same size, often transitioning with the majority being at the smaller end. In wild colonies there is no queen exclusion zone and up to 15% of cells in the nest are for drones. The majority of UK beekeepers probably still use prepared foundation in their supers, and mostly choose standard worker rather than drone sheets.

The advantages of drone comb, assuming the queen has NO access to the supers, is less wax required to carry the same weight of honey, and more readily spun (larger ratio of surface area to cell volume). There is a debate whether workers prefer to unload nectar in drone rather than worker sized cells.

If you let the workers make their own comb, the bees will vary the cell size (1).



Using a top strip (wooden bar or wax) the bees will draw out the comb in a flat sheet, guided by filled frames on either side. (2).



3.1 shows how much cell size can vary and the adaptation to fill different spaces. 3.2 is an example of a frame that has undergone perfect reconstruction after 2 cut comb sections have been removed. (3)



If the natural comb has reached and attached to all the sides of the frame it is possible to extract the honey. Using a radial centrifuge, and so long as you are fairly gentle when first turning, very few frames will blow. In these circumstances it is not necessary to wire super frames or use wired wax sheets. Cleaning of the frames is also easier leaving less debris and reducing risk of disease.

Adrian Rozkovec

Recipe

Apricot Cinnamon Cake

INGREDIENTS:

2 cups self-raising flour
1 teaspoon cinnamon
1 cup soft brown sugar
1 cup dried apricots
1 tablespoon honey
4 tablespoons of milk
2 eggs
4 oz butter

TOPPING:

1/2 cup chopped almonds
3 tablespoons of honey
1 oz butter

Method:

Sift together the dry ingredients. Rub in the butter. Then add the sugar, and apricots which have been chopped. Blend honey with milk and beaten eggs. Stir lightly into the dry ingredients. Pour into a greased and lined 8" fruit cake tin, and bake in a moderate oven for 90 mins. Cool for a few minutes in tin before turning out to cool. When cold, top with topping.

TOPPING:

Heat all the topping ingredients until the butter is melted. Then boil for 3-5 minutes. Spread over cake. Makes 6-8 wedges.

Dear Members – Your Contributions please

The next Newsletter will be in June. I don't mind what you would like to send in so long as there is a bee theme...good or bad experiences, some ideas on how to do things better, anecdotes, interesting photos, honey based recipes.

Also, I invite you to send me the story of one of your mistakes! I have made plenty over the years and in this newsletter I have authored number 1. Please contribute and don't feel embarrassed. If you want your piece to be anonymous it will still be acceptable!

Thank you

Adrian Rozkovec newsletter@bads-bka.org

Bee Supplies – Mike and Liz Duffin

If you need bee equipment or supplies please be aware that the Duffins, are the local agents for Thornes (EH Thorne Beehives Ltd), a major national Beekeeper supplier. They are very helpful, keep a good stock and you don't have to pay for packaging and postage!

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