



October 2009

Meetings: this month the big meeting is Buckfast Bee Day on October 10, but all the tickets for this day have now been sold. To encourage members to attend the big meeting we are not organising a rival attraction this month. I hope to see many members at Buckfast.

Varroa treatments: as usual some colonies which have been treated with Apiguard still have rather too many mites so they will need a follow-up treatment with formic acid or lactic acid. This is a quick process which needs to be repeated at four-day intervals and so does not make a satisfactory general meeting. However, if you would like to see how these acids are used then contact Brian and we will try to arrange a demonstration at a time when you can get to Dartington.

Beecourse2 meets on October 7 to consider swarming, and then on November 11 to consider queen rearing.

Next month: the main meeting is on Sunday, November 22 at Bogan House in Totnes. This will start with our Honey Show, and we will hear a talk from Glyn Davies and also spend a little time on our AGM. Book the date now please, more details next month, but you should receive the Show Schedule with this newsletter.

HONEY SHOW/CHALLENGE 2009

PLEASE support your honey show.

Entries over the past few years have declined to a level which puts into question the future viability of this event.

It is an opportunity for beekeepers both new and old to learn from the expertise and advice given by the judge, Peter Donovan.

This year the show is combined with the second part of Glyn Davies' talk on "Eggs" This will be an interesting and informative afternoon.

Refreshments will be provided

Last month

A lovely warm day when a rather small group met at the branch apiary to clear and tidy at the end of the active season. So the grass was cut and the edges tidied, supers cleaned up, the bench had a coat of paint and all left looking smarter, so thank you to Caroline, David, Rachel, Maggie and Rod, and at the same time Brian was able to sell off some surplus equipment.

Most of the group then went on to Jeremy and Ena's home for a barbecue, where we found home-made cider and much else prepared; before long Jeremy was busy with sausages and burgers which were eaten quickly because we had seen something of the array of puddings waiting, those were eaten in the conservatory since a shower developed and drove us in except for Jeremy who sat and finished his meal under an umbrella.

Conundrum: why were there so few of us at the barbecue? We asked people to phone in advance so that our generous hosts knew how much meat to prepare. Did that discourage you from attending?

Humble Boy

In November the Dartington Players will be performing this play in the Barn Theatre at Dartington.

There is a beekeeping connection, which is why it gets a mention here, I saw the play some years ago and enjoyed it, and the Dartington Players always do things well.

The AGM

This once a year business meeting is not until next month, but let's start thinking about it now.

It would be good to see some new faces on the committee bringing in some new ideas. This year we need a new assistant for the branch apiary, here's an opportunity for one of you to gain some extra experience with different hive types and without any expense on your part.

It would also help if someone would take on the regular grass cutting, or do some occasional strimming, How about you?

Apiary Accounts

Income

Honey sales	28 x 5.00	140.00
Cut-comb sales	61 x 3.50	213.50
2 nucs @ 30.00		60.00
2 colonies @50.00		100.00
	TOTAL	513.50

Expenses

2 x padlocks	7.49	
Hive treatment	8.99	
Apiguard	15.30	
Sugar	42.00	
Box gimp pins	3.00	
Mower petrol	2.00	
Postage stamps	1.80	
4 x Nuc boxes	410.00	
6 feeders	70.56	
Travelling expenses	50.00	
B D I & apiary site rent	20.00	
	TOTAL	631.14

Now take into account the 50 lbs honey and wax in store, then we have made a profit.

Branch Apiary Report 2009

The spring started off well with good weather, the bees built up and started attempts at swarming. Six Nucs were made up, several Queens failed after a good start. Then came the third wet July in a row, large colonies that had built up for the main flow again sat a home and ate their stores and lived on into August as they had not worn themselves out foraging. A lot of sugar was required to feed bees up for the winter. However 80 lbs of honey and 61 packets of cut comb were produced from the branch apiary bees, a lot was sold at the Totnes Show. The new equipment purchased this year was put to good use. (4 nucs and 6 feeders.)

All the colonies were tested in the DBKA Nosema testing day, 2 were found to have light infestation which is equal to 25% of the colonies the same as the Devon average.

Many thanks to Stuart Wilson for repairing the solar wax extractor.

7 lbs 12 oz of wax has been produced this year.

Brian is unfortunately standing down from the apiary this year. He has been involved in the apiary for many years and I believed started it in 2001 as a teaching apiary to follow on from his courses.

Many people owe their start in beekeeping to Brian.

We therefore need a new apiary assistant and or gardener, this could be several people to help at the branch apiary. (experienced Bee-keepers or persons new to the craft). Adam Vevers paid us a visit and again for the third year in a row, we had to hold it in the store due to bad weather. However, it was an excellent meeting about **The Small Hive Beetle** which may visit our shores soon.

An Apiary clean up day was organised for Sept 19th and many members gave their time freely to get the apiary shipshape. Many thanks to all that came.

Inquires were made at Sharpham with the idea of moving the Branch Apiary. However there was a problem with the Vinery and the site was further from the centre of our membership catchment area.

We have a good relationship with the Horticulture people that work near the branch apiary, they are keen for us to be there, must be some pollinating benefits for their enterprise.

The members overflow Apiary at Dartington was not used this year except by Brian and myself. If members require a temporary site for their stocks or mating of nucs this site is available. Please ask Rod first before dropping colonies off.

Rod Saffery

For sale

Surplus equipment, due to downsizing:

National shallow frames (SN1) used but clean, per 10 frames £4.00

National shallow foundation, thin, not wired (Thornes Premier) per 10 sheets £3.00

Contact Brian Gant, details below.

Needing help?

Our branch has two Master Beekeepers and Ken holds the highest UK bee-keeping qualification, the National Diploma in Beekeeping, so if you feel the need of some instant advice then you can telephone with a good chance of getting through to one of us. If you need help then phone one of:

Ken Basterfield NDB 01404 815885

Brian Gant 01364 642233

If you have a brood disease problem then phone our Regional Bee Inspector

Adam Vevers 01364 653325

or Seasonal Bee Inspector Clare Densley 01626 211684

Branch contacts:

Web site for news of meetings in south Devon, and many other matters
southdevonbees.org

Chairman: Jeremy Wells 01364 72180,
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Secretary: Adrian Kyte, 01803 712159, adrian.kyte@btinternet.com

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Off the Comb, and Education: Brian Gant 01364 642233,
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Apiary Manager Rod Saffery, 01803 782190, downtoearth30647@aol.com

HEMBURY BEE SUPPLIES

Your local agent for beekeeping equipment of all kinds, including varroa treatments, frames and foundation.

Phone John Harler on 01364 642517 or mobile 07769 878476
or e-mail to fire221@btinternet.com.

Collections from 12 Hembury Park, Buckfast TQ11 0ES

The Totnes & Kingsbridge Beekeepers' Association is a branch of the Devon Beekeepers' Association which is a registered charity no. 270675