



Photo: Holly Berries by Belinda Dale



Dec 2018/Jan 2019

WVBKA Charity Registration Number: 517008



Honey Show
The M&AD Williams Challenge Shield

At the 2018 Honey Show there were five members who had the same number of points in Classes 1 to 8. It has proved impossible to add five names to the shield so the committee has decided that for this year only the shield will not be awarded. In the light of this difficulty the committee will revisit/review the point system in preparation for the 2019 Honey Show.

Sue Quigley
 (Honey Show Secretary)

§

Association Visit to Gwatkin Cider

On a chilly autumn afternoon in October about 20 stalwart members convened at Moorhampton Park Farm in Abbey Dore. We were welcomed by the proprietor Denis Gwatkin himself and entered the comfortable tasting room and shop at Gwatkin Cider Company.

After a brief introduction, in which the wonders of the local airborne yeasts were explained, we were offered tastings of the large variety of ciders, perries and juices they produce. They proved to be ideal for washing down the last of the celebration cake from the Honey Show.

Next followed a short tour of the barn where the fruit is gathered, washed and pressed.

Unfortunately we couldn't have a demonstration of the process as there was a problem with the conveyor that day. We then moved into the yard to gaze at rows of tanks with open lids which emitted subtle fruity flavours of fermentation – a chance to pause and wonder at the perennial bounty.

As it was too cold to loiter outside, we made a quick retreat to the tasting room again to make our pre-Christmas purchases. There was much to choose from, would it be Stoke Red or Kingston Black or one of the other 30 plus varieties? Maybe another taste just to be sure!

It was a very enjoyable visit.

Rob Doran
§

GWATKIN



Diary Dates 2018/2019

- December 8th Pre-Christmas Lunch
- January 9th Committee Meeting
- February 16th AGM

§



Wax Workshop

If you didn't attend this workshop then you missed a real treat! You can always tell when a course is a great success as the participants don't want to go and you are packing up the chairs around them, this was certainly the case on Saturday 3rd November.

Val Vivian-Griffith, who is as you know a Master Beekeeper, titled

her workshop 'Wonderful Wax'. The day began with the fascinating history of wax.

We discovered that beeswax was used by the ancient Greeks, the Romans and Ancient Britons.



continued on page 2...

Queen Colour of the Year

2018 is: RED

2019 is: GREEN



...continued from page 1

A lost wax mould used by the Ancient Britons circa 3000 BC is exhibited at St Fagans National Museum of History near Cardiff.



However, it was not until 1903 that the process of wax synthesis was fully described. At 10 days old the worker bee develops a unique wax producing gland. This gland converts the sugar content of honey into wax, which oozes through the bees small pores to produce tiny flakes on the underside of her abdomen. Val said you can often see the flakes underneath the bee in an observation hive and on the hive floor. Producing wax requires a huge effort on the part of the worker bees and so when we expect bees to pull out new foundation we should only do so when there is plenty of 'flow', if in doubt then we should feed the bees.

Val, aided by Rosemary, went on to explain and demonstrate the three types of candle making techniques; moulded, dipped and rolled. Everyone had a go at rolling candles, some more successfully than others!



The cosmetic industry uses considerable amounts of beeswax in products such as cold creams, deodorants, mascara, lipstick and eye shadow. Many beekeepers sell their beeswax to the manufacturers of cosmetics. Val's able assistant (and husband) Jim, showed us how to make skin cream and lip balm, this was a great success and very well received by us all. We were provided with recipes so we could have a go at making them ourselves. Maybe this winter the Wye Valley Beekeepers will have no wrinkles or chapped lips!



When Val introduced the talk as 'Wonderful Wax' she wasn't overstating its attributes. She showed us what a fantastic and versatile material our marvellous bees produce.

Sue Q

§





DAVE'S BLOG

December Notes

This will be a short note just to jog your memory not to forget to make sure your hives are protected from woodpeckers.

This is the time of year that the cold spell may well bring a visit from the woodpeckers to your hives. They are looking for grubs and food and they can very quickly destroy a hive, usually taking about 10 to 15 minutes to penetrate the woodwork.

To deter them from attacking your hives, draping any kind of netting over the hive will offer some protection. They don't like loose netting draped over the hive because there is a tendency for them to get tangled in it. If you use wire netting it must be sufficient distance around the hive to prevent their beaks penetrating through the wire. It's no good putting the netting close to the hive as that will simply provide them with foot holes to perch on and penetrate the hive. So the golden rule here is either loose netting which can flap around and discourage

them or wire netting which is much more expensive but must be at least six inches away from the sides of the hive and is sufficient diameter to prevent them getting their heads through the wire.

Once they have gained a foot hold they will very quickly decimate your hives and they are very difficult to deter once they've started. The key thing is to prevent them in the first place so they never get a taste for what might be a nice breakfast or dinner.

Food Requirement

If you have fed your bees correctly in the autumn and hefted them to make sure they are sufficiently fed i.e. 40-50 lbs of stores, they will survive until the spring. The most important thing here is to actually check that they have taken down the syrup. You cannot afford to assume everything is well; you must actually make sure that the weight is there. This is done by gently lifting the hive. The problem here is that sometimes although bees appear to be taking syrup down, they subsequently get robbed by other bees leaving them in a poor state. The golden rule again is check and check again to make sure they are adequately prepared for winter with sufficient stores.

On that note may I wish you all a very happy Christmas and a prosperous New Year and may all your supers be crammed full next year.

Dave

§



Membership Renewal

It is time to renew your membership for 2019. The fees will be the same as for 2018. Please ensure that you renew your membership as soon as possible as we have to make our payment to BBKA early in the year and we can lose out if we do not apply for the correct number of members.

Attached to this newsletter is a renewal form which when completed should be sent to Roger. Alternatively, an application form can be downloaded from our website. Or, you can make payment through the website; order your membership and then following up with a BACS payment. Full details can be found at:

<http://www.wyevalleybeekeepers.org>

A definition of all the membership categories is shown below.

Membership Categories

Membership is open to all persons interested in actively furthering the objectives of the Association upon payment of the appropriate annual subscription:

Full Membership – gives full voting membership of the WVBKA which allows access to all our meetings, on-going training, apiary facilities, newsletter and website. This also includes membership of the BBKA and all the BBKA benefits and resources plus their monthly newsletter and includes BDI insurance for three hives (or more for an additional fee).

Partner Membership – provides the same benefits as the Full Membership but without the newsletters from BBKA and WVBKA. BDI insurance is not included.

continued on page 4...

...continued from page 3

WVBKA Officers for 2018

Chairman:

- Rob Doran: 01432 830056
brandoran@btinternet.com

Vice Chairman:

- David Williams: 07875 426089

General & Honey Show Secretary:

- Susan Quigley: 01981 510183
New House Farm, Michaelchurch Escley HR2 OPT
quigley.susan@hotmail.co.uk

Treasurer & Membership Secretary:

- Roger Jenner: 01873 890467
Grove Cottage, Walterstone, Hereford, HR2 0DT
wvbkamembers@gmail.com

Librarian Interim Host:

- Peter Woodward: 01432 839251

Association Apiary Management Team:

- David Williams & Dave Williams

Newsletter Editing:

- Tim & Belinda Dale: beedale@outlook.com

Committee:

- Geoff Dutson
- Juliet Parker-Smith
- Duncan Penkey
- Andy Strangeway
- June Williams
- Peter Woodward

Catering Committee:

- Jane Matthews
- June Williams

Mentoring Team & Technical Advisors:

- Geoff Dutson: 01981 500491
- Cliff Rose: 01981 251844
- David Williams: 07875 426089
- Peter Woodward: 01432 839251
- Dave Williams: 01981 550320

Website Editor:

- Rob Doran

Honorary Auditor:

- Mike Price

Countryside Membership – for anyone 18 or over who is interested in beekeeping but does not own any bees. Includes BBKA correspondence and a copy of BBKA News, gives non-voting membership of the WVBKA and allows access to meetings, on-going training, apiary facilities and newsletter by email. BDI insurance is not included.

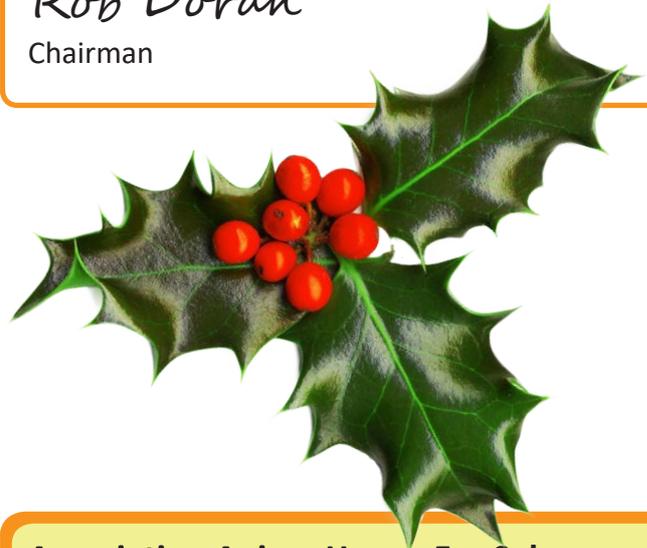
Junior Membership – gives non-voting membership of the WVBKA and allows access to all our meetings, on-going training, apiary facilities, newsletter by email and website, BBKA Junior Membership but does not include BDI insurance.

Newsletter Membership – gives non-voting membership of the WVBKA and allows access to meetings, on-going training, apiary facilities, and newsletter by post. It does not include BBKA membership or BDI insurance.

Fees for each category are on the renewal form.

Rob Doran

Chairman



Association Apiary Honey For Sale

We have a small surplus of honey from the Shenmore apiary which is available for members to buy.

There are three buckets of honey which have not been sieved and includes wax cappings. Each bucket contains about 20-25lbs of honey and is being sold at £3.00 per lb.

If you are interested in purchasing any honey then contact Rob Doran.

§