

Y.B.K.A. eNews

AFFILIATED TO THE BRITISH BEEKEEPERS ASSOCIATION



Our Chairmans message

YBKA Going Forward

Yorkshire members have certainly been busy in the last month or so:-

We've had multiple successes at the National Honey Show and our own honey show, as a part of Countryside Live, was a smash hit with record entries and praise from people visiting the show - a double win. More details are given below on both these events.

We've seen some really good honey crops extracted and filtered into storage containers. Feel sorry for our friends in Lancashire who report a long wet summer with very poor crops.

Members of the GPC took an active part in the BBKA Forum and made a major contribution to the discussions about the BBKA swarm collection system and education programme. Details are given in the BBKA News which you should have all recently received.

Our education and training team have been busy with basic and module training and assessment. More events are planned for the coming year. We also now have several more assessors based in Yorkshire and so should be able to service many more people who want to take examinations.

All our district associations have also been busy with their own honey shows, talks and training events. Yorkshire is a hive of activity.

Well done everybody!
Good Beekeeping

Bill

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NATIONAL HONEY SHOW

ONCE AGAIN YORKSHIRE BEEKEEPERS SHINE

Many congratulations to all of the Yorkshire Beekeepers who have achieved success at the National Honey Show. Once again you have won the Small Holder Shield for Yorkshire. We thank you.

Special mention must go to Peter Schollick who again carried off many first places. Peter also won the E Graham Burt Cup, the Mrs B W Hamlin Cup, the Members Cup, the Apis Club Cup (AZA), the Windermere Cup and the Two Georges Skep. A fantastic showing.

Mrs Wendy Maslin came away with the Dewey Cake Cup. Anybody who has tasted her honey cake will appreciate that this was a well deserved win.

Other Yorkshire beekeepers are listed as being 'placed' in many of the classes. A full list of the results can be found on <http://www.honeyshow.co.uk/files/2011/2011-Cup-Award-List.pdf>
<http://www.honeyshow.co.uk/files/2011/results2011.pdf>

70 YEARS IN BEEKEEPING

YORK DBKA CELEBRATE BILL BELL'S 70 YEARS AS A BEEKEEPER

Bill Bell, who is the Vice Chairman of York and District Beekeepers, has now been keeping bees for 70 years.

He started as a boy when he took a swarm and put them on a butter box.

He says that as a teenager he new everything about honeybees particularly when he was talking to other teenagers and certainly when talking to girls.

25 years ago, I met Bill as he was the Association Training officer and his enthusiasm brought me and many more members into the craft. He gave us all an insight to the theory of the craft and we visited his home and his out apiaries to see beekeeping in action.

I remember particularly going to Farndale where he took bees to the heather. Like everyone else who goes to heather he had his stories - one of how he got his car wheels full of cut hay and could not get off the field.

He always attends our AGM and is still interested and talks bees whenever we see him.

Myself and some of the older members of our association are pleased to know him and grateful for his help and support.

Tom Robinson
YDBKA

Yorkshire BKA would like to add our congratulations to Bill on his 70 years as a beekeeper. On several occasions I've met people, often in other parts of the country, who have told me that Bill was the person who helped them become a beekeeper. Ed.

NATIONAL HONEY SHOW 2011

Wendy Maslin Reports

I am delighted to report that the Yorkshire Beekeepers' for the third year in succession retained the small holders' trophy at this years' National Honey Show held in Weybridge, Surrey last week. The trophy in the form of a shield is awarded to the county association gaining the most points in the open classes 9 – 88.

There were 9 representatives from Yorkshire who all contributed to the total points accumulated and all of whom are to be congratulated with some excellent exhibits gaining prizes. As well as the Shield, 8 other trophies headed up to Yorkshire for the year. Peter Schollick, once again, being very successful and bringing home 6 of these. However, Brian Nellist of Egton, won the John Sturdy Trophy for his Ling Heather and I won the Dewey Cake cup for the fruit cake beating Janet Schollick into second place. Janet did win the class for the 6 small cakes gaining more valuable points.



The show is held over 3 days with work shops and lectures as well as the display of exhibits. We were well educated and entertained by Professor Tom Seeley who generously shared his knowledge of bees and results of the research carried out at his university in New York State. His easy style and love of his subject held the audience almost spellbound.

All the workshops were fully subscribed and covered subjects as diverse as making soaps and cosmetics to candle making and preparation for the BBKA examinations. If that wasn't enough to keep us occupied there was a further exhibition hall full of trade stands. Plenty of opportunity to spend money on beekeeping essentials and Christmas presents.

The Honey show if you have never been is well worth a visit. It is a very sociable occasion, like most beekeeping events, there are always fellow beekeepers willing to chat and share experiences.

Those exhibiting from Yorkshire this year were: Alan and Kath Brown, Catherine Cooper, Tony Fletcher, the Jefferson family, Brian Nellist, Peter and Janet Schollick and me. All contributed towards the points gained. It would be great if other members would send exhibits to the show. It is great fun and you may surprise yourself and come away with a prize, you never know how your exhibits will stand up unless you try. Getting entries to the show need not be prohibitive as transportation can be arranged via Thornes or other members, as can returns. There are lots of different classes, so why not have a look at the schedule this winter while planning for next season and make it your New Years' resolution to have a go – if we can do it so can you.

NOVEMBER

JOBS FOR THE MONTH



In preparation for winter all of out-apiaries and home garden hives should be now prepared .with the following checks:

- Treatment against Varroa completed, and the strips or packaging's removed from the hives.
- The colonies should have been fed with sugar syrup where necessary and all the colonies should have roughly 40kg of stores to last them through the winter months.
- All colonies should be queen right.
- Now is the time to put mouse guards in place after first putting in your entrance blocks to the smallest spacing, if your hive is on a full face open floor. If you are in an area where woodpeckers abound then place a chicken mesh cage (small gauge) all around the hives and make sure you leave at least a 4inch gap between the hive and the mesh ensuring the predator cannot reach the woodwork or it will peck a hole straight through the boxes in search of grubs and food.
- Honey should have been stored away in a cool place in air tight food grade buckets, filled to the top allowing no air space between honey and lids. This helps to keep the honey fresh and stops fermentation, however it doesn't stop crystallisation of the honey within the buckets as this is a natural process of the honey over time.
- Ensure you place a heavy weight (a couple of house bricks) on your lids to ensure they stay in place in the winter snow storms winds to come.

From now until next year, around about Easter time, your colonies are best left alone. No need if all the above jobs are completed to go into them at all for doing so will do more harm than good. The only exception is for those of you who treat with Oxalic Acid. This should be done on or around the shortest day of the year when the colony should have no or very little brood within the cells. I personally do my hives the day after Boxing Day and give each seam of bees a dose of 5ml of the acid solution. This kills off any mite that is still surviving on the bees and with the hive having virtually no brood within there will be no mites or very few hiding in the cells. Your bees should come out into spring clean and raring to go.

Keep checking throughout the winter especially if it snows that your hive entrance isn't blocked as good ventilation is vital for your bee's survival.

The winter months to come are preparation time for the forthcoming year. Repair any damaged boxes, Buy frames in winter sales and make them up in readiness to put in the wax when needed next spring,

clean all your feeders before putting them away and make sure all stored boxes with comb in them are fully protected against wax moths.

I take all my frames out of the boxes and place them into a deep freezer for 24 hrs. This ensures you kill any wax moth or remaining grubs and crystallises left in the comb. Be extremely careful when taking them back out of the freezer as the wax within the frames becomes extremely brittle due to the extreme cold and if knocked they will shatter like a piece of glass until they warm back up again. Whilst the frames are being treated you can sterilise your boxes with a blow lamp, making sure you get right into any cracks and where the runners are attached to ensure you kill any other wax moth or other disease within and on the woodwork. Paint your boxes whilst they are all off the hives. And on a warm day in winter whilst the bees are dormant is a good time to paint over your existing colony boxes that are in use and occupied and it won't harm the bees in any way as long as you use the correct treatment. Cupinol wood treatment is a recognised application and should last through the whole of next year when applied.

Now is the perfect time to prepare for next years exams by going along to talks and module seminars arranged by your local associations or county associations, giving you time to study the notes provided by B.B.K.A on the individual module courses, and hopefully achieving a pass. The Basic exam for the novice beekeeper is a vital part of your introduction to beekeeping and it ensures you're taught to a good standard to enable you to look after your bees to a good standard. Most associations run a course for beginners and prices vary throughout the county but they aren't very expensive. This is one exam that should not be missed by the novice beekeeper helping you to perfect the craft of beekeeping. It also gives you the confidence to progress to a higher level once the basic has been achieved.

I hope you all had a good season in 2011 your colonies all get through the winter unscathed.

Happy Beekeeping
Dave Shannon

The Y.B.K.A. Lecture

Saturday 3rd December

Normanby Pavilion, Great Yorkshire Showground

10.30 - 12.00

Mr Glyn Davis

The Misunderstood Drone

A lecture that continues our county Bee Breeding Programme

Y.B.K.A. ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

DECEMBER 3RD 2011

SATURDAY

All Members Welcome

Normanby Pavilion - Great Yorkshire Showground



Notice of the Annual General Meeting of the Yorkshire Beekeepers Association to be held on Saturday the 3rd December 2011 at the Normanby Pavilion Great Yorkshire Show Ground Harrogate

10:00 - 10:30 Coffee

10.30 - 10.45 Presentation to Macmillan Cancer Support

10:30 - 11:45 Guest speaker: Glyn Davis

11.45 - **A.G.M.**

Agenda

3.1 Apologies for absence

3.2 Minutes of the March Conference

3.3 Matters arising

3.4 Chairmans address

3.5 Secretary's report

3.6 Treasurers report and budget for the following year.

3.7 Capitation fees

3.8 Confirmation of nominated holders of Beecraft shares

3.9 Confirmation of Trustees

3.10 BBKA ADM Delegate - YBKA proposals for the BBKA ADM 2012

3.11 Bishop Burton

3.12 Countryside Days

3.13 Great Yorkshire Show

3.14 Equipment Officers Report

3.15 Y.A.S Report

3.16 Examinations Officers Report

3.17 Newsletter Editors Report

3.18 YBKA Website

3.19 Election of Officers

3.20 Area Representatives

3.21 Matters for consideration for the Executive Committee

3.22 AOB

Closure

NB: Lunch taken 12:30 - 13:30

EDUCATION

and

TRAINING

A Basic Assessor's Report



This summer I've been one of the team carrying out basic assessments in Yorkshire. It's a pleasure to witness so many new beekeepers taking this major step forward in their beekeeping, proving to themselves and to others that they are becoming competent in this ancient craft.

The assessment process is itself an opportunity to learn but the most valuable part of the whole process is the preparation that comes beforehand. Some associations run crash courses immediately prior to the assessments. Other associations encourage the candidate to do a mock assessment with an experienced beekeeper prior to the real thing. There are books that should be read. The syllabus, which can be downloaded from the BBKA web site, should be studied and thinking time should be given to rehearsing answers and clarifying knowledge.

The assessment is divided into three sections.

- 1 – manipulation
- 2 - practical and oral
- 3 – diseases

The candidate is required to get 50% or more in all three sections. So you would fail overall if you were to get 100% in two sections and 40% in the third. The assessment can take well over an hour.

Some candidates are very nervous, often those who are amongst the better prepared. But there is no need. The process is very informal and takes the form of a conversation or a discussion. The assessor is there to wheedle out knowledge from the candidate, not to ask trick questions. Nevertheless the assessment remains a rigorous examination of the candidates' ability and knowledge, covering the full syllabus.

The area of the syllabus which again and again causes the most difficulty and for which candidates tend to be least well prepared is the section on diseases. This is not altogether surprising as many of the diseases will not have been experienced in practice by the candidate and so there is no alternative but to study the subject from a text book. Foul brood outbreaks are fortunately quite rare but can be devastating. When they do occur the sooner they are recognised the quicker they can be brought under control by the bee inspectors and the less is the overall cost and damage. BBKA recognises that the Basic Assessment gives a real opportunity to encourage new beekeepers to become familiar with the symptoms of these diseases which are serious risks to beekeeping.

The autumn is considered to be the start of the beekeeping year, a time to set your ambitions and aims for the coming year. For the new beekeeper who has kept bees for a year or more should, it is a time to consider whether to do the basic assessment in the coming year and use the winter months to study the syllabus and do some background reading .

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Thank you for supporting this - we hope these are the cheapest jars available to you.

THE COUNTRYSIDE LIVE AND YORKSHIRE BEEKEEPERS HONEY SHOW 2011

The Countryside Live show held at the Y.A.S. Harrogate showground was once again a resounding success. For the third year running the show achieved record attendances and this year exceeded the 10,000 mark. The official figures for the show this year were 10,700 over the two days of the show.



This show also hosts our Y.B.K.A honey show now since the GPC committee decided to move to a more central location to enable more exhibitors to participate in the show. We have achieved record levels with our entries once again and since the show moved to the venue some 5/6 years ago we are slowly going from strength to strength with entries this year reaching 147 and once again being able to present the blue ribbon award to our best in show.



This award can only be given out where entries in the show reach over the 100 mark and for the last 5 years we have now achieved this benchmark. I would like to congratulate each and every one who placed entries into the show this year prize winners or otherwise. The quality and standards of the individual entries by all concerned once again was extremely high and our judge this year for the wax and honey section

Mr. Ivor Flatman (Senior honey judge) stated that the quality of all the entries within the show were the best he had seen all year, considering he has judged some top shows this year a complement indeed to all exhibitors. He had great difficulty separating out the winners in all the various classes. Unfortunately our mead judge this year, Mrs. Erica Osborn, (who had travelled up from Kent) was taken ill on the morning of the show and so could not continue with her judging role.. We send her our fond regards and wish her a speedy recovery. Mr. Michael Badger M.B.E., also a senior honey judge, stepped in as a last minute replacement to judge the mead classes.



I would also like to take this opportunity to thank all my stewards at the show who every year do a splendid job of setting up the show bench along with stewarding the judges and enlightening the public to every aspect of showing honey, wax, mead, cakes and confectionary.

We do need to try to encourage more entries into our novice class though, where more participation is required. This class is for beginners, members who have not won a prize at this show before, however you can have entered and won at other shows.



I, along with other colleagues, go around to all associations on request explaining how to process your honey and wax for showing so please

don't let the size of the show discourage you. Come along to next years show and put in an entry. You may just win, and prize cards and rosettes do wonders for your own confidence and honey sales. You also meet other exhibitors and will then hopefully come along again entering into some of our other categories.

Even if you don't have honey you can make and enter a plain or fruit cake or confectionary to your own recipe sweetened with honey instead of sugar, or a pair of candles. Y.B.K.A needs you to come along and let's get this show over the 200 entries mark next year

List of show winners

This years novice class winner was A.M. Armstrong so huge congratulations.

The overall winner of the show this year was Mr. Alan Woodward of Doncaster who won the Blue ribbon for best exhibit in show along with The Yorkshire Herald Cup for most points in show, the Horstman Cup for best light honey, The Yorkshire Post Cup for most points by a Y.B.K.A member, and the Y.B.K.A Challenge Cup for best 6 jars of honey labelled as for sale.

Mrs Wendy Maslin of Kirkella, Beverley won the Parkinson Cup for best ling heather in show

Mr. Keith Dobson of Wakefield and Pontefract won the Slinger Cup for best frame of honey for extraction.

The district association, accruing most points in show by combined competitors this year went to Doncaster winning the chairman's Gavel and accepted by Mrs. Janet Woodward Secretary of D.B.K.A.

Many thanks to all

D.A.Shannon.
Honey Steward



Mr. Alan Woodward



Mrs Wendy Maslin



Mr. Allan Brown



Mrs. Janet Woodward

Swarm in a Barn

Its not usual to get a call in middle of August reporting a “swarm” of bees.

A farmer from Stanghow in East Cleveland called me to report a swarm of bees in his barn, he had just taken over the tenancy of the farm and was in the process of refurbishing the barns. “A swarm in August, that can’t be worth sorting out”, I was thinking. You just have to check these things out, to satisfy curiosity if nothing else. Upon close inspection there appeared to be bees entering and exiting the outside wooden wall about 8 feet off the ground from 2 areas (each top corner of the plywood sheets).I was now thinking “Is this one colony that has been in residence for some time or could it be 2?”. I



felt the inner walls for heat and came to the conclusion the bees were indeed 2 colonies, each about 2 feet wide and 2 feet deep. They had made their home between 2 sheets of ½” plywood that formed a wall sandwiching the steel frame of the building.

Next thing to ponder was how to get them out, I may need help for this !

Armed with lots of buckets and a couple of additional co-opted helpers (My Dad, Allan and Brian Lightfoot), armed with a couple of pairs of steps, a plank, various sheets and bits of beehive / frames - I took the battery circular saw to the plywood sheet to remove the top 2 feet or so, revealing the bees had been in residence for some time due to granulated OSR honey stores and a lot of heather nectar. The next stage was the messy bit. We removed the honey into buckets and tried to lace any unsealed brood into frames with string and elastic bands, the rest of the combs or slabs of sealed brood we just placed in empty boxes spaced apart with bits of twig. (think you can all now imagine the sticky mess created, on a belting hot day to boot)

The 2 holes were sealed up with sack and foam and the 2 colonies placed as high as possible on oil drums near the old entrances.

A quick wash of all the now very sticky gear under the farmers outside tap and thoughts of “they now have 2 chances, let them sort themselves out”

The mess of comb was put through the vacuum strainer and jarred up and some given back to the farmer, to repay the “vandalism” to his barn wall – he was most pleased with his gift. The rest of the wax went through the solar wax extractor.



After leaving for a couple of days left on the oil drums and then moving home and leaving for another 2 weeks for all the brood to hatch, I can report only one laying queen and lots of healthy new brood, not a varroa mite in sight and even after a thymol tea bag – still no varroa. So I united the 2 colonies together with newspaper and a very strong colony going into winter.

One has to ask if it is worth the sweat and sticky gear for the 3 of us, overall I think yes, it is, as it is now a strong colony of black bees. Next year it's a good site for a bait hive or 2 as there are no beekeepers in the area – so where did they come from ?

Tony Jefferson – YBKA Vice Chairman



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Y.B.K.A. DATES

YBKA AGM

December 3rd 2011
Glyn Davis
The misunderstood Drone
Yorkshire Showground

YBKA GPC Meetings
25th November 2011

BBKA ADM

January 14th 2012

BBKA Spring Convention
April 20 -22nd 2012

YBKA Bishop Burton
April 28th 2012

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