

East Lothian Beekeepers Association

(Founded 1887 - Scotland's oldest Local Association?)

www.eastlothianbeekeepers.org.uk

Newsletter 142

January 2007

Christmas came early for my bees (17th December) in the shape of a cold shower containing sugar and oxalic acid, with Gordon Biggar as the cruel Santa administering their "hive tonic". The bees were fairly tolerant of being squirted at, though I quickly gave up the idea of lifting the crown boards without wearing gloves! The best tip from the day was to check that your syringe sprays nicely with sugary water – its increased viscosity makes it behave quite differently from just water. There were about a dozen mites on each tray the next day, but I didn't check beforehand for the background level – must be more scientific!

Michael Hill and Rosemary Carthy tried to steal Gordon's show with a demonstration of their frame steamer. My mucky frames were converted into gleaming wax-free and propolis-free ones in half an hour. The box was pretty clean as well. DIY types thought it would be easy to run one up from a wallpaper steamer and an old lid – or should the Association buy one for sharing?

Minutes of AGM held at 7.30pm on 25th January 2007 in the Haddington Town House

1. Apologies – Gordon Biggar and Colin Russell; 18 members attended.

2. The minutes from 12th January 2006 were approved

3. Accounts –

The accounts were accepted as correct.

Details are available to members from the Treasurer

The Treasurer noted that our expenditure was greater than our subscriptions (31 members, down from 42 in 2005) and that a healthy balance depended on continued honey sales, particularly the Haddington Show.

4. Membership fee – there was discussion about whether to increase the membership fee to £10 immediately or in annual increments of £1. The meeting decided that since there was a surplus this year and our bank balance is healthy, to maintain it at £5 for another year and reconsider an increase next year.

5. President's report – 2006 was a busy year with 13 different events and two members receiving the Microscopy certificate (congratulations to Maureen and Allan Cameron). A healthy number of beginners attended Mike Bain's classes, but we failed to re-locate the Association apiary.

6. Election of office bearers

President	George Barton (accepted his election graciously)
Secretary	Donald Smith (accepted his election reluctantly)
Treasurer	Rosemary Carthy (accepted her election stoically)
Committee	Colin McIntosh, Mike Bain, Gordon Biggar, Pat McErlean and Maureen Cameron.

7. AOCB – none

The AGM was followed by a presentation by Peter Radband in which he shared some of his beekeeping inventions – a swarm collecting box from which the queen couldn't elope, a heather press powered by a car jack, and a cardboard frame to hold your newspaper down when uniting stocks. He then revealed some of the tricks of the trade that have led to his success in the honey show. The secret is to remember that it is a "show", and that the exhibitor is striving for the best – honey that has been filtered so

well that it is clear, jars that are spotless, comb that is drip free and cut precisely. He will have hot competition next year!

Forthcoming Events:

Thursday 22nd February Haddington Town House, 7.30pm Ross Langlands will talk on “Bees, Honey and Health” Everything from stings, hayfever, Manuka honey and treatment for burns from our own no-nonsense jargon-busting beekeeping GP.

Friday 2nd March Visit to National Library of Scotland to see items from the Moir collection of books on bees and beekeeping. We are limited to about a dozen places, so names and numbers to me beforehand please – first come first served! Meet 2pm at National Library, George IV Bridge, Edinburgh.

Thursday 15th March Haddington Town House, 7.30pm Graeme Sharpe from the Scottish Agricultural College, Auchincruive will talk on “Honey from flower to jar”.

Thursday 26th April, Haddington Town House, 7.30pm, DVD evening hosted by Mike Bain – items to include “Varroa” and a DVD on the honeybee dance produced by Sheffield University.

Membership

You’ll see from the accounts that our membership fees are no longer covering our Association expenses, mainly because our membership fell last year. On the other hand, my mailing list gets longer and longer! Please join – it’s only five pounds. I am sending paper copies of the membership form to everyone this year so that those whom I normally contact by email don’t forget to join. I’ll also send reminders in a couple months to those who

need it. In the spring I will produce a revised list of members’ contact details but I can only circulate this within the membership.

Library

Three new additions:

- Practical Beekeeping by Clive de Bruyn (1997)
- Honey Bees, a guide to management by Ron Brown (1998)
- Keeping Bees by Peter Beckley (1977, a second copy)

Items can be borrowed at meetings or by visiting me.

Beginners group

Any beginners who would like to join Mike Bain’s study group of aspiring beekeepers, please contact him (01875 341226 or msbain@globalnet.co.uk). Evening meetings will start at the beginning of February.

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