

KENT BEEKEEPERS' ASSOCIATION SEVENOAKS AND TUNBRIDGE WELLS BRANCH NEWSLETTER

September 2018

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Branch website: <http://www.sevenoaksbeekeepers.org.uk/>

Show Off Your Honey



Bottling the honey, photo by Simon Staffurth

Our annual honey show takes place in just a couple of weeks, on Saturday September 15, at Otford Church Hall, TN14 5PG. The more entries there are, the better the show, so please enter as many classes as you can. If you are new to showing then you can enter the novice honey classes but it is also worth entering the main ones as well. There are two different cake classes but if you are going to try your hand at these then make sure you follow the recipes carefully. The wax classes include candles and blocks of beeswax. You can also win with mead, a photograph, cut comb, or even a piece of equipment that you have made yourself. The rules and schedule were attached to the email with July's newsletter; they are also on our website:

<http://www.sevenoaksbeekeepers.org.uk/honey-show/>

You need to follow the rules exactly if you want to avoid your entry being disqualified. Items need to be taken to the venue between 9:30 and 10:10 a.m. Judging will begin at 10:30 a.m. This year's judge is Enid Brown.

If you cannot make it on the day but want to enter then you can arrange with Richard Rose for your entries to be taken to the hall:

buzz.richard@uwclub.net

Anyone who won a trophy last year should bring it with them or arrange to return it to Richard.

Bees Favourite Plants

The end of the active season means that it is time for our indoor meetings to begin. The first will be a few days after the honey show on Tuesday September 18 at Weald Memorial Hall at 7.30pm.

Dr Karin Alton from Sussex University will be talking to us about plants for bees. Her research has involved looking at how plants and bees interact. She has also researched honey bee diseases and pollination as well as habitat selection.

Exciting New Website

A lot of hard work has gone into creating the new branch website, so please take a look. You can click on the link <http://www.sevenoaksbeekeepers.org.uk/> or you can simply search for Sevenoaks beekeepers in Google and the site will come up. It is worth checking out if only to see the lovely photos of Barrwood at bluebell time. If you have any pictures you would like to offer for the website then please contact John Farrow: dynesbarn@gmail.com

There is a section for apiary reports: <http://www.sevenoaksbeekeepers.org.uk/branch-apiaries/sevenoaks-apiary/>

All the information about the Honey Show is on: <http://www.sevenoaksbeekeepers.org.uk/honey-show/>

Honey from the Club Apiaries

This has been a good year for both our apiaries. The Hilbert Road apiary produced 50lbs of honey, which has been bottled and is available for members to buy for their own consumption. The price is £5 per jar (1lb jars), limited to a maximum of five jars per member.

Barrwood honey has also been extracted but, for the moment is still in buckets. There could be as much as 80lbs. This will also be offered for sale.

If you want to buy any jars please contact Liz Birchenough: home@silverbirch.me.uk You will need to collect from her home and can pay by cash or cheque.

Barrwood Apiary

At the beginning of August clearer boards were put on the hives a couple of days before the meeting but when the colonies were inspected on the Saturday the supers were still full of bees. In all the hives the bees were really aggressive so it was impossible to carry out thorough inspections. The supers were finally removed and 80lbs of honey was extracted.



Extracting the Barrwood honey in Cliff and Pauline Hayward's kitchen – photo by Pauline Hayward

Hilbert Road Apiary

The bees were also bad-tempered at Hilbert Road, where Barry Chaseley found the colonies were too aggressive for him to handle at the July meeting. In August there were just two people at the meeting. *Peter Hutton writes:* As there were no other attendees, we looked through my polystyrene hive and the top bar hive. A super was added to my hive. The top bar hive is a disaster, the queen has stopped laying, many of the combs have broken off or collapsed, it is an excellent example of why not to keep bees where the combs are not supported. Despite all this, Robin reports three supers of honey to be in need of extraction.

In the end, 50lbs of honey was extracted.

Beeswax Wanted

I have met a lady in our area who is producing beeswax cloths for kitchen use. She is very keen to source beeswax locally. If anyone would like to contact her with a view to sourcing beeswax, please contact jackyzen@live.com.

Liz Birchenough

Diary Dates

Saturday September 1 at 2pm: Apiary meeting at Barrwood – general inspection and varroa treatment with Bret McCulloch

Saturday September 8 at 2pm: Apiary meeting at Hilbert Road – general inspection with Richard Rose

Saturday September 15 from 9.30am: Honey Show at Otford Church Hall

Tuesday September 18 at 7.30pm: Dr Karin Alton will talk about plants for bees at Weald Memorial Hall

Saturday September 22 at 2pm: Apiary meeting at Barrwood – preparing colonies for winter with Cliff Hayward

Saturday 29th September: KBKA is holding an Autumn lecture in Lenham with two speakers. The subjects are: Experiments in Skep Beekeeping and: The Asian Hornet Incursion – Torbay Beekeepers' Response to the Threat. You will need to buy a ticket. More details on our website - <http://www.sevenoaksbeekeepers.org.uk/notices/>

Send any photos or articles for inclusion in the newsletter to Mary Staffurth: marystaffurth@yahoo.com