

# Croydon Beekeepers Assoc. Newsletter

A division of Surrey  
Beekeepers Association

Founded 1879

July, 2014

## *A note from Mark Stott, CBKA Chairman*

I'd like to start July's newsletter with a thank you to Colin Marshall, who has decided to stand down as editor. I'm sure we would all like to thank Colin for his work in putting the newsletter together in recent years. Tracey Carter will be stepping in as our new editor and I know that she will welcome your feedback, ideas, stories and photos. You can contact Tracey on 020 8686 5629 or email [traceycarter07@aol.com](mailto:traceycarter07@aol.com).

I hope you and your bees enjoy a good July. There is no denying that a few jars of honey are a fitting reward for the care and dedication needed to be a good beekeeper and don't forget that the Croydon Honey Show is fast approaching (20 September): the perfect opportunity to share the results of your hard work.

Mark

## *News from the Apiary*

This continues to be an extraordinary season for bees and swarms, and we have been inundated with calls from the public about bees 'swarming': certainly many are genuine honey bee swarms but the majority turn out to be the now notorious Tree Bumble bee (*Bombus hypnorum*) nesting in house or porch eaves.

Our apiary continues to look well; the new colonies are building rapidly (on double brood) and we continue to find it difficult keeping up with the cleaning and setting up of replacement frames – any assistance will be very welcome.

*Continued . . .*

*Chairman: Mark Stott*

*Secretary: Joyce Atkinson*

*Treasurer: Tamar Devane*

*Editor: Tracey Carter*



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## *Dates for your diary*



25 August (Bank Holiday Monday): Kent Festival of Bees – volunteer stewards needed, see below

20 September: Croydon Honey Show

6 October: London Honey Show, London Lancaster Hotel, Bayswater

30 Oct – 1 Nov: National Honey Show, Weybridge

Apiary meetings on the 2nd and 4th of each month.

Our last two sessions were quite well attended and topics we covered included tips for 'transporting hives' and 'finding and marking queens'.

The 'June Gap' (the pause between the Spring and Summer nectar flows) is not so prevalent in urban areas but 'yours truly' lost a colony to June starvation many years ago and it is something one never forgets. We have been feeding one or two who looked rather susceptible, particularly the large colonies.

Another seasonal happening has been the increasing



success of 'bait hives': we have heard of three local swarms captured like this – in each case it was just a stack of

hives with a few old frames awaiting cleaning.

**Best wishes from the Cheerful Drones**

## Association news

*Croydon member wins Robert Hammond Award:* the BBKA has awarded the Robert Hammond Award for 2011 for the highest marks in the Intermediate Theory Certificate to Croydon member Kirsty Gordon. Congratulations Kirsty.

*CBKA presence at summer shows and events:* representatives from CBKA have been attending shows throughout the summer including Croydon Green Fair, Sanderstead Horticultural Fair and a bee exhibit at Knight's Garden Centre in Limpsfield. It is always interesting and enjoyable to talk to members of the public at such events and we sometimes need people to help on our stand.

*Schools outreach:* David Shepherd took some bees into Woodcote Primary (three year 2 classes) in mid-June – he gave an interactive learning session which was greatly enjoyed by everyone.

### *Surrey County Show, Guildford, 26 May*

2014 was another very successful year for the show, with thousands of people attending despite the weather.

CBKA was well-represented by ten entries thanks to David Shepherd and Mags Scott including honey, cut comb,

cake, biscuits, photo and item of interest. Congratulations to Mags who won a second in photography and a third in

the 'item of interest' category for a necklace of silk flowers with a beaded honey bee. Mags also baked 120 scones for the honey tasting and

biscuits for the straw draw but very disappointingly was unable to attend the show due to last minute illness. However, Tamar Devane and

Martyn Cavett stepped in at the last minute to enable things to go ahead as planned, so huge thanks to them both. A real team effort by Croydon.

## *Forthcoming events*

### *Kent Festival of bees, 10.00 a.m. to 4.00 p.m., Bank Holiday Monday 25 August*

This free of charge event is held every August near Canterbury, Kent and is aimed at encouraging people to find out more about the world of bees and beekeeping.

As well as a fun family festival, there is also a bee produce and honey show, where members are welcome to exhibit. Throughout the day there will be seminars, beekeeping demonstrations

and many unique show offers from MannLake UK who are sponsoring the day. There will also be hands-on craft activities, refreshments and stalls selling bee-related products.

More information about the classes and how to enter can be found on the website:

[www.kent-festival-of-bees.co.uk/](http://www.kent-festival-of-bees.co.uk/)

The festival is also recruiting volunteer stewards for the day, all stewards are given lunch and a £30 Mann Lake equipment voucher. Call or email Angela Standen at Mann Lake UK for more details: Tel - 01227 833807 or email [angelas@mannlake.co.uk](mailto:angelas@mannlake.co.uk).

## *Nucs for sale from Epsom BKA*

Epsom's queen rearing project has a number of 5/6 frame nucs available for sale to members of Surrey BKA at a price of £125 each (to include a marked 2014 queen and 5/6 frames of brood and stores). Nucs are to be collected by arrangement from EBKA's apiary at Ewell.

Anyone interested in purchasing a nuc should contact David Jones by email [dej7ld@gmail.com](mailto:dej7ld@gmail.com) or phone 020 8643 5438.

*Local agent for E H Thorne Beehives Ltd:*

*Richard Palmer tel 020 8679 0401 or email [palmersbees@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:palmersbees@hotmail.co.uk)*

## Countdown to the Croydon Honey Show, 20 September 2014

Taking part is fun and very rewarding

If you are a member of CBKA and have never taken part in the Croydon Honey Show, or haven't for some time, then my aim in writing this is to convince you to do it this year.

Last year I entered the Croydon Honey Show for the first time and the experience added a new and different dimension to my beekeeping, one that was very rewarding. And I can honestly say that it was simple and a lot of fun to take part.

After the hard work of the year was over and my small honey crop was extracted and in the jars (I say 'my' crop but obviously it belongs to the bees!), I thought why not have a go at the honey show? After all, the honey was there and all I had to do was present it in the required way.

I started by looking at the schedule for the Croydon Honey Show and saw that there were a number of classes that I could enter, not just with honey but also with cakes, biscuits and a general interest category (when entering cakes and biscuits

you don't even have to use your own honey, so you can enter even if you don't have your own bees). Having read the schedule carefully, I sent my entry to Joyce Atkinson, the Honey Show Secretary and set about preparing my entries to meet the guidelines.

High standards are the goal and my preparation included ensuring that my honey was presented in the correct jars at the correct weight, was labelled correctly and presented with attention to detail e.g. removing air bubbles, clean lids etc. – all with the aim of showing of the natural product in its prime state.

On the morning of the show I went to the venue at the Selsdon Centre (where Sainsbury's is) and set up my entries. I entered some honey, baked a honey cake and honey biscuits, and entered some home-made beeswax products into the general interest class.

Once set up, everyone left to allow the judging to begin, undertaken by Bob Maurer, a



Master Beekeeper who is currently Chairman of Surrey BKA and well known as a microscopist and BBKA examiner. The atmosphere was one of excitement and after setting up I couldn't help hoping to win something, which added to the excitement!

When I returned in the afternoon I was delighted to see that I had won a second and third and a highly commended. It really made my day, not least because it reassured me I was doing something right with my beekeeping!

The atmosphere was friendly and upbeat with entrants coming to see how they had done and Sainsbury's shoppers and library-users popping in for a look. Bob Maurer gave a summary of feedback which was very helpful and prizes were presented to the highest scoring entrants.

Perhaps the best thing for me was seeing the amazing standard and range of honey produced by fellow association members and learning from them. Plus I met people there that I don't often see otherwise. All in all it was a very social and rewarding day.

So why not have a go yourself? There is a lot to gain from this

Don't forget:

If you have stories, notices, photos or other contributions to next month's newsletter please get in touch with me -

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Thanks!

experience. Last year there were over 80 entries and the aim for this year is to exceed 100 which would make the show a 'Blue Ribbon'

event. This means a prize could be awarded for the best exhibit (only available in shows of 100 entries or more).

Possibly the easiest class is the heaviest frame of honey – you don't even have to extract it and it doesn't matter what it looks like! Cut comb honey is another class that doesn't require extraction (there was an interesting how-to series of articles in BeeCraft recently about this).



The show Schedule will be available soon. In the meantime, on the next page there is a copy of last year's Schedule to give you some ideas. I hope you will join us on 20 September.

Tracey Carter

## Schedule of Classes

- 1 Two 11b jars of Light Honey
- 2 Two 11b jars of Medium Honey
- 3 Two 11b jars of Dark Honey
- 4 Two 11b jars of Set Honey (Crystallised or Creamed)
- 5 Two 11b jars of Chunk Honey
- 6 Two similar containers of Cut Comb - each approximately 8ozs.
- 7 One Comb of Honey suitable for extraction
- 8 One cake of Beeswax weighing between 7ozs. and 9ozs.
- 9 One bottle of Sweet Mead
- 10 One bottle of Dry Mead
- 11 Six matching 11b jars of identical honey labelled as for sale.  
Rules 5 and 7 do not apply. Note new regulations regarding lot marking.
- 12 One pair of Beeswax Candles. One candle will be lit by the Judge.
- 13 One Honey Cake. Recipe: 7oz self raising flour, 6oz honey, 4oz butter, 2 eggs, 6oz sultanas, 4oz glacé cherries. Method: Cream butter and honey, beat eggs and add flour, then fold in cherries and sultanas. A little milk can be added if necessary. Bake in a buttered circular  $6\frac{1}{2}$ " to  $7\frac{1}{2}$ " diameter tin for approximately 1¼ hours in a moderate oven.
- 14 Six Honey Crunch Biscuits. Recipe: 2oz butter, 2oz plain flour, 1 tbsp honey, 2oz granulated sugar, 3oz rolled oats, 1 tsp bicarbonate of soda. Method: Melt honey and butter together. Remove from heat and add bicarbonate of soda. In a bowl put flour, oats and sugar, mix in the liquid mixture and allow to cool slightly. Put knobs of mixture onto a greased baking sheet and flatten slightly. Bake at gas mark 4/350°F/190°C for approximately 15 minutes.
- 15 Honey Sweets from a batch, containing honey as one of the ingredients.
- 16 Honey Jar Label. A design for a label not exceeding A4 in size. Weight to be stated in Metric and Imperial units and the characters must be at least 4mm high when reduced to honey label size. The design must not have been entered previously in a Croydon Divisional Honey Show.
- 17 Artwork and General Interest Display: Anything which is unusual, original, novel or of general interest to do with beekeeping.
- 18 Photography. Must be exhibitor's own work and related to beekeeping.
- 19 Novice Class. One 11b jar of clear Honey, light medium or dark, or one 11b jar of crystallised honey, natural or creamed.
- 20 Heaviest Frame. A shallow BS frame, weight is the only criterion. Note that the winning frame may be marked so that it cannot be used in a following year. Show cases are not required.
- 21 Honey Preserve/Jam. One 11b jar. Made with any recipe but using half sugar and half honey. Recipe must be provided with exhibit.