



Quarterly Newsletter - January 2013

Forthcoming dates.

February 4th Stags head 19:30 Association meeting and Honey show carried over from 2012.

March 4th Stags Head 19:30 Maureen - On re-queening & Varroa control. See diary text for more details.

March 16 th / 17 th 10:00 Beginners course at the Apiary.

March 24 th 08:30. Welsh Beekeepers Convention. Builth Wells.

April 14 th Club Apiary 14:00 Practical session. Marking your queen.

April 28 th club apiary 14:00 Practical session. Setting up apiary.

If you wish to verify that a meeting is taking place please call the Secretary on 01267 267 318

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Back page: Training course poster. Please cut alongside the tabs at the bottom leaving just the top connected to separate the contact details then put up in your local post office, local shop or farmers stores.

REQUESTS.

If you have any comments hints tips or tricks to pass on to the other members please either e-mail them to the newsletter team at steve_p_cox30@hotmail.com or post them to us at: Pen-Y-Maes, Ostrey Hill, St Clears, Carmarthenshire. SA33 4AJ.

The next newsletter will be published early April so please try to get all correspondence to us before the end of March. We welcome all letters, information, funny stories, complaints, **things for sale or wanted**. All welcome.

A BRIEF REPORT FROM THE 2013 AGM

The meeting got underway with an introduction from the chairman who thanked various members for their efforts in the past year. This was followed by the secretaries report which included the reading of the minutes from last year's AGM, it was agreed in discussions later that it may be beneficial for the next AGM to publish the minutes in the last newsletter of the year and then just take a vote on approval of the minutes.

After the secretaries report came that of the treasurer and it was agreed that as the club has sufficient funds in the kitty and as the association has never been a money making venture that we would reduce this year's subscription for existing members to £15 although it would remain at £30 for new members.

After the treasurers report it was time to vote on club officers generally they were the same as last year. It was decided that the club doesn't need a press officer as the post was of limited use.

Sandra Eckford our current librarian wishes to resign as she is now taking on the position of training officer but there were no volunteers so she will keep it on until a replacement can be found. Another good natured attempt was made to get Geoff Bazin one of our older members to become vice-president but as usual he declined.

We also have a vacancy for a second WBKA representative; this involves attending WBKA meetings on a few occasions a year. It was agreed that for the moment our chairman Andrew, would continue in his role as one of the reps and that a volunteer would be asked for as and when the meetings were announced.

After the meeting was concluded a DVD on mead making was shown, this DVD is available from the library if anyone wishes to borrow it.



JANUARY AND THE BEES

LET SLEEPING DOGS LIE! And while they sleep DO NOT MEDDLE WITH THEM! Of course check the roofs haven't blown off in strong winds and that the entrances are clear of snow or debris to be sure the bees can get out on the warmer days. They need to go to the loo on a regular basis, and with no inside toilet they have to get out. For those that don't know these are called cleansing flights. AND whatever anyone tells you don't go in your hive for any treatments, it's not worth the risk and lastly don't whatever you do feed them, its too early. LET THEM SLEEP.

The bees are in a tight cluster, staying warm and consuming very little food. On the days when the wind is calm and the temperature rises above 40f/10c you will probably see bees flying in and out not for food but on a cleansing flight. Winter bees have a longer life than summer bees, but all bees have quite a short life, many of your bees will die during the winter, just from old age, they fall to the bottom of the hive and sometimes block the entrance (this can be cleared with a small stick) But on the whole other bees will drag them outside if its warm enough so if you see loads of dead bees outside don't panic this is normal. On the other hand if you don't see anything don't panic either! They will either clear up later on or the wind will have blown them away or even small birds will have eaten them

JANUARY AND THE BEEKEEPER

Now is the time to take stock of your equipment and what you will need for the coming year. If you bought new boxes in Thornes sale and are not quite sure how they go together help will be at hand at the apiary on Sun April 14th at 2pm. If you have piles of frames with dirty old comb now is the time to clean them up, fit with new foundation. Clean the wax set it in blocks ready to take to the Convention at the end of March and exchange it for new foundation; there will be a demonstration at the apiary on how to do this later in the year. It needs to be warm to play with wax.

FEBRUARY AND THE BEES

Daylight is becoming slightly longer and a few more warm days triggers the queen into laying a few more eggs, the cluster has worked its way upwards where it's warmer but basically they will behave much the same as in January. Later in the month you might be concerned that the bees are short of stores (food) now is the time perhaps to boost their supplies and for that we use candy (bakers fondant) the reason for that is to copy what they already have in their pantry, as near as we can, that is honey that by now will be set solid. If they need the candy they will use it, if they have enough stores they won't bother with it, so it's good either way insurance if you like. DON'T whatever you do be tempted to feed syrup as this could be a disaster, if its warm the bees will stuff themselves with it and then if it turns cold and they cant get out to cleanse it builds up inside them and they will get dysentery and foul up the hive and this can lead to Nosema and all sorts of problems you don't want.

To feed candy, cut it about an inch deep wrap it in greaseproof paper prick it with a fork and place it over the middle hole in the crown board, it should then fit under the roof of a national hive. DON'T open up your hive in February it's too soon and will serve no purpose. No need to see what they are doing just yet.

Brian has done a bulk order for candy to help us all and it will be available either by the box or just enough for each hive so you can buy whatever you need. He will be bringing it to the next meeting at the New Stags Head on Mon Feb 4th. The Honey Show, come and have a look at the same time, it's a good meeting and great fun. It would help him to know your requirements in advance so e-mail him or phone on 01267 267 318

MARCH AND THE BEES

March is the month when things begin to happen, and hopes for the summer loom large in our heads, but take it steady, no need to rush, keep topping up the candy if it's gone down. On MARCH 4th if you can make it Maureen will be giving a talk on a combined way of re-queening your hive, stopping the bees from swarming and a good form of Varroa control, all in one hit!! And even how to make up a good nuc how about that? Come to the New Stags head at 7.30 pm

March is the month when the bees are at the most vulnerable, the weather can be unpredictable, they are just getting going and stress plays a large part on how well they do. Plan in advance what you have in mind when you do want to go through them. Later in the month is better, you will need to record the strength of the colony, if it's very weak unite it with another one, rather than let it die. Remember at this time of year there will be the least number of bees in your hive so it's much easier to find the queen, now is the time to mark her, learn how to do this at the apiary meeting on April 14th. If you can't find your queen ask a friend for help, it's more fun with two of you.

On **Saturday and Sunday March 16th and 17th** at the Apiary at 10am There will be a beginners course to get new members started, or anyone who has not been on a starter course before, or anyone who would like to go over things again. Please let Sandra know if you wish to attend.

On **Saturday March 23rd** its the annual Convention at Bulth Wells, where there are stalls to buy whatever you need to do with beekeeping, and talks about all sorts. With the huge increase in numbers of beekeepers descending on the rather small hall it has turned into something of a bun-fight to get the bargains, so we are hoping to run a collective order book beforehand so that if you cant go, or cant get there early enough you will still have what you want at the bargain prices.

Maureen has arranged this with Maismores and if you phone her on 01994 448 818 she will organise it all. If you want a lot of things you might have to pay a deposit up front.

Then you can go to the Convention enjoy the talks browse through the bookstalls, study all the latest inventions try on a new bee-suit (they were only £50 last year, for a full cover-up) a nice cafe and a lovely day out. **See Advert on page 5 for more details.**

Anyone requiring tickets at the reduced price of £6 instead of £8 at the gate contact Secretary Brian Jones. He will also bring tickets to the CBKA Honey Show on Monday 4th February at The New Stags Head 7.30 p.m.

Erroneous Facts or did you know.....

Bees will tell you tomorrow's weather, if they are out late it will rain tomorrow
If they go to bed early, tomorrow will be set fair.

Bees hate anything from the chemists shop, don't wear make-up, scent, shampoo, aftershave, hair conditioner or any other smellies. All fabric conditioners are a big NO NO so if you must wash your bee suit please air it out properly afterwards. You could roll in silage and they will love you or even better silage effluent!!!


Just stand downwind of your fellow beekeepers.

In Poland it is common to attach a handkerchief to the front of each hive, this then gets the bees used to something white being near their hives and disturbing them, such as you in your bee suit.

ADVERTS.

Would anyone like to help with the library? We need a new librarian. You would be in charge of the books and would need to bring them to the meetings. You have the advantage of reading them all and vastly improve your knowledge of beekeeping! Please contact one of the committee.

Also required for the new season will be **assistant apiary managers**. Duties will include inspecting the hives in the club apiary between the scheduled meetings and later in the year being involved in the feeding program.



Cymdeithas Gwenynwyr Cymru
Welsh Beekeepers' Association
2013 CONVENTION

8.30am SATURDAY 23rd MARCH
Tea & coffee available from 8.00am

HAFOD A HENDRE HALL
ROYAL WELSH AGRICULTURAL SHOWGROUND
BULTH WELLS, POWYS, LD2 3SY.

Mynediad/admission: Adults/oedolion - £8.00 Advance payment - £6.00
Juniors/Ieuencid (under 17) - free/am ddim

GUEST SPEAKERS:

Dr Helen Crews
Lecture title to be confirmed

Dr Ewan Campell
"Controlling Varroa by gene knockdown"

Dr Tim Sparks
"Phenology - Recurring Natural Phenomena"

And once again, the ever popular
"Beekeepers Question Time"
A team of three experts welcomes questions
from beginners and more experienced beekeepers.
Your chance to ask that question you have always wanted to ask.

Trade stands and exhibitions, bargain beekeeping supplies.
All day refreshments. Free Parking.

CLUB OFFICIALS

Librarian, Joint Apiary Supervisor and Teaching coordinator.

Sandra Eckford

Glandwr, Llanpumsaint, Carmarthenshire. SA33 6JL

Tel: 01267 253263 Email: theeckfords@gmail.com

President and Swarm Co-ordinator

Maureen Macleod.

Bod Athro Bungalow, Llangynin St. Clears, Carmarthenshire. SA33 4LD

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Chairman and WBKA representative

Andrew Bowering

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Vice Chairman, Quartermaster, Joint Apiary Supervisor

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Treasurer

William (Bill) Bradley

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Tel: 01267 202359 Email: carmarthenbees@hotmail.co.uk

Secretary

Brian Jones

Cwmburry Honey Farm Ferryside, Carmarthenshire SA17 5TW

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BEE INSPECTORS

Regional Bee Inspector also local inspector for East Carms. & Mid Ceredigion

Francis Gellatly Tel: 01558 650588 Email: francis.gellatly@fera.gsi.gov.uk

Pembrokeshire & South Ceredigion

Ceri Morgan Tel: 01239 612078 / 07775 119486 Email: ceri.morgan@fera.gsi.gov.uk

Gower & West Carms.

Adrian Bowen Tel: 01972 536643 / 07775 119489 Email:

Adrian.bowen@fera.gsi.gov.uk

ADDRESSES.

Winter meetings. Mondays 7.30pm - The New Stags Head. Red Street, Carmarthen. (Parking in the Market Car Park, off Mansell Street, Free after 7.30pm).

Summer Meetings. Sundays 2.00pm - The Association Apiary. Cwmoernant Farm. Reservoir Road, Carmarthen. SA31 2EU.