



Warwick and Leamington Branch of Warwickshire Beekeepers

The Taste(r) of Success

Our Taster Day, held at the beginning of May using the Kings Hill conference facilities, was over-subscribed and we had to close the booking two weeks before the event and establish a waiting list. After a morning of presentations, honey tasting and, of course, honey cake, the twenty-three “wannabees” donned bee suits and were treated to a hands-on bee experience at the training apiary. Did they enjoy it? The above photograph says it all.



The feedback received was very complimentary with the quality of the venue and the friendliness of the members, featuring frequently. Would they have said that anyway? Well, we must have got something right as, by the evening, three attendees had joined the branch, two had volunteered to help at our displays and 17 had confirmed their interest in attending next year's introductory course.

The proceeds from the Taster Day fees are donated to a bee related charity and in this case over £500 was raised for Bees Abroad. So, all-in-all, a very gratifying outcome for all the hard work and bonhomie of the members who gave freely of their time, enthusiasm and knowledge.

Seemingly, there is no diminishing in the popularity of our craft. We already have 3 candidates for the next Taster Day which is planned for September.

Training Apiary Progress

Our Training Apiary team have really got their act together. Establishing the Kings Hill Nurseries' apiary at only the turn of the year, followed by a major re-stocking exercise, they have managed to service the demands of branch activities through the splendid support of members, the organisation of which was no mean feat in itself. They have taken providing hands-on days for our Introductory Course and Taster Days, a hive building workshop, our weekly training sessions for new and established beekeepers, populating observation hives for events, hosting Basic and Bee Heath assessments all in their stride. What a team! Well Done!

WLBK Goes Global

In yet another step towards world domination, WLBK now has a foreign correspondence based in the Asian sub-continent who, hopefully, with varroa resistant bees and native Asian hornets on her doorstep, will bring a new perspective on Beekeeping. We are very sad that Katarina Prokopiou has left these shores for paddy fields new but grateful for her infectious enthusiasm and achievements on behalf of the branch. A member only since 2018, Katerina has managed to secure a community apiary at JLR Fen End and, having convinced her bosses that this was a good idea, has opened the possibility of similar opportunities at JLR's other sites. A talented communicator, Katerina gave a presentation at our recent Taster Day and, as editor, has revolutionised the format and content of the Warwickshire Beekeeper magazine – thankfully a role she intends to continue to fulfil from the other side of the world.

Good luck to you Katerina in your new venture and do please keep in touch.

Free Wax

The Branch has 76 super frames with drawn comb which is beyond re-use in the hive and is offered to members to render down for wax craft or exchange for foundation with the major bee supplies companies. By using the branch's steam extractor, which is available for home loan, this becomes a very straight forward and simple task. No payment is required. We just ask that you scrape and scorch the supers and boil up the empty frames and return them to the branch. A new facility about to be offered by the branch will even make the boiling of frames an easy task.

Please contact Bernard Brown at bernardnbrown@outlook.com if interested in all or some of these frames

Displaying to Attract

Spring is the time when displays by creatures proliferate in the natural world and WLBK is no exception. Since the last edition of Bee Talk, our display season has really taken off with attendance at 8 different events including three on the same day, two weekends running. This admittedly did test our physical and organisational resources somewhat, not to mention our steward's endurance but, much to the team's credit, they managed to get through them successfully. The popularity of the "Ecofest" event in the Pump Room Gardens" came as a bit of a surprise. Being the first time that the event had been held, we had to hazard a guess at what to expect and staff it accordingly. Probably riding on the back of "Extinction Rebellion" the public turned out in force and our stand was among the most popular as hive product sales in excess of £1000 bears witness. Our unsuspecting team of stewards responded magnificently and saved the day. We shall know better for next year.

All but one of the other events lived up to, or exceeded expectations with Napton Cidery Open Day, not unsurprisingly, proving particularly popular with both the public and our stewards! On the following weekend our stand at the Craft event at Kings Hill was a practical way of expressing our gratitude for all the co-operation we have received from that organisation and netted some £230 of honey sales.

We are now approaching the two premier events of our programme with **The Kenilworth Show on June 8th and the Leamington Peace Festival over the two days of the 15th and 16th June**. We are now actively appealing for volunteer stewards for both events

The **Kenilworth Show**, held in a field just opposite the entrance to Stoneleigh Park, is the closest thing we have to a County Agricultural Show in Warwickshire and is fertile ground for offers of sites for out-apiaries, new candidates for our Taster Days and Introductory courses and hive product sales. It is open from 9.00a.m. until 5.00p.m. and we divide the day into three shifts - 9.00a.m.- 12.00p.m.; 12.00p.m. – 2.30p.m.; 2.30p.m. – 5.00p.m. - which leaves plenty of time for stewards to explore the fun of the fayre. In view of the early start, we set our stand up the afternoon before (Friday 7th) and also need volunteers to help then. We start loading up at our former Dalehouse Lane Apiary at 2.00pm and, as the showground is only a mile or so away, we should be done erecting the marquees etc by about 4.00p.m.

So, if you can possibly spare a couple of hours on either the Friday or the Saturday, please let me know either by completing the form at the following link

<https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSfOhPwu0ghxibpAEL9c3kNV2aVG11HvTHlXAFxiUFg7zuE3eQ/viewform> (preferred) or by e-mailing me at bernardnbrown@outlook.com or by telephoning 01926843416

Oh! and the branch will even reimburse the entry fee for those who sign up for a full shift.

The "Extinction Rebellion" effect is expected to be reflected in the popularity of **the Leamington Peace Festival**, being held in the newly refurbished Pump Room Gardens at the bottom of The Parade, and, with the environmental threats to our girls, is a particularly apposite opportunity for us to promote our craft.

The festival is a two-day event held in the heart of the town and is aimed at people of all ages wanting to find out ways of living life in a more harmonious way with each other and the environment. It provides a mix of family friendly activities, including workshops, talks, free music and other entertainment, vegetarian food stalls, environmentally conscious stands and some "interesting sights and smells"

This event opens at the far more comfortable time of 11.00 a.m. and we usually steward the event in two shifts. In the past our stand has been frenetically beesy and thus, as far as the mantra

"Peace and Love" is concerned, although we can expect very little "Peace" for our stewards rest assured, that the "Love" is unaffected.

The link to volunteer for the Leamington Peace Festival is:-

https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSdnv_14cQShS8isx_VgNJ7Kv_g6clSUHs2dT3T9LfWtirBlcg/viewform or by e-mailing me at bernardnbrown@outlook.com or by telephoning 01926843416 for either of these events.

if you can't volunteer for full shift why not just pop along and chill out.....and, of course, swing by our stand for a chat. Even a quarter of an hour of your time will enable a steward to take a comfort break.

Bernard Brown

Skep making course

In last month's BeeTalk Val and I asked members to indicate an interest in the skep making course we usually run in the Autumn. This enables us to plan the sourcing of materials, make the special tools required, and plan our own activities, like taking a holiday!

Surprisingly there was not a single expression of interest for this normally popular event, usually oversubscribed, and therefore the skep making course will not run this year.

Mike Townsend and Val Dillon



Apiary Sale

Two Ex-Leamington and Warwick members selling their entire bee keeping kit.

Four – six national hives complete with a huge amount of accessories,
Including bee suits, tools, frames etc etc. includes specialist items,
solar wax extractor and national steam wax extractor.

Everything you'd need to start bee keeping tomorrow... except the bees!

Email: dave@specialz.co.uk for a complete listing in PDF format

No reasonable offer refused- would prefer to sell as a job lot.

For Sale

We have a selection of colonies of bees for sale.

2 x full colonies on 14 x 12 frames with 2019 queens

1 x full colony on 14 x 12 frames 2018 queen

1 colony on 14 x 12 frames waiting for queen to mate.

1 x nuc on national frames.

£100. Each

chris@coldhatbour.farm

07802482515

Hints and Tips

- On average rape honey will granulate within 10 days of being sealed in the comb. So watch out for when the yellow flowers fade and harvest it as soon as possible.

As you extract your honey don't forget to think about the **HONEY SHOWS** and save some of the good looking jars for entering. It's really useful to get expert opinion on your produce.

This year the **Branch Honey Show** has a class for wax candles so keep the wax capping's separate, as they are the best for making candles and wax blocks.

There is also a show class for frames ready for extraction.

The judge will be looking for ease of extraction, so no crystallised honey. Freeze the frame to prevent crystallisation.... and don't forget to defrost on 11th September ready for the show on 12th!

The judge will also be looking for evenness, cleanness, flatness, comb proud of the wood for easy decapping, fullness, no travel staining or propolis, woodwork sound and clean.

So quite a lot to think about and remember the branch have frame display boxes available for you to borrow to really set your exhibit off.

If you have any hints or tips that you would like to share, please send them to h.essex@virgin.net...

Thank you Helen Essex

Editor Roger Wilkes, email address is roger.wilkes@kenilworthhoney.co.uk or hard copy can be posted to him at:
12 Mercia Avenue, Kenilworth CV8 1EU. **Content to him for next month by June 28th latest.**

Please send in plain text, unformatted, using Microsoft Word or another common program.

BeeTalk is: Designed, produced, printed and distributed by Roger Wilkes

Warwick and Leamington Branch
of Warwickshire Beekeepers Association
Reg Charity No. 500276 www.warleambees.org.uk