



Warwick and Leamington Branch of Warwickshire Beekeepers

SKEP MAKING DAY Saturday 5TH October 2018



This month saw the return of our annual Skep Making Day at BBKA headquarters.

We had 15 delegates, many who were not from our branch, and some who were not beekeepers. These trainees had found us via our shows or by word of mouth and they made a welcome addition to our group.



The standard this year was exceptional and we can only guess that we have either 'got it right' when it comes to demonstrating our craft, or we had a particularly dextrous group of people to teach.

Everyone went home with a good start to their skeps and a number of trainees have returned for more binder to complete them, giving us the hope that next year we should see a lot of skeps in use, and maybe also on display at our Honey Show in 2019..

So well done to all of those who took part. We had a great time teaching the craft and we hope you enjoyed the day as much as we did.

The Skep Making Team
Mike Townsend
Mary Pemberton
Val Dillon

Bee Keeping Equipment for sale

A few items remain from the sale the items from Bruce Roberts

Stainless bottling tank and filter, 50kg, £80

Thermostatic warming cabinet for buckets or jars, £100

Professionally made large observation hive (holds 2 deep plus 1 shallow frame), £100

If you are interested no reasonable offer will be refused. I can be contacted on 01788 816175 Sandra

County Honey Show 2018

This year the County Honey Show took place at NAEC Stoneleigh under the supervision of WBKA Chairman, David Blower and a team of volunteer coordinators drawn from each branch.

The new venue proved very successful. The large reception area provided ample space for registration and preparation and the display rooms were light and airy. The Novice Classes were judged by Sharif Khan and Douglas Nethercleft in open judging so members could learn firsthand the fine details being looked for. A high number of entries and audience made for a dynamic and very informative session.

The Show Judges appointed for the day were Gerry Collins, Alan Woodward and David Shannon ably assisted by our own stewards. Having judges of this level helps us maintain and improve the standards in Warwickshire in general, and encourages those who wish to show their honey etc. in other competitions around the country

This year's show attracted over 250 entries from 41 members of WBKA. There were five very creative entries in the Branch Composite class themed around '100 years of Suffrage' with our branch taking First Prize worth £50. Many congratulations go once more to Bev Oakley who won the W. Preston Cup for the best Medium Honey and Jane Ford who won First Prize for her Creamed Honey. **Hopefully these successes will encourage more of our members to enter next year.**

Alongside the honey show visitors were able to attend three, free, top class lectures.

Professor Steve Martin presentation on 'Varroa, the ghost in the hive' was nothing short of fascinating! He explained his findings from detailed and involved research in such a way that it was accessible to all. Who would have thought that a simple varroa can alter its chemical identity within 3 hours of changing hive and thus maintain its camouflage, be it on brood or bee?

Kirsty Stainton gave an overview of viral infections and an account of the current research on Chronic Bee Paralysis Virus. Once again we heard that good apiary hygiene by the beekeeper can significantly reduce the transmission of viruses between colonies.

Gerry Collins kept us all entertained after lunch with his humorous account of keeping woodpeckers at bay, recognising and dealing with colonies with laying workers. Techniques of mastering bad tempered bees came along with plenty of anecdotes and some ingenious ways of finding the offending queen ! Thanks go to Celia Davis for the very useful lunchtime session on running Winter Study Groups. There was lots of interest and I am sure we all who attended benefitted from her knowledge and advice.
Helen Essex (Member of the County Honey Show Committee)

CHRISTMAS CARDS ARE HERE AGAIN!

ONCE AGAIN, LINDA CLEMENTS, A TALENTED LOCAL WATERCOLOUR ARTIST, HAS DESIGNED CHRISTMAS CARDS SPECIFICALLY FOR OUR CLUB.



LOVELY CUTE CARDS

TOTALLY UNIQUE

PROFITS TO BEES ABROAD

£6.50 FOR 10

ORDERS TO JANEBROWNJANE@OUTLOOK.COM

For Sale

One unused white hood for BB Wear bee suit, £20.

Please note it is not compatible with suits made by other manufacturers (as I know to my cost - stings on the neck are sore!)

Contact details: bspraggett@btinternet.com or 07976 921146

Hints and Tips

- Unwanted CDs can be put to good use to scare off green woodpeckers. Hang them up close to the hive and their spinning action and reflective properties will deter them especially through the winter months when the ground is frozen. Don't forget to fit the mouse guards.
- An insulating quilt put on top of the crown board can be helpful in maintaining the hive temperature during the winter months. These can be bought specially or made from off cuts of carpet or a carpet tile.
- Cutting pieces of fondant off a block can prove tricky. Here is a suggestion to help. Before you start, place a bowl of hot water and one of hand-hot water within reach and place a length of cling film on a convenient table or worktop. Place your block of fondant on the draining board of the sink partly overhanging the clean and dampened bowl. Take your knife, - we use a stiff bread knife - and dip it in the bowl of hot water. Peel back the blue plastic wrapping on the overhanging bit of fondant and saw away at the fondant with the hot knife returning it to the bowl of hot water to reheat it when the sawing gets tough. Steve Sidaway's tip of allowing the fondant to overhang the bowl causes the cut section to fall away preventing it from re-sealing with the parent block. Place the severed piece of fondant on the cling film and wrap it up ready to be transported to the hive. It is helpful to have the bowl of hand -hot water handy to wash sticky fingers in as you go along.

At the hive score one side of the cling film a couple of times with your hive tool, lift the crown board, add an eke, move the bees away from the top bars and place the fondant scored face down, directly on the top bars over the cluster. Job Done!

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 October 27th latest.**

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

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