



# KENT BEE-KEEPERS' ASSOCIATION

County Newsletter No. 61 May 2012

## Annual General Meeting

The Annual General Meeting of KBKA will be held on Saturday 2nd June 2012 at the Detling Village Hall (near Jade's Crossing on the A249) at 11:30 am or when the Council meeting finishes if later. The formal notice and agenda is given below. The meeting is purely a formality to comply with legal requirements but anyone wishing to attend the AGM is welcome to sit in at the Council meeting as well.

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### KBKA ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

This will be held at the Detling Village Hall, Detling on Saturday, 2<sup>nd</sup> June 2012 at 11.30 a.m. (at the conclusion of the Council meeting)

#### Agenda

1. Apologies for absence
2. Minutes of previous AGM held on Saturday, 28<sup>th</sup> May 2011
3. To elect a President
4. To adopt the Annual Report and Accounts for the year ended 30<sup>th</sup> September 2011
5. To appoint an Independent Examiner for the Accounts in accordance with statutory requirements
6. Any other business

Brian Palmer, having served as President for one year, is eligible for re-election.

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At the Council meeting on 10<sup>th</sup> March all the Executive officers were re-elected:

Chairman:	Clive Watson
Vice-Chairman:	David Wood
Treasurer:	James Cash
General Secretary:	Jenny Spon-Smith
Membership Secretary:	John Hendrie
Examinations Secretary:	Angela Merritt
Committee members:	Peter Hutton, William Mundy, Michael Wall

The current membership is 846 compared with 888 at the same time last year.

### County Show at Detling 13<sup>th</sup> to 15<sup>th</sup> July 2012

If you would like to help to steward this event, please contact Bob Smith and let him know. There will be a rota and normally stints are for two hours but that will depend upon which exhibit you are assisting. Refreshments are being arranged for stewards at a nominal cost.

Please contact Bob Smith on 020 8300 1807 or [bsmith12@ntlworld.com](mailto:bsmith12@ntlworld.com) if you would like to steward indicating your preferred day(s).

## Around the Branches

### Ashford

- 6th May Nick Mengham: Talk and demonstration on using the opportunity of swarming for colony increase or queen rearing
- 10<sup>th</sup> June Bob Smith: demonstrating a shook swarm
- 8<sup>th</sup> July Apiary meeting
- 11<sup>th</sup> August Apiary meeting and tea party
- 1<sup>st</sup> September Honey Show
- 9<sup>th</sup> September Beginners day

Summer meetings are held at South Stour Apiary, Mersham at 2.30 p.m.

### Bromley

Summer meetings are held on the first and third Sunday of the month at 11.30 a.m.

Practical support and queen rearing every Wednesday at 7.00 p.m.

All meetings at the Kent House Road apiary SE26 5LJ.

### Canterbury

Meetings on the first Saturday of each month at 2.30 p.m. at a member's apiary.

### Dartford

- 14 May Procedures for the Basic Assessment: Angela Merritt, KBKA Examination Coordinator
- 9 June Late swarms and treatment: Nick Withers
- 7 July Apiary Open Day to celebrate 100 years of beekeeping in Dartford
- 18 August Disease update and colony inspection: Alan Byham, SE Regional Bee Inspector
- 8 September Bumblebees: Dr Nikki Gammans, Bumblebee Conservation Trust

All meetings to take place at Bedonwell Apiary, Tredagar Allotments, Dartford, from 3-5pm.

### Gravesend

- 20th May Progress inspection of out apiary bees at Cobham Hall 2.00 p.m.
- 9<sup>th</sup> June Bob Smith will demonstrate comb changing and renewal using the shook swarm method 2.00 p.m. venue tba
- 17<sup>th</sup> June Farm open day: Glovers Farm, Hartley Bottom Road, Hartley

### Mid Kent

- 20th May 2.30 p.m. Queen rearing project at apiary
- 17<sup>th</sup> June 2.30 p.m. Possible honey extraction at apiary
- 22nd July 2.00-4.00 p.m. Bumblebee introduction project.  
Meet at classroom at Dungeness RSPB prior to a tour with Dr Nikki Gammans

### Orpington

- 5<sup>th</sup> May Demonstration at Coolings Green & Pleasant, Main Road, Knockholt 1.00-3.00 p.m.

Branch meetings every Saturday at 2.30 p.m. from April to September at the apiary at BEECHE Centre, High Elms

### Sevenoaks and Tunbridge Wells

See website for details of apiary meetings which start at 2.00 p.m. at Barrwood Apiary and Hilbert Road Summer Apiary unless otherwise stated.

### Sidcup

Meetings at Ruxley or Baldwyns Apiary. Please see website for details

### Weald

- 26<sup>th</sup> May Hive inspection and queen rearing with Roger Patterson at his apiary in Sussex

## Westerham

May to July. Summer Garden Meetings at Weekends

Training Apiary for new beekeepers at weekends.

The Training Apiary site near to The Warren Crockham Hill is equipped with several colonies provided by Geoff Close, Sean New and James Cash. The training sessions are usually held on Saturday afternoons from 2.00 p.m. till about 4.00 p.m. dates to be confirmed

## Yalding and District

13th May Bee Fayre and Auction

Monthly meetings on the last Monday of each month take place at The Chequers Inn, Laddingford, ME18 6BP. Meetings start at 8.00 p.m.

**Please also see branch websites for details of branch meetings, lectures and courses.**

## County and other events 2012

Sunday, 13<sup>th</sup> May **Bee Fayre and Auction** 10.00 a.m. to 4.00 p.m.

Following previously successful auctions held by Chris Morris in his Yalding field, the event is being organised this year by the Yalding and District Beekeepers Association

Thursday to Saturday, 7<sup>th</sup> to 9<sup>th</sup> June **South of England Show, Ardingly**

Bees and honey section. For schedule of classes and entry form e-mail Mrs Pauline Sparkes [sparkes-1@tiscali.co.uk](mailto:sparkes-1@tiscali.co.uk) Judge: Rev Francis Capener

Friday to Sunday, 13<sup>th</sup> to 15<sup>th</sup> July **Kent County Show, Detling**

**Stewards are always needed so please make a note of the dates in your diary. To volunteer please contact Bob Smith [bsmith12@ntlworld.com](mailto:bsmith12@ntlworld.com)**

Thursday to Saturday, 25<sup>th</sup> to 27<sup>th</sup> October **81<sup>st</sup> National Honey Show**

St. George's College, Weybridge. The show schedule will be available in August

## The First Cuckoo

**The** last few months, apart from being exceptionally dry, have been unseasonably warm with the warmest February day since records began. Nature gets a little confused when this happens with trees budding early and birds building their nests and thinking about laying eggs. The bees have also enjoyed the warm weather and have been out and about. This means the beekeeper needs to keep a close eye on stores in order to avoid the risk of starvation.

At the Council meeting on 10<sup>th</sup> March, David Wood reported a very early swarm, I think he said on 24<sup>th</sup> February, albeit small, but it did contain a queen. The following day, being another exceptionally warm March day with temperatures well above the minimum recommended for inspections, I went through my own hives and also ten others at Bromley's apiary. Over the years I have been fortunate to have winter colony losses of well below average. My hives are well protected from prevailing winds which I am sure helps but I did lose one out of four this winter, the one which was alongside a nuc containing a queen and only one frame of bees for which I had held out no hope whatsoever but which, as I write, is in good heart and doing very well.

There has been no shortage of pollen and some bees have been returning to my hives looking as if they had been spray painted yellow. Colony inspection showed each hive having 3 frames of sealed brood but one colony also contained three unsealed text book queen cells which I removed and then thought maybe I should have left one. By my calculation the queen was due to emerge around the 20<sup>th</sup> March. I believe Bromley's late apiary manager, Peter Springall, had his earliest queen on the 31<sup>st</sup> March which is all very well but the one thing conspicuous by its absence in all the hives was drones or drone brood. With no drones

anywhere to be seen and no drone brood in the pipeline and assuming the colony did what bees do and swarmed, that rather begs the question how the virgin queen would get mated. No mated queen equals no brood and the colony will die out.

2012 looks to be another difficult year for beekeepers, particularly if there is a shortage of water but birds, plants, mammals etc have an amazing ability to survive and "Nature never did betray the heart that loved her".

*JENNY SPON-SMITH*

**DON'T FORGET to register at BeeBase** and receive information on disease outbreaks in your area:

On line: [www.nationalbeeunit.com](http://www.nationalbeeunit.com)

E-mail: [nbu@fera.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:nbu@fera.gsi.gov.uk)

Telephone: 01904 462510

**AND MAKE SURE YOU CAN RECOGNISE AN ASIAN HORNET**

### **Moving House?**

When you change your address or other details please don't forget to advise your Branch Secretary or Membership Secretary. This information is then passed to John Hendrie. Depending on your membership class, BDI, BBKA and BeeCraft need advising. If his database is not updated, then your incorrect details will be sent on the next update to these organisations.

*JENNY SPON-SMITH*