



Newsletter

December 2016



# Aberdeen and District Beekeepers' Association (SCIO)

- promoting the study and development of apiculture, and advancing the heritage, culture and science of beekeeping amongst its membership and throughout the wider community

Established 1910

Scottish Charity Number SC031754

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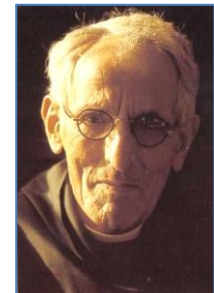
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Back by popular demand -

## THE GREAT BIG FESTIVE QUIZ!

- Q.1: With which piece of equipment is E.C. Porter of Illinois, USA associated?
- Q.2: What are the missing words in this statement? Bees will tend to fill a space of more than 10mm with ..... and less than 6mm with .....
- Q.3: Do drones have wax glands?
- Q.4: Who is the world-famous beekeeper in this photograph?
- Q.5: What is Api-Bioxal used for?
- Q.6: Solve these anagrams to name items of beekeeping equipment:  
a) Helper of Moons (4,4,5)  
b) Oh Vet Oil (4,4)  
c) Able Rod Racer (7,5)  
d) Tree She Harps (7,5)
- Q.7: *Galleria mellonella* would be a very unwelcome guest in your stored brood boxes. What is this pest's common name?
- Q.8: How does a honey bee transport propolis back to the hive?
- Q.9: AFB and EFB are serious brood diseases. Which one usually kills a larva before its cell is sealed, and which one after?
- Q.10: Honey bees continually engage in food sharing. What is the technical term for this?
- Q.11: What is the recommended temperature for storing honey in order to ensure rapid granulation: 14°C, 21°C or 35°C?
- Q.12: Running along each side of a bee's body are 10 small openings called spiracles. What are they for?



The answers are on page 4.

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At the close of another busy year at ADBKA's Crathes apiary, a hardy group of volunteers gathered on a cold November day to clean up and sterilise boxes and frames ready for next season. Thanks to everyone who helped out on our regular Sunday morning work sessions this year.



## TALK:

**WATCH OUT FOR DETAILS in JANUARY'S NEWSLETTER**

Saturday 21 January 2017 at 2.00pm

The Kinellar Community Hall, Fintray Road, Blackburn AB21 0SS

## TALK:

**PREPARATION OF COLONIES FOR GOING TO OIL SEED RAPE**

- Ian Craig

Saturday 18 February 2017 at 2.00pm

The Kinellar Community Hall, Fintray Road, Blackburn AB21 0SS

**SPRING 2017 LECTURE SERIES**

To be held at Aberdeen Grammar School Skene St, Aberdeen AB10 1HT.

- 16 February: The biology of the bee
- 23 February: The beehive
- 02 March: What do I need to keep bees?
- 09 March: The products of the hive
- 16 March: Help! There's something wrong with my bees!
- 23 March: The beekeeping year

Starting each evening at 7.30pm, the six-week programme will cost £15, payable on the first evening of attendance.

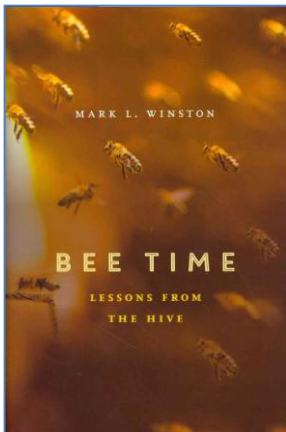
The programme is ideal for those thinking about starting out beekeeping, but would also be of interest to novices preparing to take the next step, or even experienced beekeepers wishing to update their knowledge.

It is our intention to offer attendees the opportunity to take part in hands-on beekeeping sessions at our Crathes apiary on the conclusion of the programme.

**No need to book. Just turn up.**

**A Guardian Book Review**

<https://www.theguardian.com/books/2016/oct/28/bee-time-mark-winston-review>



Mark Winston has spent 30 years studying and working with bees. His book is a passionate celebration of bees, apiaries and honey, as well as a calmly reasoned critique of industrialised farming and a plea to halt the dramatic decline in bee numbers. Sixty five per cent of plant species depend on

bees for pollination: "a world without bees would be almost impossible to contemplate". And yet in the last decade there has been a "precipitous drop" in the number of bees, with US beekeepers now losing 850,000 of their 2.6 million colonies each winter.

Winston blames a perfect storm of factors from the spread of the Varroa mite, the over-use of antibiotics and pesticides on colonies, as well as the spraying of neonicotinoids and other chemicals on crops. Research has found 121 different pesticides within the wax combs of hives, a toxic cocktail that has weakened the immune systems of bees. Winston sees their demise as a sign that our food systems are on the brink of collapse: "bees may be the canary in the agricultural mine". A wonderfully rich insight into the imperilled world of the bee. **PD Smith**

*Thanks to John Cooper for this item.*

**MANUKA MADNESS**

The worldwide craze for manuka honey has led to a crime wave in New Zealand. In one case, 300 colonies were poisoned in an attempt by rivals to corner a market which has seen the price of manuka honey almost triple over the past few years.

In its in-depth coverage of the story, the Guardian reports that, "On the back of the boom, hive thefts, vandalism and poisonings have become standard fare, with every beekeeper interviewed for this article the victim of one or more serious crimes. Verbal threats and physical beatings have also been reported and there are unconfirmed reports that beekeepers now travel in packs for protection to work remote hives."

Read more at <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2016/nov/04/manuka-honey-wars-new-zealand-crime-booming-industry-poisoning-beatings>

Meanwhile, the Unique Manuka Factor (UMF) Honey Association, which represents New Zealand's producers, is challenging the right of Tregothnan Estate in Cornwall to market their product as manuka honey. The story is covered by the New Zealand Herald at [http://www.nzherald.co.nz/business/news/article.cfm?c\\_id=3&objectid=11742109](http://www.nzherald.co.nz/business/news/article.cfm?c_id=3&objectid=11742109)

Undaunted, the English company is marketing its 420g jars of manuka honey at £225 each! No kidding. See <https://tregothnan.co.uk/search/manuka-honey-limited-edition-420g-jar.php>

## ADBKA SOCIAL EVENING

On the evening of Saturday the 26<sup>th</sup> of November members of the Aberdeen & District Beekeepers Association met for our annual social event which this year was held in Kingswells church hall.

About forty members gathered to share some food and drink, have a chat and plan for our even better beekeeping year next year. The food and drink followed the successful formula that was established previously and took the form of an 'American Supper' where members take along food and drink to share; this year's event was no exception. Such was the quantity and quality of food and drink on offer we could have stayed and dined from it for the next two weeks. It was evident that people had spent a considerable amount of time preparing the bounty. One eye catching display was presented on a platter which must have been just short of two feet in length and worthy of an entry to Masterchef. If next year's event is similar then a few pictures of the food on offer would be interesting to see for the members who cannot make it to the event.

This year's event saw the introduction of the Bee..tle drive which is a game where everyone participates having being split into groups of four with the winner and loser from each group moving tables to the adjacent groups. The game can be played by all abilities and allows the entire membership to disseminate and intermingle as the game is played out. It was a great success and allows everyone to meet people they may have only viewed through a veil and above a colony of feisty bees.

As part of our social evening the trophies for the honey show winners were presented. The winners and indeed the members who take the trouble to prepare and show their products at our annual honey show are to be congratulated; some of these entries take a whole year in their preparation. I myself have been advised by Sandy Gordon that 'you need to start preparing an entry months in advance for the honey show and select the nectar source, bees and frames specifically for the show.' I should add that it also takes a fair degree of self-restraint also when preparing mead for the show.

It goes without saying that all prize winners are at the top of their game and the winners were published in last month's newsletter. There were a couple of trophy recipients that stood out in particular to me. First was Jenny Lewis who won the trophy for the most points in the novice class and the trophy for the most points in the show, I think it must be quite unique for someone to win both of these trophies in the same year and suspect and hope that Jenny may be a regular contributor and prize winner in future honey shows.

The next award that stood out for me was awarded to James Friend for the best exhibit of cut comb and the best exhibit in the light honey member's class, when James received his trophy he asked if he could say a few words and in doing so he thanked Jock McGregor for his help and support with his beekeeping and suggested his success in winning the categories was largely down to the knowledge that Jock has been generous enough to offer him over the years.

During our social evening an opportunity is taken to present certificates to members that have completed SBA examinations (see picture). Although it is fair to say there are many great beekeepers that have never sat any formal examinations, as there is in most professions. By studying for the exams it is a relatively quick way to gain some of the knowledge than may have taken decades for others to learn through trial and error. It may be relatively quick but it is by no means easy. The knowledge these studious people gain through their hard work can only be of benefit to the membership as a whole.

Recipients of the Basic Beemaster certificates were: Jenny Lewis, Erling Watt, Yvonne Seed, Joan Gilbert-Stevens and Kathryn Seed.

Recipients of the SBA modular exam certificates were:

Phillip Barlow – Module 1 – Honey Bee Management; David Morland – Module 2 – Honey Bee Products and Forage; Helen Gooday – Module 3 – Diseases Pests and Poisoning; Ian Mackley – Module 3 - Diseases Pests and Poisoning; Rosie Crighton Module 5 - Honey Bee Biology; Kitta Potgieter – Module 5 – Honey Bee Biology; Malcolm Watson – Module 6 – Honey Bee Behaviour; Malcolm Watson – Intermediate Certificate for completion of 4 Modules; David Morland – Microscopy

With this poor season in mind it is heartening to see so many members contributing to and therefore supporting the honey show. Another indication of the health of the association can be seen from the number of members that are seeking to further their knowledge by sitting the SBA exams.

From what I can see the health of the Aberdeen and District Beekeepers Association is looking exceptionally good and we should look forward to 2017 in the full expectation that it will be an even better beekeeping year.



*Lindsey MacAuley*





### Aberdeen Bee Supplies

Jock McGregor is the local agent for Thorne Beekeeping Equipment. Contact him on 01224 790468 or e-mail: [aberdeenbeesupplies@hotmail.com](mailto:aberdeenbeesupplies@hotmail.com)

**9-FRAME RADIAL EXTRACTOR** (electric) – FOR HIRE £10 per hire period

**STEAM WAX MELTER** – available ON LOAN £10 deposit

Both items available from: Jock McGregor, 11 Marcus Road, Blackburn. Tel. 01224 790468

### QUIZ ANSWERS

Q.1: The Porter bee escape:

Q.2: “comb”; “propolis”

Q.3: No

Q.4: Karl Kehrlé, aka Brother Adam

Q.5: Controlling *Varroa* mites

Q.6: a) Open Mesh Floor; b) Hive Tool; c) Clearer Board; d) Heather Press

Q.7: Greater wax moth

Q.8: In lumps attached to the pollen baskets or corbiculae on the outside of its hind legs

Q.9: EFB - before the brood cell is sealed; AFB - after the brood cell is sealed

Q.10: Trophallaxis

Q.11: 14°C

Q.12: Breathing through



*The Newsletter apologises to Mr Tait for the delay in publishing his advert. It was originally submitted in 1890!*

### Buzzing Off

After five-and-a-half years of producing ADBKA's monthly newsletter, my ink has run out. Having also served on the committee for the same length of time, and since May 2014 as Chair, I am stepping down from all of these roles at the end of this month. Similarly, I will no longer be active in running the Crathes apiary next season.

I'm happy to report that the members of our fantastic committee have rallied to ensure that normal service will continue, only better!

It has been a great pleasure and privilege to have been so involved with the work of our association over this time, and I thank everyone who has helped me in the tasks I have carried out. I will still be an active member and enthusiastic supporter of ADBKA and look forward to seeing old friends and meeting new beekeepers at future events.

*Graham Torrie*

Research into the effect on bumble bees of the neonicotinoid pesticide Imidacloprid has found that exposure to infra-red light can correct brain deficits in the bees caused by the chemical. For more details, see <http://journals.plos.org/plosone/article?id=10.1371/journal.pone.0166531>

*Thanks to Ian Murray for this item.*



### According to.....

..... the British Bee Journal of 1890: "**SWEET-LIPPED FARM SERVANTS** - In the Aberdeen Sheriff Court, before Sheriff Brown, Archibald Skene, farm-servant, White-hills, Monymusk, was charged with having, on the 18th ult., stolen 20 lbs. of honey from two hives in the garden of Glenton Croft, Monymusk, belonging to Robert May, and with having destroyed the honey. He pleaded guilty to the charge of having destroyed the honey, and this was accepted. Mr Simpson, on behalf of the accused, said this was one of those foolish escapades that country lads indulged in. He had got a little drink, and went and unfortunately destroyed the honey. He was only seventeen years of age. The Sheriff: 'Did he receive no punishment on the occasion?' - (laughter) Mr Simpson: 'Yes, my lord, he was pretty well stung.' - (renewed laughter) The Fiscal: 'Then the punishment was not very equally distributed. There were two others with the accused, and they were sick for two days from eating the honey.' - (laughter) The Sheriff, having remarked that it was fortunate for the accused that the Procurator-Fiscal had seen it to be his duty not to press the charge of theft, ordered Skene to pay 10s., or go to prison for three days."