

Newsletter

March 2013



Aberdeen and District Beekeepers' Association

Established 1910

Scottish Charity Number SCO31754

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Rosie Crighton
Secretary, Aberdeen Beekeepers

Dear Rosie

I have been handed by Alex Grant of Oldmeldrum your latest newsletter asking for information on Captain Alexander Manson. It depends how much you want!!

He was my Father. Born in 1887. Died 1965. I think my Mother presented the trophy to yourselves shortly thereafter.

Father was an extremely keen beekeeper from an early age having been taught by his mother (b.1850) and he kept records throughout his formative years. He was called up in 1914 and lost his right arm at the Somme in 1916. This rendered him incapable of lifting things with only one arm. We five children acted when necessary as his other arm which included a lot around the hives!! Me being the youngest (b. 1931) probably endured the most. I will never forget having to climb trees to skep swarms in my short breeks. I hated it!! Having to smoke a cigar at a tender age is another matter! He was immune to stings. I was not!! Having lost an arm, the WD provided him with several aids, one of which was a clamp with which he could lift a comb from a frame single handedly.

When my Father died my first move was to dispose of the bees. I contacted Mr Deans of the College of Agriculture and he removed them to Craibstone shortly thereafter. The "hardware" was collected by another beekeeper, John Ellis, a shoemaker from Kitty Brewster.

My Mother, Isobel Manson MBE presented the trophy.

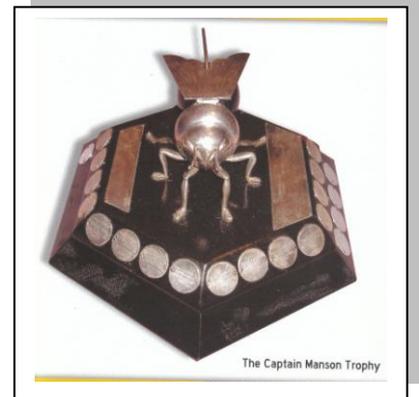
Father was an adviser with the Agricultural College for subjects which included beekeeping. He had a magic lantern with a collection of glass slides on the subject. It was during that time that he met my mother who was a fellow adviser on dairy matters. They shared a motorbike!! I have several of his records which you are welcome to view.

Yours sincerely, A R Manson

This fascinating letter was received from Alexander Manson of Oldmeldrum following our recent articles on the Captain Manson Trophy, awarded each year at our Honey Show for most points in the industrial class.

The vivid picture painted by Mr Manson brings together his own family history with the momentous social events of the time, as well as the story of beekeeping in the North East in the first half of the 20th century.

We are very grateful indeed to Mr Manson for sharing his memories with us.



The Captain Manson Trophy

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Spring 2013
Convention

See page 2.

Important Notice: Subscriptions

Some members still have to renew their subscriptions for 2013. If you need another copy of the subscription renewal form, please contact the Secretary or the Treasurer.

Benefits of membership include: Introduction to Beekeeping education programme; monthly newsletter; regular meetings; practical sessions; free loan of honey extraction equipment; free loan of beekeeping books and videos; public and product liability insurance cover; discounts on honey jars and bee healthcare products

Please note that ADBKA membership will lapse for those members who have not renewed their subscription by 31 March.

**TALK:
BEEKEEPING IN SCOTLAND
TODAY**

**Phil McAnespie, President of the
Scottish Beekeepers' Association**

Saturday 23 March at 2.00pm
The Kinellar Community Hall
Fintray Road
Blackburn AB21 0SS

**ASSOCIATION OUTING TO BBKA
SPRING CONVENTION**

Saturday 13 April
Harper Adams University,
Newport,
Shropshire
Contact Stephen Palmer on 01888 551367
or Rosie Crighton on 01224 791181
*See below

- **WORKSHOP: ASSEMBLY OF FLAT
PACK KIT, ETC.**
- **APIARY SPRING INSPECTION**

Saturday 27 April at 10.00am
Association Apiary, SAC, Craibstone, AB21 9YA

**SBA NUCLEUS CREATION
WORKSHOP**

8 June 2013
Moray BKA Apiary
Contact Tony Harris at
tonyharris316@btinternet.com
NB - £20 fee to cover costs

***Don't miss the chance to join a group of ADBKA members on a trip to the British Beekeepers' Association Spring Convention.**

Beekeepers from all over the UK and many from overseas will gather on Saturday the 13th of April at Harper Adams University in Newport, Shropshire for a day of lectures, workshops, demonstrations and a trade exhibition drawing a host of suppliers of beekeeping material and equipment from Britain and beyond.

The full Spring Convention programme can be downloaded from
http://www.bbka.org.uk/files/library/30686_bbka_complete_vf_1358367221.pdf

Alternatively, you can call the BBKA Head Office on 0871 811 2282 or 0871 811 2337

To find out more about the trip, call Stephen Palmer on 01888 551367 or Rosie Crighton on 01224 791181.

Press Release

February 27th 2013

MAQS[®] Beehive Strip has received registration in the United Kingdom for beekeeper's use. It has received approval by VMD (Veterinary Medical Department).

The beekeepers of the United Kingdom now have a new tool to combat the most serious threat to its honeybees, the Varroa destructor parasitic mite. Left untreated, Varroa mites will transmit viruses that weaken a honeybee colony. Millions of colonies across Europe have died in recent years from this parasitic mite.

MAQS[®] is a saccharide gel strip formulation of formic acid, an effective active ingredient that is naturally occurring in honey. Because the Varroa mites reproduce on the developing baby bee, transmitting viruses that deform the bee, their control is being approached as a brood disease. The saccharide gel formic acid vapours released from the saccharide gel strip penetrate the brood cap, stopping the mite where it reproduces. The initial target was the male mite, which never leaves the brood cell. However, trials show that it is also very effective on all stages of the female mite. It is the first mite treatment to successfully target Varroa mite reproduction.

The concept of MAQS[®] Beehive Strip was first developed in Canada, by NOD Apiary Products Ltd. operating in the UK as NOD Europe. NOD's personnel worked with BASF's scientists to overcome technical barriers, the solution to which was BASF's biodegradable and compostable film Ecoflex[®]. The resulting treatment is just 7 days.

The physical product will be available in the UK from early April 2013

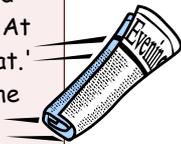
We received this press release from E. H Thorne (Beehives) Ltd and BCW Agriculture Ltd. Please note that the ADBKA does not endorse any specific product or supplier.

There's an interesting e-mail doing the rounds concerning **honey and cinnamon**. It claims that the combination can be taken to cure heart disease, arthritis, bladder infections, high cholesterol, colds, upset stomach, gas, immune system problems, indigestion, influenza, cancer (call the Daily Mail!), pimples, skin infections, fatigue, bad breath, hearing loss, as well as aid weight reduction and longevity.

Following extensive testing conducted on your behalf by your newsletter editor, only one thing can be said for sure: it's great on toast!

Members will be aware that the disease *Nosema Apis* has plagued our bees for a very long time. Now a potentially more serious threat, *Nosema Ceranae*, has been confirmed as being widespread throughout Scotland. Dr Christopher Connolly of the University of Dundee says 'There are two possibilities. Either the parasite came in a long time ago and has gone unnoticed because it's fairly innocuous. Or it has come in more recently, spread very rapidly and could be a more serious problem. At the moment it's an unknown threat.'

You can read more about it on the Planet Earth website at <http://planetearth.nerc.ac.uk/news/story.aspx?id=1367&cookieConsent=A>



For your delight.....

TELLING THE BEES

BY JOHN GREENLEAF WHITTIER 1807–1892

Here is the place; right over the hill
Runs the path I took;
You can see the gap in the old wall still,
And the stepping-stones in the shallow brook.

There is the house, with the gate red-barred,
And the poplars tall;
And the barn's brown length, and the cattle-yard,
And the white horns tossing above the wall.

There are the beehives ranged in the sun;
And down by the brink
Of the brook are her poor flowers, weed-o'errun,
Pansy and daffodil, rose and pink.

A year has gone, as the tortoise goes,
Heavy and slow;
And the same rose blows, and the same sun glows,
And the same brook sings of a year ago.

There 's the same sweet clover-smell in the breeze;
And the June sun warm
Tangles his wings of fire in the trees,
Setting, as then, over Fernside farm.

I mind me how with a lover's care
From my Sunday coat
I brushed off the burrs, and smoothed my hair,
And cooled at the brookside my brow and throat.

Since we parted, a month had passed,—
To love, a year;
Down through the beeches I looked at last
On the little red gate and the well-sweep near.

As usual, the press has been busy reporting and commenting on the question of whether **neonicotinoid pesticides** are harming bees and other pollinators. The *Guardian's* environment reporter has condemned what he sees as the UK Government's "complacency" over the issue - http://www.guardian.co.uk/environment/damian-carrington-blog/2013/mar/01/bees-pesticide-neonicotinoids?CMP=tw_twd

At the same time, a Cambridge University scientist has criticised the *Guardian*, which, she said, "mangled my parliamentary evidence on moths and beetles to claim that three-quarters of all UK pollinator species, including bees, were in severe decline" -

<http://www.nature.com/news/bees-lies-and-evidence-based-policy-1.12443>

Meanwhile, Dr Connolly features again in the *Scotsman's* report on the contrast between colony losses in the east and the west of Scotland. As the lead researcher at the University of Dundee he is reported as saying that he believes nicotine-based pesticides, neonicotinoids, may be contributing to the deaths of bees feeding on the crop, which is more commonly grown in the east -

<http://www.scotsman.com/news/environment/honey-bee-survival-rate-better-in-west-of-scotland-1-2807966>



I can see it all now,—the slantwise rain
Of light through the leaves,
The sundown's blaze on her window-pane,
The bloom of her roses under the eaves.

Just the same as a month before,—
The house and the trees,
The barn's brown gable, the vine by the door,—
Nothing changed but the hives of bees.

Before them, under the garden wall,
Forward and back,
Went drearily singing the chore-girl small,
Draping each hive with a shred of black.

Trembling, I listened: the summer sun
Had the chill of snow;
For I knew she was telling the bees of one
Gone on the journey we all must go!

Then I said to myself, "My Mary weeps
For the dead to-day:
Haply her blind old grandsire sleeps
The fret and the pain of his age away."

But her dog whined low; on the doorway sill,
With his cane to his chin,
The old man sat; and the chore-girl still
Sung to the bees stealing out and in.

And the song she was singing ever since
In my ear sounds on:—
"Stay at home, pretty bees, fly not hence!
Mistress Mary is dead and gone!"

Notice Board



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

Aberdeen Bee Supplies

Jock McGregor is the local agent for Thorne Beekeeping Equipment.

Contact him on 01224 790468 or e-mail:

AberdeenBeeSupplies@hotmail.com

In a Scottish Wildlife Trust talk entitled, 'Honey Bees', Dr. Ewan Campbell of the University of Aberdeen will be giving an update on the progress of research into 'gene knockdown' as a method of tackling Varroa. The talk, which is open for anyone to attend, is on Thursday 21st March at 7:30pm in the Main Lecture Theatre, Zoology Building, Tillydrone Avenue, Aberdeen.

For sale: an old, but very clean and functional, Thorne's tin-coated steel 4-frame honey extractor, together with double strainer, selection of buckets etc. Would suit a beginner who doesn't wish to sell his/her honey. Also, a beige bee suit (with fencing veil) a smoker, leather gloves and some beekeeping books, etc. Contact Peter Sykes on 019755 62817

Busy Bee? Car registration number B15E BE

Call Carole on 07742285466

Bees for sale: 3 hives of bees, last year's queens.

Phone Charlie Robb on 01771 637515

The Scottish Beekeepers' Association will once again have a presence at the **Royal Highland Show**, which takes place at Ingliston Show Ground, west of Edinburgh, from 20-23 June. The SBA has asked for volunteers to staff the bee tent. If you can help out, contact our SBA representative, Stephen Palmer, on 01888 551367.

Honey Jar Store



At the Persley Bridge roundabout, turn onto Laurel Drive. Continue for about half a mile. Look for Laurel Place on your right (it is a semi-circle so take the second entrance into this street).

Now turn left into Laurel Avenue. Danestone Market Garden is signposted, on the left, about 100 yards along.

The store is open between 6.30pm and 8pm on Wednesday evenings and at other times by arrangement with Sandy Gordon (Tel: 01224 484540).

For the loan items, a returnable £10 deposit is required, with the maximum length of loan being two weeks.

Ragus Candy ✓
 Apistan - 10 strips, sufficient for 5 hives ✓
 Ambrosia Syrup ✓
 Honey Jars and Lids ✓
 Mesh Floors - National size (wire only) ✓
 Hessian Squares for smoker fuel ✓
Free loan:
 Honey extractors ✓
 Mini-melters ✓
 Heather honey press ✓
 Wax extractor ✓
 Wax foundation press ✓

According to.....

.....Hilda Ransome in her 1937 book *The Sacred Bee in Ancient Times and Folklore*, "Bees are also informed of baptism or marriage. In these cases the hives are decorated with red or other bright-coloured cloths, and in some parts with a piece of the wedding dress and in Normandy and Guernsey with a piece of white linen. In parts of Brittany at any great rejoicing or when there was an especially good harvest a red ribbon was placed on each hive."