



**JANUARY  
2018**

# 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*

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**FUTURE ARTICLES**

**MEET THE  
COMMITTEE  
MEMBERS**

**MY BEEKEEPING  
YEAR**

(Murray McGregor)

**ADBKA SOCIAL  
EVENING**

in November 2017

## MEET THE ADBKA COMMITTEE MEMBERS

**Olya Macaulay – committee member since May 2016,  
now ADBKA newsletter co-editor.**

In the spring of 2017 terrorists detonated a bomb within the Moscow Underground; the carnage resulted in the deaths and severe injury of many innocent victims as they went about their daily lives. Following the atrocity the Russian President, Vladimir Putin announced that no stones would be left unturned to hunt down the perpetrators and they could expect to receive the full wrath of the law. Theresa May joined other world leaders in condemning the outrage and promised the full support from the finest intelligence and armed services that the world has ever seen.



Ten days latter Olya Macaulay flew via London Heathrow to Moscow airport on her way to Sochi to visit her parents. Security within the airport was at a very high level with armed guards stationed at key locations. Passenger's luggage was scanned individually in the presence of immigration officers and armed guards, when the passenger in front of Olya had been thoroughly checked she was then invited to step forward

and present her luggage for inspection.

Olya's luggage was passed through the airport scanner and what was detected inside raised the already tense environment to a whole new level; the scanner detected that Olya was carrying 15 kg of plastic explosives within her luggage. The airport security flew into action like a well-oiled machine and Olya was quickly separated from the main passenger stream from the aircraft and escorted to a secure area in the presence of armed guards and immigration officers.

Top level calls were made to Heathrow security officials to determine how they had allowed such a blatant security breach to happen; red faced officials in London immediately began to track Olya's route within the U.K. to uncover the source of the terrorists lair.

Within the secure area of Moscow airport Olya's luggage was further checked for booby traps before the three, square plastic containers containing the plastic explosive were removed from her case and gingerly inspected. The armed security official slowly peeled back the lid and was relieved to find each box contained 5kg of the finest Heather Honey.

Olya showed the security official pictures of her beekeeping activities she was carrying to show to her parents, the final test was conducted when the official tasted the finest product of the Aberdeenshire Highland glens.

As can be appreciated there was relief all round, the security officials were good natured enough to show Olya a radar image of the heather honey that she was transporting within the three plastic containers that are supplied from association supplies with candy bee food. The radar image was compared to an image they had of plastic explosives and the resemblance was uncanny. A call was made to London to explain the situation followed by a quick call to the Kremlin where permission was granted for Olya to continue her journey and her parents received the full 15 kg of Heather Honey.

**Lindsey Macaulay**

**In case you're wondering, the above did actually happen:**

I originate from the Caucasus region of southern Russia- resort town of Sochi which has a sub-tropical climate and not the frozen north that people associate with Russia. In the Caucasus region beekeeping is very popular and many large scale bee farms exist there where they harvest nectar and breed bees for export around the world. Whilst growing up there my parents were and still are honey lovers and still consume it in a big amount, buying the 3 kg jars, which is a traditional container in Russia for many products. In recent years I have taken honey to my parents and other family members in Sochi where they have enjoyed Aberdeenshire heather honey. I did carry 15 kg of honey on one trip to the great shock and amusement of customs officers.



My beekeeping career started about six years ago with my husband, we now manage about fifty colonies based in Hazlehead park and on Dunecht estates. This year we intend to scale back to about twenty or thirty colonies to ease the workload.

We support the local events that are organised by Aberdeen City Council and this year we were invited to attend the Aberdeen Fine Food Xmas market which was open to local food and drink producers for the first time. In addition I was invited to present to the judges of this year's Britain in Bloom competition.

We also exhibit our bees to school children at events within Hazlehead park and Duthie park and this year we were invited to participate at a schools open day at Dunecht estate. We support local shows including Echt show and Echt RHS flower show and we have participated in Environment day within Duthie park since its inception.

Our association held its first honey show at the RHS flower show at Duthie park in 1910 and we are proud to continue to support RHS Flower show at Duthie park for the last few years.

**Olya Macaulay**

**Should you have the subject of an article that you think may be of interest to our members then give me a call on 01224 315276.**

**MY BEEKEEPING YEAR**  
**By Murray McGregor, Professional Bee farmer.**

**A series of articles based on interviews with Murray Macgregor  
by Lindsey and Olya Macaulay.**

**March – April - May**

In March we trickle feed the breeding hives with one gallon of syrup fed with an Ashcroft type feeder, the breeding hives are ones we use to produce future Queen eggs and cells. We choose a good day in March to open up the hives and put the feeds on.

We do not feed bee supplements of any kind due to the risk of the bees developing dysentery and staining the hives and frames. Neither do we feed pollen patties because we do not see any significant difference between bees that are fed pollen patties and those that are not.

Colonies that are over wintered in England develop almost two to three weeks ahead of the colonies that we over winter in Scotland. Before we move these colonies we check them briefly to verify the Queen is laying. The English units are then moved to approximately thirty locations to pollinate the cherry blossom, apples and pears and then the oil seed rape.

When the weather permits at the beginning of April we check through the colonies and find and mark the Queens and clip one of its wings, this is the first time after the winter that we shall go through the brood frames of our over wintered stocks. Prior to this we keep disturbance to a minimum. These inspections take place over a ten day period.

We colour code our production Queens with the international colour code dependant on the year of Blue 2015, White 2016, Yellow 2017, Red 2018, Green 2019. The Queens that come from the bee unit we mark in a parallel colour code such as purple 2015, silver 2016, orange 2017, pink 2018 and gold 2019.

We inspect the hives for bee capacity and disease and if necessary we'll move brood frames from a strong hive to support a weaker colony. Colonies with six frames of bees we'll add a Queen excluder and a super.

We will swap positions between strong and weak colonies to allow both to build up equally as part of our pre-season colony management.

Any colonies we find that are Queenless or drone layers we'll shake the bees out from the hive and frames and take the empty equipment away.

WE aim to inspect all colonies and allocate approximately ten days to complete this task.

We try to simplify our record keeping so that a multinational work force can understand what is going on inside the hive.

We do not keep paper records instead we mark the outside of the hive with a coloured pen, using our special code of letters.

We use the letters LYQC on the outside of the hive to indicate a healthy Queen right colony.

When the colony is first set up we use the letters QC to indicate a Queen cell is present within the hive. We use numbers to indicate the first season of the new queen. The mark is written with a coloured pen on the outside of the hive, the pen colour changes as the year changes and we never use black because it stays there for a long period of time.

Over a period of years our hives have unique markings on the outside front face of the hives which makes the hive distinctive and may help the bees locate their own hive when they return to it.

On our next inspection we may see a young Queen that has not mated and has not started to lay eggs and therefore we put a letter V in front of the letters QC which now indicates that within the hive there is a virgin Queen.

**To be continued...**

## SPRING 2018 LECTURE SERIES

Each year Aberdeen Beekeepers run a series of evening classes intended for beginners. The classes are open to all, and there is no obligation to become a beekeeper or to join the association afterwards. Some people just want to learn more about the fascinating world of the honey bee.

However, those who do wish to progress will be given sufficient knowledge and practical skills to start on this popular hobby in a way which is both enjoyable and mindful of the bees' needs.

The classes will take place in the lecture theatre at Aberdeen Grammar, Skene Street AB10 1HT, on seven Thursday evenings, commencing 15th February at 7:30pm.

### PROGRAMME:

<b>15 February:</b>	<b>The Life of the honey Bee.</b>
<b>22 February:</b>	<b>The Hive and the Apiary</b>
<b>01 March:</b>	<b>Equipment, Bees and getting started?</b>
<b>08 March:</b>	<b>Products of the hive</b>
<b>15 March:</b>	<b>Help! There's something wrong with my bees!</b>
<b>22 March:</b>	<b>The beekeeping year</b>
<b>29 March:</b>	<b>Practical: Assembly of Hive Parts.</b>

Starting each evening at 7.30pm and ending at 9:00p.m, the seven-week programme will cost £10 for ADBKA members who joined in 2017 or earlier and £30 for non-members and new ADBKA members who join in 2018, payable on the first evening of attendance.

Pupils in full time education and who are ADBKA members can attend free of charge. If space is limited then priority shall be given to ADBKA members. The lecture series is open to people of all ages to attend.

Upon successful attendance of these series of lectures it is our intention to offer attendees, who are ADBKA members, the opportunity to take part in hands-on beekeeping sessions at our Crathes apiary. These hands-on beekeeping sessions shall continue until you have the confidence to obtain and look after your own colony of bees with the backup from more experienced beekeepers when required.

Fees will be collected at the start of the first class (cash or cheque only) but attendees are requested to register in advance by contacting David Morland on 07768244420 or davidmorland64@gmail.com or Middle Ardo, Udney, Ellon AB41 6QX

### ADBKA AGM

We are holding the AGM earlier in 2018 than in previous years. The thinking is to combine it with one of the winter lectures so that attendees can enjoy getting together for a beekeeping meeting without worrying so much about what needs done in the garden or the apiary!

**Our AGM will be held at Kinellar Hall Blackburn at 2pm on Saturday 3<sup>rd</sup> March.**

After the 2017 reports, all positions on the committee will be up for election or re-election. Any member wishing to put themselves (or another member with that member's agreement) forward for election to the committee is requested to notify the Secretary in writing at least one week before the AGM.

On conclusion of the formal business, members will be entertained by Graeme Sharpe from the SAC with a talk about swarm prevention and control.

#### FEBRUARY

**Saturday the 10<sup>th</sup> at 2p.m.,**

Kinellar Hall, Blackburn

Lecture – **The SBA Exam System** By Graham Torrie

#### MARCH,

**Saturday the 24<sup>th</sup> at 10 a.m.**

Venue to be announced later

**SBA EXAMS**

**To everybody living near our Crathes apiary,**

the Co-op Local Community Fund is now open for members to choose and give their 1% to Aberdeen & District Beekeepers Association. This funding period is for 11 months until the 27 October 2018.

As I understand it, the fund-raising is very local and only open to people living within a 15-mile radius of Crathes Castle. If you're in that area, please register an online account with the Co-op and then choose ADBKA as your chosen charity to support.

**Kitta Potgieter**

**IMPORTANT NOTICE:  
SUBSCRIPTIONS**

Some members still have to renew their subscriptions for 2018. If you are in that position, you will have received a further copy of the subscription renewal form with this or previous newsletter.

Benefits of membership include: Introduction to Beekeeping education programme; monthly newsletter; regular meetings; practical sessions; free loan of honey extraction and other equipment; free loan of beekeeping books and videos; 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.**

**ASSOCIATION SUPPLIES**

Syrup - 14kg containers at £15.50

Fondant - 2.5kg packs - with 5 x packs being in a box - cost each is £3 pack or £15 for the box of 5 packs

We are also including in our stock Candapoline Gold Pollen in 1kg packs - those will sell for £4 for 1kg pack or if anyone wants a box of 12 x 1kg packs that is slightly cheaper at £42 for a box of 12 x 1kg packs

There is still Regus Candy available in 2.5kg tubs at £6 tub or £24 box a box with 4 x tubs

We will be placing an order for jars later in the year and if any member is interested in small 1/2lb jars can they send a note to me at [craigmill@btinternet](mailto:craigmill@btinternet) and I can ensure that we have those also available

**Contact: Joan Gilbert-Stevens 019755 81369**

**[craigmill@btinternet.com](mailto:craigmill@btinternet.com)**

**MUIR OF FOWLIS AB33 8NX**

**FOR SALE**

A large quantity of melted bees wax. I also have a number of colonies for sale which are all in good health and are on BS frames. Price can be negotiated on both items. Bees have all been treated for Varroa.

Contact Sandy Watson

Tel.: 01224868370 or 07856653419.

**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)**

**HEALTHY 'BEES' PROJECT**

Members who read the SBA magazine will have noticed in the December edition an article about the healthy 'BEES' (bee education in Scotland) project. Tony Harris of Moray Beekeepers has obtained government funding to provide reasonably priced practical and theoretical training to Scottish beekeepers at intermediate and advanced level.



The plan is to offer eight two-day courses each year, and the subjects are :

Integrated Pest management

Plants and Balanced Nutrition

Handling Skills (intermediate and advanced)

Honeybee Management

Honeybee Behaviour

Swarm Control

Queen Rearing and Nucleus Making

Bee Farming – moving from hobbyist to professional

Tony is an experienced and passionate instructor. This is quality training and should help those who wish to improve their beekeeping skills and those taking SBA modules. The 2018 programme is nearly finalised - each course will be hosted by a different Beekeeping Association, and ADBKA are hoping to host the botany course scheduled for 18<sup>th</sup>-19<sup>th</sup> August.

Synopsis and dates are available from the Moray Beekeepers website [www.moraybeekeepers.co.uk](http://www.moraybeekeepers.co.uk) where there is also an online booking system (note : each course is restricted to 12 participants).

**Tony Harris**