



**FEBRUARY
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

**SPRING LECTURE
SERIES**

(Lindsey Macaulay)

**MENTORING AND
SELECTING YOUR
BEES**

(David Morland)

MY BEEKEEPING YEAR

(Murray McGregor)

25TH NOVEMBER 2017 ADBKA SOCIAL EVENING AND PRESENTATION OF HONEY SHOW TROPHIES.

The ADBKA social evening was held in Kingswells church hall. The evening was organised along the lines of an American supper. Members were invited to bring along food and drink which was laid out for all to share.



For the first time a raffle was organised which had gifts donated by



our friends and suppliers.

In addition there were duplicate association beekeeping books for participants to win during the raffle.

This year the event was organised by Jenny Lewis and Alison Goss who both did a sterling job and the event was enjoyed by all.

Lindsey Macaulay

On Saturday the 10th of February Graham Torrie conducted a presentation and quiz about the SBA exam system. Our thanks go to Graham for a very informative afternoon and to Margaret McGregor for providing the refreshments. 16 people attended.

All but one was an ADBKA member and all but two were also SBA members. Four people were also members of the SNHBS.

Malcolm Watson

**AN APPRECIATION OF COMMITTEE MEMBER,
BARBARA CRUDEN.**

After a long stint of membership, Barbara has decided to step down from ADBKA's committee.

Not only has Barbara served actively on our committee, but over a period approaching three decades has contributed significantly to ADBKA's work in numerous ways.

First and foremost she has been our long-standing honey show convenor, and not only organised the show year after year with her trademark professional efficiency, but also, on the day of the show, opened her home and provided lunchtime hospitality for the honey judge and the show stewards.

In a similar way, on numerous occasions, Barbara has provided accommodation and hospitality for visiting guest speakers. Beyond that Barbara has made her home available to provide facilities for ADBKA members to sit SBA exams, and in recent years has also hosted some ADBKA committee meetings.

For several years Barbara served as Treasurer for the SBA, and thereby made a significant contribution to beekeeping at a national level as well as here in the north east.

In short, with her business skills and her generous spirit Barbara provides a first class example of the sort of voluntary commitment without which ADBKA could not flourish.

Barbara, a big thank you to you from ADBKA for all your good work.

John Cooper – Previously ADBKA Chair

CRATHES APIARY REPORT JANUARY 2018

In September, all the hives were treated for varroa with MAQs strips. On inspection 2 weeks later, 2 of the hives donated by Chris were found to be queenless and were united with 2 of our weaker hives bringing our total to 12 going into winter.

We did a demonstration of using sulphur to treat supers for wax moth and also the use of acetic acid to sterilize brood boxes.

With a rather mild weather in the early autumn, the bees continued to be out flying and the stores in the hives dwindled so we fed them all with candy and this has had to be topped up just before Christmas.

In early January Ian Mackley gave a talk about the use of acetic acid to treat varroa and this was followed by a demonstration of the sublimation method. This talk was well attended and Ian answered any questions posed by the audience.

We have acquired a new Caddon hive complete with a floor, brood box, 2 supers and roof. In addition we have taken advantage of the Thornes winter sale and stocked up on brood frames and 2 new full length bee suits plus various odds and ends.

Over the year we have relied on a band of loyal volunteers who have arrived and just got on with helping to take care of the apiary. We owe a special thanks to Geoff Holtom for organising a delivery of bark, all for free and also those who turned out to help distribute it round the site. Their presence was particularly helpful on that day because Jenny Lewis managed to lay claim a work top with underneath shelving and this was delivered with the kind assistance of David Morland and settled into its new home inside the cabin.

I would also like to thanks Alison Goss for washing all the suits as well as her continued help, to Jenny Lewis, our chief queen spotter and to Joan for her help over the year and especially for taking charge of all the extracting of the honey, one very messy job for certain. At the honey show our bees took first prize in the liquid medium/ dark section; first prize for granulated heather honey and second prize cut comb ling so thank you to both the bees and to Joan for doing the necessary.

Naomi Adams ADBKA apiary manager

MY BEEKEEPING YEAR

By Murray McGregor, Professional Bee farmer.

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

May-June

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.

During one of the inspections 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.

On our next inspection we will go through the hive and check for the presence of eggs and hopefully sealed worker brood cells, if this is present we add the letter L to our previous mark and change the letter V to a Y. Our mark is now complete and readily read by all. In addition we use the rock that is placed on the hive roof to indicate the health of the colony.

May and June is the height of the swarming season and how you look after your bees during these two months affects your honey harvest and how successful your year will be.

We specifically target the heather harvest and we tailor the way we look after the bees so that our bees are at maximum strength going to the heather and in so doing we are prepared for a slightly poorer spring and summer honey harvest.

We use two main methods of swarm control dependant if we have empty hives that we want to fill or not. Almost all books and publications say that you should wait until you see a charged queen cell before you start any method of swarm control. We try a more proactive method of swarm control and will split a colony that is building up strong but may not yet have developed queen cells.

SWARM CONTROL WITH EMPTY HIVE TO FILL

Prior to the development of Queen cells but with a colony that is building up well we will split the colony. Lift the hive to the side and in the position of the original hive we will place an empty brood box complete with floor. We will go through the original brood box and find the Queen and move her together with two of three frames of brood into the empty brood box that is in the original hive position. Put several drawn brood frames beside original Queen and frames and fill the brood box with fresh frames and foundation. Put the excluder and supers above the Queen and close up the hive.

The original brood box should be set up to the side with only one Queen cell, if Queen cells are present, or a new Queen from the Queen rearing unit. If we are choosing to leave a Queen cell we have determined that we want to allow this colony to develop having proven it has good characteristics. We never leave more than one sealed Queen cell.

Half of the brood frames in the new brood and the old brood box should be fresh frames with wax foundation.

SWARM CONTROL WITH NO EMPTY HIVE TO FILL

Prior to the development of Queen cells but with a colony that is building up well we split the colony vertically. The existing hive had two brood boxes, we use the same frame size for supers and brood boxes. The colony boxes we shall label 1 & 2 with box 1 on the bottom with a Queen excluder between 1 & 2. When we want to split this colony we introduce a third brood box, box 3 and reassemble the colony at 2, 3 & 1, Box 2 is in the bottom with an excluder above it and box 3 above it which is filled with fresh frames and foundation. Above box 3 we insert a flight board and put brood box 1 on the top. The original Queen we put on the bottom and we add a Queen in the top box which is box 1. This is a system we have been using for over forty years and can give us almost a twenty day inspection period. If the colony is headed by a productive Queen we may repeat this process up to three times during the course of the season.

To be continued...

SPRING 2018 LECTURE SERIES: 1. WHAT TO EXPECT AT THE LECTURES

Sixty five people attended the first of the lecture series which was conducted on Thursday the 15th at Aberdeen Grammar and took their first tentative step on the path to becoming a beekeeper. Demand was such that people who had not previously registered were queuing outside in anticipation of attending. Each year the association advertises the lecture series in the local press, this year the demand has been the highest in recent memory so the decision was taken not to incur the cost of advertising and it is very encouraging to see such interest in a fascinating hobby.

The lecture series is open for all to attend, space permitting. You will be given the opportunity to join and become a member of the Aberdeen & District Beekeeping Association but this is not mandatory. Should you wish to progress to becoming a beekeeper and keep your own bees then it is advisable that you join the association and share many benefits that the association can offer including regular advice, practical demonstrations, discounted bee supplies, loan of honey processing equipment etc.

Even if you cannot attend all the lectures it is worth going along to the ones that you can. Each lecture is a standalone subject so you benefit from hearing about specific aspects of beekeeping.

The lectures are purely informative, there is not a test at the end of the lectures but there will be the opportunity for you to ask questions. Each lecture is conducted by a different person who is a member of the ADBKA and is an experienced beekeeper which gives you the opportunity to meet and get to know some valuable contacts within the association; each has a common interest and will happily discuss the many aspects of beekeeping with you.

Do not purchase any bees or beekeeping equipment before you attend all the lectures. Only after you have attended the lectures and you are still interested in becoming a beekeeper should you even think about purchasing anything and by this time you will be able to seek advice from your colleagues.

...to be continued

Lindsey Macaulay with contributions from David Morland and Naomi Adams

I have started a small business in Dess Aboyne called 'Bee Cabin' supplying bee equipment, feed, honey harvesting and jarring service. I am the local agent for Paynes, Maisemore, BB Wear, and B.J.Sherriff Holding stock from all with a fast order service for items not currently stocked.

Bee Cabin, Bee supplies and harvesting,
Colin Devine, Bridge Cottage, Dess, Aboyne, AB34 5BB
07809229375
beecabin@gmail.com

Aberdeen Bee Supplies

Jock McGregor is the local agent for
Thorne Beekeeping Equipment.
Contact him on 01224 790468

or e-mail:

aberdeenbeesupplies@hotmail.com

FOR SALE

6 frame nucleus in Polyhives of locally reared (Aberdeenshire) bees for sale from our best productive bees. Available in late April, early May - weather permitting. £40 deposit secures. 2017 over wintered queens, 3 to 4 frames of brood and adequate stores, and all bees treated for varroa. Price: £170 each. £50 refundable if Polyhive with miller feeder returned

Would prefer to sell to an experienced Beekeeper or someone who has a mentor and has completed a beginners' course or similar training

Please contact Norman Stewart, Kemnay
on 01467 643062 or mobile 07890631813

BB WEAR have a **SPECIAL OFFER** available for ADBKA members.

For the rest of February they are offering a 25% discount on the price of bee suits.

In March this offer is reduced to 20% and excludes online purchases.

Members are required to have their membership of ADBKA confirmed by David Morland or Malcolm Watson.

Naomi Adams