



The magazine of the York & District
Beekeepers Association

December 2008

The Combings

www.ydbka.org.uk

Association News

Chairman Tom Robinson's report to the AGM — Wednesday 15 October 2008

Beekeeping this year has become more difficult, many people lost up to 35% of colonies after last winter, there are some reports of 50%.

This can probably be explained as in 2007 there was poor weather with rain at the time when drones should have been flying and queens getting mated. Also we had nosema and we are told nosema cerano, probably in part due to poor varroa control.

Foul brood continues to be found in local colonies. In addition, although the bees built up on the oil seed rape, there was no borage, only fields of cereal. Honey is in short supply this year.

However, always look on the bright side! This year the weather has been good for queen raising, so provided we continue to feed until brood boxes are full for over wintering and varroa control is successful, we may have a better season in 2009.

On another matter, however, we are having difficulty with the trustees of the Yorkshire Museum of Farming. Since the Museum opened in 1981, the Association has always made a donation. In November 2007 we were called upon to pay rent every time we used the Museum premises (with the exception of the Bee Pavilion). Because the committee believed these rents were excessive (£60 to £180), we negotiated a flat rate of £25 every time we used the library or the kitchen. (We now hold committee meetings elsewhere without cost.)

In July 2008 the Treasurer received an account to pay an insurance premium of £220 which we have now been told is to cover the pavilion and contents. Previously the Museum had incorporated this into its own buildings. Now the pavilion is

detailed separately and has increased the insurance value by £5,000. The Museum trustees are unwilling to stand this extra cost. The new committee to be chosen at this meeting needs to consider carefully the way forward. I also thank Bob Hirst and Rob Coleman retiring committee members for their work over the years.

Treasurer Chris Robinson gave us a statement of our finances—they are very healthy. Retiring Secretary Alan Johnston then gave his report.

Yorkshire BKA have asked for York members to become officers on their committees—anyone interested?

Scarborough BKA have invited York BKA to participate in their Honey Show to be held on Saturday 23 November.

There was a long discussion over the wording of the new categories of membership to be put into an amended Constitution. These new categories originated with the British BKA and adopted by county associations. It therefore makes sense for us to adopt them. It will held the Treasurer a lot.

Then came the appointment of Officers and a new Committee. Tom Robinson was re-appointed as Treasurer and George Garbutt re-appointed as auditor. The following were then elected onto the Committee:

- Matt Atkinson
- David Bough
- Nigel Davies
- David Grey
- Sue Hesp
- Alan Johnston
- Jenny Smith
- Kate Wallace

It's nice to see some new names on that list.

A couple of small points that came up—one was the use of the Bee Pavilion at Murton for members to use for extracting their honey (this did happen some time ago). A reminder—the Association does have three hand driven extractors for you to use in your own home.

Jim Elliot thanked Seasonal Bee Inspector Alan Johnston for sympathetic handling of an outbreak of EFB that he had been blighted with.

A new member Karl Sherman was welcomed to the Association.

Committee Meeting

The new Committee met for the first time on Wednesday 27 October. At the meeting David Grey was elected with Sue Hesp as his deputy.

The constitution discussed at the AGM was finalised. A copy is attached to your Combings.

Part of the Treasurer's job has been hied off (no pun intended) - that of membership. Nigel Davies has taken on that work. As of now, any matters regarding membership should be addressed to Nigel on 01904 468001.

Included with your Combings is a membership renewal form. When you renew your membership, please fill in the form. If you are a tax payer, you can fill in another piece of paper (it has a title which escapes me at the moment) which allows the Association to recover the tax you have paid.

It was decided at the meeting to purchase a laptop and projector and a microscope. These will be available for members of the Association meeting on 21 January. Our microscopist is to be Nigel Davies. These will be available for members at the Association meeting on 21 January.

The Murton Management Group have invited us to attend their next meeting on Tuesday 11 November. David Grey and Tom Robinson will be going on our behalf.

Once again, Alan Johnston is coordinating the Yorkshire BKA Foundation offer. In the past the foundation has been Thorne's Standard Foundation. The prices I have checked are 45% lower than their catalogue prices. An order form is enclosed with your Combings. Please have it

back to Alan with your cheque by Monday 12 January. Delivery has, in the past, been at the Yorkshire Spring Conference. This year to be held on Saturday 14 March at the Buckles Inn on the A64 twix York and Tadcaster.

Tom Robinson sent me this message.

"Would you ask if all members received BBKA News. Any who do not, should advise me as the Secretary and I will follow up with BBKA. (If you have your BBKA number, it will help—it is on the membership card you get every year from them.)"

Tom also tells me that one of the Association's "Easy Steam" wax melter/frame cleaner has gone missing. If you have it, please let Tom know.

Annual Honey Show

We held our Honey Show at Murton on the evening of Wednesday 19 November at Murton. The numbers of exhibits was low, probably due to members generally being short of honey. The winner of the show cup was Jenny Smithy, with Jim Elliot as runner up and Alan Johnston third.

While Judge Ivor Flatman and our show team of June Meredith, Kate Wallace and Nigel Davies were doing their thing, the rest of us were having a social in the café next door which started with a quiz—general knowledge and bee related topics. We had a raffle with good prizes. Not only that, but we were well victualled by Sue Hesp and Jenny Smith.

In past years I have been involved with the Honey Show, so it was nice for a change to sit and be entertained.

Report of Committee Meeting 12 November 2008

The Committee finalised the arrangements for the Honey Show.

The Yorkshire Museum of Farming and the Murton Bee Pavilion was discussed and the Chairman and Secretary arranged to attend the Museum's management meeting.

The Treasurer gave a report on the banking arrangements and was authorised to open an account for CatCbank where the association's assets will benefit from higher interest charges.

David Grey as Chairman and Tom Robinson as Secretary then attended the Museum's management meeting and their accountant presented a detailed financial report by the Museum's accounts, which was interesting. The museum finances are in a better state than we expected.

There then was a frank discussion between the York Beekeepers representatives and the management committee.

Another meeting was arranged and the Chairman and Treasurer met the Site Manager and copies of the original 1984 and subsequent agreements were discussed.

We will continue to use the Bee Pavilion and support the Yorkshire Museum of Farming. Some help will be required to bring the pavilion up-to-date before the 2009 season. Any volunteers contact Tom Robinson as Secretary.

We also need volunteers to man the Pavilion on Sundays and also volunteers for apiary visits in the summer 2009.

Editor's Musings

In your September Combing I mentioned adding a new word to my beekeeping dictionary "quacking". Now I have a further expression to add "shrimp brood".

The following is a sentence from an article in February 2008's "The Beekeepers Quarterly" where the editor interviewed Colin Weightman—a well known beekeeper of many years standing—from Northumberland. He was speaking about local brown bees.

"However, they had two serious defects in the brood nest. One of these was commonly called Addled Brood, of where the sealed perforated cappings of cells containing shrunken larvae gave an unattractive appearance to the colonies concerned. The other condition, known as Shrimp Brood, also had shrunken dead larvae which, when found, were thrown out by the bees. These conditions appeared to be a seasonal thing."

Honey crops this year have been generally poor; everyone that I speak to says the same and predicting that supplies will run out round about Christmas. The only crop that seems to have done any good is Himalayan Water Balsam. With the nectar being completely enclosed, rain does not wash away. It is still there when the rain stops and bees can fly again.

My own honey crop is down by three quarters. I still have a little of last years crop left, but like others, I will probably run out around Christmas.

Ever had one of those days when things don't go right—I had one on the day I did my last extraction. There was not much (which turned out to be fortunate) but I was after every drop I could lay my hands on. I use an electric uncapping knife—I switched it on and when I came to use it, it was still cold. All I could check was the fuse and that was sound. Later, I took it to an electrician and he pronounced it dead. Looking at my records—I bought it in April 1979 (my third season keeping bees) for £28.92 which included VAT at 8%!

My first experience of uncapping was a disaster. All I had was the kitchen carving knife to uncap with and a glass pitcher with hot water to keep the knife warm. I uncapped my first frame and put the knife back into the hot water but must have let it drop the last inch and the pitcher shattered, spilling hot water all over the kitchen table and floor. I do not recall how I uncapped until I got my electric knife a couple of years later. The cheapest electric uncapping knife I have seen in beekeeping catalogues is £104.

I did my uncapping that day using a fork purloined from the dining room and simply scratched the cappings. You finish with a lot of wax floating on top of the honey, but if you run it into tubs it is easy to skim off when warmed for bottling.

The next event occurred after I had cleaned out my extractor—I give it a spin to get rid of excess water on the cage. I had just got my extractor up to speed when it died. My heart sank—only a couple of years previous I had to replace the control box. This time it turned out to be fuse.

Then, in October, my honey warming cabinet expired. I rang Thorne's to order a new heating

element only to find they are no longer made. On the off chance I rang Mike Rowbottom at Claro Bees and he turned up trumps. Mike tells me he has another one if you are interested.

The heater I am talking about is at the bottom of page 26 in Thorne's current catalogue.

Using light bulbs to heat your honey works. A heating cable is much more accurate and reliable. A thought that occurred to me while fixing my heating cabinet—a possible source of heaters would be a pet shop specialising in reptiles. Those animals have to be kept at constant temperatures.

Thorne's do an oxalic acid evaporator that runs off a car battery to use to combat varroa in winter. If you have a large apiary then it will be cumbersome to use—you will have to carry a battery into your apiary to run it.

Recently, I got a circular from Bickerstaff's Apiaries in Liverpool advertising their oxalic acid evaporator. It is difficult to estimate its size. It is made out of 1/2" copper pipe; it looks to be about 2 feet long, slightly cranked in the middle, with a 90 degree compression bend. A two inch piece of copper pipe with a compression stop at the end. This is the heating chamber.

Oxalic acid crystals are put into the heating chamber and the stop end screwed on, the long end is pushed into your hive entrance and the remainder of the entrance is sealed off. You have then to heat the crystals for four minutes with a blow lamp to vaporise the oxalic acid crystals. Leave for ten minutes.

It is cheaper than Thorne's but just as fiddly to

use. I shall not bother. Any gadget must be simple and quick to become popular.

There is hardly an edition of *Combings* where I don't mention cleanliness of your hives, frames, etc as a means of keeping EFB at bay. This is a piece I read recently in a magazine. It beggars belief that with modern day thinking anyone can use such dilapidated equipment. It is more than likely that the rest of his equipment was in a similarly decrepit state. Such equipment will store AFB and EFB spores—as having EFB on more than one occasion shows.

"Our seasonal Bee Inspector spent an afternoon looking at my bees last week—a pleasant and beneficial occasion—an opportunity to learn what's new on the disease front and a chance to have an informed opinion on all matters relating to the bees. An amusing moment occurred when he looked into one hive and said 'This colony is flawless'. 'Oh, thank you' I said, wondering exactly what I had done to merit such an accolade. 'No, FLOORless!!' was the reply. This was a really old brood box and half the floor had fallen out. The bees were not in the least bit bothered and it lent a whole new meaning to the concept of open floors! This visit was really a follow-up to check one particular site that has had a history of European Foulbrood during the last ten years or so. Two colonies were minimally affected at the end of the season the year before last, were treated with oxytetracycline and then shook-swarmed the following spring (last year). Happily, all was well."

There was a first rate article on nosema in October's BBKA News by Dave Rennison

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A map showing our location is available at www.hrbka.org.uk

of Harrogate BKA. If you have not read it, then find a copy as it is well worth reading.

I heard at the end of October that honey in bulk is fetching £2.10 per pound.

I have noticed how striking the Autumn colours have been this year. A few areas that caught my eye in particular were the A19 through Eskrick, the road into Harrogate from Wetherby and Brayton Barff—all resplendent in yellows, red and gold.

Eureka

Every now and then I hear, read, see or be told of something that immediately makes complete sense and, as a result, changes my methods of keeping bees. During the course of my time with bees this has probably happened half a dozen times. The last happened mid September.

You will all have been in a situation where you wish to unite two colonies using the tried and tested newspaper method. There is a wind blowing (there always is when you wish to do this manoeuvre) your newspaper keeps blowing away so you have to resort to using a queen excluder to hold the paper in place—this traps drones and your queen above it, which partly defeats the object of the exercise.

Recently, Alan Johnston and I were talking about just such a scenario. Alan told me that he has a wooden frame to which he attaches the newspaper with sticky tape before leaving home—and no matter how windy—your newspaper never blows away—**eureka**—what a simple idea and so obvious when it was pointed out to me.

If you imagine a glass quilt without the glass—that is your frame.

While on the subject of uniting, here are a couple of other ways of joining two colonies together. When uniting, you are trying to put two colonies together that have different smells. So uniting is all about masking colony smells.

With the newspaper method, your bees nibble their way through the newspaper and slowly get the smell of each other. This requires a second trip to sort out the two colonies after they have chewed through the newspaper. If you have a

spare brood box to hand, you can take out frames of brood out of each and sprinkle flour or icing sugar on the bees and comb, by the time they have cleaned themselves up they are united. This way you only need one visit to your apiary. A bonus to using flour or icing sugar is getting rid of a few varroa mites.

Another method I have used in the past is to spray the top of one hive and the bottom of the other with household aerosol air fresheners—it did the trick.

We are always taught to unite colonies after your bees have stopped flying, or move them three feet a day until they are alongside each other. If your bees are on stands in pairs or positioned close together, then you can unite during the day. Any flying bees will find their way into an adjacent hive. Foragers with a full crop will be readily accepted. Young bees will be submissive in front of the guard bees and drones are not a threat to the colony anyway.

Deaths-head Hawk Moth

Alan Johnston found Deaths-head Hawk moth (*Acherontia atropos*) in a hive near Thirsk in August. A one gallon pail feeder had been placed over the crown board with the roof sat on a super. If you have ever done this you will know that the roof sits on top of the feeders, and leaves a small gap between the bottom of the roof and the super. As happens with pail feeders, you quite often get seepage into the rim of the lid. This is what happened on this occasion. The deaths-head hawk moth was feeding on the syrup.

Alan showed me some digital photos of the moth alongside a standard matchbox. The body of the moth was the length of the matchbox which would give it a wing span of 4 inches. To see it flying would frighten anyone not familiar with them. They are a native of Africa and southwest Asia from where it migrates to the UK in May and June. It cannot tolerate any degree of frost, so cannot survive our winters. If you see one, it has migrated here. They are large with a wing span of 3" to 5".

It frequently happens that the moth is lured by the smell of honey and enter beehives. The bees sometimes kill the intruder and the beekeeper then finds the hawkmoth's mummified body in his hive. The moth acquired its name from the weird

markings on its thorax, reminiscent of a skull or death mask. I am not familiar with moths or butterflies—this information came from a book I have on the subject.

Not only did Alan have the rare pleasure of seeing a death's-head hawk moth but also saw something that I thought was almost extinct—braula—just a single one.

Fungus Footbaths could save Bees

Kate Wallace sent me this piece out of the August edition of "The Fruit Grower".

One of the biggest worldwide threats to honeybees, the varroa mite, could soon be about to meet its nemesis.

Researchers of the University of Warwick are examining naturally-occurring fungi that kill the varroa mite. They are also exploring a range of ways to deliver the killer fungus throughout the hives, from bee fungal foot baths to powder sprays.

It is well known that bees worldwide are suffering serious declines, and one of the causes of that decline is the varroa mite, *Varroa destructor*. Varroa mites feed on the circulatory fluid of honeybee pupae and adult bees, and in so doing they activate and transmit diseases which reduce the life expectancy of the bees and cause the colony to decline. Varroa has had a major impact in all countries where it has become established, for example it has caused losses of 30% - 50% of honeybee colonies when it first arrived in the UK and is now endemic. The loss of honeybees on this scale is affecting the pollination of commercial crops and wild plants. It originates in Asia, but has extended its range worldwide.

At present, the management of varroa is based on the use of chemical pesticides, but the mites are developing resistance. Biological control technologies (the use of one organism to control another) could offer a way of moving pest management strategies away from a reliance on these synthetic pesticides, but no natural insect or other enemies of varroa species have been identified on the varroa or on their bee hosts.

Now Defra-funded studies by researchers at the University of Warwick's plant research group,

Warwick and Rothamstead Research, have found some new natural enemies of varroa, from other hosts.

University of Warwick researcher Dr Dave Chandler said "We examined 50 different types of fungi that afflict other insects (known as entomopathogenic fungi) to see if they would kill varroa. We needed to find fungi that were effective killers of varroa, had a low impact on the bees, and worked in the warm and dry conditions typically found in beehives. Of the original 50 fungi we are now focusing on four that best match those three requirements."

The team now hope to secure additional funding to further examine the effectiveness of these four fungi and to begin to consider the best ways of applying this weapon across the hive. A number of approaches are being considered, including having fungal footbaths at the main entrances to hives. However, the complex environment within beehives means that more devious means of application may be needed.

EDITOR'S NOTE

There is a device on the market to be used as part of your integrated pest management—Exomite Apis—it is a tray filled with a powder containing thymol. It fits in the entrance to a hive forcing bees to walk through the powder. The thymol powder sticks to the bee and thus carried into the hive. Two sachets of powder are used at 12 day intervals. It can be used twice a year—in the Spring and again in the Autumn. I have not used Exomite Apis or known of anyone that has. If you have tried it, I would like to hear your thoughts on its efficiency.

For those of you with the facilities, there is a website you can go to: www.exosect.com

Small Cell Sizes

Kate Wallace pointed me to this American website article on small cell sizes. There was a lot written in the bee press some time ago, but I have not seen anything about it lately.

"... fighting the mites is mostly because I've gone to natural sized cells. In case you weren't aware, and I wasn't for a long time, the foundation in common usage by beekeepers results in much larger bees than what you would find in a natural

hive. I've measured sections of natural worker brood comb that are 4.6 mm in diameter. What most beekeepers use for worker brood is foundation that is 5.4 mm in diameter. If you translate that into three dimensions, instead of one, that produces a bee that is about half again as large as is natural. By letting the bees build natural sized cells, I have virtually eliminated my Varroa and Tracheal mite problems. One cause of this is shorter capping times by one day and shorter post capping times by one day. This means less Varroa get into the cells and less Varroa reproduce in the cells. I have mostly done this either with wax coated Perma Comb (fully drawn plastic comb) or self drawn comb on foundationless frames or frames with blank starter strips. 4.9 mm foundation is available from Dadant and Sons and from Brushy Mt. This size (4.9 mm) has been found sufficient to resolve the mite problems. For more information on small cell beekeeping, go to this website: <http://bushforms.com./bees.htm>.

EDITOR'S NOTE

Thorne's do foundation with 4.9 mm cells, but only in BS deep and Langstroth deep sizes. Tracheal mite or as we know it—acarine—is not affected by cell size. It infects young bees soon after emergence.

Cold wet summer leaves honey in short supply

The country's oldest honey fair came close to cancellation for the first time in its 731-year history because of a shortage of its main ingredient. Honey is in such short supply this year that several exhibitors had to pull out of the event at Callington, Cornwall, which dates from 1297.

Beekeepers say that the shortage was caused by wet weather during July and August which led to some colonies starving because of the shortage of flowers. Others blame the parasitic varroa mite. David Jones, secretary of the Callington Honey Fair said "I was concerned that there would not be enough honey." The shortage led to an increase in the price of a 1 lb jar of honey to nearly £4.

Steve Morey, who has been keeping bees for 15 years, estimates that honey production in Cornwall is down 80% on previous years. He had to feed his bees sugar solution to prevent them starving as they have been unable to produce enough honey to feed themselves through the winter.

This piece was in Geoff Hopkinton's "Environment" article in edition number 92 of The Beekeepers Quarterly. Bees do have very sensitive 'noses' yet we treat them with Apiguard for varroa with its most pungent smell. This is probably why bees hang outside of the hive, particularly when Apiguard has just been put into the hive.

Something in the air?

The journal "Atmospheric Pollution" recently published an interesting piece from the University of Virginia in the US, which is relevant in these days of high environmental concern. According to Professor Jose Fuentes, there is some evidence that industrial pollution has a deleterious effect on the honeybee's ability to pick up on floral scents, one of the key factors in foraging activity. To quote from the research,

"the scent molecules produced by flowers in a less polluted environment, such as in the 1880's, could travel for roughly 1,000 to 1,200 metres. But in today's polluted environment down wind of major cities, these scent molecules may only travel 200 to 300 metres".

This claim is supported by models demonstrating that fragrance molecules produced by flowers are very volatile and quickly bond with pollutant molecules such as ozone, hydroxyl and nitrate radicals which destroy their aromas.

According to the research team, *"It quickly became apparent that air pollution destroys the aroma of flowers by as much as 90% from periods before automobiles and heavy industry. And the more air pollution there is in the region, the greater the destruction of flower scents".*

The available techniques for such work are well established within the science community and the nature of the honeybees receptor organs are described in clinical detail in Lesley Goodman's "Form and Function in the Honeybee". With around 3,000 sensillae on the antennae, they represent a high order of evolution and are a key factor in the well ordered working of the colony. The conclusions reached in Virginia are a good fit with the recorded work on atmospheric pollutants to date but there is still a gap between theory and practice. Town beekeeping gives better results than rural areas

is a saying often expressed as a cornerstone of beekeeping philosophy, whilst rooftop apiaries in towns and cities have a long history, albeit some of them existing before the motorcar took over our lives.

What is the reduction in honey yields, if any, and if so how can the results be verified? Irrespective of those queries, we can expect a denial of these findings from the AA, RAC and the Motor Manufacturers Federation.

Tom Robinson sent me this snippet of some events from around the world—and we think we have problems!

Turkey — Here is a report that bee colonies in Turkey have halved in number due to poor beekeeping practices and climate change. According to this report on beekeeping, mass extinction of bees has been occurring for the past two years. First, 32,000 bee colonies died in Hatay in 2007. Later, Adiyaman, Ardahan and Ankara the bee population declined by more than 50%. The recent drought has also negatively affected beekeeping. In 2006 the floral feed needed for the bees froze, colonies got weak and died out.

Hungary — As there was a suspicion of honey sugar being added to honey, the authorities visited four of the country honey processing

plants. Having found serious irregularities, they decided to close one honey processing plant. The inspectors caught some workers in the act of making sugar syrup, and artificial protein was confiscated.

Auckland, New Zealand — Honeybee researchers at Horticultural Research have successfully used a strain of the common insect fungus *Metarhizium* to treat beehives infected with *Varroa*.

UK — In a meeting planned for early September, environmental ministers will be asked to consider establishing a secure GM crop facility at Cambridge of a blight resistant potato developed by the German Company BASF. Security for the trial, which includes perimeter fence and 24 hour security guards, has cost more than £100,000.

Australia — A Liberal Member is calling on the Federal Government to invest \$50 million in research to protect Australia's bees from the *Varroa* mite. The annual revenue of the honeybee industry is \$65 million.

Italy — Half of the honeybees in Italy have died and the Italian Government is banning sprays that contain nicotine (*Radio 4, 5 September 2008*)



Banana & Honey Loaf

Here is a treat for you. This recipe won Pam Hirst first prize at our Honey Show on Wednesday 19 November 2008. Give it a try!

Method:

1. Preheat oven to 180C.
2. Lightly grease & line a 2 lb loaf tin.
3. Beat together margarine, sugar & honey in a bowl until light and fluffy.
4. Gradually beat in eggs, then fold in flour and nutmeg or cinnamon.
5. Peel bananas and mash with a little lemon juice, and fold into mixture until well mixed.
6. Spoon mixture into prepared tin and level surface.
7. Bake in oven for 1—1 1/4 hrs or until risen, golden brown & firm to the touch.
8. If necessary, cover with non-stick baking paper or foil towards end of cooking time to prevent over browning.
9. Cool for a few minutes in tin and turn out onto wire rack and serve warm or cold in slices.

Ingredients:

- 4 ozs margarine
- 4 ozs light brown soft sugar
- 4 ozs set honey
- 8 ozs self raising flour (white or wholemeal)
- Half teaspoon ground nutmeg or cinnamon
- 2 large bananas & squeeze lemon juice
- 2 eggs

The charms of honey-based alcohol—a Dire Warning

Finding twelve bottles of mead in the back of a cupboard is indeed a lucky find. I found we had twelve bottles of mead stored away in the back of a cupboard. The contents of six of the bottles were sour and vinegary. So it was decided that the mead should be poured away down the sink.

I withdrew the cork from one bottle of the sweet mead and poured it down the sink, apart from one glass and did the same with the vinegary stuff. I found that by mixing the contents of the two glasses, this made very palatable mead, which I promptly drank. I then withdrew the cork from a second bottle of the sweet mead and poured it down the sink apart from one glass, which I mixed and drank.

I then withdrew the cork from a third bottle of the vinegary stuff apart from one glass, which I mixed and drank.

I pulled the bottle from the cork of the next and drank one sink out of it and threw the rest down the glass. I pulled the sink out of the next glass and poured the cork down the bottle and drank the glass. I pulled the next cork from my throat and poured the sink down the bottle. Then I corked the sink with the glass, bottled the drink and drank the pour.

When I had everything emptied, I steadied the house with one hand and counted the bottles, corks, glasses and sinks with the other which came to twenty-seven. To be sure I counted them again and when they came by I had seventy-two and as the house came by I counted them again and finally had all the houses, bottles and corks and glasses and sinks counted, except one house and bottle which I drank.

Alan Johnston sent me this cutting—cheers!
(taken from 'Hampshire Bee Talk')

Past Events

Wednesday 10 September

There was a good turnout for this winter's first meeting that was held in the library at Murton to hear Ben Jones from the Central Science Laboratory at Sand Hutton. Ben touched on

many topics—high spring losses—averaging 21% - after a long spring this year, after a poor summer last. He is expecting high losses next spring. CCD in America, stressing that we do not have it in the UK. He went on to mention AFB, EFB—moving away from antibiotics onto the shook swarm, acarine and nosema. Their treatment or lack of it in the case of acarine. One point that was stressed—do not treat bees prophylactically for nosema—they will become resistant to oxytetracycline.

Mention was also made of two other exotic pests hovering in the wings—Tropilaelaps and the small hive beetle. Should you have the misfortune to find either of these pests, then you must report it straight away to CSL.

Wednesday 15 October

There was a good turnout for our Annual General Meeting that was held in the library at Murton.

Wednesday 22 October

The new Committee held its first meeting.

Wednesday 12 November

Our Annual Honey Show was held this evening. More details will be available in the next edition of Combings.

WHAT YOU ALL WANTED TO KNOW ...

“Early toothpaste was made from charcoal and honey”

Finally ...

Q What does a bee get when she goes into a field of flowers?

A High bud pressure.