



# The Combings

[www.ydbka.org.uk](http://www.ydbka.org.uk)

## Association News

Starting on a positive note – congratulations to Pete Allanson, Matt Atkinson, Nigel Davies and Chris Holland for passing their BBKA Basic Assessment Examination in July. Well done.

I learned at the end of May that John Acheson has had a stroke and was in hospital. I spoke to his wife, Joan, on 13 August and she was expecting him home soon. I wish him a speedy recovery.

In your June edition of the “Combings” I mentioned that two York members had found EFB among their bees. Soon after going to the printers, towards the end of May, I learned that two more outbreaks had been found. A further case of EFB was found in a member’s bees in early August.

Even at this late stage in the season you will have to be vigilant. A further outbreak was found at Wistow near Selby (not a York member) in June and a further large outbreak in the Thirsk/Northallerton area where 42 out of 150 colonies on ten sites were found to be infected with EFB.

Saturday 31 May was the day of our Annual Auction that, as in previous years, was held at Murton. We could not have picked a better day – weather wise – it was fine, warm and sunny throughout. It was disappointing though as we only had 35 lots up for sale. There was some good woodwork – two lots of National solid floors went for £12 and £16. Two lots of National mesh floors brought £26 and £33. The best buy of the day was a Thorne’s heavy-duty hand driven plastic 9 frame radial extractor which went for £125.

Our auctioneer was, again, Colin Hattee who did his utmost to cajole buyers to part with their money. The auction put £80 into the Association’s coffers. Saturday 16 May 2009 has been set for next year’s auction.

The following were on this year’s Beginners Class run by Sue Hesp:

Ben Brown (York), David & Elizabeth Farnsworth (Haxby), Nardia Lewis (Coxwold), Kerry Roberts (York), Paul Ruckstone (York), Sharon Whittington (York), Tony Edwards (Wheldrake), Jim Heron (Linton-on-Ouse), Colin McNichols (York), Sharon Ross (Bubwith) and John Steel (Pocklington).

They are all on a steep learning curve – if they ask you for assistance, please give them all the help you can.

## Committee Meeting held on Thursday 24 July 2008

These are the salient points:

- Dick Gardner joined the meeting to press for involvement in the BBKA campaign which is due to close in September. Dick has personally collected over 600 signatures.
- New IT equipment – laptop & projector is to be priced up.
- Discussion on transferring the Association account to CAF cash (Charities Aid Foundation).
- YBKA have proposed they collect Gift Aid on behalf of all local Associations – giving 80% back to the Association - YDBKA already claim the full amount, where applicable.
- Murton have sent a bill for insurance, this has not occurred before. Chairman is to ask for an explanation from Murton.
- Various ways of recruiting new committee members were discussed – as well as organising the vote.
- Making further use of the Bee Pavilion was discussed as well as the acquisition of a beginner’s apiary site.
- The internal displays in the Bee Pavilion are to be tidied up.

- A microscope for disease identification is to be priced up.
- It was suggested that the heavy workload of the Treasurer and Secretary could be shared out in future committees – ie a membership secretary, programme secretary, equipment officer, etc.
- The new membership categories have been incorporated into the constitution, this will be put to the membership at the AGM.

The AGM is to be held at Murton on Wednesday 15 October 2008 at 1930 hours. Please make every effort to attend. It is the time when a new Committee is elected. I would like to see some new faces come forward for election.

Secretary, Alan Johnston, and Treasurer, Chris Robinson, have told me that they will be standing down at the AGM on Wednesday 15 October. Please contact either Alan or Chris or Chairman, Tom Robinson, if you are willing to take on either of these positions.

## Annual Honey Show

Our Annual Honey Show will be held at Murton on Wednesday 19 November 2008. Exhibits will be accepted between 1815 hrs and 1915 hrs. Judging will commence at 1915 hrs prompt. Our judge will once again be Ivor Flatman. If you have any questions then please contact June Meredith or Nigel Davies.

A copy of the schedule has been sent with your copy of the "Combings".

## Editor's Musings

Quite late in last year's season, Seasonal Bee Inspector Ivor Flatman took a sample of honey from one of my hives and "sent it off" for analysis. I had completely forgotten about it when

RIM No	Analysis	Matrix	Species	Result
0716941	Antimicrobial	Honey	Bees	Negative

this report from the Veterinary Medicines Directorate came through the post in late April this year.  
Results Report for Year 2007 Total: 1

I believe they are not just looking for adulteration of honey by beekeepers, but residues left after varroa treatments (legal and illegal) and the possibility of contamination by motor vehicle exhaust fumes in apiaries situated near main roads.

We are taught that swarms issue late morning or early afternoon. Early in June I went through a colony and found queen cells with larvae. I did a text book split and all was well! I went back a couple of days later to remove supers to extract only to find a swarm hanging in a bush. All I had with me was a straw skep, so the swarm finished up in it. I went back at nine the following morning to hive it – it was a lovely fine warm day – to see more bees on the outside of the skep than I would have anticipated. With that, they poured out and settled in a tree not more than twenty yards away. With a bit of difficulty I was able to hive it.

I went to an apiary meeting at Harrogate early in June. Harrogate is a thriving Association with well over 200 members, yet they only average 30 members at any meeting - at the apiary meeting that I attended the total was 25 including myself and the demonstrator. I always think that our meetings could be better attended, but when compared with Harrogate on a size for size basis we are not so bad.

They are a well run Association, with a good number of dedicated "do'ers". They have a well stocked shop in an old shipping container run by Mike Rowbottom. If you ring the number in Claro Bees advert it is Mike Rowbottom that will answer your call.

One thing struck me at the apiary meeting – all but one of those attending were wearing clean suits. The odd one stuck out like sore thumb – his suit had not been washed in years and probably stood in the corner when taken off! I cannot stress often enough about apiary and personal hygiene – clean hives, clean apiary and a clean beekeeper help to keep your bees disease free.

While on the topic of apiary meetings, I consider the turnout for Ken Barran and Sue Hesp's meeting on Saturday 26 August to be abysmal – only 6 of you made the effort to attend. I do not know what the Association can do to stimulate members to attend such meetings.

It does reflect the apathy within York Beekeepers. The idea of such meetings is not just social, but for us to see how others do things and glean ideas that can help us individually.

I added a new word to my beekeeping vocabulary after reading an article by Nick Withers in the Yorkshire Newsletter. The word is “quacking”. Here it is in the context of Mr Withers article on “Beehive Management during the Swarming Season in a single hive”

“Newly emerged virgin queens seek each other out and fight to the death. They also attempt to bite into still sealed cells to sting the occupant. They signal their presence to each other by making a sound called 'piping'. They make the sound pressing themselves against the comb and vibrating their flight muscles without moving their wings. Other queens respond, including those still in their cells which make a lower pitched sound called 'quacking'. If you hear these sounds from one of your hives, it is likely the prime swarm has gone and issue of a cast is imminent”.

One of the main talking points during July was how little honey our bees were collecting. I was told at that time that honey in bulk (probably 28lb buckets and larger) was selling at £1.80 to £2.00 per pound.

Looking in Thorne’s current catalogue, the price of 1lb squat jars worked out at 33 pence each, cheapest label are 3.5 pence each and tamper evident labels, (I always think these are a cheap security device) almost 2.5 pence each – total for a jar and labels – 39 pence. This brings the cost to you of a labelled jar and one pound of honey to £2.40. Add 50% of that for your effort, which means an asking price of £3.60. If you sell to a retailer, they will want a similar mark up putting the price of pound of honey to the consumer at £5.40. Your thoughts please.

It was the shortage of honey coming in that led me to feed some of my bees towards the end of July. This is the first time for many years that I have had to do this. It was mainly splits that were short of nectar and consequently unable to draw out foundation.

Towards the end of June there was a report from Canada in some newspapers of a lorry turning on its side and tipping twelve million honey bees from 330 “crates” onto the road. It also appeared fleetingly on the evening’s television news, showing men in bee suits sorting things out. It must have been a big job with plenty of stings for the workmen.

For the first time in years I have a report of a member suffering spray damage to some of his bees on spring rape. If you have never seen bees that have been sprayed with insecticide – it is not a nice thing to see - hundreds – maybe thousands of bees dead on the ground under the hive entrance. Others will have died out in the field. Jenny Smith is our Spray Liaison Officer – she will point you in the right direction. Samples of bees can be sent away (to CSL I believe) for analysis, but at a cost. You should also contact the farmer and or the spray contractor.

## What are the clinical symptoms of *Nosema Ceranae*?

Alan Johnson sent me this piece that he read in a CSL Bulletin.

A good description of the disease has come from a paper written in French by leading Spanish researchers:

“What we are calling dwindling syndrome is not a new phenomenon. We first noticed losses in the late 1990s but the problem became serious in Autumn/Winter 2004 and the Spring 2005. This phenomenon is characterised by a progressive reduction in the number of bees in a colony with no apparent cause, until the point of collapse. The beekeeper may well also note a decline in colony productivity. In the final phase of this decline, secondary diseases frequently appear, including chalk brood and American foul brood. Eventually the affected colonies contain insufficient bees to carry out basic colony tasks and the colonies collapse. Mortality in front of the hives is not a frequent symptom of *N. ceranae* infection. There are not symptoms of diarrhoea or visible adult bee mortality in front of the hives. Sometime the disease affects the whole apiary and other times specific colonies will show symptoms. Dwindling sometimes occurs rapidly and sometime over several months. In general, one observes a lack of vigour and fitness of the colonies.” Treatments are the same as for *N. apis*.

*Editors Note: The spores of N. ceranae are difficult to tell from N. apis even under a 400x magnification. This piece by Steve Bird appeared in “The Times” newspaper on Monday 30 June.*

## So ... if it isn't bug eating bug, what is killing the honeybees?

This piece by Steve Bird appeared in "The Times" newspaper on Monday 30 June.

The cause of a virus that wiped out billions of honeybees remains a mystery after new research disproved the theory that it was transmitted by mites.

For years scientists believed that the deformed wing virus (DWV) was spread by varroa destructor mites, which have invaded and spread infections among honey bee colonies in Britain.

But researchers from the Rothamsted research institute in Harpenden, Hertfordshire, found out that DWV does not grow within the mite. Instead, the infection has been found only inside the gut of the varroa, suggesting that the mite has merely eaten it from the bodies of bees already infected. Varroa mites cannot regurgitate their gut contents, and so would not be able to transmit the virus. The researchers used an antibody technique to track the viral particles. It does not appear that the virus has invaded the mites' cells and can reproduce within them.

Teresa Santillan-Galicia, who led the study, which is published today, said: "The presence of deformed wing virus in large amounts in mite faeces suggests it is picked up during feeding on an infected bee. However, one important question remains: how is the virus, transmitted to bees?"

"It is likely that the amount of virus acquired by the mite plays an important role in the interaction between deformed wing virus and the varroa mite. Full understanding of the interaction between deformed wing virus and the varroa mite will provide basic information for the future development of more sustainable control strategies against the mite and the virus."

Editors note: I always thought that varroa was responsible for Deformed Wing Virus. Reading this article, it looks as if DWV is present all the time and it is the presence of varroa that brings it to the fore.

## Imidacloprid as a systemic neurotoxin

The following is an email sent to me by Tom Robinson, who in turn got it from Graham White of Coldstream in Scotland. It is linked to an article that appeared in the "Guardian" newspaper.

Hope you found the article from Saturday's Guardian illuminating. I have attached a WORD document which is a general introduction to the subject of Imidacloprid as a systemic neurotoxin.

The key thing to grasp is that this poison is being used on over 1.4 million acres of UK crops (2004 figures). It is being mainly used on oilseed rape, maize, potatoes, peas, beans, wheat and barley; however, it is almost universally used in large garden centres and plant nurseries - since one application obviates the need to spray any further insecticides during the growing season. It is even - I kid you not -

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Advice on the selection and use of beekeeping equipment always available.

Open every Saturday morning 0900 hrs to 1230 hrs April to October inclusive.

Beside the Harrogate Arms, past the RHS Harlow Carr Gardens, Crag Lane, Harrogate, HG3 1QA, or by arrangement.

A map showing our location is available at [www.hrbka.org.uk](http://www.hrbka.org.uk)

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included in some types of Levington Compost where it is incorporated as 'added plant protection' - so every houseplant potted bought from the garden centre - or potted on into Levington compost - is probably killing honeybees, bumblebees, butterflies, hoverflies and moths.

I also suspect that it is being widely used in municipal parks, cemeteries and town gardens - for exactly the same reasons of efficiency, labour saving and the fact that it is already in the plants when they arrive from the nursery.

This may explain why beekeepers like John Chapple lost 14 hives out of 14 in central London in 2007; his bees would be visiting parks and gardens which have been treated with Imidacloprid and its sister Neo-Nicotinoids - or hanging baskets and potted patio plants which are similarly lethal.

Please circulate this information among your members; educate yourselves via the web and start to communicate horizontally. It is a waste of time going to the BBKA for assistance because they are not listening. According to them, there have been 'no incidents' of bee poisoning in recent years. Well that's alright then! Our fellow beekeepers in Germany and France and America must simply be imagining the destruction of hundreds of thousands of hives which have been confirmed as having been caused by Imidacloprid, Clothianidin and Fipronil. No doubt the BBKA believes that the German and French governments have completely banned the pesticides in those countries without any solid evidence; probably Gallic hysteria and Teutonic hastiness.

**B** BKA is in complete denial about the global impact of neo-nicotinoid pesticides on bees and the general ecology of the world. Norman Carreck, Martin Smith and Martin Tovey have all issued statements in the last week saying essentially that:

1. There is no problem with any neo-nicotinoid pesticide in the UK;
2. The mass deaths of bee colonies in Germany is a mere accident - an anomaly;

There have been no 'incidents' of poisoning whatever in the UK in recent years.

They have offered no solidarity with our fellow beekeepers in France and Germany - and seem intent - at all costs - on preserving their financial

relationship with Bayer Crop Sciences - in return for endorsing Bayer's insecticides as 'bee-friendly'. Meanwhile - Germany has suspended usage licenses on no fewer than EIGHT of Bayer's systemic pesticides in Germany, including Imidacloprid, Fipronil and Clothianidin; all of which are still licensed for use in the UK - and your bees are being exposed to them every time they leave the hive.

**T**his next piece was pointed out to me by Chris Clayton. It is condemning neo-nicotinoids the same as Tom Robinsons email. If you wish to follow it up, go to the Guardian on Saturday 31 May 2008 (page 52) Features & Comment section.

I get the impression that the Guardian's article is taken from a book that has just come out titled – A World Without Bees, by Alison Benjamin and Brian McCallum, which is published by Guardian Books at £8.99 plus p&p. To order a copy with free UK mainland p&p, call 0845 606 4232, or go to [www.guardianbooks.co.uk](http://www.guardianbooks.co.uk). There is also an article in the August 2008 edition of Beecraft.

Editors Note: I wonder if this article is to promote the book "A World Without Bees" rather than genuine concern for bees and beekeepers! I had planned include the whole article but it is rather long, running to four pages of "Combings" using small print.

## BBKA Research Campaign

**D**ick Gardner has sent me this update on his campaign to collect signatures for the BBKA petition pushing the Government to increase funding for bee research.

Following the two articles I wrote in June, Tom Robinson very kindly invited me to attend the next Committee meeting (easily the best way of shutting up a noisy member!) and this I'll duly do but I'd just like to say what I've achieved – not to boast about it but just to show what can be done without too much effort or offending anyone.

I've sent off nearly 700 signatures to the Petition and there aren't too many more people I can ask, though no-one has been anything but supportive. People want to sign it. The forms I put in the Church produced a splendid "SAVE OUR BEES" poster and my photo of this has made Bee Craft, the BBKA News – and the Church Times as

part of a two-page feature on the plight of the honey bee. I also did an article for the local Church Magazine. I've sent off lots of emails and I think a version of one is in BBKA News but I just can't find it when I need it.

## Yorkshire BKA Associations

In the Yorkshire BKA Newsletter of March 2007, there is a list of Associated BKA's. York had the highest number of members at 80. The next was Beverley with 64. This rather surprised me, until you think of the area they cover – the whole of Holderness from Spurn north to Bridlington and west to overlap with York. Then came Leeds with 42 and Halifax with 41. Top of the list is Harrogate with over 200 members. They are not members of Yorkshire, but are a thriving association with many dedicated members. One anomaly that I noticed was Cottingham BKA with no members – yet contact details were given of their Secretary!

## Yorkshire Beekeepers Association websites

Here are some local websites for you to browse through on those long winter nights when there is nothing worth watching on TV. (That is most nights in my opinion).

Barkston	<a href="http://www.barkstonashbeekeepers.org.uk">www.barkstonashbeekeepers.org.uk</a>
Ash	
Beverley	<a href="http://www.beverleybeekeepers.co.uk">www.beverleybeekeepers.co.uk</a>
Halifax	<a href="http://www.bdevel.co.uk/bees">www.bdevel.co.uk/bees</a>
Harrogate &	<a href="http://www.hrpbka.org.uk">www.hrpbka.org.uk</a>
Ripon	
Leeds	<a href="http://www.leedsbeekeepers.org.uk">www.leedsbeekeepers.org.uk</a>
York	<a href="http://www.ydbka.org.uk">www.ydbka.org.uk</a>

## The Sting in the Tail ...

... written by Tim Lovett, Chairman, P and P Committee of the BBKA.

Much has been written on stings over the years and there is some confusion over the relative risks of reactions producing the severe anaphylactic collapse.

According to Veronica Varney, a Consultant in Respiratory Medicine, Allergy and Immunology,

writing in a recent issue of the post-graduate medical magazine, 'Update' (p236 Feb 2002), Anaphylaxis is seldom fatal in otherwise healthy subjects. The risk of death is increased by asthma, angioedema of the airways or hypertension of the coronary and cardiorespiratory circulation.

Some 4% of the population experience problems following a bee or wasp sting; one third of the population being capable of producing an antibody after a sting, so having the capacity for an allergic reaction. This antibody however decays over time. Allergic reactions come from second and subsequent stings. The most common reaction is a non-allergic local swelling whilst the late phase reaction is the most common allergic reaction, with large local swelling, but is not life threatening. Systemic reactions include generalised urticaria, asthmatic reactions and in the most severe form, anaphylaxis, producing collapse due to histamine induced hypertension.

Wasp and bee allergy is not genetically transmitted and so not passed on to children. A second sting within a year may produce an identical reaction, but the effect decays over time and after five years a severe reaction is unlikely to recur. After ten years little danger remains. Anaphylaxis occurs in subjects who are allergic and have IgE antibodies to venom; however high levels of IgE do not correlate with anaphylactic reactions. A second factor appears to be involved, lying in the angiotensin-renin levels, which are depressed in patients suffering anaphylactic reactions to venom. (The angiotensin-renin system is manipulated pharmacologically in some treatments for hypertension, by the way).

Desensitisation (immunotherapy) can correct the angiotensin-renin defect. It is based on a series of injections (12-15) of extremely small doses of venom to produce tolerance. Protection to bee and wasp venom develops rapidly but continued treatment with maintenance doses every 4-6 weeks over 3-5 years increases protection. Interestingly, Dr Varney does not recommend immunotherapy in children who appear to out grow their allergy quickly. It is worth remembering that immunotherapy is not cheap and in these days of post-code NHS provision one wonders whether your local trust will foot the bill; your potential to react may decline as you remain on the waiting list!

## Pain associated with bee stings

Kate Wallace sent me this light-hearted article on the subject. I find some of the descriptions quite humorous. It has to be American!

### Schmidt Sting Pain Index

(from Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia)

The Schmidt Sting Pain Index or The Justin O. Schmidt Pain Index is a pain scale rating the relative pain caused by different Hymenopteran stings. It is mainly the work of Justin O. Schmidt, an entomologist for whom the index is named. Schmidt has published a number of papers on the subject and claims to have been stung by the majority of stinging Hymenoptera.

His original paper in 1984 was an attempt to systematise and compare the hemolytic properties of insect venoms.

The index contained in the paper started from 0 for stings that are completely ineffective against humans, progressed through 2, a familiar pain such as a common bee or wasp sting, and finished at 4 for the most painful stings. In the conclusion, some descriptions of the most painful examples were given, e.g.: "Paraponera clavata stings induced immediate, excruciating pain and numbness to pencil-point pressure, as well as trembling in the form of a totally uncontrollable urge to shake the affected part."

Subsequently, Schmidt has refined his scale, culminating in a paper published in 1990 which classifies the stings of 78 species and 41 genera of Hymenoptera. Notably, Schmidt described some of the experiences in vivid and colourful detail:

**Sweat bee:** Light, ephemeral, almost fruity. A tiny spark has singed a single hair on your arm.

**1.2 Fire ant:** Sharp, sudden, mildly alarming. Like walking across a shag carpet & reaching for the light switch.

**1.8 Bullhorn acacia ant:** A rare, piercing, elevated sort of pain. Someone has fired a staple into your cheek.

**2.0 Bald-faced hornet:** Rich, hearty, slightly crunchy. Similar to getting your hand mashed in a revolving door.

**2.0 Yellowjacket:** Hot and smoky, almost irreverent. Imagine WC Fields extinguishing a cigar on your tongue.

**2.0 x Honey bee and European hornet:** Like a matchhead that flips off and burns on your skin.

**3.0 Red harvester ant:** Bold and unrelenting. Somebody is using a drill to excavate your ingrown toenail.

**3.0 Paper wasp:** Caustic & burning. Distinctly bitter aftertaste. Like spilling a beaker of Hydrochloric acid on a paper cut.

**4.0 Pepsis wasp:** Blinding, fierce, shockingly electric. A running hair drier has been dropped into your bubble bath (if you get stung by one you might as well lie down and scream).

**4.0 Bullet ant:** Pure, intense, brilliant pain. Like walking over flaming charcoal with a 3-inch nail in your heel.

### Finally, on bee stings ...

When I first started keeping bees I was taught to wear leather gloves with gauntlets while manipulating bees as a protection against stings. It became the norm to get stung on my gloves every time I went into a hive. I have requeened colonies accusing them of being bad tempered.

A couple of years ago I noticed beekeepers were wearing Marigold type gloves while handling bees. They are very thin so would give no protection from stings. I was working bees with Alan Johnston a short while ago. I was wearing my leather gloves and he was wearing marigold's. I was getting stung and he wasn't. It was then that the penny dropped – my gloves were giving off the sting pheromone from previous times. As soon as a hive was opened up – the bees got the scent and attacked.

Even washing my gloves made little difference. I spoke to another beekeeper on the same subject – he put his leather gloves in the washing machine with his beesuit – a drastic measure, but the result was the same – he got stung as soon as he opened a hive.

Since then I have used marigold gloves. I no longer get stung as before. Marigolds only keep

your fingers free of propolis. You could then take things one stage further and use the thin latex gloves used by dentists or mechanics—they can be bought by the box and disposed of after use.

## MetriCation

The law on the metric sale of goods in the UK pre-dates the UK joining the European Union contrary to urban myth. As far back as 1897 the British Parliament legalised the metric system for use in the UK and in 1965 announced the UK trade would go metric. Prior to joining the European Economic Community the UK Parliament started to plan for the introduction of metrication into the UK economy as backed by the then Federation of British Industry.

Today, the law on weights and measures has remained little changed from when the UK formally joined the EU. The UK agreed that metrication would be completed for industry no later than mandated in the EC Directive of 1989. For the benefit of British industry and the export trade, the UK economy was to go metric in goods sold loose by the end of 1999 with few exceptions. This deadline was extended for the continued use of pints of milk, beer and cider and to allow for certain customers like those

from America to still order in imperial.

The system of selling in imperial is still permitted today to allow for older customers to order in pounds and ounces as long as the goods are weighed out in the metric equivalent. The offence for selling goods in imperial units pre-dates the EU as the British weights and measures legislations made it an offence to use units not approved for trade such as the peck and bushel since 1968. Goods such as fruit and vegetables will continue to be sold in packages marked with a metric unit of weight or loose in kilograms. The law on weights and measures only looks to make it an offence for traders who continue to sell and weigh goods only in pounds and ounces.

Also contrary to urban myth, the use of imperial weights in Britain is not sovereign to this land. The origin of the imperial unit dates back to when the Romans spread their system of measurement across Europe. The Pound or "lb" comes from libbra and the abbreviation "oz" for ounces comes from the Italian "onza". The original pound and ounces system or avoirdupois has more in common with the French and Italian imperial systems of their time. Britain co-operated in the adoption of the metric system with the Metre Convention in

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## Honey Jars For Sale



12 ounce hexagonal jars with lids in boxes of 84 for **£21.00**

Ambrosia in tubs at **£14.00** each

Your purchases can be brought to meetings  
or collected from Colin Hattee's home by prior arrangement.

**Please note — Colin tells me that he no longer stocks 1 lb honey jars.**

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1875 since when we have become truly international in our adoption of international standards in all aspects of trade. The current system of weights and measures in the UK has not changed recently contrary to popular belief - metric units are still required for all trade measurements to consumers and businesses.

The imperial indication may be used in addition to the metric one, as long it is not more prominent. A decision was taken by the EU following that, allowing the continued use of such 'supplementary indications' alongside metric units after 2009. Supplementary indications may remain indefinitely now to make allowances for older people who are more comfortable with imperial units and to permit trade with the USA. Trading Standards Officers from East Riding will continue to enforce the law on weights and measures in just the same way, offering advice and guidance to traders.

Ian Reader, Senior Trading Standards Officer  
Tel: 01482 396225 Email:  
[ian.reader@eastriding.gov.uk](mailto:ian.reader@eastriding.gov.uk)

## How about this for a bumper honey crop ...

Exploitation of the principle that the bigger the number of foraging, as against house bees, the larger the surplus stored, seems to have reached its maximum in the achievement of Mr. A. Schnetler at Pretoria.

He took 2112 lb. 12 oz. of honey in the year ending 19 March 1949. The weighing was checked by a committee of independent experts. The bee was the indigenous *Apis Adansonii*, which this operator finds superior to Italians. The number of queens in the hives ranged from two to six, but for the most part only three were present. During periods of dearth, sugar syrup and artificial pollen were supplied to maintain breeding. Most honey came between November and February, but the highest single day's income was on 8 October 8 when a gain of 40 lb was registered.

## Forthcoming Events

### Wednesday 10 September (1930)

Our first winter meeting at Murton. The speaker will be from CSL at Sand Hutton.

### Friday 12 September – Sunday 14 September

Harrogate Autumn Flower Show

### Wednesday 15 October (1930 hrs)

York BKA Annual General Meeting.

### Thursday 16 October – Saturday 18 October

#### National Honey Show

Please note that the information in your March "Comblings" is incorrect—a new date and venue has been set.

### Thursday 30 October – Saturday 1 November

The National Honey Show is now to be held at St George's College, Weybridge, Surrey, KT15 2QS. The college is situation just off the M25 junction 11 and a short walk from Addlestone station.

Editor's Note: This new location is to the south west of London. If you are travelling down the M1 by car, once you reach the M25, junction 11 is a further 30 miles anti-clockwise. I think the new venue is a disinclination to people travelling from our area.

### Wednesday 19 November

Our Annual honey show will be held this evening. Exhibits will be accepted between 1815 hrs and 1915 hrs. Judging will commence at 1915 hrs prompt. Our judge will once again be Ivor Flatman.

### Saturday 16 May 2009

This day has been allocated to hold our Annual Auction at Murton. There will be more details nearer the time.

## Past Events

### Saturday 31 May

Annual Auction held at Murton.

### Tuesday 3 June

This meeting was to have taken place at Rob Coleman's apiary in conjunction with our Beginners Class, but because Rob had a standstill order on his apiary due to EFB this meeting could not be held at Rob's apiary and was held at Murton instead.

### Wednesday 25 June

A meeting was held at David Gray's apiary at New

Earswick. This apiary is unusual. It is in Rowntree's Nature Reserve and surrounded by sharp pointed steel fencing. Access is through a padlocked steel gate. David modestly declared that he has not had any problems with vandalism! This apiary began life in September last year.

The evening was attended by 18 members including some from this year's beginner's class on a fine warm evening. David explained to us what was going on in each of his hives. He opened up a couple and promptly handed the manipulations over to beginners to continue. It gave them valuable experience under a watchful eye. The bees were very gentle.

### **Wednesday 2 July**

Tom Robinson was the host for this apiary visit at his apiary in Fulford. With some new comers to the craft, Tom spoke of drone laying queens and showed a frame that a drone laying queen had been laying in. He pointed out the high domes of drone brood in worker cells. This led onto laying workers and how to tell the difference between the two.

Tom went on to talk about his queen rearing. He opened his cell rearing colony expecting to find a large percentage of the eggs he had recently put into cell cups being drawn out – only to find that not one had been started. The disappointment in Tom's voice was quite evident. It is one of the trials of rearing queens.

A dozen members attended on a fine evening. We had not been there long when we had some light rain for a short spell, but not heavy enough to halt proceedings.

### **Saturday 19 July**

This was the day of our annual barbeque. Our host this year was Jenny Smith. Jenny always put on a good show and this was no exception. There has been a lot of rain about lately, so Jenny made a wise move and cleared out a barn and put every thing in there. There were forty or so members, their spouses, family and friends in attendance. It was a good do.

### **Wednesday 23 July**

This was a big day for four York Members – it was the day they took their British Beekeepers Basic Assessment. The assessment was held at Alan Johnston's apiary. His apiary and bees were in tip top condition and were a credit to him. The weather was perfect for beekeeping. Their Assessor was Henry Kay from Scarborough.

### **Saturday 26 July**

The last apiary meeting for this summer was held at Ken Barran's extracting house. The turnout was

very poor with only six Members attending. Ken has a good extracting facility and well worth visiting to see how he has set it up. He has been keeping bees since 1958 and has a wealth of experience to pass on just for the asking. Refreshments were laid on at his son's house nearby afterwards.

### **Saturday 2 August**

Alan Johnston and Kate Wallace represented York beekeepers at Tockwith Show this year. You talk to the general public about bees and beekeeping and usually finish up with a few names of people interested in beekeeping.

## **What you all wanted to know ...**

**T**horne's take over three tonnes of beeswax at Stoneleigh from beekeepers. Earlier this year I took some of my own wax to exchange against goods. While I was there I asked how much wax Thorne's used during the year. I was told 100 tons /tonnes.

What does a bee eat at Mac Donald's?  
A hamburger. (A. Wag).

## **Annual Honey Show**

**A** link is available on the homepage giving further details of the Annual Honey Show.

