

HELENSBURGH AND DISTRICT BEEKEEPERS ASSOCIATION

NEWSLETTER No. 164 SEPTEMBER 2011-09-08

PROGRAMME OF EVENING MEETINGS 2011-12

Here is the programme of talks and members' nights that has been organised for our evening meetings over the winter and spring months. As usual all the meetings are on Thursday night in the Hall at Rhu Church starting at 7.15 pm

- 22 September Review of the past season (see item immediately below)
- 27 October John Taylor, Dunkeld, on his "Beekeeping and bee products"
- 24 November Phil Moss, Oban, on "How honeybees see the world"
- 26 January AGM: Una Robertson, Edinburgh, "100 years of the SBA"
- 23 February Bron and David Wright, Edinburgh "Making the most of honey and wax"
- 22 March Members' event : re-run of the successful "Setting up an apiary"
- 26 April Graeme Sharpe. SAC Auchincruive, "The season ahead"

The programme aims to cover various aspects of beekeeping from both the bee and the beekeeper's points of view; the history, the practicalities and craft of keeping bees and use of their products. The programme may also appeal to anyone thinking of taking up beekeeping and provide a good introduction. If members know of anyone who would like to start bee keeping please bring them along to our meetings.

FIRST MEETING OF THE NEW SESSION: REVIEW OF THE SEASON
THURSDAY 22 SEPTEMBER 7.15 pm AT RHU CHURCH HALL

This year we are going to repeat the review of the season but change the format.

We propose to break up into small groups so that everyone gets a chance to contribute their thoughts on what has been an extraordinary season. We then will pool our conclusions in an open session, which will also address any problems or questions that remain un-answered from the group discussions.

Home baking as usual. It will be good to see everyone again.

APIARY HONEY FOR SALE

There is about 50 lbs of apiary honey for sale at £4.00 a jar. Any member wishing to take up this offer should contact Neil Sandison before 22 September so that he can bring along the orders to hand over to purchasers at our first meeting. Phone Neil on 01389 841408 or email neilsandison@aol.com

LIBRARY RECOMMENDATION

Hot off the press and in the Association's library is Willie Robson's extraordinary "Reflections on Beekeeping". Within the pages of this slim volume are observations on bees and beekeeping that are trenchant, thought provoking, and sensitive, based on a lifetime and more (Willie's father was also a beekeepers as is his son) of observation and beekeeping at Chainbridge Honey Farm.

URGENT: EXCLUDERS OUT

Remember to take out your queen excluders now so that the queen is not left stranded when the cluster gravitates upwards to stores above in the winter.

THE RESULTS OF THE HONEY CLASSES COMPETION.

The Helensburgh and Gareloch Horticultural Society 161st. Flower and Vegetable Show took place on the last Saturday in August . There were 3 honey classes judged by David Brown of Balloch and 7 entrants. The results were:

Jar of Clear Honey: 1stMike Thornley, 2ndMike Appleton, 3rdGraham Greenwell

Jar of Set Honey: No result

Frame of Honey Ready for Extraction: 1stNikki and Eddie Monaghan, 2ndNeil Sandison, 3rd. Mike Thornley

Buchanan Cup for most points in Honey Classes: Mike Thornley

The judge had the following comments. A number of the entries in the Clear Class were of unripe honey, lacking in viscosity. This is an indication of not allowing enough time for the honey to settle in the tank and recent bottling. Some were also cloudy. Unfortunately one entry had to be set aside as the jar did not conform to the rules. There was only one entry in the Set Class. This was disqualified as it was not set sufficiently and failed the inverted jar test. There was only a hair's breadth between First and Second in the Frame ready for extraction Class but the winning entry, although not as heavy as the second placed entry, was drawn right to the frame.

Thanks to Graham, Gordon, Howard, Neil, Mike A., and Nikki and Eddie for their entries and particular congratulations to first time winners. Thanks also to David Brown for his impeccable judging and report and to Alastair and Anne for acting as stewards.

CABA SUMMER TRIP - JAMIE BAXTER

I was somewhat disappointed with the trip. I arrived at Partick Burgh Hall to find I was the only member from Helensburgh and a small turn out from other clubs. The coach trip to Angus was pleasant enough good company on board. With the poor turn out the cost of the trip went from £12 to £20. We arrived at Scarlett's Apiary to be told we probably would not be seeing any bees. Instead were shown into the main storage shed & greeted by Andrew Scarlett who then gave us an hour long talk on commercial beekeeping, which was very interesting. We then had a break for lunch.

After lunch Andrew gave us another long talk on bottling & packaging of honey & how they are doing more bottling & packing of other peoples honey. This seems to be the largest part of his business. He then showed us around the bottling packaging area followed by another talk on heather honey & how they move the hives etc. The return trip was a stop at the local pub for a meal, which I knew nothing about until I got on the coach (another £20). Got back to Glasgow about 7 pm. All in all not a very exciting trip, and no bees seen.