

HELENSBURGH AND DISTRICT BEEKEEPERS ASSOCIATION  
NEWSLETTER No. 168 February 2012

“MAKING THE MOST OF HONEY AND WAX”  
THURSDAY 23 FEBRUARY AT 7.15 pm IN THE HALL AT RHU CHURCH

Bron and David Wright are coming from Edinburgh to speak to our next meeting on all matters relating to the production and presentation of honey and wax from the hive. Bron has been secretary of the SBA for some time and is now also the vice-president. With David she is a qualified honey judge. I first heard this talk last year in Oban and was impressed, not only with the insights provided into showing but more with the way that Bron and David demonstrated how small scale beekeepers could and should plan out their years work to ensure that everything their bees produce as surplus is put to good use and not in any way wasted by the beekeeper. There was a sense of completeness about their beekeeping that was inspiring: definitely a talk not to be missed.

#### COMMITTEE CHANGES

Gordon Smith was elected as secretary at the AGM and can be contacted at The Moorings, Ferry Road, Rhu, HELENSBURGH, G84 8FN, 01436 520591 and at [gordon@windsmith.co.uk](mailto:gordon@windsmith.co.uk). Mike Thornley will assist Gordon by continuing to make arrangements for our winter meetings, providing a link with the SBA, and helping with the Newsletter. Ian Taylor and Sue Reid also have joined the committee.

[and a big thanks to Mike for his fantastic work as Secretary over the last 4 years]

#### SUBSCRIPTIONS

It was agreed at the AGM that the annual subscription should remain at £12 with new household membership set at £3. These are now due and should be remitted to the treasurer, Neil Sandison at 10 Muirend Road, Cardross, G82 5LG or, better still, at our next meeting.

#### VOLUNTEERS WANTED FOR THE GREEN FAIR ON SATURDAY 24 MARCH

HDBA are taking a stall at the Green Fair being held in the Victoria Halls, Helensburgh on Saturday 24 March 11.00 am to 4.00 pm. This is a good cause to support as well as providing us with useful publicity at the time of the year when we are looking for new beekeepers. In a way it fills the gap left by the late and lamented Blossom Festival and will allow us to publicise the Introduction to Beekeeping night (see below). The committee are looking for volunteers from the membership to be present on the stand, to answer questions from the public, and to promote beekeeping locally. If you can give 1 or 2 hours of your time please contact Gordon Smith so that a rota can be made up, thus sharing the task.

#### INTRODUCTION TO BEEKEEPING NIGHT ON THURSDAY 19 APRIL

We are holding an Introduction to Beekeeping night on Thursday 19 April at 7.15 pm in the Hall at Rhu Church. The event will take the same form as in previous years with three short talks on the honeybee, the beekeeping year, and about equipment, with plenty of time for questions. Tea and coffee will be available. This

will be followed up by a visit at a weekend to an apiary when the participants will be provided with bee suits and given the opportunity to be involved with opening hives. The event is aimed at those who people who would like to take up beekeeping but want to get an idea of what is involved before committing themselves. Many of us started in this way. If you know anyone who might like to attend please ask him or her to get in touch with Gordon Smith.

#### URGENT CALL FOR APIARY IMAGES

This is a repeat of the item in last month's Newsletter asking for members to send images of their own apiary so that a simple Powerpoint presentation can be made up to accompany members describing the good and possibly not so good features of their own apiaries at our March meeting. Jim McCulloch is going to run this in Alastair's absence – please email pictures to [jmcculloch1@btinternet.com](mailto:jmcculloch1@btinternet.com). Please send these not later than the end of February.

#### TIMELY WARNING

Neil Sandison mentioned that he had checked his hives and found that some needed extra feeding. Bees have not been flying much at the moment so it is difficult to know how they are getting on. Check by hefting or, if you have a way of seeing into a top box, whether the bees are up at the top of this. If the hives are light or the bees are high, feed them: fondant, sugar bags (or even a light syrup but that is better left till later). Don't let them starve.

#### CABA SPEAKER: TUESDAY 20 MARCH 7.30 pm PARTICK BURGH HALL

Murray MacGregor, bee farmer and honey importer from Coupar Angus, will be talking about the trials, tribulations, as well as the good times of his bee related enterprises.

#### AND FINALLY...

The SBA AGM takes place on 17 March at the Dewars Centre in Perth. I will be going if anyone would like to share a car.

Mike Thornley.