

HELENSBURGH AND DISTRICT BEEKEEPERS ASSOCIATION  
NEWSLETTER No. 169 MARCH 2012.

EVENING MEETING THURSDAY 22 MARCH 7.15 pm. HALL AT RHU CHURCH  
“WHAT MAKES A GOOD APIARY?”

This a repeat of a highly successful night about 4 years ago when members talk about their own apiaries, illustrated with pictures they have taken to show the good and not so good points. The siting of hives is one of the most important aspects of beekeeping from both the honeybee' and the beekeepers' points of view. By the end of the evening we hope to have a checklist of what makes a good apiary. It is also about the last opportunity to make any changes in your apiary in light of the evening's discussions so this is a timely topic.

If you have not yet sent images of your apiary please do so by emailing them to Jim McCulloch at [jmcculloch1@btinternet.com](mailto:jmcculloch1@btinternet.com)

#### CLUB NUCS

Neil Sandison reminds members who are thinking of making an increase this year or producing a nuc for sale that the association has 2 nucs for use of the members. Contact Neil on 01389 841408 if you would like to borrow one.

#### CLUB APIARY

Neil is also looking for help with the club apiary this season. He would like to allocate responsibility to 3 other members, each to be responsible for a month. If you would like to put yourself forward for a month or want to offer help but not take full responsibility, please talk to Neil at the next meeting.

#### CABA

Murray MacGregor, bee farmer from Coupar Angus is giving a talk to CABA (Clyde Area Beekeepers Association) on Tuesday 20 March at 7.30 pm at Partick Burgh Hall.

Neil Sandison, who was elected at the AGM as the association's CABA representative has also become chairman of the organisation as it is Helensburgh and District Beekeepers Association's turn, by rotation, this year. Neil hopes to encourage all associations and their members to support CABA and to increase its effectiveness.

#### OTHER DATES FOR THE DIARY

Saturday 17 March 1.00 pm SBA AGM at the Dewars Centre, Perth

Saturday 24 March 11.00 am- 4.00 pm Green Fair at the Victoria Halls, Helensburgh where HDBA will have a presence. For details go to <http://www.transitionhelensburgh.org.uk/helensburghgreenfair.html>

On a recent trip to Edinburgh, I finally discovered where the bee library was so I thought I would share my experience with you. Location: Opposite Virgin Megabowl on Dundee Street following on from Fountainbridge, a stone octagonal building posing as the public library. The bee library is in the basement, keys from reception and you need your SBA membership card with you.

First impression – Oh! A dimly lit room with a desk, 2 chairs surrounded by cabinets and shelves of publications, and books. But when you orientate yourself with what's where, it starts getting interesting.

With the hour I had to spare, I found my way to the reference section – the first book I put my hand on was Darwin's "Origin of Species", 6<sup>th</sup> edition 1882. He was encouraged to complete this edition because of failing health. Here are a couple of extracts:

"The complex web of relations between plants and animals showed that the Viola tricolor and some variety's of Clover, only varieties visited by bees produced seed, the others did not".

and

"In Australia, the imported Hive Bee exterminated the small native Stringless Bee".

The next book that came to my attention was Shuckard's "British Bees" 1866 I liked the use of the English language so here is another extract:

"The queen, the productive female whose function is thought to be exclusively to lay eggs but who may perhaps have some hirer to undiscovered control over the executive of the hive, to be implied by the confusion invariably following her death in her removal from the community and which becomes totally destructive to it's organic constituency unless stayed by another monarch being improvised or by one extraneously supplied.

One monarch alone rules without a coadjutor and without any equal being tolerated, for the presence of a second queen or the immature larva of one, even of her own progeny, maddens her to murderous aggression or to the impulse of emigration accompanied with a lot of adherents which never leave the hive once duties commenced. She is by structure rendered incompetent to execute any of the labours that devolve upon the workers"

Nothing new here then eh!

*(No, not much except we now know some Victorians wrote even longer and more unintelligible sentences than I do and that it is good to hear that Adrian is still pursuing his interest in bees. Ed.)*

If other members are interested in visiting the Moir Library, Ian Taylor was planning to organise a trip – please get in touch with Ian at the next meeting if interested.

## GREEN FAIR VOLUNTEERS

Gordon, Jim, Ben and Anne are confirmed for looking after our stand but more helpers would be great. Please contact Gordon on [Gordon@windsmiths.co.uk](mailto:Gordon@windsmiths.co.uk) if you can help out.

## BEES AND MENTORS

Looking ahead to this season we would like to draw up a “waiting list” of those who want bees. We would also like a list of those members who would be prepared to mentor new beekeepers. If you fall into either category, please make yourself known at next week’s meeting or email [Gordon@windsmiths.co.uk](mailto:Gordon@windsmiths.co.uk).

## CLUB LOGO

It was felt at the last committee meeting that we should have a club logo. If anyone has any ideas send either a description or a sketch or if your talents stretch that far, finished artwork to [Gordon@windsmiths.co.uk](mailto:Gordon@windsmiths.co.uk) and we’ll try and get some ideas together for the April meeting.

## SPARE PRINTER AND SCANNER

The association has an almost unused Epson C46 inkjet printer and Epson 1260 photo scanner that are surplus to requirements. It is available to the best offer from a member with a good home. Mike will bring them to the next meeting and perhaps we can have an auction of a sort.

## TREASURER FOR NEXT YEAR

Neil Sandison will be stepping down as treasurer next January. We are keen to identify the next treasurer as soon as possible so that Neil can hand the role over in a smooth manner when the time comes. If you can help out, please get in touch with one of the committee.