



## WISBOROUGH GREEN BEEKEEPERS' ASSOCIATION

A DIVISION OF WEST SUSSEX BEEKEEPERS' ASSOCIATION

JULY 2017

Website: [www.wgbka.org.uk](http://www.wgbka.org.uk)

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## DIARY OF EVENTS



### **APIARY MEETING EVERY SATURDAY (unless notified as cancelled)**

**Wednesday meetings 5th & 26th July.** See page 2 for meeting dates and details.

*If possible please arrive at meetings early this helps the meeting leader to arrange the right number of groups and allocate colonies. Please sign the attendance book.*



*Please monitor your email for apiary meeting updates.*

### **EVENTS 2017**

**Wisborough Green BKA Honey Show** - Bank Holiday Monday, August 28th.

*See page 3 of this newsletter*

**Wisborough Green BKA End of Season Supper** - Saturday 23rd September.

*See page 8 of this newsletter*

*See the West Sussex BKA Newsletter for events organised by other local divisions.*

**To help reduce the carbon footprint, parking and traffic on the roads we ask members to share vehicles if possible when attending meetings.**

*We advise all beekeepers not to purchase bees and queens that may have been imported. This is to reduce the risk of importing pests and diseases. Very often they are unsuitable for our climate and it is possible that aggression may show in subsequent generations.*

# Dounhurst Apiary Dates

The following apiary meeting dates have been scheduled for 2017.

**Saturday meetings:** *Gather from 1.30 p.m. Notices at 1.50 p.m.*

July	August	September
1st	5th	2nd
8th	12th	
15th	19th *	
22nd	26th	
29th		

\*19th August: Extracting.

*Don't forget to take a look at the WGBKA Library - there are lots of interesting books to borrow.*

*Read at your leisure.*

*No borrowing fee!*



**Wednesday meetings:** *Meetings will start at 6.00 p.m..*

**July**  
5th  
26th

*Please remember to sign-in when attending meetings.*

The following topics are planned for Saturday meetings during July

**July**

**1st** *All: Viruses - Identification and remedy.*

**8th** *All: Varroa monitoring - Alcohol wash.*

**22nd** *Group: What varroa treatment shall I use this year? \**

**26th** *Group: \* The above topic will be repeated on Wednesday 26th July.*

*Please read the updates in each addition of this newsletter and continue to check email regularly for any amendments to existing dates or times, and ad-hoc meetings.*

## Smoker Fuel Required

We are currently short of smoker fuel at the Teaching Apiary. We could do with a mixture of fuel including hay, wood chippings, touchwood and dried grass mowings. Touchwood needs to be light and easily broken up.



# WG Honey Show

***The annual Wisborough Green BKA Honey Show will be held on August Bank Holiday Monday (28th).***

Some of you may be wondering what the Honey Show involves, what it's all about, why we hold it, how you can help, and how to enter honey and other items in the show. If so, read on.....

Our divisional honey show is held on the village green at Wisborough Green, occupying a section of a very large marquee in which the local horticultural society holds their big summer show. This space is not given to us for free; we pay a substantial 'rent' to the horticultural society. Beyond the marquee, on the rest of the village green, the annual Wisborough Green fete is held, with the usual stalls, attractions, dog shows, egg races, etc, etc. It is a very popular event, attracting both locals and visitors from a much wider area.

The show is held annually on August Bank Holiday Monday, but the marquee is erected on the Thursday before and other events are held within it on the Friday and Saturday; there is usually a musical event, so it is worth looking out for the posters to see what is on (or check the Wisborough Green village website). The horticultural society has access to the marquee from the Sunday morning, and that is when we start to set-out our area for the WG Honey Show, in readiness for the next day.

The honey show is held primarily for Wisborough Green members, but members of other BKAs may also enter (although certain prizes can only be awarded to WG members). It gives our members the opportunity to show their hive products at their best, to take a pride in the craft of beekeeping and to practice their skills in honey and wax production; as well as their photographic and baking abilities. Exhibiting at a local show is good practice for entering the National Honey Show, in the County Division; several of our members have had success at the national show with entries previously entered at the local show.

The honey show is also an opportunity for beekeepers to engage with the general public, promoting the welfare of bees and the craft of beekeeping. The mission statement for our division of the BBKA fits with this: *'To promote the craft of beekeeping and facilitate learning about honey bees and their importance in the environment'*. We have display boards with information and an observation hive, which is a major attraction at any show we attend. In recent years Liz and Derek Ready have also attended, selling their cosmetics and fudge, and have done an excellent job selling jars of the divisional honey on our behalf. All this helps to make an interesting display for members of the public to come and see.

How can you help? The first thing you can do is to exhibit at the show; without exhibits there will be no honey show. There is a lot of back-ground organisation involved in putting on the show, and it is a little embarrassing if the BBKA Honey Judge arrives to find there are not many entries to judge. Help is required on the Sunday to set-up the marquee with the tables and staging; the staging and display items need bringing to the marquee, and so help is required to collect these items and return them to storage after the show. Volunteers are also needed on the day of the show (exhibiting does not prohibit you from helping) as we need two stewards to assist the judge. If you have not been a steward before and would like to do so it is not an issue, as you will be placed alongside an experienced steward to learn the ropes. Being a steward is very interesting and you learn a lot about preparing honey and wax products, (this helps with the preparation of

honey for sale, not just for exhibiting at shows). Stewards are given a buffet lunch prepared by the 'horticultural society ladies' (and paid for by the Division). There is also a morning cuppa and home-baked biscuit, so all a steward needs to bring is a comfortable pair of shoes (you are on your feet all day).

The marquee opens to the public at 2pm and volunteers are always needed to help during the afternoon; manning the observation hive and being on hand to answer questions about bees and bee-keeping. The show closes at 5pm and extra help in clearing the show is always welcomed.

So, you've decided you would like to enter something into the show; what do you do? Continue reading.....

Firstly, decide what you would like to enter. You will find a **DRAFT** schedule for this year's show on **page 6** of this newsletter. This will give you a good idea of which classes you think you can produce exhibits for (some details have yet to be finalised). Start planning now; if you are going to enter honey you will need honey, jars and lids; cut comb will require containers, a comb ready for extraction will require a display case (ask around, someone may lend you one), and wax moulds require early preparation (do not try and do a wax mould the evening before the show - there will be tears!). To enter honey classes, the honey must come from your own hives, but if baking you can use purchased honey if you do not yet have any of your own. If you want to enter but are unsure, or don't understand the classes, then ask an experienced member or contact the Show Secretary (that's me) at this stage, don't wait until two days before the show.

The **Show Schedule, Rules and Entry Form**, together with some hints and tips, will be issued with the **August** newsletter. Read the Schedule and Rules, complete the entry form and submit in accordance with the instructions in the August newsletter. Prepare your exhibits. Don't forget to make a note of the classes you enter before sending the entry form, so that you prepare the correct number of exhibits (you would be surprised how many people can't remember what they are supposed to be entering).

Great, then what? On the day of the show, you will need to bring your exhibits to the marquee and stage them ready for judging (the stewards will help you to do this). If you know that you will be away on the day, you can still enter your exhibits, simply ask someone to take them to the show (and collect them afterwards) on your behalf. Please note that as Show Secretary I am unable to take them to the show for you.

In order to stage your entries you will need three things; your exhibit, an entry card, and sticky class label(s); and for the baking classes, a card displaying the recipe. The exhibit and recipe card are supplied by you; the entry card and sticky label(s) are provided by the Show Secretary. When you complete your entry form you can provide a stamped addressed envelope and the exhibit cards and sticky labels will be sent to you; or you can collect them when you arrive at the marquee.

What do you do with the entry cards and sticky labels? When you stage your exhibit, the entry card (white, detailing your exhibitor number, the class number, and your name) is placed **face down** on the table/staging, with your exhibit. The sticky labels (detailing your exhibitor number and class number) are placed on the exhibit in accordance with the schedule rules.

WISBOROUGH GREEN DIVISION W.S.B.K.A	
CLASS NO. ....	ENTRY NO. ....
NAME .....	
.....	
.....	

So, what happens on the day of the show? You will need to stage your exhibit within the allotted time. Entries can be staged from 08:30 onwards, and all exhibitors must be clear of the marquee by the time judging commences at 10:00. If you have requested your entry cards and exhibit

labels by post, then bring them with you, (you can attach the sticky labels at home as you prepare your exhibits); if not, then collect them from the Show Secretary on your arrival (there will be an envelope with your name on it and the number of classes you have entered). Remove the cards and labels from the envelope, place the labels on the exhibit, and then stage the exhibit with the entry card. Allow yourself plenty of time; if you have six exhibits don't turn up at the marquee five minutes before judging starts! Stewards will be available to assist you, but please be patient as each of us only has one pair of hands.

You've prepared and staged your exhibits, then what? Judging starts at 10:00 and you must leave the marquee before this time. Go home, visit friends, have lunch, relax; and return to the show in the afternoon to see how your entries have been judged. The marquee opens to the public at 2pm; you will not be able to enter before this time. Shortly after the marquee opens, we will have the judging of the "honey for comment" Class; all are welcome to observe the judging process, it's a great learning opportunity. Please be considerate to others and don't stand too close so that everyone gets a good view; also please listen quietly and don't chatter as this prevents others being able to hear what the judge is saying. You want to hear what the judge is saying about your entry, let others hear what he is saying about theirs.

Apart from the aforementioned Class, all judging is confidential and any comments written on the entry card by the judge is for the exhibitor of that particular entry. Please respect your fellow beekeepers and do not handle exhibits or turnover exhibit cards. Another reason for not handling the exhibits is that if visitors to the marquee see exhibits being handled, they think it's alright for them to touch them, which of course it isn't.

When the judging is completed, the judge signs the prize cards and the stewards then place the awards next to the exhibits. This is a time-consuming business and sometimes over-runs; so if you arrive at the marquee at 2pm and you can see the stewards are busy setting out prize cards, please do not interrupt them, wait until they have finished before asking them any questions you may have.

So, you've seen how your exhibits have done, you've listened to the judge describing the entries in the "honey for comment" Class, you've admired the other exhibits, chatted to friends, seen the horticultural show exhibits and had a look at the stalls and attractions on the green; now what?

Once the horticultural society has announced its prize winners the marquee closes. This is at 5pm. You can then collect your exhibits, entry cards and prize cards and taken them home. Please note that you will not be able to take your exhibits prior to this time (our display looks really messy and unprofessional if people start removing exhibits ad-hoc). If you are unable to attend in the afternoon, then please arrange for someone else to collect your exhibits; I am unable to take them home for you.

If you would like to help, either on the day of the show or on the Sunday to set up, then please send me an email, or give me a call. I'm sure my regular group of helpers would welcome some additional pairs of hands.

The WG Honey Show doesn't happen by itself, it involves weeks of planning and takes up the whole of my bank holiday weekend; but most importantly it requires **you** to enter exhibits if it is to be a success.

***Caroline***

*Wisborough Green Honey Show Secretary*

**WISBOROUGH GREEN HONEY SHOW 2017**  
**SCHEDULE OF CLASSES**

**DRAFT**

1. 2 x 1lb jars light honey. *(Requires 2 x identical 1lb jars of honey.)*
2. 2 x 1lb jars medium honey. *(Requires 2 x identical 1lb jars of honey.)*
3. 2 x 1lb jars dark honey. *(Requires 2 x identical 1lb jars of honey.)*
4. 2 x 1lb jars naturally crystallised honey. *(Requires 2 x identical 1lb jars of honey.)*
5. 2 x 1lb jars soft set honey. *(Requires 2 x identical 1lb jars of honey.)*
6. Novice Class: 2 x 1lb jars identical liquid, naturally crystallised, or soft set honey. *(Requires 2 x identical 1lb jars of honey.)*
7. 3 x 1lb jars identical liquid, naturally crystallised, or soft set honey labelled as offered for sale. In BS squat jars. Exhibit to be judged for quality and presentation. The use of tamper proof seals is optional. *(Requires 3 x identical 1lb jars of honey.)*
8. 1 x 1lb jar liquid honey any colour for comment by the judge. *(Requires 1 x 1lb jar of honey.)*  
*\*To be judged after lunch, when you are welcome to watch and listen to the judge's comments.*
9. 'Covered jar' class. 1 x 1lb jar of liquid honey to be judged on taste. *(Requires 1 x 1lb jar of honey.)*
10. 1 comb suitable for extraction. *(Requires 1 x display case.)*
11. 2 containers of cut comb, each of gross weight 6-9 oz (170-250 g). *(Requires 2 x identical containers of same weight.)*
12. 1 cake of beeswax produced from a plain mould, weight 7-9 oz (195-250 g). *(1 x white plate for display.)*
13. One decorative beeswax exhibit produced from a mould.
14. 1 bottle of dry mead.
15. 1 bottle of sweet mead.
16. 5 honey crunch biscuits ,recipe will supplied. *(Recipe to be confirmed.)*
17. 1 honey cake , recipe will supplied. *(Recipe to be confirmed.)*
18. 6 Cup cakes incorporating honey. Made in paper muffin cases to a recipe of your own choice. Topping & decoration of your choice. Recipe to be displayed. *(Class yet to be confirmed.)*
19. 6 sweets made using honey. Recipe to be displayed.
20. An exhibit, which can include a piece of artwork, demonstrating the use, or creative use of beeswax. Colouring and wire support is allowed.
21. A flower arrangement in a BS squat honey jar as a vase. Using flowers suitable for honey bee forage.
22. A photograph on any beekeeping related topic. This can be colour or black & white; mounted or un-mounted, but no larger than A4 size.
23. Children's class (aged 12 and under on day of show): A piece of artwork on a bee-related subject – painting, drawing, collage etc. This can be a 2 or 3 dimensional piece.

**Draft schedule. Class numbers subject to change.**

## Patterson In Print



*Nell and friend*

I am writing this on the day following the Cranleigh Show that we have had a stand at for a number of years. I have attended most of them, so I have seen some changes.

This year the pattern of people visiting the stand was different from what I have seen before, with a very slow start, then people passing in waves, meaning there were either very few or too many to manage. We were much closer to a ring than we have been before, which caused a distraction to people walking by. Why is it that people gawk at something they really aren't interested in that moves and is noisy, rather than look at a highly educational stand like ours?

I usually park myself by one of the two observation hives, but this year I felt there were enough WG members to do that, so I tried to guide people into our direction with cries of "Bees and Honey", "Come and see the bees", etc. Doing something like that probably gave me a better view of the attitude of the general public than I would have gained by being next to an observation hive.

There were lots of different reactions including.....

"Ooh, let's look at the bees"

"I like honey, but not the \*\*\*\*\* bees!"

"I'm allergic to bees"

"My grandfather kept bees", followed by being told of an incident that happened when the teller was 6 years old. I think it had been told several times over the last 70+ years.

"Have you got any comb honey? My daughter brought me some back from Devon."

"I've got bees in my lawn/shed/bird box, etc"

"I'm diabetic. I can't eat honey"

"I've always wanted to keep bees"

"Bees are in decline", followed by "Did you know that if bees became extinct we would all be dead in 4 years?"

I have not mentioned several who made grimaces at the mention of "bees".

There were a number of people who either had bees or had them in the past. I had several conversations with people who belonged to other BKAs, but didn't seem to have learnt very much. One person asked me if he could re-use super combs after extraction. Another had moved into a village on the Sussex/Surrey border that I know is well covered by 3-4 BKAs; they had such poor experiences where they came from they decided not to join another BKA. I suggested visiting all local ones, which included ours. They then said they thought their one colony had swarmed twice a few

days apart. It appears they don't inspect them! One person was interested in keeping bees, but didn't have enough time to attend our Beginners Day!

I overheard a middle aged couple on exiting our tent. The lady said "I found that fascinating", to which the man responded "I didn't realise bees could be so boring"! As the saying goes.....it takes all sorts! I have no doubt those inside will have similar tales to tell.

Nell had been good all day, either sleeping or chatting to other dogs and visitors. There was little to do earlier on, so we arranged some entertainment for her and Murray's Springer, Chloe. To give her a bit more exercise I let her have a go at the terrier racing. She didn't do very well!

Even though it might appear quite frustrating at times, I believe that BKAs have a role to play in educating the public about bees. Unfortunately some believe what is written or on telly, rather than from beekeepers, but I think it's worth the effort at events with large crowds. It also gives us the opportunity to publicise WG, so is a recruitment opportunity.

## ***Roger***

# Annual Supper

***Our annual supper WILL take place this year on Saturday 23 September.***

To be held at the Wisborough Green Village Hall, starting at 7pm, where I believe the first supper the club ever held took place over 60 years ago

In order to arrange meat/fish orders in advance, there is a cut-off date for booking tickets this time which is 11th September.

Please book your tickets with Daisy at [wellingtondays@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:wellingtondays@hotmail.co.uk) or 07980 280852. Ticket price is £7.50 per person and you can pay on the door.

The Division will provide alcohol and meat/fish - everyone booking tickets to indicate whether they wish to bring a pudding or a salad.

There will be a raffle and hopefully some entertainment during the evening. If you haven't been before it's a lovely evening and a chance to bring partners along if you wish.

Please note no stiletto heels are allowed in the hall, I'm sure that won't affect too many of us!

## ***Daisy***



## Potential Site For Bees

*We have received the following message, offering land as a potential apiary site.*

We are interested in someone keeping bees on our farm. We live 3 miles north of Petworth and have 50 acres of grassland and woodland, with a small herd of pedigree Sussex cattle and South-down sheep.

We would love to have bees here. My sons love honey and suffer from hay fever, so to have our own honey would be wonderful. We lead a busy life and I'm not sure that we have the time needed to do this by ourselves.

If a beekeeper would like to keep bees here, we would be delighted to have them on the farm. We would like to get involved and learn about keeping bees, ultimately to run a hive on our own.

I look forward to hearing from any interested beekeeper. Please call the mobile number below and ask for Petra.

Tel: 07787 507797

## Teaching Apiary Safety

### *Safety at the Teaching Apiary*

We take our 'Duty of Care' responsibilities seriously. Members and visitors are advised that natural hazards are present at the apiary, as you would expect in any natural location. It is the responsibility of all attendees to take all reasonable precautions to ensure the wellbeing of themselves and those in their charge. Head protection should be worn when close to the bees. Any accidents and injuries should be notified to the Demonstrator in charge of their group.

Children should remain within eyesight. Parents and Guardians are advised that it is their responsibility to supervise and monitor any child in their care at all times while in the apiary or within its vicinity.



### **WGBKA Executive Committee**

## Division's Extracting Equipment.

The Division's extractor and associated equipment is available for loan to WG members (no fee). If you wish to borrow anything, please contact **Graham Elliott** by E-mail at [grahammt@sky.com](mailto:grahammt@sky.com).

### **Equipment available:**

- ◆ 3 frame manual extractor
- ◆ 50kg bottling tank with strainer
- ◆ Plastic uncapping tray

# Tales From An Out-Apiary

*Caroline Drewett shares the joys and frustrations of running an out-apiary.*

When I wrote last month's article, the apiary seemed to be running to plan; oh what a difference a couple of weeks can make. At the time, I had three colonies with new queens and there have been issues with all three. The newly mated queens in two of the colonies were laying worker brood in a good pattern; then the next time I inspected the hives there was no unsealed brood and no sign of the queens. 'Buttercup' had raised queen cells and so I left them to get on with it. Unfortunately any queen that emerged from those cells is no longer there; and the colony now has a single sealed queen cell that they have raised from a frame of donated eggs; better luck this time.

'Cowslip' seems to have gone wrong from the start and there is only drone brood. The fact the cells contain a single egg points towards a drone laying queen, but I can find no queen; so is it a laying worker? One to sort out!

The third colony has imitated 'Buttercup' in that there was a good pattern of worker brood that simply stopped (in the same time period as the other colony). Adding frames with eggs from another hive has not resulted in any queen cells; but I cannot find a queen (and finding queens is not usually a problem). So work in progress!

I finally extracted the early crop of honey on 24th June (13 days later than last year) and found minimal crystallisation. Of the supers removed from the hives, the crop averaged about 18lb per super. I only removed frames that were totally or partially capped; any frames not yet capped remained on the hives, as at this date the more recent nectar would not be from OSR.

The weather has been rather warm recently; warm enough to start melting wax foundation, as I found out when I accidentally left a box of made-up brood frames with foundation in the car on what turned out to be the hottest day of the year. The foundation peeled away from the wires and hung down in very soft triangles. Tip of the month - make sure you return everything to the bee shed when you get home from an apiary visit. Some of the frames were able to be saved but others require new foundation.

Another recent mistake was to run out of egg boxes for lighting the smoker. I used a cardboard tray that had contained fruit. It wasn't until the acrid smoke nearly burnt my lungs that I remembered this type of packaging contains insecticides to protect the fruit from pests. It's lethal stuff. I had also run out of smoker string, and as I have been looking for an even better fuel, with a cooler smoke, I ordered a bag of cotton (pre-washed cotton waste and husks from the USA), also available as rolled cartridges. I will be using this type of cotton from now on; it's easy to light without any need for additional materials, and once started it will burn continuously with a slow, cool smoke, and is completely chemical free. Yes, it costs more than the free grass or touchwood you can collect when out walking, but the smoke it produces is far kinder to the bees and the beekeeper. If I want to smell nice I add a little dried lavender to the smoker.

One of my colonies is still finding some OSR; I have noticed bees wearing yellow crosses when they return to the hive. I suspect it's from the headland of a field that yielded OSR last year.

**Caroline**



# Equipment For Sale At The Apiary

As usual we will have supplies available for members at apiary meetings this year. Because we buy in bulk you will find that our prices are generally lower than from anywhere else, and with no carriage charges! This is a valuable service to members, but does take volunteer time so please read below about ordering. All available at apiary meetings (subject to stock).

## How to order

As meetings can be hectic please **email orders in advance** to Tom at [stone.house@btinternet.com](mailto:stone.house@btinternet.com) so that they can be ready for you. If you leave it until the day you must be prepared to wait until there is a convenient time to collate your goods, which may not be until the end of the meeting, or if I am not carrying enough stock with me, you may have to wait until the next meeting!

All prices are PER SINGLE ITEM unless stated otherwise and are correct at April 2017 for current stocks. We reserve the right to vary prices if there are changes from suppliers.

## Frames (unassembled) **all 60p**

**DN1** for National and WBC brood chambers

**SN1** for National and WBC supers

Frame nails small bag (approx 80 grams) **£1.00** or full box (500 grams) **£5.00**

Foundation for the above

**Wired Brood £1.05** (some available in drone base for culling/varroa control, or drone breeding)

**Wired Shallow 65p** (*please specify worker cell or drone cell*)

**Un-wired Shallow** (for cut comb) **45p**

Spacers (to suit National hives)

Castellated spacers (metal) in 9, 10 or 11 slot **£2.00/pair**

Narrow plastic ends **10p (20p/pair)**

## Sundries

**Hive tool** steel, yellow, British made **£8.50**

**Hive strap** orange, 3 metres **£4.00**



**Payment** can be made in cash (*easiest for us*), or by cheque.

Please make cheques payable to **WSBKA Wisborough Green Division**.

Thanks to this month's contributors. If you have similar articles or beekeeping experiences you would like to share, please supply articles and any photographs for the **August edition** no later than the **24th July**.

If you need any help submitting an article, please give me a call.

**Caroline**