



Cumbria Bee Times

Editor: Ian Gregory, Mount View, Carleton, Carlisle, Cumbria, CA1 3DZ
Telephone: 01228 524054, email: iangregory550@gmail.com

(Views expressed in this newsletter are those of the editor and do not necessarily represent those of the CBKA)

New Issue No:15

Date: March 2022

After a dry January, February brought us back to normality with heavy rain and storm force winds. Hopefully the winds which we normally expect in March have blown themselves out. The first few days of March certainly look promising having just experienced a few sunny days although there has been a cold wind. However, the bees have been flying and I have observed them in our garden on Snowdrops, Spurge laurel, Hellebores, Crocus and Viburnum. At this time of year there are not many flowers for honey bees to forage from and with the unpredictable weather there is the possibility that after the long winter the bees can easily suffer from starvation as the Queen will have started to lay and there will be hungry larvae to feed. It is important to keep checking on food stores and top up as necessary. Now is an opportunity to prepare for the coming season by making up clean frames with wax foundation.

A Brief History of Beekeeping.

The Rev. Langstroth has been credited with the discovery of the “bee Space” and inventing the removable frame hive during the year of 1851. However, in 1789, in Switzerland, Francis Huber invented the Leaf Hive. This was an observation hive that opened like a book, the frames having glass sides, enabling Huber to observe the Life history of the Honey bee. He discovered that the queen bee did not mate inside the hive but in the air and confirmed the discovery by A M Scirach that bees are able to convert eggs into queens by the use of royal jelly and that worker bees can also lay eggs. Huber’s leaf hive was the forerunner of the modern observation hive and he made many other discoveries about the life of the

honey bee. Perhaps what is more remarkable is that by the time Huber had taken an interest in bee research his eyesight had failed and he was blind. He instructed his servant Francis Burmens how to carry out the research who was fully committed to the investigations.

Langstroth acknowledged Huber’s contribution and noted that the use of the Huber hive had convinced him that with proper precautions the combs might be removed without enraging the bees. Without the knowledge gained from Huber he would have regarded the removal of the combs to be quite too dangerous for practical use.

Meanwhile in England 1859 a Mr Woodbury imported a yellow Ligurian or Italian queen from Switzerland. This was the first queen to be introduced in to Britain from another country. Woodbury was a great believer in the superiority of the Italian bee over the Old English Black bee and enthused about this superiority in every respect.

We obviously owe a lot to the enthusiasm and scientific research carried out by these dedicated scientists and beekeepers. However, I often wonder if this was the start of the problems that we encounter in modern beekeeping. The removable frame hive has allowed manipulation of the bee colonies and migratory beekeeping which bring on stress to the bees and encourages the spread of disease. Beekeepers are now advocating the return of the Black bee to this country.

With the introduction of the removable frame hive and more productive bees, beekeeping became more popular and commercialised. To cater for beekeepers search for more knowledge and to keep up with research, Bee Journals were

established. In 1873 a Mr. C. N. Abbot founded the first monthly one in Britain and published it for about ten years before passing it on to a Rev. H. R. Peel. In 1883, the British Bee Journal was issued, at first as fortnightly and subsequently as a weekly.

Soon after the British Bee Journal was established a Mr Abbot inaugurated the British Beekeeping Association with the object of the diffusion of the knowledge of beekeeping, especially among the poorer classes as a means of bettering their condition.

In 1874 the British Beekeepers Association held its first great Exhibition of Bees, Hives and Honey at the Crystal Palace. Since that time regional associations have been formed and thousands of people have become acquainted with the value of honeybee products. The manufacture of hives and accessories has become a large industry employing many people.

Cumbria Beekeepers AGM 2022.

This was held on Saturday 5th March via Zoom. It had been hoped to have the meeting in person but there is still the fear of Covid.

Prior to the start of the AGM a guest speaker, Margaret Murdin gave an excellent and informative talk on "Communication in Honey Bee Colonies". Margaret explained about the different pheromones in the hive that control the behaviour of the bees and larvae at different stages of their development and to the changing requirements of the colony as a whole. Bees can hear through their feet by detecting the different vibrations transmitted through the honey comb. Plastic comb will not transmit these vibrations in the same way as beeswax upsetting one of the ways of communication within the hive.

The Secretary Debbie Keighly gave notice prior to the meeting that she would not be continuing in that role after the AGM. There is now a vacancy for the position of Secretary to the Cumbria Beekeepers Executive Committee. Stewart Beattie gave notice of his role as Examination Secretary and there is now a vacancy for this position.

If anyone is interested in either of these positions please contact your Branch Secretary who will be able to provide the contact details for applying.

The Treasurer, Melanie Vincent, presented an accurate record of income and expenditure to the meeting which showed a very healthy bank balance.

The Executive Committee continues to support branches with their various projects and

individual beekeepers with financial support on the successful completion of the basic Beekeeping Examination.

Dates for your Diary.



Programme

9.30am	Reception and coffee
9.55am	Welcome by the Chairman
10.00am	Ian Gregory Pollinators and attracting them into the garden
11.15am	Julia Hoggard Hive defence, enemies and diseases
12.30pm	Lunch
2.00pm	Ian Gregory Beeswax: its history, preparation and uses
2.45pm	Julia Hoggard The bees' needs: nutrition and management
4.00pm	Dick Smith Being a Bee Scout: Notes on siting bee hives
4.30pm	Chairman's closing address followed by refreshments

The convention fee is £15 per person (£5 under 18years) for the day or £7.50 for the morning or afternoon session.

Booking

By email- please report names and number of places to furnessbeekeepers@gmail.com and send payment by BACS with your name/convention as reference to sort code 20-04-68 account 10345792.

By post- if you receive this by post then also enclosed will be a reply slip and envelope. Please enclose slip and cheque payable to Furness & District Beekeepers Association and add stamp to envelope. Alternatively, you could post the reply slip and pay by BACS.

It will be possible to pay at the door but please tell us you are coming.

Refreshments

Tea and coffee will be available during registration and at the conclusion of the convention free of charge.

At lunchtime, vegetable soup and a roll, with coffee, tea and cake will be available for a small charge. It would be a great help if you would indicate on booking that you would like to have soup.

Thorne's beekeeping equipment

As many will know, Julia Hoggard is an agent for Thornes. She would be pleased to bring your orders to the convention including supplies of her preferred nitrile gloves. To order, do telephone her (015395 60869) or, preferably, email (julia@bcs.org) in good time.

How to find the Malt Kiln, Bardsea

Well Lane, Bardsea, Ulverston LA12 9QT. Grid ref: 296745

Entering Ulverston on the A590 from the east, turn left at the first traffic lights onto the A5087 Coast Road to Barrow. After 3 km passing the Manjushri Institute on the left, take the next right, signposted Bardsea. Past the church at the end of the village turn right, signposted Well House and Bardsea Green. The Malt Kiln is 75m on the right.

Enquiries- Graham Jackson telephone 01229 585878 or email furnessbeekeepers@gmail.com
