

# Welwyn Beekeepers Newsletter

## July 2017

[www.welwynbka.org](http://www.welwynbka.org)

### NEWS SUMMARY

Here's what we've been up to during June:

- Held the Tea Party in the Garden
- Attended Mill Green Museum, Christchurch Park Way Summer Fete, the Welwyn Street Festival and Applecroft School Summer Fete
- Participated in two Bayfordbury Staff Open Days

And we are looking forward to during July and beyond:

- Stephen McPartland's visit on July 22 at Knebworth Apiary
- Attending the Pangshanger Festival of Wildlife on July 29&30 and the Knebworth Steam, Craft and Country Life Fair on August 12&13
- Receiving the Danish Buckfast queens to get the Welwyn Beekeepers Bee Improvement started
- Next social event: Honey Tasting

Regular items:

- Thoughts from the Beekeeper
- Around the Apiaries
- Training
- Events

See detailed reports below and on the following pages.

### **Apiary visit from our local MP Stephen McPartland**

Stephen McPartland, the Member of Parliament for Stevenage, Knebworth, Codicote, Datchworth and Aston is visiting our Knebworth Apiary on Saturday, July 22 at 10.30 h. The visit was originally scheduled for June 10, but given we had the small matter of a general election on June 8, got postponed. Please come and join us at this event and support Welwyn Beekeepers. This is a perfect opportunity to raise awareness for bees/beekeepers and bringing it to a wider audience through the resulting reports in the press. We look forward to seeing many of you there.

**SAVE THE DATE**

**Next Social Event**

**HONEY TASTING**

at the White Hart Welwyn  
October 17, 2017

Visit from our local MP

**Stephen  
McPartland**

**Knebworth Apiary**

Saturday  
July 22 at 10.30 am

*The next Newsletter*

*will appear in your*

*inboxes in September*

## **Tea Party in the Garden**



The weather gods were with us on the day and despite the forecast of showers we all enjoyed a beautiful day in the garden. Conversation flowed, food and drink was plentiful and for the more energetic ones amongst us, horseshoe throwing was practised and a number of very competitive croquet matches were played.

A huge thank you to Lieva and Andy Nation who hosted the event in their garden and made us all feel very welcome.



## **Summary of Events with WBKA involvement**

The six events that we attended were all very well received. We generated interest for beekeeping and sold honey in the process. Thank you very much to all the helpers who made these events get off the ground and a success.

## **Welwyn Bee Improvement Programme**

We are all looking forward to the imminent receipt of our Danish Buckfast queens. The members who have signed up to purchase a queen are busy with getting their respective nucs "ready for action". It is anticipated that we are trying to graft larvae to raise further queens later this year once we have established laying queens.

## **Forthcoming events: Pangshanger and Knebworth**

See attached with the newsletter a poster advertising the Pangshanger event. We are looking for helpers for the two events. Pangshanger runs from 10 am to 4 pm each day and Knebworth from 10 am to 5 pm each day. Please contact Andy Crossley at [andyc321@hotmail.com](mailto:andyc321@hotmail.com) if you can spare a morning/afternoon or a few hours to help on our stands.

## **Social Event: Honey Tasting, October 17, 7.30 for 8 pm at the White Hart Welwyn**

The annual honey tasting event has proved popular in the last couple of years and we are again looking to taste and vote for the best honey produced by our bees. Don't miss an evening filled with the smell and taste of honey and time to catch up with other members.

## **Thoughts from the Beekeeper**

*By Peter Folge*

Given the topic of new queen introduction is high on the agenda as a result of the imminent arrival of the Danish Buckfast queens, the following explains how to best introduce a new queen.

Take a nuc box or empty hive and place this next to the parent hive, Put in 3 frames of sealed brood and one frame of food and an empty frame and/or a feeder frame. Shake in lots of bees from the brood box or from the super. If this is done in the morning go back later in the afternoon and have another look to make sure there are enough bees within the box, most of the old flying bees will have gone back to the parent hive. If this is the case and there are not enough young bees left within the nuc box, shake another lot of bees from the super, repeat this as necessary. If you are taking these from the brood box make sure that you are not putting the Queen into the nucleus.

Once enough young bees remain within the nuc box it is a good idea to feed the colony with some syrup, this helps to settle and calm the bees even further.

The nuc is now ready to receive your new queen when it arrives. Before placing your queen into the hive, just quickly check to make sure that the nuc has not raised any queen cells (look carefully), if so destroy these and then place your queen within the cage, with the tab in place, between the brood frames. I suggest leaving the Queen cage with the tab in place for about 4-5 days the tab can then be snapped off to allow the bees to eat the candy and free the Queen. Once the Queen is established with her own brood you can then go back to the parent colony, kill the queen and unite the nuc with newspaper to the parent hive. As the bees in the nuc are the same as the parent colony they are less likely to fight and kill the queen and will accept her much more easily. This is a very good way of getting a new queen accepted.

## ***Around the Apiaries***

### **Knebworth Golf Club**

Knebworth beginners' sessions seem to have settled down with a small but regular bunch attending. We've had some mostly queen-related challenges so hopefully there is a bit of variety each week.

### **North Mymms Park**

Apiary is currently full with a good mix of new and slightly more experienced beekeepers.

### **Digswell Lake**

Digswell Lake is settling down well with a dozen hives and Anne has introduced a regular Sunday discussion session at the apiary.

### **Expansion of existing and search for new apiary sites: Ramblers Holidays, Lemsford**

Spaces are available at Bayfordbury. We are still awaiting the decision whether the apiary at Ramblers Holidays, Lemsford can be set up. A potential apiary site in Potters Bar has come forward and is being discussed.

## ***Training***

### **Members Apiary Training Sessions**

Held at 10.30 every second Saturday in the month at the Knebworth Golf Club Apiary, and is open to all Members.

### **New Members Apiary Training Sessions**

Held at 10.30 on all other Saturdays in the month at the Knebworth Golf Club Apiary, and is primarily aimed for those new members that would like to gain some practical experience before deciding if beekeeping is for them, and those new members who would like some supportive practical training in their early stages of beekeeping.

## ***Forthcoming EVENTS with WBKA involvement***

Saturday & Sunday, July 29 & 30	Pangshanger Festival of Wildlife
Saturday & Sunday, August 12 & 13	Knebworth Steam, Crafts & Country Life Fair, Knebworth House
Sunday, October 8	Tewin Orchard Apple Day
Thursday – Sunday, November 16-19	Hatfield House Frost Fair