

Welwyn Beekeepers Newsletter

September 2017

NEWS SUMMARY

Here's what we've been up to during the last two months:

- Attended Panshanger Festival of Wildlife and Knebworth Steam, Craft and Country Life Fair
- Unfortunately had to cancel the visit from Stephen McPartland as he was unwell
- Received the Danish Queens and have introduced them to the relevant nucs
- Planned the training programme for the next few months

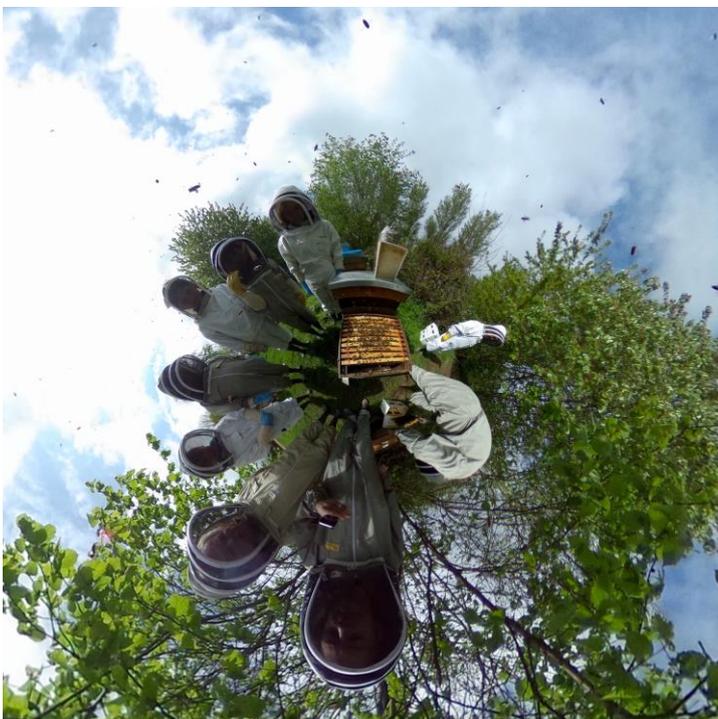
And we are looking forward to:

- Our Honey Tasting Social evening on October 10
- Attending the Tewin Orchard & Codicote Apple Day
- National Honey Show October 26-28 (see attached email)
- Save the date: WBKA Christmas dinner November 28

Regular items:

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

See detailed reports overleaf.



Apiary training – photo courtesy of Colin Gilchrist

www.welwynbka.org

Next Social Event

HONEY TASTING

CHANGE OF DATE

at the White Hart Welwyn
now on October 10, 2017
7.30 for 8 pm

Urgently Wanted

An Apiary in or around Potters Bar

We are continuing to look for an apiary in or around Potters Bar for Members there and in surrounding towns. Ideally it should be reasonably close to the town, out of view from the public eye, and reasonably accessible. The site owner should know that any security arrangements and barriers are as much advantage and therefore respected by us.

Please email Mike Goodhew training@hertsbees.org.uk if you know of any suitable sites.

CHRISTMAS DINNER

November 28

Book your place no later than
October 15 with Lieva Nation
welwynbees@gmail.com or by
phone 07949 624 354

Summary of Events with WBKA involvement

Panshanger Festival of Wildlife – 29th & 30th July

A new event for us but very successful. Lots of very enthusiastic members of the public asking lots of questions and showing great interest in bees and beekeeping. Nice to see lots of young families in attendance. Good sales too, so this event looks like a worthwhile addition to the calendar.

Knebworth Steam, Crafts & Country Fair – 12th & 13th August

Another successful event. Fairly quiet on the Saturday but much busier on the Sunday. Bright sunshine brought out the families, with plenty of children showing interest in the observation hive and Ann's table. Healthy honey sales, almost exactly the same as last year.

Hatfield House Game Fair – 28th to 30th July

Although not officially an association event, there was a small stand run by Barry Darbyshire and Peter Folge. Plenty of interest in the observation hive and beekeeping, but honey sales not quite as brisk as perhaps the scale of the event might have suggested.

Welwyn Bee Improvement Programme

We have made good progress having received our Danish Buckfast queens beginning July. Out of the 11 queens ordered (two belonging to our Welwyn Association), 10 were introduced successfully. One unfortunately took to the air and was never to be seen again. A replacement queen was sent as one had a damaged abdomen on arrival. Surprisingly this damaged queen was accepted and on the last inspection was laying very well. Unbelievable!

The Two Welwyn Queens were used to graft 12 larvae from each. Out of the 24 grafted larvae, 14 cells were sealed and of these, 2 failed to emerge. Three weeks later, of the 12 virgin queens, one had a deformed wing and could not fly and one vanished.

This has left us with 10 British, August mated, laying queens of which 7 have been allocated to our members who have shown interest in helping with this project. We endeavour to raise more Buckfast queens earlier next year for other members who have shown interest. We will continue to offer a queen at just £12 to our membership. This will help to contribute towards future costs in purchasing new Danish Buckfast Breeders and hopefully encourage members to purchase and support our association's home raised queens and bees. The Mating nucs, all with brood, that now have had their queens removed, often raise a replacement queen which often make excellent sized queens. There are still a handful of drones about and it will be interesting to see if any of these queenless mating nucs will be able to raise more Buckfast descendants? Any of these spare queens can still be introduced to colonies in need.

Next year we will review our new colonies and give a full report on their success. If you have not asked and would like to take part in our Bee Improvement Project please do let Peter Folge (the_beekeeper@hotmail.com) know.

Social Event: Honey Tasting, Tuesday October 10, 7.30 for 8 pm at the White Hart Welwyn

Please note that the date for the honey tasting is now on **Tuesday, October 10** and not as originally published on October 17. The perfect opportunity for a get together to catch up with fellow beekeepers, taste lots of honey and vote for the best honey produced by our bees. Please bring a jar of your honey (not labelled). We look forward to seeing lots of you on October 10.

Social Event: Christmas Dinner, Tuesday November 28, 7.30 for 8 pm at the White Horse Welwyn

We are looking forward to seeing many of you join us for our Christmas Dinner. It will take place at the White Horse, Mill Lane, Welwyn. The cost for a 3-course meal will be £27. At the time of this newsletter the Christmas menu is not out yet, however, we will need to provide the White Horse with final confirmation of number of attendees by October 15. Please contact Lieva Nation (by email welwynbees@gmail.com or by phone 07949 624 354) to book your place as soon as possible.

Thoughts from the Beekeeper

By Peter Folge

Autumn is approaching quickly. With cooler days and nights and shorter days our bees should now have their Varroa treatments coming to an end and feeding should be completed by the end of September. This allows the bees enough time to process any sugar syrup otherwise it will start fermenting over the winter period. Next month a reminder on Winter Preparation and essential hive Protection.

Forthcoming EVENTS with WBKA involvement

Sunday, October 8	Tewin Orchard Apple Day
Sunday, October 15	Codicote Apple Day
Thursday – Sunday, November 16-19	Hatfield House Frost Fair

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. Last Training Session for the year to be held on September 9, 2017.

New Members Apiary Training Sessions

Held at 10.30 on all other Saturdays in the month at the Knebworth Golf Club Apiary. Sessions are continuing until the "bees are put to bed for the winter".

See also attached email.