

# Cumbria Bee Times

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(Views expressed in this newsletter are those of the editor and do not necessarily represent those of the CBKA)  
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## Cumbria Beekeepers Annual Conference and Honey Show

**Date:** November 5th

**Venue:** Newbiggin near Penrith.

Large area for free parking

Various classes to enter, excellent Speakers; this is the Cumbria Beekeepers social event of the year.

Please support your County.

Full programme and schedule of classes from your Branch Secretary.

## What AFB really looks like.

Greasy looking slightly sunken brood cappings with central perforations in many and on digging into the cell (with a matchstick ) a sticky toffee coloured goo can be pulled out. There is often an unpleasant smell too. Remember the signs and make sure your bees are not harbouring this notifiable disease. If you have any doubt talk to a bee inspector



## 2016 Autumn Convention

Saturday September 3rd Cockerthorpe Beekeeper's Convention, the latest in a long history of Cumbria Conventions with the objective to inform and educate local beekeepers utilising the best speakers available with the most up to date information and methods. When I started beekeeping in the distant past Cumbria Conventions were funded by the council and held at Newton Rigg. Council cuts are nothing new, so when funding was stopped the Cumbria Association through John Skinner, a Cockerthorpe member, continued the Conventions first at Braithwaite Hall, then it later moved to Embleton under the management of other Cockerthorpe beekeepers.

This year Willie Robson was one of two speakers, a veteran commercial beekeeper who has weathered the ups and downs of beekeeping in the Borders struggling with the varied weather all Northern beekeepers face. Developing a thriving family business utilising the three main nectar sources local to Berwick, Oil Seed Rape, Field Beans and Heather. Through diversification of products using honey and wax they create a wide range of products to increase sales and revenue; a selection was on view and for sale. The development of the site at Chain Bridge to include retail, education and a tourist venue with visitors center and café created much needed employment in the Berwick area. Willie's talk took in all the above and was peppered with characters he has met on the way, incidents experienced and lessons learned. Learn more at the Chain Bridge Honey Farm web site or from his book "Reflections on Beekeeping".

Ian Molyneux was the next speaker diverting from his usual topics of bee health and letting us into his personal world of managing an out apiary in rural Ireland. His ability with only one or two holiday visits a year to keep the colonies alive, when Varroa is such a problem and get a good honey crop. Definitely a case of less is more. Taking the honey crop, with the help of Stewart, marking and clipping queens, health check plus treating for varroa, supering without queen excluders and sorting out the bait hives all done in November. Back home on the ferry with the supers to extract.

His second talk was on the establishment and running of the Manchester Educational Apiary. The one disappointment of the day was the low turn out of Cumbria members for the event. Amongst other reasons a big problem seems to be an information blockage at branch secretary level which needs to be addressed.  
W. Mac Phee Chairman CBKA

## CBKA Committee meetings

**Saturday 17th September 2016**

**Saturday 15th October 2016**

**Saturday 3rd December 2016**

**All at Southey Street Methodist Rooms at 2.00pm**

### CONTACTS FOR BRANCHES

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Full details of CBKA events and Officers contacts can be found on the Cumbria Beekeepers website  
[Cumbriabeekeepers.co.uk](http://Cumbriabeekeepers.co.uk)

There are several other non-affiliated Associations in the North West

## Women's work

The National Trust's programme of contemporary art commissioned Freya Poklington to paint women at work to commemorate the 150th anniversary of Beatrix Potter's birth. Freya included women who reflect some of Beatrix Potter's Lake District interests. Her exhibition including a portrait of a beekeeper is to be seen at Acorn Bank until the 27th November and at Hill Top until 20th October



## Past Times

### **From the Cumberland News**

**exactly 100 years ago**

“The Cumberland and Westmorland Beekeepers’ Association has inaugurated a scheme to restock the Apiaries which have been ravaged by the Isle of Wight disease. It is proposed to make trials with two proprietary cures and Cumberland is to be the first county in the country to adopt such an experiment.”

## Something wicked this way comes

Known in French as Frelons Asiatiques, in English as Asian Hornets, their Latin name is *Vespa velutina*. As their name suggests they are not native to Europe. They arrived in France in 2004 amongst a container shipment of Chinese pottery to Lot-et-Garonne. Their significance is that they eat bees voraciously and along with pesticides have contributed to a drop in honey production in France by two thirds.

The spread throughout France has taken a decade, the hornet reached Paris in 2009. Its presence in Morbihan was announced by Ouest France in 2014. It is smaller than its European counterpart 2-3cm against 4cm and there are claims that it is no more ferocious; however its sting contains much more poison than a wasp and stinging in quantity has caused death in human beings. Its modus operandi is to hover outside beehives and attack bees in mid air as they exit. There has been no effective deterrent against them. Traps have been ineffective as they tend to capture innocent insects and very few Asian hornets. Pesticides have not worked as the hornets tend to nest in the higher branches of trees. A nest begins in April the size of a tennis ball looking as if made of orange papier mache. By May this will have grown to 40-80cms in diameter. The nest has a single point of entry.

Identification of the Asian Hornet is relatively easy with its overall dark brown colour. The abdomen is brown whilst its fourth segment is orange/yellow. The legs are brown with orange extremities. The front of the head is orange/yellow. The more benign European cousin is speckled russet with an abdomen of yellow and black. The dangers of the Asian hornet should not be underestimated. Bees, which are their food pollinate the plants we eat. No bees— no food.  
James Bell

From Central Brittany Journal

[Note:the Asian Hornet is now in Gloucestershire](#)