

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 BKA Honey Show and Conference Sat 12th November

This year the venue chosen was Newbiggin Village Hall and the facilities were excellent. Exhibits for the show were slightly down in number on last year but the standard was extremely high according to both the Judge and our afternoon speaker.

The morning speaker Dinah Sweet, President of Welsh Beekeepers Association talked about Queen rearing by small scale beekeepers and emphasized the need to develop colonies that are able to thrive in the Cumbrian climate, by choosing appropriate Breeder colonies from which to develop new Queens. (Lecture notes available from the ed)

At lunchtime we had a most interesting demonstration of wax cleaning and also Q cup making by Pete Watt our afternoon speaker. He then went on to extoll the virtues of the Polystyrene hive in his afternoon talk. Even the thorny problem of cleaning these has been solved with trials of 6% Washing soda solution showing adequate activity.

The Honey Show Best exhibit was that of light honey shown by John Cowper of Keswick. His cut comb was perfection too. As a young and keen beekeeper he has given the rest of us a standard to aspire to!

Richard & Anne Kenyon

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Wax Day

Saturday 3rd December

Braithwaite Hall

CBKA Members only Cost £5.00

10.00—16.00 Registration 9.30 am

Learn about Wax recovery, Wax cleaning, Foundation making, Candle making (dipped, rolled, moulded) and making Toiletries.

To book your place e-mail or ring S. Barnes
braithwaitebees@sky.com 01900 824872

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Peter Watt at the Honey Show in Newbiggin demonstrating the Wax Extractor known as an "M and G" Extractor

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Cockermouth Convention

After the absence of a year the return of this event was welcome. Perhaps some people missed the preceding notices and attendance was down despite top class speakers. To engage such quality talks is expensive and only possible if we, the grass root beekeepers turn up and pay the modest admission fee.

Margaret Thomas spoke on the subject of Varroa treatments past, present and future, and on Swarm control. I have her notes on file (thanks to Dr Margaret Riches who collated them) if anyone wishes to have a copy.

Ian Craigs' talks on "Listen to the Bees" and on winter management ("Autumn into Spring") were excellent. He propounded the double brood box arrangements for colonies with very persuasive argument and this seems an attractive idea following our cold Winter and wet Summer.

If you were unable to make the Convention this year -better luck in 2012!

American foulbrood (AFB),

Cumbria has been found to have several outbreaks of American Foul Brood this season discovered at Apiary inspections by the SBI. (Check the areas on Beebase). Although we are now in the broodless season, it is vital that we know what to look for next Spring.



AFB caused by the spore-forming *Paenibacillus larvae* (formerly classified as *Bacillus larvae*), is the most destructive of the bee brood diseases. *Paenibacillus larvae* is a rod-shaped bacterium, which is visible only under a high power microscope. Larvae up to 3 days old become infected by ingesting spores that are present in their food. Young larvae less than 24 hours old are most susceptible to infection. Spores germinate in the gut of the larva and spread throughout its' body causing the infected larvae to die usually after their cell is sealed. The bacterium forms spores and each dead larva may contain as many as 100 million of these. They can survive for decades, are resistant to heat, drought and chemical cleansers. The spores are ingested by the house bees as they clean out the cells trying to remove the adherent scale and then these spores are transferred to young larvae as they feed them (a one day old larva can be infected by a single spore) This disease only affects the bee larvae but is highly infectious and deadly to bee brood. The signs of AFB include sunken cappings with a waxy appearance; these are often perforated as the adult bees nibble away to get at and clean out the dead larvae, and a pepper pot brood pattern. The dead larva often has an extended proboscis before it "melts" into a gooey substance in the base of the cell - used in the "ropiness" test. This dries out to form a blackish very adherent scale which is composed of millions of AFB spores all spelling disaster for the colony .