



Special points of interest:

- Hives to Africa
- Newsletter & website
- Honey Show results
- Beginners' course
- Spring Convention news

Special edition

November 2008



And we're off!

The FIRST and very special issue of our Branch newsletter

Why a newsletter? So we can keep you, our members, better informed! With the best will in the world, the greatest challenge for any organisation, large or small, is good communication.

With that aim, the Branch is launching both a newsletter AND a website (see below).

It is our intention to publish four times a year and hopefully keep you well informed on news and developments, not only within the branch but further a field at county and UK levels.

We hope you like the format, and indeed the content. If you have any comments or good ideas for future content, please let a committee member know.

Competition to name YOUR newsletter -

It's your newsletter, so give it a name and win a prize! 'The Holsworthy Branch Newsletter' is a little formal and we can surely do better.

Get your thinking caps on and come up with a catchy name and you could win a £10 voucher to be exchanged at Bitz4Bees at the Spring Convention.

Just let any committee member know before the end of November. The decision will be made at the next committee meeting

A.G.M.

This year's A.G.M. is to be held in November, earlier than usual because of a change in the D.B.K.A rules.

The meeting will be held in our new winter home: 'The Stables' which is part of the Methodist Church at Chilsworthy. No horses, just a newly refurbished meeting room.

Hopefully, everyone will enjoyed the new location and

Hives to Africa

As members will be aware, this Branch has already sent two hives to Africa through the organisations 'Send a Cow' and 'Bees For Development'.

At the second of this year's Winter Programme, members heard directly from a 'Send a Cow' worker and learnt about the enormous benefits that a single hive can have on a destitute family.

And in a tremendous spontaneous gesture, enough money was collected to sponsor two more hives. This included a very generous donation from one individual member.

Bee Health Strategy

There surely cannot be a bee keeper who is not aware of DEFRA's draft bee health strategy. In their words, it sets out to 'address the challenges facing beekeepers given their important role as custodians of honey bees'.

The document outlines the Government's thoughts on five key areas, including 'Effective biosecurity' and 'Good standards of beekeeping and husbandry'.

As a Branch of D.B.K.A. we were invited to contribute to the Association's response, but we went beyond that and submitted our own response directly to DEFRA. Time will tell what impact anyone's comments will have, but we will keep you informed.

Web site

'Have you got a web site? A question so frequently asked at shows and on the telephone. So why not?

Committee member Graham Jones has been working hard throughout the summer to find out what this entails and finally at the November Annual General Meeting, the Branch intends to launch its web site. Get those fingers tapping and make a visit:

www.holsworthybeekeepers.org.uk

Graham says he is keen to hear ideas for future

Beginner's Course

For the new and not so new beekeeper, Holsworthy Branch is again running classes during the winter. This is a joint venture with Launceston Branch of Cornwall Bee Keepers and, as in the past, our instructor will be Dennis Scott. The course of lectures will start on Tuesday, 13th January 2009, 6.30pm to 8pm, at Dennis's home in Launceston, and run for ten weeks.

These lectures will be followed up by practical sessions at our Branch apiary, starting in the Spring. All this leading to success in the basic exam, if you want to take it! The cost is £10 for the full course.

Places are very limited and will be allocated on a first come, first served basis. So don't put off making a decision. To book a place, please contact Linda Davis, our Education Officer, on tel 01409 221991.

Even if you are a more experienced beekeeper and don't feel the winter classes are for you the Branch would encourage you to consider taking the Basic Exam in

Honey Show-2008 (Results)

| <u>Class</u> | <u>Description</u> | <u>Winner</u> |
|--------------|-------------------------------|-------------------|
| 1 | Light run honey | Christopher Smith |
| 2 | Medium run honey | Andrew Sluggett |
| 3 | Dark run honey | Andrew Sluggett |
| 4 | Chunk honey | No entries |
| 5 | Naturally granulated honey | Peter McCabe |
| 6 | Creamed honey | Peter McCabe |
| 7 | Frame of honey for extraction | Andrew Sluggett |
| 8 | Cut comb | Dennis Scott |
| 9 | Wax made object | Anne Bentham |
| 10 | Cake of beeswax | Andrew Sluggett |
| 11 | Item of beekeeping interest | Anne Bentham |

Spring Convention 2009

The fourth Holsworthy Spring Convention is scheduled for Saturday, 28th February 2009, again at Chilsworthy Village Hall. Make a note in your diaries now!

A full and varied programme is again being put together, and our now famous (or is it infamous) Ploughman's Lunch will be provided.

This event, now fully supported by D.B.K.A., will have the usual trade support from Bitz4Bees where your beekeeping equipment needs can be met at very competitive prices.

We hope to see you there! For more details, contact either Anne Bentham or Christopher Smith.

Gift Aid—Money in the Bank

Many of you will recall that, as tax payers, you have in the past been invited to sign a declaration of Gift Aid. This allows the Branch to reclaim the tax you have already paid on the amount of your subscription.

A number of members have done so and this has resulted in over £100 being recovered from the Inland Revenue this year. This amounts to around £7 per person!

We can, as an Branch, do even better next year if more members are willing to join the scheme.

There is no work involved, it is all done for you. All

High Standards at Holsworthy Honey Show

For the Branch, the end of the bee keeping year is marked by our annual honey show. This year's show, held on Saturday, 25th October, was again hosted by Mole Valley Farmers at their Holsworthy store.

Despite a very difficult year, even worse than 2007 for many beekeepers, a creditable number of entries were received, resulting in a very impressive show of the craft of beekeeping.

As a justified reward for the quality of his excellent entries across a number of classes, Andrew Sluggett walked away with every major trophy.

Of particular note was the Stanley Rowland Cup awarded to the beekeeper with the most points from the honey classes. This year marks the seventy-fifth anniversary of its first appearance at the honey show. It was therefore very fitting that Stanley Rowland's son, James, was on hand to present this and other trophies.

Andrew Sluggett's clean sweep of the show prizes was only challenged by Christopher Smith whose honey won its particular class and then went on to win 'best in show'. The show's novice cup was won by Elaine Smith in her very first year of entering.

A significant number of the entries were subject of some very favourable comments from the show judge, Steve Ide from Exmouth, who regularly judges at Devon County Show. He remarked that the standard of the actual products and their presentation was very high, and was keen to encourage more local beekeepers to participate in

Thought for the month....

"Instead of dirt and poison, we have rather chosen to fill our hives with honey and wax, thus furnishing mankind with the two noblest of things, which are sweetness and light."