



The Daily Worker

• Edition 2 April 2009



Spring Convention

Holsworthy Branch recently hosted its fourth Spring Convention at Chilsworthy Village Hall, and whilst this annual event was originally aimed at our own members, this year it attracted a record number of beekeepers from across Devon, Cornwall and Somerset. What a day!

At a time when our honeybees and beekeeping are facing unparalleled challenges from successive wet summers and exotic pests and disease, there was an upbeat and enthusiastic exchange of information, ably supported by some of the best qualified speakers in their field of expertise.

A keen supporter of the event since its inception has been the National Bee Unit and in particular, Richard Ball. This was Richard's last Spring Convention as the National Bee Inspector.

Throughout the day, which consisted of a series of workshops and presentations, we learnt new skills and had our perceptions challenged. We heard how the NBU are planning to deal with the potential arrival in the UK of the Small Hive Beetle. We heard the latest thinking on climate change. And we learnt something about medical aspects of bee keeping, pollen identification, and how to make things as diverse as propolis throat sweets to hand cream. What a day!

With all this information, it was great to pause and reflect over an ample 'Ploughman's' and a marvellous selection of cakes and desserts. All enjoyed with friends, new and old. What a day! The Spring Convention was an exciting start to the year for us, especially as it added over £400 to branch funds. Our thanks must go to the small planning group who organised the event. Thanks are also due to committee members and others who helped on the day, contributing both draw prizes and cakes.

What a day!



Visit to Torbay

Torbay Branch of DBKA has invited our members to visit them on Saturday 4th July. Anyone wanting to join the visit please let Peter McCabe know, as he will be coordinating numbers.



Devon County Show

A note received asking for help!

Dear Secretary

As you know, the County Bees & Honey Show is held every year in May in the Bees & Honey Marquee at Westpoint, Exeter, as part of the Devon County Agricultural Show. This year it will be the 21st to 23rd May. The Show stalls include Candle Rolling, Honey Sales, a 'Taste of Honey', Live Bee Handling, Equipment Sales, Information, the National Bee Unit, Observation Hives and many other things.

I would be grateful if between you and your Branch Chairman you would advertise to your Branch members the need for volunteer Stewards at the Show. You will also see a 'calling notice' in the next edition of Beekeeping Magazine. The Show Committee is supported in running the Show by an enthusiastic, large group of volunteers. I have taken over as Chief Steward and Steward Liaison Officer from Chris Utting, and have started the process of arranging for all the Stewards needed. I already have a large database of people who have worked as Stewards over many years and I have been contacting everyone to check their availability (or not!). But we are always looking for new volunteers - particularly younger ones, and those members new to Branches.

The commitment need not be an onerous one. It ranges from a single half-day to a full 3 days of help - the choice is an individual one. There are opportunities to help on a particular stall or section, or in a general role. An entry ticket to the Show is included, which gives the opportunity to enjoy the Show as well - for free - in return for help in the Marquee. Parking at the Show is free.

Anyone interested in having a thoroughly rewarding and enjoyable day out, and joining a very friendly and enthusiastic team, is asked to contact me on 01805-601715 or tupnce@aol.com.

Regards, Barry Neal

Hive Space at Blagdon Manor

Blagdon Manor, Ashwater, Beaworthy are offering hive spaces in one of their fields, in exchange for a few pots of honey for their hotel guests breakfast. Anyone interested please contact Heather (Secretary) heather@trelay.org
07923536908



Consultation

Those of you that were at last November's Branch AGM will recall the fact that, after all expenses, the Branch was left with only 70p from the subscription of each registered (full) member. Of course, the Branch element of your subscription was only £4 to start with and out of that we have to pay the cost, when required, of posting out each month's 'Bee Keeping' magazine.

Branch activities such as running the Branch apiary and providing a quality winter programme, together with the Annual Honey Show, all have to be paid for. All these things have no doubt contributed to the fact that our Branch reserves have reduced for the second year running. Your committee feel we cannot go on like this – we could end up with an empty bank account within five years! And that is despite a profit on the Spring Convention and other fund raising activities.

At its last meeting, your committee proposed the introduction of a nominal £1 charge for each attendance at either summer apiary meetings or the winter programme. We believe this to be fair as only those who make use of these facilities would actually pay, and of course there would be no additional charge for your tea and biscuits!

The introduction of a charge will not answer all our financial issues, but will help.

But before we make our final decision, we would like to hear your views, good or otherwise. So please contact Christopher Smith, our Chairman on tel. 01409 254457 if you have something to say on this matter or want further information.



Dates for Your Diary

19th April. 2.30pm Apiary Spring Tidy Up. Bring protective clothing, and if possible some general garden maintenance tools.
3rd May. 2.30pm. Apiary Meeting.
17th May. 2.30pm. Apiary meeting
21st to 23rd. May. Devon County Show.
31st May Apiary Meeting and fortnightly every other Sunday at 2.30pm to end of season.
4th July. Visit to Torbay branch of DBKA.



Class Distinction!

It appears that there is some confusion about the various classes of membership that DBKA, and therefore your Branch, has to offer. It was clear at a recent meeting of the DBKA Executive Council that members of Holsworthy Branch are not alone in that state of confusion!

There are in fact seven classes of membership, but for all practical purposes, we only need to consider four: Registered, Partner, Associate and Country. If you suffer from insomnia, you can read all about the classes and the benefits/responsibilities of each in the DBKA Year Book.

It is the relationship between the membership classes 'Associate' and 'Country' that has caused confusion.

Just in case this article raises alarm, don't worry. For the vast majority of members, either registered or partner, life goes on the same.

The Year Book tells us that 'Associate' membership is open to 'those who are generally interested in the craft and wish to support the DBKA'. It goes on to state that Associate members 'will be deemed not to have any honeybee colonies of their own'.

If you do keep bees, but do not wish to become a 'Registered member' and do not need the various insurances provided, the only class of membership available is 'Country'. A 'Country' member is still a member of DBKA, and the Branch, but pays a little less subscription.

But before everyone rushes to change their membership at the next AGM, please consider the insurance implications, particularly BDI, and public and product liability, that is built into your 'Registered' member subscription.



Thought for the Month

We ought to do good to others as simply as a horse runs, or a bee makes honey, or a vine bears grapes season after season without thinking of the grapes it has borne.

Marcus Aurelius