

# The Daily Worker

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Web site: [www.holsworthybeekeepers.org.uk](http://www.holsworthybeekeepers.org.uk)



## Harry Riches, MD, FRCP - An Appreciation

Dr Harry Riches who was prominent in the world of beekeeping from the 1970s died aged 89 on Friday 31 May 2013 at his home in north Devon, with his family around him.

Harry Riches graduated MB, BS (London), MRCS (Eng.), LRCP (London.) from Guy's Hospital Medical School in 1948. After junior hospital appointments he fulfilled his national service obligation by serving two years in the Royal Navy as a surgeon lieutenant. Returning to a hospital career he subsequently proceeded to higher medical qualifications of MRCP (London.), MD (London.) and FRCP (London.). From 1960 to retirement in 1988 he was Consultant Physician to Harefield Hospital and Mount Vernon Hospital, Northwood.

Away from his professional life Harry had a lifelong interest in beekeeping which he may

have acquired from his grandfather during his childhood in Norfolk. A member of the Hertfordshire BKA through West Herts division, he became chairman and president of this association. His daughter Penny remembers "What started as a small hobby, of course escalated and I remember as a child at one time there were thirteen hives in the garden! I am not too sure what the neighbours thought about that. I also remember coming home from swimming one day and finding him lying flat out, collapsed, in the garden from a reaction to bee stings. My mother, who had been a nurse, saved the day and him, by being able to administer some adrenalin and he recovered. It was this incident which led him to study and become an expert in the desensitising of people to bee venom. He was not going to give up his bees, so he had to

find a cure to the problem of having such a reaction to being stung! And he did.”

In 1981 he was elected to the executive committee of the BBKA where his abilities, judgement and leadership qualities were quickly recognised and he served on several BBKA committees, was chairman of the Publicity, Publications and Public Relations Committee and acted as Press Relations Officer. He quickly rose to be BBKA Chairman and in 1987 he served two years as BBKA President.

He was an expert in bee venom hypersensitivity and author of several beekeeping books. His first, *‘Beekeeping’*, Foyles handbook, published in 1976 is worthy of revision for today’s beekeepers. *‘Honey Marketing’* from BBNO, 1989, is another useful book though some statutory regulations have now altered. *‘Medical Aspects of Beekeeping’* was published in 2003 by the Central Association of Beekeepers and *‘Insect Bites and Stings’* was published by IBRA in 2003. An article by Harry on this topic had appeared in *‘Bee World’* in 1982.

A BBKA honey judge himself and specialising in mead, Harry wrote *‘Mead-making, Exhibiting and Judging’* which BBNO published in 1997 with a new edition by Northern Bee Books in 2009. In addition to these books Harry wrote numerous articles and lectured widely throughout the country. His work and writings on bee venom allergy have been acknowledged internationally.

Other organisations too, benefited from Harry’s involvement. He was a member of the Central Association of Beekeepers, served a period on their organising committee and in 1989 became their president for many years. He was, at one time, a member of the council of the International Bee Research Association (IBRA). He was President and a Director of Bee Craft Ltd. and Chairman of the Executive Committee of the National Honey Show and became their President. He was also a Liveryman and Past Master of the

Worshipful Company of Wax Chandlers of the City of London for two years in 1993.

Harry continued to keep bees when he moved to Devon to join his daughter. He joined the Holsworthy Beekeepers where his first lecture to the members was on the making of mead, having been a renowned honey and mead judge.

His daughter said “He loved being here in Devon and I believe it was a return to the country life he had so much enjoyed as a boy in rural Norfolk. However this time, he was able to have his own Dexter cattle, donkeys, chickens as well as cats and of course his bees. He greatly enjoyed going to the local agricultural shows in the summer, and it was all we could do to stop him buying llamas when we saw them at one of the shows! He loved animals. He had a life long interest in natural history and took an active interest in encouraging barn owls to the farm. We are now the proud owners of many bird boxes, owl boxes, bat boxes and dormice boxes.”

His sudden illness in early May was a surprise as he had always enjoyed good health, which sadly deteriorated very quickly. He was laid to rest with his wife, Pamela, in Rickmansworth on Monday 10 June 2013 after a service which was attended by many from the beekeeping world and the Wax Chandlers’, as well as medical colleagues, friends and family. He is greatly missed.

*Written with information from his daughter Penny Riches Mills and David Charles, BBKA Past President.*

Harry's family would like to thank all the beekeeping world who so kindly sent get well messages; every one was read to him which he loved. And of course condolence messages from beekeepers all over the UK and abroad; even from people who have said they never met him, but wanted to make contact.

## Apiary Party: The bunting is going up for our 50th year celebrations at Dunsland

**Apiary on 7th July.** 300 Sausages have been ordered, Andy is down the coal mine digging up some coke for the barby. There are lots of activities so please come along and join in, bring friends and family. Justin Seedhouse will be there answering questions on Dunsland House and David Arney will lead groups around the grounds. Penny Riches Mills will cut the Celebratory Cake in place of her father. Dennis Scott, our Honorary member, who has contributed so much to the development of the Holsworthy Beekeepers will cut the ribbon and officially open the new clubhouse.



## HISTORY OF HOLSWORTHY BEEKEEPERS

Please can you look through all your old photos of anything taken at the Hollacombe apiary, or Dunsland ...we want to build up a pictorial history of the club's activities ... we have 50 years to cover.

If your photo is digital send to Linda at [info@west-lake.co.uk](mailto:info@west-lake.co.uk) or print off and bring with you on the day of the party ,if its a black and white photo please bring it along, if you can't come to the party – give to another member to bring.

Best 3 photos win a prize. Oldest photo will win a prize. Put a date on your photo – and any notation – ie who is in the photo, who is behind the veil etc. what's going on in the photo. There will be a special board to post your photos on.

Many thanks.

Linda



## Devon County Show

Our warmest congratulations to the two Holsworthy members who were Trophy Winners at this years show.

**Peter McCabe** . The Blue Ribbon of the British Beekeeper's Association, the Blackmore Trophy, and the DCAAA Award Card for the exhibit judged to be the highest grade in the Show.

**Andrew Sluggett**. The Frank Alston Perpetual Trophy (Gift Class).



## BBKA membership cards 2013-14

All members (except Associates) should by now have received their membership cards direct from BBKA. The clever ones amongst you will have spotted that the cards are dated incorrectly. Apparently they forgot to change the date and the cards for this year were printed with last year's date (12/13). I didn't

spot it but received a letter from DBKA about it! Obviously BBKA apologise about the error but do not want to spend money on re-printing the cards and assure all members that the cards are valid.

Graham Jones



## Holsworthy branch forum

A discussion forum has been created on the branch website. This can be viewed by anyone on the internet but only branch members will be able to add comments and questions etc.

The aim is to give all members an opportunity to share information, experiences etc. about bees and beekeeping. It will also enable everyone to advertise spare equipment etc. for sale and wanted.

Some initial sub-forums have been created to make it easier to see what's what but these are not fixed and any suggestions for the future are very welcome.

Currently the sub-forums are:

- Beekeeping questions and answers
- Apiary matters
- Sales
- Wants
- Forum announcements
- Branch news

Those members who have used other forums will, I hope, find this new one easy to navigate and use. I have found that discussion forums can be very useful, especially in getting advice but really it is up to the members to make whatever use they wish. Remember, of course, that it is a public forum and that the normal rules of politeness and decency apply.

The forum can be found at [www.holsworthybeekeepers.org.uk/forum](http://www.holsworthybeekeepers.org.uk/forum) and there will eventually be a link from the branch website. The setup is very flexible and any comments about improvements etc. are very welcome.

In order to post items to the forum you will need to register and this may take a day or so to process but I'll try to do it as soon as possible.

Graham Jones



## Exams and Training Courses

Five of the Holsworthy Members will be biting their nails on the 29th June when they will be taking their BASIC beekeeping exam – mostly a practical with verbal questions – relaxed and

informal as much as it can be. Candidates will also make up a frame and get a cup of tea ! Sue Hoult from FERA and Chris Utting will be taking the candidates through their paces.

An Improvers Study group has been set up and will group together in August. Nine members have already joined and Lea Bayley has agreed to start the first session and advise the group.

Graham Jones has said he will lead a Beginners Group next year. If anyone wants to attend this please email Graham through club website. If anyone wants further information about the above email Linda on [info@west-lake.co.uk](mailto:info@west-lake.co.uk)



### **Predatory Mites**

Brian Dixon reports on his use of predator mites.

The first batch arrived in April and I inserted the sachets within 24 hours of receiving them. The daily drop was minimal and debris viewed under the microscope showed empty varroa shells.

Since treating with the second batch the daily has been about one per day.

So far I am happy with the results.

Last year I just used "Hive Clean" treatment and no oxalic acid.

Brian Dixon



### **Dates for your diary**

#### **Woolsery Agricultural Show**

**Monday 29<sup>th</sup> July 2013** at Clovelly Court, Clovelly.

Holsworthy Beekeepers are delighted to be sharing the National Trust Marquee.

Our theme will be to promote bees and beekeeping. There will probably be the opportunity for members to sell honey

We will need volunteers to help man the stand.

#### **Holsworthy Agricultural Show**

**Thursday 22<sup>nd</sup> August 2013.**

Again we will be needing help to man our stand at this show.

#### **Holsworthy Beekeepers Honey Show**

**Saturday 12<sup>th</sup> October.**

Keep the date clear and start planning your entries.

#### **Monday 9<sup>th</sup> September 2013**

‘Building & managing a Top Bar Hive’ a talk by Jim Slade.

The intended talk on The Wonderful World of Bees has had to be postponed until 2014.

#### **Monday 14<sup>th</sup> October.**

Emma Simcock, from ‘The Bee Vets’ will be giving us an update on the use of predatory mites, Stratiolaelaps, to control varroa. Members will remember Emma giving us a talk about this subject at the Spring Convention earlier this year.

#### **Monday 11<sup>th</sup> November.**

AGM. Bring & Share supper. Auction of equipment etc.

#### **December Meeting**

Any suggestions for our December Xmas Party to Linda please.

#### **Spring Convention**

**22<sup>nd</sup> February 2014**

Once again this will comprise an interesting and entertaining range of talks by experts on bees and beekeeping, and we will be pleased to welcome beekeepers from Ireland, including Phil McCabe who will talk on both Spring, and Summer Apiary Management.

Also Dr. Steve Martin, from University of Sheffield will be giving a talk on the Asian Hornet. A subject to ensure that no-one has an after lunch nap.

Much more information to come on our Winter Programme and the Spring Convention

