

Bromley Bee News Monthly Update

Published by the Bromley Beekeepers

Welcome to the **August 2003** issue of Bromley News.



Bromley Beekeepers Apiary July Meeting

Its with sad regret we report the passing of Bromley branch member Ian Coleman. Ian was a very enthusiastic beekeeper and gardener, and attended apiary meetings regularly. Myself and others who attended Ian's funeral felt sorry we didn't get to know him better. Ian enjoyed a full life and had many good friends. I wish to extend our condolences to Ian's wife Joan and friends and family.

Ian was beekeeper of the month in the July 2002 newsletter which is archived at: www.kentbee.com/bromley/newsletters/julybbk02.htm and you can see pictures of Ian's garden at: www.beedata.com/ian-coleman/

Sticky Time

Out of my seven hives three have produced very good honey crops, this is still on the hives but should be safely in my honey house by 17th August. The extracting will be done during the evenings when it's cooler as you can't have any windows open for obvious reasons.

This year I will be using Apiguard instead of the usual Apistan for varroa control. Both treatments work best in late summer and so you should plan your honey removal and application dates in accordance with the instructions.

This month there are a lot of diary dates to remember, the biggest is Clive and Jack's Barbeque, see elsewhere in this issue for details.

Mike Oliver, a possible new member, has sent a literary contribution to the newsletter

which we have published on the web version. Mike hopes to get his first bees in September (see article below).

Your Honey Show Needs You !

This month you should receive a copy of the Bromley and Orpington branches honey show schedule, if you don't you can download a copy from the Internet www.kentbee.com/bromley/news/honeyshow2003.htm

At the next apiary meeting on the **17th August 3.00pm** (Special Meeting) Peter Bashford will do a demonstration on preparing exhibits for the show bench, make sure you allow time to attend this after the apiary meeting.

You may have heard about the branch purchasing a the new display tent but not seen it yet. See below for photographs.

More bad news Cecil Tonsley passed away on the morning of Saturday 26th July 2003. Our thoughts are with Nora and his family.



Photographs by Peter Springall





Internet

Improved web version of this newsletter with pictures

URL: <http://www.kentbee.com/bromley/newsletters/Augustbbk03.htm>

Apis-UK-The free Beekeeping web magazine and newsletter

Contents: July issue No.15 prints to 18 sides of A4. Contents: Editorial; Beekeeping news; Bee press; Articles: Natural Ways of Improving Varroa Containment (part 2) Ian Rumsey; Poem of the month: An Ode to the Honeybee Warren Ogren; Fact File: Swarming why do they do it? What triggers it? Letters: Bill Turnbull, John Yates; Updated beekeeping events diary and lots more Total D/L. 258KB.

URL: <http://www.beedata.com/apis-uk/newsletters/apis-uk0703.htm>

Steven Turner

A closed mouth gathers no foot

It is said that when Cortez reached the New World he ordered that his ships were burnt to impress upon his men that there was no going back.

I am an absolute beginner in beekeeping. As I write my knowledge and equipment are zero. So why did I open my big mouth when Robin and Jenny Spon-Smith asked if anybody wanted a colony? I think it may be a swarm but since it has colonised a discarded water tank perhaps it should be a pseudo-colony.

With great pleasure I attended the club meeting of the Bromley and Orpington group for the first time on Sunday 20th July and met all you veteran apiculturists. I sat quietly and respectfully listening as befits a mere tyro, absorbing the half-understood pearls of wisdom voiced by Peter and Clive and the rest of you. When Robin and Jenny arrived they drew everybody's attention to a swarm they had previously reported in past newsletters which they had accommodated beneath an inverted plastic water tank. They wanted to donate it to somebody and it was suggested that one of the three or four newcomers sitting in the circle of chairs might like to take it on.

After casting the runes and consulting a decidedly minimalist pocket diary the oracle pronounced. Peter Springall declaimed sombrely that the priesthood would descend upon the Spon Smith domicile at the hour of three in the afternoon of the 21st day of September, 2003CE, there to perform the solemn rite of rehousing the swarm/colony in more suitable style.

The rest of the initiates, being far more sensible than I, kept their mouths firmly shut but remembering the words of Chairman Mao that a journey of a thousand miles begins with a single step, I accepted the challenge. Now the result of my mental aberration is that I await the 21st September with some apprehension and I am gamely enquiring far and wide for an affordable hive.

Robin and Jenny invited me to go to their house after the meeting to inspect the infamous water tank and its denizens. There was the tank, black, large, squarish and smug with field bees sauntering in and out and eyeing me up, with some disdain I thought.

I have to say there is something sinister going on at Chez Spon-Smith. There were at least two other discarded water-tanks lurking amongst the neat and gentle formality of the bottom end of the estate. Is this the start of the Spon-Smith Tanks-R-Us business? Do they intend to revolutionise beekeeping with an alternative to the National and WBC?

I recall that Napoleon Bonaparte adopted the bee as his personal symbol or motif as a sign of his sagacity and industrious nature. I have a feeling, t'anks to the Spon-Smiths, that I too might be about to meet my Water-Loo.

Mike Oliver E-Mail:mike.oliver@sra.gov.uk

Apiary News

Last Tuesday I delivered two of my Queens to Brian Palmer at his Apiary near Maidstone. He suggested they should be introduced by the direct method. Having never witnessed this way of Queen introduction I was all for it. Brian armed him self with two jars of lukewarm water and dropped the Queens in.

We searched through the first hive removed the old Queen and dropped the now almost exhausted replacement Queen onto the comb on which her predecessor was found, three pairs of eyes watched with held breath. Within moments a ring of bees surrounded her and after a minute or two she put her tail in a cell and laid an egg. Big sighs of relief all round and we opened the second hive to repeat the operation, again success. Brian is away for a couple of weeks and plans to look into the hives on his return. That'll be the acid test.

Once again the time has come around when Clive and Jack stage their summer BBQ. It takes place on the **16th August at 3:00pm** and will be held at their apiary site at Dorset Road. You are all invited and the guest list also includes members of the Bee Tour trips from the past few years. We had about 70 turn up last year and it was so successful that most vowed they would certainly attend in the future. Tea, coffee, soft drinks and red wine will also be available but if that doesn't suit your palate bring your own. Just one small favour, please give Clive a ring on 07771-990034 or e-mail me on ps@zbee.com a few days before the event just to let us know you are coming that way we can keep the catering in hand. Many thanks.

The following day on the **17th at 3:00pm** we have the final afternoon meeting for this season at the Club Apiary. Peter Bashford will follow the beekeeping with a demonstration on preparing exhibits for the show bench. This precedes our Branch Honey Show by four weeks so there will be plenty of time to get your exhibits ready. Remember you only need two jars of honey to enter and if you have never won a first

prize before you could possibly do well in the novice's class. You may think that showing honey is not your scene but there is no better way of getting you in the habit of preparing honey fit to offer friends or for sale.

Another enjoyable day is promised for **Bank Holiday Monday the 25th August** when we take our lovely new tent to Cudham for the penultimate show this year. Do come along and spend an hour or two talking to the public and perhaps bring some honey for sale, I guarantee you will have a good time.

Don't forget, **Sunday 7th of September** we resume the first Sunday morning meetings at **11:45am** which continue until June of next year. This date on Sunday coincides with the open day held in aid of the NSPCC at the allotments. Best wishes for a bumper honey harvest. See you all soon

Peter Springall

Diary Dates

Saturday 16th August 2003 3:00pm

Clive and Jack's Summer BBQ, Dorset Road, Beckenham.

Sunday 17th August 2003 3:00pm (special meeting)

The branch afternoon apiary meeting. Beekeeping demonstrations and hive management. Tea and biscuits provided.

Monday 25th August 2003 (Bank Holiday Monday)

Open 12:00pm Cudham Village Fayre, Cudham, Kent.

Sunday 7th of September 2003 11:45am

The branch morning apiary meeting. Beekeeping demonstrations and hive management. Tea and biscuits provided.

Saturday 13th September 2003 - The Bromley and Orpington Honey Show and Beekeeping exhibition.

Opens to the public at 2.30pm FREE ENTRY. Emmanuel Church, The Grove, West Wickham, Kent. See quality products of the hive; buy pure English honey; things for kids to do; watch the bees at work safely behind glass in the demonstration hive; beekeeping exhibits and more. Refreshments available. Honey Show Schedule and entry forms from the URL: <http://www.kentbee.com/bromley/news/honeyshow2003.htm>

Sunday 21st September 3:00pm - Bromley branch meeting at the home apiary of Robin Spon-Smith. 77 Bushey Way, Beckenham, Kent, BR3 6TH E-Mail: <rss@spon-smith.com>. Please email Robin so he has a idea of the numbers attending.

For more information

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Visit our site www.kentbee.com/bromley

Advertisements

(free to members or £10.00 for non-members)

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Contact Ian Scorer Tel: 07973-797512 or E-mail: eeaness@bigfoot.com

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