

Bromley Bee News Monthly Update



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Beekeepers**



Cover pictures from the November apiary meeting and the National Honey Show

Merry Christmas from Bromley Beekeepers

Welcome to the **December 2001** issue of Bromley News.

The National Honey Show 2001 was an outstanding success for our branch, we now hold both the Geoffrey Dixon cup and the Bee cup. Some of our branch members excelled and won many cups between them, namely Mr P. Bashford, Mr. J.Pearce, Mr. P Reynolds. Well-done gentleman.

My individual ambitions of first prize for my honey didn't materialise, I did however receive a Very Highly Commended for two jars of clear honey in the gift class, I was facing big competitors and the standards where very high despite the slightly lower entries numbers compared with last year.



Those beekeepers with access to the Internet can tune into the National Honey Show website www.honeyshow.co.uk and download over a hundred photographs of exhibits and trades stands.

Phil Reynolds kindly offered to be our roving reporter and did some excellent audio interviews with four visitors which can be heard on the website in MP3 format.

How many members have heard of the **First Honey Co-Operative**? This is a non-profit making company looking for new members. I have been told that there is a ready-made market for floral honey from this area, apparently very few beekeepers from the South East have joined the scheme. I will have a number of leaflets to hand out at our 1st Sunday in the month meetings if you are interested in bulk selling your honey and supporting this worthwhile co-operative.

John Henman has negotiated a discount with **KBS** for bulk purchasing of beeswax foundation and beekeeping sundries, to take advantage of this offer you must order through John Tel: Home: 020 8460-8452 Work: 020 8777-4853

To end on a beekeeping note do remember to put mouse guards on those hive entrances before those pesky rodents move in.

Internet

Looking for local honey? Beekeepers can add their own entries and can edit later www.beedata.com/localhoney/

Winter garden with a unique working Victorian Apiary located off B6045 at Blyth, Nottinghamshire. More info and photographs at: www.beedata.com/news/hadsock2002.htm

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Apiary News



In last months newsletter I mentioned that Dave Harris was due to go into hospital. I am delighted to say that he is now back in harness and appears none the worse for his ordeal. I was pleased to get a call from him last Saturday as he was concerned that his bees were clustering on the outside of the hive, and could they be swarming? Later I learned that others had witnessed the same phenomenon.

Swarms in November are not unknown. Barry will recall a November meeting some years ago when a swarm was waiting on a fence for us to give it a new home. Not a swarm in the usual sense but what is known as a hunger swarm. Having used up all their stores the colony de-camps then goes in search of a weak stock with stores to spare. It then, uninvited, takes up residence in the new accommodation and

does both stocks a favour. Of course one of the queens pays the supreme penalty but that is the way of life in the bee world.

Getting back to my original story, Clive and I were on our way back from Canterbury when we got Dave's call and being at a bit of a loose end we offered to meet Dave at his apiary. Accompanied by Sally it proved to be most enjoyable visit as the apiary is situated in a farm on the edge of the town and the presence of shire horses, cows, sheep and chickens added to the appeal. This gorgeous day followed a week of almost freezing weather which accounted for the lively bees (sometimes referred to as a joy or cleansing flight).

Recent visitors to the apiary will recall that the observation hive is still viable and leaves me wondering what is the best course of action for the forthcoming winter. Displayed in the clubhouse to the delight of two local school parties on their visit to the site last week the hive attracted more interest than the ducks and chickens and hopefully sowed the seeds of future beekeepers. It also prodded me to fill the empty shallow frame with sugar syrup and I am now tempted to carry on down that road as long as the bees survive. Bringing a two and a half frame observation hive through winter must surely be a first.

Don't be caught out by the announcement of the 3rd of January date in the County Notices. I gave the information over the phone and not knowing the actual date, said the meeting would be on the **3rd Tuesday of January**. Obviously the word Tuesday was missed out. WATCH THIS SPACE NEXT MONTH.

As usual you and yours are invited to the Annual New Year get-together on **January 6th**, this being the first Sunday of 2002. Save a little space for some stolen cake, mulled wine, and BBQ and of course the most important ingredient, your company. **Happy Christmas to you all.**

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