

# Bromley Bee News Monthly Update

## Published by the Bromley Beekeepers

Welcome to the Christmas special **December 2003** issue of Bromley News.



**Honey with your Tea** Photo: NHS 2003 st

Before anybody asks the C4 documentary about Peter Bashford and myself preparing for the National Honey Show (two beekeepers and friends do battle for the top prizes) was not to be, the producer rang me only a few days before to say C4 was not going to fund the two days shooting needed to make the ten minute documentary. I was disappointed but I knew the film crew would have stirred up the air making it very difficult to keep the dust off the surface of the honey, only serious competitors would be worried by this!

For years I dreamed of winning a first prize at the National, after many years of trying with limited success I was finally rewarded for my continuous optimism by winning a first in both the open class 1a and the London Beekeepers' Association class 167. I was on cloud nine, my ego and head nearly exploding!

Also congratulations to other 1st prize winners of the Bromley branch Peter Springall, Tom Winks, Barry Mills, Peter Bashford and Dr John Cowan.



This years AGM was well supported, all officers were re-elected and all business done. The trophies and awards were presented to our winners of the Bromley and Orpington honey show by Peter Bashford (these pictures can be seen on the improved web version of this news letter).



Peter Bashford handing out the cups and trophies at the AGM to the Bromley winners of the 2003 branch honey show. Left to right starting from top Steven Turner, Mary Slater, Dr John Cowan, Tom Winks.

You can read this newsletter online with more pictures from the URL:  
<http://www.kentbee.com/bromley/newsletters/decbbk03.htm>

I have some good suggestions for Christmas presents that any beekeeper would like to receive. The 2004 "Beekeepers Annual" is something worth considering as a stocking

filler, it contains a calendar and diary, bee crosswords, articles and a directory of beekeeping organisations and statistics and loads more for a mere £9.75. What about a annual subscription to the best English beekeeping magazine in the world? "The Beekeepers Quarterly" cost £19.00 both are available from Northern Bees Books, you can order online at [www.beedata.com/beebooks.htm](http://www.beedata.com/beebooks.htm) or Phone +44 (0) 1422 882751 Fax +44 (0) 1422 886157 Scout Bottom Farm, Mytholmroyd, Hebden Bridge HX7 5JS (U.K.) I'm sure the local equipment supplier can suggest other practical beekeeping equipment if you wanted to surprise your partner with that new hive or smoker he/she always wanted.

## THE BEEKEEPER'S ANNUAL



2004

Recently in conversation with another beekeeper we both realised now inadequate our bee bags were, mine always seems to be bulging and difficult to carry and the smoker is always a fire hazard in the car when you're between apiaries. The conclusion was that a commercial bee equipment bag needs to be designed and manufactured with enough space and safety features built in. I'm throwing down the gauntlet to anybody who can design such a bag.

This is a busy time of the year for non beekeeping activities but don't put off fitting those mouse guards, do it now. I have often reported in this newsletter about my on going battle with rodents in my shed, this year I'm trying a new tactic of leaving the radio on a talk station, my theory is the human voices will scare them away. So far this non violent method seems to be working. Please no rat jokes at the News Years barbeque!

Looking back over the season, my brood comb replacements transformed those selected colonies, honey yields were good, swarming reduced and combs were fantastic to handle. I will be giving this treatment again next spring. One particular area I wasn't very successful with this year was hiving swarms, I shall be looking hard at my methods to see if I can improve my success rate. Most of the problems for working beekeepers is

the time needed to do the job properly, you can't really plan for swarms as you always get the call just as you are going out or coming home from somewhere or other inconvenient times. I have three hives which will need re-stocking in the spring, rather than relying on swarms for this I will make an effort to make up nuclei from my stronger stocks, using purchased queens or ones raised locally, these will build up and shouldn't swarm that year.

I hope your beekeeping season was a productive one and the next is even better. Merry Christmas **Steven Turner**



Photo: NHS 2003 st

### **Apiary News**

I am pleased to say that Mike Oliver has undertaken to tend the Bee Garden since both Cecelia and Jill are not around at the moment. The garden got a trifle overgrown towards the end of the year and now is a good time to make a start knocking it back into shape.

The 2003 National Honey Show and the Branch AGM are now both history and we look forward to the challenge of the new venue for the National at Hendon. Our Branch has over the years gradually taken on more and more of the responsibility of staging the National and I only hope that our willing band will continue at least for the first few years at the new venue.

I went through the stocks in the mini nucleus hives this week and found only two had survived to date. Two had been destroyed by the greater wax moth and the remaining two were given fondant on top of the frames which of course will now become a regular duty throughout the winter as long as they survive. We can only hope.

On the subject of candy, John Henman now has a supply in stock some of which he will bring to the apiary meetings. If you need some urgently give him a ring on 020-8777-4853 and you can arrange to collect it.

I am off to Spain tomorrow to help with the olive harvest. I am told that it makes ones hands beautifully smooth so that I will be ready to shake your hand on the first Sunday

(the 4th of January) of the new year when you and your partners are all invited to the customary BBQ and mulled wine session.

Due to my trip to Spain I will be unable to attend the meeting on the 7th of December which I believe will be the 6th time I have missed a meeting since I joined the branch in 1962 a habit I will have to break. Never the less you will be in good hands.

On that note I only have to wish you all the best for the forthcoming festive season and looking forward to seeing you all on the 4th of January.

***Peter Springall***

### **Diary Dates**

**Sunday 7th December 11:45am.** The branch morning apiary meeting. Beekeeping demonstrations and hive management. Tea and biscuits provided.

**Sunday 4th of January 11:45am.** Bromley branch apiary club BBQ, beekeepers/friends and partners are all invited.

**Sunday 1st February 11:45am.** The branch morning apiary meeting. Beekeeping demonstrations and hive management if the weather permits. Tea and biscuits provided.

### **For more information**

Peter Springall 020-8690-3906 Mobile: 07779970104 [E-Mail](#)

Tom Winks Chairman 020-8777-3144

Clive Watson 020-8658-3786

Steven Turner (editor) 020-8698-0313 [E-Mail](#)

Visit our site [www.kentbee.com/bromley](http://www.kentbee.com/bromley)

### **Advertisements**

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

### **Bumble Gear**

Give yourself a treat, or your wife, may be a girl friend. Keep up with the Jone's or those European beekeepers. Food quality stainless steel buckets with lids **£15 each**. This is half price, no handles coming off when heated. Tel: 020-8395-6852

### **David Harris**

Is now an approved Thorne agent able to supply all beekeeping needs at a discount. 49 Shawbrooke Road, Eltham SE9 6AL. A telephone call before calling is much appreciated 020-8850-7826 Web: [www.busybusybee.demon.co.uk](http://www.busybusybee.demon.co.uk)

### **FREE Six large (very heavy) concrete slabs idea for standing hives on**

Collect from Steven Turner 153 Thornsbeach Road, Catford, SE6 1HB Tel: 020-8698-0313

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