

# Bromley Bee News Monthly Update

## Published by the Bromley Beekeepers



**Peter Springall demonstrating**

**Top Cover picture from the May Apiary meeting © Tom Winks**

Welcome to the **July 2002** issue of Bromley News.

**The beekeeping exhibition at Blackheath Fair** was a great success, I would like to thank our branch members who helped set up the tent and displays, a number worked hard standing up all day pushing honey sales which went very well. A special thank you to Sally for managing sales and mental arithmetic, which must have been extremely tiring.



**Sally on Honey Sales**

The poor weather in June played havoc with my weekly inspections, and I lost a swarm of yellow bees in the Catford area; which so far has not been found. Checking my bees during late June (mid Summer) shows we are enjoying a very good honey flow, my supers are filling up very quickly indeed. To take advantage of this you need strong stocks and loads of supers piled on.



**Photograph taken at Blackheath Summer Fair**

My inspections have shown that wax moth is making a mess on some of my older brood combs, if you see a greyish trail across the brood you can easily remove the unwanted larvae with the corner of your hive tool without doing any more damage to the comb.

The June Sunday afternoon apiary meeting was most unusual, the observation hive was found to be queen-less, and most of the meeting was spent looking for a replacement queen. In the end drastic action was needed. This was again captured and put on the web as a beekeeping picture gallery: [www.kentbee.com/bromley/june1602](http://www.kentbee.com/bromley/june1602)

**SAVE MONEY** Clive Watson will be bulk ordering Apistan or Bayvarol strips for end of season Varroa control. Please contact Clive with your requirements.

The Kent honey show is this month and I'm keen to motivate branch members to take part, the closing date for entries is July 11th. If you would like a schedule and entry form go to [www.kentbee.com](http://www.kentbee.com) and click on the link for the Kent Beekeepers Association, you should be able to download and print them easily.

### **Beekeeper of the month**



**Bromley branch member Ian Coleman** has a number of hives in his Brockley, London garden and has recently expanded his hives and runs an out apiary on the Barriedale Allotment Association site, near to a busy railway line. His hives are all home made, Ian's design is based on the Jumbo Langstroth.



Ian has also written an article about the difficulties of getting bees on a London allotment, telling his story. This is due to be published on Apis-UK this month.

## Internet News

### Improved web version of this newsletter with photographs

<http://www.kentbee.com/bromley/newsletters/julybbk02.htm>

### NBU South-East Region Newsletter June 2002

<http://www.beedata.com/news/fb070602.htm>

**Apis-UK the FREE beekeeping web magazine.** Download Apis-UK The July 2002 issue will soon be published <http://www.beedata.com/apis-uk/index.htm>

## Other News

I had this request from a film company , if interested contact them directly:

I am emailing you from Radical Media production company in London. We are currently casting for the role of a Bee Keeper for an up coming shoot (one day between the 1st and the 5th of July) I wonder if anyone at your club would be interested? We need some one between the ages of 30-60 and would be able to visit your apiary this Saturday if you and your members were interested in the role. The casting would involve photographs and a short video of members that are interested and the role would require no acting skills. Please phone me on 0207 432 6800 for more information. I will also try to phone you later on today (I got your contact information from the internet) Kind Regards Ben Kyne.

### *Steven Turner*

## Operation Sting

**Saturday 22nd June ... The longest day.** With almost a full moon and a bright sunny evening I knew I would be in for a late night waiting for all the bees to come home so I could seal up the hives.

The middle of June is about the worst time to move bees, I had six colonies to move, four of them had three supers, and the remainder had two. All were pretty well full and sitting on national 14 x 12 brood boxes so each hive was fairly weighty. The last thing I wanted was to have to move them. But because of circumstances out of my control I was asked politely to 'Bog Off' from my apiary on a local allotment.

So, Saturday night, 22nd June at 10pm I went to close up the bees only to find a very warm and bright evening with the bees flying quite happily in and out of their hives. I

fitted the travelling screens then I waited and waited until about 11.30pm when I thought enough was enough and proceeded to seal up the hives. To my horror I discovered I had forgot to take a torch and the foam had gone solid and crumbly, so I sealed the entrance holes with gaffer tape then departed for a well earned night's sleep. I arranged to meet Barry Mils, Steve Turner and Ian Coleman at 9am Sunday morning, they had kindly volunteered to do the transporting with me and Barry was to supply a second trailer.



I arrived at about 8.40am Sunday morning to fit the hive straps. Again to my horror three of the hives were leaking bees. The gaffer tape was not sealed properly with the early morning sun the tape started to curl. The air was full of bees and expletives! I decided to go for it anyway, I had no alternative. Barry, Steve and Ian were due to arrive at any minute I quickly sealed up the leaking entrance holes and started fitting the hive straps when Barry, Steve and Ian arrived just before 9am. We continued fitting the hive straps and started loading onto two trailers. By now the air was thick with the returning bees obviously wondering what the hell was going on. I left behind an old empty WBC hive, placing this in the centre of the area we quickly loaded up all six hives, stands and blocks, making a speedy departure onto our new location which was some six miles away. With the aid of the hive carrying tool the six hives and stands were soon in place, the sealed entrance holes released and bees flying!

They were all fired up by now having had a very bumpy journey to their new location. Steve received a good pasting and took shelter in one of the cars, so bee suits were hastily donned and a speedy escape was made, we managed to leave the site at 11.45am. Later in the afternoon I went back to the old site to look at the remaining bees who, I am happy to say, had taken up residence in the old WBC.

After that I went to the new site and walked around the hives taking off the travelling screens and replacing the roofs. Everywhere was quiet and peaceful with bees flying in and out as though nothing had happened.

My grateful thanks to Barry, Steve and Ian, whose invaluable help along with a good sense of humour made an exciting and entertaining Sunday morning. Steve captured the whole event with his digital camera, and can be viewed from the beekeeping picture gallery on the Bromley Branch website: [www.kentbee.com/bromley/movingbees](http://www.kentbee.com/bromley/movingbees)

**Tom Winks**

## Apiary News

I suppose the thing I will remember most about June 2002 is the amount of swarming that has taken place, not just in my own apiary but it seems in everyone else's too. Earlier this year I was recommending giving the bees plenty of space, but that obviously is not the complete answer.

You may well think that your bees have not swarmed, but unless your queens are marked there is every chance that a swarm has escaped without your knowledge, it only needs a moment of absence and all is back to normal within 15 minutes.

Much of the trouble is of course that we are continually replacing our lost colonies with swarms, which is just propagating the tendency for bees to swarm. The other course of action is to replace these swarmy queens with queens from a low swarming strain.

As you know, I am back on the breeding programme and all is going well. Not only docility but also lack of inclination to swarm are high on the list of desirable traits to breed for and hopefully both these elements are in the queen I am breeding from.



Originally members were bringing nucleus hives to the apiary and I was installing larva from my breeding stock but this has proved to be a little cumbersome and I have now resorted to mini nucs and at the time of writing I have 7 queens in the pipeline. If you are interested have a word with me at the next meeting on the **21st July**.

Don't forget we still need your honey as there are still some shows due to take place and as I've said before we get a good price.

I have a reminder from Clive that he has a supply of Apistan and you should see him at the next meeting if you are running out.

**Jill Dunn** who has been looking after our bee garden has found it necessary to give up so we are looking for a volunteer to take over. It's not a particularly onerous task but just a case of keeping up with the weeds and trimming the edges of the flowerbeds. Clive or myself will carry out the grass cutting as in the past. Finding a volunteer perhaps turning up a quarter of an hour before meetings and all lending a hand could be another solution.

The honey is still coming in albeit slowly but the last couple of cooler days has not helped and in my experience once the flow takes a downturn it seldom recovers.

***Peter Springall***

## Diary Dates

### **Sunday 14th July 12pm-5pm (Bromley Beekeepers)**

Foal Farm, Jail Lane, Biggin Hill.

### **Sunday 21st July 3.00pm**

Branch apiary meeting. Beekeeping demonstrations and hive management. Tea and biscuits provided.

**12-14th July 2002 Kent County Bees & Honey Show** at the Kent Agricultural Show, Detling. Come and steward and see the show. Contact Jane Mannings, 1 Crowdleham House, Heaversham Road, Kemsing TN15 6NG Tel: 01732-763811  
Download the schedule and entry form from the URL:

<http://www.kentbee.com/kbbka.htm>

### **For more information**

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