

# Bromley Bee News Monthly Update Published by the Bromley Beekeepers

Welcome to the **March 2004** issue of Bromley News.



## **Bromley Branch Apiary Meeting**

Our show organiser Tom Winks has given me the details of this year's outside events starting on the 16th May at Woodlands Farm Trust, Shooters Hill. You can view the full listing of events on our website. We need volunteers for these events; members that help always say what a good time they have. If you are interested give Tom a call 020 8777 3144.

We had a very good lecture last month given by Alan Byham, our new regional bee inspector. His talk was about I.P.M which stands for integrated pest management or in this case varroa management. One simple method of reducing your varroa population that uses no chemicals is to practice drone brood removal every fortnight during the season. Alan recommended we make a special brood frame in which the bottom third is drone foundation, this you cut out when capped, the comb is best positioned in the middle half of the brood chamber, this will slow the rate of varroa increase by 50%. For the confident hobbyist beekeeper artificial swarm control can be another highly effective method, this has the advantages of producing a new queen and removing 80% of the varroa population. With all these methods we need to check the efficiency of the control by regular mite fall monitoring.

***Steven Turner***

### **Obituary Dennis Geoghegan**

It is with great sadness that it falls on me to record the passing of a very well known beekeeper. Dennis Geoghegan took up beekeeping in 1972 and joined the Bromley Branch of the Kent

Beekeepers Association.

He died in his sleep during the night of the 4th of February at the age of 71. The post mortem revealed that he had had a heart attack and that he had suffered a heart condition for several years previously but was apparently unaware of his condition.

He worked as a BBC Engineer until his retirement and shortly after in 1993 took up the post of Bee Inspector and became a very familiar figure in the world of beekeeping especially in Kent .

I for one got to know him very well over the following seven years as in his professional capacity he was a frequent visitor to my apiary until he finally gave me the all clear late in 2000 by which time I was down to one stock. He eventually relinquished the post of inspector at the end of the season of 2002, but regularly attended all the branch events.

Our heartfelt condolences go out to his wife Marie and all his family. The funeral took place at Hither Green Crematorium on Wednesday the 18th of February when over 200 mourners including his family and 28 beekeepers attended. ***Peter Springall***

### **Apiary News**

As I sit at the keyboard I look out on what is left of a beautiful day. I wonder if with our fickle weather it will last for the meeting on the 7th of this month. I took a peep into the remaining nuke and actually saw her majesty but only two sealed cells so far. Perhaps with the fine spell we had for a couple of days last week she decided to start laying, only to be put off by the onset of yet another cold snap. Perhaps when we look in at the weekend we will see some unsealed cells with larva. Who knows?

So far the only losses at the apiary are two which were overtaken by wax moth late in the season last year, it only needs a quick inspection to ensure there is enough stores to see them through the following critical weeks after which they can fend for themselves.

The work of clearing the apiary goes on slowly but we are getting there with the help of Barry and Tom and with Paul Bond when pressure of work permits.

I look forward to seeing some of you at the day of talks hosted by the Central Association at Stamford Street on **Saturday the 13th March**. This the second year this event will take place at this venue and judging by last years performance it will be well worth taking the time to pay a visit. Full details elsewhere in this issue.

Our own talk for this month on **Tuesday the 16th** will be by Dr David Perkins who will be giving us the low down on bees but not our honey bees but some of the hundred or more species that live around us. Please make the effort to come along and hear what Dr Perkins has to tell us.

As I have warned in the past, now is not too soon to get those supers on. Never allow the bees to get the idea that they are running out of space and trigger off the swarming instinct. I am hoping to have some queens raised from a low swarming stock available within a couple of months so if you are using swarms from last year, get your name down and re-queen as soon as possible.

I have just had a call to from a Mrs Smith 020 8300 9626 to say her father has died and left two empty hives and her mother wants to dispose of them, they are empty of bees but have all the frames. The asking price is 30 pounds each and they are located at 139 Sibthorpe Rd, Lee. The mother, Mrs Maria Norton 020 8851 2142 is a little hard of hearing so I have given her daughter's number as a contact. See you all soon. ***Peter Springall***

**Saturday 13th March 2004 - CABK Spring Meeting** at Kings College ( Waterloo campus), London :- Peter Harvey, Bees, Wasps and Ants Recording Society: "Invertebrates and the importance of brownfield sites". Dr Ian Kitching, Natural History Museum: "The biology of Death's-Head Hawkmoths, lepidopteran kleptoparasites of honeybees". Lizzie Cant, Rothamsted Research: "Hedges and roads: guiding pollination and increasing plant gene flow?".

### Apis-UK February

Issue No.21 prints to 27 sides of A4. Contents: Editorial; Beekeeping news; Bee press; Articles: The varroa mites secret weapon - cloning Graham Law; Colony development during the active season John Yates; An investigation into natural comb - cell orientation (part5) Ian Rumsey; Bumble bees in winter Mathew Allen. Readers letters: Bob Ogden, John Yates, Margaret Cowley, Nattaly Senchugove. Diary of events and more Total D/L 298KB. URL: <http://www.beedata.com/apis-uk/newsletters04/apis-uk0204.htm>

### Diary Dates

**Sunday 7th March 11:45am - The branch morning apiary meeting** . Beekeeping demonstrations and hive management if the weather permits. Tea and biscuits provided.

**Tuesday 16th March 7:30pm** evening lecture at the branch club house - David Perkins: There are other bees that do not collect honey.

**Sunday 4th April 11:45am - The branch morning apiary meeting** . Beekeeping demonstrations and hive management if the weather permits. Tea and biscuits provided.

**Tuesday 20th April 7:30pm** evening lecture at the branch club house - Peter Griffiths: Making Mead.

### Outside Events 2004

**Sunday 16th May - Woodlands Farm Trust**, Shooters Hill.  
Further details will be announced.

**Saturday 5th June - Blackheath Village Fayre**, Blackheath.  
Assembly 10 am, Fayre opens 1-5 pm.

**Saturday 12th June - St. Christophers School**, Beckenham.  
Assembly 10 am, Fayre opens 1-4 pm.

**Sunday 4th July - C.P.R.E.** Keston.  
Assembly 11 am, Show opens 2-5 pm.

**Sunday 11th July - F.O.A.L. Farm**, Biggin Hill.  
Assembly 10 am, Show opens 12-5 pm.

**Monday 30th August** (Bank Holiday Monday) - **Cudham Village Fayre**, Cudham.  
Assembly 10am, Fayre opens 12-5 pm.

All are welcome to attend these events to help in many ways, I guarantee that you will enjoy yourself, and will learn something. You will be fed and watered by our inhouse 'Chef of the Year'... Barry. If you are interested and want to know more, Phone me 020 8777 3144. You will be a great asset to the branch, and will promote Beekeeping. **Tom Winks**

### For more information

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### 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)

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