

## KENT BEEKEEPERS' ASSOCIATION

### Orpington Branch Newsletter May 2010

We have a lot of activities coming up in the next few weeks so I will start by going through them. First of all is the Petts Wood May Fair on Monday May 3rd at the Memorial Garden where we will hope to sell a lot of honey and inform people about beekeeping. Setting up is at 9.00am and it usually comes to an end about 3pm. Bring honey to sell.

On the following Friday the 7th there is a microscopy workshop from 10-3pm hosted by Gravesend Branch at St.Mary's Church Hall at the corner of Manor Road and Sole Street DA13 9BN. Cars can be left in Sallows Shaw at the end of Manor Road. It is being run by Alan Byham and David Rudland and you should bring along a sample of at least 30 bees from each of your sites so that they can be tested for acarine and nosema. This is a fine opportunity to find out more about the health of your bees and something you cannot do unless you have a microscope and the skill. The day is to be split up into one hour slots and you should contact Lesley Fancote (lesleyfancote@msn.com or 01474 702666) to let him know which one you would prefer.

Then on Saturday May 15th we demonstrate beekeeping at Coolings site in Main Road. This is a chance for passers-by to don suits and veils to get really close to bees.

On Saturday May 22nd we have a stall at Hadlow College, Mottingham and then on June 5-6th a stall at Coolings in Rushmore Hill.

On the Saturdays when these events take place it may be that there are fewer experienced beekeepers at High Elms.

It was sad to read in the County Newsletter of the death of Ted Hooper, whose book "Bees and Honey" was the gospel to thousands of aspiring beekeepers, including me.

If you are on the net and change your email address please remember to notify Richard Brook and Keith Snellin or we will lose touch with you.

Another reminder to new beekeepers - if you joined since August 1st last year, you are eligible for free membership of the National Honey Show for one year and free entry for your exhibits. You have to let me know by July 31st if you want to take up the offer. Also as a new beekeeper you are welcome to a visit by a bee inspector who will check over your bees and help with advice. To arrange it ring Alan Byham on 01306 611016

Eric tells me that he has a number of Landstroth super frames available. If you are interested ring him on 01689 831166.

An article from the "Washington Post" that Eric has given me reports continuing dismay in USA about losses of bees with symptoms like Colony Collapse Disorder the cause of which has yet to be diagnosed. One beekeeper who has had his bees in California for the almond crop has decided to give his bees a rest and then take them to the east coast for the apple blossom instead of going to the orange groves of Florida as he would normally. He hopes that there will be fewer losses. Another started seeing losses as early as late October and they have continued during the winter. Global honey prices have dropped and the cost of looking after bees has gone up so honey is not a profitable crop. The beekeepers depend on pollination for their income and the shortage of bees means that putting a hive in to pollinate almonds is worth \$150 compared to \$60 before CCD. We are fortunate that there is no evidence for it here so far.

Frank