

KENT BEEKEEPERS' ASSOCIATION

Orpington Branch Newsletter September 2005

A big 'Thank You' to everyone who sent me their good wishes during the time I was laid low, especially the members at the Apiary who sent me a get-well card – it was very comforting during the long days.

Another big 'Thank You' to Gordon for writing the August Newsletter. I thought it better than the ones I produce. If you think the same, have a word with him. I don't know whether he might be prepared to do it in future, but if he is I wouldn't be upset!

The KBKA are in trouble at the moment because their Treasurer has resigned and they have not so far found a replacement. They have to have one to produce the accounts which are not yet complete. Without a treasurer, the association could be wound up and its assets distributed amongst other charities. A particular problem is that one of the departing treasurer's decisions was that our trophies were part of the KBKA's assets. So we could lose them, though it is not obvious why anyone else would want them. If winding up takes place, there are a number of options open to us to enable us to continue as a branch, but we will wait to see what happens first. There is a Council meeting on September 3rd to discuss what to do and our representatives will be there. I'll keep you posted.

Our Honey Show is almost on us – it is on Saturday September 17th and as last year it is at West Wickham. I hope as many of you as possible will enter something. If you need an entry form I will get one for you.

I was not able to go to the Kent Show but I looked at the list of awards and didn't notice any names of Orpington members. I hope I missed some!

The National Honey Show is getting near – it is on Thursday October 20th to Saturday the 23rd and as last year is at the RAF Museum, Hendon. I hope some of you will enter. If you are worried about getting there, ask around and you might find that someone will give you a lift.

There seems to be happening a sudden reversal in the fortunes of beekeeping. There was a two-page article in the 'Telegraph' Weekend reporting how the hobby had become glamorous and was being taken up by young professional women. In the same paper's magazine a two page spread was headed 'From serious honey producers to burnt-out executives, from pop-stars to university professors, they're all getting a buzz from beekeeping'. Well, it's about time that numbers started increasing.

A newsletter from the BBKA includes the welcome news that the application of the Veterinary Medicines Directive to Apistan and Bayvarol is being considered as a special case and they will be exempted until October 2006. Also included is a plea for beekeepers to write to their MP, their EMP and Defra lobbying against the proposed cuts. Have you written or are you prepared to accept what uninformed ministers and civil servants dream up?

I had a rare venture out this afternoon to the new Coolings site in Knockholt. This turned out to be a lucky choice since it was the opening day of the Nature Trail. Doreen and I walked the shorter path and it was delightful. In the course of this we met the two people looking after it – Steve and Susanna. The path passes within a few feet of the hives and there are warning notices advising people not to go too near. One or two of the hives, to my eyes, didn't give a very good impression of beekeeping and I hope we will be able to smarten things up before too long. Steve would like to have more information available about bees and I am writing to them to ask what they would like. This could be a potential source of new members.

Frank

PS: I couldn't see any Orpington honey on the shelves!