

**SEVENOAKS AND TUNBRIDGE WELLS  
BEEKEEPERS  
BRANCH NEWSLETTER  
SEPTEMBER 2022**

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**Get Ready for the Honey Show**

Saturday 1st October, St John's Church Hall, Hildenborough

I do hope you are thinking about entering our Honey Show. All members are eligible. Here are a few hints and tips:

1. Follow the Rules and Schedule to the letter (they were emailed to you with the last newsletter).
2. Bring your entries to the hall between 9.30 and 10.30am. There will be committee members on hand to help you if necessary. Free parking is available at the hall.
3. Judging will take place between 10.30am and 1.30pm (approx). Only the Judge and Stewards are allowed in the hall at this time.
4. The Show will be open to the public between 2pm and 4pm for viewing. We will be offering refreshments, so we do ask those entering cupcakes to agree to offer these with refreshments.
5. You can collect your entries from 4pm. Please don't come too early, otherwise there will be nothing for the visitors to see.

If you wish to enter the show but are not available on the day, please contact me or Sue Knights so we can submit entries on your behalf.

If you won a trophy last year, please bring it along so it can be displayed. Again, you can leave a trophy with Sue or me if you cannot attend in person. All the trophies will be collected at the end of the show for engraving and will be presented at the AGM.

For further information or clarification, contact the Entries Secretary - Sue Knights (07825 210885) or me: [membership@sevenoaksbeekeepers.org.uk](mailto:membership@sevenoaksbeekeepers.org.uk)

*Liz Birchenough, Membership Secretary and Treasurer*

**This Season's Branch Honey on Sale**



The branch honey is now available at £7.50 for a 1lb jar, and £6 for a 12oz jar. If you are buying for family or friends, please remember the honey is not pasteurised and therefore not suitable for infants under 12 months or expectant mothers. Due to the recent hot, dry weather, the honey is likely to granulate quickly. This does not affect the shelf life or quality of the product. No need to refrigerate, but please remember to replace the lid. Available from Liz Birchenough at [membership@sevenoaksbeekeepers.org.uk](mailto:membership@sevenoaksbeekeepers.org.uk)

**For Sale - National Hive Parts**

A quantity of National hive parts and frames from Thornes, never used, is being offered for sale by a retired member. £100 for the whole lot, buyer collects (Ticehurst area). Please contact Grahame on 07893465697.

## Laying the Foundations at Hilbert Road



Hot! Hot! Hot!

This month has been one of consolidation. The colonies are building up nicely and although this season there will not be a honey harvest, we are hopefully laying foundations for next year. The number of colonies has expanded from two at the beginning of the season to seven.

The warm and dry weather conditions may have contributed to a large number of swarming preparations this year with more than one split nucleus swarming again for no obvious reason.

This has helped to build up the numbers in the apiary quickly, although we will have to monitor closely next season in case we have particularly swarmy bees, something we may want to breed out with a queen rearing programme next year.

The hot weather has caused one colony to move outside as shown in the pictures. This was probably exacerbated by the placement of the varroa monitoring board just as the temperatures went up again.

My thanks to everyone who has supported my efforts at Hilbert Road especially Huw, who has been ensuring that all our infant colonies are fed while they build up.

*Sue Knights, Hilbert Road Apiary Manager*



## Indoor Meetings are Back

Our meeting on September 20th is titled: An Introduction to Microscopy for Beekeepers. Earlier this year Bob Smith came to talk to us about nutrition in honeybees and his own studies of the pollen collected by his bees. This was followed by Vanessa Jones' talk on Varroa and Nosema. It therefore seemed appropriate that we should incorporate a session on the use of a microscope to examine for Nosema and for studying pollen. You are welcome to bring along your own sample of freshly dead bees to examine them for Nosema (about 30 are needed and the normal process for killing is to freeze them).

There are many pollen colour charts available, but colour alone is often inconclusive in identifying the pollen being collected by your bees. Far better to collect pollen from known sources locally and produce reference slides. We will demonstrate the procedure for producing stained pollen samples. There will be insufficient time for an in-depth study and instruction on microscopes, we will simply show their usefulness to beekeepers. Maybe, if there is interest, it could be the beginning our own microscopy group. To ensure we have enough microscopes and associated equipment, please e-mail Liz Birchenough if you plan to attend:

[membership@sevenoaksbeekeepers.org.uk](mailto:membership@sevenoaksbeekeepers.org.uk)

Following our Branch Honey Show on October 1st (I mention it to everyone I meet so I couldn't pass another opportunity to add it to your consciousness) our October talk will be on Plants for Honeybees. Pam Hunter is a well-known speaker and has given many excellent talks, which are available on the BBKA website. "Why do bees have smelly feet?" was aimed at children and is the most intriguing. With a desire to ensure honeybees do not have a negative effect on the natural pollinator population, most beekeepers are planting for bees, but it can be difficult to know what you should choose for a comparatively small space. Pam's talk should help to guide you.

*Cliff Hayward, Branch Chairman*

## Promoting Bees at Eden Valley Museum

*By Liz Birchenough*



On the last Saturday in August, I attended the Craft Fair at Eden Valley Museum in Edenbridge with my husband and Martin Barrett. The museum has a wonderful and quirky collection of local history and is housed in a beautiful historic building in the High Street, worth a visit in its own right! The Craft Fair was designed to be a showcase for local artisans, so it was a privilege to be invited to represent beekeeping.

It was a really fun day out. We were provided with a gazebo in the courtyard for our stall, which offered front row seats to listen to the local band playing a wide repertoire of traditional tunes, many of which they play to accompany the local Morris Dancers for their shows. There were also supplies of local beers and cider, cakes, and many other

interesting stalls. There were good sales of our 2022 honey plus several enquiries about membership and training, which we will follow up. A good day was had by all.

### Diary Dates

**Sunday September 4 at 11am: Apiary meeting** at Hilbert Road

**Saturday September 10 at 2pm: Apiary meeting** at Barrwood Apiary

**Sunday September 18 at 11am: Apiary meeting** at Hilbert Road Apiary

**Tuesday September 20 at 7.30pm: An Introduction to Microscopy for Beekeepers**  
at Weald Memorial Hall

**Sunday September 25 at 2pm note change of date: Apiary meeting** at Barrwood Apiary

**Saturday 1st October: Honey Show** at St John's Church Hall, Hildenborough

Go to our website for all the latest beekeeping news: <http://www.sevenoaksbeekeepers.org.uk/>

Send pictures or items for the newsletter to [marystaffurth@yahoo.com](mailto:marystaffurth@yahoo.com)