

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

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A Busy Year for the Branch

The Branch Annual General Meeting took place in November. The Chairman, Cliff Hayward, described a busy year. It began with an extended programme of indoor talks and workshops were introduced for the first time. The Barrwood and Hilbert Road Apiary meetings provided plenty of opportunity for learning. The Barrwood Apiary land, which was privately owned, has just been bought by Kent Beekeepers Association, which Cliff said would ensure its long-term future as an apiary.

The Membership Secretary and Treasurer, Liz Birchenough, said the number of members had taken a dip during the pandemic but had now returned to pre-Covid levels. She warned against being complacent and said it was important to engage with the local community, for example by manning stalls at fairs, in order to attract new members. In her Treasurer's report Liz said that although the Branch ended the year with the same amount of money in the bank, costs were rising. The charge for hiring the hall is increasing and buildings and contents insurance for the apiaries has risen.

Branch officers were elected at the meeting:

Chairman: Cliff Hayward

Vice-Chairman: Martin Barrett

Secretary: John Farrow

Treasurer/Membership Secretary: Liz Birchenough

Committee Members: Huw Griffiths; Sue Knights; Chris Stewart; Bob Blair; Liz Seal; Sarah Rapley

KBKA representatives: Sue Knights; Cliff Hayward

Hilbert Road Apiary Manager: Sue Knights

Barrwood Apiary Manager: Cliff Hayward

Cups and prizes from the honey show were presented once the business of the annual meeting was concluded. The first to be awarded was the Chairman's Cup. Cliff Hayward said that he had decided to give it to Sue Knights in recognition of the excellent job she had done since taking over as Hilbert Road Apiary Manager. He said she had mentored new beekeepers and was also a key organiser of the honey show, approaching everything with enthusiasm.



Left to right: Branch Chairman Cliff Hayward presents Sue Knights with the Chairman's cup.

Branch President Paul Abbott presents the Captain Turner Cup to Bob Blair, the Wilbury Cup to Tim Johnston, the Jenner Rose Bowl to Zelda Williamson and the Sloane Challenge Cup to Cliff Hayward

Honey show cups and certificates were presented to all the winners present. Certificates of basic apiculture were presented to Richard Smith and Martin Barrett.

Mary Staffurth



West Kingsdown Swarm

This was the winning photograph in the Branch Honey Show. It was taken by our secretary and swarm-coordinator, John Farrow, and captures an image of a fruit tree dripping with many thousands of bees.

January Meeting

Tuesday January 17 at 7.30pm at Weald Memorial Hall: A demonstration of how to put together flat pack hives. More experienced beekeepers are welcome to join in and help assemble frames for Barrwood and Hilbert Road Apiaries.

Helping New Beekeepers

On Sunday 27th November, we held the first Introduction to Beekeeping training day for this year. As usual, we met at Weald Memorial Hall and, although it was a wet and gloomy day, everyone was enthusiastic and participated in the discussions. The idea is to ensure potential new beekeepers are aware of the responsibilities and commitment required of beekeepers before getting started. We look forward to welcoming the participants as new members at our apiaries and meetings as they develop their practical skills before embarking on setting up their own apiaries.

The next training day will be Sunday 22nd January at Weald Memorial Hall. So, if you know of someone considering beekeeping and in need of a Christmas present or New Year Resolution, this could be an ideal option. Please contact me for further details.

Liz Birchenough: membership@sevenoaksbeekeepers.org.uk

Branch Honey For Sale

Branch honey is still available at £7.50 for a 1lb jar, and £6 for a 12oz jar. If you are buying this for family or friends, please remember the honey is not pasteurised, and therefore not suitable for infants under 12 months or expectant mothers. Available from Liz at membership@sevenoaksbeekeepers.org.uk



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