



Editorial; Several members of the Committee 'retired' this year: Stephen Brain has held nearly every post in our Branch and many in Avon. Thank you very much for all your hard work and we wish you a good 'retirement'. Our thanks to Tom Salter who gives his time unstintingly to the Branch, Avon and BBKA and to Emma Allen who has kept our coffers in good order. We congratulate the new Committee and hope they receive support and help from Branch members. It is always shocks me to hear that in other Associations people say..."*I have been Secretary (or some such Officer) for 20 + years*" Huh!! No wonder they are still there...no-one wants to take on 20 years of a role! Our system of three years in the post seems to work well as it *is* only for three years —it brings in lots of 'new' members...and once you know how hard the committee members work I think it helps support them after your role has expired. Ivor Davis took lots of photos at the AGM, thank you Ivor, when several of our members received certificates for passing beekeeping assessments. It is to their credit that they want to learn more about our craft. Beekeeping has never been more in the public eye...and it is our responsibility to look after the creatures we choose as our hobby. Sadly, we heard the news of Bruce Telford's death in November. Bruce was our President for several years and with his wife Ruth, was a mainstay of our Branch and also Avon when the County Association was first formed. He was a quiet, gentle doctor who could never quite resist asking about your health in his lovely Irish accent..... My best wishes for a very Happy Christmas and a very good 2011.

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE Firstly, thank you for trusting me with the role of your president, Stephen will be a hard act to follow. He has done a brilliant job and presided over what must have been the largest increase in membership in the history of the Branch and long may it continue. It was so nice to see such a large turnout at the AGM, so many people that I was beginning to wonder if I was in the right meeting. I hope that you all enjoyed the speaker, I thought he was riveting. Well, that's all I'm going to say for now, other than that we look forward to seeing you all at our meetings in 2011. Best wishes for a happy Christmas.

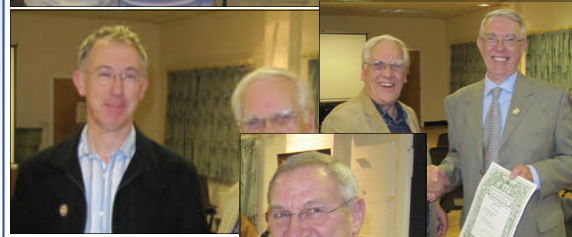


Bob South

Bath and West Show Philip Clemente
In past copies of the Newsletter, several of our members wrote about their time spent at the Bath and West Show. However, nobody mentioned that I run the Avon stand at the Show. So, if anyone would like a free ticket (worth £20) in exchange for a half day working on a stand at the Show and the rest of the day free to go around, let me know. I am also looking to change the theme on the stand, so if you have any ideas, get in touch. The Show also has its own Honey Show, I will be getting some schedules at the next committee meeting, so if you want to exhibit, let me know. Also, if you have any honey you want to sell, it can be sold at the show, I will find out at the next committee meeting what the selling price will be and what you will get back.



◀ Glyn Davies is seen here presenting a Certificate of Long Service to Reg & Shirley Stevens. Tom Salter congratulates Martin Stickland on becoming an Honorary Member of the Branch. ▶



Glyn also presented Stephen Brain (far left) with his Certificate of General Husbandry; David Welham (left) with his Module 1 Certificate and Jon Webber with his Basic Assessment Certificate (middle)

Congratulations!!



Chairman's Letter Looking out of the window now, bees are the last thing on my mind! However, a timely reminder from Jan stopped me short. As I start my chairmanship I have two goals: the first is to encourage the furtherance of our knowledge within the branch; the second is to increase the attendance at branch meetings. In other words, education balanced with social opportunities. If you think about it, chatting to others at branch meetings will achieve these aims both in terms of listening to experienced speakers and getting a chance to pick the brains of our very learned older members. As a branch we are lucky to have such a wealth of knowledge and experience to call on. I hope there'll be plenty of you – both old & new members - at our future meetings to ensure this wealth can be shared. If we've looked after our little friends properly, they'll all be snuggled up in a ball with the Queen at the centre making sure that she keeps warm. I wish I was that Queen!

Wendy Welham



Members' Corner

Many thanks to **Phil Clemente** for organising the Christmas Meal again. The photos on the right show a very jovial crowd of members and partners...especially the table with the President..that side of the table certainly looked Festive being green and red!
Please don't forget to pay your subs. And complete a Gift Aid Form if you haven't already. Treasurer **Sally Webber 01275 859544**



FORTHCOMING EVENTS 2011

Sat. 8 Jan. 2.00pm Churchill Memorial Hall, Churchill.

Beekkeeping My Way, Ken Basterfield Shared Tea

For study sessions please see accompanying Study Programme Ffi: Ivor Davis 01934 832825

Sat. 19 Feb. 2.00pm Churchill Memorial Hall, Churchill.

Branch Honey Show Shared Tea

Sat. 19 Feb. Somerset Beekeepers 2011 Lecture Day

Sat 12 March 2.00pm Tickenham Village Hall, Tickenham

Beekkeeping Year Discussion Shared Tea

Wed. 16 March 10.00am **Tyntesfield Visit** (National Trust Property). Ffi: Peter Carter 01934 820097

Sat. 26 March 2.00pm **Avon BKA AGM**

Hosted by Weston Branch Clive de Bruyn

Ffi; <http://www.avonbeekeepers.co.uk>

If you have suggestions for meetings or venues please contact Debbie Kolombos 01934 862088



Denis Sims at the Langford Apiary in August showing many new hives



Taste of summer 2010 at the Tatton Park Show

Notes from the AGM 27/11/10 David Welham, Secretary

We had a good turnout of 50 attendees, the meeting started with a minutes silence in memory of George Sims.

As the officers had all produced their reports prior to meeting there were no problems or questions from the floor. Emma Allen proposed an increase in the branch subs of £1 which was carried unanimously. Votes of thanks were proposed for all the retiring officers and of course passed by the meeting. Reg and Shirley Stevens were presented with a certificate recording their long service to the branch, Reg started keeping bees in 1947 after his demob! Martin Stickland was made an Honorary Member by the branch for his long and exceptional service to the branch, much to his surprise.

Afterwards Glyn Davies gave his talk on the Essential Sex Life of the Honeybee he presented certificates to members who had passed exams during last year.

The next AGM was proposed to be held on the 26/11/11.

We then all enjoyed the usual sumptuous tea provided by everyone and a good chat.

Branch Honey Show

Saturday 19th February 2011, Churchill Memorial Hall.

Tutored judging by Tom Salter, Senior Honey Judge

The schedule will be circulated or <http://www.avonbeekeepers.co.uk>

BCD Officers for 2011

President: Bob South Chairman: Wendy Welham

Secretary: David Welham Treasurer: Sally Webber

Apiary Manager: Phil Clemente/Ashley Grist

Swarm Liaison: J on Webber

Education Officer: Ivor Davis Avon Delegate: Bob South

Programme Manager: Debbie Kolombos

The 2011 programme is on the web/posted with this N/L.
Programme cards will be available at Branch meetings.

Veterinary Medicines Directorate - Open meeting Ivor Davis

At the end of November each year the Veterinary Medicines Directorate, the organisation that licences veterinary medicines in this country, holds an open meeting to discuss latest developments and take questions from the industry. I normally go along to ensure that the issues with honey bee medication are kept in the forefront. This year I went with Tim Lovett, the immediate past President of the BBKA and we were able, once again to get a couple of questions answered that affect us all.

It should be noted that at present we are privileged in this country in that most medicines for bees are on general sale (commonly known as GSL [general sales list]). However, there is pressure from Europe to bring the UK into line with other countries, namely that honey bee medicines should only be available on prescription. This is a retrograde step and would add no value to our procedures. We have therefore been trying to find a middle way that will allow the VMD to meet the needs of Europe but also allow us to continue to have access to medicines without involving vets. There is a classification of medicines known as POM-VPS [prescription only medicines available from a Vet, a Pharmacist or a Suitably Qualified Person].

This will require a number of beekeepers to become SQPs as will Thornes, National Bee Supplies and other suppliers of beekeeping medicines. We are hoping that this will be a low cost qualification (I am off to Harper Adams College to discuss the qualification just before Christmas). If this succeeds then we will be able to have local beekeepers who can store and supply medicines to fellow beekeepers. We will all need to keep records of medication—as required now. The other news on the medicine front is that one of the oxalic acid treatments is soon to become licensed in this country which, with the above change in approach, will allow us to be more open in our use of winter treatment for varroosis.

As time goes on we will all have to be more vigilant about the use of medicines to treat our bees and accept that keeping medication records is both necessary and important.

Apiary Notes

Philip Clemente, Apiary Manager 01275 879697 nerja5@hotmail.com

All the bees are now in a cluster, and possibly much warmer than we are, so just occasionally check the openings are clear, and the woodpeckers have left the hive alone. The next time we will open them will be for a treatment of Oxalic Acid, hopefully in January. Ashley Grist is sorting out the mentors for the beginners, so if you did not put your name on the list at the AGM, and you want one, let him or me know.

Have a good Christmas and a Happy New Year to you all.