



Blagdon, Clevedon and District Branch  
of Avon Beekeepers Association, Charity No. 271717

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**Editorial;** I hope your bees are well and tucked up safely for the winter but now there is plenty of work to do keeping your equipment clean and in good shape- and there are winter study sessions to attend to keep you up-to-date. Please do come along. It has been a busy year in the apiaries and as always there are lots of members to thank for their hard work looking after the bees *and* the new members...but probably most of you would like to thank Phil in particular for his help. Thank you Phil. Please do remember that this is your newsletter so if there is anything you would like to see in it; photos, articles, for sale/wanted items please do let me know. It is lovely to have a fresh name on a piece of copy for publication. My best wishes and see you at the AGM.



Portishead Show in July  
Photos of Phil Clemente, Pat South & Wendy Welham



### BBKA Course in a Case

Ivor Davis

You may have heard about the new educational material that is being produced by the BBKA under the heading of Course in a Case (CiC). This work was started about a year ago and came about because there is very little standardised material about for teaching beekeeping. The BBKA is an education charity and therefore has a responsibility to promote education. This has become even more important in recent years because of the need to keep our bees healthy and the virtual loss of all feral colonies as a result of varroa. I was appointed the Project Manager for the production of the intellectual property and Roger Cullum-Kenyon was given the responsibility of packaging and delivery. Chris Deaves, the chairman of the BBKA Education Board is the Project Director. We have a small project Board to guide us and Tom Salter represents the BBKA Examinations Board in this.

So far we have produced the first one designed to provide a course for beginners. Over 120 have been supplied to Associations in the UK including Scotland, Wales and N. Ireland. There are another 4 CiCs to be delivered over the next 2 years progressing up to Master Beekeeper level. In addition, there are a number (7) short Courses being developed by the National Diploma in Beekeeping (NDB) Board specifically designed to teach trainers the higher levels of beekeeping theory and practice. I am producing one of these on Successful Wintering.

In the last few days Fera have agreed to fund 50% of the work with the other 50% being funded by the BBKA. In all, the cost will be about £80,000, with a further £80,000 being spent on training trainers over the next few months. This is a tremendous programme that is producing high quality training materials and also encouraging beekeepers to learn more and hopefully test themselves by taking the BBKA assessments.

Blagdon members should be pleased to know that the materials are being used in our branch first. We are running our Introduction Course starting in January and the materials in the CiC are the ones we have used in the last 2 years on this course. We will also be running a course to prepare our members to take the Basic Assessment and will again be using the CiC material that I have produced. So, thank you for being guinea pigs and for being in the vanguard of this exciting enterprise.



The last meeting of the season was at Denis & Eve Sims. Ivor Davis gave a talk about overwintering our bees.

### Beekeeping Course 2011 Wendy Welham 01934 852361

The beekeeping course for 2011 is getting booked up fast with more than 20 out the 30 available places already taken and deposits paid. There are another two application forms out and so it looks as though we shall have a full class again next year.

The course runs on 10 consecutive Monday evenings starting on 17<sup>th</sup> January. It will be held at Churchill Memorial Hall. If you know of anybody who has expressed an interest in taking the course but has not yet applied, now may be the time to remind them!

**WANTED**  
Please bring your cheque books to the AGM, for your Annual Subscription to BCD due November 31<sup>st</sup>.  
There is no change from last year!



**Chairman's Letter** I am very pleased that the past few Saturday meetings have been well attended, the committee have worked hard to bring to the membership interesting and useful topics and a good level of attendance has given us a boost just as the

- ☆ 2011 programme is being put together.
- ☆ The nectar flow was halted by the poor weather in August but it was a good yield this year particularly from early flows. I am late with my extracting because of visitors, but the bank holiday gave me the opportunity to complete the four days of extraction necessary for my crop.
- ☆ The active season with the bees is over, now is the time to prepare our bees for winter, to cut down the varroa numbers with Apiguard and feeding to replace the honey taken off and to get the queen into lay to produce the all important winter workers that will see the colony through to the spring. The beekeeping year has well and truly started.



Following the international code for marking Queens - the year 2010 is BLUE

**Members' Corner** Welcome to new members: **Brian Hockey, Ami Patel, Caroline Callow, Tom Francis, Gail Scott-Wilson and Kelvin Loveridge**—we hope you will enjoy your beekeeping with us and please remember we have a good number of experienced members within the Branch who are more than happy to help you. Also, there are many talks and demonstrations held throughout the year—to help all our members. During the summer it was sad to hear that **George Simms** had died—a good friend of our Branch, who with Gill his wife, loved our BBQs! He was Avon Beekeepers' Librarian & Education Officer for many years. Some of us will remember him carrying huge boxes of books around the Branches to various events. Nobody was keen to take this on when he retired and so the ABKA Library was split between the 5 Branches.

These photos were taken in August by member Paul Jelley, at the foot bridge between Froomsgate House, Rupert Street and Lewins Place, Lewins Mead about 100yds east of the city centre. He says "The bees have been there some time as you can see by the comb they have drawn out. They are about 15 feet in from the left end of the bridge as you look from the centre, suspended underneath not really protected in any way."



### FORTHCOMING EVENTS 2010

Sat 27 Nov. 2.00pm

#### Branch AGM & Speaker

*Glyn Davies, Master Beekeeper and past BBKA President*

returns for a talk on Looking at Eggs Part 2

Churchill Memorial Hall

Shared Tea

Fri 3 Dec. Branch Christmas Meal 7.00 for 7.30pm

@ Angelina's Warrens Village, Colehouse Lane, Kenn.

Everyone welcome with partners special diets can be ordered.



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

### BBKA Forum 2 October 2010

Ivor Davis

Sometimes it feels that beekeeping Associations just love having meetings but nothing gets done afterwards. Every year the BBKA invites Associations across the country to send representatives to a meeting where the agenda is set by the Associations and it gives them a good chance to air grievances and hold the Trustees to account. The only rule is that no decisions are made at the meeting - this is left for the Annual Delegates Meeting (ADM) held in January.

Jan and I went this year and were able to represent Avon (Jan is also part of the team that meets and greets the attendees and ensures that they are well cared for).

This year a major topic was why does the BBKA work closely with the Agricultural Companies? There are very divided views held by beekeepers in all Associations but when this has been formally discussed and voted upon (a regular occurrence), the Membership has backed the BBKA stance that agricultural chemicals are a fact of life and we should talk to these companies and endorse the use of chemicals that do least harm to bees.

However, a strong minority see this as supping with the devil and feel this is totally wrong. I am sure the debate will continue but my view is, it is better to talk with these people and ensure they are aware of our concerns rather than have nothing to do with them. They are contributing a lot of money to honey bee research because of the liaison with BBKA and it is helpful to guide this to areas where it will benefit us all.

Other topics included how do we encourage beekeepers to learn more about honey bees and beekeeping and the consensus is that the CiC (over) and publicity will help. We can all do our bit—the government and BBKA will do all they can to help local groups to learn more about our fascinating craft.

The last major subject was a discussion on how the BBKA should use its small research fund (about £100,000) to benefit beekeepers. The thought was that the work should be directed to the practical aspects of beekeeping and possibly money to get projects started so that other major funders can then follow with more significant grants. Whilst £100,000 sounds a lot of money it is only sufficient to fund a post graduate student and their work for about a year. Research is expensive but so necessary to help us combat the problems we face in beekeeping.

### Hammer and Nails Sessions

Stephen Brain 01275 342235

We are planning some practical hands-on making sessions for winter/spring of next year for any who want to make some of their own beekeeping equipment. We are thinking of open mesh floors, nuke boxes, feeders, crown boards etc. We would provide most materials and wood would generally be pre-cut, thus making it easy to assemble.

If you have any suggestions, comments etc, then please let me have them urgently so I can reflect them in our thinking. An idea of interest would be helpful and whether you prefer Sat/Sun morning or afternoon or an evening in the week.

### 2010 Village Shows

**Portishead** Thanks to **David Hounsell** who organised this Show and his helpers.

**Tickenham** Weston Branch organise this show but **Phil Clemente** won the Honey Cup with most points in the Honey Section.

**Winscombe** Thanks to **David Welham** and helpers. The winner of the Rowley Hazel Cup was won by **Zdenek Kumpel** with 16 points. He beat **Phil Clemente** by one point! One of our new members **Alison Wilson** won first prize for her Honey cake -well done **Alison**.

We sold over £200 worth of honey and had several enquiries about the beginners course, in fact one lady went to David's house that evening with her deposit to ensure she was on the course.

Once again our MP **John Penrose** and BC&D member, was on the stand for over an hour and we were also visited by Professor **Mick Aston** of Time Team fame.

### Colonies for beginners

Stephen Brain

We provided 18 colonies to members this year which is impressive considering the low number of swarms this year. Of these colonies, 4 were nationals, 4 commercial and 10 deep national, which says something about the popularity of different hives amongst our newer members. We have raised a large number of queens for these and thanks go to all those who have loaned Apideas so I could get the queens mated! We intend to repeat this activity next year and Phil will again be coordinating the list of who wants what. More details will be announced nearer the time.

### Apiary Notes

Philip Clemente, Apiary Manager 01275 879697 [nerja5@hotmail.com](mailto:nerja5@hotmail.com)

We have now reached the end of another year at the Apiary. There are at the moment some 23 colonies being prepared for the winter there and we have some very enthusiastic beginners. The branch has two colonies at Langford, and four at the Walled garden. By now you should have all finished your Apiguard and your feeding complete. Don't forget your mouse guards before the first frosts, and inspect your hives at intervals during the winter, especially making sure the entrances are clear.

To all this years' beginners, thanks for putting up with me, and watch your e-mails for the date and venue for the Mentors evening.