

1923 - 2020



Medway  
Beekeepers  
Association

**Medway Beekeepers Association**

**Celebrating over 95 years of support for beekeeping  
and beekeepers in and around the Medway Towns**



---

## Newsletter October 2020

By now our bees should be ready for the long winter ahead. Make sure they are healthy and have sufficient stores to get them through. Now we have at last some time to spare, why not register for some of the excellent Zoom lectures this winter. See below for details.

---



### **Terry Clare 18<sup>th</sup> September 1937 to 6<sup>th</sup> September 2020**

Terry Clare from Rainham in north Kent passed away on 6<sup>th</sup> September following a short illness.

Terry was a dedicated beekeeper starting in the late 1970's, when he attended a course run by Ken Beevor at Gillingham Adult Education Centre. He continued to manage hives up to two months before his death. He was an active member of The Medway Beekeepers Association and he was a member of the Bee Farmers Association. He was for many years MBKA's Education and Examinations Officer and Beekeeping Expert, and was always ready to help members with useful

advice. He was the Chair of BIBBA and a committee member for a number of years, he also attended some of the European Black Bee conferences (SICAMM).

Terry was responsible for getting our Association back into the BBKA fold and was very helpful in getting the necessary BBKA motion passed.

Except for one occasion in the last twenty years Terry attended the annual FIBKA conference at Gormanston and we spent many happy evenings in the Huntsman putting the world to rights. Terry was so popular in Ireland, the year he missed Gormanston, the proprietor of the Huntsman asked where Terry was! So, he was missed at the local hostelry as well as by the local beekeepers.

Terry enjoyed travelling and attended Apimondia in Dublin in 2005. BIBBA had a stand at this event managed by Terry who was the BIBBA Chair at that time. The team enjoyed talking about black bees (*Apis mellifera mellifera*) and bee breeding to delegates from around the world.

The following year he travelled to Egersund in Norway with David Loo, Claire Wilkinson and John Hendrie to spend a week beekeeping with a Norwegian family. This gave an opportunity to see how bees can survive in a climate harsher than the UK.

Many people across the UK remember Terry as the person who started their beekeeping interest either from one of his beginners' courses run for many years in Kent or his interesting lectures held nationally. He really did promote beekeeping to a wide audience.

Terry was well known by members of the BBKA because for many years he ran queen rearing courses at the Spring Convention, some years he also lectured. Perhaps he will be

best remembered at Harper Adams as the person collecting tickets for entry to the evening banquets.

Terry was always supportive at the Medway BKA and would always ask searching questions at meetings if things were not clear, but his interest was always for the club's wellbeing. He always stewarded at the Kent County Show at Detling near Maidstone, usually providing an observation hive and managing bee demonstrations for the public.

He will be missed by all his friends in the UK, Ireland and worldwide.

Our sincere sympathy to his wife Pat, his children and grandchildren.

Terry RIP

**John Hendrie**

**With additions by John Chapman for MBKA Newsletter.**

If any members would like to donate to Terry's chosen charity please click on this link:  
<https://www.funeralguide.co.uk/obituaries/81114>

---



### **A Past Zoom Presentation:**



**8.00pm Wednesday 23 September 2020**  
**Celia Davis**

**BEEKEEPER v BEE:** How our activities as beekeepers, impact on the natural life of the

honey bee colony.

What a start to our new style winter meetings. Celia Davis is such an engaging speaker and she didn't disappoint, even though it was her first attempt at a zoom talk.

We had 78 viewers, many were MBKA members but we also had visitors from 6 other Associations.

Celia's talk concentrated on two main issues; the needs of the bees and those of the beekeeper, both of which can, at times be diametrically opposed. She looked at the evolution of the honeybee in all of its' many subspecies and how they have individual traits which enable them to deal with their own particular environmental challenges. She then developed this thought into how honey bees have been transported around the world by beekeepers and placed into alien environments to which they are not particularly well suited, and some of the unforeseen consequences of these actions.

She spent quite a lot of time comparing the way feral bees live and act in the wild and how when we put them into a box and tend them, we put them under stress. For example, handling, swarm prevention and chemical and other treatments can cause a lot of these stresses and how we should be aware of their effects on our colonies.

Celia spoke of how beekeepers not only have a duty of care to their bees, but also to other beekeepers and of course their neighbours. Highly defensive bees in a garden just will not do. So, treat your bees with care and always make sure they have food including a good supply of pollen all year round.

In conclusion she highlighted the following points:

- Routine management can cause stress. Try to reduce this as much as possible. Choose a good day, get in quietly and with care. Then check and get out as quickly as possible.
- All year-round nutrition is fundamental to good bee health. Keep them fed and don't forget pollen.
- Varroa is at the centre of many problems, we must control it.
- Disease can weaken and even kill a colony. Nosema is a growing problem. Undertake comb changing in the spring to get rid of pathogens and chemical residues.
- Beware when moving frames around within the hive as 'The Dance Floor' is a vital communication area for the bees. It is usually close to the entrance and laden with pheromones. When you move this frame, the bees will take time to re-establish a new area.
- Finally, you don't have to examine all of the frames every time. Always ask yourself, "Why am I going into this colony?"

Celia then took various questions which she answered honestly, directly and with humour.

This is just a short personal synopsis of her talk as she covered much more than space allows.

Many thanks to Celia for talking to us and also to Archie, Jen and Bob for organising this very different but equally very enjoyable meeting.

**Paul Lawrence**

---

**The Next Zoom Presentations: More information is available on the websites.**

Members will receive personal invites and registration details for the following events soon:



**8.00pm Monday 12 October 2020**  
**Jim Vivian-Griffiths**

**The Dancing Bees:**  
**Research by Karl von Frisch on the waggle dances of honey bees.**

You may register for this meeting here if you wish: [Click here](#)

---



**8.00pm Wednesday 28 October 2020**  
**Marin Anastasov**

**Nutritional requirements of bees and supplemental feeding.**

**Registration details will be available soon.**

---



**City Way Apiary Report:**

The hives have now had their final weekly inspection for this year and the team now move to monthly inspections. The Weekly Report Cards are available to view on the Member's Area.

Each hive will soon be fitted with a mouse guard and has each has sufficient stores to last the winter period.

---

## Reading Around:



A monthly glance at a topic or two in the media with Archie McLellan.

**This month:** 'If ants had nuclear weapons, they would probably end the world in a week.'

Well they don't, so we can relax. Except that, just as everything in the natural world has to exist in a state of equilibrium, so we beekeepers have to balance all sorts of conflicting options.

Plus recent BIBBA talks on Zoom, an old NHS Q&A session, the latest talk from Robert Pickard (of course), and something *very low* from Beekeeping Forum. Not the Zenith but the...

To view this month's edition please: [Click here](#)

---



## National Honey Show Summer 2020

As you will know by now, this year's show will be an Online Conference, **Thursday 22nd to Saturday 24th October.**

**The National Honey Show 2020** has been cancelled. We will be hosting a professional, online conference – the first event of its kind in the UK beekeeping world! Attendees will be able to attend lectures, demonstrations, visit our trade hall and take part in other exciting activities. Planning for the online conference is evolving so visit our website and Facebook page for more news as we add content to the show over the coming weeks. Registration details will go live in early October.

Everyone is welcome to attend the event, free of charge. The show will feature a series of lectures and demonstrations, followed by live online Q&A sessions, with the opportunity to ask questions via the 'chat' facility.

### Live Lectures:

- Michael Palmer - A year at French Hill Apiaries
- Etienne Bruneau - The honey market in turmoil
- Jeff Pettis - Long live the queen, please! Why are queens failing?

### Live Demonstrations:

- Gwyn Marsh - Making beeswax wraps
- Chris Park - Skep making
- Sara Robb - Same day soap: a quick and easy recipe
- John Goodwin, Showing honey

Evening events will be hosted on Thursday by The Central Association of Bee-Keepers, with a live lecture by Medhat Nasr from the Canadian Prairies; and on Friday, Bees for Development welcome you to their live online Quiz evening.

Trade Hall. All your favourite traders will be represented in the Trade Hall, where you will be able to keep in touch with their latest offerings.

Trophies and Cups – please look after these for another year, and bring them to the show in 2021.

We know the lack of a physical Show will be disappointing, as it is for us all, but we hope to offer an exciting armchair event, where the National Honey Show Community can come together online. Please visit our website or Facebook page for the latest information. We will issue further bulletins as we develop the conference.

**Best wishes, Fiona, Val and Helen**



## BBKA PHOTO COMPETITION

**We are looking for the best photo of a wasp, hornet (European or Asian), nest or gadget to protect your bees. Thorne Beekeeping Equipment have kindly donated a £100 voucher for the winner.**

Photos should be of good quality resolution as entries may be used on the website, social media or BBKA (with credit).

Enter by sending your photo in to [Julie.Horbury@bbka.org.uk](mailto:Julie.Horbury@bbka.org.uk) with the subject Photo Competition

Deadline **30th September 2020**.

The winner will be announced in BBKANNEWS and on the BBKA WEBSITE during last week of October.

**Editors note:** Apologies for the late notification of this competition. The information arrived too late for last month's newsletter. However, it has been on the Member's Area for two weeks.

---

### Asian Hornet Update:

The '**Asian Hornet Watch**' app may be downloaded onto phones so that people have the information ready to hand to identify and report sightings of Asian Hornets and particularly nests, as we move into autumn.

BBKA's PR Officer, Diane Roberts, has written the attached press release: [Click here for details](#)

Visit: [www.nationalbeeunit.com](http://www.nationalbeeunit.com) for the latest updates

---

### Beekeeping Equipment and Consumables Available Locally:

Some of our newer members have been asking where they might buy equipment and consumables locally to view a list: [Click here](#).

## MBKA Policy: Selling Honey Bee Colonies

During this past year some of our Committee Members have been approached by a number of members of the public, asking if they could buy honey bee colonies from our Association.

As a result, we have published a Policy regarding this issue.

To read this Policy please: [click here](#)

---

## Hives Stolen in Oxfordshire:



These would be very easy to identify by anyone who is offered them or sees them as they have a new type of hive entrance we have developed in Cholsey and any beekeeper would immediately be curious if they saw them.

The 2 National bee hives are very distinctive in that they have 3 round holes drilled in the brood boxes and 1 in the supers.

“I keep detailed records for each hive on the Bee.Watch system including inspection data and regularly take time stamped pictures (Attached). I know that the hives were checked on Wednesday 16th and gone on Saturday morning 19<sup>th</sup> September. The stolen hives were clearly carefully chosen from the 22 so the thief has a good level of bee keeping experience. “



You would also notice the National roofs have mesh on the outside as well as the inside of the vent.

If anyone has seen or have been offered them then let's see if we can catch these thieves.

Contact the Thames Valley Police on 101, quoting Crime number 43200295563.

**Norman Guiver, Mob: 0780861199**

---

## Facebook also carries up to date information.

Join our Facebook page for information, updates and events:

<https://www.facebook.com/medwaybka/>

---

## And Finally:

As usual, many thanks to all who have contributed to the newsletter at this difficult time.

Contact Details:

### Chairman

John Chapman  
[john.chapman@medwaybeekeepers.co.uk](mailto:john.chapman@medwaybeekeepers.co.uk)

### Newsletter and Website Enquiries

Paul Lawrence  
[paul.lawrence@medwaybeekeepers.co.uk](mailto:paul.lawrence@medwaybeekeepers.co.uk)