

W&DBKA Newsletter, February 2020

Apiary News

The August repairs to the apiary shed have proved to be very timely, given the wet and windy weather this winter. In spite of the storms, the shed and its contents are remaining secure and dry.

January saw two different events at the apiary. Firstly a work party assembled on January 12th to dig over the central bed of the garden, as the first stage of replacing the current planting with a grass/wildflower mix. The morning was dry and fine, and two hours of steady digging resulted in the soil being turned over to bury the weeds.

The next phase will be in March, when the ground will be rotavated and raked, to prepare the soil for the seed. The aim is to create an area which continues to provide forage for the bees, but which is less labour intensive to maintain.



A week later, a second working party gathered to clean out the shed, and all the bee equipment, ready for the start of this year's beekeeping activity.

Thanks to Steve Sullivan for the following account of the afternoon;

“Around 10 members turning out for the annual Apiary clear out and clean-up. The shed was emptied and all the equipment was

sorted, singed with blowtorches, washed and scrubbed as appropriate. All was then replaced in some sort of logical order.

The team was led with an iron rod by our recently promoted “man of leisure”, Richard R.

Refreshments were as ever served from a flask and the anonymous donor of the Christmas cake was glad to see it gone for another year. Now the diet can really begin.

Time out was taken to admire the work of the previous weekend by those members responding to the Gardeners advert, who are otherwise known as the “Dig economy” resulting in the soil being turned over waiting for preparation and sowing with a wild flower seed mix.

All the attendees filled in an exhaustive questionnaire on completion of the task. We now have the results to hand and can confirm that everyone had a profound improvement in their sense of wellbeing but significantly, felt that next year some other members should be able to share such a wonderful sensation.

Hopefully a productive year of beekeeping is ahead and its good to know all the equipment is ready to go.”

Summary of Autumn 2019 events

Cumbria Honey Show. This was well attended by members from Whitehaven Beekeepers, who were presented with their certificates for passing the Basic Bee Husbandry. A jar of honey from our teaching apiary at Westlakes won first prize for “a jar of honey prepared for sale”.

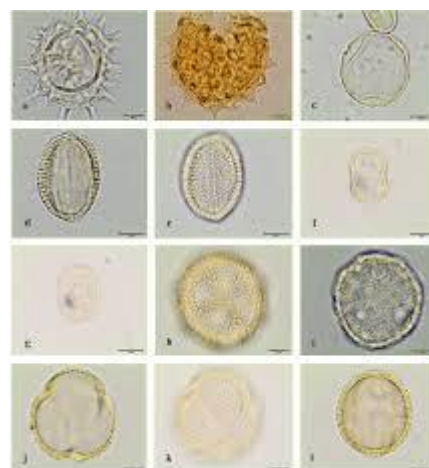
W&DBKA Newsletter, February 2020



The remaining members of the committee were re-elected for another year, and Derek Roberts and Andy Smith were also elected to the committee.

The membership secretary reported a membership of 34 full members, 20 friends of the apiary/family members and 4 life members. After discussion it was agreed that the costs of subscriptions for 2020 should remain unchanged.

Pollen Microscopy. Val Sullivan and Dominic Rhodes ran a very successful pollen Day on November 24th. Those who attended learned how to prepare and examine microscope slides of a wide range of pollens of all shapes and sizes, ranging from hazel to marrow.



WDBKA AGM, 15th November 2019. Our AGM was held at Lamplugh Village Hall, with 21 people attending. Val Sullivan stood down from the committee after many years. She was thanked by our chairman, and presented with a BBKA medal in recognition for all her work on behalf of Whitehaven Beekeepers.

WDBKA events for 2020: Dates for your diary.

Wax demonstration, Thursday 19th March. Alan Robson has kindly offered to demonstrate cleaning wax, pressing wax to make foundation, and wiring foundation for

W&DBKA Newsletter, February 2020

frames. This event will run from 7.00 pm – 9.00 pm at Lamplugh Village Hall. Tea, coffee and light refreshments will be available.

Beginners Weekend, 25th and 26th of April.

This year the venue will be St Bees Village Primary school, as Lamplugh Village Hall is planning a major rebuild. The format will be similar to last year, with a day of talks on Saturday, followed by a visit to our teaching apiary on Sunday. Sixteen people have applied to attend.

Teaching Apiary Visits. These will begin on Saturday 2nd of May, and continue through the spring and summer, alternating between Saturdays and Sundays. All visits will start at 13.00, meeting at the overflow car-park at Westlakes Science Park before walking to the apiary.

All the dates of the visits are listed on our Events Calendar. Please note there will be no meeting on the weekend of Gosforth Show as this is the venue for our annual honey show.

Skep Making Day. We are holding another skep making day this summer on Sunday 12th July. Derek Roberts has kindly offered his barn at Ullock as a venue. Full details will be available later in the year.

WDBKA Honey Show. 15th August. This will be held as part of at Gosforth Show as usual. Activities will include honey tasting, an observation hive and a skep-making demonstration.

Bee Anatomy Day. Following the success of our Pollen Microscopy day last autumn, Val Sullivan will be running a Bee Anatomy Day on Sunday 1st November.

Subscriptions for 2020.

The costs of subscriptions remains unchanged from 2019.

Single membership is £30.00

Friend of W&DBK is £5.00

Family membership is £35.00

If anyone has not renewed their membership and wishes to do so, please send your form and payment to

Karen James,
Autumn House,
Seamill Lane,
St Bees
CA27 0BB

Full details and membership forms are available on our website.

www.whitehavenbeekeepers.co.uk