



September 2015

First of all apologies to those who have not been receiving the newsletter. Computer problems, I am afraid. The August newsletter is on the website at www.Helensburghbees.com under "Recent News".

Next Meeting Thursday 24/9/2015 **Virtual Apiary tour/Season's Reports/ short EGM**

Images wanted of members' apiaries

Please send photos to Alastair Cameron at camay2390@gmail.com, who has kindly agreed to put them together into a simple powerpoint. In this way we should be able to visit a number of apiaries in one night. One image to give the setting of your apiary plus another of a close up of the hive(s) would be good or any other image. A short comment on your apiary or bee year would be welcome. Alastair will be dealing with the powerpoint and acting as MC on the night. *Mike Thornley*

P.S. from Alastair Cameron. I am happy to come and take photos if that is a help. Also, that evening, we would like to know how much honey you took off and how many hives your are taking into the winter *Alastair (674707)*

Programme for year

Wednesday, repeat **Wednesday!** October the 21st Enid Brown 'My method of beekeeping'.

Thursday 26th November Dr Ewan Campbell Aberdeen University

Thursday 28th January AGM

Thursday Feb 22nd Practical Beekeeping

Thursday March 24th to be announced

Thursday April 28th Film The beekeeping year

Honey Competition Results

There were entries from 7 members in the 3 honey classes at the Helensburgh and Gareloch Horticultural Society show on the last Saturday in August.

Class 115 for set honey attracted 3 entries

First Janet and Cameron Maccallum

Second Mike and Sue Thornley

Third Neil Sandison

Class 116 for clear honey demonstrated the variety of honey that can be obtained from our relatively small area with a wide range of colours from medium to light on display in the 6 entries.

First Neil Turnbull

Second Janet and Cameron Maccallum

Third Mike and Sue Thornley

Class 117 a frame of honey ready for extraction had 3 good entries with wonderful white cappings and 2 not so good frames (including one from this reporter).

First Janet and Cameron Maccallum

Second Jane Leach

Third Neil Sandison

Janet and Cameron Maccallum were worthy winners of the Buchanan Challenge Cup for most points in all classes. It was good to see new names on the winners list as well, and let us hope that this encourages more entries next year. Many thanks also to Ben Bellamy who judged the entries with considerable thoroughness.

Autumn Feeding

Question: how much stores does a colony need to over winter? Answer: a reasonable colony should have about 40 lbs of stores. This is a lot: the equivalent of a super of honey and 3 or 4 frames of stores in deeps in the brood chamber. Another way of looking at it is 8 frames of stores in deeps in a top box over 8 frames in the bottom, if you are working on double deeps. Whichever, bees like stores above their heads so that they can slowly eat their way upwards and to the sides, avoiding being isolated from stores in cold periods and starving. Remember that it is crucially important to remove the queen excluder to avoid the cluster leaving the queen behind and her dying.

So you need to calculate how much stores colonies have at the end of the summer. A rule of thumb is 2 1/2 half lbs in a super frame and 5 lbs in a deep but these must be well drawn and well filled ie heavy. If not add more frames to the equation. On a good day go in and see what your bees have got and then feed the shortfall with a thick white sugar syrup (check Hooper or other reference books for the mix) or one of the proprietary feeds. Although appreciating that it is not cheap we think Ambrosia is excellent as it can be left uncapped by the bees (who seem to love the stuff) without it fermenting.

Association Dinner Wednesday 24th October, Commodore Hotel, Helensburgh. Please contact Ben Bellamy as soon as possible if thinking of attending 01436 842692

Clyde Area Beekeeping Association (CABA) Wednesday 30/09/2015. The Tour Speaker is Graham Royale and he will be speaking at the Heart of Scotstoun Community Centre, 64 Balmoral Street, G14 0BL at 7pm on "Apis through the looking glass" Contact Alastair Cameron if you want a lift.

Scottish Beekeepers' Association Autumn Convention Saturday the 12th September, Oatbridge Campus SRUC, Ecclesmachan, Broxburn, EH52 6NH. All day, with fabulous speakers and lunch etc, £30, also trade stands with beekeeping equipment bargains. Contact John Coyle, Rose Cottage, Burton, By Kippen FK8 3JL 07774 266 540 info@beekeepinginScotland.co.uk. There are usually several people from Helensburgh going to this event so a bit of car sharing should be possible. There may still be places but you need to phone to check. A lift might be possible. Alastair Cameron