

#215 April 2016

**Next Meeting: Movie night: a film all about the beekeeping year
Thursday 28 April 7.15 pm in the Hall at Rhu Church**



Tim stirs his chocolate

More than just honey.

This month's big thank you goes to Tim Syddall for his introduction to chocolatiering as well as showing how honey can be incorporated into the process, Nikki Monaghan for demonstrating how to make lip balms, and Janet and Cameron Macallum for showing how to make cast and rolled candles respectively. How many meetings do you leave with a candle, lip balm and bag of chocolates?

Honey and Healing lecture

On 21 March, several club members attended a lecture on Honey & Healing at the Glasgow Vet School, which was organised by Clyde Area Beekeepers Association. The speaker, Dr. Patrick Pollock is a veterinary surgeon and gave a fascinating & engaging talk on wounds to horses & the role that honey can play in the healing process.

There is a period of time during the healing process when the application of honey dressings can speed wound recovery. It does this by killing bacteria that can grow on the wound, partly because of the hydrogen peroxide found in the honey. However, if the dressings are applied for too long, they can actually hinder the healing process.

Currently, all commercially available dressings use Manuka honey which is treated to ensure it is safe for the patient. The dressings command premium prices, so Patrick & his team devised a test to examine the efficacy of a range of honeys in killing a variety of bacteria including MRSA, *E.coli* & *Staphylococcus*. They compared medical grade Manuka, commercially produced honey available from supermarkets & some from beekeepers. Some honeys were more effective than others in killing bacteria, but the results showed that Scottish Heather Honey from Inverness and the medical grade Manuka Honey performed the best.

This was a tremendous outcome as it showed that it may be possible to treat wounds far more cheaply - this could be especially important in developing countries where horses play a vital role in providing transportation.

Patrick then spoke of his desire for more research that would help to further understand the mechanisms involved in honey's healing role & to create a grading system to allow honeys to be ranked by their effectiveness at killing bacteria. As always, funding for such projects is scarce, but Cameron Macallum presented Patrick with a cheque for £500 on behalf of CABA which will hopefully go towards the £35k needed to progress the research.

An excellent evening was then rounded off with a tour of the Equine Centre. Thanks again to Patrick & everyone who made the evening such a great success.
Colin Campbell.

DIY.

There can be few hobbies that lend themselves so well to DIY. Sandy Abel is a retired cabinet maker who, along with a fully equipped workshop, has the expertise and skill to help anyone who would like any help with some woodwork. Email Sandy for more information: meldrumloon@icloud.com.

What's happening in the hive?

This is month when the first real inspections usually take place. The traditional 'a day when it's comfortable to be in short sleeves' rule of thumb still remains as to the weather conditions on the day of the first inspection; why unnecessarily chill all the brood just as things are really getting going? Check the colony has a queen laying well and unite colonies if necessary. For those who like to clip and mark their queens, now is the prudent time to do so whilst the population remains low. Provide ample space as the colony expands so as to delay swarming.

Ben's Birthday



Congratulations Ben.

90th birthdays are special and the last meeting saw Ben Bellamy presented with a slightly belated birthday cake for his. Ben has been a stalwart of the Association, can be credited with its inception and, as secretary, oversaw its smooth running for many years. For a long time Ben was THE face of beekeeping in the area. Ben is a staunch supporter of the SBA, offering his views from the perspective of vast experience. If anyone epitomises 'age is just a number', it is Ben.

Link of the month: <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCLvaoyDPYoPAGWRTCsVU3Iq>

The SBA now has a YouTube channel. As yet there are currently a limited number of clips, but this will surely grow and it at least offers a route in to other links on beekeeping topics.