



LUNE VALLEY COMMUNITY BEEKEEPERS NEWSLETTER FEBRUARY 2020

New members

We are delighted to welcome new members Belinda Hulme, Jon Schofield and John Tamlin.

January meeting



Our January meeting took place on Wednesday, 8th January 2020 in our new venue, Aughton Village Hall. The Hall was very warm and it was pleasing to see the number of new members. The evening started with wine and cheese followed by a showing of the film "*More than Honey*", a remarkable documentary film made in 2013 by the Swiss filmmaker Marcus Imhoof, which looked into the fascinating world of bees, and showed small family beekeepers and industrialised honey farms.

Membership Renewal

Membership subscriptions for 2020-2021 fall due at the end of February. We are retaining the subscription rate at £12 per member but are having to increase the public liability insurance premium to £13 for the year. It would be very helpful if you would complete the membership renewal form at the end of this newsletter and return it to me as soon as possible.

February meeting

PLEASE NOTE THE CHANGE OF VENUE



Our February meeting will be on Wednesday, 12th February, at Aughton Village Hall when Fred will explain the various ways of obtaining bees, together with their advantages and disadvantages, and then explain several simple techniques for increasing colonies.

We shall also discuss the possibility of a Club initiative to breed bees on a collective basis for those who wish to take part.

Open Day 2020 – Saturday, 11th July



Our Open Day this year will take place on Saturday, 11th July and planning for the event is already under way. A number of stalls have already been booked for the event and we shall be having two marquees as well as our own gazebo. If you would like to have a stall at the Open Day, please let me know so that we can organise the space effectively. As usual, we shall need the most volunteers possible to man this event so please make a note in your diary to attend and help if you possibly can.

The new season

Looking outside at the weather, it is hard to believe that the new beekeeping season is only a few weeks away. Swarms have been known to occur in mid to late March so be prepared!

If you have been building a new apiary over the winter, now is the time to check that you have everything you need to complete it before the end of March. Likewise, now is the time to ensure that all the maintenance tasks needed by your apiary are completed and that you have all the equipment you think you might need in good condition and ready to go.

If you are thinking of buying new equipment, most of the major suppliers offer attractive discounts in the Spring, especially at trade shows such as BeeTradex.

Out apiary site

The excellent out apiary site near Tatham in the Lune Valley is still available and another site on the outskirts of Halton may also be available soon. If anyone is interested, please give me a call.

Finding the Queen



No matter what type of beekeeper you are, there comes a time when finding the queen may be helpful. This can be challenging, even for veteran beekeepers as, although some queens seem quite happy to be in the open, most scurry off to the darker corners and hide.

New beekeepers and some more experienced, have difficulty picking out the queen from the worker bees. The queen is larger, but more specifically, she is longer. Her lengthy abdomen extends out beyond the tip of her wings, giving

her the appearance of having short wings. Also, her back is different from that of most workers. She has a shiny, black hairless back, while workers tend to have fuzzy backs. Her legs are long and usually light in colour, while worker bees tend to have dark legs.



Whilst the queen is very obvious in the first picture, can you spot her in the second? She is there!

Most conventional beekeepers mark their queens, which certainly makes them easier to find. In doing so, there is a danger that the bright dab of paint on the queen's back becomes a crutch, encouraging new beekeepers to become too reliant on using it to find the queen, rather than truly learning the distinguishing features of a queen bee.

Finding the queen amongst some 30,000 + bees is not easy but there are some things you can do to improve your chances. Firstly, avoid using smoke unless absolutely necessary as this will drive your queen into hiding. Secondly, as the queen is most likely to be on a frame with new eggs, frames that are predominantly honey or capped brood can be removed to another brood box which reduces the places left for the queen to hide. Arrange the remaining frames into pairs and move each pair of frames as far away from the next pair as possible. The probability that the queen will be hiding between one pair of frames is now very high.

There are a number of other approaches for finding the queen but as all are fairly intrusive, the decision to use them should be weighed against the benefits gained.

Primary school project

We have been asked by a primary school if we would be interested in developing a short programme to introduce their pupils to the world of honey bees. The initial thinking is to have a classroom session followed by a visit to the apiary, including looking into an active hive. Whilst we already have all the necessary equipment, including children's bee suits, we need one or two members who have the interest and time to work with the school to develop the project. The programme could then be made available to other schools if there is the interest. Please get in touch if this appeals to you.

Programme

The programme for 2020-2021 is in the process of being developed. If there is anything you would like including, please let me know and we shall do our best to include it. Here is what we have so far:

Sat 29th Feb	Apiary Working Party	Club Apiary 10-00am to 3-30pm
	This will be a general tidying up of the apiary site after the winter including weeding, scrub clearance and the removal of fallen trees. If time permits, we shall also tidy the container so that everything is stored as tidily as practical and can easily be found. The more people we have, the easier this will be so please come for all or part of the day if you can.	
Wed 11th Mar	Speaker Meeting Topic: Thermoregulation in the hive	Aughton Village Hall, 7-30pm Speaker: Keith Bartlem
	Keith is an airline pilot, and experienced beekeeper. His talk will help to improve our understanding of how, why, and when bees monitor and alter the hive temperature and is particularly relevant in our usage of insulated hives.	
Sun 15th Mar	Open Course - An introduction to Alternative Beekeeping – Part 1	Aughton Village Hall, 9-30am to 4-00pm
	See poster for details	
Sun 19th Apr	Spring Apiary Inspection	Club Apiary, 10-30am
	An opportunity for all members, especially new members, to experience a Spring inspection and assess how well the bees have come through the winter.	
Sun 17th May	Open Course - An introduction to Alternative Beekeeping – Part 2	Club Apiary, 10-30am to 4-00pm
	An introduction to the practical skills of beekeeping such as frame making etc and live hive inspections for those who have completed Part 1.	
Sun 14th June	Summer Apiary Inspection	Club Apiary, 10-30am
	An opportunity for all members, especially new members, to experience a Summer inspection and assess how the colonies have built up.	
10th July	Working party	Club Apiary 10-00am to 3-00pm
	Working party to set up for Open Day.	
11th July	2020 OPEN DAY	Club Apiary 10-00am to 4-00pm
	Details to follow	
12th July	Working party	Club Apiary 10-00am to 1-00pm
	Working party to clear up after Open Day.	
Wed 2nd Sept	Speaker Meeting Topic: Honey extraction	Aughton Village Hall, 7-30pm Speaker:
	Your bees have produced honey, so what do you do now? This practical workshop will demonstrate how to get your honey from comb to jar.	
Sun 13th Sept	Autumn Apiary Inspection	Club Apiary, 10-30am
	An opportunity for all members, especially new members, to experience an Autumn inspection and assess how well the colonies are prepared for winter.	

Wed 7th Oct **Speaker Meeting** **Aughton Village Hall, 7-30pm**
Topic: Bee Stings **Speaker: Dr Julia Pigott**
Julia is a retired GP, our Seasonal Bee Inspector and runs the Brigsteer Bee Reserve, a private, 17.5 acre wildlife reserve in the Lyth Valley, Cumbria.

Wed 4th Nov **Speaker Meeting** **Aughton Village Hall, 7-30pm**
Topic: TBC **Speaker:**

Wed 2nd Dec **Speaker Meeting** **Aughton Village Hall, 7-30pm**
Topic: TBC **Speaker:**

2021

Wed 8th Jan **Social Meeting** **Aughton Village Hall, 7-30pm**

Wed 3rd Feb **Speaker Meeting** **Aughton Village Hall, 7-30pm**
Topic: TBC **Speaker:**

Wed 3rd Mar **Speaker Meeting** **Aughton Village Hall, 7-30pm**
Topic: TBC **Speaker:**

Other events of interest



Saturday, 14th March 2020, Beetradox 9-00am to 4-30pm
Hall H3, Stoneleigh Park, Warwickshire, CV8 2LG

This is the largest, independent trade exhibition of beekeeping equipment in the UK and attracts over 2500 beekeepers. A diverse range of free lectures run from 10-00am to 3-00pm. Admittance is £6 if booked in advance, or £7 on the day.

www.beetradox.co.uk/registration/

I shall be attending, so if there is any equipment you need and would like me to collect it for you, just let me know.

3rd -5th April 2020, BBKA Spring Convention

Harper Adams University, Newport, Shropshire, TF10 8NB
The annual BBKA Spring Convention provides an impressive range of workshops, courses and lectures spread over three days. A large trade show also takes place over the first two days. For more details visit

www.bbka.org.uk/news_and_events/spring_convention.php



Wednesday, 20th May 2020, World Bee Day

The purpose of this international day is to acknowledge the role of bees and other pollinators for the ecosystem. World Bee Day is celebrated on the baptism day of Anton Janša, who was born in 1734 in what is now Slovenia.



Northern Bee Auction

This is usually held at Houghton Village Hall, Cumbria, CA3 0NW, on a Sunday in May and offers a range of both bees and second-hand equipment. Further information can be obtained from: enquiries@beeauctions.co.uk

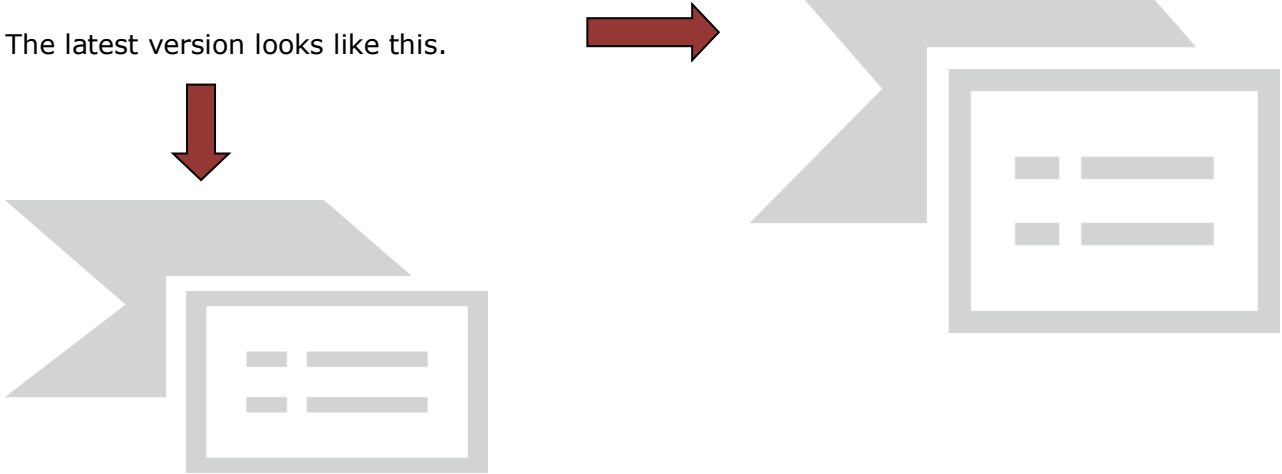
Beekeepers hold sticky protest over herbicide

German beekeepers poured honey over the steps of the agricultural ministry in protest against the use of a controversial herbicide. Sebastian and Camille Seusing said they had had to destroy four tonnes of honey from their hives near Berlin after it was contaminated with glyphosate that was sprayed on fields close by. Activists want the chemical to be banned. *The Times, 16.01.20*
Sent in by *Huston Clements*.

Just a thought!

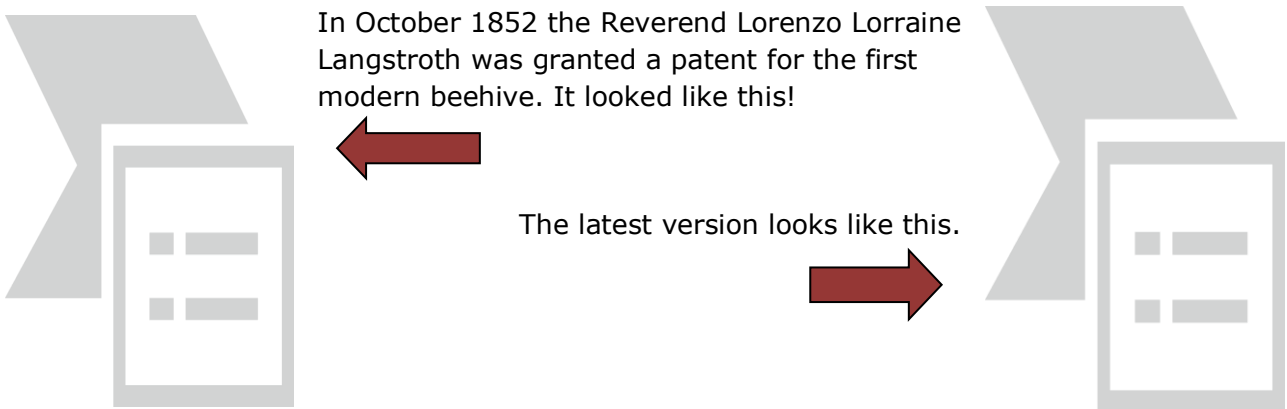
A patent for the first modern motor car was granted to Karl Benz on 29th January 1886. It looked like this.

The latest version looks like this.



In October 1852 the Reverend Lorenzo Lorraine Langstroth was granted a patent for the first modern beehive. It looked like this!

The latest version looks like this.



BEE MYTHS AND CUSTOMS



In 1015, a huge fire which destroyed much of the town of Meissen, in the Upper Elbe district of what is now modern Germany, was extinguished using mead, as the townsfolk were short of water!

Fred Ayres, Editor & Chairman
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The Lune Valley Long Hive

An innovative but simple long hive



Only £325

Only obtainable from Lune Valley Community Beekeepers

Delivery can be arranged.

Essential features:

- Designed by bee-centric beekeepers for bee-centric beekeepers
- Comfortably houses one colony of bees without the need for additional supers or brood boxes
- Has a hinged roof to avoid the need for heavy lifting
- Can be managed by a person in a wheelchair
- Can be used with 14 x 12 frames (recommended), standard brood frames or top bars
- Has a removable floor tray which can act as a biological sump or a debris board for varroa counts
- Has 2" thick wooden walls which provide five times more insulation than a standard hive
- Roof space is ventilated and has space for a jumbo feeder
- Has a metal roof
- Is manufactured locally, especially for LVCB
- Is constructed from pine wood to reduce the cost but will need an external preservative or coat of paint
- External measurements: L 86cm, H 77cm, W 52cm
- Despite its high specification, it is economically priced whilst offering exceptional value for money.



Support our Club by buying an

LVCB Mug

Only £5

**LUNE VALLEY COMMUNITY BEEKEEPERS
MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL FORM – 2020-2021**

Title:	Name:	
Address:		
Telephone No:		
Email:		
2020-2021 Subscriptions	Amount	
Annual Membership from 01.03.20 to 28.02.21	12.00	
Public Liability Insurance from 01.04.20 to 31.03.21 (delete if not wanted)	13.00	
Donation		
Total due		
Please indicate method of payment	Cheque/BACS/Cash	
Bank details for BACS payment <i>Please quote your name as the payment reference to help us identify the payments.</i>	Lune Valley Community Beekeepers Account number – 29993268 Sort code 77-26-17	
I consent to the holding of my membership records on computer and consent/do not consent to disclosure to other members of the Charity and BeeBase.		
Signed:	Date:	
Gift Aid declaration (for tax payers only)– past, present & future donations		
Please treat my subscription as a Gift Aid donation. I confirm I have paid or will pay an amount of Income Tax and/or Capital Gains Tax for the current tax year (6 April to 5 April) that is at least equal to the amount of tax that all the charities and Community Amateur Sports Clubs (CASCs) that I donate to will reclaim on my gifts for the current tax year. I understand that other taxes such as VAT and Council Tax do not qualify. I understand the charity will reclaim 25p of tax on every £1 that I have given.		
Lune Valley Community Beekeepers – HMRC Charities Reference XT22947		
Signed:	Date:	

Please copy the following poster and distribute it as widely as possible.

Ever thought of keeping bees?



If you have ever thought of owning a colony of honey bees but have been deterred by not knowing exactly what is involved, or how much time it might take, then this course is for you! This popular, one day, inter-active workshop, organised by [Lune Valley Community Beekeepers](#), focuses on responsible, low intervention, bee-centric approaches to beekeeping and covers all you need to know and consider before you start keeping bees.

Sunday, 15th March, 2020

9-30am to 4-00pm

The Village Hall, Aughton, Lancaster LA2 8LU



For further details or to book a place visit
www.lunevalleybeekeepers.co.uk
or telephone 01525 811978