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THE
ESSEX BEEKEEPER



"Move along please"

Photograph by Penny Learmonth

Monthly Magazine of the Essex Beekeepers' Association

*Furthering the Craft of Beekeeping in Essex
Registered Charity number 1031419*

www.ebka.org

Issue No. 634

October 2017

Divisional Meetings Diary dates for October & November 2017

5 Oct	Thursday 8.00pm	Harlow	Kings Church, Red Willow, Harlow CM19 5PA
5 Oct	Thursday 8.00pm	Romford	'Plants & Bees' - Darren Lerigo. Chadwick Hall, Main Road, Gidea Park RM2 5EL
14 Oct	Saturday 6.00pm	Romford	Divisional Honey Show & Harvest Supper. The Ascension Church, Collier Row RM5 2BA
16 Oct	Monday 7.30pm	Chelmsford	'Flow Hives and Top Bar Hives' - Rita Wilson and Peter Aldridge. The Link, Rainsford Road, Chelmsford CM1
18 Oct	Wed 7.30pm	Dengie 100 & Maldon	'Mistakes made over the Winter' - Eric Beaumont. The Oakhouse, High St, Maldon CM9 5PR
19 Oct	Thursday 7.30pm	Epping Forest	'Practical Tips' - moving hives, etc. Chingford Horticultural Hall
21 Oct	Saturday 9.30am	County Event	Annual Conference - 'Future Challenges and Opportunities' Holiday Inn, Eight Ash Green, CO6 3QL
25 Oct	Wed 7.30pm	Southend	Divisional Honey Show - WI Hall, Bellingham Lane, Rayleigh, SS6 7ED
26 Oct	Thursday 7.30pm	Colchester	'Great Tilkey Honey' - talk by Michael Coe. Langham Community Centre, School Rd CO4 5PA
29 Oct	Sunday 2.00pm	Braintree	Divisional Honey Show - White Notley Village Hall, The Street, White Notley CM8 1RH
2 Nov	Thursday 8.00pm	Harlow	Tba & Winter programme discussions. Kings Church, Red Willow, Harlow CM19 5PA
2 Nov	Thursday 8.00pm	Romford	Chadwick Hall, Main Road, Gidea Park RM2 5EL
13 Nov	Monday 7.30pm	Saffron Walden	Talk by Arthur Davey, Master of the Worshipful Company of Wax Chandlers. Thaxted Day Centre, Vicarage Lane CM6 2RL
15 Nov	Wed 7.0pm	Dengie 100 & Maldon	'What do we do?' - Alan Hart, Bee Farmers' Assoc. The Oakhouse, High St, Maldon CM9 5PR
16 Nov	Thursday 7.30pm	Epping Forest	tba
18 Nov	Saturday 9.00am	Saffron Walden	'Bee Improvement for All' - Swards End Village Hall, CB10 2LG - see Notice on page 18
20 Nov	Monday 7.30pm	Chelmsford	Chelmsford Environmental Strategy - The Link, Rainsford Road, Chelmsford CM1

Who's who and how to contact them

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Saffron Walden BKA

with **BIBBA**

Bee Improvement and Bee Breeders Association

are organising

Bee Improvement for All

with **Roger Patterson**

Saturday 18 November 2017

9 am to 4.30 pm

Cost: £ 12.50 to include tea/coffee

'Bee Improvement For All' is a one day course that is designed to help beekeepers use opportunities to improve their bees, as well as giving information to those who wish to raise more queens. Some speakers and books don't serve the beekeeper with a few colonies very well, as they often use methods that are beyond the needs of the ordinary beekeeper. This course will help and encourage beekeepers of all abilities to improve their bees, using simple techniques without the need for specialist equipment.

There will be plenty of information on colony management, with emphasis on understanding what is happening inside colonies and keeping things simple. This course will help beekeepers to rear their own queens from good local stock that are survivors, rather than using imported queens that may introduce pests and diseases and may not suit our unpredictable climate.

Please bring your own lunch.

Booking and enquiries -

Swbka.info@gmail.com

**Sewards End
Village Hall,
Sewards End,
Saffron Walden
CB10 2LG**

More Divisional meetings

22 Nov	Wed 7.30pm	Southend	AGM - WI Hall, Bellingham Lane, Rayleigh, SS6 7ED
23 Nov	Thursday 7.30pm	Colchester	'Microscopy' - Langham Community Centre, School Rd CO4 5PA
24 Nov	Friday 8.00pm	Braintree	'Eat Natural' - Their products and beekeeping campaign. White Notley Village Hall, The Street, White Notley CM8 1RH

BBKA MODULE STUDY GROUPS & MODULE 2 TRAINING DAY 2017-18



If you are interested in joining the Module Study Groups or Module 2 Training Day please email me:

jane.ridler@uwclub.net EBKA Education Secretary.

The Study Groups will be held in October/November, evenings tbc, in Great Dunmow, and will cover Module 1 (Honey Bee Management) and Module 5 (Honey Bee Biology) in preparation for 11th November exams.

The Module 2 Training Day (Honey Bee Products & Forage) will take place in January at Writtle University on a weekend day in January 2018.

Knowledge and experience up to the Basic Assessment will be assumed but only required if you are actually sitting the exams.

More details later, depending on response.

EBKA 2017 Annual Conference

Hosted by Colchester Division

Saturday, 21ST October 2017, 9.30am – 4.30pm

Venue: Holiday Inn, Abbots Lane, Eight Ash Green, Colchester, CO6 3QL (just off the A12)

Ticket Price £25, includes buffet lunch (vegetarian options)

Cheques payable to
*'Essex Beekeepers' Association
Colchester Division'*

Send with your contact details to

The Treasurer, Crabtrees, Paynes Lane,
Little Bromley, Manningtree, Essex,
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Award	Classes	For	Winner	Division
W.B.C. Cup	23, 24, & 29	Biscuits, sandwich and fudge	M Barke	Harlow
Devall Award	1 to 41	Novice gaining highest total number of points and an award in classes 19 to 21	M McCulloch	Southend
Essex Chronicle Cup	38	Twelve jars of clear honey	M Barke	Harlow
Chelmsford Wine Circle Marconi Trophy	14	Best bottle of sweet mead	G Furnell	Romford
Alf Gunn Jubilee Shield	44 & 45	Best bottle of metheglin	M Barke	Harlow
Walden Wine Shield	42 & 43	Best bottle of melomel	J French	Braintree
G A Taylor Mazer	15	Best bottle of dry mead	J McNeill	Romford
Archie Horton Award	35 & 36	Most points in candles classes	P F Abbott	Southend
B.B.K.A. Blue Ribbon		Best exhibit in the show	M Clay	Chelmsford
National Honey Show ticket	19-21	Best in the Novice classes	S Frazer	Harlow

Award	Classes	For	Winner	Division
Burt Challenge Cup	11A & 11B	Best container of cut comb honey	J French	Braintree
Cowan Vase	1 & 4	Section	P F Abbott	Southend
Dearman Cup	39	Twelve Jars of crystallised or soft set honey	Not awarded	
Ford Trophy	2, 3, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10 & 12	Most points in extracted honey classes	P Hughes	Chelmsford
Horton Cake Cup and Knife	22 & 26	Best honey fruit cake	P Hughes	Chelmsford
Mallinson Cup	35 & 36	Best exhibit of cast and uncast candles	P F Abbott	Southend
Ongar Cup	5	Frame of extractable honey	M Barke	Harlow
President's Cup		Division gaining highest total number of points in all classes	Harlow	
Holmes Cup		Exhibitor gaining highest total number of points in all classes	M Barke	Harlow
Tidswell Challenge Bowl	1 to 12	Most points in all honey classes	P F Abbott	Southend
Jersey Cup	13 & 21	Best cake of beeswax	M Barke	Harlow

An unnecessary demise

Penny Learmonth - Saffron Walden Division

I want to share with you the deeply sad saga of an amazing wild colony that David and I were called out to. Unfortunately, the outcome gave rise to suppressed fury and tears (on my part).

These bees were content in a hedge and obviously had been there for months (maybe up to a year). Then a passer-by was stung and David and I were sent for by the owner of the hedge. It was a truly amazing phenomenon. At least two feet in all three directions, with brood and stores in perfect order. We realised that this was going to be a serious weight and we needed to think about how best to deal with it – and to get in some extra hands and muscles. We went home and phoned Robert and Douglas Pickford who we knew would be resourceful, strong and would have a big enough receptacle to transport them. They were unable to come until the next day so we agreed to meet them on site the following afternoon.



Arriving there, Douglas was seen pacing along the hedge. “*You can't miss them*” I called out. But, like the Marie Celeste, there was nothing there – not a single bee, not a drop of wax. The previous day there had been a rare, free hanging colony which had been present for a long time.

A person appeared from a nearby house – a bit cross and defensive. “*The pest man said 'They was wasps',*” was all that was said. It was evident that an unscrupulous operator had taken a flame thrower to whole colony.

I found it heart breaking. What was gone was gone. We might never have successfully rehoused the bees but it would have been worth the try, and we would have had a rare example of a magnificent natural structure.

Clearly, there are some unscrupulous people who are willing to name an insect as anything they like and thus destroy them without remorse.

The moral: If it is possible, act at once.

Feeding bees for the winter

John Everett - Master Beekeeper (courtesy of eBees)

There are three main things in the honeybee diet:

Pollen is their source of protein needed to feed larvae and develop some glands in the adult. (There is little or no pollen available in the heart of winter and bees could not forage for it, if it is cold.)

Water is necessary to dissolve sugar (honey) in the bodies of adult bees. Bees can use condensation in hives in the winter but also visit dirty water sources like damp seed trays, septic tank overflows, slurry pit seepage and the like ignoring the nice clean water you put out for them. My guess is the bees need mineral salts from the dirty water.

Sugars are the main food needed by adult bees. These provide them with energy to keep warm and helps them move. European honey bees have evolved to store large reserves of sugar (honey) in the spring and summer to be able to use it when the weather is poor.

Having 'stolen' their honey in the summer we have to feed sugar to the bees so they can survive the winter. Feeding excess sugar solution in the autumn is the best way of giving them enough food to survive until the spring. Your bees will digest the sucrose in supermarket sugar, evaporate the solution and store it in the same way that they store honey.

In the late summer/autumn if bees do not consume sugar syrup quickly, suspect that the colony might have a queen problem. Bees will ignore sugar syrup when the weather is cold so you will have to use fondant or candy.

Both are much more expensive than supermarket sugar — but cheaper than bees dead from starvation.

I make my own candy like this:

6lb supermarket sugar (sucrose)

½ pint water

Teaspoon of an acid like citric acid, tartaric acid or vinegar.

(The acid helps convert the sucrose to glucose and fructose that the bees would have to do during digestion.)

Class	Description	Position	Winner	Division
41	One colour photograph related to beekeeping, unmounted	1st	Pam Hughes	Chelmsford
		2nd	Sheldon Cooper	D H & Maldon
		3rd	Alexandra Tidmas	Harlow
		VHC	Helen Hardwicke	Chelmsford
		HC	Paul Abbott	Southend
		C	Victoria Tidmas	Harlow
42	One bottle of sweet melomel	2nd	Richard Alabone	Chelmsford
43	One bottle of dry melomel	1st	Janet French	Braintree
		3rd	Richard Alabone	Chelmsford
44	One bottle of sweet metheglin	1st	Mike Barke	Harlow
45	One bottle of dry metheglin	1st	Mike Barke	Harlow
46	Honey label	1st	Mike Barke	Harlow
		2nd	Pauline Tidmas	Harlow
		3rd	Paul Abbott	Southend
		VHC	Jim McNeill	Romford
47	Pair of coloured bees-wax candles	1st	Jim McNeill	Romford
		2nd	Paul Abbott	Southend
48	Two rolled bees-wax Candles Junior		No awards	
49	Beeswax polish	1st	John Ferguson	D H & Maldon
		2nd	Mike Barke	Harlow
		3rd	Jim McNeill	Romford
		VHC	Janet French	Braintree
		HC	Kate Tuerena	D H & Maldon
		C	Carlie Mayes	D H & Maldon
50	Vase of flowers	1st	Helen Hardwicke	Chelmsford
		2nd	Susan Andrews	Romford
		3rd	Pam Hughes	Chelmsford
		VHC	Mike Barke	Harlow
51	Divisional Garden	1st	Romford	Romford
		2nd	D H & Maldon	D H & Maldon
		3rd	Harlow	Harlow
		VHC	Southend	Southend
52	Needlework	1st	Margaret Dixon	D H & Maldon

Class	Description	Position	Winner	Division
32	Junior class. A poster about Beekeeping	1st	Finlay Phimister	D H & Maldon
33	Divisional composite class.	2nd	Southend	
		3rd	D H & Maldon	
34	A decorative display of honey products		No awards	
35	A pair of beeswax candles, cast in a mould	1st	Paul Abbott	Southend
		2nd	M. R. Wilson	Southend
		3rd	Jim McNeill	Romford
		VHC	Walter Gee	Chelmsford
		HC	Mary McCulloch	Southend
		C	Gary Furnell	Romford
36	A pair of beeswax candles, not cast in a mould	2nd	Paul Abbott	Southend
		3rd	Jim McNeill	Romford
37	A practical invention related to beekeeping	1st	Jim Rushbrook	Chelmsford
		2nd	D Burge	D H & Maldon
		3rd	Mike Barke	Harlow
38	Twelve 454gm jars of clear honey, all one colour, labelled.	1st	Mike Barke	Harlow
		2nd	Gary Furnell	Romford
		3rd	Pauline Tidmas	Harlow
		VHC	David Tidmas	Harlow
39	Twelve 454gm jars of crystallised or soft set honey,		No awards	
40	Junior class. One colour pho- tograph related to	2nd	Alexis O'Connor	DH & Maldon

- Bring to the boil and continue heating until the boiling solution reaches Softball: 114/115°C (238/240°F).
- Place pan in cold water and stir like mad as small crystals form.
- As it thickens and appears milky, pour into a suitable container like a plastic margarine container.
- When cold place directly on the top of the cluster. [Some put insulation over the candy so the bees can warm it.]

It is a slow process and it is much easier to feed well in the autumn.

If you overheat the syrup you will end up with toffee and the solution will not crystallise — experience speaks!

Some may be concerned that the acid (there to speed up the hydrolysis of the sucrose to glucose and fructose) could harm the bees — BUT the reaction will work if you boil sucrose solution, so you could achieve the same end products by using more water and boiling for longer. With more water, the water needs to evaporate longer to get the temperature up to 114°C (238°F). This gives the sucrose longer to react and hence more time to turn to the end products. It is much easier to lower the pH.

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**COUNTY HONEY SHOW 2017
RESULTS & PRIZE WINNERS**

Class	Description	Position	Winner	Division
1	One section of comb honey (Gift)	1st	Paul Abbott	Southend
2	One jar of clear honey (Gift)	1st	Janet Pratt	Chelmsford
		2nd	Pauline Tidmas	Harlow
		3rd	Mike Barke	Harlow
		VHC	David Tidmas	Harlow
		HC	Jim Rushbrook	Chelmsford
		C	Angela Mander	Romford
3	One jar of Crystallised honey (Gift)	2nd	Pam Hughes	Chelmsford
4	One pair of comb honey sections	2nd	Paul Abbott	Southend
5	One frame of Extractable honey	1st	Mike Barke	Harlow
		2nd	Sabina Barke	Harlow
		3rd	Mary McCulloch	Southend
		VHC	Mr Wisbey	Chelmsford
		HC	Paul Abbott	Southend
6	Two jars of light clear honey	1st	David Tidmas	Harlow
		2nd	Sabina Barke	Harlow
		3rd	Val Jepps	Harlow
		VHC	Pauline Tidmas	Harlow
		HC	Jim Rushbrook	Chelmsford
		C	Gary Furnell	Romford
7	Two jars of medium clear honey	1st	Brian Greenland	Braintree
		2nd	Victoria Tidmas	Harlow
		3rd	Sabina Barke	Harlow
		VHC	Mike Barke	Harlow
		HC	Pauline Tidmas	Harlow
		C	David Tidmas	Harlow
8	Two jars of dark clear honey	1st	Margaret Clay	Chelmsford
			+ Blue Ribbon for 'Best in Show'	
		2nd	Jim Rushbrook	Chelmsford

Class	Description	Position	Winner	Division
25	Four apricot and honey scones	1st	M. R. Wilson	Southend
		2nd	Sabina Barke	Harlow
		3rd	Mike Barke	Harlow
		VHC	Pam Hughes	Chelmsford
		HC	Helen Hardwicke	Chelmsford
		C	Susan Andrews	Romford
26	Junior class. One honey fruit cake		No awards	
27	Junior class. Six honey nut cookies		No awards	
28	Junior class. One honey sandwich		No awards	
29	Six pieces of honey fudge	1st	Jim McNeill	Romford
		2nd	Helen Hardwicke	Chelmsford
		3rd	Margaret Dixon	D H & Maldon
		VHC	Mike Barke	Harlow
		HC	Pam Hughes	Chelmsford
		C	Val Jepps	Harlow
30	Six pieces of honey toffee	1st	Margaret Dixon	D H & Maldon
		2nd	Jim McNeill	Romford
		3rd	Mike Barke	Harlow
		VHC	Susan Andrews	Romford
		HC	Sabine Barke	Harlow
		C	Val Jepps	Harlow
31	One honey and malt wholemeal loaf	1st	Mike Barke	Harlow
		2nd	Sabina Barke	Harlow
		3rd	Margaret Dixon	D H & Maldon
		VHC	Margaret Clay	Chelmsford
		HC	Pam Hughes	Chelmsford

Class	Description	Position	Winner	Division
18	Two jars of dark clear Honey (Novice)		No awards	
19	Novice class. Two jars of clear honey, any colour	1st	Sue Frazer	Harlow
		2nd	Ron Pratt	D H & Maldon
		3rd	Mike Warboys	Chelmsford
		VHC	Nick Webster	Chelmsford
		HC	Carol Sissons	Harlow
	C	Kaye Barker	D H & Maldon	
20	Novice class. Two jars of crystallised honey, natural or soft set		No awards	
21	Novice class. One cake of beeswax, 99gm - 128gm	1st	Mary McCulloch	Southend
		2nd	Brian Greenland	Braintree
22	One honey fruit cake	1st	Pam Hughes	Chelmsford
		2nd	Jim McNeill	Romford
		3rd	Pat Rowland	Braintree
		VHC	Susan Andrews	Romford
		HC	Helen Hardwicke	Chelmsford
	C	David Tidmas	Harlow	
23	Six honey nut cookies	1st	Margaret Dixon	D H & Maldon
		2nd	Sabina Barke	Harlow
		3rd	Mike Barke	Harlow
		VHC	Val Jepps	Harlow
		HC	Pat Rowland	Braintree
		C	P Hughes	Chelmsford
24	One honey sandwich	1st	Sabina Barke	Harlow
		2nd	Mike Barke	Harlow
		3rd	Janet Pratt	Chelmsford
		VHC	Helen Hardwicke	Chelmsford
		HC	Pat Rowland	Braintree
	C	Margaret Dixon	D H & Maldon	

Class	Description	Position	Winner	Division
9	Two jars of Crystallised honey, Natural set	1st	Patrick Saunders	Colchester
		2nd	Paul Abbott	Southend
10	Two jars of crystallised honey, Soft set	1st	Pam Hughes	Chelmsford
11a	One plastic container of cut comb honey, not set or crystallised	1st	Janet French	Braintree
		2nd	Pam Hughes	Chelmsford
11b	One plastic container of Crystallised cut comb honey		No awards	
12	Two jars of chunk honey	1st	Simon Nicholson	Epping Forest
		2nd	Janet French	Braintree
		3rd	Gary & Carol Stapleton	Southend
		VHC	Paul Abbott	Southend
13	One cake of beeswax 425gm - 482gm 25mm min thickness	1st	Mike Barke	Harlow
		2nd	Paul Abbott	Southend
14	One bottle of sweet mead	1st	Garry Furnell	Romford
		2nd	Patrick Saunders	Colchester
		3rd	Paul Abbott	Southend
		VHC	Mike Barke	Harlow
		HC	Jim McNeill	Romford
15	One bottle of dry mead	1st	Jim McNeill	Romford
		2nd	Peter Davidson	D H & Maldon
16	Two jars of light clear Honey (Novice)	1st	Nick Webster	Chelmsford
17	Two jars of medium clear Honey (Novice)	1st	Friends of Cressing Temple Gardens	Braintree
		2nd	Sue Frazer	Harlow



**Blue Ribbon for Margaret Clay
'Best in Show'**



Judging in progress

Fiona Dickson assisted by Paul Abbott

County Honey Show 2017

Condensed to one public day at the Orsett Show, but no lack of exhibits or public attendance.

Congratulations to all the prize winners and many thanks to all the helpers who made this a memorable and enjoyable event at this great venue.

**Vi Taylor, Jan French & Pauline Tidmas
Making it all run smoothly**



Practical Invention Class

**Romford's winning Divisional Garden
130th EBKA Honey Show**

Photographs by
Paul Abbott and Jean Smye

**Winning entry for
Moulded Beeswax Candles**



Lunch for the helpers

The Mead facilitated the lubrication of the vocal chords for the next sessions with the public

