

# NLB

## Annual Review 2012



photo by Farokh Khoroshi

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## Chairman's Report AGM 2013

So farewell to 2012, what began with drought and hosepipe bans ended with floods of Noah-esque proportions. The impressive achievements of the athlete's at the games and their haul of gold was not matched by the liquid gold honey crop as the bees languished in their hives sheltering from the rain and eating the meagre stores laid down in the spring. New queens failed to mate properly, if at all, and the colonies swarmed, superseded and generally behaved in unexpected ways.

The Association, however, has had another successful year. In February and March an enthusiastic group of beginners attended our course followed by hands-on sessions at the apiary. Despite the difficult conditions Johan did a splendid job in getting enough colonies to work with and lots of useful experience was gained.

We again had stalls at the Highgate Festival, Highgate Heritage Day, Fenton House and Hampstead Heritage Day. The observation hive, complete with its own queen of 2010 vintage, was as usual very popular with the crowds. This year the most common question was about whether there were too many bees in London as opposed the more recent "are the bees dying out?" - this was as a result of an article in the Evening Standard. The question is of course very relevant to urban bee-keepers and not much research has been done on acceptable density of hives. John Hauxwell is our representative looking into this with the LBKA and the Middlesex Federation.

The garden party in June luckily managed to avoid the rain and many thanks for all the delicious contributions.

In order to accommodate greater number of members our honey show and pot-luck supper venue was changed this year to the Danish YWCA. All who attended will, I am sure, agree that this was an excellent venue and an amazing supper. The format of having the exhibits and judging in one room and the supper in another worked really well and the quality of the food was extremely high. We are very grateful to the manager, Palle Pederson, for allowing us to use these lovely rooms. It was also a good decision to engage the three residents to help serve the food and clean up afterwards, it made a big difference. As a token of our appreciation a present of apiary honey was handed to Palle, a rare treat indeed – he had the entire apiary surplus output of 10lbs!

Despite the poor summer the standard of exhibits was high and although we missed Moyra Davidson's company and skills as a judge we were fortunate to have Peter Bashford who shared some of his secrets as to preparing exhibits.

The year ended with an excellent Christmas party and more wonderful food to start the festive season, and grateful thanks to our hosts, John and Tessa Hauxwell.

We have again decided not to increase the subscription rates this year but note that the BBKA, subject to approval at the Annual Delegates Meeting later this month, will raise their capitation rates in October, in which case, next year we will have to revise our subscription. This will be discussed at the AGM. In addition as a result of the poor weather our apiary honey sales receipts will this year be zero.

On behalf of the whole association I would like to thank all those particular members who have helped to organise and run the many events in the year for their considerable contributions to the success of them all.

I hope that come the spring all your colonies will emerge and I wish all members a very Happy New Year.



Malcolm Balston, Jan 2013

# APIARY REPORT 2012

All our 8 colonies overwintered but some were very small – just one queen and a hundred workers in each. One does not give up on a Queen who has survived the winter, but sadly despite our hard efforts to nurse them back to normal we did not succeed. Most of our colonies were very slow in building up and they never seemed to gain strength despite being fed all though the season. A total of 300-400 pounds of Ambrosia was administered to the colonies which is more than our standard honey harvest per year.

In early summer the colonies remained weak, and as no Queen Cells were made a nucleus was purchased at great expense. This was done in anticipation that it would kick start our Apiary with lots of new brood. To our great disappointment, the nucleus did not expand and died in late October. I cannot recall the Association ever having had to purchase a nucleus before because of something like this.

Later in the season we managed to rear a few Queens and divide some of the stronger colonies, and it almost looked like an Apiary in the month of July. However, only by constant feeding and management did the bees survive. Formic acid and icing sugar were used in our continuous fight against the dreaded Varroa mite, including drone capping.

As per normal we acquired 4 New Zealand Queens, two of which disappeared without trace. From now on we will remove the old Queen a week prior to the introduction of a New Queen and keep her in an Apidea as a back-up. Any Queen Cells produced in this period will be reared, and hopefully we should have a better success rate.

Despite 2012 being a difficult year with a honey harvest of only approximately fifty pounds, we have learned a lot from our dealings with the bees. Nothing seemed as it used to be and everything needed thorough planning and total concentration. In previous years Queens were usually accepted, and colonies seemed to thrive without much interference. One good bit of news though is that our Queen in the Observation Hive managed to keep going for five years by staying in the observation hive in the summer and overwintering in a full sized colony.

Many people have attended the apiary sessions during the past year, and I hope you have enjoyed the meetings as much as I have done. I would like to thank everybody for their help, not to mention for the tea and cakes so kindly offered.

I hope 2013 will be kinder to our bees and look forward to seeing old and new faces at the Apiary.

Happy Beekeeping!

Johan Kjaer January 2013

## NLB Honey Show 2012

NLB's Honey show on 5<sup>th</sup> September 2012 was held at the London home of the Danish YWCA, "Nutley Court" in Maresfield Gardens, Hampstead. Our show Judge, Peter Bashford from Kent, kindly stepped in when Moyra Davidson, our Judge for the past 10 years, unexpectedly moved from Southern England to Scotland.

The Danish YWCA let us use its spacious drawing room for the show with generous space for display and for members to mingle and to inspect exhibits. In the same room Peter awarded trophies, commented on the exhibits and suggested how some might be bettered. It was advantageous that all this could be done before members moved downstairs to feast on a, now traditional, pot-luck-supper. This was superbly organized by Liz Jack and we are grateful to a team of Nutley Court's residents who carried food and drink downstairs and then both served and cleared up after supper.

The separation of show and supper between rooms worked well. With regard to the show, encouraged by our new judge, random numbers were allocated to all show entries so that it was impossible to guess from whom any entry originated through finding entries with sequential entry numbers. This certainly assured the impartiality of judging in a way that was not necessarily the case in shows in which entries from any one exhibitor were allocated consecutive entry numbers. It was a mistake that entrants were not given the identification numbers allocated to each of their exhibits at the time of their delivery. Thus, it was difficult for exhibitors to identify their own exhibits on the show tables with the judge's comments on them. As show organizer, I apologize for this mistake. Another mistake was to have chosen a recipe for honey cakes (Class 6) which produced delicious cakes but other ingredients (mixed fruit, mixed spice and lemon) all tended to mask the taste of honey which should have been the dominant flavour of cakes in this class.

The new venue was splendid and we owe thanks to the Danish YWCA for letting us use their facilities and for welcoming us to hold the honey show at Nutley Court. We are particularly grateful to its manager, Palle Pederson, for his help with all our arrangements. We also thank Peter Bashford for judging our show and for enthusing us with many ideas. These covered both how exhibits could be improved and how the show might be developed to encourage participation by a greater number of NLB's members. Just 14 members of NLB entered this 2012 show. Nicky Faith, Johan Kjaer and Liz Jack all made indispensable contributions to its organisation.

P.M.Ogle 31 Dec 2012

# NLB Honey Show Awards 2012

**Class 1. Honey, light:** (No. of entries 2) **2<sup>nd</sup>** A.Dougall.

**Class 2. Honey medium:** (4) **1<sup>st</sup>\*** M.Balston, **2<sup>nd</sup>** H.Saunders /M.Leigh, **C** A.Kahane.

**Class 3. Honey dark:** (1) **HC** P.Buckoke.

**Class 4. Granulated/softset honey** (2) no awards.

**Class 5. Novice** (2) **1<sup>st</sup>** M.L.Delmonte, **C** J.Parker.

**Class 6. Honey cake** (4) **1<sup>st</sup>** M.Balston, **2<sup>nd</sup>** A.Kahane, **3<sup>rd</sup>** J.Kember, **HC** D.Cullen.

**Class 7. Piece of Bees' Wax** (2) **1<sup>st</sup>\*\*** M.Balston, **HC** J.Hauxwell.

**Class 8. Cut comb or Section** (1) **1<sup>st</sup>** A.Dougall.

**Class 9. Frame for Extraction** (2) **2<sup>nd</sup>** P.Buckoke, **VHC** A,Dougall.

**Class 10. Mead** (no entries)

**Class 11. Interesting/instructive relating to bees/beekeeping with explanation** (1)  
**2<sup>nd</sup>** E.de Witt.

**Class 12. Pair of candles** (2) **1<sup>st</sup>** M.Balston.

**Class 13. Beekeeping related photograph & explanatory caption** (6) **1st** F.Khorooshi,  
**2<sup>nd</sup>** D.Cullen, **VHC** P.Buckoke, **HC** J.Hauxwell, **C** M.Balston.

**\* Award of Svela Challenge Bowl** to M.Balston; **\*\* Award of Marsh Cup** to M.Balston.

**Key: VHC:** Very Highly Commended

**HC:** Highly Commended

**C:** Commended

P.M.Ogle 31 Dec 2012

# North London Beekeepers Statement of Account for 2012

<b>2011</b>	<b>INCOME</b>	<b>2012</b>
£5,422.60	Subscriptions & BDI	£4,977.25
278.80	Profit from activities and donations	257.91
728.45	Sale of Association honey (+ future sales)	0.00
9.96	Bank interest (net of tax and bank charges)	10.08
2,200.00	Beginner's Courses	1,700.00
<u>1,939.66</u>	Jar Sales & extractor rent	<u>740.05</u>
£10,579.47		£7,685.29
	 <b>EXPENDITURE</b>	
£404.88	Hire of halls, meetings and speakers	£940.05
293.99	Secretarial, Publicity, Mailings	367.64
1,074.32	Classes, Presentation, Teaching	772.25
1,328.18	Apiary	1,724.93
369.10	Bee Disease Insurance (BDI)	444.75
2,363.76	Capitation BBKA and Middx. Fed	2,248.65
112.00	Beekeepers' Quarterly (net)	0.00
1,718.62	Honey Jars & labels	478.01
<u>195.82</u>	Web Site	<u>119.00</u>
£7,860.67		£7,095.28
 <u>£2,718.80</u>	 Excess of Operating Income over Expenditure	 <u>£590.01</u>
	 <b>ASSETS</b>	
<b><u>at 31.12 2011</u></b>		<b><u>at 31.12 2012</u></b>
12,593.03	Santander Current Account	£3,716.62
11,230.65	Santander Reserve Account	21,239.65
320.00	Unsold Honey	0.00
<u>0.00</u>	Debtors less creditors (subs etc paid in advance)	<u>-222.58</u>
£24,143.68		£24,733.69
	 <b><u>Financed by</u></b>	
£21,424.88	Members funds (from previous year's total)	£24,143.68
<u>2,718.80</u>	Operating Surplus for year	<u>590.01</u>
£24,143.68		£24,733.69

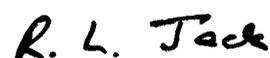
The Association owns certain sheds, teaching aids, trophies, books, observation & other hives, apiary equipment, jars, honey, bee medicaments & other items. These are listed separately.



Hamish Johnston Stewart  
Honorary Treasurer

I have audited the above accounts which are in accordance with the Association's books and records as at 4 Jan 2013.

4 Jan 2013



Bob Jack, Honorary Auditor

### TREASURER'S REPORT

The operating surplus for 2012 was £590, a considerable reduction on the previous year. This is due to the absence of association honey to sell and reduced numbers in both membership and the beginners class.

Members funds of £24,734 (held at Santander) are over 3 years' expenditure but this must cover the cost of replacing the (self insured) shed in case of loss.