

NORTH LONDON BEEKEEPERS ANNUAL REVIEW 2017

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Photographs Alison Kahane



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Chair's Report 2017

Nicky Faith

This has been quite a mixed year for North London Beekeepers.

While the weather was mostly unremarkable and the summer quite warm and pleasant, many of us however, reported a poor honey harvest. Then just when we had fed our colonies ready for the winter we had a huge flow of ivy nectar which would have kept our bees without us needed to feed them, if only we'd known it was coming.

Very sadly we lost three of our members. Margaret Jarvie, a committee member for many decades passed away in January aged 93. In April, Maria Christodoulou who was on the beginners' course in 2015 and who helped us so much at the apiary was suddenly taken ill and died within a few days. In September, Maurice Melzak, a member for nearly twenty years passed away after a long illness. We shall miss them all.

The beginners' course had a full contingent of students, many of whom signed up the previous autumn at the Taster sessions organized by Julie Parker. Julie organized two more Taster sessions this last September which were fully subscribed and many of those who attended have signed up for the 2018 course which is now fully booked.

The season began as usual with the Shed Party, which is always an opportunity for new members to visit the apiary for the first time. In June the apiary hosted the very well attended Summer Picnic at which our local seasonal bee inspector Brian McCallum demonstrated inspections on some of our hives and pronounced them healthy.

We decided not to continue with plans for a new shed and electricity at the apiary for reasons that have been explained in a letter to all members.

We were fortunate to have John Hauxwell running workshops for swarm control and wax processing and hope he will continue with these and other workshops in the future.

NLB had a stall at the 'Highgate Fair in the Square', also at the East Finchley Allotments' Centenary Celebration Open Day and at Fenton House Apple Weekend. On all three occasions we took the observation hive and sold Association and members' honey.

In September we ran our Honey Show and in October we were treated to a fascinating talk by Pete Higgs from 'BeeGone' about removing honeybees from difficult places. In November Rebecca Marshall from British Honey Producers gave a great talk about how they breed their docile queen bees.

The year ended with the Christmas Party at Alison and Jeff Kahane's house - as usual well attended and very enjoyable.

After many years of trying to find a second apiary and of many offers failing to work out, we were thrilled when the efforts of many people came to fruition and our new apiary at Alexandra Palace opened in November.

Many thanks to everyone who has been involved in these events and I would also particularly like to thank the committee for all their work and support over the year.

May I wish everyone a very Happy New Year and hopefully a successful beekeeping season!

Nicky Faith
December 2017

Kenwood Apiary Report 2017

Johan Kjaer Apiary Manager

All our colonies came through the winter as in most of the previous years – although some were weak which gave us a slow start to the early spring of 2017. Three queens were bought in the early spring – the only ones available at the time, and these were introduced with some difficulty. Only one was accepted and the remaining two colonies had re-queened themselves within a month. Not the best start we had hoped for.

In 2017 many activities took place at the Apiary – not only on the Thursdays and Sundays. There were amongst other things, practise sessions for the Basic Assessment as well as in July the assessments themselves. In September there were two 'Taster Sessions' for would be beekeepers which proved to be extremely successful. There has been a very dedicated intake of new beginners this year, which has helped the Club immensely.

The Hampstead Heath cabin has been moved up to our entrance door, and a new floor has been fitted. The Cabin is now used for storing our honey extractors and other bee keeping equipment. This way it gives our members easier access to collect the extractors at the honey harvest season. We will also be replacing the felt roofing on the main shed inside the Apiary in the forthcoming month. The small lawn mower shed will be replaced by a slightly larger one in the same position, as the old one as it is now beyond repair.

The Kenwood Apiary is constantly evolving. New practices and ideas are being implemented, including the usual repairs and renewals undertaken by our dedicated group of volunteers.

2017 was the first year that we did not extract any honey from our colonies. Although the bees had 125 lbs. of surplus store it was decided to leave it for the bees themselves in the hope that little or no feeding would be necessary. This proved not to be the case. I am not sure why the bees produced so little honey at the Kenwood Apiary, but other beekeepers have also had disappointing 2017 harvests.

Again this year we received a clean bill of health for our bees at Kenwood, but varroa still proves to be a continuing problem. In August we used MAQ strips to reduce varroa and Api-Bioxal via an electric evaporator will be administered to the bees as our winter treatment in January 2018. Eight colonies will overwinter at Kenwood plus two colonies at the Alexandra Palace site. Julie Parker has done a tremendous job in making this new, second Apiary a reality – well done to you and the rest of the gang.

Sadly we lost Maria Christodoulou who departed suddenly after a very short illness. Maria was an enthusiastic and keen helper who took a strong interest in the plants and flowers at the Apiary. She was also a recipient of the Maggie Ridout Apprenticeship but unfortunately was not given the chance to enjoy the experience. Her family and friends have given a donation for spring flowering bulbs, which were planted in the autumn. Maria is sorely missed by us all.

I look forward to seeing you all again at Kenwood in 2018.

HAPPY BEEKEEPING Johan



Honey Show Report 2017

Helen Rogers + Paul Welland - Honey Show Secretaries

Date: Tuesday 26th September 2017

Venue: The Danish YWCA, Nutley Court, 43 Maresfield Gardens NW3 5TF.

Judge: Sue Lang - Bedfordshire Beekeepers' Association

Once again we much appreciate being able to use the Danish YWCA and thank Palle Pederson for all his help with making the event such an enjoyable evening. We welcomed a new judge - Sue Lang - this year and we all appreciated her expertise in judging and her discussion and presentation of how honey and beeswax should be prepared for showing. For the first time we invited members to bring along their honey for a tasting by everyone present. This proved very popular. We were amazed by the variety of flavours in London honeys. This year the food was a delicious canape reception, brilliantly organised by Alison Kahane and served by a team of Nutley Court residents.

The results are as follows:

| Class | 1st | 2nd | 3rd | Highly Commended |
|-------------------------------|-------------------------|-------------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|
| A Light Honey | Nicky Faith | John Hauxwell | Nikola Sutherland | Jim Rea + Judith Schecter |
| B Medium Honey | Liz Jack | Hamish Johnston Stewart | Helen Rogers | Julie Parker |
| C Dark Honey | Helen Rogers | Nicky Faith | | |
| D Set Honey | John Hauxwell | | | |
| E Novice | Amanda Hayes | Bill Richardson | Jim Rea + Judith Schecter | Nikola Sutherland |
| F Honey Cake | Amanda Hayes | Nicky Faith | Sandy Litman | |
| G Beeswax Block | Helen Rogers | Hamish Johnston Stewart | John Hauxwell | |
| H 3 Beeswax Blocks | Helen Rogers | John Hauxwell | Hamish Johnston Stewart | |
| I Cut Comb | Helen Rogers | John Hauxwell | | |
| J Frame for Extraction | John Hauxwell | Helen Rogers | | |
| K Mead | | | | |
| L Exhibit | Emily Richardson | | | |
| M Candles | John Hauxwell | Amanda Hayes | | |
| N Photograph | John Hauxwell | | | |
| O Confectionery | Nikola Sutherland | | | |
| P Label Design | Sara Bell + Kate Cardon | | | |

The Challenge Cup - Best Honey in Show Amanda Hayes

The Riley Cup - Best Frame for Extraction John Hauxwell

The Marsh Cup - Best Beeswax Helen Rogers

Winner of the Honey Tasting Liz Jack

North London Beekeepers Education Programme Report

Julie Parker Education Officer

2017 has been a great year with sold out courses and on-going practical workshops in swarm control and demonstrations for all our members. NLB continues to provide an informal and formal (BBKA exams) education programme that is planned, accessible, engaging and enjoyable. A programme that meets the aspirations of our members from the beginners through to advanced beekeepers.

Taster Sessions 2017

- **Taster Sessions** x 2 - September 16th 2017 – attended by 30 people
Taster sessions continue to be extremely popular. They are a very quick and useful way for people to find out if they really do want to learn about beekeeping. This year they were attended by two groups of 15 – so 30 in total. Eight people from these sessions have signed up to our 2018 Beginners Course.
As last year, we advertised in the local press, the WI, Allotment Associations throughout north London, Community Growing Projects, Council websites, Thornes courses page, Community Centre notice boards in Haringey, Hackney, Islington & Camden, bookshops, tweets and word of mouth. The Media/Press and circulation e-list with contact names and numbers compiled last year was updated for 2017.

Beginners Course 2017

- The 2017 Beginners Course was attended by 25 would be beekeepers. The course was presented by Richard Corrigan, Julie Parker, Alison Kahane, John Hauxwell, Amanda Hayes, Johan Kjaer and Nicky Faith. Paul Welland supported the frame making session. The attendance over the six weeks of theory sessions and the four practical sessions was excellent and the attendance by the 2017 beginners group continued throughout the season at apiary meetings and events. The power point presentations were updated and new film and video clips embedded into the slides. In addition we are using the BBKA's - An Introduction to Beekeeping as the course book. A very good reference book.

Basic Assessment 2017

- Eight members took the time to prepare for the BBKA Basic Assessment Exam. This is a practical assessment that took place at our Kenwood Apiary in July – Congratulations to all on passing the exam. A big thank you to Amanda Hayes for co-ordinating and organising this.

Alexandra Palace Apiary – New for 2017

- In June 2017 NLB was offered a large plot at Alexandra Palace Allotments as an apiary site. Over several weekends from late August to the end of October a fantastic group of NLB volunteers worked really hard to clear the dreadfully overgrown site. In total 20+ NLB members worked to create this new resource for the association. We built a perimeter fence, burnt the old beekeeping equipment on the site, removed several car loads of rubbish, renovated, cleaned, painted and disinfected the old shed. Finally, we moved over 3 tons of gravel to cover the membrane floor of the apiary and added the rush fencing to the boundary frame to enclose the hives. We were supported in this work by the generous donation of materials by Alexandra Palace Garden Centre and help from their Landscape gardening team. In early November the bees arrived – two colonies carefully selected by Johan Kjaer from our home Apiary at Kenwood House and two strong Nucs from Ged Marshall.
- We held an opening celebration in November that was attended by 60+ people from NLB, Alexandra Palace Allotments and the Garden Centre. 11 beekeepers from the 2017 Beginners Course are working in small groups to jointly manage a designated hive for the 2018 season. This will enhance the knowledge of 2nd year beekeepers. Support will be provided by some of our more experienced members. This is a pilot scheme and will be reviewed in autumn 2018.

BBKA Modules - 2017

- These are organised by members with other like-minded members - via the newsletter.
As far as I am aware no NLB members sat any module exams in 2017.

Discussion Groups

- John Hauxwell continued his popular discussion groups and workshops. This included his Open House workshop on wax processing and candle making.

Practical Demonstrations

- A workshop and demonstration of swarm control/ artificial swarms was held at The Highgate Society in February - led by John Hauxwell and Julie Parker. Plans to run more workshops were well intentioned but we were not able to timetable any further practical sessions. We aim to revisit this programme in 2018.

Plans for 2018

10 week Beginners Course February, March and April

- 6 evening theory sessions + 4 practical apiary sessions - Fully Booked
This course is very popular. **If any members are willing to help with presenting the course – do please let me know.**

Basic Assessment - August 2018

- Amanda Hayes will be looking after and planning the Basic Assessment training and study groups for 2018. This is a really excellent way of meeting other members and building your knowledge. The assessment is purely practical – no written section – If any members want to join the group please contact Amanda.

Taster Sessions - September 2018

- **4 sessions – If any members would like to help present these sessions –** please let me know. It involves opening a hive, lighting a smoker and talking briefly about what is needed in terms of time, space and knowledge to become a beekeeper – We encourage people to sign up for a beginners course after this.

BBKA Honey Bee Management Practical Exam Spring/Summer 2018– NEW

- A new practical exam designed to bridge the gap between the Basic Assessment and the Husbandry Exam. You need to have passed the Basic Assessment and kept your own bees for three years. The syllabus appears straight forward. If anyone is interested in taking the exam this year let me know and I will email you a copy of the syllabus.

Practical Demonstrations

- We are aiming to run practical demonstrations for swarm control/artificial swarms, Integrated Pest Management, Uniting Colonies and Disease and Pest Recognition. Danyal Conn and Richard Corrigan may run sessions in Queen Rearing – Please keep an eye on the Newsletter for details.

Julie Parker - 3rd January 2018

North London Beekeepers Statement of Account for 2017

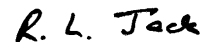
| 2016 | INCOME | 2017 |
|----------------------|--|----------------------|
| £4,695.60 | Subscriptions & BDI | £4,977.25 |
| £812.97 | Profit from activities and donations | £328.42 |
| £1,977.50 | Sale of Association honey | £354.50 |
| £95.74 | Bank interest | £72.18 |
| £2,300.00 | Beginners' Course | £2,600.00 |
| £962.50 | Taster Courses | £1,485.00 |
| £1,135.50 | Jar Sales & extractor rent | £1,662.60 |
| £11,979.81 | | £11,479.95 |
| | EXPENDITURE | |
| £1,163.50 | Events, Speakers, Meetings | £1,427.70 |
| £296.29 | Secretarial, Publicity, Mailings | £253.67 |
| £909.30 | Classes, Presentation, Teaching | £1,121.79 |
| £1,074.56 | Apiary | £5,870.20 |
| £356.60 | Bee Disease Insurance (BDI) | £382.35 |
| £2,864.75 | Capitation BBKA and Middx. Fed | £3,145.25 |
| £822.16 | Honey Jars & labels | £1,477.01 |
| £0.00 | One-offs (Projector) | £536.12 |
| £139.00 | Web Site | £169.50 |
| £293.81 | Webcollect and Paypal | £280.70 |
| £50.00 | Donation to Bees for Development | £50.00 |
| £300.00 | Donation to BDI research | £300.00 |
| £8,269.97 | | £15,014.29 |
| £3,709.84 | Excess of Operating Income over Expenditure | (£3,534.34) |
| | ASSETS | |
| at 31.12 2016 | | at 31.12 2017 |
| £1,794.84 | Santander Current Account | £225.75 |
| £30,000.00 | Santander Reserve Account | £29,000.00 |
| £393.00 | Unsold Honey | £0.00 |
| -£2,863.00 | Debtors less creditors (subs/course paid in advance) | -£3,435.25 |
| £29,324.84 | | £25,790.50 |
| | Financed by | |
| £25,615.00 | Members funds (from previous year's total) | £29,324.84 |
| £3,709.84 | Operating Surplus for year | -£3,534.34 |
| £29,324.84 | | £25,790.50 |

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 2 Jan 2018.



2 Jan 2018

Bob Jack, Honorary Auditor

TREASURER'S REPORT

Despite running a deficit this year, the financial situation remains sound. Some of the accumulated surplus of previous years has been spent in setting up the new apiary, new beesuits and a new small extractor. There remain ample means to fund the new shed.

Members funds of over £25,000 (held at Santander) would cover several years' expenditure but this must cover the cost of replacing the (self insured) shed in case of loss.