

February NEWSLETTER 2008

Ormskirk & Croston Beekeepers Branch

Chairman Ray Dowson 01704-892118 Email: (chairman@ormskirkbeekeepers.co.uk)
Secretary Penny Oakley 08445-867841 Email: (secretary@ormskirkbeekeepers.co.uk)
Treasurer Keith Hemming 01204-694897 Email: (treasurer@ormskirkbeekeepers.co.uk)

Website: <http://www.ormskirkbeekeepers.co.uk>

Change of Venue for the Next Meeting

First of all details of the next meeting to be held on Wednesday 20 February. Please note that the venue has changed to **The Red Lion in Newburgh** at 7.45pm

Ian Molyneux will be with us once again to talk about Diseases. He will be talking about the latest developments in the fight against pests and diseases and as ever his contributions are always of importance to members. Please bring your questions.

Here are some comments from the Chairman:

Colony Losses

A number of people have mentioned that they have already lost colonies this winter. We will be doing a survey of Branch members towards the end of March to try to discover the causes so that we can hopefully do better next winter. In the meantime if you discover that any of your colonies have died out, would you please try & analyse why this has occurred. They could be short of food, have become isolated from their food supplies, no bees in hive, varroa infestation, mice, etc. If you require assistance in diagnosing what has gone wrong please get in touch with a committee member.

Please make a note of your findings so that we can make our survey as meaningful as possible.

Congratulations

As announced at the January meeting, congratulations go to our very own Martin Smith who has been elevated to the position of Chairman of the BBKA. Look out for an article in the Ormskirk Advertiser, amongst others, which Martin tells us will include a photograph of him as a six year old!



<http://www.nationalinsectweek.co.uk/>

From Derrick Harris

Help Required for National Insect Week Open Day: Saturday 28 June 2008

As part of National Insect Week, we intend to hold an Open Day at the Out Apiary on 28 June. Not only is this an ideal opportunity to promote beekeeping and the Association, but even more importantly we can convey the fascination of these amazing insects.

With such a marvellous creature as the honey bee, there are lots of ideas for the Open Day. However it will only happen with plenty of volunteers to help. **Please e-mail Derrick Harris** derrick.harris@ormskirkbeekeepers.co.uk **asap to confirm you are willing to help.**

The plan would be to have all aspects of the honey bee covered. **Honey:** various produce, together with information on production and harvesting. **Wax:** making rolled beeswax candles. **Pollen:** pollen under the microscope. **Lifestyle:** observation hive, hunt the papier mache "swarm", colour dusting bees and challenging people to spot them around the farm. **Anatomy:** bees under the microscope. **Also:** face painting, quizzes, activity sheets etc.

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It would also be good to cover other insect groups as well: eg bumble bees, wasps, butterflies, moths, spiders, flies etc. If anyone has any expertise and/or ideas and/or contacts, please e-mail Derrick Harris asap.

Do you like talking about bees...?

As an Association, we want to offer schools the opportunity to have beekeepers attend classes with an observation hive (ideally) to talk about bees and beekeeping. **Are there any beekeepers that would be willing to get involved?** The idea would be to have a list of volunteers; so volunteers can be involved as frequently or infrequently as they wish. The Observation hives and bees will be supplied. Also, you don't have to be an expert to be involved. All of us are aware that the more we learn about honey bees, the more we realise how little we know.

Please contact Derrick Harris (derrick.harris@ormskirkbeekeepers.co.uk) either to volunteer or for more information.

Events for 2008

Mark Ball is our events co-ordinator. There are a number of local events that we hope to attend.

Westhead Carnival
Green Fayre
Bickerstaffe Fun Day
Haigh Hall
Mawdesley Fun Day

Please let us know if you can suggest any other events that might be worth attending to promote beekeeping. Examples might be:-

Parbold
Burscough

Membership Fees

Keith Hemming says that the deadline for paying these is fast approaching. If you miss 1 March you will incur a £10 surcharge to cover the additional administration overheads incurred.

Sale of Equipment

We anticipate that there will be a sale of equipment at the Saturday 17 May meeting. Further details will be in the next newsletter.

Basic Assessment in Beekeeping

Eric Bradbury will again be running a series of sessions to prepare for the Basic Assessment. The assessment is arranged for 5 July with 6 available in case of poor weather.

Tutoring dates will be 28 May, 4 June, 11 June and 18 June with all sessions held at Worsley Mesnes Outdoor Education Centre in Wigan 7pm - 9pm.

There will also be a practical session to be organised during the course.

Eric can be contacted by e-mail, eric.bradbury@ormskirkbeekeepers.co.uk or by phone: 01942 769812 (day) and 01257 427051 (evening)

CONVENTION 1 MARCH

The convention on 1 March at Merchant Taylors' Boys' School promises to be the most significant and prestigious event for beekeepers in the North West during 2008.

We are lucky enough to have two speakers with international reputations.

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This is an opportunity not to be missed and we look forward to seeing you all there.



Ivor Davis is a Wax Chandler prize winner and a speaker of considerable note. He is an advocate of responsible beekeeping and his contributions are of tremendous value to all beekeepers.

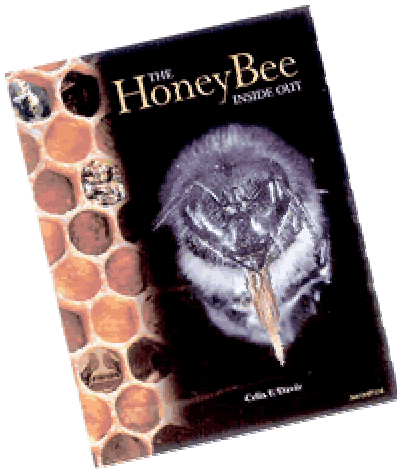


For directions follow this link

<http://www.merchanttaylor.com/senior-boys/directions-to-find-merchant-taylor-school.html>

And Finally

If you are receiving this newsletter by post and you have an e-mail address please let us know so that we can keep the Branch's costs down.



Celia Davis has written articles for over ten years in Bee Craft, which have culminated in the publication of her two acclaimed recent books – 'The Honey Bee Inside Out' (2004) and 'The Honey Bee Around and About' (2007). They were awarded an Apimondia 2007 Gold Medal.

Her academic beekeeping record includes the Robert Hammond Award for the BBKA Intermediate exam, the Wax Chandlers' Prize for the Senior Beekeeping exam and the NDB in 1984.