

NLB

Annual Review 2011



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Chairman's Report AGM 2012

Looking back over 2011, it seems to have been a year of doom and gloom with talk of a double dip recession, collapse of the Euro and global economic meltdown. Compared to what is happening elsewhere the problems we have to tackle as beekeepers are relatively insignificant. We do, however, have to keep a constant guard against the problems that threaten our colonies and this year has seen the rise in EFB of about 30% and even some outbreaks of AFB (the 1st since 2007 in the south east area), fortunately, not too near us.

Varroa continues to be a real menace since with the current warm temperatures mite levels are high, despite autumn treatments and the threat of the Asian hornet is still very real although claimed sightings have yet to be confirmed – be vigilant!

On a happier note, in common with all other bee keeping associations, demand for training outstripped supply and our course in February and March was over-subscribed. We limited the intake to 25 in order to be able to fully support trainees at the practical apiary sessions and a successful series of evenings was held at the Highgate Society for the enthusiastic new intake.

The following hands on sessions at the apiary were a great success, despite early difficulties after the winter colony losses, thanks to Johan who had got the hives up and running for trainees to benefit from. As part of the training programme John Hauxwell demonstrated the Bailey comb exchange and shook swarm techniques. I would particularly like to thank Johan and his Thursday crew for the magnificent way they keep the apiary.

On an academic note, five members gained their basic assessment whilst Will Clayton and Liz Jack both added to their tally of module passes. John Hauxwell passed the General Husbandry Certificate - we are all aware of his practical knowledge and experience and now he has the paper to prove it! Congratulations all round.

I was pleased to host our summer garden party again which lived up to its name as the weather held up and I should like to thank everybody who came for their delicious contributions.

The observation hive was again in demand and the association attended shows of Hampstead Heath, Highgate Woods, Highgate Festival and Fenton House. Members are always welcome to help man the stand and field the many questions from the public; many thanks to those who did turn out for these events - despite some frightful weather.

Our honey show and pot luck supper was beautifully organised and very well attended. Moyra Davidson again judged the entries and gave her informative feedback. We very much enjoy her comments and guidance and I am glad to say she has promised to come and judge this year's show which will be held at a new venue in order to accommodate more members. Do consider submitting an entry – the more the merrier!

I started by mentioning the gloomy economic situation and am glad to finish with the good news that we have not put the membership subscription up despite an increase in the BBKA capitation payment rate. You may not be aware that out of the £30 subscription, a total of £18 goes directly to the BBKA, the Middlesex Federation and the mandatory Bee Disease Insurance leaving £12 for the Association – what a bargain in these days of austerity.

I wish you well for 2012 and hope that your haul of liquid gold will be of Olympian proportions.



APIARY REPORT 2011

2011 was a slow start with many small colonies. Due to the dry spring there was little nectar for the bees to forage on and hence we had to feed repeatedly to avoid starvation. It also came to our attention that the bees were low on pollen, a vital ingredient for rearing of the brood. In the last two years we have lost colonies during the winter and I suspect a lack of pollen may partly be to blame for this. As a result we now keep pollen for feeding, as and when needed. During the annual bee inspection by Caroline Washington, our Local Bee Inspector, no diseases were found and our bees were given a clean bill of health. We have since been informed, however, that European Foul Brood has been detected in Muswell Hill, which is a little too close for comfort and a cause for concern. Needless to say a rigorous inspection of all colonies will be undertaken in spring.

As we ran out formic acid last summer (and to this date have been unable to find a new supplier), ApiLifeVar was used in the war against the dreaded varroa mite. I am not convinced by the efficacy of this product and I prefer to use formic acid as this deals with accarine at the same time. If there are any members out there who know of where we can get hold of some Formic Acid, your help would be appreciated!

At the end of the season only half of the colonies had managed to produce enough honey for harvesting – the leanest honey record in my years as apiary manager. All the hives on the apiary were used for teaching and as a result were opened far too frequently and for too long a period each time, causing undue stress to the colonies. Five NZ Queens were acquired for the Apiary, but within six weeks three of these were superseded.

Again this year twenty five new beekeepers were taught at the Apiary by some of our experienced beekeepers - an important part of North London Beekeepers' activities, and I hope everybody enjoyed themselves as much as I did.

October. Colony No. 8 revealed drones and drone brood, and this colony will have to be dealt with in early spring.

13th November was almost like an early summer's day with 19°C. There was a lot of bee activity and a quick inspection revealed strong colonies with lots of bees, brood, honey and pollen stores. They seemed to have gathered strength since.

The Maggie Ridout award scheme goes next year to Malcolm Haynes and Jill from this year's class. I hope that this will help them gain a more thorough and detailed insight into beekeeping and the joys of it. I wish them all the best and hope that they will continue to be a valuable part of the apiary.

The Observation Hive has been used frequently for shows/teaching events. We decided to keep the Queen after the season as she is still a good layer despite being our oldest Queen at the apiary.

A big thank you to Margaret Jarvie and Angela Dougall for dedicating so much time to sorting out the three pallets of honey jars ordered for our members – a huge undertaking on their part. This job took many, many hours and in future we will need more helpers with this task for it to continue. Any volunteers please?

As always I have enjoyed the season, and I look forward to the tasks ahead and meeting old and new beekeeping friends in 2012.

HAPPY BEEKEEPING!

Johan Kjaer

NLB Honey Show 2011

On 14th September the honey show was held in tandem with a splendid pot-luck supper, organized by Liz Jack . Both took place in the Highgate Society's hall. We are immensely grateful to Moyra Davidson, holder of BBKA senior judges/show judge's certificate, who, for the seventh occasion in succession, judged our exhibits. This year there were 14 entrants who, between them, submitted a total of 41 exhibits.

Awards were as follows (n= number of entries in the class):

Class 1 (Light honey, n=1) **2nd** P.Buckoke.

Class 2 (medium honey, n=7) **1st** S.Hewitt, **2nd** E.Jack, **3rd** J.Hauxwell*, **H.C.:** M.Balston, **C:** P.Buckoke

Class 3 (dark honey , n=2) **2nd** H.Saunders & M.Leigh

Class 4 (granulated or soft set honey, n=5) **1st** J.Hauxwell, **2nd** N.Faith, **3rd** M.Balston.

Class 5 (novice honey, n=6) **1st** G.Hart, **2nd** J.Udden, **3rd** A.Kahane, **V.H.C.** S .Hewitt, **H.C.** H.Johnston Stewart

Class 6 (honey cake, n=3) **1st** P.Buckoke, **2nd** A.Kahane, **3rd** M.Balston

Class 7 (bees wax, n= 3) **1st** M.Balston**, **2nd** J.Hauxwell, **3rd** S.Hewitt

Class 8 (Section or cut comb n=2) **1st** M.Balston, **2nd** P.Buckoke

Class 9 (Frame for extraction n=2) **1st** M.Balston***, **H.C.** P.Buckoke

Class 10 (mead, n=1) **1st** P.Buckoke

Class 11 (Interesting or instructive, n=4) **1st** F.Khorooshi, **2nd** P.Buckoke, **3rd** E.deWitt, **V.H.C.** J.Kember

Class 12 (matching candles n=3) **1st** J.Hauxwell. **2nd** M.Balston, **3rd** P.Buckoke

Class 13 (Photograph(s), n=2) **1st** J.Hauxwell, **2nd** P.Buckoke.

Challenge cup** best honey in show: ** **Marsh cup** best beeswax; **Riley cup** best frame for extraction.

Show entrants found some unexpected phrases in NLB's rules for exhibitors. For the most part these arose as we tried to make NLB's schedule of classes and rules for exhibitors similar to those of the National Honey Show. Standard grading glasses to assess honey colour were found to not be easily obtainable and officers of the National Honey Show are seeking an affordable source of these.

Members who have not yet been to an NLB honey show, may not have seen Moyra's individually marked tutorial notes left beside almost every entry in the honey classes. These indicate which , if any, of common faults were present. Her list is:

“Too light for class
Air bubbles on surface/edges
Debris seen in honey
Incipient granulation
Jar / lid not clean
Non matching jars/lids
Show label wrong height
Jar not full – air space seen
Set honey too mobile
Set honey surface too moist.”

Despite endless reminders to “read the rules and keep to them!”, some exhibitors still fail to do this. This year all entrants in one class transgressed! Moyra smiled and decided not to disqualify any of these entries. However, don't assume that she will be lenient again!

For several members 2011 was the first year in which they had exhibited and, it was a pleasure to see a number of these amongst the prize winners. Thank you for entering. We look forward to seeing more newly courageous entrants amongst 2012's prize winners. Good luck!

P.M.O.
January 2012

North London Beekeepers Statement of Account for 2011

2010	INCOME	2011
£5,151.75	Subscriptions & BDI	£5,422.60
878.66	Profit from activities and donations	278.80
1,219.76	Sale of Association honey (+ future sales)	728.45
-9.30	Bank interest (net of tax and bank charges)	9.96
2,450.00	Beginner's Courses	2,200.00
815.40	Jar Sales & extractor rent	1,939.66
£10,506.27	Net income = £1,125.68	£10,579.47
	Net income = £221.04	£10,579.47
	EXPENDITURE	
£353.39	Hire of halls, meetings and speakers	£404.88
153.45	Secretarial, Publicity, Mailings	293.99
1,403.02	Classes, Presentation, Teaching	1,074.32
1,649.85	Apiary	1,328.18
533.00	Bee Disease Insurance (BDI)	369.10
1,965.04	Capitation BBKA and Middx. Fed	2,363.76
80.00	Bee Craft & Beekeepers' Quarterly	112.00
705.90	Honey Jars & labels	1,718.62
89.00	Web Site	195.82
£6,932.65		£7,860.67
£3,573.62	Excess of Operating Income over Expenditure	£2,718.80
	ASSETS	
at 31.12 2010		at 31.12 2011
9,333.71	Santander Current Account	£12,593.03
11,221.67	Santander Reserve Account	11,230.65
692.00	Unsold Honey	320.00
177.50	Debtors less creditors	0.00
£21,424.88		£24,143.68
	Financed by	
£17,851.26	Members funds (from previous year's total)	£21,424.88
3,573.62	Operating Surplus for year	2,718.80
£21,424.88		£24,143.68

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 2012.

R. L. Jack

4 Jan 2012

Bob Jack, Honorary Auditor

TREASURER'S REPORT

The operating surplus for 2011 was £2,718 which is little changed from the previous year. Members funds of £24,143 (mainly £23,823 at Santander) are over 3 years' expenditure but this must cover the cost of replacing the (self insured) shed in case of loss.