



Coronation Celebrations

The tradition of beekeeping has long continued within the Royal Family. Not only has HM King Charles been active in beekeeping for years, but he has long championed the cause of bees whilst he was the Prince of Wales.

It's quite widely known that not only did Prince Charles embrace organic farming at his vast estates, he has also kept hives both at Clarence House, Highgrove House and now at Buckingham Palace.

His Majesty did a lot of invaluable work through his support of initiatives and projects for the environment, often with a focus on the importance of bees. Charles was someone who was raising awareness of the effect the changes in the environment were having on bees very early on.

Both King Charles and his wife Queen Camilla have been involved in the charity *Bees for Development* since they met the charity's representatives in 2015 during a visit to Monmouth. Camilla became their first president on World Bee Day in 2020.

HM Queen Camilla also has her own charity honey, produced by the bees in her Wiltshire garden at Ray Mill House. This is exclusive to Fortnum & Mason and sells for £40 per 200g jar.



Inside this issue:

<i>50 Years of West Sussex Beekeepers</i>	2
<i>World Bee Day</i>	2
<i>Review of WSBKA Auction</i>	3
<i>South of England Show</i>	4
<i>Chairman's Chat</i>	5
<i>BeeBase Update</i>	5
<i>BBKA New Learning Platform</i>	6
<i>Around the Divisions</i>	7
<i>Dates for your Diary</i>	7
<i>BBwear Discount</i>	8
<i>West Sussex BKA website</i>	8



of the West Sussex Beekeepers' Association

The inaugural meeting of West Sussex Beekeepers was on 22nd May 1973. Since then, it has continued to support beekeepers across the county and today comprises of four Divisions - Central Sussex (Horsham), Chichester, Wisborough Green and Worthing.

Membership is currently over 500 and is spread across the Divisions with the committee made up of members from each Division, many of whom have given their time so generously for many years.

'This year's events have been very well supported by the membership and by others from across a wide area', says President, Christine Stevens. 'The Convention in February and the Auction last month both demonstrate how well the four Divisions can work together for a common aim', Christine adds.

The full history of the Association and its founding in 1973 is on the website written by our current Chair and founding member Roger Patterson. www.westsussexbeekeepers.org.uk/page_3097175.html

World Bee Day

Bees and other pollinators are fundamental for the health of ecosystems and food security. They help maintain biodiversity and ensure the production of nutritious food. However, intensive monoculture production and improper use of pesticides pose serious threats to pollinators by reducing their access to food and nesting sites, exposing them to harmful chemicals, and weakening their immune systems.

Under the theme *'Bee engaged in pollinator-friendly agricultural production'*, World Bee Day 2023 calls for global action to support pollinator-friendly agricultural production and highlights the importance of protecting bees and other pollinators, particularly through evidence-based agricultural production practices.



The global World Bee Day ceremony, which will be held in hybrid format at the UN's Food & Agriculture Organisation headquarters on Friday, 19th May, will be an opportunity to raise awareness of the importance of adopting pollinator-friendly agricultural production practices to protect bees and other pollinators, while contributing to the resilience, sustainability and efficiency of agrifood systems.

Review of the West Sussex BKA Bee Market & Auction

On 22nd May WSBKA celebrates 50 years since its inception in 1973 (see the 'history' page of the website for the full story). For 47 of those 50 years a Bee Market and Auction has been held at the beginning of the beekeeping season. This is for the benefit of members and non-members alike and this year we had visitors from as far afield as Suffolk.

The weeks leading up to the Auction had been wet, wet, wet and as a result much of the grounds on the Brinsbury Campus in Pulborough were under water. So, the main carpark was used to display and sell the 352 auction lots that had been registered for the sale.



337 lots were eventually sold with the entire sale taking from 12:30 pm to almost 5pm. The feedback we have received is that most of the buyers and sellers were pleased with the results of the day with WSBKA taking a small commission on the sales to contribute towards the cost of staging the event.

The plant stall run by Sue Cooper and Melvyn Essen, the cake stall set up by Central Sussex Division, the tombola run by Worthing Division and the sale of refreshments by Wisborough Green, Central Sussex and Chichester members all made a significant contribution to the success of the day.

In total 54 members contributed to the day helping with the administration, managing the sale of the lots and assisting the buyers and sellers. Such an event would just not be possible without the full commitment shown by so many, and for that I am very grateful.

The day was spoiled only by the theft of a colony of bees that had been sold earlier in the afternoon. A report has been made to the Sussex Rural Police and it has transpired that this is not the first theft of honey bees in the area. It is hoped the CCTV on the Campus and the cameras used to monitor the car-parks may help to identify the perpetrators – and if you are reading this, I hope you are suitably ashamed of yourselves!

This year's event was slightly earlier than normal with the BBKA reserving our normal weekend for their Spring Convention. But we hope next year we will be back to 27th April and I look forward to seeing you there—although the thieves we can do without!

Graham

secretary@westsussexbeekeepers.org.uk

www.westsussexbeekeepers.org.uk/auction.html

South of England Show

Bees & Honey will again have a presence at both the Summer (South of England) and Autumn shows at Ardingly this year. Last year's format will be repeated by splitting the activities between the two shows.



Moving the honey sales' table to the Autumn show allowed for the offering of honey from many more beekeepers, and the Honey Show attracted 99 entries. So this new format will be repeated again in 2023.

A record of last year's event and the schedule of classes for 2023 (when it is issued) may be viewed here: www.seas.org.uk/competing-autumn-show-horse-trials/

At the summer show, the marquee will present the popular live beekeeping displays. This year there are plans for demos targeted specifically at organised school groups. There will be observation hives, information displays, and stalls selling bee-related products. As always volunteers are needed to help, performing demonstrations, presenting information, answering questions and looking after the safety of visitors.



Then at the Autumn show, the sales stall will be offering honey from around Surrey, Sussex and beyond, and the South of England Honey Show. Good progress has been made in establishing it as a regional event ahead of the Nationals at Sandown Park a month later. The judge this year is Claire O'Brien. Volunteers are needed to sell honey, explain exhibits to visitors, steward the Honey Show, and help to clear up afterwards!

Help is also needed in a number of ways:

- volunteers to staff the marquee at the summer show and provide the demonstrations of beekeeping etc. Let Bob Barnes know as soon as possible if you would like to do this - remembering that the show now runs Friday to Sunday.
- entries for the Honey Show, and honey for sale. Please put the word out among the beekeepers in your Division. Entries from WSBKA could be coordinated with the collection of show entries and deliveries to Ardingly with honey for sale. Can you help?
- members to join the organising committee. Contact Bob to discuss what is involved.

Contact Bob Barnes, Chair and Chief Steward, Bees & Honey Section, SEAS.
07974 428 539

Chairman's Chat



Chair, Roger Patterson writes for the County News.

Another auction has passed, with bees and equipment changing hands through our annual sale. As the only person who has attended every auction since the first in 1975, I have seen changes and different patterns.

Overall, the quality of lots was very good this year, with much National equipment and, compared to previous years, little WBC. I would have expected to see an increase in polystyrene hives over the last few years, but this hasn't happened.

Although there was probably a larger crowd to start with than in previous years, it tailed off, perhaps because of the Grand National. I found it more difficult to sell this year, with fewer people bidding, though prices in general were higher than I would have expected, which seemed strange. Angus Farquhar now shares the selling with me and beforehand we chat about starting prices, which in most cases were beaten.

Bees fetched good money, but sadly one was removed without permission. This has been put in the hands of the Police. A kind member has offered to replace it, so the buyer has a colony. This shows the extremes of people in beekeeping.

There were many people not bidding, but I'm sure they enjoyed the day out and the opportunity to chat to other beekeepers. Overall, the sale went very well and a tribute to the effort of Graham Elliott and the 50 or so people who helped organise and on the day.

Thank you all very much.

Roger

chairman@westsussexbeekeepers.org.uk

BeeBase Update

The National Bee Unit has been making big changes behind the scenes and has launched its new and improved BeeBase website.



The new website comes with a modern layout and is designed with user experience and functionality in mind, with improved ease of access to the many resources, articles, maps, and to your own beekeeping pages. Which provides a good user experience whether on the phone or the laptop.

Log-in to view and update your personal details, view or make changes to your apiaries, view your historic records and results and access e-learning. BeeBase will also email you automatically with your diagnostic results and with any alerts relevant to you, like notifications of disease found within 3km of your apiaries, if you have opted into email alerts.

There is no need to re-register, your log-in details have stayed the same and your account is ready for you to use.

There are many new features planned and the site development will continue over the coming months. Please continue to support by keeping your records up to date, helping the NBU to effectively monitor and control the spread of serious honey bee diseases and pests.

Visit www.nationalbeeunit.com/ and pass on your comments.



BBKA New Learning Platform

BBKA has completed the set-up phase of the online Learning Platform. Now, every BBKA Member can access study units by using their membership number as a login and creating an account at: <https://learning.bbka.org.uk/>



There are four types of study units:

- Units for individual beekeepers (free)
- Units for the public, to raise awareness (free)
- Units to be used by Associations in their training (free)
- Correspondence courses (fee paying)

The first individual study units available are: *'Hygiene and Disease Inspection'* and *'Asian Hornet Awareness'* and more units will be filmed and created through the summer. If you have photos or videos BBKA could add, they would love to have them and credit you. Please send to: photosandvideos@bbka.org.uk

The Associations are the members, so creating materials for Associations to use as part of their own training is a priority. The existing *'Course in a Case'* materials (all levels) are being made available as well as more recent courses offered by Associations: *'Towards the Basic'* and *'Beyond the Basic'*. All these cours-

The general public will have access to non-specialist study units about the Asian hornet and Swarming. In future BBKA aims to create materials about planting for pollinators. If you could help with this, please contact jane.medwell@bbka.org.uk

BBKA News is now stored digitally on the Learning Platform, so you can enjoy reading past issues much more easily.

Please send your thoughts about the BBKA Learning Platform to Jane and tell her what you would like to see in the future.

Original communication from Jane Medwell, BBKA Trustee & Chair of Education & Husbandry

Around the Divisions

All Members are welcome to attend any Divisional meeting, but please advise the organiser if you plan to attend.

Central Sussex Division

Full details of the Division's activities from: chairman@centralsussexbeekeepers.org.uk or the Division's website: <https://centralsussexbeekeepers.org.uk/>

Chichester Division

Wednesday 17th May - 'Attracting Pollinators to your Garden' with Julie Henderson from the RHS. 7:30pm. at Boxgrove Village Hall, The Street, Boxgrove, PO18 OEE.

Further details of the Division's activities from: Cheryl Barton, secretary@chichesterbeekeepers.co.uk or the website: www.chichesterbeekeepers.co.uk



Wisborough Green Division

Details of the Division's activities from: Martina Hendry, secretary@wgbka.org.uk or website: www.wgbka.org.uk. The Newsletter may be downloaded here: www.wgbka.org.uk/Newsletters.html

Worthing Division

Details of the Division's activities from: Debra Edwards, dmcd.edwards@gmail.com or the Division's website: www.worthing-beekeepers.org



'Share your Division's activities with readers of the County News'

...and Dates for your Diary

Saturday 20th May - 'World Bee Day'. See article in this Newsletter.

Monday 22nd May - 'WSBKA 50th Anniversary'. Celebration in this Newsletter.

Friday 9th - Sunday 11th June - 'South of England Show' featuring the Bees & Honey marquee. Ardingly Showground, Selsfield Road, RH17 6TL.

Further details from the Society's website: www.seas.org.uk/

We are on facebook so if you would like your events featured please send details to the Editor.



...and finally

Discount Update from BBwear

BBwear is extending the Association discount offer until the end of June 2023 using the same discount codes as previously.

Apply the following discount codes at the checkout on their website at :

www.bbwear.co.uk

Discount code for 15% off Polycotton Basic and Deluxe range:

BKAPOLY15

Discount code for 10% off Virtually Sting Proof Ventilated Ultra range:

BKAULTRA10

Both codes are case sensitive and are valid for use with jackets, vests, trousers, gauntlets, replacement hoods and children's bee suits.



MEMBERS' COUNTY NEWSLETTER

Thanks to all this month's contributors. If you don't have access to the internet and want further details of anything in this newsletter, please contact the Editor & County Secretary. Likewise, if you would like to contribute to future newsletters please send articles and photographs to:

Graham Elliott, Editor & County Secretary, no later than the 20th of the preceding month.
secretary@westsussexbeekeepers.org.uk

We're on the web:
www.westsussexbeekeepers.org.uk



Follow us
On
Facebook

Previous newsletters from the last 12 months are available on the website.

