



Forest Beekeeper

The monthly newsletter of the Epping Forest Beekeepers
February 2010

www.eppingforestbeekeepers.co.uk

Divisional AGM Reports an outstanding 2009

So many people crowded into Chingford Horticultural Hall on Thursday January 21st for the Epping Forest Division AGM that we ran out of chairs! 'Bees are now the buzzword' said Chair Helen Chadwick, and the enthusiasm generated by media coverage of the plight of the honey bee has transformed the Division. Full membership has increased from 32 to 44 in 2009 and associate members from 10 to 36. So many would-be beekeepers contacted the Division that Ken Barker's beginners' course is full this year with 30 starting in February and there is a waiting list for 2011 – an incredible undertaking on Ken's part. As membership now stands at a record 80, Helen proposed that the committee should in future hold minuted meetings every two months to keep things running smoothly. She also proposed a new post of Assistant Membership Secretary to work with Treasurer Ted Gradioselski.



Ted was not present, but has reported an excellent year with new members, donations and honey sales all contributing to a profit of £434.56. Thanks to John Gracy for auditing the account.

The Forest Festival in September on Chingford Plain was a very worthwhile event. We were inundated with people interested in bees and wishing to buy local honey. We will attend again this year.

Jenny Johns reported as Epping Forest Trustee for the County Executive Committee. The CEC meets bimonthly at Chelmsford and is

attended by Trustees from all Divisions in the County who give short reports on their activities and can make requests. Along with other Eastern Region counties CEC is supporting a PhD student at Sheffield University to carry out research into honeybees' recognition of varroa and the interaction of viruses and honeybees. This involves giving £500 every year for four years. The Government is matching every £1 given by donating £6. In 2010 CEC will be looking at ways EBKA can help Divisions run courses for the large numbers of beginners they now have. Jenny stressed having a CEC Trustee is important as it keeps us in touch with everything going on in the county and prevents us becoming isolated so close to London.

Show Secretaries Peter Clark and Ron Baldwin reported a few more entries at the show, but still more exhibitors were needed. A new Show Secretary is needed as they were resigning after five years. Apiary Manager Paul Turner said the new apiary was a good thing for the division and thanked Mark Stephens for his generosity. There were seven hives there – five with bees – and space for a total of 12. The colonies had so far made it through the winter.

Some prizes and cups were awarded from the Honey Show in October – details and photographs in next month's newsletter.

Librarian Joe Chadwick said that few people were borrowing books. Jenny Barling offered to write reviews of the most useful to help beginners choose. Any other business: Ken suggested borrowing EBKA's public address system with a view to buying one for the division if it proved useful. Helen Chadwick asked the Division to consider purchasing a new banner for £90. Both proposals were accepted. ✂

Chair's Corner

Thank you for re-electing me as Chair, and many thanks to the existing members who are continuing on the committee. We are grateful for all the hard work that Peter & Ron have done as Show Secretaries. and although they are standing down in this role we hope they will still continue to be important members of the division. Thanks to Kevin for his two years production of the newsletter, and we are glad he is continuing as webmaster. A warm welcome to Olivia, Eric Frank & Pierre for joining the committee. It is great to see new enthusiastic people helping the expanding division. **Helen Chadwick** ✂



Our next meeting is on Thursday 18th February 2010
There has had to be a change to our programme. The speaker who is going to talk on Urban Beekeeping has, unfortunately, broken his arm and is now coming in March.

Swarm Control

Swarming is the bee's natural way to increase the number of bee colonies. In the spring and early summer, if conditions are right, the bees will swarm. This can be a nuisance to the general public but also to the beekeeper. When a swarm leaves the hive the queen and about 50% of the bees, who will have gorged on honey, fly off to find a new place to set up home. This means that the bees that are left have to wait for the virgin queen, who will now be present, to fly and mate before she can start to lay and begin to build the numbers up again. This takes over three weeks and so checks the development of the hive just when the beekeeper wants the numbers to be high. Since so many of the flying bees are lost the numbers of foragers is greatly reduced and so there are less bees to collect nectar to produce the honey. So how can the beekeeper help to stop their bees swarming? At the next meeting **Ted Grad** is going to tell us what signs to look out for, which indicate that swarming is likely, and what we can do to stop it. This is obviously an important topic and so a meeting not to be missed. The meeting will take place on Thursday 19th February from 7.30pm at Chingford Horticultural Hall, Larkshall Road, Chingford. ✂

New appointments: Olivia Burren and Pierre West replace Tiffany Levi and Kevin Cook as newsletter editor and mailing secretary. Frank Dunkley Wood volunteered to be assistant membership secretary. Eric Beaumont takes over as Show secretary. The Division still needs a CEC Trustee – please contact Jenny Johns if you can help. ✂

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