



The Apiarist

...High Weald Beekeepers' Newsletter

Chairman's Chatter

By Malcolm Wilkie

I don't know about you but my bees have been nothing but trouble these last few weeks. St Leonards has good forage so starvation has not been a problem but my difficulty has been the number of boxes that have wanted to swarm for a second time. The bees seem to have felt cramped in their brood boxes after splits were done; no doubt in part due to their difficulty in drawing wax given the lowish temperatures we have had recently. Every box has now built queen cells.

My biggest challenge has been one box of extremely prolific bees (I got from another beekeeper) where varroa had been allowed to build up. I decided to do a split but leaving the queen on the old site with just foundation (I knew this queen needed a fresh start). This just didn't work as I had planned, however, as the temperatures just weren't elevated enough and with the supers above the bees just didn't bother to work Mr Kembles nice foundation. I eventually gave them drawn comb and the Queen laid into that. But now for the second time they have built queen cells and so I have just banked her in an apidea mating hive with a cupful of bees. Bees are so frustrating at times! The parent hive was another story. Over a period of two weeks a carpet of dead bees has built up in front of the hive as diseased bees crawled out of the hive. They had wings but couldn't take off and a stream of them seemed to be making their way daily down the garden. I knew it would be risky getting a viable queen cell so took out an insurance



policy of two frames of brood with over 10 queen cells. I left them all in the nuc I took away from the parent hive. From that insurance policy I got one nice looking queen. In the parent hive I left one queen cell. Just as well I had my insurance policy as the queen cell I left in the parent hive, when checked, contained a dead larva. So I was able to put back my insurance policy. However what had been a big box of bees is now a smallish unit. The three supers they had laden with honey have now had to be given to other hives as there aren't enough of them to look after it or to cap it! My queen will take another week to come into lay and as I have a lot of units I have added a frame of sacrificial larvae. Phoretic varroa mites will hopefully dive into this as there is no other brood and in a weeks time I shall remove this frame and burn it. Let's hope this gives my new queen a fresh start.

I have a similar scenario at my out apiary with the box of bees I allowed to expand into a double 14*12 brood box for queen rearing. Lots of bees equates to lots of varroa and lots of varroa means lots of viruses getting a hold. I have created a real management headache for myself!

I don't know about you but varroa seems to be a big problem this year. Yet again this is proving to be a year like no other and my prediction is that many of you will struggle with varroa in your hives earlier than normal so

policy of two frames of brood with over 10 queen cells. I left them all in the nuc I took away from the

IN THIS ISSUE

ARTICLES

Chairman's Chatter.....	1
SBKA Bee Market	2
Trees and Bees	4
Book reviews	5
Compost loo at Horsted officially opened	7
Summary of the latest committee meeting	8
The Bees in the Chimney, part 2 - Moving on	9
Calendar	10
The HWBKA committee	11

For Full calendar & details see <https://hwbka.info/event/>

The Apiarist is a quarterly newsletter produced for members of the High Weald Beekeepers' Association.

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Next issue: October 2024

you will need to monitor carefully what the daily mite drop is.

We have bee safaris organised for the end of June and those who will come will be in for a treat. Look out for the session on treatments. In my opinion this is the most important session. Get that right and the bees are far more likely to survive the winter. Get it wrong and hives can collapse in March.



SBKA Bee Market

By Paul Lindström


For the second year the SBKA Bee market was held at Uckfield College. HWBKA had a stall with the observation hive on display, honey and bee friendly plants on sale as well as a demonstration of pollen microscopy.

Malcolm Wilkie gave a brief talk on how to take up beekeeping and Stephen Flemming – co-editor of Bee Craft Magazine – gave a talk on Drone Congregation Areas.

There were also activities for children – painting, colouring bee images, making simple bee houses/ nesting tubes made from plastic guttering etc. by Maggie Pratt, Primary School Teacher and Co-owner of the Bee People beekeeping supplies company.

One of our bee inspectors showed what the National Bee Unit (NBU) do to fight the invasion of Asian hornets.

We also had an Asian Hornet stand for the first time distributing flyers, trap lids etc to raise awareness of the threat.

And of course – the Auction of bee equipment and bee colonies finished the day. 



The HWBKA observation hive always draw the attention of visitors.



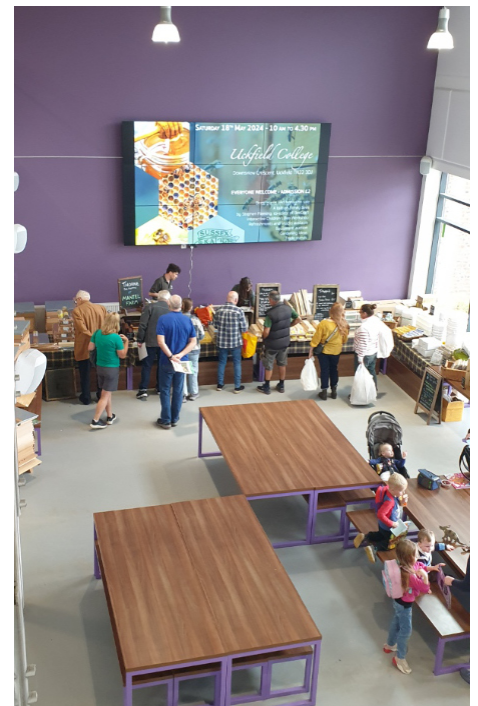
Stephen Flemming, co-editor of Bee Craft Magazine, gave a talk on Drone Congregation Areas.



The HWBKA stand was centrally positioned in the hall and had good traffic all day.



The auction was well attended as usual.



Thornes was one of the suppliers who displayed their products at the Bee Market

Images by Paul Lindström and Peter Coxon

Trees and Bees

By Jonathan Coote

Introduction: Early this season me (Paul Lindström) and Matt Weeks answered an appeal to help rescuing a honey bee colony in an Ash tree in Buxted that had to be taken down because of being infested with Ash dieback disease. As it turned out the nest was abandoned by the bees and occupied by a squirrel family. But I came to discuss how to best go about rescuing a colony from a tree with Jonathan, and it turned out he had a lot of experience in this, and the right equipment to do it. So here is his advice on this topic.

The natural habitat of the European honeybee has, for millions of years, been in hollows in trees. Not all members of the honeybee family have this habit.

Apis Dorsata the giant Asian honeybee, for example, living as it does in tropical areas but having to cope with seasonal droughts and lack of forage manages to survive quite happily by building its nest in the open on the underside of big tree branches and it also sometimes building its very heavy wax comb on overhangs of cliff faces.

A. Dorsata colonies migrate hundreds of miles over each year following seasonal food sources and although no members of the colony will survive long enough to know where its various other seasonal nest sites are, the colony as a whole manages to return to the previous nest location as seasons progress and food sources run out or become available.

Our own honeybee needs an enclosed shelter to nest in for several reasons; to protect it from predators, to minimise its energy needs during winter hibernations and to protect its food stores and young against predators and adverse weather conditions.

Only in the last few decades have beekeepers provided substantial long term weather resistant hives for their bees to nest continuously in. Skeps



When dealing with swarms or nests in a tree a cherrypicker is the ideal tool. Jonathan has his own.

made generally of straw and reeds were used to house swarms of wild bees until the colony had amassed its winter stores. The bees were then killed, and the honey itself 'harvested'.

By keeping a few colonies in skeps and sheltering these in usually stone made 'bee boles' some adventurous beekeepers managed to overwinter good strong colonies, but it took the advent of the movable frame and wax foundation to enable suitable hives to keep bees in semi permanently to be developed in the early 1900's.

Wild honeybee colonies in Europe will build a nest in any sheltered and defensible hole or cavity of sufficient size using simply wax that they can extrude from their own wax glands and for strength and water resistance, propolis, a natural gummy substance collected by the bees exuded from damaged bark on trees as the tree tries to correct damage caused by animals and birds or fungi of various kinds.

Before 1987, in the south of the UK tree cavities in large veteran trees were numerous and the wild bees had plenty of choice in finding nest sites. The most sought-after sites were in large old trees. These trees and their inhabitants were destroyed in their hundreds and thousands during the hurricane that year.

To make matters worse the mid 1990's saw the arrival of the Varroa Mite in the UK.

The combination of these two disastrous events hugely reduced wild honeybee colonies. Where I lived in west Kent at that time the only other possible nest sites were mainly behind the tile hanging of timber framed cottages, but varroa's arrival reduced the numbers of these wild nests to virtually nothing.

I retired from my career as a Chartered Surveyor in 1999 and decided to spend my time both on beekeeping and forestry (we owned about 50 acres of woodland at that time).

I re-qualified as a tree surgeon during which I had to learn to climb safely by rope and harness, use chainsaws and how to deal with many tree problems. As the number of homeless wild bees began to recover, after 2000 I responded to many calls both to remove bees from buildings and trees, and many from other tree surgeons who disliked bees but were again beginning to find colonies in trees that had survived the hurricane, but which were now unstable and had become a hazard. I had already acquired an all-terrain tracked cherry picker, properly called a 'Mobile Elevating Work Platform' or MEWP which took me to a working height of about 50 feet and an outreach of 25 feet.

The removals were easy when the nest was in a cavity in a side branch which could be sectioned and brought down to ground level, a bit at a time, each section weighing perhaps 100Kg. Before doing this, I drilled the branch both above and below the nest entrance carefully with a long thin wood drill to find the extent of the cavity, then very early in the morning I shut the bees in safely in their nest



Bigger sections of tree trunks needs to be handled using a hand winch.

with a patch of fine steel mesh over the entrance hole held in place by an adhesive accurately called 'Sticks like Sh*t'. which adheres rapidly and strongly, even to wet surfaces like tree bark on a misty morning. The nest section was then lowered gently to the ground, usually using a Tirfor 2-ton hand winch, wire ropes and pullies.

With colonies in lower and therefore larger branch sections or in the main trunk it was not possible to use this method, so the only answer was to get the bees to leave the nest in an orderly fashion before felling or other removal methods were used. To achieve this without losing control of



Jonathan with an example of a tree trunks which once held a feral colony.

the colony by causing a panic exit, I would introduce through small drilled holes at the rear measured doses of a harmless, inexpensive but very effective bee repellent (normally used for food flavouring called Artificial Oil of Almonds). Chemically speaking it is Benzaldehyde. For more information on toxicity etc see Wikipedia 'Benzaldehyde'

This substance for some unknown reason, if applied properly in small quantities encourages the whole colony, including the queen to move away and abandon the combs, including brood, to the outside of the trunk, sacrificing sadly in the process all of the brood, stores and combs.

After removal the bees and queen are treated against parasites and re-hived just as a shook swarm would be to enable replacement comb to be made so that the colony can rapidly replace its lost brood and stores.

Sometimes, once the tree cavity has been emptied of bees it can be thoroughly cleaned out of decayed wood and repaired using high strength materials, potentially strong enough to lengthen the lives of some of our wonderful old veteran trees. This can also often reduce the byzantine complications of Tree Preservation Orders.

I kept several of these colonies in a separate apiary. They rarely became strong enough to form a swarm but

usually after about three years they would abandon the nest and presumably move to a recently discovered larger cavity elsewhere.

Quite possibly if you have a smallish swarm move into some spare hive equipment you have left in the open it will have come from such a source.

I have learned from these experiences that the messages we have in the beekeeping literature that we should concentrate our beekeeping efforts on controlling swarms (and diseases) and maintaining our queens for perhaps 3 years or more is not a good idea.

Our bees are coping with many more threats and challenges such as nosema apis and nosema ceranae, the latter as yet remaining unrecognised as a significant threat. I do not agree with the tendency of Natural Beekeepers of letting the bees manage diseases for themselves, but we have many useful techniques to help our bees manage to survive and remain productive in all senses of the word.

Perhaps on a future occasion I will have the opportunity to say more about how I now look after my bees, in a way that is not 'mainstream'. There are still many avenues to explore and as we do so we will often find that there is so much still to learn, despite many thousands of worthy words are available from highly respected sources which will very probably prove to be incorrect. It is said that The National Library of Great Britain has a longer length of shelving on Beekeeping matters than any other subject.



Simple tree trunk hive made from a former tree cavity used by feral bees.

Book reviews

By Paul Lindström and Ann Chilcott

Piping Hot Bees & Boisterous Buzz-Runners, by Thomas D. Seeley, 2024. Published by Princeton University Press, Princeton and Oxford. Illustrations by Margaret C. Nelson.



Thomas "Tom" Seeley wrote this book with the intention that it would be accessible for a general audience, not only for scientists like himself. He selected to describe 20 different research projects that he has been involved over the years, and what he and his colleagues found out about different aspects of the life of the honeybees. It is a fascinating journey and he kept me interested all the way through the book. I learned a lot of new stuff, even if I have read most of his books already. For example I learned that worker bees (the scouts) also do piping sounds, not only the queens. Another thing that was new to me was the Honey Bee Algorithm (HBA), used in Cloud Computing. In 2016 Tom steely was awarded the "Golden Goose Award" for this together with four colleagues on the project. The Awards are given by the American Association for the Advancement of Science.

Among the other interesting topics are how he describes the "Tremble dance", how a forager bee recruits workers to act as a nectar receiver. And the "Buzz runners" – the scouts that stimulate her sisters to wake up and prepare for the take-off of the cluster so the swarm can go to their new home. Well, every chapter is in fact of interest, so I can wholeheartedly recommend this. A little bonus at the end of the book is a the appendix "List of Signals" – names and functions of mechanical and chemical signals of honey bees, in all 20 different signals. No wonder we are impressed and fascinated by our bees!

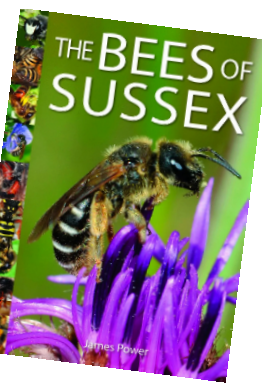
The Bees of Sussex by James Power.

This is a brand new book, published 2024 by Pisces Publications. James Power has worked as a nature conservationist for over 40 years but the interest in bees started quite late. But thanks to support and sponsorship from several organisations he has been able to devote 3 years on full time to collect new data and organise older records of the bees in both West- and East Sussex. And there are many different species in Sussex – 229 in total, which after Kent is the highest number in the UK.

They are all described with great photos and detailed maps of where they have been found. James recommend that you use the app iRecord if you want to contribute yourself to this research. Even if you don't intend to do serious research this book is a perfect encyclopaedia to use when you want to identify a bee you come across in your garden or on walks in the countryside.

Beekeeping for Gardeners by Richard Rickitt.

This is a book I will get, but haven't read yet. But Ann Chilcott has written a very good review on her blog "[The Bee Listener](#)", and I have her permission to re-publish the entire article here.



Review by Ann Chilcott, Expert Scottish Beemaster

Do you ever get "goose bumps" when you look at a beautiful work of art like a picture? I did with I opened Richard Rickitt's book and saw his



Stare at this and relax your gaze to see the hidden central images.

amazing photography. I got the feeling of deep relaxation like I do when I study closely Magic Eye pictures (publications of 3D illusions by N.E. Thing) and see 3D images within their centres (see above).

And now to Richard's spectacular book, the only criticism I have is that it wasn't there when I started beekeeping! I'm glad to have it now though as it is a great reference book when teaching beginners and improving my gardening. Just one important thing to mention is that *Beekeeping for Gardeners* will be released next month (May) but you can pre-order from Northern Bee Books, Bloomsbury Press, and Amazon.

Beekeeping for Gardeners is also very much about gardening for beekeepers. Richard Rickitt is an established award-winning author and co-editor of the prestigious best-selling UK magazine *BeeCraft*. He has over twenty years beekeeping experience and teaches classes at home and abroad. With an extensive knowledge of gardening, and a background in film technology and visual effects, Rickitt is well qualified to write this magnificent book.

This is not just a gem of a book; it is the jewel in the crown. There is nothing like it in beekeeping literature despite many new publications appearing every year. This may be because Rickitt has a deep understanding of the natural world and the evolution of bees and plants which he links perfectly with the environment and our modern challenges. Plants and bees co-evolved at the same time and they are



such a perfectly natural blend that one cannot truly understand one without understanding the other.

Another facet of what makes this book unique is the overarching concept of true sustainability. Rickitt describes sustainability in perfect context and gives good examples of how we can promote it. The introduction sets the scene and conveys the background story in sufficient detail for the reader to understand the position today regarding the environment, modern farming, pesticides, ecosystems, and the relationship of honey bees to other insects.

We also learn about the origins of honey bees and their relationship to humankind through the ages. The challenges faced today are explained in an account that is both accurate and up to date. Rickitt explains that honey bees are not in decline, but he remains encouraging to people who might want to start keeping them. However, he begs them to devote time to all our other native bees. He shows us how to care for bumble bees and solitary bees by providing homes and forage.

The environmental impact of too many managed colonies of honey bees in certain areas is discussed and we are encouraged to only keep enough colonies to provide for our enjoyment and a modest quantity of honey.

The writing style is friendly and authoritative. Explanations are uncomplicated and give just the right

amount of information at the correct level to help a newcomer to beekeeping understand the processes described. Communication is clear and concise, and all plants and bees are given both their common and binomial Latin names so that they can be easily identified by everyone across the world.

On almost every page the reader finds the most amazingly clear and high quality-coloured photographs. There are 400 in total, the majority of which have been taken by the author. They are breathtakingly beautiful and in themselves provoke a strong feel-good factor as well as providing good information.

This book comprises three parts with the first one dedicated to beekeeping. The beekeeping year is covered in full and includes; getting practical experience, joining a local association, siting apiaries, hive types, tools, handling techniques, managing swarms, feeding bees, bee health, moving bees, preparing for winter, hive products and processing them, and the importance of using locally adapted bees and local queens. Rickitt mixes humour with his vast knowledge to explain the “when” and “whys” of some of the more complex aspects of beekeeping in a relaxed non-prescriptive manner.

The second part discusses the other bees one finds in a garden. We learn how to identify the common bumble bees and solitary bees, and discover that the UK’s smallest bee is called the small scissor bee and looks

just like a fly. We find out which plants different bees require for sustaining good nutrition and the scene is set for gardening.

In the third part, we discover an astounding and thought-provoking fact that there are around 23 million gardens in the UK with more land than all our nature reserves together. What if these gardens were managed for life-sustaining plants and wildlife? Even if lots of intensively managed arable land was replaced by carefully planned homes and gardens local biodiversity and the environment would surely benefit.

You will be astonished at the amount of useful information shared here which includes the subsequent management of newly created gardens. The advice on topics involving planting for nature is wide-ranging, and includes; incorporating flowers in a lawn, making lawns, meadows, wild gardens, pools, damp gardens, hedges, shrubs, trees, vegetable and herb gardens, making green manure, and farm crops. The plants for each scenario are carefully listed and graded according to their food value for pollinators.

Did you know that, “a strawberry flower has 50-200 stigmas, and it can take 6-15 bee visits to make sure pollen is delivered to them all”? This is just one of the fascinating revelations but you must read the book for yourself to discover more. Whether you are studying beekeeping, agriculture, horticulture, garden improvement, or purely wanting to enjoy beautiful photographs, this book gives exceptionally good value. *Beekeeping for Gardeners* is for everyone who cares about the future of our planet.

Title: *Beekeeping for Gardeners: The Complete Step-By-Step Guide to Keeping Bees in Your Garden*

Author: Richard Rickitt

Publisher: Bloomsbury Publishing

Published: May 2024

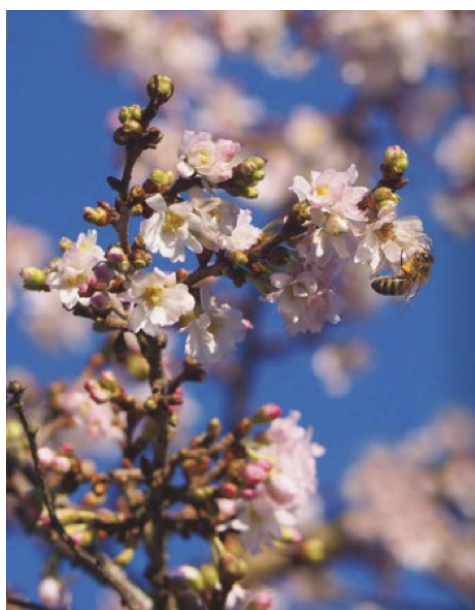
Paperback, 304 pages

ISBN: BB: 978-1-3994-0484-6

ePub: 978-1-3994-0483-9

Cost: £20

Available: Bloomsbury, Northern Bee Books, and other good bookstores.



Sample page from the book..

Beekeeper's Bog – a composting loo at Horsted in place

By Paul Lindström and Peter Coxon

It all began with Malcolm helpfully suggesting that the ladies visiting the Horsted Apiary may wish 'to go' before coming to the apiary as there were no facilities.

Our ever-helpful Horsted Apiary Manager (Peter) suggested we might build a composting loo there and had found a very reasonably priced unit on-line. We then got permission from WDC, our obliging landlord.

Much to my dismay however, rather than a flat pack unit, as advertised, what arrived was a huge pile of bits of wood.

Nil desperandum ... a team of willing volunteers was assembled, and, in May, work started on the installation. Without them it might still be a pile of bits of wood and the apiary manager might have had to take the honourable way out and emigrate ... or worse.

Steve Davies, Paul Lindstrom, Maurice McGowan and Peter focused mainly on building the loo but there is



What was supposed to come as a "flat pack", arrived as a huge pile of bits of wood.

always a great deal of other work to be done at the apiary especially early in the season and Steve Adams & Mark Salmon spent a hot exhausting day strimming around the hives. There is also a great deal of equipment cleaning and frame building to be done which Liz Missen, Peter Halford and Mark Wilcox turned

their hands to... and after 5 long Sundays it all got done somehow... and much of it will have to be done again next year ... so all offers of help gratefully received.

It's quite a snazzy toilet – with electricity via a small solar panel, which drives both the light inside and



Part of the work party – from left Maurice McGowan, Peter Coxon and Steve Davies.



In place, painted – and working.



it even has USB sockets to charge your phone!

The new toilet came in handy recently when we had a visit from the Regional Bee Inspector Tom Bickerdyke and the Seasonal Bee Inspector Daniel Morgan ... supposedly a follow up to the EFB outbreak at Slab Castle last year ... but in reality, it was being used to introduce some recent senior appointees at APHA to the world of bees & beekeeping. (APHA being the "UK agency that works to safeguard animal and plant health for the benefit of people)

They were all ladies and included the Lead Non-Executive Director APHA, Executive Science Director and Interim CEO APHA. They were clearly more familiar with other topical matters, such as Blue Tongue, than with bees but keen to learn more and we had a very pleasant day informing

them as we went through all the hives as in a normal inspection.

We did get a clean bill of health and importantly our Beekeepers' Bog had an auspicious christening ... discretion forbids divulging who did the honours. One of the above had been PA to Prince Charles and to Margaret Thatcher.

In case you were unaware, Horsted Apiary will be our main focus in future ... in fact our only apiary as the lease at Slab Castle terminates in September, hence our desire to improve facilities. As we now have running water and toilet facilities, we plan to do more at the Horsted Green Park apiary ...even honey extractions and there will be an announcement to that effect soon.

If you would like to become more involved please do shout ... 'a volunteer is worth 10 pressed men etc.'



Summary of the latest HWBKA committee meeting

The HWBKA committee met on 1 May 2024.

Our *Asian Hornet Plan* has been sent out to the membership.

Membership numbers are decreasing although unknown whether its because people are giving up beekeeping or whether just giving up membership. It seems to be the same in all divisions of SBKA. **Action:** Holly to chat to Peter Halford on some of the data regarding demographics and overall trends/ reasons behind the trends. We could

do a members survey and an ex-members survey. **Action 2:** Holly to add to the next agenda to discuss whether all members must have to offer help at at least 1 event.

Apiary reports: Toilet delivered to Horsted, building work start Sunday 5 may. We have 5 colonies at Horsted. Agreed to sell all nucs. Slab castle apiary is to be dismantled and colonies moved to Horsted, along with some equipment. Suggestion: Ask members to take responsibility for one hive at Horsted and also

come and help with inspections for educational purposes. **Action:** Peter Coxon to think about this and see how it would work.

Events: participation on SBKA Bee Market 18 May, "Mini-Crowfest Saturday 13/7 and "Weald on the Field" Saturday 10 August. Mayfield Cricket Club is to be booked.

The next HWBKA Committee meeting will be on 10 July – (about to take place when this issue of The Apiarist is almost finished).



The Bees in the Chimney, Part 2 – Moving On

By Laurel Lindström

Penny was dozing on her unmade bed, her head still heavy with yesterday's cabernet sauvignon and the Cointreau she had known would be a mistake. It was eight days since the funeral and a day since she'd last seen Max Westerham. He'd popped in to see how the colony was settling in. Fellow travellers he had said. Someone had said. Penny lay motionless, lost in dusky light as unreliable pictures flitted across her mind. The buzzing and the dozing conspired to present a curious picture.

The image was of a tall man, with a rangey build and eyes she feared to look too deeply into. Something hard, impenetrable, with a veneer of invitation. The buzzing sound was intermittent and as she slowly sat up Penny recognised that it was something other than a swarm of bees. She opened her eyes and saw the shadow boxing of what looked like a giant wasp thumping against the glass behind the sun soaked curtain. The creature was stuck and it was loud, but it was just one insect and not a swarm. She could not call on Mr Westerham to come and clear away just one insect.

Penny watched the shadow fling itself in violent strikes against the window. The noise, the insistence, was too much to take. Shutting the door behind her, Penny went downstairs to the kitchen and got herself a glass of wine. It was three o'clock in the afternoon; ever since Roger had died, time seemed to be sliding about all over the place. Five o'clock somewhere some echo whispered. Penny was a slow moving pinball. She rolled across hours and habits bound in by walls that Roger had left, although he did not build them. Walls Penny could sometimes see through, but could not pass.

Roger's death had been uneventful in the end. He had slid slowly sideways into a netherworld, unseen except by his devoted wife who couldn't show any sign of understanding what was happening to them. She looked but she did not see, the glass walls that held her were unreliable. And in the last few days before Roger softly smiled his feeble last, Penny pretended it was all someone else's story, someone else's drama.

At the funeral, embracing one of their children she had even whispered "this


isn't happening". But it was. Roger had known that it was and sitting on the back terrace, watching birds taking flight, as his wife wittered on about spaniels and Border terriers, Roger had daily tried to tell Penny it was truly real. He told her that she should remember every time she looked at his picture that he wanted her to understand. It was all about what happened next and nothing about him being gone. He would be dead and she would be living. That must be the focus, not grief. He had said it so many times. An echo Penny kept hearing getting louder, like the buzzing of the trapped creature. "You need to think about yourself love, not about me, because I won't be here. You know that. You'll be the one living, you'll be the one to carry on. I'll just be dead."

But Penny hadn't really heard the low murmuring voice. She responded to his slow then rapid decline with efficient bustle, busy-ness, purposeless purpose punctuated with a silly high pitched little laugh. She hoovered the floor a lot. Polished the framed photographs and knick knacks, did the washing up almost before there was anything to wash up. The dishwasher was not used, nor the microwave. The machines took too little time, provided too little distraction for Penny. They left her just with Roger alone, and waiting for a ping to say that the food was ready or that the dishes were clean left just too much empty space. The machines were intolerably modern and convenient and belonged not to the time of Roger and Penny as lovers, parents, partners, friends. The machines belonged to this new house, to a cynical promise of happy retirements with dog; and to the promise of death.

Roger would sit in his chair close by the kitchen table watching his wife cutting, chopping, measuring, mixing, at first in benign indulgence and as his disease progressed, with increased irritation. Roger tried to explain that the incessant motion, the tension and the elaborate meals were exhausting, unnecessary. They were superfluous to his very personal process of meeting his maker quite soon. But Penny would not hear him. When she spoke, she spoke to his photograph not to his shrinking, faded face. Roger understood that

Penny was holding on, clutching at the rotting fabric of their old, shared life. He had seen that in that space there was no room for his disease, his decaying life, his incapacity, his death. Their new life's rules meant that she was simply too busy for such foolishness, so Penny cooked and cleaned. Penny forced her wasting husband to have conversations about dogs and shopping and meals, meals he soon couldn't eat. But she still cooked them, scraping leftovers daily into the bin as Roger moved gently away towards another realm.

With a passing glance at the clock and at Roger's picture, Penny tipped the wine into the sink and went back upstairs to finish her aimless nap. Standing at the foot of her bed, she listened to the angry buzzing of the insect on the window. She moved to the window and pulled back the curtain just enough to see a very large, brown and yellow striped thing bristling with angry, frustrated menace. A hornet. But the window was shut and the phone was ringing. Penny stood, dazed and numb watching the hornet. The hornet continued to bump and grind against the window, angry, defying the glass and set on breaking free to the outside. The hornet had places to go, prey to capture, a nest to return to where she would deliver captured bees to her hungry babies.

As he left the message, Penny heard the answering machine tell her that Mr Westerham would be in the garden tomorrow to check her honeybee colony for queen cells. Penny had no idea what he was talking about and went closer to the window to get a closer look at the furious blur of brown and gold. Reaching carefully and slowly up to the window catch she lifted it and stood still hearing the continued bumping and buzzing. Still hearing the hornet's fury, Penny picked up the phone and dialled Mr Westerham's number. She heard the window go suddenly silent; she heard her voice leave a message on Mr Westerham's answering machine. "I got your message and that's fine." From across the room Roger's picture smiled at her, no longer his fellow traveller. Penny remembered what he said once, long ago *mortui viventes docent*. The dead teach the living. 

Dates for your calendar

Tuesday 9th July

BBKA Basic Assessment

Venue to be confirmed. If you are interested in taking a BBKA exam, contact Peter Halford at the.hwbka+exams@gmail.com.

Saturday July 13th (open to all) @ 11am-1pm

Session 7 Varroa control

Venue: Horsted Green Park Apiary

Wednesday July 31th @ 7.30pm

Bee Banter

Venue: Function room, Blue Anchor Pub, Crowborough

Saturday 10th August

Weald on the Field, Uckfield

Sunday 11th August

Summer BBQ

Venue: Greenbank, Shepherds Hill, Buxted, TN22 4PX
Please register by clicking [here](#)

Wednesday August 28th @ 7.30pm

Bee Banter

Venue: Function room, Rose & Crown Pub, Mayfield.

Wednesday September 25th @ 7.30pm

Bee Banter

Venue: Function room, Blue Anchor Pub, Crowborough

Saturday 28th September @ (times?)

Session 8 – Preparing hives for Winter

Venue: Horsted Green Park Apiary (open to all).

Saturday October 5th @ 10am-12.30pm

Session 9 – Showing honey

Venue to be confirmed.

24th, 25th & 26th October

National Honey Show

Venue: Sandown Park

Wednesday October 30th @ 7.30pm

Bee Banter

Venue: Function room, Rose & Crown Pub, Mayfield.

Saturday November 9th @ 10am-1pm

Session 10 – Wax workshop

Venue: Sandy Infields Black Shed Studio, Fairwarp.

Please express interest on the HWBK Events page

Sunday November 24th @ 1pm-5.30pm

AGM and Honeyshow

Venue: Five Ashes Village Hall.

Saturday 14th December @ 7pm

HWBK Christmas meal buffet

Venue to be confirmed.

More events might be listed on our [web site](#) – check it regularly for the latest updates. 

Rent a honey extractor from HWBKA



The newer SAF Natura Tangential 4-frame extractor

The association has three extractors available for rent. One newer SAF NATURA tangential 4-frames extractor, one older tangential 3/6-frames extractor (pictured right). We also have a smaller 3-frames tangential, kindly donated by Don Bastick.

You can rent them two days at a time. The newer 4-frame tangential cost £10 for two days (and a £20 deposit)

The older 6- and 3-frames tangential extractors cost £5 for two days (and a £15 deposit).

Included in the rent is a honey bucket, a sieve and an uncapping fork, if required + instructions for use.

Note that the deposit will be forfeit if returned late, damaged or dirty. Severe damage/repairs will be charged at cost.

One extractor is stored by Paul Lindström in Southover (outside Burwash).

The older 6-frames tangential and the 4-frame SAF Natura are stored by Lynne Curtis at Lynne's Organic Farm (just outside Crowborough).

All bookings and inquiries through Paul, see contact info below.



The older tangential 6-frame extractor



For info, availability and booking call either 01435-88 35 65 (preferred). Or call or text mobile 07833-088 766.

Or email: the.hwbka+apiarist@gmail.com • Address: The Clock Tower, Southover, Spring Lane, Burwash, TN19 7JB

HWBKA Committee 2022-2023

President: Keith Obbard (the.hwbka+president@gmail.com)

Chairman: Malcolm Wilkie (the.hwbka+chair@gmail.com)

Honorary Secretary: Holly Caetano Alves de Castro (the.hwbka+secretary@gmail.com)

Honorary Treasurer: Phil Edwards (the.hwbka+treasurer@gmail.com)

Magazine Editor and Vice Chairman: Paul Lindström (the.hwbka+apiarist@gmail.com)

Apiary Manager (Slab Castle): Keith Obbard

Apiary Manager (Horsted): Peter Coxon

Assistant Apiary Manager Roxanne Gould (hwbkaapiaryassistant@outlook.com)

Events Secretary: Sandy Infield (the.hwbka+events@gmail.com)

Membership Secretary: Peter Halford (the.hwbka+membership@gmail.com)

Training & Education Manager: Malcolm Wilkie (the.hwbka+training@gmail.com)

AHAT Coordinator: Peter Coxon (the.hwbka+ahat@gmail.com)

Lecture Coordinator: Helen Chivers (the.hwbka+lecturecoordinator@gmail.com)

Acting web master: Peter Coxon (the.hwbka+webmaster@gmail.com)

Committee member: Mark Wilcox

Other useful contacts - National Bee Unit inspectors:

Local Bee Inspector: Daniel Morgan (Mobile: 07500 95 43 90)

For more Bee Inspectors see the National Bee Unit [web site](#).