

BEELINES

NEWSLETTER OF THE BEEKEEPERS CLUB INC

JULY 2018



Bus trip to Beechworth

Upcoming Events (see website for full details and registration)

Club Monthly Meeting

19th July 2018, 7:00 PM

Doncaster Secondary College,
123 Church Rd, Doncaster 3108

Allergy to bee stings

Presented by Dr Kate Nicholls,
Royal Melbourne Hospital

August Monthly Meeting

16th August

AGM

Beginners Course

15th Sept

Filling fast...

Nuc Nanny Course

13-27th Oct

One place left...

Queen Raising Course

27th-28th Oct

Now open for registration...

Editorial

Winter is supposed to be a quiet time for beekeepers!

Instead of which we have had the Varroa scare at Melbourne Port with the activation of the Statewide Quarantine Response Team (SQRT), plenty of action at the club with the Beechworth Field Trip, the Skep Workshop and of course the luminary conference on the Gold Coast. Perhaps swarming season will seem calm in comparison.

AGM

The AGM will be held on 16th August and the notice of the meeting and call for nominations for next year's committee positions will be going out soon. The current committee would like to reiterate the invitation for members to consider standing for positions on the club's committee. Remember it's your club and you can be part of determining its future.

Andrew Wootton, Secretary



In the News

Coles takes Capilano Honey's import cocktail off the shelves

The Age July 5th

Coles will no longer stock Capilano Honey's controversial Allowrie product, which contains honey sourced from China and Argentina, with the supermarket chain saying it wants to support Australian production.

Skep Workshop



An enthusiastic group of club members joined artist Jody Goldring for a weekend of skep building on 7th and 8th July. The results were amazing!

Skeps are traditional hives with heritage extending to medieval times. Although no longer appropriate for hiving bees due to the requirement for removable frames, skeps can still find a use in the modern apiary. Apart from their obvious decorative and historical interest, they make ideal containers for collecting swarms, being lightweight, breathable and giving purchase for the bees to cluster inside.



State Quarantine Response Team

Andrew Wootton

Varroa mite surveillance - Industry and government working together



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Over the past few days we have had the privilege of working alongside five members of the State Quarantine Response Team (SQRT) – including Bill from Moe. Our field teams have been working with the SQRT crew to inspect properties for varroa mite in the zone around the port of Melbourne. We are continuing our surveillance work so we can rule out spread of the pest. Victorian Farmers Federation Geelong Beekeepers Club Inc.

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Derek Wilson
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You will have heard that bees were detected on a ship from Texas on 27th June. They were intercepted and exterminated before landing at Melbourne Port. As a precautionary measure the State Quarantine Response Team (SQRT) was activated. I got the call on Saturday 30th whilst still at the Gold Coast Conference and reported for duty to the



Emergency Response Centre at Attwood for initial briefing on Monday 2nd July.

Two teams of 2 beekeepers with an accompanying Agriculture Victoria Officer were sent out to the registered hives in the 2km surveillance zone around the port. Sugar shake and alcohol wash tests were performed and miticide strips inserted along with sticky mats

SQRT (continued)



to catch any falling mites. Next day the strips were removed and the sticky mats retrieved for examination.

Organization and communication at the Emergency Response centre was remarkable. It's obvious how important this is in chaotic situations like bushfires. The teamwork was fantastic and it was wonderful to play a part. It was also great working with such experienced beekeepers as Bill Ringin and Alan Smith, you will always pick up tips by watching masters at work.

The responsiveness of the beekeepers in the zone and also the public has been very gratifying. Social media has been abuzz with support.

DEDJTR officers are conducting the same surveillance within the restricted dock areas

where they have sentinel hives established. We also surveyed local parks and gardens for likely feral sites, although the cranes and containers looked more inviting for bees in the cold and wet of Melbourne's winter.

Surveillance rounds will continue for at least 4 weeks. It's been a formidable response, despite everyone being as confident as possible that no bees or mites escaped.

I'm deeply impressed at what's been achieved and by the commitment of Government, Agriculture Victoria and all involved to our biosecurity. A really valuable experience for me and I can't wait to go back and support the program further.



You can never tell with bees! This thriving colony was out in the open with fully exposed combs. It was meters from great piles of old abandoned equipment with numerous ideal-looking cavities for a nest.

3rd Australian Bee Congress



Don Muir

The congress was hosted by AHBIC and held at the RACV Royal Pines on the Gold Coast from 27th – 30th June 2018. Officially endorsed as an Apimondia Pollination Symposium the event was an outstanding success with some 986 delegates registered.

The program was filled with world-class speakers who presented on a wide range of topics.

The congress included concurrent sessions with speakers covering subjects such as pollination, the effects of neonicotinoid insecticides on queen bee and colony development, biosecurity, bee gut bacteria, how varroa mite harms bees, protection of honey bees, deformed winged virus, feeding bees, to presentations on estimating how many feral hives in Australia, bee breeding, genetic improvement of productivity and health in honey bees, positioning a beekeeping business to leverage opportunities, and much more. Over the 3 days some 60 different presentations were delivered by some of the world's best apiculture presenters from overseas and researchers from Australian institutions.

We also had an insight into what it took to manage a large scale apiary business, and maximise profits in America from David Mendes who owned a 20,000 plus hive business based in Florida.

It was not all work however, as the program provided plenty of time for drinks and social interaction with the opportunity to meet beekeepers from all Australian states and discuss biosecurity and industry issues affecting the Australian honey bee industry, and just catching up with old friends. I have said it before but we do have some great people in this industry who are always willing to take time and impart their knowledge.

In addition to the presentations an 85 plus Trade Exhibition was available for delegates to inspect and see the latest in beekeeping equipment and services.

AHBIC and in particular the Organising Committee chaired by Ben Hooper must be congratulated for organising a superb event, the venue, catering and program were world class.

It has been 30 years since the last Congress and it was the undeniable feeling of all delegates that we do not want to wait another 30 years for such a great event. There is a rumour that AHBIC may hold another congress in 4 years 2022 to coincide with the 200 year anniversary introduction of the European honey bee into Australia. I for one hope that rumour turns out to be true.

Beechworth Field Trip

Don Muir

The annual field trip was held on the 16-17th June when we ventured into the highlands of North East Victoria to Wangaratta, Beechworth and Milawa.

Some 50 members braved the winter cold and left Doncaster at 8 am.

It was a shock to most when we alighted the bus at Avenal for morning tea to approx. 6°C temperature (it did not get much warmer for the rest of the trip).

After a warming coffee we set off for lunch at Glenrowan before our first visit to Andrew Nicklaus at Beechworth. Andrew, a commercial beekeeper operating about 1500 hives, has a high quality packing and storage facility just outside Beechworth. Andrew gave a comprehensive run through of the life of a commercial beekeeper and a tour and explanation of his operation and extraction and filling line. Andrew very generous with his time answered many questions.



Beechworth Field Trip



Andrew's extraction plant



Rows of lids waiting refurbishment



Andrew's freezer treatment

Leaving Andrew it was just a short drive to Beechworth Honey and a good look at Jodie and Steven Goldsworthy's museum of honey, a video show of beekeeping followed by a very extensive arrange of honey tasting. Many of us spent up big on candles, honeys, meads, books and all matter of things to do with honey.

We headed back to Wangaratta to our accommodation and Saturday night meal. The Gateway Motel exceeded all expectations and supplied not only superb accommodation suites, but an excellent dinner of which I heard no complaints. After dinner we moved into a conference room and had an enlightening night with not one but two speakers. We were delighted to have both Linton and David Briggs (Queen Breeders) address us and then take an extended Q&A session on queen breeding and other beekeeping questions. As I said on the night to have both these industry icons was a coup for our club and a one off experience for those attending.

Sunday morning started with a full breakfast that was well up to the standard of the previous night's dinner. Promptly at 9.15am just avoiding snow and sleet we set off for our visits around the Milawa region.

First stop was the Mustard factory which held a lot of interest and again extensive tastings of mustards and relishes from mild to hot, to very hot. After this visit we moved on to the Milawa Cheese factory and the cheese tastings served as lunch, taking our time to taste and enjoy the warmth, but eventually we got tossed out into the bus and then to Walkabout

Apiaries (the Whitehead family) where Rod and Greg looked after us. Fortunately the Whiteheads produce a fine range of meads and with the fire burning provided a very amicable environment to taste every style of mead. My personal favourite was the Raspberry Melomel, although it did take me a number of tastings before I could finally make up my mind.

With snow beckoning (Rod later told me they had 20cm just up the road on the hills) we boarded the bus for the journey home, confident we had surveyed the best of the region.

All in all I think I can say all enjoyed the weekend and relished the opportunity to form some new club friendships and take in some of the region's gourmet foods.

Honey Competition Recipes

A selection of the winning recipes will be presented over the next months.

Honey Baklava

Jennifer McInnes

375g	walnuts
200g	almonds
75g	castor sugar
1 tsp	cinnamon
125g	butter
375g	filo pastry

For the syrup

200g	sugar
120g	honey
1	vanilla bean
60ml	lemon juice
10	cloves
4 strips	lemon rind

Put all the syrup ingredients into a small saucepan over a gentle heat. Stir occasionally. Cook until the sugar is fully dissolved. Set aside.

Process the walnuts till finely chopped. Process the almonds till finely chopped. Mix with the castor sugar and cinnamon.

Melt the butter. Brush each sheet of filo with



the butter as you go. Lay 7 sheets on the base of a 18 x 30cm baking tray. Spread half of the nut mixture on top. Press down firmly. Lay 4 sheets on top of that. Spread the rest of the nut mixture over and cover with another 5 sheets of filo.

Put the tray in the freezer for 20mins or so to firm up. When you take it out cut the baklava into the desired sized pieces. (If desired stick a clove into the top of each cut piece) Bake at 200 deg for approx. 35 mins till very gently browned.

Remove the cloves, lemon rind and vanilla bean from the syrup and put it back onto the heat till warmed then pour over the baked baklava. Allow to cool. Then hop into it!

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