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Welcome to our autumn 2019 newsletter.

Chairman's Notes

I'm beginning to wind down after what has been a very busy season. The last of my syrup feeds has gone on today and I'll leave it a few weeks before putting on fondant, hopefully more of an insurance policy than anything else. I've been trying to not let beekeeping take over my life! I came out of last winter with eight hives and will be going into this one with nine, so at least I'm still in single figures. I've had a record amount of honey this year so have had to look for some new outlets. It's good to find plenty of places willing to take it as I've had to reluctantly give up my honesty box outside my house due to the level of thefts.

We've had a number of changes to the committee and it's good to welcome some new faces: Wendy Frost, Craig Fenton and Alison Ramcharron; and with sadness say farewell to Norman Jarvis and David Nisbet. We also have a new website. This gives us a whole new range of functionality, and it's much easier to keep up to date. The link with Kelso School is very encouraging and it's a great tribute to Ray Baxter and the school that beekeeping is now on the curriculum. We are looking forward to developing links with other schools in the Borders, helping to spread the enthusiasm for beekeeping and to reduce the average age of beekeepers!

Quite a few of our members took their hives to the heather and despite initial worries about the heather beetle most of us took a reasonable crop. I had about 20kgs from my two hives. Greenlawdean is a fantastic spot and despite all the challenges getting hives there, I think it's worth it in the end.

We've cut down on the number of shows we attend so this year we only attended the Berwickshire Show at Duns, which was a great day. We had glorious weather and got a lot of interest from would-be members – and we sold a lot of honey.

Our first winter meeting of the year Getting Ready for Winter at the Black Bull in Duns was very well attended. There are a couple of meetings this week which should be worth attending. One is the touring SBA speaker Irene Power who is speaking about efficient beekeeping at Newbattle College (see website) and the second is our own meeting on the subject of Wax lead by Kate Atchely (see the Winter Diary panel).

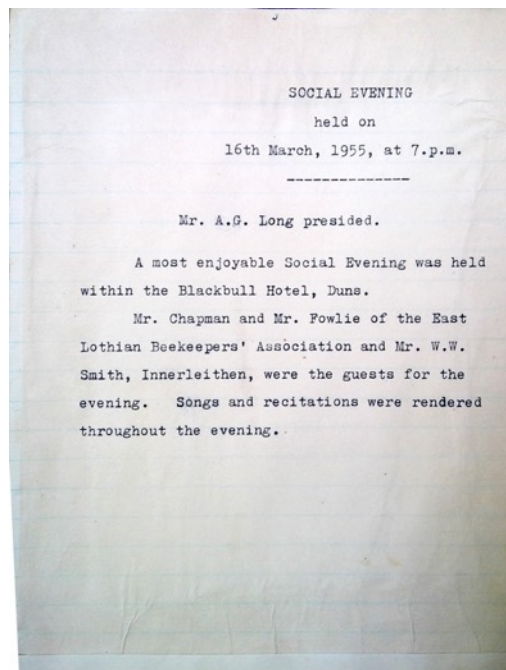
Congratulations to one of our members Luis Molero who has become lead bee inspector for Scotland. Luis has kindly agreed to speak at our April meeting – see Winter Diary panel and/or website for details.

We've had a good response to our beginners' course which will start next February. More than half of the 28 places have been filled already.

Of course it's not long till our honey show and I hope many of you will put in some entries. With our esteemed honey judge, Enid Brown, we should all have plenty to learn.

So with thanks to all the members of the committee for all the help and support they have given me in the past year and to members of the association for being such a great group to be part of. Enjoy your winter break and it won't be too long before the flowering currant signals the start of the 2020 season.

Thanks to John and Norman for hosting our successful ‘Getting Ready for Winter’ evening in September in the Black Bull in Duns. We had an attendance of more than 40, and it was serendipitous that a box of old Association minutes and correspondence had recently brought to light the fact that there was a social meeting in that very pub in 1955. There was lively discussion and great advice offered at our evening, but sadly no songs and recitations.



Winter Diary	
Oct 3	<i>Wax Recovery, Cleaning & Candle Making</i> by Kate Atchley
Nov 3	BBA Honey Show at Kelso High School
Dec 5	<i>My Method of Beekeeping</i> by Graeme Sharpe at Duns
2020	
Jan 13	Association Dinner at The Cobbles, Kelso
Feb 3	Talk by Alan Riach, president of SBA
Mar 5	<i>Swarm Control</i> , speaker TBC
April 6	<i>From Hobby Beekeeper to Lead Bee Inspector for the Scottish Government</i> by Luis Molero

Updated Logo

We have a new logo! Well, a slightly updated version of the previous one. Heather Taylor designed the old one to represent beekeeping in the Eildon Hills, with the hills taking the form of skeps. Craig Fenton, our multi-talented new treasurer has brought it up to date with his fancy technology and of course to reflect the tiny change to our name. We hope you like it.

New Website

We are so grateful to Ray Baxter for spending a great deal of time putting together our new website. www.bordersbeekeepers.org. You will notice the URL is *slightly* different from before.

This is partly to reflect the fact that our association is in The Borders (not The Border) and partly so that the new website is independently hosted by us rather than being affiliated to Finlay’s work one. Many, many thanks to Finlay and Caroline for hosting and editing the old one for so many years.

Features

Despite the fact that it's all there on the website for perusal at your leisure, may we draw your attention to a few elements that might be useful:

Under the 'About' menu there is a list of your **committee members**, their roles on the committee and their email addresses so you can contact them individually when appropriate.

Also on that menu is a form called '**Bee Heard**'. We are here for you, so if you have any bright ideas for the website, talks, newsletter items, bee-related activities or anything else please use this form to get in touch. We welcome feedback (let's not call it complaints) too, so don't bottle it up if you feel strongly about something to do with the BBA.

Under 'Services' there is a page about **Swarms**. Nearer the time we will update this with a list of our volunteer swarm collectors and some links to external websites for help for the general public. Often identification is key as we will only help with honeybee swarms.

The 'Courses and Education' page is where you can direct friends who would like to join a **beginner's class**, or a **taster day** to see what beekeeping is all about.

And anyone can join the BBA using the form on the **Membership** page.

We really hope you like the new look and find it easy to navigate.

Honey Show

With all your honey now extracted and jarred up and combs cut:



it's that time of year again, 4 weeks or so now to polish up your jars, wipe their sticky lids, get the candle moulds out and get baking!

The show is on Sunday 3rd November at Kelso High School, in the main atrium. Bring entries from 1pm so you can fill out the entry forms and stage your entries for a prompt start at 2pm.

The best bit about the honey show is the taking part! It's fun, just for us, our association, all friends together with a little bit of healthy rivalry and a chance to showcase the amazzzzing work our honeybees have been doing all summer. In previous years we've had

open judging where we have learnt a huge amount about the things the judges look for. It can be quite time consuming, so this year the judging will take place while the Kelso High School Bee Club puts on a tasting event for us. When the judging for the show has been done, there will be some feedback by the judge, Enid Brown, to explain some of the results.

Here is a link to the page on the website with a list of all the classes and some hints and tips (click on the white box to download a file with guidance for all entries).
<https://www.bordersbeekeepers.org/events>.

So bring along 2 jars of honey for each class you want to enter, and also a small jar of honey if you would like to join in the KHS Bee Club's tasting event. Hopefully after Kate's talk on Wax you might be inspired to make a candle or a beeswax cake to enter. And how about dusting off your pinny to bake something with honey in it, or dig out a great photo to print out? There's also a crafty class, for um, crafts. So why not do that?!

We look forward to seeing you there!

And finally....

Anecdote of the day from Shirley Sharpe, sent to us in May:

My bees appear to be either supremely lazy or highly intelligent as, to put it colloquially, they have started taking the proverbial...

They're flying in at the front door (without knocking I might add) going straight through the house and out to the back garden through the open window. Definitely showing more brain cells than the dog.

Thanks for your contribution Shirley. I'm just glad the window was open.....

Your newsletter editors Joanna Payne and Kate Atchley would love to hear from you with photos or stories, poems or musings, requests for articles or announcements; we hope to prepare the next issue in the spring.

Please contact Joanna (jp@thepayneclinic.co.uk) or Kate (bees@kateatchley.co.uk).

We look forward to hearing from you!