

AUSTRALIAN

VOL. 105 - NO 2 FEBRUARY 2024

ISSN 0046-0294

BEE JOURNAL



Online Farm Business Program ... page 11



KELVIN TRADING PTY LTD

Manufacturer, Wholesaler and retailer

*Please visit us, or
contact us for
wholesale pricing*

Bee suit/jacket & gloves

Size: S, M, L, XL, XXL, 3XL
Material: Cotton/ Polyester,
YKK Zipper



Queen excluder

Sizes: 8/10 frames
Material: Plastic, stainless
steel, galvanized steel



Timber hive box & frames

Sizes: Full Depth, WSP,
Manley, Ideal



Plastic foundation

Sizes: Full Depth, WSP,
Manley, Ideal
(With or without bee wax
coating)



Honey jar/bottle

(various shapes and sizes)
Material: Plastic, glass



Stainless steel honey extractor

2/3/4/6 frames (manual)
3/4/6/8/12 frames (electric)



<https://ktbeekeeping.com.au/>



31/830-850 Princes Highway,
Springvale, VIC 3171



ktpl10@yahoo.com.au



PH: (03) 8555 4754

Mobile: 0405123098

AUSTRALIAN BEE JOURNAL

Published since 1918 by the VAA - founded in 1892 -

FEBRUARY 2024 - Volume 105 - No 2

Registration No. A8347

VAA & Board Information	4
President's Report	5
The Propola Hive	5
VAA Board Nominations	6
Bee Bits	6/28/30/32
VAA Recreational Beekeepers Conference	7/12
Hilder's Honey	8
Today In The Apiary	10/34
Online Farm Business Program	11
DCAs	13
AgriFutures New Publication	14
Call For Expressions Of Interest for VAA Subcommittees	15
Sherriff Bee Suit Repairs / Karyn Di Florio	17
Melbourne Section Report	18
AHBIC Newsletter Extracts / AgriFutures Panel Member Recruitment	22
BeeHero	25
Thrixotropic Honey	28
BIBBA Against Bee Imports Into UK	29
New Book Releases	31
UK National Honey Show Lectures	32
AHBIC Varroa Updates	33
The Adapta Eke	35
Contacts	36/37
Classifieds / Members / Index of Advertisers	38

Cover photo: John van Weeghel. Time for a super.

**Deadline for copy for the March 2024 journal is
10pm on Friday 1st of March 2024.**

The Australian Bee Journal seeks to publish contributions dealing with all aspects of beekeeping.
Statements expressed by contributors do not necessarily reflect the views of the VAA Inc or the editor.
Editor: Annette Engstrom

Contact the Editor for ads, photos, classifieds and article information

The Editor, Australian Bee Journal, P.O. Box 42 Newstead, VIC. 3462 Email: abjeditors@yahoo.com

Australian Bee Journal Advertising rates

	12 mth	6 Mth	3 Mth	1 Mth
Color Full page	\$3,000.00	\$1,980.00	\$1,185.00	\$450.00
1/2 page	\$2,100.00	\$1,170.00	\$660.00	\$280.00
1/4 page	\$1,188.00	\$690.00	\$405.00	\$200.00
B/Card	\$960.00	\$600.00	\$360.00	\$150.00
B&W Full page	\$2,280.00	\$1,500.00	\$900.00	\$380.00
1/2 page	\$1,560.00	\$930.00	\$555.00	\$210.00
1/4 page	\$960.00	\$600.00	\$390.00	\$150.00
B/Card	\$600.00	\$480.00	\$300.00	\$120.00

2-page ad - \$4800.00 - available for 12 month contract only

The Victorian Apiarists' Association Inc. (VAA)

The VAA was founded in 1892 and is the peak body for beekeeping in Victoria. The Association advocates to federal, state, and local governments to protect and improve Victoria's honey resources and to ensure beekeepers' interests are safeguarded and promoted. We work to secure effective legislation and encourage scientific investigation and research in all aspects of beekeeping.

Our achievements include:

- Introducing the Victorian Apiary Code of Practice allowing bees to be kept in urban areas
- Contributing to the new Apiculture on Public Lands Policy through our involvement with the Buzz Committee
- Working with Plant Health Australia which contributed to the development of the Australian Biosecurity Code of Practice.

The VAA advocates for the beekeeping industry on behalf of all beekeepers in Victoria.

Management

The VAA Board meets a minimum of six times a year. Members of the 2023 - 2024 Board

Secretary / Treasurer

Kerrin Williams
P.O. Box 40,
California Gully, VIC. 3556
Mob: 0498 461 460
vaa@vicbeekeepers.com.au

President

John van Weeghel
0419 542 479
john.vanweeghel@bigpond.com

Vice President

Phil McPherson
0428 621 455
mchoney1@optusnet.com.au

Vice President:

Lindsay Callaway
(Bendigo Branch representative)
0429 857 835
warral@iinet.net.au

Other members:

Judy Leggett
0423 464 800
aandjleggett@bigpond.com

Ken Gell
0428 506 752
gellshoneymaryborough@gmail.com

Robert McDonald
0427 722 162
McDonald.Robert@y7mail.com

Rob Kerr
0421 078 387
robkerr62@gmail.com

Andrew Wootton
0481 392 798
andrew.wootton@gmail.com

VAA sub-committees & conveners

Contact by email is preferred

Biosecurity

Ken Gell

Finance & Insurance

Ken Gell

Education

Don Whitehead
don@walkaboutshoney.com.au

Melbourne Show/fund raising

Judy Leggett

Constitution & Legal

Lindsay Callaway

Conference

Lindsay Callaway

Clubs & Affiliates

Phillip McPherson

Aust. Bee Journal/Website

John van Weeghel

Resources

Ken Gell

Services

John van Weeghel

Commercial beekeeping

Phil McPherson

Recreational beekeeping

John van Weeghel

All beekeepers and interested groups are welcome to join the VAA.

Membership benefits include:

- The VAA's monthly magazine *Australian Bee Journal* (ABJ) including one free classified ad per year
- Access to the members' only section of the VAA website vicbeekeepers.com.au
- Discounts for beekeeping services and products, including insurance
- Borrowing rights to the extensive VAA library
- Voting rights at VAA regional group meetings and the annual VAA state conference
- Opportunity to participate in and contribute to VAA sub-committees
- Opportunity to meet and share ideas with other beekeepers at local group meetings, field days, shows and conferences
- Opportunity to contribute to advocacy to government and development of policy on beekeeping

Membership Rates

Up to 100 hives (1 vote): \$90
101- 500 hives (2 votes): \$240
501-1000 hives (3 votes): \$385
1000+ hives (4 votes): \$530
Partner membership is \$20 less in each category and includes all rights except receipt of journal

How to join

Join online at

www.vicbeekeepers.com.au
or email
vaa@vicbeekeepers.com.au
to request a membership form.

www.vicbeekeepers.com.au

President's Report

The Recreational Conference promises to be a day not to be missed. The program (see page 12) includes something for all recreational beekeepers whether you are new to beekeeping or are a well-established beekeeper. It will include opening of hives to demonstrate what to look for, AgVic will update on varroa and diseases, feeding bees, an expert on viruses Professor Madeleine Beekman will talk on viruses of the honeybee and possible connection with varroa, and as they say, "much much more". The organizing committee have been fortunate to get Ally Driessen to be the MC for the day ensuring that it will be memorable day. I encourage members to support the first recreational conference, it will be an opportunity to increase your knowledge and skills but also to make new, like-minded friends.

There is a call for expressions of interest to join either the Commercial or Recreational subcommittees (page 15). These two subcommittees are being set up to have all members well cared for and their relative interests represented at the Board meetings. Many issues affect both groups, like varroa and disease control; but other issues only relate to one group, like for example border restrictions, access to public land or a recreational conference. I encourage members to become involved with one of the subcommittees. With wider par-

ticipation of members we will achieve more and better outcomes. Feel free to contact me if you would like more information.

At the time of writing this report our Secretary and Treasurer, Kerrin, is on leave. Anyone that has contacted the office lately and is waiting for a response can call or email me. We apologise for any inconvenience and hope to have the office functioning again by the time you read this article.

All beekeepers have been eagerly awaiting the signing of the "National Management for Varroa". Once this gets past the finishing line, we should get access to training sessions and assistance with the control of varroa when it is found to be in Victoria. Some members have questioned the delay in the signing of the agreement but if you consider that there are 26 groups which need to unanimously accept the plan, it will be no surprise that it has taken longer than expected. The one thing we can count on is that AHBIC is doing everything possible to achieve the best outcome possible for all beekeepers across Australia.

Please support our sponsors and advertisers.

John van Weeghel
President

NEW - THE PROPOLA HIVE

By John Kennedy

Innovative Sioux Falls, South Dakota company Premier Bee Products has released another new product, after its earlier release of its Pura hive design and a new plastic foundation sheet which it says was designed to be like the bees want it to be.

The Propola Hive, it contends, has a number of reasons in favour of the new design hive box which has a scored internal surface designed to encourage the bees to attach an envelope of propolis. Just like bees in a natural environment line an internal cavity of a tree surrounding their nest.

The benefits according to Premier are many, as modern smooth walled beehives discourage bees from coating their insides with propolis.

They say that their Propola hive contains roughened and grooved interior walls to encourage propolis collection and restore a propolis envelope inside the hive which they say creates a healthy stable environment for the bees.

Also the antimicrobial properties of propolis significantly reduces the presence of foulbrood and chalkbrood among others.

They also note that there is "some evidence that propolis lowers the density of varroa destructor".

Another benefit is that less disease results in stronger bees and more of them, claiming that "the Propola hive has shown to increase colony populations of up to two frames of bees per hive".

Premier attaches to its launch announcement seven technical papers on the perceived benefits of propolis.

There is also a four minute video from Dr Marla Spivak of the University of Minnesota, an expert who has devoted her research to the benefits of propolis and says it is really good for bees and an important part of their health responses.

She also comments that it is great to see the results of research being delivered as a commercial product.

According to its website Premier Bee Products is quoting \$US30 for a standard depth bee box as a flat pack offer.

All the launch information and supporting documentation and the video can be accessed at

www.premierbeeproducts.com



Photo supplied by Premier Bee Products.

The new Propola Hive received rave reviews from several notable beekeepers at the early January North American Honeybee Expo held in Louisville, Kentucky where it was publicly released. Note the scored internal four sides of a timber box hive to encourage the bees to propolis the surfaces.

The company had on display a halved tree trunk minus the bees but showing how they had coated the boundaries of their cavity with propolis.

2024 VAA Board Nomination Procedure

Nominations for the position of Board member from Regional Associations and each Branch of the VAA are now being called for.

Nominations must be received by the VAA Returning Officer by 28 February 2023 at returning_officer@vicbeekeepers.com.au

As per the Victorian Apirarists Association Inc. Constitution May 2022

Types of Board membership and size of Board

D.4. (1) The Board consists of nine members:

- (a) one member of the VAA appointed by each Regional Association.
- (b) one member of the VAA appointed by each Branch.
- (c) such number of generally elected Board members as will bring the total number of Board members for that year to nine.

(2) A regional association cannot exercise its right to appoint a Board member unless at the annual census date

- (a) It has a minimum of 25 members who are also members of the VAA; or
- (b) 75 per cent of its total membership are members of the VAA.

Board members must be able to communicate electronically.

Bee Bit The giant North American Honey Bee Expo held in Louisville Kentucky from January 4 to 6 was a sold out event and judged a great success, to such an extent it will likely return as an annual event. Featuring a giant trade show that attracted producers, innovators and inventors of beekeeping equipment as exhibitors, it was supported by technical sessions provided by some 15 widely recognised educators, professionals and commercial and recreational beekeepers. A feature now available online and by a web search is a Facebook video produced by Pennsylvania based weekly bee commentator Frederick Dunn. It features interviews with exhibitors both from the USA and internationally, that Dunn has judged as launching new and innovative products. Dunn's video which has a run time of nearly three hours is worth watching by beekeepers interested in seeing what new products are coming into the market, at least in the USA. It will also be watched by local bee product importers, retailers and suppliers to aid in identifying outstanding and relevant new product innovations for Australia.

John Kennedy



TECHNOLOGY LEADERS IN CTI YEARS OF TESTING ROBUST, SAFE, GUARANTEED

PERFORMANCE

- ✓ Greatly reduce load vibration & improves driver comfort
- ✓ Greatly improve traction in all terrains to extend seasons
- ✓ Safer braking & handling in all conditions with less suspension wear
- ✓ Good for driver health & keeping schedules

MONEY

- ✓ Save bee stock during transport & also equipment damage
- ✓ Savings money as an asset for taxation. Use free air!
- ✓ Extend vehicle life & maintenance cost are reduced
- ✓ Save on field breakdowns, expensive down time & tyre wear



**Lindsay Callaway
Warral Maldon Honey**



AIRCTI
ULTIMATE TYRE PRESSURE MANAGEMENT
CENTRAL TYRE INFLATION

HEAD 10 Holmes Road Morwell,
OFFICE: Victoria, Australia 3840

OPEN: Monday to Friday 8:30am – 5:00pm
PHONE: +61 (03) 5127 6128
EMAIL: sales@aircti.com



TESTIMONIAL

"The biggest time saver! It got me out of trouble so many times, I could be going up a hill and I start to lose traction and my truck starts bogging down. I dump my air through the controller on the dash, the tyres bite in, it gets me over the hill and I just pump them back up on the bitumen. They are right with what they say - better braking, better tyre wear and it is a much easier ride on my poor old aching back" Steve Grahame – Outback Trucker

Media Release from the VAA

IMPORTANT CONFERENCE FOR HOBBY OR RECREATIONAL BEEKEEPERS IN MELBOURNE ON SATURDAY 9 MARCH AHEAD AND READY FOR THE LIKELY ARRIVAL OF VARROA DESTRUCTOR

Across the back yards of Melbourne and regional Victoria there are at least 14,000 beehives in action.

This may only be about half the number of active recreational or hobby beekeepers despite compulsory registration (at no cost if you have up to five hives).

Most small beekeepers invest a quite substantial investment in their hives, their bees, the recommended safety and related working equipment (often \$1000 or more if you choose the Australian innovation the Flow Hive).

They seek to produce an annual harvest of tasty raw honey often for their own consumption or gifting to family or friends. Many also see their backyard hive as their contribution to a greener environment in recognition that the world's bee population is declining, principally due to chemicals used in farming or even to excess in the home garden. Some beekeepers just obtain solace from watching their bees as they fly in and out of their hive. And there are benefits too in pollinating orchard trees and their vegetable gardens,

But there is a new threat to beekeeping on the imminent horizon in the form of the Varroa destructor, a unique small pest that can lead to the total loss of your bees, it may arrive in Victoria within the next 12 months and it is approaching Victoria's beehives from infestations now across the River Murray.

In consequence of this threat and to inform hobby or recreational beekeepers about remedies, state specialists the Victorian Apiarists' Association (the

VAA) has organised the Recreational Beekeepers Conference to be held at the Victorian Croquet Centre at 65 Nobel Banks Drive at Cairnlea on Saturday 9 March. Commencing from 9 am, the full day will discuss a program that is broken up into two parts – Improving Your Skills as a beekeeper and addressing the Biosecurity Challenges like the Varroa mite. In support of these themes will be live beehive openings and demonstrations with *"the secrets of the hive explained"*!

VAA President John Van Weeghel says that an impressive program of speakers has been confirmed, with leading practitioners, educators and scientists including Vin Anderson, Mike Love, Michael Johnson, Dr Jodi Gertz, Dr Andrew Wootton, Prof Travis Beddoe, and Prof Madelaine Beekman as guest presenters.

They will be joined by VAA President John Van Weeghel, and Nikki Jones and Adam Maxwell from Victoria's Department of Agriculture.

Your attendance on Saturday March 9 will cost \$200, which includes morning and afternoon teas, a sandwich lunch and notes from all the speakers. VAA members receive an additional discount.

To make your early booking use the address www.vicbeekeepers.com.au/events or email rec.conference@vicbeekeepers.com.au

Do you have photos of bee or honey related subjects?



John van Weeghel

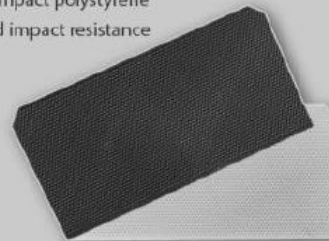
The Australian Bee Journal would love some of your photos for use in the journal and on the VAA website.

Please send to
abjeditors@yahoo.com

FACTORY DIRECT Made in Australia by Danbar Plastics BEEPLAS FOUNDATION SHEETS

Plastic Beehive Components

- Made in Australia for Australian conditions
- Top quality food grade high impact polystyrene
- Excellent tensile strength and impact resistance
- Natural cell size
- Mitred bottom corners
- 6mm engagement tongue



Buy NOW!! IN-STORE or ONLINE www.danbar.com.au

Contact:
Danbar Plastics
sales@danbar.com.au
Ph: (03) 5382 4740



BEEPLAS
AUSTRALIA

Hilder's Honey

HOW TO SUCCEED OVER ADVERSITY IN BEEKEEPING

By John Kennedy

I find it quite amazing how one event in beekeeping inevitably leads me to another.

Just prior to Christmas I was challenged by Liz, who runs her business Dindi Bee Supplies at Yea in Murrindindi Shire, to taste and then purchase a jar of local district honey which she retails in her store.

The jar titled Red Stringy honey also carried an attractive label indicating it was produced by Hilder's Honey in Strath Creek.

The label also carries a mobile phone number which I rang after being very satisfied by the taste and presentation of the honey that I received, which I perceived to be a boutique honey product.

So, I contacted the beekeeper and that is how my visit to Hilder's Honey in Strath Creek and this report emerged.

But I should note, at this stage between setting up a time to visit beekeeper Paul Hilder and my visit two days later Paul had the misfortune to lose about a 100 hives, caused by the extensive flooding of his local King Parrot Creek after the heavy rainfall event experienced in Central Victoria about January 7 and 8.

Despite this upset Paul still elected to show me around his beekeeping operation on his home property (it should be noted that bad luck seems to attend Paul as he lost his beekeeping operation and his property but saved his home. in the dramatic Black Saturday bushfire on February 9, 2009.

Despite this he got back into beekeeping aided by a case manager and some grant funding, and effectively began again with just one hive.

Hilder's Honey normally runs about 250 hives these days, so he really is a moderate scale full time beekeeper, although he has a two day a week role as a local farm maintenance man.

Paul does some regular pollination duties with about 150 hives to the almonds and to a plum orchard near Swan Hill.

(Continued on page 9)



Paul Hilder, who runs his Hilder's Honey from Strath Creek, near Seymour, with some of his hives he recovered after they were flooded, submerged, or just washed away after the major rainfall event in early January. They were sited along the King Parrot Creek in an area never known to flood before, such was the impact of the rainstorm that is claimed to have delivered three months rainfall in one day to central Victoria.

Quality hiveware direct from the manufacturer

Whirrakee Woodware are one of Australia's largest manufacturers of quality timber products for beekeeping.

Specialising in bee boxes, we manufacture a full range of hiveware including boxes, lids, bottoms, nuc boxes, clearer boards, division boards, assembled frames and supply wax and plastic foundation and hardware to suit. For quality beekeeping products, call us today.

CONTACT US

38 Drive In Court, Maryborough, Vic. 3465
Landline: 03 5461 4661
Peter: 0418 535 300 Ali: 0498 102 600
enquiries@whirrakeewoodware.com

STOCKISTS OF



Hilder's Honey, cont'd

(Continued from page 8)

He says he has a good over wintering site near Seymour which is a bit warmer than his home property, and thus gets his hives up to pollination standards.

Otherwise, he is a migratory beekeeper with a number of reliable sites within about a 50 kilometre radius of Seymour and Strath Creek, although he is finding it increasingly costly (especially for fuel) to shift hives.

He has no family members with a real interest in bees although a grandson will help when an extra hand is needed.

Paul says he abandoned his licensed bee sites due to regular thefts of hives, or having them driven over by four wheel drive vehicles or other vandalism.

"I prefer to use private land and I enjoy contact with a number of farmers who are interested in bees and see the benefit of having hives placed on their farms".

How he first got into beekeeping is a story in itself - he got his first hive at 14 years of age.

He then had a small number of hives on a canola paddock near Mangalore, and was surprised to find that noted local beekeeper Eddie Moylan had his hives at the opposite end of the block.

In consequence a conversation developed between the two which led to an effective "apprenticeship" for Paul, with lots of advice and encouragement from Eddie Moylan.

When Eddie was in poor health, and passed away in 2011 (at 90 years of age) Paul Hilder inherited the last

20 hives that Eddie had retained.

In the course of telling me this story Paul reiterated the importance of beekeepers at whatever age forever learning something new about beekeeping, and especially about the forage that the bees prefer.

Paul says his honey yields vary season upon season like everyone else, but he has a regular clientele for bulk and packaged product (he introduced his own informative and visually attractive label some years ago, developed for him by a local high school design student).

He says he can effectively sell all the honey he produces and in his earlier years he ran a number of market stalls, but nowadays supplies some regular retailers and several people who conduct stalls at roadside or market sites.

He is well set up with a large beekeeping shed with two large extractors, an uncapper, and an adjoining bottling or packaging section.

It is spacious, clean, and well laid out, but he says he would invest in a new extractor to replace an original stainless Pender one (that he says it is now too slow!), if they weren't so expensive.

He is fully registered and compliant with local Council regulations as an extracting site.

Paul also has a locally purpose built flat bed trailer fitted with an Ezyloader, and he likes to have multiple bee locations each with about 40 or so hives capacity which suits the carrying capacity of the trailer and his

(Continued on page 10)

DENMAR APIARIES

P.O. Box 99, Wondai, Queensland, 4606

Phone: (07) 4168 6005

Mobile: 0448 690 064

International Ph: +61 7 4168 6005

Email: ausbee4@hotmail.com



ISOLATED MATED BREEDERS \$600.00 EACH

**QUEEN BEES
ITALIAN**

UNTESTED

1 — 10	\$32.00 each
11 — 49	\$28.00 each
50 +	\$24.00 each

Prices as from 1/9/2020

**BANK ACCOUNT DETAILS
AVAILABLE UPON
REQUEST**

Terms 7 days - Late Payments - add \$4 Per Queen

Hilder's Honey, cont'd

(Continued from page 9)

ute.

In the aftermath of the flood losses of his bees and hives Paul says he is thinking about giving the game

away.

But I reckon the maxim of having operated bee hives all your life with a degree of enjoyment, satisfaction and success and never giving up will come into play.

TODAY IN THE APIARY

By John Kennedy

In 2014 the VAA published the 78 page anthology of the late Eddie Moylan's monthly columns contributed to the Australian Bee Journal over the years 2008 - 2011.

It is a robust publication with as much practical relevance today as when the columns first appeared. (See page 34 for an extract).

Eddie who passed away at age 90 (1921-2011) had a lifetime of experience in beekeeping in north east Victoria from his home base in Seymour.

The publication includes a comprehensive personal tribute prepared by Eileen McDonald.

In addition, included in the publication is the preface by the late Linton Briggs, who notes that Eddie had much wisdom and gave practical advice "acquired not only from his lifelong study of and passionate devotion to honey bees, and from study of the well documented ancient craft of beekeeping".

If you are a relative newbie beekeeper a personal copy of Today in the Apiary is well worth seeking out and should be in your library. A quick search reveals that copies are still shown as available for purchase from at least one bee product supplier, or the VAA has a few copies for sale for \$18.00 plus postage.

Today in the Apiary Part 1

The collected works (2008-2011) of Eddie Moylan

\$18.00 per copy

To order and/or check postage for your location contact vaa@vicbeekeepers.com.au



Let Steritech give your hives a treat

For over 30 years, Steritech has proudly provided Gamma Irradiation treatment to eliminate a wide variety of problems in bee equipment

Gamma Irradiation easily penetrates all areas of the equipment being treated.

As a chemical free process, it eliminates the need for any post-treatment quarantine periods which allows equipment to be used straight away.

Contact your closest Steritech office to find out more about our service

STERITECH
Protecting what matters

QUEENSLAND
180-186 Potassium St
Narangba
QLD 4504
07 3385 8400
steriqld@steritech.com.au

NEW SOUTH WALES
5-7 Widemere Rd
Wetherill Park
NSW 2164
02 8785 4400
sterinsw@steritech.com.au

VICTORIA
160 South Gippsland Hwy
Dandenong
VIC 3164
03 8726 5566
sterivic@steritech.com.au

www.steritech.com.au

Online Farm Business Program Helps Manage Risk

Agriculture Victoria is offering farmers an opportunity to participate in a free online business program designed to help farm businesses better manage risk in the face of a variable climate. The online program, beginning in February on Wednesdays, is suitable for live-stock, grain, mixed farmers, horticulturalists and apia-rists.

James Rowe, Senior Project Officer

Agriculture Victoria Farm Business Resilience Pro-ject Leader Kit Duncan-Jones said participants will im-prove their skills and knowledge to better prepare for and manage risk, adapt to change and strengthen their farm businesses.

‘The course is designed to help farmers set and achieve their individual business goals and is relevant to those who are new to farming and young farmers, as well as more experienced farmers,’ Mr Duncan-Jones said.

An introductory session will be run in early Febru-ary, followed by 5 sessions on key farm management topics, including:

- identifying and managing risks, strategic plan-ning and setting business goals
- financial management, budgeting and profitable decision making

- managing people on farm, succession planning and farm safety
- climate risk and natural resource management
- business planning.

As part of the course participants will be offered a one-on-one session with an experienced farm manage-ment consultant to review their business plan.

Mr Duncan-Jones said participants will be supported by Agriculture Victoria staff and team of consultants from Pinion Advisory.

‘Online delivery of the course allows farmers from anywhere in the state to participate, from the comfort of their own homes and without the added time commit-ment of travel.’

‘If you’re a farmer who wants to better manage your business, strengthen your farm resilience to withstand future droughts and shocks, and set up your farm for success now and into the future – this is the program for you.’

To register your interest,

[please complete this short survey.](#)

For more information,

contact Sarah Clack 0417 316 345

or sarah.clack@agriculture.vic.gov.au

VAAInc: www.vicbeekeepers.com.au



DALRYMPLE VIEW

APIARY SUPPLIES

**MANUFACTURERS AND
SUPPLIERS OF ALL YOUR
BEEKEEPING NEEDS**

- **FRAMES**
- **SUPERS**
- **CLEARER BOARDS**
- **EXCLUDERS
AND MORE**

**ALL
AUSTRALIAN
MADE USING
QUALITY
AUSTRALIAN
HOOP PINE**



**FAMILY OWNED
AND OPERATED**

Locally owned and
manufactured in our
factory on the Southern Darling Downs, QLD

Stockist of most other beekeeping supplies

65 Forde Street Allora QLD 4362 • 0448 717 051
www.dalrympleview.com.au • sales@dalrympleview.com.au



Victorian Apiarists' Association

Recreational Beekeepers Conference

Melbourne, Saturday 9th March 2014

Are you ready for varroa?

Successful Beekeeping in Challenging Times

HURRY - SELLING FAST

Join us for this one day seminar with the latest on varroa treatments from the AgVic team plus updates on the national management plan. Hear from international experts on honey bee viruses, resistance breeding and disease detection. With live hive and practical demonstrations to explain, reinforce and entertain. Hurry, early bird discounts end soon!

Session 1: Improving your beekeeping skills

The 4 seasons of beekeeping
Feeding bees
Splitting Hives
Flow Hive tips and tricks

Session 2: Tackling biosecurity today

Integrated Pest Management and varroa treatments
Breeding varroa resistant bees
Viruses of the honey bee
AFB/EFB testing
Honey testing

Keynote Speakers

Prof Madeleine Beekman

Madeleine is Professor Emerita at the University of Sydney where she studied behaviour and evolution of social insects and particularly honeybees. Her special interest is in the role Varroa plays in vectoring honeybee viruses and she has embarked on a set of experiments to disentangle the role of Varroa on the spread of the deformed wing virus.

Prof Travis Beddoe

Prof Beddoe is Head of the Department of Animal, Plant and Soil Sciences at La Trobe University (Bundoora campus) where he leads the Agriculture Bio-Solutions laboratory. His research program focuses on field deployable diagnostics, the molecular understanding of disease pathogenesis and sustainable treatment solutions (vaccines). His research team have developed rapid in-field assays for EFB and AFB.

Dr Jody Gerdts

Dr. Jody Gerdts is the founder and Director of Bee Scientifics, a Benalla, Victoria-based company that specialises in honey bee breeding and apicultural research. Jody's interest in breeding bees for varroa resistance has been supported through two prestigious fellowships: International Specialised Skills Institute and Veski Fellowship providing opportunities for international travel and collaboration with some of the world's leading experts.

Tickets: Members \$150 (early bird \$120) Non-members \$200 (early bird \$170)
Catering including lunch, tea and coffee supplied.
Location: Victorian Croquet Centre, 65 Nobel Banks Dr, Cairnlea VIC 3023

Organising Committee: John van Weeghel, Andrew Wootton, Adam Maxwell
Enquiries: rec_conference@vicbeekeepers.com.au
Website: www.vicbeekeepers.com.au/events



DCAs

WHAT DO WE KNOW ABOUT DRONE CONGREGATION AREAS?

By John Kennedy

One of the great “known unknowns” if not unexplainable beekeeping issues concerns Drone Congregation Areas or DCAs to those in the business.

Dr Stephen Fleming who holds down a number of posts in the UK, including as co-editor of the Beecraft magazine, as a beekeeper himself, as well as managing the hives owned by impresario Andrew Lloyd Webber has put his knowledge of the topic to a recent meeting of two prominent beekeeping clubs in Cornwall.

Fleming also authored a paper with the title “The Scilly game of drones” which is on the Beecraft website and includes a short 20 second explanatory video which should be accessible if you engage in a web search. (It should be noted that the Scilly Isles are a collection of small islands with a number of active beekeepers that are located some distance off Lands End in Cornwall).

After reading his presentation I have distilled a number of his views.

DCAs are normally high up in the sky where male bees (drones) gather and are ready to engage with queen bees to be impregnated on their first flight.

Stephen noted that DCAs were first documented by naturalist Gilbert White in his diary on the 28th of June

in 1792, a year before his death, as he picked up the sound up bees humming as he walked. Although he could not see them, and even though his hearing was poor he recorded them.

It is posited that White could identify an audible humming and his recording is still available today.

The BBC played this recording on the 225th anniversary of his passing in June 2017 and it was noted by observers present that the sound of the bees was incredibly clear.

Fleming answered a number of questions at his Cornwall drone presentation including why they choose a DCA.

His thoughts include that primary causes may be magnetism, polarised light, light density, even thermals or air rising up a slope, or pheromone trails.

He added that drones only live for a few months on average, so they are not showing younger drones where to meet. But some instinctive behaviour led them to the same locations.

Where they go and why drones choose a DCA is a big mystery.

But there is something that lures virgin queens to them, and Fleming felt that thermals might be one of the positive factors involved.

On how many drones there are in a DCA there is a formula that enables the estimation of the number.

(Continued on page 14)

The industry benchmark in beekeeping equipment & stainless steel manufacturing. Creating the largest Automated Honey Extractors in the world!



Horizontal Extractors

- 36 to 60 frame 3 bank • 48 to 144 frame 4 bank
- 198 frame 6 bank • Twin Systems
- Automated self loading machines
- Wax Melters – 200 ltr to 750 ltr
- Reducers – 1200 to 1800
- Capping spinner • S/S vane pumps
- Centrifuge • Heat exchange
- Storage tanks • Mixing/heating tanks

*Prestige
Stainless*

1994 Finlay Road (P.O. Box 187) Tongala Victoria 3621
P: +61 3 5859 1492 • F: +61 3 5859 1495
E: info@prestigestainless.com
www.prestigestainless.com.au

DCA's, cont'd

(Continued from page 13)

Fleming calculated the likely drone number at between 1700 to 2500 odd.

He embarked on a trial in the Scilly Isles to go hunting for a DCA.

The factors he employed were synthetic 9-ODA, an attractant available only in very small quantities and painted on a queen cage, or a spare caged queen, an approximately four metre long fishing rod to elevate the lure and a radio controlled drone. along with global earth, a knowledge of the location of local apiaries and a grassland environment where it is easier to see DCAs without tree cover.

The efficacy and results of this trial are shown in the short video on his presentation referred to earlier.

A number of Fleming's conclusions are also presented.

Firstly, the preferred time of day for drone flights which in southern England he puts at between three and five pm, and an ideal summers day for DCA finding is around 19 degrees C.

His theory being that drones prefer to fly into a breeze as it gives them better control over their flight.

At a NEAA Field Day at Swanpool a few years ago I asked noted queen breeder David Briggs what the best indicator was of an active DCA.

He replied that evidence of bees flying with a humming sound he thought was a likely indicator, so the late Gilbert White may have been on the right track in 1792!

AgriFutures Australia: New Publication - Resilient beekeeping in the face of varroa

To support the industry through the transition to management phase, AgriFutures Australia has invested in research to understand what we know and don't know about varroa, and how it may react under Australian conditions. The project involved a literature review, a survey and interviews with experts to develop a proposed national strategy for the management of varroa and to identify knowledge gaps and the research required to help beekeepers live with varroa. AHBIC believes this publication is a valuable starting point in Australia's transition to management of varroa. Access the AgriFutures publication [here!](#)

The Australian Bee Journal welcomes letters and contributions from readers and members. Please send any letters, articles or photos to abjeditors@yahoo.com

LYSON BEEKEEPING SUPPLIES

OVER 500 PRODUCTS PREMIUM EUROPEAN EQUIPMENT AUSSIE OWNED

The advertisement features a central collage of images in hexagonal frames: a beehive, a blue and pink storage unit, a person in a beekeeping suit, a beehive with a yellow cover, a person in a beekeeping suit, a beehive, a person in a beekeeping suit, and a beehive. Below the collage, a yellow banner reads "BEEKEEPING NOTEBOOK".

WE'RE HERE FOR EVERY BEEKEEPER

WWW.LYSONAU.COM.AU – 1800 955 579 – INFO@LYSONAU.COM.AU

CALL FOR INTERESTED PERSONS TO SIT ON V.A.A. SUBCOMMITTEES

During the last year, we as an organization have seen an enormous amount of change as we aim to deliver good governance and guidance to our Association through these challenging times.

Some of these changes include:

- Adoption of our upgraded Constitution, along with accompanying By-Laws.
- Board Structure for our Executive Committee.
- Exploring the idea of a paid CEO
- Rebranding our Association.
- Re-introducing a Printed journal and upgrading our web site.
- Strengthening our Insurance for Affiliated Clubs and members
- The introduction of a more inclusive sub-committee platform for members.

This last change I would like to talk on more, as it creates the opportunity for members to get more involved with driving the Association into the future, with all the challenges that presents. Last year the Board decided to introduce two new Sub-committees, [a Recreational and a Commercial Sub-Committee].

Each Sub-committee will have a Board member as convener with five committee members. I encourage everyone that would like to be part of one of these committees to submit an expression of interest to the Board. Please include: Your name, address, Sub-committee you would like to join, number of hives and a short statement of why you would like to be involved.

To qualify to be Commercial preferably you should be running more than fifty hives. Expressions of interest can be emailed to vaa@vicbeekeepers.com.au by the 30th of March 2024. The board will then choose the candidates and you will be notified if successful or not.

We are hoping that this will give all members, whether Recreational or Commercial, the opportunity to have their concerns heard at the management level and present a more united approach to decision making. We also encourage affiliated Clubs and VAA branches to consider becoming involved with this new approach.

Hoping for a positive response.

Regards, Phil McPherson,
V.A.A. Vice President

introducing... Mineral Bee™



100%
NATURAL



Give your bees the boost they need

MINERALS & TRACE ELEMENTS

For Bees



Scientifically proven to contain the same key minerals and trace elements as honey and pollen. Also contains amino and fatty acids. Simply add 10ml to 1L of bee syrup or drinking water.



	Potassium	sulphur	Phosphorus	Nitrogen	Magnesium	Sodium	silicon	Iron	Zinc	Copper	Manganese	Molybdenum	Boron	Calcium	Vanadium	Nickel	Lithium	Iodine	Chloride	Glutamic Acid	Fatty Acids
MINERAL BEE	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
HONEY	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
POLLEN	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
SUGAR SYRUP	✗	✗	✗	✗	✗	✗	✗	✗	✗	✗	✗	✗	✗	✗	✗	✗	✗	✗	✗	✗	✗

+61 (0)4 81 972 930

info@mineralbee.com.au

www.mineralbee.com.au

250ml \$29.95 - 1 Litre \$59 - 5 Litre \$200 - 10 Litre \$400 - 1000 litre by request

AGRISEA BEE SUPPLEMENT

Agrisea is made from New Zealand kelp which is fermented to extract the vitamins, minerals and Amino acids to promote greater brood raising and improved health. Bees prefer Agrisea as it is more palatable than other supplements, try it and compared the taste. Agrisea can be fed to bees with sugar syrup, added to water, or in patties. When putting stickie frames back onto bees spray them with water and Agrisea. This will stop the bee robbing and help the bees clean the combs, as well as increase brood laying. No residues and all-natural components.

1 litre \$39, 5 litre \$105, 20 litre \$300

BLUE JACKETS

Blue jackets are made from a lightweight ventilated material. Amazingly it is rare for the bees to sting through the material. Cool to wear and easy to slip on, no zippers or other problem areas. Hand wash and they dry in a few hours. Can be placed in the glove box or under the car seat. \$60 posted Australia wide.

**Also FULL DEPTH ASSEMBLED & WIRED PINE FRAMES
And PAULOWNIA TIMBER LOCK JOINT FULL DEPTH & IDEAL BOXES
and more**

GEELONG HONEY P/L TRADING AS EDMONDS HONEY

5 LOWER DUNEED ROAD. MOUNT DUNEED 0412 735 179

www.edmondshoney.com.au

OPEN 6 DAYS A WEEK 8.30AM TO 5PM CLOSED SUNDAYS

SHERRIFF OFFERS BEE SUIT REPAIR

By John Kennedy

Noted Cornwall based, long established bee suit manufacturer B J Sherriff is offering a repair and refurbishment service.

For many years Sherriff was the only accessible supplier of bee suits locally, until many other manufacturers including locally and from the Asia Pacific region entered the market.

This suggests there is still a goodly number of veteran beekeepers who still retain and probably use an original Sherriff bee suit.

The company is now offering relatively inexpensive services including zip replacement or a partial refurbishment of patching fabric tears, reinforcing pockets and replacing ankle cuff and thumb loops all for 25 pounds sterling.

Then there is a full replacement service adding the above and Velcro replacements. There is a delivery fee of seven pound 15 to all repairs except for those which may be covered by a warranty.

You will of course need to ship your original bee suit by post (and at least washed before return) to B J Sherriff in Cornwall UK or advise them on hello@bjsherriff.com of its shipment.

Introducing Karyn Di Florio Victoria's new Bee Biosecurity Officer

After 15 years working at the Melbourne Wholesale Markets (both Footscray and Epping) and in Agriculture Victoria's Plant Biosecurity Team, Karyn Di Florio recently joined the apiary team as the Bee Biosecurity Officer.

Karyn brings with her a wealth of government and agricultural knowledge and experience, particularly in plant biosecurity. Her role within the markets team involved conducting surveys, completing inspections and fumigation treatment monitoring, as well as auditing and issuing health certification. She also delivered pest and disease surveillance programs. Her initial interest in apiary biosecurity came through the State Quarantine Response Team (SQRT) program while training as a Team Leader in 2020. Since then Karyn has worked with the apiary team in a number of roles including compliance and inspection operations at almond pollination and being part of Agriculture Victoria's response to the Varroa mite incursion. Most recently Karyn has filled the position of Movement Controls Officer (Permits) for the varroa project team for the last 12 months, which involved aligning permit conditions to the Code of Practice, determining conditions and working with industry. Her initial interest in apiary has led to more permanent involvement by taking on the role of Bee Biosecurity Officer (BBO), and she now keeps a hive at home.



Steam

For decapping, extractors,
wax reducer & wash down



Fully Automatic Electric Steam Boilers

Model shown ranges
from 3kW to 42kW

- Steam output from 5.7 to 66.8kg/hr.
- Models range from 1/3 h.p. (3kW) to 48 h.p. (480kW).

Advantages

- Fast steam raising
- Compactly packaged & self contained, no plant room required
- 99% Thermal efficiency
- Low capital & low installation costs
- No boiler attendant required (state regulations may limit maximum capacity)
- Simple installation requires only connection of water & electricity
- No flue – no fire – no risk of explosion – no fumes or smell
- No oil storage tank – no oil deliveries
- Clean equipment & work area
- Can be installed adjacent to steam appliance in workspace
- Quiet & reliable operation – low maintenance cost
- Simple to operate & maintain – no sophisticated burner/ignition/draft controls – no fire brick maintenance
- Corrosion resistant, no tubes, gussets or stays – no heat transfer surfaces
- Low heating element replacement cost
- All spare parts available ex stock
- Comprehensive operating & maintenance instructions, wiring & piping diagrams accompany each boiler

SIMONS BOILER CO.

755 Botany Road
Rosebery NSW 2018

Ph: (02) 8338 8660

Fax: (02) 8338 8661

Australian family owned
company Est.1932

34 Strong Avenue,
Thomastown, Victoria 3074
Ph: (03) 9462 6700

Agents in all other states

www.simonsboiler.com.au

VAA Melbourne Section Report

The end of 2023 was celebrated with a Pizza night. The January Meeting had live bees and wax processing gadgets. We elected VAA MS Rep to the VAA Board. The Recreational Beekeepers Conference is March 9th. Beekeeper Training course in March 2024. Honey at the Apiary. Varroa education.

Hello Beekeepers and Bee lovers

The VAA MS hopes that you are all producing honey or achieving your particular goals for this season. I think the vegetation has been providing food so much better this year than the last two or three. The weather will change of course and so will our beekeeping practices as the little mites make their way around Australia. It seems reasonable to expect a big impact on the recreational beekeepers as they learn how to manage the mite and whether this is still what they want to do. The "5 P's" will help here (see later).

What ever happens in your beekeeping, it is almost certain that being part of a beekeeping group will help you work through the issues and stay motivated.

VAA Melbourne Section Rep elected

Short for the VAA Melbourne Section Appointed Representative to the VAA Board, for the new Board commencing after the AGM in June 2024.

John van Weeghel was selected as the VAA MS Rep at the election held at the January Meeting.

I congratulate John on his selection and recognise his ongoing commitment to all beekeepers in Victoria.

Other VAA MS people are on this years Board: Andrew Wootton and Rob Kerr. There will be an election

for some Board member positions around March - April, so if you wish to serve Victorian beekeepers that is one of your opportunities.

The December Pizza Night and the January Meeting were enjoyable events with the first being social and educational and the second being educational and social.

December Meeting

After an unintentional break in January, I'd like to thank the team for the Pizza Night organisation in December. We had a couple of standout contributions. The smoker competition was won by a young beekeeper. The variety of smoker lighting methods and fuels and also results under pressure were entertaining to see.

The quiz was a magnificent effort by Angelique Drew to combine some trivia, some facts and figures, and some regulatory questions. It reminded me that only a regular personal read of the Apiary Code of Practice and the Biosecurity Code of Practice combined with the 'will to be more disciplined' will make my beekeeping safer for me and my beekeeping safer for everyone else.

Pizza and desert were served!

January Meeting

The traditional January Meeting 'live bees' presented three hives at various stages of progress from swarmhood (or swarmliness, perhaps!). One about a month ago, one about two and half months, and one from the beginning of Spring. Mike L talked to these hives.

(Continued on page 19)



Backyard & Sideline Specialists
Premium Apiary Supplies & Training
Beekeepers Servicing Beekeepers Australia wide



EXTRACTORS bee suits **smokers** HONEY PRESSES **ADVICE** nutrition
frames **TRAINING** books **EDUCATION** SMOKER FUEL frame holders
LYSON WAX FOUNDATION **COMPLETE HIVES** beeswax **QUEEN CAGES**
excluders uncapping knives **QUEEN BREEDING** honey sieves honey gates **NUCS** VEILS
BEGINNER KITS hive tools **KIDS SUITS** WIRE **mead** honey tubs





www.becsbeehive.com.au

VAA Melbourne Section Report, cont'd

(Continued from page 18)

Gadget night was a DIY of wax processing with a few wild card show-and-tells. The presentation by attendees of how they do things on a shoestring or because they just happen to have something available or because they do too much internet surfing always provided new insights for the audience ... or themselves!

Mike L brought his pot and gas stove to melt his wax bucket contents and came up with a very clean and yellow block of wax on the night. Some things will not be new, but I am so used to water expanding on freezing, that when the wax was cooling down I was surprised to see the crater in the middle of the cooling block. Oh, yeah, nearly everything except water reduces in volume when it freezes.

Recreational Beekeeper Conference

And here it is: the Recreational Beekeepers Conference is on March 9th in Cairnlea (next to Sunshine). The facilities are very good, and so are the presenters and topics. The two areas of focus are beekeeping skills and tackling biosecurity. What are you waiting for?? Your bees aren't getting any younger and neither are you. Check out the events page on vicbeekeepers.com.au/events.

Varroa will likely occupy our minds and hands greatly in the near future, so this conference is the way to go. From my office days, some "5 P's" advice: "Prior Planning Prevents Poor Performance". The Recreational Conference will educate and guide your thoughts for countering the coming invasion of the little mites.

Beekeeper Training Course

The VAA MS is running a Beekeeper Training Course in March. This will be a few zoom sessions over a few weeks and finish with a practical day at the Collingwood Children's Farm.

Beekeeping needs knowledge and ability. This course is a good place to start. After this, you'll still need to increase knowledge, acquire your own knowledge from research and experiences, and then refine your practices in an ongoing process. I know that my honey harvesting and extraction practices have changed a lot this season as it's my first season with a large return (with extra hives as well).

Apiary

The hives at the CCF Apiary in Abbotsford are slowly gaining sufficient weight so we will have a harvest after two years of no honey production. The target date for the first extraction is the second Sunday in March. We invite you to participate in the extraction.



Photo: Rob Kerr

We will re-queen half the hives in Autumn in line with minimising risk from temperamental bees. We replaced one queen in November because the bees were just beyond reasonable. It made a complete difference, with the rider that it did take 11 weeks to get the last of the grumpy bees out of the hive. A good hint to preplan regular, new, well bred queens to avoid having grumpy bees in the first place!

We have been performing Varroa mite tests and recording the testing activity on BEEMAX.

February

The February Meeting is on Thursday the 29th: in the tradition of role reversal, does this mean the bees get to inspect us? Being the end of Summer, we will have a panel discussing aspects of Autumn beekeeping. Bring along your thoughts. Beginner's Corner with segments on flora, disease, and your beekeeping questions will precede the panel.

The Library will be open with its huge range of books and other media for loan. And you can enjoy a snack and cuppa before, during and after the meeting. Bring along a little extra cash to pick up something from the shop.

See you there!

Thanks go to all the regular contributors and attendees to the Melbourne Section. Keep on beekeeping on.

Enjoy your bees,

Rob Kerr, VAA Melbourne Section Secretary

0421 078 387

vaamelbournesection@hotmail.com



Prices include GST:

1-10	\$33.50 each
11-49	\$31.00 each
50-100	\$29.00 each
OVER 100 (in total)	\$28.50 each
200 and over—Discounts apply	

Queen Rearing Manager: Rose Taylor - 0409 667 908

Package bees available October to March...

Terms: Payment prior to delivery/pick-up

FOR ORDERS OR ENQUIRIES CONTACT
ROSE and NICOLE TAYLOR / ROWENA

1800 024 432 FREE CALL from anywhere in Australia
(Call from anywhere in Australia for the price of a local call)

IF UNANSWERED: (02) 6368 3788

Or write: 58 Marshalls Lane, Blayney, NSW 2799
Email: aqbe@bigpond.com / Fax: 02 6368 3799

Introducing
**BETTER BEETLE
MANAGEMENT
TECHNOLOGY**
from Nuplas

**AUSSIE OWNED & MADE
FOR AUSSIE HONEY**

**better
beekeeping.**

*Having trouble
with Small Hive
Beetle hiding in your
plastic frames?*

Nuplas Apiarist Supplies has the solution with our new BBM Frames, using our specialised *Better Beetle Management Technology*. With over 400 extra cells moulded into the perimeter wall of the frame, your bees can store honey and keep the pesky beetle out of those tricky hiding places.

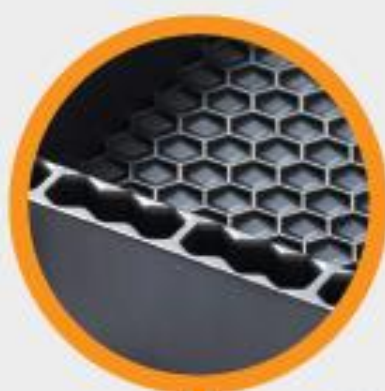
Our constant drive to be innovative in everything we do, is just another way we listen to our customers and help you to maximize your honey production.

nuplasapiaristsupplies.com.au

**BBM TECHNOLOGY IS A NEW
INNOVATIVE INITIATIVE BY NUPLAS
APIARIST SUPPLIES PROVIDING
GREATER HIVE PROTECTION FROM
SMALL HIVE BEETLE.**



**BETTER BEETLE
MANAGEMENT**



**OUTER
FRAME CELLS**

*Allows bees to access
cells and chase out
the beetle leaving
them nowhere to hide,
as well as store honey*



**DRONE
SIZE CELLS**

*Produce drones
on demand
with easily
identifiable
green colour*



**UNIQUE
SAW TOOTH
DESIGN**

*Provides extra
stability and prevents
frame from slipping
during extraction*

**PROUD SUPPLIERS OF AUSTRALIA'S
MOST EXTENSIVE RANGE OF FRAMES AND FOUNDATION**

- ▶ Full Depth Plastic Frame and Foundation
- ▶ Full Depth Drone Comb Plastic Frame
- ▶ WSP Depth Plastic Frame and Foundation
- ▶ Ideal Depth Plastic Frame and Foundation
- ▶ Ideal Out Comb Plastic Frame
- ▶ Full Depth, WSP and Ideal Timber Frames
- ▶ Full Depth, WSP and Ideal Plastic Foundation
- ▶ Assembled Timber Frames with Plastic Foundation
- ▶ Assembled Wired Timber Frame
- ▶ Assembled Timber Frame with Plastic Foundation
- ▶ Assembled Wired Frame

AHBIC January 2024 Newsletter Extracts

CEO Update January 2024

Happy New Year for what I hope, will be a better year for our industry.

2024 will be another big year for AHBIC, doing the best we can for industry with the resources we have got. This year will be packed with activities including transition to management, importing honey testing, levies and strong lobbying to the government to try and get a better deal for our beekeepers.

Since our December newsletter, Bianca and I have each had short break over Christmas/New Year, in order to recharge, ready for what will be another intense year. As a result, our readership would have noticed a short pause in some of our regular AHBIC communication, we are pleased to be back, with the new year well upon us for our January newsletter drop.

Varroa Response

On December 19th, 2023, the CCEPP met to discuss the response plan v4 (T2M) and made some recommended amendments for out of session approval with the aim of a NMG meeting mid-January for final approval. We are now late January and waiting for the NMG meeting which will likely be scheduled second week of February.

The core activities in the T2M plan remain relatively unchanged from what has been presented to AHBIC's member bodies previously. There is likely to be a significant debate at the NMG meeting regarding timeframes of T2M. AHBIC is lobbying strongly for exceptional circumstances, to be applied to some activities for extension to 24 months, this is beyond what is written into The Deed, which states T2M activity won't exceed 12 months.

CRC for Pollination Security

Unfortunately for our industry the CRC for pollination security bid was not successful this round. Hopefully the core bid group can maintain momentum and energy to bid again in the upcoming rounds. This leaves our industry reliant on the existing R&D funding mechanisms which is insufficient now Varroa has arrived.

Industry statistics

Current data review on national hive numbers has shown our industry has increased by 200,000 hives over the last 3 years. About half operated by recreational beekeepers and half by commercial beekeepers. The number of commercial beekeepers has remained rela-

tively unchanged at around 1,800 but the recreational sector has increased from around 28,000 in 2019 to approximately 47,000 registered recreational beekeepers in 2023.

Interestingly our industry continues to import significant amounts of honey. The volume has been consistent at around 8,000t per annum for the last decade with exports declining to only 3,000t in 2023. The volume of honey exported is now at the lowest levels since the 1960's perhaps demonstrating our lack of competitiveness on the global stage with pricing (current global honey commodity price at \$3.80 AUD). 2023 also recorded a national levied honey production of 17,000t, significantly down on the long-term average of 20,000t.

Undoubtedly imported honey is influencing farm gate prices but is it the only influence? Our industry has increased hive numbers by 200,000 hives over the last 3 years, yet we are recording low notional levied honey production and the lowest export volumes on record. Where is all the honey from the additional hives going? Clearly not through the established industry supply chain. Perhaps direct to customers bypassing the levy system? If so, what influence is all the additional honey in the system having on honey pricing? Either way, beekeepers and packers have sheds full of honey, suppressing farm gate prices to unsustainable levels.

Red Dwarf Honey Bee incursion in WA

A total of 24 active colonies have now been identified and destroyed with an additional 9 abandoned nests found. Eugarroa has been confirmed in 23 of the 24 colonies. Surveillance on European honey bee colonies as not detected any Eugarroa at this stage.

DIPIRD continues to send surveillance crews to Burrup Peninsula with the aim of determining the spread of the pest.

The Month Ahead

We are all eagerly awaiting the final NMG approval of the T2M plan, as once approved activities will start to ramp up. We are acutely aware of the need for training and support, and we are doing all we can to work with the process for an outcome as quickly as possible.

AHBIC has been maintaining involvement as ILO with the NSW varroa response, ILO in the AgVic team through regular response team meetings and a point of contact for the South Australian PIRSA team assisting their planning and preparations moving forward.

2024 Levied industries Advisory Panel member recruitment

AgriFutures Australia is currently recruiting for Advisory Panel members across a number of our levied industries. Advisory Panel members are required to work closely with AgriFutures and industry organisations. Functions of the Advisory Panel include:

- Advising on industry requirements for investment through the development and monitoring of research, development and extension (RD&E) plans.
- Providing recommendations to AgriFutures on suitable RD&E opportunities & activities to address industry issues.
- Providing feedback and investment advice on RD&E proposals to ensure alignment with RD&E plans.
- Advising and assisting in the dissemination, adoption and commercialisation of RD&E activities.

The Honey Bee & Pollination Advisory Panel has one available position for a commercial honey producer or someone with extensive skills in honey production. Significant governance and financial management skills will be highly regarded, however they are not mandatory. Appointment of the successful Advisory Panel applicant will commence immediately. [Applications](#) close Tuesday, 27 February 2024 at 5pm AEDT

New Book Release

By John Kennedy

EVER WANTED TO PRODUCE & SELL ROYAL JELLY?

Less than a handful it seems of local beekeepers concentrate on the production of Royal Jelly from their hives.

This practice may change now that a "how to do it guide" or manual has been released by the leading publisher of bee books in the world.

Northern Bee Books (www.northernbeebooks.co.uk) is the source for a 102 page paperback simply titled "Producing Royal Jelly".

It is authored by scientist, agricultural researcher with his doctorate in plant pathology, Dr Ron van Toor, who as part of his credentials also worked with the NZ Ministry of Agriculture & Fisheries to solve specific problems in the export of honey bees and the production of royal jelly.

Van Toor's book breaks the topic up into sectors

beginning with a section on why bees produce royal jelly, its components and perceived benefits, chemical composition and qualities and therapeutic uses including for humans with recommended doses.

Next comes a preparation for production section including hive layouts, hive designs and queen cells. How to supplement the bees diet with protein and sugar feeding with then a section on larvae transfer.

The publisher's information notes that whether you own one or 1000 hives this manual will take you through the royal jelly production process with step by step instructions.

There is also a section on international standards, storage and sale of the fresh product.

If you see royal jelly as a new value adding initiative for your beekeeping operation, this manual seems an ideal primer.

It is available from the aforementioned publisher at a cost equal to the \$A equivalent of 10 pounds 95 shillings sterling, plus packing and postage to your local address.

VAA conference - 4th to 6th June 2024 Wonthaggi Workmen's Club



Phone (03) 9587 5950

Email redpaths@redpaths.com.au

Web www.redpaths.com.au

"Supplying beekeepers for over 50 years"

Redpath Quality "Weed Process" Comb Foundation
Alliance (NZ) Beekeepers Woodware
Lega (Italy) Extractors, Honey Tanks and Pumps
Pierce (USA) Electric and Steam Uncapping Knives
Beeco (AUS) Stainless Steel Smokers
Ecrotek (NZ) Full Bee Suits

And many more quality apiary items also available in
our shop and online.



Opening hours

Monday to Friday:

9am - 5pm

Saturday morning:

(August to March)

9am - 12pm

**193 COMO PARADE EAST,
PARKDALE 3195**



AUSTRALIA'S NO.1 BEEKEEPING LOADER

BEE SMARTER. WORK SMARTER.

Add efficiency, comfort and versatility with a multi-purpose loader from Avant Equipment Pty Ltd

Manufactured in Finland to the highest specifications, these machines are reliable and well designed for access, safety and ease of maintenance. Free call 1800 686 411 to organise your obligation free demo!



- ✓ Ability to load the truck from one side using telescopic boom
- ✓ Huge lifting capacity up to 1500kg
- ✓ Park sideways across truck
- ✓ Optional air-conditioned cabin
- ✓ Self Levelling Boom
- ✓ Prompt delivery Australia wide

- ✓ All terrain 4wd with outstanding stability
- ✓ Backed by a Family business for over 25 years
- ✓ Save time and man power
- ✓ Easy to access and operate
- ✓ Over 200 attachments
- ✓ Easy finance options available



**1800 686 411 | sales@avantequipment.com |
www.avantequipment.com**

BeeHero

ADVANCES POLLINATION IN CALIFORNIA AND MILDURA

By John Kennedy

BeeHero an Israeli start-up company, now based in California, is using the almost imminent (in March) pollination season for almonds in California to demonstrate its new hive monitoring technology to provide a data driven oversight for commercial beekeepers.

BeeHero says that its technology, developed by commercial beekeepers for commercial beekeepers, provides real time colony health insights to pollination activity.

By using an in-hive detector it says the advantage should be lower operational costs by managing pollination team personnel more effectively, by obtaining reduced mortality rates for the bees, and by managing factors like colony stress when it strikes, and by having stronger healthier colonies.

And it says a logical outcome should be by getting premium pollination prices by having stronger, better performing colonies.

BeeHero says its technology is exciting “making it much easier (for the beekeeper) to plan for the season ahead”.

And for almond growers in particular it says “its technology should optimise and increase their yield by predicting and perfecting their pollination”.

In July last year BeeHero announced that it had reached agreement with Monson’s Honey and Pollination in Mildura as its official entrance into the Australian market.

They said the partnership will bring the groundbreaking hive monitoring technology to Australian bee-

keepers and growers.

To quote their announcement, Bee Hero said their technology would help Monson’s to manage their bee-keeping and pollination activities year-round.

”With insights viewable 24/7 in the BeeHero app. beekeepers can virtually manage their day to day apiary tasks and streamline their workload and yard maintenance not only during pollination season, but in between seasons.

“For growers, the BeeHero platform ensures accuracy of deployment and data driven insights for improved outcomes,”

BeeHero uses unobtrusive, low cost, in hive IoT sensors to monitor each hive continuously and remotely collecting unprecedented audio and biological data.

The BeeHero platform then analyses it using AI-powered algorithms, providing information for beekeepers to better manage their hives and take proactive and preventative action when necessary, removing ambiguity, guesswork and inaccuracy from pollination processes and lowering colony mortality.

It says that its technology brings transparency and efficiency to the complex logistics of commercial crop pollination as Precision Pollination as a Service (or PFaaS) resulting in better crop yields and increased profits.

It adds that its technology is rapidly evolving to build a resilient and future proof sustainable agricultural system.

For more information see www.beehero.io

Photo: GA Jackson



McCahon's Bee Material

**Call and see Barry and his gang
at work making foundation.**

**Bring your wax to be
processed into foundation.**

- Supers
- Frames
- Lids
- Bottoms

and most lines on hand

**Jubilee Lake Road
Daylesford, Victoria
Ph: 03 5348 2533**

Clayton Plastics

Servicing the honey industry for over 40 years.

Jars & Squeezes



250gr & 500gr
Square Jars



300ml Twist
& Squeeze



500gr Squeeze
(Honey Comb)



500gr Upside
Down Squeeze



250gr & 500gr
Amber Jars

Pails



Non Tamper Proof Pails

500gr, 1kg, 1.5kg, 3kg, & 5kg Pail
(500gr, 1kg, 1.5kg available in clear as well)



Tamper Proof Pails

1kg, 1.5kg Honey Pails &
2.2L, 5L Pails

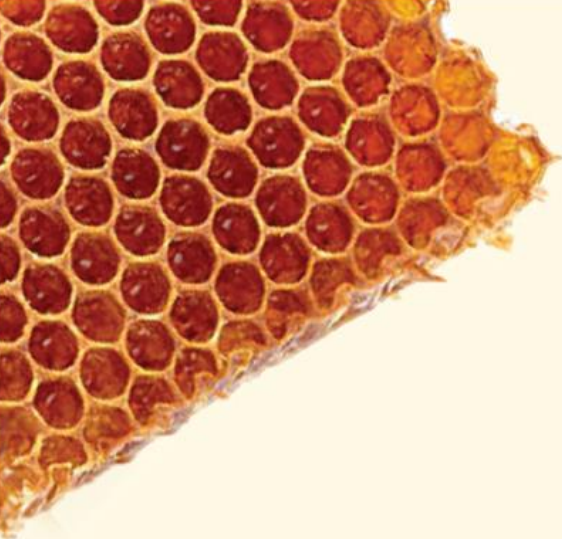


10L, 15L, 20L Pails

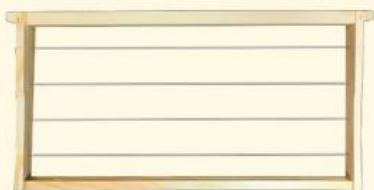
AK
AU KINGSUN

Clayton Plastics

www.claytonplastics.com.au



Bee Frames - Wood and Plastic



Wood Frame Full Depth
Assembled With Wire



Wood Frame Full Depth
With Plastic Foundation
(Not waxed)



Plastic Frame Full Depth

Plastic Beehive

Plastic Beehive with 10 Frames

Material: food grade polypropylene

Thickness: 30mm

Working life: 30 years

Packing dimension: 60x50x44cm 13.8/kg



Features:

UV resistant

Thermal insulated increasing honey production

Light weight for easy lifting and carrying

Antioxidant plastic material for longer life expectancy

Holds standard and full depth frames

Easily assembled

Digital Thermometer

Built in ventilation

No painting required

What you get:

2 box hive consisting of:

1 x ventilated top cover

1 x full size super

1 x Queen excluder

1 x brood box

1 x bottom board (including 2 feeders and pollen trap)

1 x Entrance reducer

4 x Lock, Latch connectors

1 x Temperature Gauge



Dealing With Thixotropic Honey

By John Kennedy

David Evans is an accomplished Scottish beekeeper and researcher (he is an Emeritus Professor of Virology at St Andrews University where he has done a lot of work on bee viruses) and he writes regularly on bee issues as The Apiarist.

His latest topic is on honeys which are thixotropic (a word that means - like a gel).

In New Zealand some manuka types pose this challenge at extraction time.

In the UK as David Evans notes it is a relevant problem in extracting heather honey types.

Even here in Australia beekeepers often see it with honeys that the bees have harvested from tea tree or Burgan vegetations. I've also heard of some local beekeepers operating Flow Hives who have found that the honey condition is so gel-like that extraction by moving the combs doesn't work.

In New Zealand and the UK there are a number of "pricker devices" on offer which penetrate each cell in a manner that encourages the honey to flow.

Evans devotes his latest writing to a discussion on the thixotropic condition of honey and its solutions.

He is very keen on a German manufactured device known as a Speidel Hydropress – a product that is used extensively by wine and cider makers and also for perry

and mead, as a means to press fruits, grapes and berries.

It is effectively a version of a stainless steel press with an exterior pierced frame.

Rather than using a screw to press the contents the pressure is applied to the contents by an internal rubber hydraulic bladder that is powered by a hose connected to tap water.

(I note that the same principle is applied in large scale winemaking by what is described as a bag press.)

David Evans gives the Speidel Hydropress a good review as a solution to dealing with thixotropic honey (rather than simply hand crushing the cut comb).

I did a bit of product research and found that several local winemaking suppliers have it listed and available for sale.

The smallest and cheapest version is described as being of 40 kilograms capacity and it retails at about \$1700.

One supplier notes that it is ideal of use without electricity and without muscle power, and that the hydraulic press "can also be used for pressing honeycomb, tomatoes, macerated tobacco, or citrus fruit" and that it gives a high juice yield quickly, with less waste.

So, if your bees produce a honey from such difficult to extract floral resources, a Speidel Hydropress might offer a solution at extraction time.

THE PASSING OF KIM FLOTTUM

By John Kennedy

Kim Flottum, the long term editor (for 33 years) of the Bee Culture magazine, and author of at least ten useful books in beekeeping, including backyard and commonsense topics which have all sold in very large numbers around the world, passed away at his home on December 10, 2023.

His passing at 76 years of age was from complications from diabetes, and although he had retired he was still actively communicating about bees, beekeeping and equipment by a podcast series.

Now a memorial service and a celebration of his life is to be held in his home town of Medina Ohio at the Medina Community Centre on Saturday April 13th.

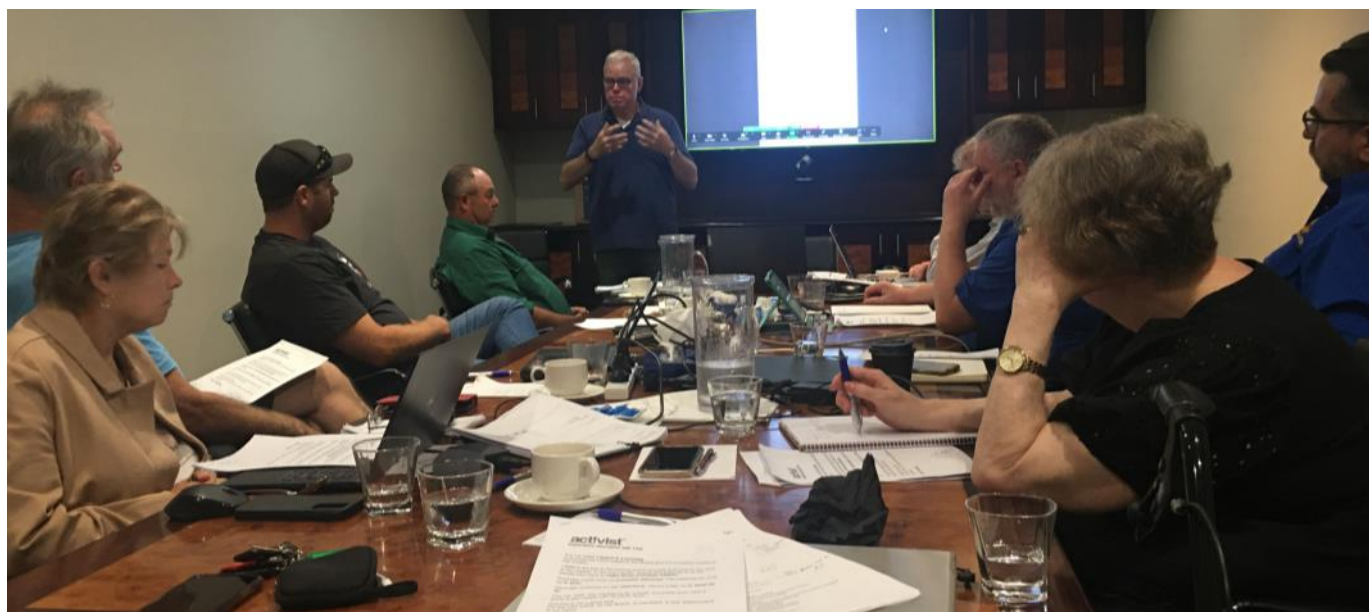


Photo: John van Weeghel,

The VAA Board at work, the gentleman near the screen is Barry Robinson who will do a VAA rebrand

BIBBA Against Bee Imports Into UK

BIBBA RAILS AGAINST BEE IMPORTS INTO UK – VARROA INCLUDED

By John Kennedy

BIBBA - the British Bee Improvement & Bee Breeders Association has restated its opposition to imported queens and bees from other countries, including from the EU, in a review of its policies on managing and controlling pests and diseases of honey bees citing varroa as a major negative.

Its policy on varroa is available from the website www.bibba.com

The review, running to ten printed pages, is a useful reference noting that the mite was first detected in the UK in 1992 and adding that it is difficult now to find a "varroa free" colony in the UK.

Whereas in some countries like France it has been prevalent since the 1970s.

It notes that "without the treatment of suitable varroa controls at the right time most of the honey bee colonies in temperate climates would collapse within a two to three year period."

But it adds "regular treatment has led to a substantial increase in beekeeping costs and an increased risk of chemical residues in honey bee hive products".

It notes that remote areas of northern Scotland and some islands remain free of varroa, but there have been

some results in breeding bees that are tolerant to varroa or have effective grooming, or hygienic behaviour leading to lower levels of mite infestation.

"However, many attempts have been made to develop this approach and to date none of these have been successful."

The document also considers the success of the Healthy Bees Plan introduced in the UK in 2009 to improve beekeepers' management of pests and diseases by improving training and education.

This program has only been moderately successful though, and more effort is required by beekeepers, their clubs and associations.

Feedback from those who have participated indicated a willingness to attend more training sessions, with a 70 to 75% incidence of changes made in beekeeping practice.

BIBBA says that varroa is still the major worry for the industry and more needs to be done to raise the status of the disease, and aspiring or new beekeepers should be carefully informed about the challenges of the mite and the commitment in time and money that will be needed to control and manage it effectively, together with the eventual risk of not doing so - i.e. colony losses.

With varroa now on our shores, the paper is an interesting backgrounder of likely responses required by local beekeepers.

Deadline for copy for the March journal is 10pm on Friday 1st of March 2024



Bees on catmint



Specialising in
**Caucasian
Queen Bees**

Marked Queens	-----	\$40 ea
1 - 9	-----	\$35 ea
10 - 49	-----	\$30 ea
50 - 199	-----	\$27 ea
200 plus per season	-----	Discounts Apply
Queen Cells	-----	\$8 - collect only

Breeder Queens - \$825

Naturally mated on a remote island.

Post & Handling \$15 per dispatch under 50 qty.

Prices include GST

Valid September 2019 to March 2020

Terms: Payment 10 days prior to dispatch.

For orders contact:

John Covey

Email: sales@coveybees.com.au

Ph: 0427 046 966

PO Box 72 Jimboomba QLD 4280

Bee Bits from the US

By John Kennedy

BEEKEEPING SECOND IN US POLL OF NEW HOBBY INTERESTS

According to a report published in a recent edition of US industry magazine *Bee Culture*, in a survey undertaken of 3000 respondents about the new hobbies they would most like to take up this year beekeeping emerged as the second most popular new venture.

It came in second only to aquarium keeping (or to use a buzz term aquascaping) which includes homing fish and aquatic plants.

Beekeeping was judged in the responses as the opportunity to produce your own delicious honey, as well as supporting the health and productivity of essential pollinators.

Factors like inspecting hives, managing bee health and a hands on experience that is both educational and therapeutic were also presented.

Following on in preferred hobby types were falconry, lapidary, metal detecting, home brewing, optophotography (or astro photography of celestial events), even foraging for hidden treasures like wild berries, mushrooms and herbs also rated well.

Interests right down to twentieth place were presented and were confirmed by a five year Google search analysis of interest in unconventional hobbies or pastimes.

LAUNDERING INSTEAD OF SUBSTITUTION

A new lexicon has entered the worlds of honey and beekeeping according to a recent article published in the *Bee Culture* magazine in the USA.

Honey laundering is now apparently a new term for substitution of alternative products to make up the volume of honey product sold cheaply in some retail or supermarket outlets.

The article notes that honey laundering takes place on two counts.

The first being mislabelling of honey claiming that it is sourced from a particular region or country, when it is not.

The second is honey that has contamination or cheap-

er substances added like high fructose corn syrup, rice syrup or other syrupy substances, with the product then presented and sold as pure honey, deceiving consumers and under-cutting honest honey producers.

It says to be sure that the honey purchased by consumers is genuine it can be bought directly from local beekeepers or farm markets.

It notes that some honeys are presented as “True Source Certified” or with a QR codes that provide the source information.

The *Bee Culture* article concludes with a couple of simple tests as to authenticity.

Pure honey will almost certainly crystallise over time while adulterated honey will remain syrupy.

Another is a water test achieved by putting a drop of honey in water.

Bee Culture observes that “pure honey will settle at the bottom while adulterated honey will start dissolving”.

And another solution is a flame test by dipping a match stick in honey and trying to light it.

If it lights easily the honey is pure, and if adulterated the product will prevent the matchstick from lighting due to the moisture coming from the additives.

Honey laundering or contamination is a worldwide challenge for beekeepers, and vigilant and informed consumers can play a crucial role in combating the process of buying honey with cheap alternative syrupy products added.



Photo: Aydin Oz. A honey frame I took last year at my apiary near Bendigo

New Book Releases

By John Kennedy

HEALTHY BEES HEAVY HIVES

The promised and relevant new book *Healthy Bees Heavy Hives* subtitled *How to Maximise Your Honey Crop* has emerged from the presses at Northern Bee Books in the United Kingdom.

The authors are Steve Donohoe, a successful bee farmer in Lincolnshire where he consistently achieves honey yields exceeding 130 pounds or 59 kilos per hive, and Paul Horton, a successful commercial bee farmer who runs Apidae Honey also in Lincolnshire.

Donohoe regularly moves his hives around and provides information on the best ways to do this. He also serves as a bee inspector in the UK and has previously authored the book *Interviews with Beekeepers*.

In the introduction Murray McGregor, who trades as Denrosa Apiaries at Perthshire in Scotland, comments that the book offers “a very practical set of advice and a sound description of methods that anyone seeking to enter the world of professional beekeeping really should read”.

Northern Bee Books notes that this book follows on from other landmark publications including R O B Manley’s *Honey Farming* produced in 1946, and *Honey By the Ton* from Oliver Field in 1983.

They note that the new book has clear diagrams and beautiful photographs which complement a relaxed writing style “which is both enjoyable and informative to read”.

With a retail price equivalent to 28 pounds 95 shillings, plus postage to Australia, it is a 600 gram heavy-weight paperback of 224 pages with 11 chapters rang-

ing from producing to marketing honey.

DOZENS OF HONEY RECIPES

Around the globe there are a number of beekeepers and honey producers who regularly present honey recipes in their Facebook or email updates.

Nick Hoefly, who runs the successful Astor Apiaries honey business in New York City, is one of the most regular and reliable posters of such exciting cooking options. His latest is a Whisked Cinnamon Honey Butter, a spread which seems an ideal toasted adventure. But wait a moment.

Northern Bee Books (which quite rightly claims to be the world’s largest publisher and source of bee books) has just released a contribution to this important topic. Their latest release is *Honey Recipes from a Welsh Kitchen*.

Penned by Jane Jones, it is a 118 page paperback that retails at 12 pounds 95 sterling, plus postage,

The publishers note says “his book is aimed at those who want to use one of the oldest ingredients in the world... A product that is so versatile it should not be ignored”.

Jones presents over 100 delicious recipes in an attractive book that is brimful with step by step instructions and colour photographs.

These are orderly addressed with chapters on meat, fish, vegetarian and salads, dessert, cakes, biscuits and specials for Christmas.

The book is published in conjunction with IBRA – the International Bee Research Association.

For more information or to order a copy of either book see www.northernbeebooks.co.uk



Photo: Phil McPherson. Conference about 1964 at Glenrowan with the apiary inspector Jack Ruthard-Sharp demonstrating putting a hat full of bees on his head

National Honey Show Lectures Released

By John Kennedy

The UK's National Honey Show, held over three days every October, is one of the most revered and well attended programs of bee information events held anywhere.

It includes awards for honey and all types of bee products, a huge trade show and an impressive lecture program.

To the organisers credit they release Facebook videos of a number of the technical presentations, most of which are about an hour in length.

On Boxing Day last, through the support of their major sponsor The Worshipful Company of Wax Chandlers, and a number of others including the National Lottery of the UK, a number of new videos were placed on their website, albeit some months after their actual delivery.

A key release is the presentation by Michael Palmer, the innovative operator of French Hill Apiaries in Vermont in the USA, on how he has used "Seasonal Management of Double Nuclei" to build up his substantial

number of hives.

His account ranges from creation to summer management, and swarm control to queen evaluation in nucleus colonies, varroa mite controls and winter preparations.

Another presentation is by Andrew Abrahams on 'The Colonsay Black Bee Reserve'.

Andrew, a beekeeper of 40 years, outlines his management on Colonsay, a remote Hebridean Island of Scotland with harsh and often difficult weather conditions.

Another offering is Nigel Semmens talk on the Asian Hornet and its impact on bees in the UK.

There are a number of earlier but equally interesting accounts of prior lectures presentations. All of these are available for free from the website www.nationalhoneyshow.co.uk.

For the record, the 2024 edition will be held on October 24 to 26, at the excellent venue the Sandown Park racecourse, which is only about 40 minutes by train from London's Waterloo Station, then a short walk to the grandstands.

BEE BITS

Flowers are evolving differently due to a lack of bees – and not in a good way Flowers could become smaller and less attractive as they evolve to become self-pollinating due to a decline in insects, a new study claims. The shock findings come from researchers in France who found some plants are showing reductions in floral displays and nectar production. They conclude this is because they are evolving to rely less and less on bees due to rapidly depleting populations The team behind the study, published in the journal *New Phytologist*, found a consistent average decrease of 20% in the traits of the plants used to attract pollinators, represented by decreases in nectar volume. Read the full article [here](#)

ABC News

NSW beekeepers question how to live with varroa mite as deadly pest spreads The nation's peak beekeeping industry body (AHBIC) says anxiety is high in the sector — three months after NSW walked away from trying to eradicate the deadly varroa mite. The NSW Department of Primary Industries (DPI) led efforts for 15 months to try to rid Australia of the bee parasite before that goal was considered unattainable ... Australian Honey Bee Industry Council chief executive Danny Le Feuvre said the impact of varroa had been "unmeasurable" and many felt unprepared for what was ahead. "It would be devastating, particularly having to make the sacrifice for industry and then deciding that it's not achievable," he said. Read the full story [here](#)

ABC Rural

Beekeepers demand transparency from South Australian fruit fly spray program after unexplained hive deaths Key points:

- SA beekeepers have reported the sudden deaths of tens of thousands of their bees in recent months
- The government's fruit fly eradication program has been accused of contributing to the deaths
- PIRSA says it doesn't use the chemical Naturalure on properties known to have beehives Read the article [here](#)

'Inert' ingredients in pesticides may be more toxic to bees than scientists thought ... What are inert ingredients? Inert ingredients have a variety of functions. They may extend a pesticide's shelf life, reduce risks for people who apply the pesticides or help a pesticide work better. Some inerts, called adjuvants, help pesticides stick to plant surfaces, reduce pesticide drift or help active ingredients better penetrate a plant's surface... Read the article [here](#)

ABC Rural

Australian Honey Bee Industry Council investigates concerns about imported honey

Australia was never a big importer of honey. That was until the millennium drought crippled floral reserves and prompted some companies to look overseas, lifting imports from 300 tonnes in 2000-01 to 3,000 tonnes the following year.

That number has since risen to 8,800 tonnes a year.

It came despite Australian beekeepers producing 20,800 tonnes in 2022-23, which excluded production from amateur beekeepers. Read the article [here](#)

AHBIC Industry Varroa Update 54

590 Days of Response
2nd February 2024

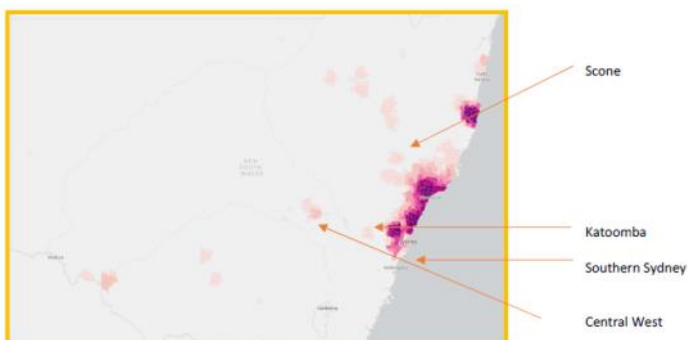
Control Order NSW

The new Control Order 2024 has gone live, effective from 1st February 2024. Disappointingly neither AHBIC nor NSWAA was afforded the opportunity to provide feedback on the control order prior to it being published. We have identified and understand the significant concerns beekeepers have with the order and we are providing feedback into the IMT demanding them to amend the order as soon as possible. We have requested that they improve consultation with industry moving forward on any significant changes in the response.

Response Activities NSW

In NSW the DPI is responsible for communications to all registered NSW beekeepers, make sure your details are up to date for information on upcoming community meetings and expressions of interest for training events.

In NSW the varroa heat map continues to provide an overview of the DPI confirmed spread of varroa in NSW. Recent additions have been made to the heat map with infested premises now showing presence further south of Sydney, Katoomba, Scone and to the west of Orange in the Central West NSW.



Response Activities VIC

No Varroa mite has been detected in Victoria. The DECCA Apiary Team are undertaking additional surveillance via sentinel hives and swarm catch boxes along their border with NSW and in the Sunraysia region in VIC. Victorian Control Area Order remains in place, preventing movement of bees and bee products across the border from any state or territory without a permit. VIC beekeepers are reminded that queen bees from NSW are NOT permitted entry into VIC.

Slowing the Spread

AHBIC encourages all beekeepers across Australia to be vigilant in continuing to take an active role in slowing the spread by regularly monitoring hives for presence of varroa through alcohol/soapy water washing/sugar rolling, reporting results and undertaking approved treatment intervention if at threshold.

To learn more about alcohol washing check out the nationally agreed resource:

<https://www.planthealthaustralia.com.au/beepestblitz/>

Chemical Treatment Table

The chemical treatment table will continue to be updated on our website please refer to the most up to date version regularly via <https://honeybee.org.au/ahbic-varroa-treatment-table/>

The most recent version of our AHBIC treatment table is dated 2nd February 2024.

You can reach out to AHBIC via:

Varroa Coordinator

Bianca Giggins

0402 467 780

bianca@honeybee.org.au

AHBIC Industry Varroa Update 53

575 Days of Response
18th January 2024

CCEPP Update

The CCEPP is in the process of circulating and finalising endorsement of Response Plan Version 4 - Transition to Management and forward to the NMG. We have been informed by the secretariat that the NMG will meet early February, until then we are all waiting for the plan to be approved and activated.

Varroa Spread

AHBIC encourages all beekeepers to continue to take an active role in slowing the spread by regularly monitoring hives for presence of varroa through alco-

hol/soapy water washing/sugar rolling, reporting results and undertaking approved treatments if at threshold. Through beekeepers reporting to the NSW DPI the varroa heat map continues to provide the best overview of the spread of varroa in NSW.

Varroa detections around the Sydney basin has seen further spread to the south of Sydney. There is now 53 confirmed new detections of varroa that have been reported across the GREEN (suppression) zone, with a further 11 within the GREEN zone awaiting laboratory confirmation. Of the confirmed 53 new infected premises, only 26 have been provided with chemical treatment from the department.

(Continued on page 34)

AHBIC Industry Varroa Update 53, cont'd

(Continued from page 33)

Emergency Order

The current NSW Emergency Order was extended toward the end of 2023 and is due to expire 31st January 2024. We are awaiting a change from this Emergency Order document to a Control Order in NSW which is consistent with the emergency response transition to management phase.

Response Activities

The response continues to demobilise with the majority of activities completed and field teams reducing. 47,060 hives have been euthanised during the response with disposal now completed. All bait stations have

now been decommissioned.

Drone ballooning across the management zones continue to validate the surveillance technique with good success.

Fipronil residue trials are continuing to determine if there are any residue effects on managed hives brought back into baited areas.

Chemical Treatment Table

The chemical treatment table will continue to be updated on our website please refer to the most up to date version regularly via AHBIC Varroa Treatment Table - Australian Honey Bee Industry Council. The most recent version is dated 10th January 2024.

Today In The Apiary: February 2008

As we move into autumn, consideration has to be given to how much surplus honey we can afford to take off and still leave sufficient stores to carry hives over winter.

There has always been discussion in the apiculture industry on certain management procedures as to when they should be carried out on a seasonal basis.

Requeening is one of these, many favouring a spring program and others opting for autumn. There are probably sound reasons for re-queening throughout the season, being applicable to prevailing circumstances at any given time.

It is suggested that the immediate focus ought to be on those hives that have failed to measure up to the standard of the majority of hives.

Strong hives, in general, maintain their hive population and continue to do so even under natural queen supersedure circumstances. These colonies recognize failing queens early and much supersedure takes place without the knowledge of the beekeeper.

The operator who has a strict requeening program, a marking of queens and an efficient recording system has an advantage in identifying queen problems.

Colonies that have failed to expand in line with the rest of the apiary could be headed by inferior queens, whether they be aged or have poor laying patterns.

Young vigorous queens, under good pollen and nectar conditions often lay out beyond bee cover and therefore expand rapidly, whereas the poor performers only maintain the status quo and do not achieve adequate population growth.

One would expect that such colonies would supersede the queen under the circumstances, but mostly do not, and the chances of survival over winter are greatly reduced and at best will not improve in the spring.

Of course other reasons such as disease and undersized divides at the wrong time will result in non-performing colonies. Small divides and swarms with only one or two frames of bee cover will take a long time to reach suitable size, even with a top queen.

Such colonies need assistance with the addition of hatching brood from strong disease free colonies. Autumn is not recommended for dividing colonies.

The answer to rehabilitation of poor performing colonies is re-queening, but those that have fallen to very low strength ought not be considered as it could be a waste of a good queen. It would be preferable to destroy the old queen and unite the bees with a strong colony. Uniting several weak colonies into one hive late in the season is never successful, as all the bees are aged.

Any proposal to requeen in the autumn should produce excellent colonies in the spring, but early action is essential because winter is only weeks away.

I am very conscious of the fact that I have promoted the above in a prevailing climate of poor nectar and pollen resources, low production, and the exploitation of the producer by the market place...

We read of cheap imports of honey from overseas countries, but when I go to the supermarket I can only buy Australian honey. Who is retailing this cheap honey? When people say to me, how do you get your honey to go thick and why is supermarket honey so thin and terrible tasting, the time has come for beekeepers to stand up and be counted. If reports are accurate, in many cases the standard of honey on retail shelves is doing nothing but harm to an excellent product.

See page 10 of this journal for more information about the *Today In The Apiary* book.

The Adapta Eke

THORNE RELEASE THE ADAPTA EKE

By John Kennedy

Thorne's, the prominent UK bee supply house, has released an interesting new timber product which it calls the Adapta Eke, which they have developed in-house to address a range of hive functions.

It fulfills a number of purposes and manipulations above the brood box including to accommodate either a feeder using either a fondant package or sugar water, to provide a clear viewing or inspection port, or a transfer screen for hive movement.

Another option is to accommodate a variety of clearer boards to assist with uncapping or extraction.

Internally the Eke has a visible green or red limiting ledge to accommodate the choices of attachments and their position within the fitting.

Another feature is an entry port for either a separate upper entry, or for ventilation.

It is marketed with a range of optional attachments

in either timber or galvanised screens.

The steel closure device is held in place by magnets embedded within the frame and can be adjusted to give a range of opening sizes.

Thorne's claim that it gives a better application for most types of an oxalic acid vaporisers as the fumes are applied more efficiently from above the frames of the brood box, instead of from below using the normal hive entry port to insert the vaporiser tool.

Whereas application from below the hive is preferable as the hot bulb of the product being vaporised has been known to create problems.

Thorne's note that with polystyrene hives this heat produced by the bulb can fatally damage hives or even fire.

There is a very informative short demonstration video available from the website www.thorne.co.uk.

It is also a useful reference for we Australian beekeepers as methods of treatment for varroa destructor are something that we are as yet, not familiar with.

Below: John van Weeghel. Saw Banksia

Right: Doug Heckathorn. Broad-leaf Privet (noxious weed)

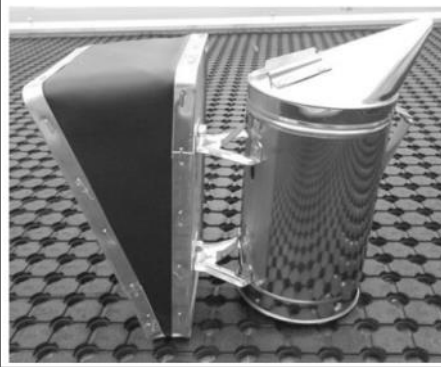


WHIRRAKEE HONEY PTY LTD

Manufacturing quality Australian
Beeco Smokers

White colorbond metal lid covers
Metal escape corners

Ph: 0427 843 383



Contacts

VAA Resources Management Comm.

Chairman: Ken Gell,
Mob: 0428 506 752
gellshoneymaryborough@gmail.com
Secretary:
Angela Enbom
0400 261 233
angela_enbom@yahoo.com

Regional Managers

Central region:
Millie Enbom-Goad
Ph: 0400 083 582
millie_enbomgoad@yahoo.com.au

North East region:

Andrew McCallum
Mob: 0448 577 780
rawhoneyvic@gmail.com

Sunraysia region:

Ron Robinson,
Ph: 03 5024 1068
honeybee711@bigpond.com

Port Phillip region:

Ashley Smith
Mob: 0419 155 857
lakesidehoney@outlook.com

Gippsland region:

Ian Cane, Mob: 0428 516 325
iancane@bigpond.com.au

Western region:

Daryl Hobbs
0427 340 197

Agriculture Victoria:

Agriculture Victoria: Apiary team
Website: [Honey bees | Livestock and animals | Agriculture Victoria](http://Honey%20bees%20Livestock%20and%20animals/Agriculture%20Victoria)
Website:
www.agriculture.vic.gov.au/livestock-and-animals/honey-bees
To report a suspect exotic please call: Exotic Plant Pest Hotline 1800 084 881
For enquiries and endemic disease notification please use:
Ph: 136 186
Email honeybee.biosecurity@agriculture.vic.gov.au
The Varroa project team can also be contacted at the above email.

For enquiries related to permits and movement restrictions:
Email honeybee.permits@agriculture.vic.gov.au
For beekeeper registration please log onto BeeMAX
www.bees.agriculture.vic.gov.au
or call the Bee Registration Helpline 1800 356 761

Current Apiary Officers

Nikki Jones
Biosecurity Manager Apiary
1 Taylor Street, Epsom,
Victoria, Australia 3551
Mob: 0428 617 071
Email: honeybee.biosecurity@agriculture.vic.gov.au

Karla Williams
Biosecurity Officer Apiary
1 McKoy Street, Wodonga,
Victoria, 3690
Mob: 0417 121 987
Email: honeybee.biosecurity@agriculture.vic.gov.au

Adam Maxwell,
Biosecurity Officer Apiary
475-485 Mickleham Road,
Attwood, Victoria, 3049
Mob: 0428 893 595
Email: honeybee.biosecurity@agriculture.vic.gov.au

Karyn Di Florio
Bee Biosecurity Officer
Email: honeybee.biosecurity@agriculture.vic.gov.au

If you can't reach an Officer and need to talk to someone urgently, please call the Customer Service Centre: Ph: 136 186

Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning (DELWP):

BAIRNSDALE:
Tracey West 03 5152 0422
BALLARAT:
Jennifer Bromley 0448 389 270
BENDIGO:
Melissa Dole 0436 615 569
Melissa.Dole@delwp.vic.gov.au
GEELONG
Linda Laurie 03 5233 5519
HEYWOOD
Jacki Hayward 03 5527 0444

HORSHAM:
Jess Dickerson 0437 913 538
MILDURA:
Dan Cadmore 03 5051 4349
SEYMOUR:
Kathryn Hamono 03 5735 4300
WODONGA:
Lloyd Beaty 02 6043 7936

Other contacts

Australian Honey Bee Industry Council (AHBIC):
CEO: Danny Le Feuvre
Mob: 0402 467 780
AHBIC@Honeybee.org.au
PO Box 42, Jamison Centre,
Macquarie ACT 2614
www.honeybee.org.au

Crop Pollination Association
Stephen Targett,
Ph 0428 649 321

Honey Bee Research & Development committee (HBRDC)
Annie Stoddart
Program Coordinator Research
02 69236918
Annie.stoddart@agrifutures.com.au

VFF State Beekeeping Branch:
Secretary: Gail Rochelmeyer
Mob: 0408 592 091

Collingwood Childrens' Farm Apiary Open 10.30-3.30
2nd & 4th Sunday of month.
collingwoodbees@gmail.com
www.facebook.com/collingwoodbees

The Australian Bee Journal welcomes contributions from beekeepers and others for inclusion in the journal. Please send your original bee and honey related photos, articles, handy hints, anecdotes, club activities etc to abjeditors@yahoo.com

Photo: Geoff Jackson



Contacts

VAA Inc Regional Groups

Bendigo Branch:

Carol Maunder,
Ph: 03 5446 7911
secretarybendigobranch-vaa@gmail.com

General Information Q&A
Meetings - 1st Wed. each month
(except Jan & Dec)
Dinner at 6.00pm (optional)
Meeting at 7.00 pm.
Lakeside Hotel, Bendigo.
Executive Committee Meeting:
3rd Wed month as required.
Venue: As notified.

Please register to attend all Meetings

Melbourne Section:

Secretary, Rob Kerr
Ph: 0421 078 387
Vaamelbournesection@hotmail.com
www.vicbeekeepers.com.au/Melbourne-Section

Information/ Education Meetings:
from 7:30 pm the last Thursday
of each month except December
Location: Church of Christ,
1 The Avenue, Surry Hills.

Sunraysia Branch:

Trevor Monson,
Ph: 03 5024 8674.
monsonshoney@bigpond.com

VAA Inc. Library Trust

Secretary: Russell Goodman,
Ph 03 9735 3836

Affiliated Organisations

Central Victorian Apiarists' Association Inc (CVAA Inc.):

Millie Enbom-Goad
Ph: 0400 083 582
cvaa_inc@outlook.com

Gippsland Apiarists' Association Inc. (GAA Inc.):

Sue Harding,
Mob: 0408 343 779
hardstein@bigpond.com

North Eastern Apiarists' Association Inc. (NEAA Inc.):

Secretary: Moss McCallum
secretary.neaa@gmail.com
"J" Beekeeping Club Inc.
35 Duncan's Lane, Diggers Rest
Meet on the 2nd Wednesday each month at 7pm

Southside Beekeepers Club:

Secretary: Ted Cottle
Ph: 0428 429 547
ted@southsidebeekeepers.com.au
7.30pm on the 4th Wed each month at Monterey Secondary College,

21 Silvertop St, Frankston North
Geelong Beekeepers Club

Pres: Stephen Fridey
Ph: 0401 897 579
info@geelongbeekeepersclub.org.au

Meetings third Friday of the month at Belmont Masonic Centre,

25 Regent Street, Belmont
Latrobe Valley

Beekeepers Assoc.

President: Sean-Paul Smith
E: LatrobeValleyBees@gmail.com

Meets 7-9pm first Tuesday each month, Old Moe Netball Courts, 99 Savages Rd. Moe
P.O. Box 323 Newborough 3825
Mob: 0466 041 199

Woodend Bee-Friendly Society

An action group of the Macedon Ranges Sustainability Group
E: wbfsm@mrsg.org.au

South Gippsland Beekeepers Inc.

Secretary: Anna Jones
Mob: 0411 770 062
secretary@sgbeekeepers.org.au
Web: <http://www.southgippslandbeekeepers.org.au/>

Meetings: second Thursday of the month at St Peters Anglican Church Hall, Cnr McCartin St. & Bruce St., Leongatha

Melbourne Beekeepers Club Inc:

Web: melbournebeekeepersclub.org.au
E: secretary@melbournebeekeepersclub.org.au

Northwestern Bee Club Inc.

President: Roger Mitchell
Mob. 0407 427 431
northwesternbeeclub@gmail.com
Web: <https://www.nwbee.club/>

Mornington Peninsula Beekeepers Association :

P.O. Box 186, Mornington, 3931
Ph: 0401 965 558

E: admin@mpba.org.au

Monthly MPBA Club Meeting - 4th Wednesday of every month at 7pm Mornington Park Pavilion, 9 Flinders Drive, Mornington

Moonee Valley Beekeepers Club Inc. (MVBC Inc.)

Secretary: Paul Kucera
mvbeekeepersclub@gmail.com
Meets at 7pm every 2nd Tuesday of the month at Maribyrnong Park Bowls Club, 195 Holmes Rd, Moonee Ponds, VIC 3039

WerriBeeks Inc.

President: Carmel Gerdson
Secretary: Helen Morland
Treasurer: Debbie Conway
E: werribeeks@gmail.com

Bee Culture

The Magazine Of American Beekeeping

140 years Experience Today's techniques -- Tomorrow's Ideas

ONLY US\$24 for a digital Subscription

www.BeeCulture.com for details



AMERICAN BEE JOURNAL

The Beekeeper's Companion Since 1861

51 South 2nd St., Hamilton, IL 62341

www.americanbeejournal.com

Helpful practical beekeeping advice and discussion of current beekeeping methods.

The oldest and largest English-language beekeeping magazine

*Only \$21 U.S. Dollars for a Digital Subscription

*Paper edition \$66 U.S. Dollars per year—12 big monthly issues

Australia's Honeybee News

"The Voice of the Beekeeper"
The Journal of the NSW AA Inc.
Published bi-monthly
Annual Subscription
Aust. \$65
Overseas \$100 AUD

For more information contact:
The Editor, PO Box 7425,
SUTTON NSW 2620
Ph: 0427 552 001
honeybeenews@bigpond.com

CLASSIFIEDS

HONEY BUYERS

Archibald's Honey Co.
Spring Rd. Dingley, VIC,
3172 Ph: 03 9551 1860
Contact: Stuart Archibald
Email: rosalie@archibaldhoney.com.au

Beechworth Honey Ltd.
38-40 Hammersley Rd.
Corowa, NSW 2646
Ph: 02 6033 2322
Contact: Steve or Jodie
Goldsworthy

Beeman Honey & Beekeeping Supplies
2/14-16 Tova Dr.
Carrum Downs Vic 3201
Ph: 0438 7465 01
Contact Moe Jarrad
majarrad@gmail.com
Beemanhoney.com.au

Capilano Honey Ltd
Capilano St.
Maryborough, VIC 3465
Ph: 07 3712 8224
0419 431 652
Contact: Stephen Covey

Goode's Honey
Lot 1, 75 Bosworth Rd
Bairnsdale, VIC 3875
Ph: 03 5152 2180
Contact: Terry Goode

Honey Buyers Group
Martin Drake,
Bendigo or Melbourne
0409 808 332

Redpath's Beekeeping Supplies
193 Como Parade East,
Parkdale, VIC 3195
Ph: 03 9587 5950
Alan Redpath
redpaths@redpaths.com.au
www.redpaths.com.au

Classified ads ONLY
\$2.20 per line
Contact ABJ Editor
PO Box 42 Newstead,
VIC 3462
or
abjeditors@yahoo.com

FOR SALE

Business for sale
Jeeralang Apiary Supplies
Koala Drive, Jeeralang Junction
Ph: 03 5122 2641
Servicing Gippsland and
Eastern Victoria

8 & 10 frame tin lids
New & recycled tin
KAS MANUFACTURING
Ph: 03 5449 6680
Mob: 0409 017 311

NEW MEMBERS

Suzanne Ditchfield
Helen Fisher
Robert Fransen
Aaron Grinter
Damien Hartrey
Murray Nagle
Jacqueline Ogier
Kamm Pryor
Paul Tobin
Adam Todhunter
Troy Watson
Dana Windle

DEATH

John Ward
former Board Member
of the CVAA Executive
passed away in January.
A prayer service was held at
St Mary's Catholic Church
Heathcote
on the 16th of January 2024.

VAA members are
reminded that they are
entitled to one FREE
6-line classified ad
each year. Contact
abjeditors@yahoo.com
Members Notices
(births, deaths etc)
are always free.

Index of Advertisers

AIR CTI	6
Aust. Queen Bee Exporters	19
Avant Equipment	24
Becs Beehive	18
Beechworth Honey	Inside back
Beeplas Australia	7
Clayton Plastics	26/27
Covey Queens	29
Dalrymple View	11
Denmar Apiaries	9
Edmonds Honey (Geelong Honey)	16
Kelvin Trading	Inside front
Lyson	14
McCahons Bee Material	25
NuPlas	20/21
Prestige Stainless	13
Redpaths Beekeeping Supplies	23
Simons Boilers	17
Stafford Engineering - EzyLoader	Back
Steritech	10
Whirrakee Honey	35
Whirrakee Woodware	8

The deadline for the March 2024 Australian Bee Journal is 10pm on Friday 1st of March



Australia's Most Satisfied Customers

Thank you to Australia's best beekeepers for supplying your honey to us. Together we can be proud to be voted Australia's #1 Honey.



OVERALL SATISFACTION



TASTE



TEXTURE & CONSISTENCY



RANGE VARIETY



VALUE FOR MONEY



PACKAGING DESIGN

If you're interested in selling your quality Australian honey or beeswax please call Steven Goldsworthy on 0419 559 242 or 02 6033 2322.

beechworthhoney.com.au



EZYLoader

www.ezyloader.com



- Manufactured in Australia
- Six models
- Customised Service

- Unique levelling feature for ease of load handling
- Boom brake system – ease of under-supering and requeening
- Split boom for load positioning anywhere within reach
- Small footprint
- Fully self contained and low maintenance
- Special range of attachment for specific industries
- Manual lifting of beehives removed – saves backs!



M & K STAFFORD ENGINEERING PTY LTD

3/204 Southern Cross Drive, Ballina NSW 2478

P 03 6686 8736 F 03 6681 6077 M 0412 426 133