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AUSTRALIAN BEE JOURNAL



VAA Board Nominees Statements ... page 32-35



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AUSTRALIAN BEE JOURNAL

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Cover photo: Lindsay Callaway

**Deadline for copy for the June 2024 journal is
10pm on Saturday 1st of June 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

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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

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VAA sub-committees & conveners

Contact by email is preferred

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Ken Gell

Finance & Insurance

Ken Gell

Education

Don Whitehead
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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
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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 program for the VAA Annual Conference is packed to the rafters with excellent presentations. Needless to say that varroa gets a fair share of attention but it also includes honey testing, quality assurance, honey packing, MRL's, sharing of overseas beekeeping tours, a Farm Business Economist, AgVic with Transition to Management report and all the usual updates and reports.

Please see pages 30 and 31 for the full program.

The organizing team, under the leadership of Lindsay Callaway, have put together an excellent program and I call on members to take advantage of three days of learning and enjoying the company of fellow beekeepers.

The Association's Annual General Meeting will be on Wednesday afternoon 5th June. All usual reports will be available and elections will be held to elect a President and two Vice Presidents.

A general business session will be held to give members the opportunity to ask questions. Please remember that recommendations can be voted on, but motions that give direction to the Board and/or Association need due notice to all members, as per the constitution.

The Board will ask the members to support a proposal to increase the membership fee for 2024-2025 by CPI, approximately 4% and rounded to the nearest dollar.

It is with great pleasure that I can report that the As-

sociation has a new Administrative Officer. After interviewing five applicants, we had a difficult decision to make as we had several excellent candidates. The interview panel agreed to offer the contract to Tino Corsetti, a gentleman that has the qualifications and ability to assist the Board in driving the Association forward. It will be a real pleasure to have once again someone that will take care of all the admin. Tino will be introduced to the members at the Annual Conference, and I know that Tino is looking forward to getting acquainted with all the members.

May I take the opportunity to remind members that there still may be time to participate in the election for the 2024-2025 Board. It is important that we have a Board that has the support of and is representative of all the members. It has been a real pleasure to be a part of the Board over the last year as we had a balanced Board that represented all VAA members.

The current Board has made themselves available to serve for another year and continue to work for a stronger Association. Thank you to all the members that have made themselves available to serve (see pages 32-35).

Hope to see you all at the Wonthaggi Workmen's Club on the 4th, 5th and 6th of June.

John van Weeghel
President

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New Book: Splitting Colonies

By John Kennedy

If you seek advice or information on how to split a hive there are numerous Facebook and video presentations presented by a range of beekeepers, bee clubs and other proponents.

But wait, a new book, released by Northern Bee Books is now available. It is a paperback first edition text of 34 pages, costing 12 pounds sterling plus \$A conversion and postage to our shores. It carries the title *Splitting Colonies*, subtitled *For The Small-Scale Beekeeper*.

It is authored by David MacFawn, a well-qualified craftsman beekeeper based in Columbia, South Carolina who is already the author of three other books on beekeeping. He has worked with a number of university professionals and has kept bees in three states of the

USA.

This book has been well reviewed in the two principal beekeeping journals in the USA.

Author MacFawn notes that splitting hives is an important means of colony increase and swarm mitigation. He says it is an art as much as a science, but success will vary year upon year based on local weather and conditions.

A variety of splitting measures are discussed including a walk away split, a split with a mated queen, and splitting with swarm cells.

An endorsement provided by Dewey Caron at the University of Delaware says the book is well illustrated, with very easy to follow information on splitting a colony and that the book will be very helpful for beginners and more experienced beekeepers alike.

www.northernbeebooks.co.uk to order.

VAA Sunraysia Branch AGM will be held at the Red Cliffs Club on Tuesday 25th June at 7pm, following a meal at 6pm

UK HONEY BEE POLLEN

By John Kennedy

With the seasons turning in the UK (and here) the prominent London Honey Co. run by beekeeper Steve Jeffrey, has launched a seasonal promotion on honey pollen.

He notes that "if you need a little boost to put a natural spring in your step we'd recommend introducing our British Honey Bee Pollen into your diet", The pollen is 100% pure and natural and is collected by honeybees in wildflower meadows in the countryside.

It is a precious low impact product that is collected without harm to the livelihood of bees or to the productivity of the colony.

London Honey Co's natural sources include blackthorn, willow, allium, blackberry, raspberry, dandelion and plum to name just a few sources, they say,

They claim it is "a super high energy wholefood packed with enzymes, high in protein and jam packed with vitamins, minerals, trace elements and phytonutrients".

Their recommendation is to enjoy a teaspoon a day to introduce the natural power of pollen and propolis into your diet by adding to breakfast yoghurt, porridge or a smoothie, or to sprinkle across salads and grains, and it is often used as a natural remedy to bring relief to hay fever sufferers.

London Honey Co offers its premium grade 100% natural British Honey Bee Pollen at 12 pounds fifty per 100 gram jar.

A value adding opportunity for local beekeepers?



I thought I would send you this drawing which was done by my granddaughter Ruby three years ago.

I came across it yesterday whilst tidying up her art works. I very much like the cells that the queen is happily flying towards though I am concerned that all of the bees might have succumbed to DWV - or maybe the wings are beating too fast to be seen.

However, I think that the then six year old was quite observant.

Dr Ingrid Galitis

Beekeeping With Varroa, A New Frontier

This year's VAA Inc. Annual Conference has taken shape with a keen focus on addressing pressing issues such as *Varroa destructor*, honey quality standards, the imminent pollination season, and the "state" of industry updates. Our keynote speakers are Worldwide, Australia wide, and Victorian wide. At the VAA Inc., we pride ourselves on being the home of Victoria's beekeepers.

Varroa, a persistent threat to our bee colonies worldwide is now endemic in NSW, and will take centre stage this year. We have a great line up of experts to discuss integrated pest management strategies and the latest research on combating this destructive parasite. We have two fully dedicated sessions focusing solely on varroa with additional varroa centric talks elsewhere in our program. Presentations will focus on practical guidance on monitoring, treatment options, and breeding practices aimed at enhancing bee resilience.

Honey quality will be another pivotal theme, with a full session dedicated to understanding and maintaining high standards in our honey production. Speakers will explore factors influencing honey authenticity and purity, while also delving into methods for detecting adulteration. A panel discussion is planned to unpack quality topics from sustainable harvesting practices to best practices in processing and packaging.

Industry updates from AHBIC, AgVic, AgriFutures,

CPAA, will offer a glimpse into the evolving landscape of Victorian beekeeping, with insights on market trends, regulatory developments (border opens and closures), and innovations in technology and equipment. Valuable perspectives on diversifying revenue streams, marketing products effectively, and staying abreast of emerging opportunities and challenges in the apiary sector.

Networking opportunities will be plenty, fostering connections among beekeepers, researchers, suppliers, and industry stakeholders. Collaboration as an industry and knowledge sharing will be encouraged, nurturing a sense of community and solidarity within the Victorian beekeeping community.

Our aim is that as you depart this year's conference you will be equipped with actionable strategies, fresh perspectives, and a renewed commitment to advancing the sustainability and prosperity of your beekeeping enterprises. The VAA Inc. will also launch its all-new brand that we hope will serve as a catalyst for driving positive change in the industry, reaffirming the critical role of all Victorian beekeepers in safeguarding pollinator health, and promoting the production of high-quality honey

Kind Regards

Lindsay Callaway

VAA Inc. conference planning committee



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Bendigo Branch Report

By Carol Maunder

Bendigo Branch of the VAA has had an active year with interesting monthly meetings. Our guest speakers covered so many interesting topics from queen bee rearing to all aspects of bee husbandry. Our Annual Beekeeping Field Day, always held on the second Sunday in October proved to be a stimulating day of learning: listening to guest speakers, visiting trade stall holders, and various open hive, beginners and other presentations.

We have a very enthusiastic membership who partake in the many activities we hold, which make for very friendly and enjoyable occasions. Our membership consists of all levels of beekeepers from absolute beginners to the most experienced. We are very fortunate within our group to have wonderful mentors with so much beekeeping experience who are always more than happy to share their tips and experience as well as learning from newer beekeepers. I really enjoy it that so many choose to stay on after meetings to chat and catch up with each other. Our barbeques for activities and interaction are so well attended, especially our Annual Autumn Pack Down Day.

I have enjoyed the last year together with the great camaraderie within our club. We invite, welcome and encourage new members regardless of levels of experience to attend meetings.

Elections held at the April AGM for Bendigo Branch VAA resulted in the appointment of the following members to our Board of Management Executive Committee for the April 2024-April 2025 year: Chair: Jamie Trimby, Deputy Chair: Max Maunder, Secretary: Peta Dawe, Assistant Secretary: Robert McDonald, Treasurer: Carol Maunder, Assistant Treasurer: Scott Wright, Resources Rep: Max Maunder, VAA Board Rep (*nominated in February*): Lindsay Callaway. Members: Committee: Margie Gallagher, Stafford Kelly, Michael St. Clair, Doug Barrett and Angelique Perry.

The April meeting's guest speaker was Lindsay Callaway, who provided a most informative, stimulating presentation about Queen Bee Rearing, which resulted in much discussion and questions.

Continued features of our meetings include: a brief description by a couple of members each meeting discussing how they started their beekeeping journey, also regular question and answer sessions, together with bunches of five general tips for beekeepers. Bendigo Branch's Mead Making session followed by a social barbeque, and then an informative Autumn pack down Day was held on Sunday 28th April, with an excellent attendance of members and other interested beekeepers.

A reminder that we encourage attendance by all beekeepers of a variety of levels of experience. We welcome you all.



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World Bee Day 20th May.

Apimondia April Newsletter

World Bee Day is observed on 20 May each year to draw attention to the essential role bees and other pollinators play in keeping people and the planet healthy. It provides an opportunity for governments, organizations, civil society and concerned citizens everywhere to promote actions that will protect and enhance pollinators and their habitats, improve their abundance and diversity, and support the sustainable development of beekeeping.

World Bee Day shines a light on the habitat of pollinators to improve the conditions for their survival so that bees and other pollinators may thrive. The date was chosen as it was the day Anton Janša, a pioneer of modern apiculture, was born. Janša came from a family of beekeepers in Slovenia, where beekeeping is an important agricultural activity with a long-standing tradition.

We have been celebrating this day since 2018, thanks to the efforts of the Government of Slovenia and FAO, with the support of Apimondia, that led the UN General Assembly to declare 20 May as World Bee Day!

Bees and other pollinators are essential for our existence, sustaining agriculture and biodiversity worldwide. With over 20,000 species of bees and various other wild pollinators, they face challenges from human activities, such as habitat loss, pesticide use, and climate change. In recognition of the pivotal role that youth can play in

addressing challenges bees and other pollinators are facing, **World Bee Day 2024** focuses on the theme "Bee engaged with Youth." This theme highlights the importance of involving young people in beekeeping and pollinator conservation efforts, recognizing them as the future stewards of our environment.

The Government of Slovenia and the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) organize an **International forum for action on sustainable beekeeping and pollination**. This biennial event (to be held in Slovenia, May 2024) brings together governments, experts, business and civil society to give a regular fresh impetus to the international cooperation on beekeeping and pollination and to align it with the quickly changing needs. It also provides a platform to share experience from beekeeping and pollination development projects and initiatives around the globe – to learn and get inspired by them. The forum will provide an opportunity for in-depth dialogue and reflection. While global in its scope and outreach, each edition has a geographical focus (Africa in 2024).

The next Apimondia Congress will be held in Copenhagen, Denmark on 23 – 27 September 2025 in Cooperation with the Beekeepers' Associations from Sweden, Norway and Denmark.

www.apimondia2025.com

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The advertisement features a black background with a yellow honeycomb pattern. At the top, the 'LYSON BEEKEEPING SUPPLIES' logo is displayed in bold yellow and black text, with a silhouette of a bee inside the letter 'O'. Below the logo, three yellow hexagonal boxes contain the text 'OVER 500 PRODUCTS', 'PREMIUM EUROPEAN EQUIPMENT', and 'AUSSIE OWNED'. The central part of the ad is a collage of images in hexagonal frames: a beehive, a person in a beekeeping suit, a blue and green storage bin, a person working with equipment, a woman smiling, a beehive, a person in a beekeeping suit, a beehive, and a beehive. At the bottom, a yellow banner reads 'WE'RE HERE FOR EVERY BEEKEEPER', and another yellow banner below it provides the website 'WWW.LYSONAU.COM.AU', phone number '1800 955 579', and email 'INFO@LYSONAU.COM.AU'.

BBVAA Pack-Down Day

By Jamie Trimby

On Sunday 28th April Bendigo Branch held their annual Autumn Pack-down.

Margie and Wayne Gallagher generously hosted the day on their property, with family helping to prepare for 35 to 45 beekeepers, thank you. The terrific facilities and weather made for an excellent day of bee chatter.

Jake and Tom Nixon provided an excellent demonstration on making or brewing Mead. Jake talked the crowd through the process of making your own Mead (recipe to be emailed out to Bendigo members later). Tom did an excellent job stirring the ingredients and keeping Jake on schedule. Jake was inundated with questions providing in depth answers and clarification to help us become confident to try our hand at making our own version of Mead. He also explained what a hydrometer does and why it is important to take measurements at the correct time. This was followed by some much anticipated mead tasting.



A cuppa, morning tea and plenty of social catch up then Wendy Millar and Chris Dawson went through the main nectar yielding Eucalypt species in the Bendigo region and surround, plus a few current pollen sources flowering. Providing information on identifying species through the soil type, where they naturally occur in the landscape from river beds, and as the land gradually rises to the hills. The tree shape (crown and trunk), leaves, buds and bark. Margie and Wayne's property has a great selection of Yellow Box, Red Ironbark, Grey Box, and possibly Red Gum in the distance that Wendy and Chris pointed out. We also viewed some recommended local books to help us in growing our local flora knowledge.

After a BBQ lunch cooked by Darryl and Stace, and more discussion on all things beekeeping, Rob McDonald smoked us out with his collection of smokers. Rob described the different parts, facets, and essential smoker functions for safe smoker operation. He warned about the



dangers and risks of high fire danger days, total fire ban days and reading the CFA guide. Next the all-important wick, fuel, lighting, and time, time that the smoker is monitored to ensure it is set for plenty of smoke on

call when needed. Rob demonstrated how to hold the smoker hands free, nothing like a mobile phone!

Wax moth, what can I do with all the hideous destruction? A member asked if wax moth frames can be saved or need to be burned? Enter Chris Dawson, let's run a demonstration for the benefit of everyone here. Chris went through the wax infested frames removing cocoons, webbing, squashing grubs and moths and ensured that all things wax moth were put into a plastic bag, I believe later presented to some satisfied chooks. Once the frames were cleaned up Chris advised to freeze them for a couple of days to sort any sneaking



grubs not found in the clean-up. The frames need to be stored appropriately, over winter preferably, so air can circulate between the frames and a reasonable amount of regular light.

Autumn pack down - Max went through the supers auditing what stores the bees needed for winter and which frames could be robbed. Inspecting the brood and pointing out eggs, larvae, capped worker brood, pollen, nectar and capped honey, not a drone or drone cell to be seen anywhere. Nikki Jones, the Victoria Biosecurity Manager, demonstrated alcohol washes on bees, showing the best frames in which to collect young bees after several sets of eyes ensured the queen wasn't amongst them. Shaking bees into a tub and after a small wait collecting half a cup of bees into the alcohol wash. Swirl, shake wait and repeat, remove the dead bees into a sealed bag and inspect the alcohol for any pests. How to report negative results on BeeMAX, how to record without internet availability and to text Biosecurity Officer immediately if a suspected Varroa mite is found and to secure it in the container. Michael and Stace completed the pack down while members got to chat to Nikki and ask all manner of questions. The group moved from Margie's apiary to the shed, securing the honey supers from the bees.

We enjoyed great company, discussions, afternoon tea and with the schedule just as full as our bellies, we didn't get to demonstrate honey extraction! Our apologies Margie, thank you to everyone that participated.

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HONEY	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
POLLEN	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
SUGAR SYRUP	✗	✗	✗	✗	✗	✗	✗	✗	✗	✗	✗	✗	✗	✗	✗	✗	✗	✗	✗	✗	✗

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Varroa Management Resources Have Launched

In a critical juncture for the honey bee industry, AgriFutures Australia in partnership with the industry's peak national representative body, the Australian Honey Bee Industry Council (AHBIC) is set to launch a suite of Varroa Mite (Varroa Destructor) focused resources.

The suite of resources follows the completion of the *Resilient Beekeeping in the Face of Varroa* project, an AgriFutures Australia research initiative.

The project has been a key focus for the AgriFutures Honey Bee & Pollination Program following the incursion of Varroa Destructor in June 2022. In September 2023, the eradication of Varroa was deemed no longer technically feasible, leading to a transition to management phase aiming to slow the spread and limit the impacts of Varroa on Australia's beekeeping industry.

Its introduction jeopardised the critical role played by 29,800 skilled commercial and recreational beekeepers collectively managing 530,000 hives. These hives and residents are vital for the pollination of 35 agricultural crops and many of our favourite foods, including a range of nuts, berries and stone fruits.

The AgriFutures Honey Bee & Pollination Program invests in research that ensures a productive, sustainable and profitable beekeeping industry and secures the pollination of Australia's horticultural and agricultural crops. The *Resilient Beekeeping in the Face of Varroa* project aims to support the industry through what is arguably the biggest challenge it has faced.

"Despite being relatively prepared for the [Varroa mite] incursion, there's still a lot of anxiety within the industry driven by a lack of knowledge," explained CEO of the AHBIC, Danny Le Feuvre.

"Now that the National Management Group, the decision-making body for the national Varroa mite emergency response, has decided that it's not feasible to eradicate, our primary focus in the industry is on getting information out to the beekeepers on how they can best manage this threat," he said.

To ensure the most accurate, relevant and comprehensive information was dispersed, the *Resilient Beekeeping in the Face of Varroa* project undertook a litera-

ture review, a comprehensive survey and interviews with 21 international beekeeping industry experts.

"We've always known that education is a critical component of any transition to management process, this resilience project has reaffirmed the view that education is a key component and the number one method of slowing the spread," said Danny.

The research included a final report and six fact sheets that focus on the following key areas of concern: slowing the spread, bee health, impact on pollination, integrated pest management, bee breeding and varroa chemical treatments.

The fact sheets will be complimented by a series of interviews and podcasts to ensure accessibility for beekeepers across various platforms. The suite of resources will feature interviews with global experts and concentrate on the lessons Australia can draw from Varroa management practices overseas as well as the potential implementation of these strategies in the Australian context.

General Manager of Levied and Emerging Industries at AgriFutures, John Smith, says that ensuring Australian beekeepers are provided with educational resources to thrive despite Varroa is vital to the sustainability of the industry.

"This will be one of the first Varroa communication activities that looks at what we can learn from other countries with Varroa and how beekeepers can reduce Varroa and remain productive and profitable," said John.

"The resources are extremely practical and, I believe, will prove to be an excellent resource for Australian beekeepers who are hungry for information that will help them manage this threat effectively."

The collection of resources will be hosted on the AHBIC website, and will contribute towards minimising the impacts of Varroa, not only to honey bee businesses immediately but also to the pollination dependant industries that rely on the prosperity of the honey bee industry to support Australia's food security.

TINO CORSETTI APPOINTED VAA EXECUTIVE OFFICER

The Board of the Victorian Apiarists' Association is delighted to announce the appointment of Tino Corsetti to the important role of Executive Officer.

He succeeds Kerrin Williams, and takes up this important role after her retirement from the position after 36 years of meritorious contribution.

Tino brings a broad range of skills to the Association.

He is recently retired from a career in Continuing Education where he has been proficient for some years.

He holds a Master of Business Administration and a Graduate Diploma in Distance Learning Education.

Residing in Mt Macedon, he admits to being a recreational beekeeper.

Importantly, he is currently undertaking the inaugural Level 3 Beekeeping Course offered by Melbourne Polytechnic.

Of equal importance, Tino is also currently Chair of his local bee club, the Woodend Bee Friendly Society, where he also edits their newsletter and website.

Tino says he looks forward to meeting personally with many VAA members, at all levels of beekeeping activity, in the months ahead.

VAA, PO Box 721, Woodend, Victoria, 3442

Mob: 0498 461 460

vaa@vicbeekeepers.com.au

The Old Bee Farm

From a painting of the same name
by Clara Southern, Warrandyte, c 1900
Oil on canvas

In the twilight
the woman bends over the squat bee boxes
She is queen of her rustic domain
Her workers have left the rundown farmhouse

In her blue and brown garments
she is as much part of the landscape
as the sky and earth
and lonely as both

The grass is unkempt
knee high, home to snakes
Stalks catch the late rays of light
and the hem of the woman's dress

The queen bee has long departed
with her workers and drones
in search of a more fruitful honeypot
maybe wattle or peach blossom

The combs degrade in the old hives
The honey has long fermented
The woman longs for company
for the busy buzzing to resume

Jennifer Chrystie



Photo: Lindsay Callaway

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Two New Books

AI ON BEE DISEASES and THE OBSERVATION HIVE

By John Kennedy

Everything I read these days seems to be dominated by the initials AI (meaning Artificial Intelligence) so it's really no surprise that they should emerge in a new book on beekeeping.

The UK's prolific publisher and bookseller Northern Bee Books (www.northernbeebooks.co.uk for more information and orders) is the source of the two newest works.

The first is entitled *AI In the Apiary* subtitled *Honeybee Diseases* and is a first edition work, a softback of 198 pages,

It comes from the hand of Paddy G Walker, now retired but originally an apiarist located in west Yorkshire, who has studied at Harvard and now works as a business consultant for notable businesses GM, PWC and IBM.

This book gives a comprehensive view of the breadth of different honey bee diseases, covered by their classification, biology, transmission, symptoms, how to identify the disease, its impact on the colony and advice on mitigation.

The publisher's note points out that if a regular internet search, for instance on Deformed Wing Virus, is conducted it produces in excess of 250,000 responses which it says, "is a level of response that is not useful."

They note "using AI takes a very different approach

which is very complete, consistent and produces data sets which are way beyond the capability of traditional research methods", adding "AI is a large language model which allows for a comprehensive and complex assessment of data sitting in more than a trillion 'bits' of information."

This book looks like a little more than bedside reading for the average apiarist, and it sells for 22 pounds sterling plus conversion and postage.

The second new release is a reprint of the 1973 original edition of the text *The Observation Hive*, authored by Karl Showler.

It is a softback book of 90 pages and sells for 12 pounds sterling plus \$A conversion and postage.

This book is devoted entirely to the Observation Hive - its history, construction, use and maintenance.

Mr Showler was a Technical Officer of the International Bee Research Association.

In his original introduction he noted that "observation hives permitted the elucidation of many problems facing beekeepers in the 18th and 19th centuries and even today play an important role in the scientific study of the honeybee.

"Many beekeepers prepare this type of hive both for their own interest and as a feature at exhibitions and agricultural shows".

The book discusses a number of historical hive designs and concludes with a construction guide and plans, making it essentially a useful source of information on the topic.



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Email To Members

Notices to members.

1, In accordance with clause E10 of the Victorian Apiarists' Association constitution the Board gives notice of the Annual General Meeting of the Association to be held at 1.30pm on Wednesday 5 June 2024 at the Wonthaggi Workmen's Club, 75 Graham Street, Wonthaggi, Victoria.

Members' attendance is free but for catering purposes we ask that you register. A zoom link and the agenda will be provided to all members prior to the AGM.

2. In accordance with clause C13 of the Victorian Apiarists' Association Constitution, the Board gives notice that it will seek the members' approval for the proposed membership annual subscription at the Annual General Meeting on Wednesday 5 June 2024 at Wonthaggi.

The proposed annual subscriptions are:

Up to 100 hives (1 vote) \$ 93.00

101 - 500 hives (2 votes) \$249.00

501 -1000 hives (3 votes) \$400.00

1000+ hives (4 votes) \$550.00

3. The requirements for the use of a proxy at the AGM are set out in clauses E.21 and E.22 of the constitution. For your convenience the clauses and the proxy form are included in this notice.

E.21 A member may appoint another member as a proxy to represent that member at a General Meeting. The proxy must be in or to the effect of the form as set out in the Appendix to this Constitution. It is not necessary for the form to include instructions to the proxy on how to vote on a motion.

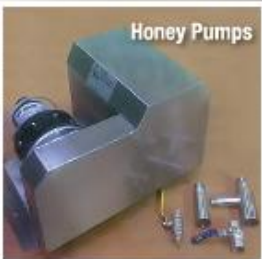
E.22 Completed Proxy forms must be
(i) delivered to the registered email address of the Association not later than 5:00 pm on the day before the day of the meeting;
(ii) received by post at the registered address of the Association not less than 3 days before the day of the meeting; handed to the Administrative Officer by 5:00 pm



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Appendix 1: Proxy Form For General Meeting

Victorian Apiarists' Association Incorporated

PROXY FORM For ANNUAL / SPECIAL GENERAL MEETING

Proxy Nomination

I, (name)
of (address)

being a member of the

Victorian Apiarists' Association Incorporated

appoint (name)
of (address)

who is a member of the Association or, failing that person,
the Chair of the Meeting (Optional – Delete if desired)

to act as my proxy at the

[Annual] / [Special] General Meeting to be held in

..... (month) (year)

Signature of Member

Date/...../.....

Resolutions (See Notes below) If there are any specific resolutions on the notice of meeting, I direct my proxy to vote as follows:

Resolution No.	For	Against	Abstain	Proxy Decision
1	[]	[]	[]	[]
2	[]	[]	[]	[]
3	[]	[]	[]	[]

You may direct your proxy how to vote by putting an 'x' in the appropriate box. If you do not direct your proxy, the proxy may vote as they think fit.

Notes:

1. A proxy should be appointed only if the member has their own genuine interest in the issues being addressed.

2. The actual proxy form submitted must be in, or to the effect of, this form. This actual form is not required to be used.

3. It does not need to state how the appointed proxy is to vote.

4. The appointment of a proxy must be either

(a) Delivered to the registered email address or phone number of the Association not later than 5 pm five days before the day of the meeting; or

(b) Handed to the Administrative Officer by 5 pm five days before the day of the meeting; or

(c) Received by post at the registered address of the Association not less than 5 days before the day of the meeting (as the Administrative Officer may have left the address of the Association to go to the place where the meeting is to take place).

5. If a completed proxy form is sent by email or text message, typing the member's name in place of the signature and sending the email or text from the member's electronic address or phone number registered with the Association, constitutes an electronic signature under the Electronic Transactions (Victoria) Act 2000



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Another Top NEAA Presentation

By John Kennedy

The North Eastern Apiarists Association, (an Affiliate organisation of the VAA) was founded 70 years ago and continues to offer its members a portfolio of important information on current industry topics, as well as practical information at their Annual Field Day held in early October each year at the Swanpool Memorial Hall, Cinema and Recreation grounds, midway between Mansfield and Benalla.

On Friday May 3 a strong gathering of commercial and sideline beekeepers, plus a couple of recreational participants, attended this year's NEAA Annual Conference and General Meeting held again at the excellent Swanpool venue.

With the theme of Varroa and its Imminent Arrival into Victoria, three excellent speakers were organised to provide the main event of the day.

As an Incorporated association, the statutory AGM requirements were considered. These included a Treasurer's Report that confirmed that the NEAA is in good health, the necessary Committee reappointments were made (President Don Whitehead of Walkabout Apiaries at Milawa being reappointed) with the day later concluding with an outdoor barbecue lunch, and a raffle to distribute a number of valuable items generously provided by key beekeeping industry sponsors.

Included in the notice of meeting were several seasonal reports from prominent officers, like David Briggs and Don Whitehead, that confirmed that the recent honey season had been pretty good.

Then the attention turned to the three keynote speakers.

Karla Williams, the Department of Agriculture Apiary Officer based at Wodonga, was charged with updating on the likely arrival of the mite in the next 12 months, plus the biosecurity measures that are already in place.

Karla noted that the first four to five years under varroa are likely to be difficult "but beekeepers who prepare will be likely to prosper".

She updated on the registration status of likely treatments which are not yet approved for use by beekeepers but are likely to be so declared on the mite's arrival.

The importance of every beekeeper being up to date on the current situation was stressed including with the importance of the Transition to Management plan.

Also, the updates from AHBIC and the recent 90 minute zoom update from the National Varroa Mite Management Plan, now available on line, are also key resources for beekeepers.

The next presentation was a three stage PowerPoint presentation from Lindsay Callaway who is a fifth generation beekeeper who operates the substantial Warral Honey business at Maldon, and is also the VAA Vice-President.

In February Lindsay made an 11 day investigation tour to New Zealand which he has packaged into three segments – The Good, the Bad and The Ugly.

Lindsay believes we have much to learn from the best responses by our NZ compatriots.

He also observed the decline that has happened there from one million to about 400,000 hives resulting from

the collapse of the Manuka honey boom.

He also observed that beekeepers there are acting to burn the relatively high number of abandoned hives in place.

Of special interest was his observations from a visit to that country's largest bees wax processor, and especially the concern over industry contaminants.

The growth in hive (plastic) washing services on a batch process was of great interest, and a likely precursor here for individual business or contract washing services on a commercial basis.

The final presentation was provided by Bertram Lobert, a local ecologist and resident, and an active member of the Save Our Strathbogie Forest group.

The Strathbogie forests, totalling about 25,000 hectares, are the host for bee sites for numerous beekeepers and are of state, even national importance.

However, Victoria has a schedule of burns of forest blocks often of 500 hectares or more including a couple scheduled for execution in the following days.

Bertram visually demonstrated a number of burn consequences especially the loss of old heavily cavities forest trees which are most usually the host of the important Greater Glider population.

Several beekeeper present indicated the problems that they have encountered with hives in the forest sites trapped behind road closures and also the loss of valuable bee positive understorey plants.

This raises a number of issues for the VAA Resources Committee who welcome reports from beekeepers on their experiences.

Bertram's view is if the fire burns are not working properly then why conduct them.

The scene is now set for the NEAA Annual Field Day at the Swanpool site, which should be a must-attend function for most levels of beekeeping.

It will occur on the first Sunday in October.

Conferences

New South Wales Apiarists Association

23-24 May, Wagga Wagga

Tasmanian Beekeepers Association

31 May & 1 June, Launceston

Queensland Beekeepers Association

11 & 12 July, Townsville

Victorian Apiarists Association Inc

4-6th June, Wonthaggi

AHBIC AGM

10th July, Townsville, Queensland

Bee Industry Council of WA

Field Day only in 2024—TBA

17th Asian Apiculture Association Conference and AAA Apitherapy Forum 2024

12-14th June, Esplanade, Freemantle, WA

Crop Pollination Association of Australia Inc

22 May, Wagga Wagga



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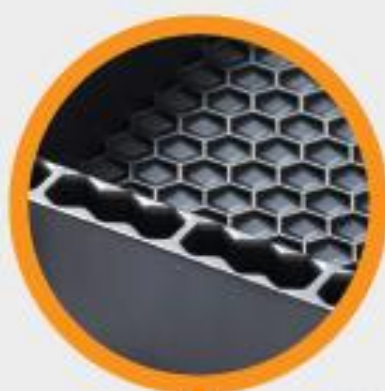
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- ▶ Assembled Timber Frames with Plastic Foundation
- ▶ Assembled Wired Timber Frame
- ▶ Assembled Timber Frame with Plastic Foundation
- ▶ Assembled Wired Frame

AHBIC April Update

CEO's Report

I have been lucky enough to have a couple of weeks break in April to reset and recharge. My wife and I had an amazing trip to Cambodia working with a charity using agriculture to break the poverty cycle. Worlds away from Varroa!!

Over the last month AHBIC has been focused on the Transition to Management along with providing oversight and ILO activities for both the Queensland Asian Honey Bee incursion and the Red Dwarf Honey Bee detection in the west.

We continue to put pressure on the jurisdictions to provide industry with their plans for border movements now we are transitioning. It is frustrating for everyone that we still do not have any clarity as to what Spring will look like for beekeepers. We will keep applying pressure to jurisdictions to publicly inform industry of border movement restrictions.

AHBIC has regained membership to the ACCC's Agriculture Consultative Committee which is an important step in keeping honey and mislabeling in front of mind for the ACCC. We have also applied for membership of the DAFF non-prescribed foods export reform committee to ensure that any modernisation of export systems for honey, actually benefits our exporters and doesn't create additional red tape.

National R&D forum

Over 60 honey bee researchers, beekeepers and funders came together in Canberra to workshop and priorities the R&D needs in the face of Varroa. This workshop was an important initiative that was made possible by the AgriFutures Honey Bee and Pollination Advisory panel to understand what research is underway, where are the gaps and what are the priorities.

This facilitated workshop will produce a R&D National Varroa Strategic Plan that will be circulated to gain broader industry feedback before being finalised and used to guide industry investments. This is the first time this type of coordinated approach has been used to develop the plan. To have your input, please complete the form:

<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/VarroaResearchStrategy>

We look forward to being able to communicate the draft outcomes with industry as soon as it becomes available.

National Bee Breeding Workshop

On the back of the R&D workshop a National Bee Breeding Workshop was also held with the aim of producing a National Bee Breeding Strategic plan. This will help achieve a collective approach to identifying and improving Varroa resistant stock in Australia and also improve genetic gains generally.

Similarly to the R&D strategy, the facilitators will draft a strategic plan that we will be able to circulate broadly around industry for consultation. This plan will help guide investment and assist AHBIC in lobbying for additional investment in our industry. Again, we thank the support from the AgriFutures Honey Bee and Pollination Advisory Panel for enabling the workshop.

Launching of the AgriFutures/AHBIC webinar and podcast series

In a collaboration between AHBIC and AgriFutures we have launched a section on the AHBIC website that will host a growing suite of Varroa focused resources. Initially it will include a new interview with an expert each week for six weeks, and factsheets that have been produced by the team that produced the *Resilient Beekeeping in the Face of Varroa* publication.

We hope to be able to keep updating the website section as new information becomes available from different research projects. Well done to the AgriFutures team and Bianca from AHBIC in getting this resource developed.

The 5th Australian Bee Congress

At a recent AHBIC member body meeting it was agreed that AHBIC will host the next national congress in 2026. We are in the process of establishing a sub-committee to begin the process of selecting a venue and planning the congress. We are excited about the prospects of the next congress, and we will aim to make it the best congress yet!!

Varroa Response and Levies

All AHBIC member bodies have unanimously agreed to begin the process of proposing a 1 cent per kilogram of honey sold levy increase. This increase will be used to pay the 1.1% of the Varroa response costs that the honey bee industry is responsible for. It was agreed that the increase would be temporary and will be removed as soon as sufficient funds were raised to pay the debt.

This may seem unfair that we are required to pay for a response that caused significant impacts to many in the industry. However, as part of the Emergency Pest Response Deed that we as an industry signed up to many years ago, we have legal responsibility to pay our share. Since AHBIC's extensive work to achieve recategorisation last year for varroa destructor, the share and proportion has significantly reduced as the Government is responsible for paying 80% of the costs and the 16 industry parties responsible for the remaining 20%. Each industry parties share is calculated based on Gross Value of Production (GVP) resulting in the honey bee industry paying 1.1% of the total cost.

Senate Inquiry into the Biosecurity Protection Levy

AHBIC has united with many primary industries in opposing the proposed federal biosecurity protection levy due to be imposed in July this year. AHBIC witnessed at the recent senate inquiry explaining to the committee of senators the inequities in the government proposal.

Key points raised were the lack of consultation from government, the proposed calculations of contributions and the inequity of the levy collection in our industry.

The Month Ahead

The first of the many conferences start with NSWAA on 22nd May which we will be attending followed shortly by many of the other AHBIC member body's conferences. Towards the end of next month (May), the next round of Plant Health Australia member meetings and all the associated meetings around that will be held in Sydney.

Regards

Danny LeFeuvre

AHBIC April Update

The Transition to Management (T2M) rollout is under way.

NSW DPI have completed the first 'Train the Trainers' event in NSW and I attended one of the NSW Varroa Management Workshop provided by the T2M in early April in Bega, NSW. I encourage everyone to make the effort to get along to one of these workshops. There is a lot of good information to assist beekeepers to make informed decisions on managing varroa. There are a limited number of workshops so make the effort and get to one near you.

I strongly encourage everyone that attends these workshops to get the contact details for the Varroa Development Officers (VDO) in your state and keep them handy.

AHBIC will be focusing on other parts of the T2M such as Code of Practice and Biosecurity Manual updates and importantly an Australian COLOSS survey as we move forward.

If you have never attended a state conference now would be an excellent time to start. I am sure that all state conferences will have a range of speakers to talk on varroa monitoring, treatments and the latest research. This knowledge will assist your business decisions with regard to varroa and its management. Have a look at our events page for a state beekeeping event near you: <https://honeybee.org.au/events/>

Want to provide your constructive feedback personally to AHBIC? – I recommend you attend your state conference, where at least AHBIC CEO or Chair will

be in attendance so you can approach us to have a chat. Another way to formally reach AHBIC is via the state body conference – we encourage beekeepers to raise issues in General Business at your state Association conference requesting they are put through to AHBIC.

AHBIC continues to lobby the APVMA to have as many mite treatments as possible approved for use in Australia. An application for ApiBioxal (Oxlaic Acid) was submitted at the start of the year and we await feedback from APVMA and NSW DPI. Approvals are a slow process. Other issues we are working through are export protocols, surveillance hives and other biosecurity matters.

The CEO has had a well earned break. Thank you to Bianca who has covered for him in his absence. AHBIC work and meetings to attend do not stop for anyone. A thank you to Jon Lockwood for stepping in to cover me for a couple of meetings in the next week or two. AHBIC is very much a team effort. From the guidance given by member bodies to fine tuning by the executive, and the mundane but necessary meetings attended by several people. This all helps to raise AHBIC's profile and to make sure that AHBIC focuses on the priorities that have been set by the strategic plan and our member bodies.

Stephen Targett
Chair

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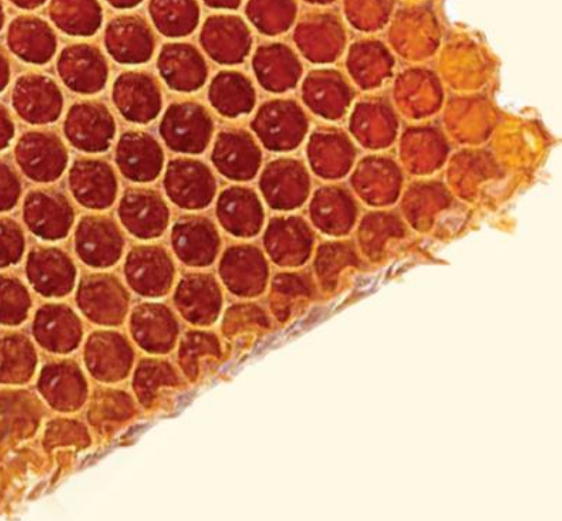


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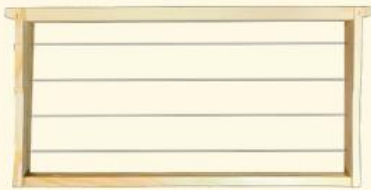
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- 4 x Lock, Latch connectors
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Conference Competitions

The 2024 Annual Conference competitions.

It is time to start getting your entries ready!

The Victorian Apiarists' Association Annual Conference Honey Competition has been in existence for over 110 years.

The Honey Competition is always a highlight of the Annual Conference.

Liquid honey

- Native Flora Honey
- Yellow Box Honey
- Introduced Flora Honey
- Garden Honey
- Dark Honey
- Candied Honey
- Creamed Honey

Honey is to be in a standard 500gm (375ml) round glass jar, with a white/gold 63mm lid, labelled with honey type and no wax. Jars to be filled halfway between lid rim and top.

Honey Liquid will be judged on Colour (25 Points), Density (25 Points), Flavour (25 Points), General Appearance (15 Points) and Aroma (10 Points). TOTAL 100

Honey Candied or Creamed will be judged on Evenness of Grain (30 Points), Flavour (30 Points), Firmness (30 Points) and Colour (10 Points). TOTAL 100

To help the judging please label the honey flavour on the bottom of the jar (small label)

Honey Comb and Bees Wax

- Sealed Frame (full depth)
- Honey Comb Section
- Bees wax - Best commercial block
- Beeswax Block (approx. 1kg)
- Decorative Bees Wax

Frame and Comb Honey will be judged on Fullness (30 Points), Colour of Capping's (30 Points), Evenness (20 Points) and General Appearance (20 Points). TOTAL 100

All pure bees wax items to have a clean neat appearance, no cracks or sediment.

Wax will be judged on Colour (25 Points), Clearness (25 Points), Tenacity (20 Points), General Appearance (20 Points) and Aroma (10 Points). TOTAL 100

2024 Annual Conference Competitions, cont'd

Honey Beverage.

All beverages must be exhibited in screw top clear colourless glass wine bottles without lettering, fluting or ornamentation of any kind.

Mead will be judged on Colour and Condition (15 Points), Bouquet (35 Points) and Flavour (50 Points). TOTAL 100

Pollen Competition

Pollen must be cleaned and dried in a clear 500gm glass jar.

Pollen will be judged on Taste (25 Points), Hardness (20 Points), Cleanliness (25 Points) and General Appearance (30 Points). TOTAL 100

Photo Contest

Photography – History

Photography - Native Flora

Photography – Apiary (now on its own)

Photography - Equipment (now on its own)

Photography - Introduced Flora

Photography - Portrait of a honey bee

Please note: All entries to be submitted by 1.30pm on Wednesday 5th June, 2024

DR MARLA SPIVAK ON PROPOLIS

By John Kennedy

Premier Bee Products, the South Dakota based producer of bee hives and foundation, which released earlier this year their Propola™ hive which has scored internal sides to encourage bees to form a “propolis envelope” internally, has now made access available to a presentation on propolis by Dr Marla Spivak.

Dr Spivak, an entomologist, is a revered professor at the University of Minnesota's Bee Lab, and is probably the world's leading researcher on propolis and its pros and cons. Her presentation, a video of about 20 minutes in duration, was originally delivered as a guest speaker at the North American Honey Bee Expo held in Louisville Kentucky in early January, and is well worth reviewing. In her presentation she notes that propolis, a sticky substance, is collected by bees from plant resins. and is employed for a range of tasks within a hive. In natural tree hives they use it to create an envelope within their tree cavity, usually working from the entrance back. Some bees have a genetic tendency to be prolific collectors of the substance. She also touches on its pharmacological benefits for humans.

It is available from www.premierbeeproducts.com or from a general web search.

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Thorne's Beekeeper's Rule

By John Kennedy

Leading UK bee goods retailer Thorne's has launched The Beekeepers Rule as a new product.

They say the device, developed with the help of Professor Robert Pickard, is designed to maximise the honey crop, queen propagation breeding, or even where to site an apiary (albeit in the northern hemisphere.)

Retailing at two pounds 70 sterling in the UK, it is a clear plastic slide rule like wheel that they describe "as a clever device to assist the beekeeper".

Thorne's provide examples like - they say most beekeepers should know from experience the plant species in their apiary area from which their bees are likely to gather most nectar. Further the apiary should be managed in a way that maximum numbers of foraging bees will be available in synchrony with the nectar flow. The slide rule disc is rotated to align the four week foraging period with the dates of the nectar flow. The objective, giving queens ample laying space in the form of newly drawn comb to produce a maximum labour force

for when required.

In regard to queen propagation, the timing of virgin queen emergence and swarming is calculated. On the breeding aspect the apiarist needs to increase the likelihood of preferred matings to ensure maintenance of a proven strain of bees.

Synchronising the production of drones and virgin queens can be achieved by placing drawn comb in the selected hive ensuring ample food supplies are present, and temporarily removing the queen to a nucleus box if the colony appears reluctant to raise drones. Drone production and maintenance can be stopped in all other colonies by restricting their food stores, although this is often unnecessary at the end of summer.

"The right time to produce selected queens is indicated by the rule".

For more information see www.thorne.co.uk

This Rule appears a practical idea and it would be interesting if a local bee goods supplier took up the creation of a version matched for the southern hemisphere. Thorne's don't say if it is a patented idea or product.

The Independent

Scientists have made the shock discovery that bees can survive underwater for a week, and only found it out because researchers accidentally kept one submerged for days. One queen common eastern bumblebee survived for seven days after water accidentally got into the container it was being kept in, described as a "surprising" discovery by researchers from the University of Guelph, Canada. The team then carried out the study on 143 insects with those kept underwater showing similar survival rates to those above ground. Read the full story [here](#)



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Lindsay Callaway
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TESTIMONIAL



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Melbourne Section Report

In this report: Happy snaps the MS photo competition. We prepared for Honey Comps. May the Honey Comp gods vote for you in May. How is your varroa T2M? One can waste a lot of time with anagrams of "Apiarist".

What are some anagrams of beekeepers? 'Beep seeker', 'bee see perk', 'see kerb pee', and even 'keeper bees'. Apiarist is a bit harder: 'aria spit' and 'Asia trip' and then it degenerates into 'I is a prat'.

'Apiculturalists' is the anagram challenge I am leaving to you!

But the point is we have more choices if we break things down into their parts, understand each part and really understand how they **could** all fit together. It may be better than how they always **have** been together.

Photography Competition

The 2024 VAA MS photography competition was judged at the April meeting. A big thank you to the entrants of the Melbourne Section photo competition for 2024. Thank you to our judge, Andrew Wootton, for his entertaining critique and willingness to take on the job. There were more than 20 entries. The entries will be available for viewing at the May meeting. The elements of story, focus, content, and presentation make up a good photo, but how many of us take a photo with specific thought for each element? The upshot is that we'll be engaging an insect photographer (not a pest with a polaroid) to enlighten us on insect photography at a monthly meeting near you.

Preparing apiary products!

You missed out! You really did!

We had a fantastic session on preparing honey and wax for competition. It seems that removing particles is the really tough job of both products. But that's just a statement of the objective. The knowledge of how honey works and how, at different temperatures, wax works is fundamental to choosing your starting product, your refinement technique and your timing within any technique.

The MS Honey Competition

The Honey in "Honey Competition" covers all of the apiary products: honey, comb, wax, pollen and beverage. Some keen competitors probably started ages ago in preparing their entries, but I recommend that you try to have as many entries as you can across the different categories because only then will you find out what you do and don't know and improve. Besides, they only announce the winners and not the ones that made them laugh!

So we'll see you at the May meeting with your clutch of entries.

And then on to the VAA Honey Competition. If you aren't going, even after the next paragraph, please feel free to leave your entry with me or a few others who will get them to the June competition in Wonthaggi.

The VAA Conference in Wonthaggi

This should not be news to you. There have been lots of advertisements, and it happens every year.

I think it will be great event. We have some really 'top of their field' speakers on topics that we will all have to face in the next year or two. It's also a chance to see and hear how other apiarists operate and how they get through the highs and lows of beekeeping.

The early bird price is probably over when you read this, but go anyway!

The Melbourne Section AGM

This is one of your Member notices that the Melbourne Section AGM will be held at the July meeting. The VAA Board positions will be settled by then and we can sort out who will, and how we will, run the Melbourne Section for the next 12 months. Only VAA Members can vote, so join up now if you need to.

The VAA Library

Most of the library is housed at the Melbourne Section venue. There are regular transfers of books to, at least, the Bendigo Branch to spread the knowledge around. There's always work to be done with the library, and cataloguing acquisitions (new / donated) is one part. And wouldn't it be great to have the library catalogue on line? Any ideas or experiences in this line? Helpers always welcome. Browsers are even more welcome.

T2M is for recreational beekeepers 2!

Before the TLA* gets boring, make sure you are engaged with the varroa transition to management as it comes to your bee club or your area. Significant funding and effort is being put into connecting with clubs, is being put into the content and is being put into training courses both online and face to face. The T2M update held on Tuesday 30 April via zoom was and is part of shifting our relatively lazy brains from no varroa to full on varroa. None of us will be able to suddenly be comfortable living with varroa: it takes time and participation on our part. So ... you guessed it ... come along to the Melbourne Section meetings where we can work on changing ourselves some more.

It's getting cold and dark

The winter months are heading our way, and so cheese and ham toasties will become more popular both pre and post (and during) monthly meetings. Kitchen volunteers and other bodies to take up what would be cold air (does this sound familiar?) are wanted to keep the spirits high and the beekeeping discussions hot.

And the last anagram for the night: Apiarists becomes 'As a spirit'.

Rob Kerr

Melbourne Section Secretary

* TLA - three letter acronym. Did I really have to tell you? Ciao.



Photography judge Andrew Wootton at the VAA MS April Meeting



Victorian Apiarists' Association Inc

"Beekeeping with varroa, a new frontier"

123rd Annual Conference - 4th to 6th June, 2024

Wonthaggi Workmens Club, Wonthaggi, Victoria

	Tuesday 4th June 2024
3:00 - 7:00 pm	Early check In Check in, collect conference satchel, submit competition entries and meet with friends.
7:00 - 10:00 pm	Hospitality evening Sponsored by South Gippsland Beekeepers, Gippsland Apiarists Association
	Wednesday 5th June 2024
8:00 - 9:00 am	Welcome refreshments Sponsored by Redpaths Beekeeping Supplies Check in, collect conference satchel and submit competition entries.
9:00 - 9:15 am	Welcome to conference John van Weeghel, President VAA Inc.
	Symposium: Honey - confirming the quality Chairperson: Lindsay Callaway, Warral Maldon Sponsored by: Bendigo Branch VAA Inc.
9:15 - 9:55 am	Protecting Australian honey from adulteration Dr Liz Barbour, CEO Y-Trace Pty Ltd
9:55 - 10:10 am	MRL's of honey Nick Jolley, National Quality Assurance Manager, Hive and Wellness Australia
10:10 - 10:40 am	Morning Tea - Sponsored by B-QUAL Australia
10:40 - 11:20 am	Business and logistics of the Honey Library Prof. Sharon Purchase, University of WA - Business School, Marketing
11:20 - 11:35 am	The fight against Imported honey Jon Lockwood, AHBIC Vice Chairman & Imported Honey Subcommittee Chair
11:35 - 12:15 pm	Unpacking the Q in Quality Stuart Archibald, Dr Liz Barbour, Angela Enbom, Prof. Sharon Purchase. Moderator: Lindsay Callaway
12:15 - 1:15 pm	Lunch - Sponsored by Shire of Bass Coast and Shire of South Gippsland
	Symposium: State of the industry Chairperson: John van Weeghel, President VAA Inc.
1:15 - 1:30 pm	Conference Opening - The Hon. Jordan Crugnale MP
1:30 - 2:30 pm	VAA Inc. 2024 Annual General Meeting
2:30 - 3:00 pm	Rebranding the VAA Inc. - Beekeepers looking skywards. Not backwards. Presenter: Lindsay Callaway, with VAA Inc. Board
3:00 - 3:30 pm	Afternoon tea - Sponsored by Kelvin Trading Pty Ltd
3:30 - 4:00 pm	AHBIC high level talks Stephen Targett, Chairman AHBIC
4:00 - 4:30 pm	AgVic report Nikki Jones, Biosecurity Manager Apiary & Karyn Di Florio, Bee Biosecurity Officer - Agriculture Victoria
4:30 - 5:00 pm	AgriFutures report Steve Fuller, President CPAA, Vice chair honeybee and pollination AgriFutures

	<i>Wednesday Evening</i>		
	Visions of varroa; An evening's entertainment Chairperson: Ken Gell, Gells Honey		
7:30 - 8:15 pm	Finding "it" first! Peter Burgess, River Meadows Apiaries		
8:15 - 9:15 pm	Jon Lockwood Goldfields Honey Australia	Matt Lorenz McDonalds Honey, Castlemaine	Matt Petersen Dividing Creek Farm Honey
9:15 - 10:00 pm	Tips from the trips Matt Lorenz, Jon Lockwood, Matt Petersen and Peter Burgess Moderator: Ken Gell		
	Thursday 6th June 2024		
8:00 - 9:00 am	Welcome Refreshments <i>Sponsored by: Redpaths Beekeeping Supplies</i>		
	Symposium: varroa - Sharing the science Chairperson: Dr Andrew Wootton, Master Beekeeper with the Eastern Apicultural Society of North America Sponsored by: Dividing Creek Farm		
9:00 - 9:50 am	UBeeO: a novel tool for selection of varroa resistant honey bees Dr Kaira Wagoner, University of North Carolina at Greensboro		
9:50 - 10:20 am	<i>Morning Tea</i> - Sponsored by Goode's Honey		
10:20 - 11:10 am	Varroa control options (IPM) Dr Cameron Jack, University of Florida		
11:10 am - 12:00 pm	Hidden in plain sight Dr Zac Lamas, US Dept Agriculture - Agriculture Research Services, Bee Research Laboratory, Beltsville MD		
12:00 - 1:15 pm	<i>Lunch</i> - Sponsored by SI Coatings / HyChem International		
	Colloquium combo Chairperson: Peter McDonald, McDonalds Honey, Castlemaine.		
1:15 - 2:00 pm	AgVic varroa transition to management report Brett Harrison, Program Coordinator Plants, Apiary & Regulated Crops, Agriculture Victoria		
2:00 - 3:00 pm	NZ beekeeping with varroa Dr Richard Hall, Principal Scientist & Hayley Pragert, Senior Adviser, Honey Bee Health New Zealand		
3:00 - 3:30 pm	<i>Afternoon tea</i>		
3:30 - 4:00 pm	Extracting the numbers and pressing the pennies Sam Henty, Farm Business Economist, AgVic & James Rowe, Resilience and Recovery, AgVic		
4:00 - 4:15 pm	The ins and outs of Crop Pollination Steve Fuller & Mal Porter, Crop Pollination Association Australia		
4:15 - 5:00 pm	Crop Pollination: A session for lateral thinkers Steve Fuller, President CPAA, Vice chair honeybee and pollination "Agrifutures" Tim Jackson, CEO Almond Board of Australia Mal Porter, Vice President CPAA Jonathon Monson, Pollination Coordinator, Monsons Honey & Pollination Moderator: Peter McDonald		
	<i>Thursday Evening</i>		
7:00 - 11:00 pm	2024 VAA.Inc. Annual Dinner Hosted by newly elected VAA Inc. Vice Presidents Sponsored by: Olam Orchards Australia Pty Ltd Raffle draw, Competition results, Silent Auction, "Loud" Auction, Thanks, hello and goodbyes.		



VAA Board Member Nominees Statements

Judy Leggett

I have served on the Board for three years now and if elected, look forward to continuing to serve members for another year. I grew up in a beekeeping family helping Mum and Dad with all aspects of their business. After studying Ag science, working and travelling, I returned home and continued to work part time with bees, whilst continuing to work and study. After gaining teaching qualifications and having my own family, I continue to manage all aspects of a sideline apiary business and teach three days a week in a Primary school Kitchen Garden program in Ararat.

I have been involved in the industry for many years, with stints as Secretary and Treasurer for the Central Victorian Apiarists Association, member and chairperson of the Apiculture Industry Advisory Committee. For the last two years I have coordinated the VAA stand at the Melbourne show and have enjoyed meeting more members and volunteers. I enjoy representing beekeepers to ensure we can all continue to enjoy our hobby or business successfully. With the challenge of Varroa it is important we have a strong Board working together to assist all beekeepers. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me. Thank you, Judy Leggett 0423 464 800.

Tony Wilsmore

I am a sideline beekeeper and have kept bees for many years. I currently run 24 hives across Moonee Valley and provide mentoring and training to others. I am active in the Moonee Valley Beekeepers Club being a member of its management committee and its Bee Security and Training Officer. I am also an active member of the VAA.

I am a member of the Victorian State Quarantine Response Team and participated in both the NSW and the Victorian Varroa mite emergency responses from the initial NSW call for volunteers to the last Victorian mite surveillance in 2023.

I promote the value of bees and beekeeping by volunteering with the Wheen Bee Foundation and, previously, as a volunteer beekeeper with Collingwood Children's Farm. I have presented at schools and community events and groups to talk about bees, pollinators and beekeeping.

What I bring:

My knowledge and experience of beekeeping is augmented with extensive experience of working with organisations at management and board levels. I am also a Graduate of the Australian Institute of Company Directors.

I believe that I can add value to the VAA Board and to the sector by:

Working with beekeepers, beekeeping clubs, agricultural industry and government to prepare the sector for the changes that will be required for the future.

Increasing the VAA's value to beekeepers and beekeeping clubs by supporting the sector in the areas of training and governance.

Being a stronger voice for beekeepers where decisions are made.

Rob Kerr

I wish the VAA to represent the interests of all apiarists.

My background in large change projects over three decades in the IT industry and in the Victorian Government can help the VAA. All Boards need a variety of business skill sets. The resourcefulness of beekeepers can be enhanced with experience from other roles and industries.

My participation on the VAA Board would be to ensure that all beekeeper perspectives are included in our decision making, to continue to developing our sound decision making and record keeping practices, to pursue connections with the government, industry and any other body that can influence the opportunities and rights of beekeepers, and to increase financial security by diversifying funding sources.

I believe that we can become a more sophisticated player in apiculture and a more sophisticated provider of services to Victorian apiarists: one reaches out and one reaches in. The VAA as the advocate to industry and government is critical but sometimes is too distant from day to day beekeeping. Besides increasing our understanding and impact on the world outside the VAA, I will pursue the development of services for our beekeepers: services that only the VAA can and should provide.

My time and effort on the VAA Board, the VAA Constitution Committee, the VAA Conference Planning Committee, and 4 years as Melbourne Section Secretary show my dedication and desire to work for Victorian Beekeepers.

Angela Enbom

Angela is a 2nd generation commercial beekeeper, now managing the family business with her daughter Millie.

She has been an active member of the CVAA Executive for 5 years and is currently the CVAA Vice President, the VAA Resources Secretary, and the Chair of AIAC (Apicultural Industry Advisory Committee).

As our industry prepares for Varroa, Angela believes that inclusive Beekeeper networks along with evidence based best practice, including IPM (Integrated Pest Management) will be critical in order to mitigate the impacts of varroa.

Angela has State Government board experience and is skilled in governance and risk & finance.

With a genuine interest in a thriving Honey Bee and Pollination Industry, Angela will support the VAA to be the peak professional body in Victoria, truly representing all of its members.

Robert McDonald

My name is Robert McDonald, and I am currently serving as a general Executive Member on the Victorian Apiarists Association Board. I would like to ask you for your vote in the upcoming Election to the VAA Board for 2024/2025. My belief is that it is the responsibility of the VAA Executive to represent effectively to

(Continued on page 33)

VAA Board Member nominees statements, cont'd

(Continued from page 32)

Government bodies on behalf of the Membership, for communication with the Membership to be a priority and for the needs of the Membership to be prioritised above all else.

Unfortunately, after the last election that we had two years ago I found out that other candidates for that election had been contacting members asking them to vote against me. I know this because a person that I trust was contacted in such a manner, and called me to ask what I had done to offend the other person. I could only reply that I had no idea.

I have no interest in naming the people involved, or in asking you not to vote for them. What I would ask is that if you are contacted in such a manner, consider the motivations of someone who would do such a thing. I certainly would be. And would have little hesitation in voting contrarily to their requests.

I am a Life Member of this Association. I have been a full time, professional beekeeper for most of that time, until I retired a few years ago. I have also served as President and Vice President.

Matt Lorenz

I've been beekeeping since 2014, and as soon as I discovered the amazing world of beekeeping, I couldn't get enough of it. I transitioned to full-time beekeeping in 2018 and became a co-owner of McDonald Honey in 2020. Since then, we've expanded the business to in-

clude 11 employees and manage 2,500 hives. Despite feeling like I'm still brand new to this game, my passion quickly turned into an obsession. I spend most of my time thinking about and learning as much as I can about bees and what it takes to be a successful beekeeper. Alongside my Bachelor of Business, majoring in Marketing from Latrobe, I have sought opportunities to expand my leadership skills by completing the ARLF TRAIL Emerging Leaders Program (AgriFutures scholarship) and the Farm Business Resilience Program (Ag Vic).

The arrival of varroa in our country has added a lot of pressure to our industry, and it will likely bring about significant changes. This has placed a heavy workload on our industry groups such as the VAA and the volunteers who run them. In 2022, I joined the CVAA executive, which has provided me with valuable insight and experience into how our industry groups operate.

I would like the opportunity to further assist our industry through these changing times. While I will continue to learn a lot through this process, I believe that I have much to contribute to the VAA and beekeeping in Victoria for years to come.

Richard Collins

I am a passionate 3rd Generation beekeeper dedicated to advancing the beekeeping industry through modern techniques and community engagement.

(Continued on page 34)

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STOCKISTS OF



VAA Board Member nominees statements, cont'd

(Continued from page 33)

As a young professional in the commercial realm of beekeeping I have successfully managed pollination services, honey production, and Packing Direct to Consumer (Wholesale & Farmers Markets), ensuring that each facet operates efficiently and sustainably.

My commitment to the beekeeping community extends beyond more than just Bees.

I am deeply invested in supporting local efforts and fostering collaborative initiatives that benefit all stakeholders involved.

My vision for the future of the Victorian Apiarists' Association (VAA) is centered around modernization. I believe that by integrating innovative practices and technologies, we can enhance productivity and sustainability across our industry.

This will not only improve the quality of our products but also the viability of beekeeping as a profession for future generations.

Through my role in the VAA, I aim to lead projects that embrace new ideas while respecting the time-honored traditions that have shaped our beloved craft. By encouraging a spirit of cooperation and forward-thinking, I am confident that we can achieve remarkable progress and continue to thrive in an ever-evolving landscape.

I am eager to contribute my energy and insights to the VAA, working together to ensure a prosperous future for all members and the broader community we serve.

Ken Gell

Hi all Ken Gell here looking for your support for the incoming year, on the VAA Executive.

I have been around for quite a while so hoping I can steady the committee as we take the industry forward into unknown territory with the arrival of Varroa mite into our country, this will be a learning curve for all of us, so hoping I can be part of this leading the way for all of us to keep bees healthy. With a strong executive we all can deliver what is expected of us as representatives of our industry delivering best practices.

Vin Anderson

I'm a 3rd generation beekeeper, with horticultural training, which gives me a plant based view of our beekeeping world.

I run about 100 hives now days just for fun and as a distraction from running a landscape construction business with a growing crew.

I'm an active sort team member. 3 years ago whilst helping Ag Vic with almond pollination surveillance late one evening while chatting with some other beekeeping colleagues and lamenting all the things wrong with the industry and what we would do to help make things better I suggested to the others in our quorum that they should be on the VAA board and not just be sitting in a bar complaining about things. Well one of my bright friends suggested that perhaps I should do the same.

So here I am offering some assistance not sure what difference that I can make if any.

I bring with me good leadership skills and an ability to ask tough questions in an attempt to see issues from all sides.

Really I'm just another beekeeper (aren't we all). There is a lot that needs to be done by us beekeepers to engage the government departments, the pollination industry and the general public, so here's hoping we can do that.

Ben Moore

Hi, my name is Ben Moore, I'm 32 years of age. I'm a commercial Bee Keeper from Maryborough, Central Victoria. I'm very passionate about our growing industry and feel like I'm a valued contributor on the VAA board. I would love to be part of it again for another year.

Matthew Peterson

Matt Petersen is a commercial beekeeper and honey packer, founder of Dividing Creek Farm Honey and 4th generation beef farmer from South Gippsland.

Having bees since he was a child, Matt established a full time commercial operation in 2019, Matt has focussed his passion on public education, advocating for industry unity, financial stability and honeybee health, with Varroa a major focus for some years.

Matt would be a strong non-biased advocate for members as we head into a new era of beekeeping in Australia. Matt will contribute new ideas, outside the box thinking and fresh energy for the betterment of all within the industry.

Andrew Wootton

I have been a VAA Board member for the past year. I have attended all Board meetings and the 2023 AGM.

I am the VAA Webmaster, responsible for the website and the membership management software (Wild Apricot) which I initiated for the VAA in 2017. My IT undertakings include event registrations, poll and form management and VAA email bulletins and communications. Last year I successfully implemented our Google Workspace for Nonprofits account which is used for our email services and shared cloud-based file storage.

I was lead convenor of the successful Recreational Beekeepers Conference in March 2024 and managed the audiovisual facilities, enabling recording of the presentations and their subsequent posting on YouTube. I am currently serving on the Annual Conference Organising Committee.

I am chair of the VAA Education Subcommittee and have made presentations at 3 of the VAA Affiliate Clubs in the past year. I ran a queen-raising workshop for the Melbourne Section at the Collingwood Children's Farm in November 2023.

I have been deployed numerous times in the SQRT (State Quarantine Response Team) with Agriculture Victoria and also with NSW DPI. I am a certified Mas-

(Continued on page 35)

VAA Board Member nominees statements, cont'd

(Continued from page 34)

ter Beekeeper with the Eastern Apicultural Society of North America.

I am committed to the VAA as peak body for beekeeping in Victoria and particularly its role in aligning and representing the interests of both commercial and recreational beekeepers.

Phil McPherson

I am presently serving my eighth year on the Executive and am at the moment Vice President. I wish to continue to represent the interests of the members and ask for your support. The last twelve months has been a

very busy year with the border restrictions and the pending future arrival of Varroa mite. In Victoria we have been heavily involved in planning and [when it does arrive] implementing the transition to management. As you are aware we are presently working on implementing and refining several management changes being a new branding exercise and exploring the options for a CEO, as well as Resource management in general, to provide for growing hive numbers within the state. Communication and collaboration with all levels of our industry [from Commercial to Recreational beekeepers] I see as important for our future. With your support I would like to continue working on these issues on your behalf and build on the progress already achieved.

EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT MOVES ON HONEY LABELLING

By John Kennedy

After many years of inaction the European Parliament has resolved to revise the rules on breakfast products including honey, juices and jams saying that citizens of Europe are entitled to healthier and better quality choices.

In short, the changes are designed to boost consumer protection, identify defective products, and to identify the country or source of production.

The EU Commission website says "The approval is a revision of existing rules on the composition, labelling and production of honey, fruit juices, jams and marmalades and milk including stricter rules for labelling honey, increased fruit content in jams, less sugar in fruit juices and the possibility to produce lactose-free milk with water partly or completely removed".

The moves were first introduced 20 years ago before a deal was introduced in January this year with the EU Parliament approving and adopting the new regulation in April. They become effective 20 days after their formal adoption with all EU countries having to apply the rules fully within two years.

So far as honey is concerned the new rules include identification on the country of origin and the sources of the honey, and any additives.

Similar enforceable rules will now apply to "regulate the description, definition, characteristics and labelling of different food products including cocoa, and chocolate products, sugars, honey, fruit juices, dehydrated milk, coffee, chicory extracts, fruit jams, jellies, marmalades and sweetened chestnut puree" the EU Commission official statement reads.



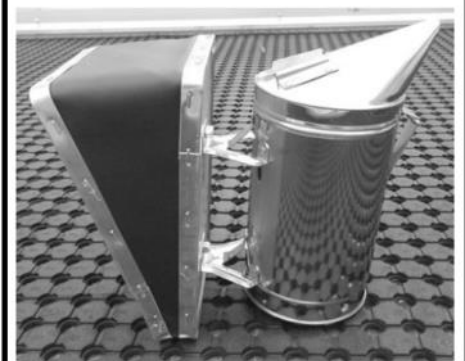
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Agriculture Victoria:

Agriculture Victoria: Apiary team
Website: [Honey bees | Livestock and animals | Agriculture Victoria](http://Honeybees|Livestockandanimals|AgricultureVictoria)
Website:
www.agriculture.vic.gov.au/livestock-and-animals/honeybees
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

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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

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Honey Bee Research & Development committee (HBRDC)
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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

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cvaa_inc@outlook.com

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

Sue Harding,
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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
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**VAA Sunraysia Branch
AGM**
will be held at the
Red Cliffs Club on
Tuesday 25th June at 7pm
following a meal at 6pm

VAA members are reminded
that they are entitled to
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