

Preveiling Wind



Autumn 2022

Newsletter of the Kendal and South Westmorland

'For Whom the Bell Tolls' If I had to choose one book towards the end of my days to reflect back on or take with me, it would be this one. The name 'Hemingway' was bandied about when I was younger particularly on the radio. I was a bit dismissive. But after reading 'Homage to Catalonia', I saw that his book 'For Whom the Bell Tolls' was the next one to read to give me an understanding of why civil wars are so destructive on the population. It describes just 4 days, when the task for the central character is to blow up a bridge. My main memory of it is thinking that this is the book that I couldn't possibly conceive of writing. His style, and ability to weave threads of the story together, to have stand alone pages of great tension, and bring the whole thing to a 20 page climax that was burnt into my mind, put me in awe of his work.....and what a great 'full of thoughts' title.

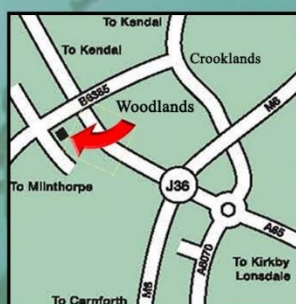
Only having had one hive for two years, I decided to try a double brood box in early spring, to try and control the swarming instinct. It worked. Just having one hive has meant it has been a generally easy summer, but with occasional 'big days'. Yesterday was a big day. I stood behind the hive, unable at 6'2" to see over the top of it. The sun was out, it was warm. I took a breath. I lifted the top off and carefully took down 3 boxes of capped honey (heavy), and one still being worked on. I then thought I'd have a quick look into the top of the brood.and for the first time this summer, found a large uncapped queen cell. So I had to go through the whole lot and found four more.....and also saw the queen. Both brood chambers full of bees. So..... I covered all the boxes with tea towels, and prepared the equipment for an artificial swarm. When I needed to find her of course, it took six full sweeps of the 20 frames. The bees were impressively calm (although everywhere by now of course).

Inevitably I got stung 3 or 4 times. By the time I had successfully put the whole lot together again I gave myself an overall score of 7/10. I came inside, clothes covered in sweat, but the fingers that had been stung were fine. As I began to shower however, I developed a remarkable number of raised hives and welts, and then my lips and tongue started to swell. Rosie thought it best to phone the surgery who told her to phone 999, and after just 5 mins talking to the operator I began to hear the siren, very common if you live in Kendal, but this time, out of a population of 26,000, I realised it was my Hemingway momentthey were coming for me. To cut a long story short, I got great treatment. It was a systemic reaction, not a complete anaphylactic shock, but I had to go to Lancasterwhere I found myself sitting next to another beekeeper of 60 years who had been stung by a wasp on the tongue. Time passed easily. In fact, so easily that I was down to the last but one bus of the day to get me home (train strike). In the meantime, along with others who joined in, we swopped a lot of stories, and like the hive, some of them a bit tall. **Phil**



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THE LOST QUEEN..... or The Ineptitude of a Beekeeper.

A long while ago in Blackpool, I kept bees for about ten years in the pre-varroa era, giving up in 1995. I kept my equipment and last year restored it to usefulness. Granville kindly furnished me with a swarm last July and I became a beekeeper again! The swarm became queenless and diminished in size so I decided, with some trepidation, as I'd never done it before, to purchase a new queen from Northumberland Honey Company. She arrived in the post and the introduction went well (phew!). She went on to lay very well and had the colony in good shape for over wintering.

Likewise, this spring she has laid very well and built up a strong colony, bringing in good amounts of honey. Then, one day, she disappeared and so did the brood! Oh no, I thought, queenless again! Granville came to the rescue again with spare queen cells but to no avail. Then the odd behaviour started. Every other day the bees appeared to be swarming but not in a tight cluster and after about half an hour came back, forming a large cluster on the outside of the hive, known as 'bearding' I believe. After a week of this, under some pressure from my neighbour, I had a good root through the hive and discovered, to my astonishment, brood in the supers - and lots of it! In addition, there were many queens cells. I couldn't find the queen but she was clearly there evidenced by eggs and young larvae. The hive was packed with bees so most likely they had been trying to swarm but the queen was trapped above the queen excluder.

I carried out a modified form of swarm control based on the Pagden method. I set up another hive to the left of the original and put a new empty brood chamber under the supers with brood in, but leaving the queen excluder in place temporarily lest they tried to swarm again. All queen cells were removed except one emerging queen which I gave to the bees in the original hive. The observant amongst you will recognise that this was converse to the Pagden method as the old queen should be in the original hive. However, the physical manoeuvre on its own seemed to work as most of the flying bees went back into the original hive.

A few days later, after the very hot spell, swarming had ceased and I was able to find the old queen and replace her where she belongs in the new brood chamber. I have yet to find out if the virgin queen will survive and mate but I intend to unite the



colonies in the autumn anyway.

Lessons learnt from this are : 1) Be careful to ensure the queen is not on the excluder when I remove it and if possible identify her during the inspection.
2) Check the supers more carefully and don't assume they are full of honey!

Ned (Alan) Rowlands Beetham

The Flighty Queen

Just before our bee buddy went on holiday at half term, his first colony produced a cast swarm. Sally caught it and put it in a nuc, but when she went round to feed it a couple of days later, there it was, hanging from the same branch as before. So she caught it again and, knowing our buddy didn't want a 3rd colony, brought it down to our apiary at Sizergh, only for a lot of the bees to leave and form a cluster under the box. Did this cluster contain the queen? Had she gone on a mating flight and missed the entrance on her return? Who knows, but, after a couple of weeks, Sally removed the cluster and returned it into the nuc. Later, we found eggs and worker brood, so we assume that a virgin queen had mated successfully.

After a few weeks, we offered this colony for sale, found the queen and marked her. After delivering the colony to its new owner, I went back on the morning of the hottest day ever to help make the transfer from nuc to hive. Unfortunately we didn't spot the queen, neither on the frames nor in the nuc box. Not having a brush handy, I turned the box upside down over an empty super on top of the brood box and knocked the remaining bees out. Presuming all was well, we shut everything up. We then noticed a cluster of bees on the adjacent hive, and, lo and behold, the queen, with her bright yellow spot. Before I could get her into a queen cage, she flew twice more, returning each time to the roof of the adjacent hive. In the end though, she walked out of the cage down into her new home.

Dick T

Honey Show 2022 reminder Brigsteer Village Hall, Thursday 10th November.

Hall opens at 6.30 for setting up. Last entry at 7.15pm. Judging to start at 7.30pm.

Please save your best honey and other products for judging.

Prizes to be won. Details to follow.

South Cumbria Beekeeping Supplies

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Nitrile long cuff gloves

Please contact Julia & Martin Hoggard at Brigsteer, LA8 8AH

julia@bcs.org 015395 60869 (evenings) 07570583461



Summer into Autumn Apiary Meetings. From May to September we meet every month at an outdoor venue. Starting in October we meet indoors at the Cumbria Wildlife Trust, Plumgarths, Crook Road, Kendal LA8 8LX. The honey show in November however is in Brigsteer Village Hall which allows for more space.

Sunday August 14 th 2022 at 2pm Heron Hill School, Kendal LA9 7JH. Come and catch up with all the bee friendly changes that have taken place at school since we last met there: new bee sheds, a top bar hive to look at and lots of work growing veg and extending the wildlife habitat. Bring a bee suit etc if you would like to inspect the honeybees, otherwise just come and look round and have a relaxing sociable afternoon. Please bring some food to share. Park in the school car park, and then walk through the gate at the end and down the slope to the apiary area. If it rains and is wet we shall cancel the meeting..... watch your emails for an update.

Sunday September 11th 2022 at 2pm Levens Hall, Levens, LA8 0PD. Please park in the usual car park but we will meet by the potting shed. Access via the 5 bar gate at the south east corner of the car park (look right as you face the usual entrance and ticket office). Chris Crowder will show us the apiary and tell us about making up nucleus colonies, over wintering them and keeping them alive! He will show us round the gardens. We should still be able to meet if the weather is poor but again, watch your emails if it looks wet. Bring food to share and a travel mug if you have one – if there are lots of us present, the nice china mugs won't go round.

Tuesday October 11 th 2022 7.30pm Cumbria Wildlife Trust – review of the summer. We especially would like to hear from new beekeepers so we can plan how to support you through the next bee season and prepare for the honey show.



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Selling Honey on Kendal Farmers' Market

Sally and I have sold honey at the last 3 Kendal Farmers' Markets, which are held on the last Friday of each month.except in December, when it's shortly before Christmas. We now have our own stall and have invited a friend of ours, who makes wax wraps, to join us.

At the next Market, on 29th July, we will be offering honey from another local supplier, in addition to our own. They sold honey at the Farmers' Market last year in the run up to Christmas and are keen to maintain their presence.

So now we will have honey in 3 sizes of jar, 227gms, 340gms and 454gm, for which prices are currently £5, £7.25 and £9.50 respectively.

If you'd like to sell some of your honey on Kendal Farmers' Market, give me a ring on 07771 998554 or send an email to dicktowler49@gmail.com.



Dick Towler

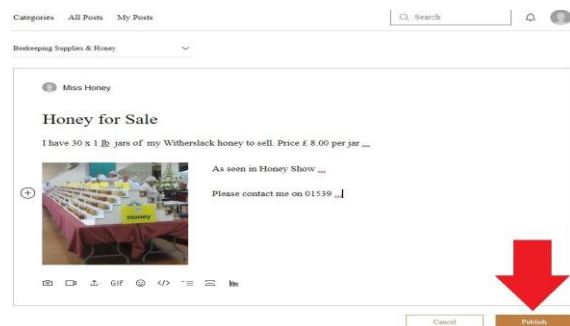
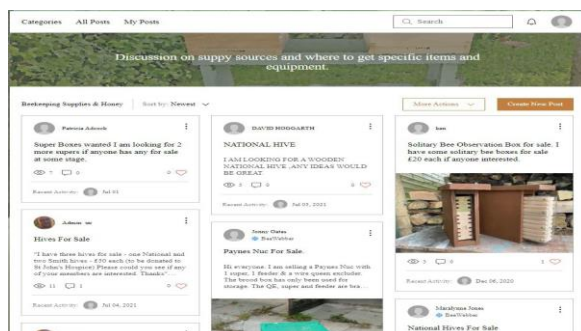
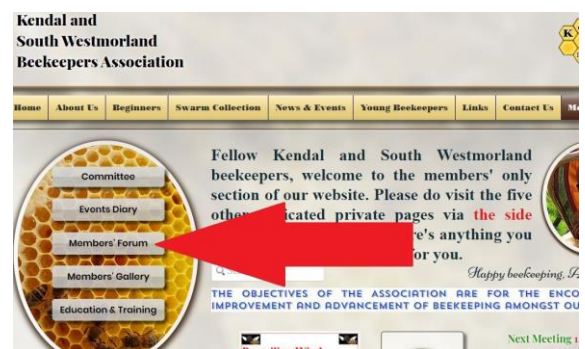
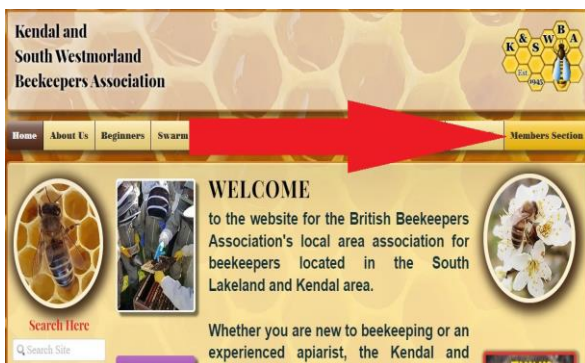
An appeal to all of our members: Please Use Our Own Forums

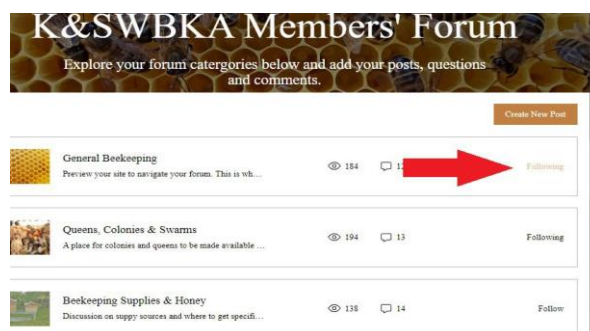
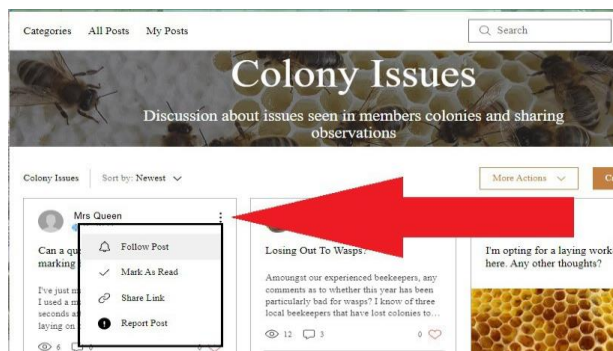
Most of us have experienced the value of forums, groups and shared information and discussion, whether it is for asking advice of a number of people, offering a service or an item or just general information to a specifically targeted group; such as beekeepers. This can be done in many ways these days, such as Facebook groups (public or private), WhatsApp groups, Google Groups and many more. The only issue the K&SWBKA has with us endorsing any specific group medium is that there will be members who either cannot, or for legitimate concerns, will not use some of these groups' organisations. We respect that and after careful consideration the committee, some time ago, decided that, although we were obviously happy for any members to form whatever WhatsApp, Facebook etc groups for themselves (e.g. the Basic Certificate study groups) as an organisation we would rather remain open to all our membership. As such, and after a survey amongst the membership found in favour, Andy Brown formed a set of group forums on our own website.

We would like to encourage all K&SWBKA members to start using these website forums which can be found on the association's website, in the membership private section. There are moments in the beekeeping season when we need to contact each other reasonably quickly to share queens, to distribute swarms, to exchange or share equipment and to seek advice and the Forums are a way of us doing this efficiently and securely. All members of K&SWBKA can access the members area of the web site and if you haven't had a chance to do this please can we encourage you to do so. In the members section you will find a link to Members Forum and if you click on this you will find a number of forums with different subject titles which you might want to sign up for. We would like all members to at least 'follow' the 'General Beekeeping' forum so that any member posting on there will know that the

message will go to all members of our Association. A useful tip; on the initial forum page, if you click the word 'follow' then you will be sent email notification of any posts on that particular forum. Also, on any particular post on a given forum if you click on the three little dots on the top right of the post and then click the 'follow post' option then you will be alerted to any specific replies and comments on that post. There is really no effort to click follow on all the categories, that way you'll miss nothing. There is also a 'share' option on each post where you can pop a link to the post on your device (pc, laptop, iPad or smartphone) clipboard, then it can be 'pasted' to an email, Facebook, Twitter or anywhere else that another member may see it. Remember, only a signed-up member can open the links to posts in our forum.

Following on below, there are a series of pictures below that will graphically assist you in the accessing, following and posting on these forums. Links, pictures and even short video clips can be posted to promote, share and assist. Obviously, it is a venue for polite and good natured discussion and we would ask you all to be respectful of one another in any discussions or statements. Also, the more we use the forums, the more useful they become. If you do have any issues or even just need a friendly bit of help then do contact Andy Brown. **Ali Crumbie, Andy Brown**





Visit to Boarbank Hall On July 9th we met at Boarbank Hall in Allithwaite to learn about the work going on in the grounds around the hall to improve the environment for pollinators. We were hosted by Sister Margaret Atkins who described the project to us and showed us around the extensive grounds including the hay meadow, the more formal areas around the hall, the orchard and the vegetable garden. Julia helped us to identify the different wildflowers which can be found in hay meadows and Martin gave us a demonstration of scything. We helped to scatter yellow rattle seed across an area of meadow that needs assistance to become more biodiverse and we had a quick look at the beehives on the edge of the property. This was an inspiring visit which gave us all lots of ideas about how to improve forage for pollinators. It provided an example of how beautiful formal gardens can sit easily alongside pollinator friendly habitats and how, with the right attention to detail, we can all benefit from a more biodiverse environment.

Ali C



Many thanks to all the contributors for this edition of the Preveiling Wind : Julia, Alison, Andy, Ned, Crystal, and Dick.

Further dates for the diary:

Tuesday December 13th 2022 7.30pm Cumbria Wildlife Trust Jacob Join and Christmas Quiz.

Tuesday January 10th 2023 7.30pm Cumbria Wildlife Trust - our AGM