



# The Macarthur Beekeeper

October 2021

Views expressed in the newsletter do not necessarily represent the views of the committee, the members, or the Association



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## USEFUL LINKS

**MBA Website:**

<https://macarthur.beekeepers.asn.au>

**MBA Public Facebook:**

<https://facebook.com/macbeekeepers>

**MBA Members Only Group:**

[facebook.com/groups/macbeekeepermembers](https://facebook.com/groups/macbeekeepermembers)

## PRESIDENT'S UPDATE

Greetings fellow Beekeepers

Oh what a month it has been! The key word for the past month must surely be "swarms!" An incredibly high volume of requests for assistance for swarm collections made their way to the Club's Facebook page from all over the Macarthur region. On one particular day I counted eight requests for assistance. I have also heard of swarm collectors collecting so many swarms they were running out of boxes and frames, one person even resorting to fabricating a makeshift cardboard box NUC as a stop gap. Some of my own hives decided to stretch their wings and I am fortunate to have understanding neighbours who allow me access to their yard and trees to collect the girls and set them up in a new box.

In regard to swarms, some of the lessons learned for new beekeepers are: don't put off getting into the brood box, checking for queen cells, examining the brood pattern, providing brood box space, even making that split. It's really about what happens in the brood box which directly impacts swarm potential, rather than thinking that giving them the 'space' they need, by extracting some honey or adding another super, will be sufficient.

*Continues on page 2...*

In doing our inspections Dallys and I have also taken the opportunity this Spring to re-queen some of our hives and I can honestly admit Dallys has proven herself much more efficient at queen spotting than I am.

In regards to, feedback to the club on the vacant position of Club Secretary, I received an offer from one club member offering to assist in a part-time capacity but admitting that once lock-down finished, their time to assist would be greatly restricted due to family and work commitments. With that in mind, and in the absence of alternatives, Rob, our current Membership Officer, has volunteered to cover the role up to the next AGM unless of course someone else with sufficient time makes themselves available. I do say thank you to the club member who offered the part-time help and also thanks to Rob for covering.

Lockdown for the 70% of NSW with double dose covid-19 vaccination status was lifted on Monday October 11th (audible sigh of some relief) and additional easing of restrictions when the State achieves 80% not that far away including the ability to resume regional NSW travel. We continue to monitor things as they change, and I will repeat comments from last month, it is likely that future Club face-to-face events such as club meetings and field days will not only be limited to nominated group sizes in the short term but also, in line with the NSW Government's roadmap to freedom, will be restricted to those who are able to verify they are fully vaccinated.

In regard to future club activities, we will continue with online meetings at this point and unavoidably the October Field Day was cancelled. I am sure members understand and accept why. Instead of a Club Meeting in November, we normally hold our Christmas function. Given the current environment, interest and options will be discussed at the October meeting.

As a representative of our Club, I have been invited to attend the 2021 ABA Club Forum, an online meeting scheduled for October 31st. I will update our membership post the event.

If you are still to perform your Spring brood inspection, I encourage you to do so. If unsure what to do, what to look for, I am sure the Club Officers will be more than willing to provide you some tips and advice.

Happy Beekeeping!

*Ed*



# WELCOME NEWBEES

Welcome to our latest members!

**Kathleen Cameron**

**Viviana Capote**

**David Hili**

**Bob Wright**

**Mark Horne**

**Shane Duncan**

**George Burrell**

**Kim Cannon**

**Nicole Tinker**



## VICE PRESIDENT UPDATE

Hello all our members and welcome to any new members.

Hope you are all well and getting ready to return to our new normal once everything opens up again after COVID. I have been very lucky and took 5 weeks off work (which I desperately needed) and was just as well as I've been very busy the past month with painting boxes and preparing frames.

Luckily for me, my inspections have all gone well and I had to complete a few splits, but (touch wood) no swarms from any of my hives.

We have a guest speaker this month, David, who will be talking about weights and measurements for jarring honey. I'm sure this will be a great help to all the new members and I'm also sure us older members will also learn a thing or two.

Hoping to be able to return to face-to-face meetings really soon.

Until then, keep safe!

*Rhonda*



## APIARY GOINGS ON



Hi,

As bees don't know about the stay-at-home restrictions, and with warm & nice sunny days, there has been a lot of bee activity at the Club's apiary. We continue taking care of our hives, and maybe next month we will be able to return to our field day activities.

The beehives are strong and we keep inspecting our hives, giving space for the queen to lay and adding boxes to store sweet honey. There is a lot of nectar and pollen flowing into the hives, and the bees are growing in population and bee boxes.



October activities at the Apiary:

- Full Hive Inspection
- Hive Swarming Control
- Inserted new frames with embedded wax in the brood nest.
- Added extra boxes.
- Harvested Honey.
- Cleaned, transported & stored beekeeping equipment at the Club's container.
- Made a Split hive.
- Re-queened hives.
- SHB traps maintenance.



*James*

## EDUCATION AND BIOSECURITY UPDATE

Hi everyone,

Now that we are well and truly into spring and everyone has probably experienced a swarm here and there, I can tell you now it is nothing special this year. Swarms are left, right and centre but that is nature's course. I had a few swarms too, even though I inspected my hives, gave them ample room and harvested honey so they didn't run out of storage space. I caught the ones I could, and the others left without a trace, even though my neighbourhood knows I have bees. But I do not worry about it too much, at least I get a new queen out of it and that is a good thing.

In regards to Biosecurity, I would encourage every member to check their hives for AFB and EFB. October is AFB awareness month so get yourself familiar with the signs. Early detection of EFB saves your hive and with AFB, when detected early, you only lose the one hive and not your whole apiary.

If you find something suspicious and are unsure, take a good photo and write a short description, then email it to me [macarthur.biosecurity@beekeepers.asn.au](mailto:macarthur.biosecurity@beekeepers.asn.au) and I will have a look at it.

Happy beekeeping!

*Torsten*

## MEMBER PROFILES

### Member profile – Father and son, Craig and Terry

Craig has recently registered a business name with ABN, he is excited he just needs honey and merch and products now... 😊

The Bees are working hard and sound happy in the backyard  
*Craig*

Ghost Creek Honey (trade mark) has its origins in the 2021 NSW Covid lockdown. One August afternoon sitting back weeks into lockdown, two fellahs drinking beer noticed the only ones working and free in Campbelltown are the bees. Free to forage outside the 5k limits, free to work and store honey. Sweet Ghost Creek Honey. The discussion began. How many people like honey? Can we somehow help these bees with their honey? A Google search and some ideas along with some You-tube study heralded the beginning of newly discovered "Ghost Creek Honey".





As the police lockdown surveillance chopper hovered and circled overhead the ideas became reality.

Sweet Ghost Creek Honey, foraged from the scary Ghost Creek gorges and gullies around Campbelltown, where nectar and pollen abound in shadowy patches and under heavy floral bushes and trees where only the Ghost Creek bees and white Cockatoos dare to fly.

*Terry*



### Member profile – Parker (12 years old)



*How did you hear about Macarthur Beekeeping?*

I remember going shopping to the Epicure store in Camden with my sister and saw a container of honeycomb. I had no idea what it was or if you could even eat it! I came home and had lots of questions and googled honeycomb and then .... Googled making honey and then how bees make honey...and the rest is history.

When I spoke to my parents about bees and maybe looking at a hive, lots more questions were asked and then we found Ed. Mum and I went to see Ed at home and he showed me so much in an hour - it was awesome. I was hooked!

Then we found the Macarthur Beekeeping association. We have been to a couple of field days – but because I have sport on Saturdays and then COVID restrictions, I have not been able to get to anymore.

Everyone is always so happy to help and answer any questions I have. I have a great mentor Pino Lombardo who comes to my house (when we are not in lockdown) and helps me with inspections and gives me guidance which we are very grateful for, we also have had Ed and Torsten provide guidance and answer questions that we have had along the





*What got you interested in beekeeping?*

Just knowing what bees do for our environment and how important they are to all of us was the main reason I decided to get a hive.

Finding out that within a hive you have different bees who have different jobs was so interesting. Their life cycle and how they forage for pollen and how all of that ends up being a raw honey to eat was amazing. Learning the difference between the Queen, Drones and worker bees and the role and life cycle each play was fascinating. Have been able to extract a few times now and my family and friends say that my honey is very clean, light and delicious. We are very lucky where we live to have such a variety of flowers around.

I have also an Instagram page called out.the.back.bees (because when people hear I am a beekeeper they ask- where are your bees??? so the name says it all). People follow my page to hear about my hive, see my products and learn interesting facts about bees and photos I display.

*What is your current setup?*

My hive is in my backyard in Kearns. We back on to a reserve so our bees are happy foraging around our local area. We have lots of natives around our yard as well as our lemon trees, mandarin trees and lavender just outside their hive. We have plenty of water sources around filled with rocks, twigs and sticks to protect them from drowning while they rehydrate.

We bought a nuc from Torsten last September and I have been able to extract a few times from it. We have 1x brood box and 1x super with 8 frames. My dad has also just bought his nuc from Torsten this month and so we have a brood box for him but we don't have a super just yet. We also have an epi-pen in case of emergencies. Mum and dad have been stung but they seem to like me and I have not been stung by my bees.....yet 😊

*If you could fly overseas for a holiday, where would you go and why?*

We have been to Fiji a few times and dad loves it – so probably there. But I did go on a cruise with my family... So I would like to do that again when we can.

*Rebecca*



## BEE INFORMED

### Member contributions/Research articles

#### Australia vs Varroa mite

What can Covid-19 teach us about varroa?

Covid-19 has made us acutely aware how fast pathogens can spread. A single case can be spread and turn into thousands more and, like varroa mite, it can be hard to spot. I think we all are aware that it is a matter of 'when' varroa reaches Australia, not 'if'.



It is estimated that 95-100% of feral bee colonies would die if varroa reached our shores, and approximately 50-60% of recreational and semi-commercial keepers to leave the industry. This would severely impact our pollination capability, as well as honey stock. Commercial beekeepers would likely remain, but understandably the challenge and additional costs would impact their business.

We all understand the importance of testing for pathogens, like Covid-19, in our community. The same rings true for varroa. Regular testing is the most effective way to detect outbreaks in order to prevent further spread.

What is being done?

In some exciting news, bees have been imported into Australia for the first time in 20 years in an effort to be more prepared for the inevitable arrival of varroa. Australia now has a quarantine facility inside a compound in Victoria, which has been specifically built and designed for the importation of queen bees. The bees have been imported from the Netherlands and have a specialised cleaning behaviour which detects and removes varroa



mite from the baby bees before the mite is able to reproduce. For more information, I highly recommend watching the Landline (ABC) coverage on this, super interesting!

<https://www.abc.net.au/landline/bee-prepared:-importing-bees-to-help-protect/13450032>

*Sources:*

<https://beeaware.org.au/archive-news/what-can-covid-19-teach-us-about-varroa/>

*ABC Landline* <https://www.abc.net.au/landline/bee-prepared:-importing-bees-to-help-protect/13450032>

*Mel*



## SALES AND MARKETING UPDATE

Thanks to Covid there have been no sales of honey over the last month. The good news is that Bunnings Narellan is planning ahead for November this year to resume stores.

A big thanks goes out to Bunnings Narellan for the wonderful basket of donations that they gave our club to use for raffles at our meetings. Thank you so much Bunnings Narellan!

Shirt orders have gone to RSEA at Gregory Hills and hopefully these will be available in the not-too-distant future. Thank you to all who ordered these.

I have also ordered five khaki and 5 black caps that will be for sale at our meetings when they arrive.

*Jeanette*

## BEEKEEPER'S PUZZLE

### MBAi - Who is Who?

- |   |             |
|---|-------------|
| 1. First name of the Club Apiary Officer      | A. Melanie  |
| 2. First name of the Club Webmaster           | B. Rebecca  |
| 3. First name of the Club Newsletter Editor   | C. Rob      |
| 4. First name of the Club Biosecurity Officer | D. Rob      |
| 5. First name of the Club Vice President      | E. Torsten  |
| 6. First name of the Club Treasurer           | F. James    |
| 7. First name of the Club Gardening Officer   | G. Lindsay  |
| 8. First name of the Club Liaison Officer     | H. Ed       |
| 9. First name of the Club Library Officer     | I. Rhonda   |
| 10. First name of the Club Secretary          | J. Caroline |
| 11. First name of the Club President          | K. Anthony  |
| 12. First name of the Club Equipment Officer  | L. Dallys   |

[Answers on the last page!](#)

## MEETINGS & EVENTS

Please check the calendar on the MBAi website for event updates: [macarthur.beekeepers.asn.au](http://macarthur.beekeepers.asn.au)  
Deadline for submissions for our next newsletter is Sunday 14th November.

Submit articles with photos separately (not embedded in the document) or advertisement requests to Mel at: [macarthur.editor@beekeepers.asn.au](mailto:macarthur.editor@beekeepers.asn.au)

### PLEASE NOTE

Club meetings will continue to be held online via Google Meet till further notice. There will be pre-registration for a number of people to attend at the MCSL

NOVEMBER 2021	DECEMBER 2021	JANUARY 2022
13th - Field Day	11th - Field Day	8th - Field Day
14th - Close for Newsletter	12th - Close for Newsletter	9th - Close for Newsletter
20th - Newsletter out	15th - Meeting 7.30pm	16th - Newsletter out
	19th - Newsletter out	19th - Meeting 7.30pm

Due to the Covid-19 restrictions all further club meetings will be online only. Please see details below for upcoming meetings.

**Wednesday, 20 October · 7:30 – 9:30pm**

MBA Club Meeting Online

Google Meet joining info

Video call link: <https://meet.google.com/zqi-yofd-thd>

Or dial: (AU) +61 2 9051 5582 PIN: 185 824 466#

More phone numbers: <https://tel.meet/zqi-yofd-thd?pin=9346897876736>

**THANK YOU TO OUR SPONSORS!**





## SPONSOR PRODUCTS OF THE MONTH

As part of the newsletter, we will be putting a spotlight on a product each month from our sponsors. If you have any products you would recommend, please email [macarthur.editor@beekeepers.asn.au](mailto:macarthur.editor@beekeepers.asn.au). Please note that these products are shown for informational purposes only and prices are accurate as at the time of writing. As many beekeepers will tell you, there are many products that can do the same job and much of the decision can come down to preference and budget. We strongly encourage you to speak to other club members or the store directly for more information, feedback and advice.



### Single Frame, 3L internal feeder With Ladder - Flat packed

RRP: \$8.00

Quality flat packed frame feeder. Perfect for feeding splits, nucs or just hungry bees!

Save money and assemble yourself.



<https://beekeeping.iwoohoo.com.au/feeding/single-frame-4l-internal-feeder-flat-packed/>



Unit 1A 1 Swaffham Rd, Minto NSW 2566  
Monday to Friday 8.30am to 5.30pm  
Open Saturdays 9am to 1pm  
Tel: 02 9731 7400



### Top Feeder 8.5 L Complete Kit RRP: \$37.40

Capacity: 8.5-L

Comes with wooden surrounds to support feeder.

Top feeders are great for feeding raw or dry white sugar in the early and mid-winter. Feeding in this way, don't use a "chimney cap" and let the bees range across the feeder. If using dry white sugar you may want to add a small damp sponge to the top feeder to give the bees some moisture to work the sugar.



In the late winter/early spring you may want to feed a heavy syrup (2 kilos of white sugar to 1 litre of water, heated to fully dissolve). This shouldn't stimulate the queen to lay and with it being in a top feeder she shouldn't sense too much the sugar coming in. When feeding in this way, use a chimney cap to restrict the bees and prevent them from getting out in the bulk of the liquid. This will minimise drowning. If you don't have a chimney cap, you can fill the feeder with pebbles, or twigs, or some people use lots of polystyrene which will float and give the bees a place to sit above the syrup.

Available in 8 or 10 frame.

<https://hornsby-beekeeping.com/top-feeder-8-5-l-complete-kit/>



#### Hornsby Store

Unit # 8 47 - 51 Jersey Street, Hornsby, NSW  
2077  
Monday - Friday (9 AM - 5 PM)  
Saturdays (9 AM - 4 PM)  
Phone: (02) 9477 5569

#### Mt Druitt Store

Unit 11, 71 Kurrajong Avenue, Mt. Druitt, NSW  
2770  
Monday - Friday: 10 AM - 6 PM  
Saturday: 10 AM - 5 PM  
Phone: (02) 9625 5424

## CLASSIFIEDS

### Diatomaceous Earth

Now available in  
500g tubs for \$7  
Contact Ed on  
0439 303 422

### WANTED TO BUY

Large quantities of  
honey on a  
regular basis.  
Call Mark on  
0408 412 272



### HIVES AND NUCS FOR SALE

5 frame nucleus hive with 2021 mated and marked queen  
(limited numbers in stock) - \$220

8 frame established hive with 2021 mated and marked queen  
(2 available) - \$300

Please call or text Torsten on 0425 357 643 for availability and  
to arrange pickup

I offer installation in your hives on site too for an additional  
small fee.



### BOOK YOUR NUCS

5 frames of strong and healthy bees with a new mated italian queen (very calm bees).

Price: \$250 – Local pickup in Campbelltown

MBAi members get \$10% discount

For any further details & orders (delivery &/installation)

Call James Templeman Ph: 0466 823 635

We are COVID SAFE

**Newsletter Advertising** Short line with phone nos. = Free, Size up to 60mm by 40mm (one per member) = Free.  
Non-member = \$10/per month. Required to renew your ad each month. Provide artwork to:

[Macarthur.editor@beekeepers.asn.au](mailto:Macarthur.editor@beekeepers.asn.au)

### Club equipment available to Members

The following equipment is available  
for use by club members:

- A two-frame manual extractor.
- A four-frame manual extractor.
- An electric uncapping knife.
- A Cappings draining tray set.

For use contact Ed

Via email

[macarthur.president@beekeepers.asn.au](mailto:macarthur.president@beekeepers.asn.au)

Or phone:

0439 303 422

All equipment must be returned in a clean condition ready for the next user.



**BEEKEEPER'S PUZZLE ANSWERS (PAGE 9)****MBAi - Who is Who?**

- |   |             |
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| 10. First name of the Club Secretary C          | J. Caroline |
| 11. First name of the Club President H          | K. Anthony  |
| 12. First name of the Club Equipment Officer K  | L. Dallys   |