



**Amateur
Beekeepers
Association**
NSW PARRAMATTA

August 2019 Newsletter of the Parramatta Amateur Beekeepers

For information on the ABA including joining (re-joining) go to: www.beekeepers.asn.au

To go to the Parramatta Branch Page, click on <https://goo.gl/i4q87x>

Join us on Facebook



<https://www.facebook.com/groups/parramattabeekeepers/>

A warm welcome to new members!

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Newsletter Deadline to submit material – 20th of each month

Secretary's Report – important information

By Robyn Alderton, Secretary

No Executive Meeting Actions to report. The next Executive Meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, 7 August 2019.

Full copy of Minutes of Executive Minutes are available upon receipt of a written request.



August club event – 2020 Calendar – Voting

By Robyn Alderton

Reminder: Be at the August Club Event to cast your vote on your favourite photos that you would like to see highlighted in the 2020 Club Calendar.

It's not too late to submit your photos!

Refer to this Newsletter for further details.

Important information – parking in Baker Street

By Robyn Alderton

Since our last club event, Council have made some changes to the linemarking in the vicinity of the gates we access in Baker Street to attend Parramatta Amateur Beekeeper club events.

The short advice is **'Do not park on the housing side of Baker Street'**. Parking in Baker Street should only be on the school side (if signage permits).

Reminder of the general parking arrangements

1. For club events, eg, Movie and Pizza (July) and Christmas (December), no general parking on school grounds. Those transporting items for the events are exempt.
2. Monthly club events – For the purpose of safety, parking in the vicinity of the Auditorium is restricted to those with disabilities and on an 'as needs' basis only. Everyone else is requested to park in either Baker Street (school side) or inside the first gates only, ie, in the area of the Ag room and club shop. Members may like to consider bringing a torch for personal sight safety.

Why is parking in Baker Street now limited? Double unbroken centre lines have been placed on the roadway in Baker Street. The placement of the unbroken centre lines has changed the roadway widths, ie, the roadway along the housing side is now very narrow and does not permit legal parking along the kerb. RMS parking rules advise that 'Parking is not permitted within 3 metres of any double unbroken centre lines' link:

<https://www.rms.nsw.gov.au/roads/safety-rules/road-rules/parking.html>

If you have any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to contact me.

August club event feature – Shaun Garvey

By: Robyn Alderton from information supplied by Shaun

About Shaun: I started beekeeping about 15 years ago when a friend asked me to help him with an extraction on his hives. At about the same time I started lawn bowls and learned that one of the senior bowlers in the club was a beekeeper and willing to sell two hives.

Rudi became my mentor and we formed a great partnership that was mutually beneficial until he passed away in 2014. Before that I had started regularly attending club meetings and field days to learn more about bees. In February 2015, I was encouraged to apply for a position as the apiarist in the bio research department at Macquarie University.



It's wonderful when a love/interest/hobby becomes your work. Macquarie University has allowed me to learn more about bees not only at a practical care level but also at a higher research level.

Recently I was able to represent the university in China as part of a business development group based in Hong Kong. While there I met both local beekeepers and staff at one of the universities. The love of bees and the blessings they bring us don't know language and continental barriers. I look forward to sharing more on 14 August.

We've hit a double century!

By Steve Alderton, Membership Officer

I am pleased to announce that our Membership reached 200 on 16 July 2019 a huge milestone for bees and the future of beekeeping through dedicated members.

Hot off the press - as at 30 July 2019 our membership stands at 202.



Calling all swarm collectors

By Bill Dick, Colony Distribution Officer

Calling all members! Are you willing to spare some time and collect swarms on behalf of and for the club and its members?

If so, please contact your friendly Colony Distribution Officer, Bill Dick, on email: parramatta.swarms@beekeepers.asn.au and advise your contact details and areas you are willing to collect swarms from so that Bill can contact you.

July club social event – movie and pizza night - summary

By: Sandy Harrison, Events Officer

Sixty nine, friends, family and members joined us warmed by the open fire and great member company. To enjoy the Gourmet Pizza served by Leigh and Faith from Franco Mobile Pizza they just cooked until we were all full. Highly recommend he is easy to organise and the pizzas were delicious Frank 0404496871.



A minor technical setback held up the start to the dinner but this did not stop the fun and friendship shared. The kids enjoyed each other's company and the open spaces with the adults mingling and meeting new and old friends.

As the group continued to enjoy the fire and company and time was getting late so the executive decided to cancel the Movie for another time.

Those present

were happy with the enjoyable environment and company.

Thanks to Robyn and Peter Clarke for the raffle and door prizes which finished off the night.



Franco extended his apologies for the technical problem that delayed the start we all accepted this and enjoyed the pizzas.

Reminder to pop in your calendar the members, family and friends Christmas Event for 11 December. Until then



Supplementary feeding of bees using external feeders

By Norm Webb

Note: This article was published in a previous Newsletter however with the increase in new members I believe there is value in a repeat publish.

The advantage of using external feeders, in cold climates particularly is that the hives need not be opened. We usually feed bees in late winter and /or early spring when stores are low and when there is a need to stimulate brood rearing in preparation for summer honey flows.

There are a couple of important points about the external feeder should you wish to make your own. Firstly, the correct saw/drill size must be used to ensure that the circumference of the hole allows the upturned jar to sit snugly and therefore stand without support. Secondly, the holes made in the lid are so small that the sugar syrup will hang and only drip occasionally. In order for this to happen, the sugar syrup should be allowed to cool after mixing before offering it to the bees. By having several jars available, it is a simple matter to remove empty jars and replace them with full ones.

The only disadvantage of this method of feeding is that if you have several hives in a variety of locations, several trips maybe necessary as the bees can consume the syrup quite rapidly depending on the condition of the individual hives.

Refer to Chris Kydd's instructions over the page and Norm Webb's photographs below.

Thank you Norm and Chris!



The feeder



Some bees showing interest in what the feeder has on offer



Appropriate hole size



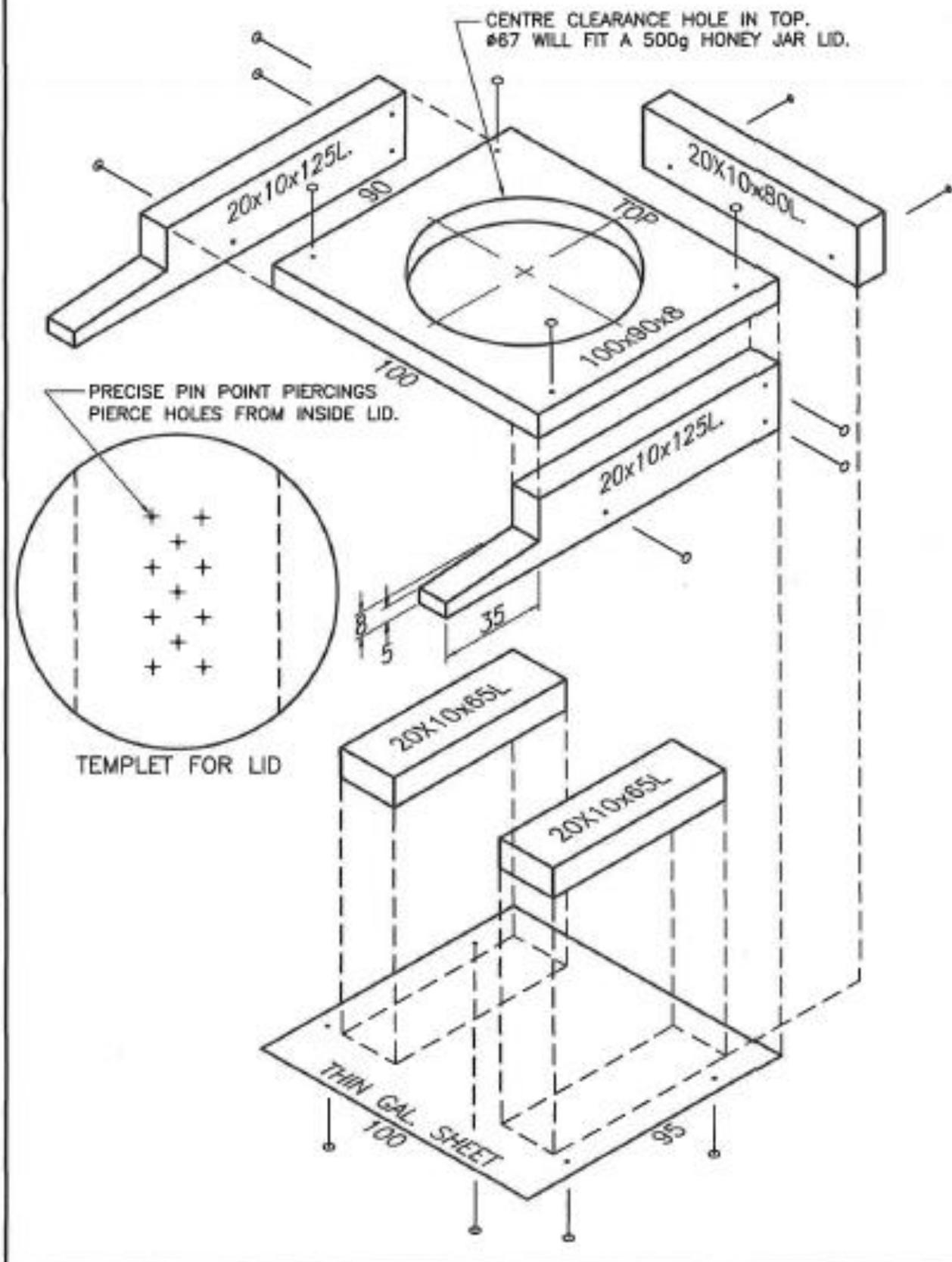
The finished product



The feeder inserted

CHRIS KYDD'S BEE FEEDER

MATERIAL: UNLESS OTHERWISE STATED - TIMBER.



First spring hive inspection

So Spring is around the corner, the days will soon start to warm and the girls will be bringing in a variety of pollen for brood rearing. You will soon need to learn the condition of your hive(s)

Before you open the hive

- Choose a warm day (bees usually fly at 15 degrees) if it is too cold they will lose a lot of heat from the hive and it takes up to 24 hours for the bees to return the hive to optimum temperature.
- Look for disease at the front of the hive. Check for nosema, signs of defecation up the front of the hive and small hive beetle. Check for dead bees and chalky looking skeletons (chalkbrood).
- Spend time observing the hive, determine what they are doing; are they bringing in pollen of a variety of colours? A good pollen flow is where every second bee will have pollen sacks. They will only gather lots of pollen when they need it to feed brood.
- If no pollen is coming in, the queen may have died or she isn't laying.
- Gently lift the back of the hive to feel how heavy it is, a heavy hive will indicate a good food source.
- A light hive may indicate that you need to feed the bees, feed them a thick syrup 2 parts sugar to 1 part water. Feed it to them warm and only enough for them to take up overnight and early the next day. (If you feed them earlier in the afternoon, they'll come out of the hive looking for the location of the nectar source).
- Smoke the hive generously – leave for 3 minutes so the bees digest some honey – digesting honey is calming for them.

Take the lid off

- If bees are clustered in a tight circle, don't open the hive any further. They have clustered in an attempt to keep warm. To break the cluster is detrimental to the survival of the hive, in the cold.
- Check frames in case they need replacing and / or repairing and check the combs for disease.
- Assess the strength of the colony – how many bees are there? Are they filling the space? You may have to cut back a super (box) so they can keep warm more easily.



Photograph: Bringing in the pollen, Lake Conjola, NSW (Robyn Alderton)



- If they're okay and moving around, check for the queen, is she present or can you see evidence of her? That is can you see eggs and / or larvae.
- Look for a good brood pattern.
- Get the hive tool and wedge it between the first and second frames and then force the frames away from you – then take the second frame out of the hive completely. This will make space for you to work the hive. Wedge the remaining frames as far back as possible to reduce the risk of rolling and / or crushing bees in the hive.
- Pull out the middle frame check for the presence of brood, larvae and eggs. If all are present, this will tell you that everything is good. A good brood pattern will tell you that the hive is disease free.
- If you want to encourage the bees to raise brood, give them syrup of 1 part sugar to 2 parts water.
- Once they start to build wax along the top bar, this may be a clue to give them another box. If possible, put frames of drawn comb next to the brood frames so that they won't have to work too hard.

*This information is a summary of information provided previously by Members:
Sheryl McIntosh, Norm Webb and Arthur Garske*

Spring management of bees

In the context of this article, spring refers to the period September, October and November. During this period, bees may starve in September due to lack of stored honey or may swarm in late October / November. Either way, this is usually the busiest period for bees and beekeepers.

Key aspects to consider during this period are:

- starvation
- disease inspection
- brood manipulation
- re-queening
- creating space for expansion within the hive
- swarm control
- removal of honey crop

It must be remembered that spring may arrive either later or earlier than average in the area in which your bees are being kept. The coast, particularly around Sydney and further north, will have an earlier spring than Tablelands areas such as Oberon or Goulburn. Many of the major honey flows on the Tablelands occur in summer and autumn, whereas the western slopes and plains and the coastal districts may have major honey flows in winter and spring.

Starvation

During late August / early September more hives die from starvation than in any other period of the year. This is primarily because the bees consume much of their stored honey during winter. Then the slightly warmer temperatures, the availability of fresh pollen and a light honey flow may encourage the hive to resume brood rearing in earnest. If the seasonal shift into spring is interrupted by more than a week of cold, wet weather then the colony may quickly use up its stored honey to ensure the survival of the expanding brood nest.

This is when starvation is possible. It can be overcome by moving frames of honey from colonies with plenty of stored honey to those with little. Before doing this it is very important to consider the next point.

Disease inspection

Early spring is particularly important for inspection of combs for bee diseases, as the bees have consumed a large amount of stored honey and some of the honey may have contained bee pathogens. Also, the bees are heavily stressed due to their greater age and the amount of activity undertaken.

In the early stages of spring it is possible to have a disease in some combs and not in others. Inspect hives during late August or sometime in September. It is important to look for symptoms of bee diseases as the highest priority. Also assess how much honey is stored, what condition the queen is in, and the general condition of hive components.

Brood manipulation

Brood manipulation, a practice used extensively in commercial apiaries, has its benefits and drawbacks. If done properly, it will substantially increase the number of bees in a hive within ten weeks. This practice is usually carried out when the colony has covered most of the frames in the brood box. Conditions should be conducive to brood raising with warm temperatures prevailing during the day and good stimulating supplies of pollen and nectar available.

Brood manipulation requires one brood box and a queen excluder. The practice involves removing two frames of capped brood, or combs of honey or pollen, from the brood box and replacing them with two empty drawn combs, with worker cells suitable for the queen to lay in, every two or three weeks. These combs should be placed in the centre of the brood nest.

Obviously, the floral conditions, strength of the colony and the weather are critical for this practice to be successful in building large populations.

Brood manipulation is not as important if a queen excluder is used over two boxes or if no queen excluder is used at all. However, the brood nest may still be choked out with honey; if so, the manipulation of combs to give the queen empty cells to lay in will be beneficial in increasing the number of worker bees in a hive.

Brood manipulation is normally practiced prior to a major anticipated honey flow. Care should be exercised initially in not splitting the brood nest too much. If the bees cannot cover all the combs of brood to keep them warm in cold weather, they will abandon the outer brood combs. The brood in these combs will chill and die. Interference may cause the colony to go backwards rather than increase in numbers. Brood manipulation can double a honey crop if done under the right conditions, but it may also be detrimental to the colony if started too early.

Re-queening

An early spring inspection of the colonies may reveal failing queens that are not as productive as the next colony. In addition, some colonies may exhibit signs of being more aggressive than others. October onwards is a suitable time to re-queen your hives or even increase the number of hives in your apiary. From October through to the early autumn months, drones are usually plentiful. Thus, if you are breeding queens, the virgins will be adequately mated. If you are buying queens, the commercial queen breeder will be able to supply a mated queen from October onwards.

It may not be necessary to re-queen every year, but the vigour of a young queen will assist the colony in overcoming mild disease symptoms, building up a strong populous hive capable of collecting a large honey crop. Particularly savage hives can be re-queened with a strain of bee which is easier to handle and manipulate.

It is important that a diseased hive is not given a new queen. Such a move will not overcome the disease problem, but will lead instead to the death of the new queen.

Space for expansion

It is important to recognise a honey flow in progress so that you can add extra combs or extract combs to allow sufficient space to ripen and store the honey crop. It is possible for a colony to fill a honey super in one week under optimal conditions (on a heavy honey flow with large colonies resulting from brood manipulation). Failure to allow space in the hive during a honey flow will result in a loss of part of the honey crop.

If a honey flow is in progress, use it to draw comb foundation that can be used later as brood combs or left in the honey supers. Each spring you may have combs to cull. These can be replaced by new foundation. Cull old black heavy brood combs, damaged combs and combs with a large area of drone cells.

Swarm control

Swarming is a natural phenomenon and is the way the colony reproduces itself. This is done by the old queen leaving the original hive with approximately half the number of workers to establish another hive elsewhere. This is termed a prime swarm. A number of ripe queen cells are left behind. One hatches, destroys the other hatching queens, mates and begins to lay. The whole process may occur within a period of ten days.

A variation of this is when, after the prime swarm has departed, a virgin may hatch and leave the colony with a proportion of the worker bees that remained in the hive. This is termed a secondary swarm or after-swarm. Either way, the colony's ability to collect surplus quantities of honey has been severely reduced. Swarming is counter-productive and undesirable. Not only does swarming significantly reduce the honey crop collected by each hive, it also has social implications when it occurs in urban areas. Swarming can be reduced by the following management strategies.

- Re-queen with a young queen. Older queens have a greater tendency to swarm and some strains of bees are more inclined to swarm than others. It is important to re-queen before a colony shows signs of swarming activity, not during swarming activity.
- Allow plenty of space in the brood nest for the queen to lay in, by brood manipulation. This is an opportune time to draw comb foundation.

- Ensure that the colony has room to store and ripen honey during the peak honey-producing period.
- Remove part of the colony to form a new colony. This may not be desirable if maximum honey production is desired, although this is a good strategy if more colonies are required. Part of the colony can also be removed when swarming is at its peak and then united a month or so later after the swarming tendency has diminished. The practice of regularly destroying swarm cells is only marginally beneficial as the colony may swarm anyway.

Removing some or the entire honey crop may reduce the possibility of a colony swarming. This is assuming that the colony has plenty of empty combs to continue to fill.

Removal of honey crop

New beekeepers often ask:

- When should I remove honey?
- How much should I take?

Honey can be extracted in the spring, summer and autumn if floral conditions are conducive to good supplies of nectar and pollen. In spring, the colony has a number of warm months to follow, so the question of how much honey to extract is not a problem. The answer is as much as you wish, particularly in late October / November if the prospects of a continuing nectar supply are favourable. It is best to leave some honey on each colony if you are unsure of the future. Removing full combs and replacing with empty or extracted combs will stimulate the colony and encourage the colony to collect even more honey if the flora is still yielding nectar. Success in hive management is an ever-changing practice, and is different each year, in each location and for different colony conditions. It requires good observation skills and versatility. A beekeeper in one district may be taking honey off hives, whereas in another apiary nearby, the bees may be starving. It is necessary to assess the situation within the area being worked and continually monitor the condition of your hives and the available flora.

Thank you to NSW Department of Primary Industries for giving prior approval to the copying, distributing and publication of this information free of charge. All are advised that the information contained here is based on DPI's knowledge and understanding at the time of writing (February 2010).

Source: http://www.dpi.nsw.gov.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/0016/321712/Spring-management-of-bees.pdf, accessed 26 July 2019.

Pre-loved Flow Hives – For Sale

The club has on offer, to members for purchase, 2 Flow Hives of varied condition.

Flow Hive 1 – Reserved at \$50

Flow Hive 2 – Reserved \$250 - **UNDER CONTRACT**

Those interested and wish to inspect should contact Peter Clarke on peterandjanclarke1@bigpond.com

2020 Calendar – a chance to have your beekeeping photograph hanging on walls across Sydney

By: Robyn Alderton

The Club have agreed to develop a 2020 Calendar of member's favourite beekeeping photographs.

Members are invited to be a participate.

Photographs chosen will feature bees or beekeeping. Photographs will be enlarged to A4 size so must be of a good quality. Please submit photos that have been taken in landscape mode rather than portrait.

The process to develop this Parramatta Beekeepers Calendar is:

1. By, Sunday, **11 August 2019** submit, by email, your beekeeping **photographs (up to 8 photographs)** to Robyn on parramatta.secretary@beekeepers.asn.au include:
 - a description of the photograph, eg, explanation, location of the photograph (this information will be included in the calendar)
 - photographer's (members) contact details
 - a statement advising that the photograph was taken by you and is your property to submit and be used in the Parramatta Amateur Beekeepers calendar without cost to the club
2. All suitable photographs will be printed and will be made available at the 14 August 2019 Monthly Club Event where members will be invited to vote for their favourite photographs
3. The top 12 photographs chosen will be used for the Parramatta Amateur Beekeepers 2020 Calendar
4. All 12 photographers will be acknowledged on the Calendar
5. Calendars are the wall type, a month to an opening with space to note important activities/personal messages on each day
6. The plan is to have Calendars printed and available for purchase by members and the public by the middle of November
7. It is envisaged that Calendars will include important dates, eg, public holidays, school holidays, daylight savings start and end

So, what are you waiting for? Get those entries in!

Club t-shirts and caps – have you got the look?

By Sandy Harrison, Events Officer

Wooahoo! Check out our very own Stores Officer, modelling our new branded t-shirt and cap.

You too, can 'get the look' for:

T-shirt: \$33, Cap: \$7 or \$40 for the lot!

Initial stocks have depleted, to meet the demand to 'get the look', further stocks have arrived.

Volunteers, representing the Club, at Shows/Events, are encouraged to purchase a t-shirt and cap.



Club shop opening

By Lod Porretta

The Club Shop is open for business prior to most Monthly Club Event nights. Opening between 6.00 pm and 7.15 pm sharp.

Additionally, the Shop will be open at the end of weekend training events.

Shop space is very limited, please queue outside the shop and await your turn to be served.

Your patience is appreciated.

For all shop enquiries, please contact: Lod Porretta parramatta.stores@beekeepers.asn.au



What's available in the shop?

The following items are now available to purchase in the Club Shop

- Beetle Traps
- Bottom Boards
- Boxes
- Bee Brush
- Cleats
- Chemicals
- Eyelets
- Electric Embedder
- Foundation
- Frames
- Frame Wire
- Glass Jars
- Gloves
- Hive Closers
- Hive Locks
- Hive Tools - J
- Honey Gate
- Jackets/Suits
- Lids
- Plastic Buckets
- Risers
- Smokers
- Spur Wheels
- Strainers & Cloths
- Uncapping Boxes

Online club diary of events

By: Robyn Alderton

No need to fumble for your latest newsletter to find the details of upcoming Parramatta Amateur Beekeeper Club events, the club's calendar is available online.

Go to the Parramatta Club Page on the ABA website or click on the following line to scroll through the calendar.

<https://goo.gl/i4q87x>.

The screenshot shows a calendar interface with navigation buttons for 'Today', left and right arrows, 'Print', 'Week', 'Month', and 'Agenda'. The main content area displays a list of events:

- Wednesday, August 7**
 - 6:00pm Parramatta Executive Meeting at C...
- Wednesday, August 14**
 - 7:30pm Parramatta Branch Meeting
- Wednesday, September 4**
 - 6:00pm Parramatta Executive Meeting at C...
- Wednesday, September 11**
 - 7:30pm Parramatta Branch Meeting

Handy contact details

Position	Position Holder	Contact Details
President	Geoff Peoples	parramatta.president@beekeepers.asn.au
Vice President and Bio Security Officer	Dave Wilson	parramatta.vp@beekeepers.asn.au
Secretary	Robyn Alderton	parramatta.secretary@beekeepers.asn.au
Treasurer	Andrew Bardsley	parramatta.treasurer@beekeepers.asn.au
Stores Officer	Lod Porretta	parramatta.stores@beekeepers.asn.au
Apiary Officers	Dave Wilson and Arthur Garske	parramatta.vp@beekeepers.asn.au awgarske@gmail.com
Event Organiser	Sandy Harrison	parramatta.events@beekeepers.asn.au
Member Officer	Steve Alderton	parramatta.membership@beekeepers.asn.au
Colony Distribution Officer	Bill Dick	parramatta.swarms@beekeepers.asn.au
Education Officer	Arthur Garske	awgarske@gmail.com
Extractor Custodian Officer - east	Sandy Harrison	parramatta.events@beekeepers.asn.au
Extractor Custodian Officer- west	Andrew Bardsley	parramatta.treasurer@beekeepers.asn.au

Calendar 2019 or go to <https://goo.gl/i4q87x>

Date	Time/Event	Feature/Comment
7 August	6.00 pm Executive Meeting	Carlingford Bowling Club
14 August	7.30 pm Parramatta Club Event	Club Event Speaker/Feature: – Shaun Garvey – 2020 Calendar Photograph Voting
4 September	6.00 pm Executive Meeting	Carlingford Bowling Club
11 September	7.30 pm Parramatta Club Event	Club Event Speaker and Feature – Norm Webb – ‘Swarms and their Impact in Residential Suburbs’ at JRHS
28/29 September	<i>Beginning in Bees Training at JRAHS</i>	TBC
2 October	6.00 pm Executive Meeting	Carlingford Bowling Club
9 October	7.30 pm Parramatta Club Event	Club Event Speaker/Feature TBC
12 October	Total Beekeepers’ 40 th Annual Field Day	A free event for beekeepers and beekeepers-to-be, Tocal College, 815 Tocal Road, Paterson
26/27 October	<i>St Thomas Catholic Primary School, Willoughby Art and Craft Show</i>	TBC – not determined as yet if we will/can participate
November	Parramatta City Council Foundation Day	Participation: to be determined
6 November	6.00 pm Executive Meeting	Carlingford Bowling Club
13 November	7.30 pm Parramatta Club Event	Club Event Speaker/Feature TBC
16 and 17 November	Flower Power event	
11 December	6.00 pm Parramatta Club Event	Feature: Christmas Event at JRHS

Please note: Apiary Field Days - with the absence of a dedicated Apiary Manager, field days will be organised individually and communicated through the Newsletter and the on-line calendar as and when they are organised.

Note: Details correct at the time of dispatch however subject to change

Please email your Newsletter enquiries to: parramatta.secretary@beekeepers.asn.au

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