



**Amateur  
Beekeepers  
Association**  
NSW PARRAMATTA

**June 2020**

**Newsletter of the  
Parramatta Amateur  
Beekeepers Inc**

For information on the ABA including joining (re-joining) go to:

**[www.beekeepers.asn.au](http://www.beekeepers.asn.au)**

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

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

***Welcome to the 215 new and renewing members!***

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**Anyone who thinks they are too small  
to make a difference have never met  
the honeybee!**



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*Newsletter deadline to submit material – 20<sup>th</sup> of each month*

# President's Report

By Robyn Alderton, President

Looking forward to catching up with you as soon as it is safe to do so. I have everything crossed in the hope that we can get together soon. It would be great to start off with a member and family social event, ie, a BBQ with a warm open fire and the drawing of the Raffle. Make sure you listen to the Covid updates and look out for the news in upcoming Newsletters.

In the meantime, your Executive has been hard at work. Please refer to the Executive Report for a summary.

Reminder: With the intent of maintaining the club relationship with our members, we are running a (free) raffle.

Our Club Raffle is a means of maintaining relationship with our members during the Covid restrictions. Please note that tickets for this raffle cannot be purchased and members must either nominate themselves or be nominated by another member, but only once (a member cannot be nominated by two people for the same act of kindness). To be eligible to be in the draw, members can -

1. purchase goods through the club shop, earning one raffle ticket for each \$10 spent (or part thereof - \$7.50 being the rounding figure), eg, a purchase of \$18 will earn two tickets.
2. conduct a random act of beekeeping related kindness, either for the benefit of another member or the club itself, earning one raffle ticket for each occasion/nomination.

All appropriate nominations received by the President will have tickets allocated and the raffle will be drawn at the first club event to be held after the lifting of restrictions.

See below for inspiration!

<b>Nominee</b>	<b>Reason</b>	<b>Nominator</b>
Guy Challis	Raised an important issue about a new kind of comb that isn't really comb.	Dave Wilson
Timothy Kotlar	For submitting another photo for the 2021 calendar.	Robyn Alderton
Guy Challis	In celebration of World Bee Day - for advising the Executive of the availability of a documentary about bees (supported by the Wheen Bee Foundation). The ABA were contacted and requested to communicate this information to all ABA members.	Robyn Alderton
Dave Wilson	For the development of online Beginning in Bees Training material.	Robyn Alderton
Margaret McGregor	For developing a Frame Making video to be used for online training.	Robyn Alderton

<b>Nominee</b>	<b>Reason</b>	<b>Nominator</b>
Malcolm McGregor	For developing a Frame Making video to be used for online training.	Robyn Alderton
Bill Dick	June Newsletter contributor	Robyn Alderton
Arthur Garske	June Newsletter contributor	Robyn Alderton
Steve Alderton	June Newsletter contributor	Robyn Alderton
<i>Marina Tuskan</i>	<i>Completed the Find-a-Word puzzle</i>	<i>Robyn Alderton</i>
<i>Marina Tuskan</i>	<i>Pointed out the errors in the Find-a-Word puzzle</i>	<i>Robyn Alderton</i>
<i>Arthur Garske</i>	<i>Completed the Find-a-Word puzzle</i>	<i>Robyn Alderton</i>
<i>Arthur Garske</i>	<i>Tenacity in an attempt to find the word 'blue' in the Find-a-Word puzzle</i>	<i>Robyn Alderton</i>
<i>Timothy Kotlar</i>	<i>Completed the Find-a-Word puzzle</i>	<i>Robyn Alderton</i>
<i>Timothy Kotlar</i>	<i>Pointed out the errors in the Find-a-Word puzzle</i>	<i>Robyn Alderton</i>
<i>Gary Christoffel</i>	<i>Act of kindness - provided beekeeping advice to new members</i>	<i>Marina Tuskan</i>
<i>Marina Tuskan</i>	<i>Act of kindness - volunteered to review PAB materials</i>	<i>Robyn Alderton</i>
<i>Robbie Ashhurst</i>	<i>Random act of kindness - tidied the apiary</i>	<i>Robyn Alderton</i>
<i>Peter Clarke</i>	<i>Col Pulling quiz participant</i>	<i>Robyn Alderton</i>
<i>Steve Alderton</i>	<i>Col Pulling quiz participant</i>	<i>Robyn Alderton</i>
<i>Andrew Bardsley</i>	<i>Col Pulling quiz participant</i>	<i>Robyn Alderton</i>
<i>Sheryl McIntosh</i>	<i>Col Pulling quiz participant</i>	<i>Robyn Alderton</i>
<i>Guy Challis</i>	<i>Col Pulling quiz participant</i>	<i>Robyn Alderton</i>
<i>Norm Webb</i>	<i>Col Pulling honey entries</i>	<i>Robyn Alderton</i>
<i>Dave Wilson</i>	<i>Act of kindness - worked in the apiary</i>	<i>Robyn Alderton</i>
<i>Arthur Garske</i>	<i>Act of kindness - worked in the apiary</i>	<i>Robyn Alderton</i>
<i>Guy Challis</i>	<i>Act of kindness - worked in the apiary</i>	<i>Robyn Alderton</i>
<i>Timothy Kotlar</i>	<i>For submitting a photo for the 2021 calendar</i>	<i>Robyn Alderton</i>
<i>Bill Dick</i>	<i>Newsletter contributor</i>	<i>Robyn Alderton</i>
<i>Arthur Garske</i>	<i>Newsletter contributor</i>	<i>Robyn Alderton</i>
<i>Guy Challis</i>	<i>For submitting photos for the 2021 calendar</i>	<i>Robyn Alderton</i>
<i>Bill Dick</i>	<i>For submitting a swarm/nest photo for the Newsletter</i>	<i>Robyn Alderton</i>

*Note: Details in 'blue italics' above were published in the May Newsletter*

New nominees (from the previous Newsletter) are shown in Black type.

Prizes on offer are:

<b><i>Decapping pinwheel</i></b>	<b><i>Vented escape board</i></b>	<b><i>A bucket strainer</i></b>
		

All nominations to be sent to the President. The raffle will be drawn at the first club event where we can meet at the school. No tickets can be purchased for this raffle.

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***Stay safe, stay connected and I look forward to  
catching up at a monthly club event soon!***

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## ***Executive Report - March/April***

*By Dave Wilson, Secretary*

As you know, due to the threat posed by Covid, all club activities have been cancelled, however, your Executive has been working behind the scenes to keep the club functioning until restrictions are eased.

The Executive had a successful teleconference “executive meeting” on 20 May 2020. These notes are a summary of that meeting.

Dave Wilson, Andrew Bardsley, Robyn Alderton, Steve Alderton, Sandy Harrison, Peter Clarke, Margaret McGregor and Malcolm McGregor all attended the meeting with an apology from Lod Porretta.

Robyn Alderton (President) welcomed Margaret and Malcolm McGregor to the Executive Committee. Robyn also informed the Executive of the progress made in developing a “blended” learning course for new beekeepers. The theory component would be based on the “Bee Ag Skills” text with a series of self-marking exercises which will be made available to participants. No formal classroom teaching would be involved. This theory course would be accompanied by a practical activity in the club apiary. The committee approved preparation of further units.

Andrew Bardsley (Treasurer) provided a report indicating the opening balance for the month of May being \$6,871.91 with a closing balance of \$6,871.91. With no physical meeting and limited shop activity there has been minimal income. The main expenditure has been for Bee Club Apiary Competition certificates.

Andrew also noted that the engraving of club loan equipment has been completed. He reported that the effort required to organise a PayPal account for the club was extensive and was not justified.

The committee considered the fate of the Christmas in July function and thought it likely that this will not be viable in July but will consider holding it as soon as possible in the second half of the year.

Peter Clarke noted that bee box kits have been purchased with 20 being assembled and of those, 10 have been painted. Some have been sold by the shop. Fifteen nucleus boxes have also been purchased in anticipation of the swarm season in spring.

Peter will investigate the cost of sourcing plastic hives from Nuplas. These have the advantage of not requiring antifungal protection nor painting and are easy to assemble. The meeting noted that there will remain a strong demand for quality wooden bee boxes. Depending on pricing it is possible that the shop may have both available to members.

The matter of transporting the honey frames from the apiary to the extracting room was again discussed. The possibility of making use of a cheap “non-registered” car is being considered. Steve Alderton to further investigate.

Parramatta and Hunter Valley Clubs are the joint winners of the 2020 Colonel Pulling Competition. Dave Wilson will coordinate the engraving and safe display of the shield until next year’s competition.

Sandy Harrison informed the meeting that the events at Bunnings and at St Ives Show have been indefinitely postponed due to COVID-19. She also provided the most recent COVID-19 advice.

The meeting noted that advice from NSW Department of Fair Trading permits incorporated clubs such as PAB to delay their AGM past the last possible date of 30 June 2020. A decision is yet to be made about this meeting but it is noted that if a special resolution is to be considered, members must be notified at least 21 days prior to the AGM.

The Committee approved the trial development of our own instructional videos. Malcolm and Margaret McGregor offered to produce a video on frame assembly and wiring while Peter Clarke and Steve Alderton offered to produce a video on bee box assembly. Andrew Bardsley will do the voice over.

The meeting thanked Katie Twomey (Agriculture Teacher at James Ruse) for her help in selling club honey. This is particularly appreciated as several ‘bee’ events have had to be cancelled, preventing the sale of club honey.

Minutes for the meeting and this summary prepared by Dave Wilson.

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***Club meeting records are maintained by Dave Wilson. Should you require further information, please contact Dave on [parramatta.secretary@beekeepers.asn.au](mailto:parramatta.secretary@beekeepers.asn.au)***

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## **Attention to all those selling their honey**

For those of you who are lucky enough to have available honey and/or honey products for sale, please ensure you follow good Covid protection practices, eg:

- request that money be deposited directly into your nominated account or to be left in a zip lock envelope at a nominated location.
- organise a safe place to enable the product(s) to be picked up with contactless pick up.

***Look after your health and be vigilant!***

## **PAB 2021 Calendar entries are still OPEN!**

*By Robyn Alderton*

Our 2020 inaugural calendar was a huge success.

To have the opportunity to contribute to the PAB 2021 calendar, send your bee and/or beekeeping photos to:

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

**Would you like your photos included in the 2021 Parramatta Amateur Beekeepers Calendar?**

*See below for inspiration*

What are you waiting for? While you're hiding from Covid go out in the garden and snap away before winter hits us and it is too cold to take hive opening type photos.

**Entries** must be received **by 31 July 2020**. Voting / selection will take place at the 12 August 2020 Monthly Club Event or online (Covid dependent).



***What are you waiting for? Go out and snap away!***

# Autumn management

## **Arthur's advice will help you with autumn management of your hives**

*By Arthur Garske*

Honey flows can still occur in autumn, depending on the location of the hives. Typically in the suburbs of Sydney, bees can and will continue to forage in parks, creeks, native bushlands and even streetscapes; you may notice Mugga Ironbark, Paper Bark (Bellbowrie Tea Tree), Western Red Bloodwood, Brush Box and White Box, amongst other species of the genus Eucalyptus, which are distributed along the entire eastern seaboard.

Experienced beekeepers find it helpful to keep a diary specific to their area, noting the vegetation in flower, the nectar yield, when and how long the different species bud or blossom and particularly if rain has fallen recently.

During periods of rain/moisture (precipitation), Paper Bark will flower and yield at this time. The bees will be foraging and there should be increased activity at the hive entrance. This is the appropriate time to remove the honey and start reducing the hive for the winter.

Examine the honey supers which were prepared the month before when the brood inspection and sugar shake test were undertaken. Have an empty box at hand, standing on a lid rim and smoke over the top bars and at the entrance. Remove the lid, lift out frames and shake and brush the bees off into the box, then place in the empty box. Repeat until the super has been emptied. Gently shake off any persistent bees.

The box underneath contains the previously partially filled combs, which should now be full. The procedure carried out previously is called "under-supering" and is an efficient way to add new boxes. Lift off the 3/4 full - full boxes and place on the empty box. Place the partly filled box on top. Because it is usually the two outside frames on each side that are not completely filled, rearrange their position in the box by moving them to the middle and placing the fully capped frames at the sides. This will encourage the bees to move up into the top box to continue filling the partially filled combs. Because they have to move through the empty box, they will start to put honey in the middle frames as well as in the middle frames of the top box.

Then reverse the frames in the under-supered box, moving the full middle frames to the outside and the partially full frames to the middle. This swapping of the position of the frames encourages the bees to work more quickly, as heat is conducted up through the middle of the hive.

The honey is now ready to be extracted, preferably on the same day as it is removed from the hive - this will ensure it retains enough warmth to facilitate extraction and minimises the possibility of corruption by the Small Hive Beetle larvae. Obviously, any pest infestation will render the honey unsuitable for human consumption.

The box of stickies (stickies are the frames with remnants of honey remaining following extraction) can be put on the top of the hive with an internal cover placed on top of the frames of the box below. This internal cover should be approximately 10-12 mm smaller than the internal dimensions of the bee box. Black plastic sheet or vinyl linoleum can be used to make this internal cover. Stickies can be stored over winter this way. A mild winter, an early spring, and / or a dearth of space will encourage the bees to move up above the internal cover and start to use this empty super that you have left over winter.

Alternately, stickies may be placed above the internal cover for a week. The bees will come up and dry them out, after which they can be removed and stored appropriately until the season begins again in spring.

## Monitor your bee activity safely over winter

By: Steve Alderton

Have you ever wondered how your bees are faring through our chilly winter weather when common sense tells you it is too cold to open the hive and have a peek no matter how curious you are?

Well, thanks to modern technology in the form of an infrared camera, you can satisfy that curious nature.

These photographs were taken with an infrared camera on Wednesday, 3 June 2020 on the south coast of NSW at approximately 2.00 pm. The outside temperature was approximately 19 degrees. The sun was shining however there was a cool southerly wind blowing.

You will note from the photograph at right that this hive comprises a Nuplas brood box and a honey super. The hive is located on the southern side of a colourbond shed.

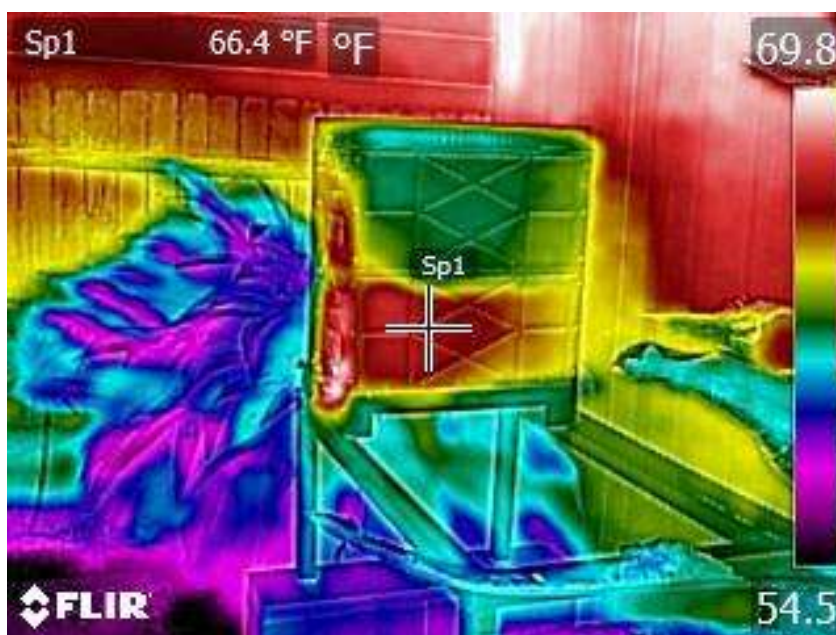


The hive is elevated on blocks and a hive stand to ensure it is clear of flood waters/ Yes, the area was flooded earlier this year and the flood water level came up to the hive entrance. Following the flood, blocks were added to achieve added height).

Now looking at the infrared image below you can see the 'red' shaded area in the brood box and the front of the honey super. The red shading denotes a hot spot indicative of where the cluster of bees was at that time. I'm confident that so far this hive is doing well.

This is not a cheap management tool (at approximately \$1,000-\$1,200 for the camera) however if you are fortunate enough to have access to one and can use it regularly, it can help you manage your hives by identifying:

- The need to add/remove supers
- That the hive is active and queen right





An added advantage to a swarm collector would be the ease of identifying the exact location of a swarm/nest of bees in a wall cavity.

Of course, the infrared camera is a tool to help you and will never replace actual hive inspections where you check that your bees are bringing in pollen and nectar that your hive is queen right and free of disease.

Following is an example of a hive, at a different location, in normal and in infrared view.



## **Mario's answer to small hive beetle eradication**

*By: Bill Dick, Swarm Distribution Officer*

I miss the Bee Club meetings and the cuppa and conversations about bees afterwards.

A couple of years ago I was talking to Mario, one of our bee club members.

The topic was how to control Small Hive Beetle (SHB).

At the time I was quite convinced that an oil trap under the bottom board, an Apithor inside the hive on the bottom board and an oil trap on top inserted between the frames was sufficient.

Mario laughed and said his answer was to suck up the SHB with a small tube attached to a vacuum cleaner.

In February I did my last honey extraction for the season.

The only SHB that I saw had either drowned in the oil traps or come to grief with the Apithor.

All my SHB deterrents seemed to be working.

The first week in May I went through my hives again intending to close them down for the winter.

I was alarmed to see more than my share of SHB and set to squashing the blighters.

They are very clever at hiding and I missed too many for comfort.

After some thought I remembered my conversation with Mario and his vacuum cleaner idea. Two weeks later I returned to the hives with a slightly modified handheld battery operated vacuum cleaner and together with a smoker went on the attack.

Once again, some escaped, but I hope the Apithor and the oil traps will control numbers until next season.

My thanks to Mario for his idea.



Dirt Devil SHB eradicator



SHB vacuumed from one hive

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*We hear you, Bill, we will be back together, monthly, as soon as it is safe to do so and thank you for your contribution, a raffle ticket has your name on it. ... Robyn*

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## Club shop

By Lod Porretta, Stores Officer

Due to Covid-19, the club shop is closed however you can email your order to the Stores Officer.

Submit your order by Monday. The Stores Officer will advise the cost. Payment to be submitted electronically. After clearance of funds in the club account, an advice will be sent and goods can be collected the following Wednesday from Castle Hill (pm).

Members are encouraged to support PAB by purchasing their beekeeping goods from the club shop whenever possible.

## Special!

To help you out, our executive has been hard at work treating, assembling and painting boxes for sale in the shop. We have 10 available for the low price of \$45 each. These boxes are of superior quality, they are:

- Shaped with rounded corners
- Nailed in all dove tails
- Dipped in copper naphthanate to prevent rot
- Primed with oil based anti bleed primer paint
- Box faces painted with two coats of full gloss acrylic paint
- Box edges painted with two coats of full gloss oil-based paint

This product is produced in Australia and made from A-Grade timber.

**A quality product made by beekeepers for beekeepers.**

Members are encouraged to support their club shop and purchase their beekeeping goods from the club shop whenever possible.

Shop email: Lod Porretta [parramatta.stores@beekeepers.asn.au](mailto:parramatta.stores@beekeepers.asn.au)

The following items are 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

If the item(s) you seek are not listed above, just email your friendly Stores Officer to see if, in fact, the item is in stock.



## **DPI changes are coming to a registration near you!**

By: *Robyn Alderton*

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*Thank you to Sandy Harrison who received the following advice and suggested that members be advised of the DPI Registration changes being rolled out to all registered beekeepers.*

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On advice of registration renewals that are due, members are learning of the change to the NSW DPI system for registered beekeepers. The beekeeper registration management system has transitioned from Service NSW and will now be managed by NSW DPI. This new system will enable beekeepers to manage their registration online.

NSW DPI advises that beekeepers have not been provided with a new online portal where they can:

- Apply for a new registration or renew an existing registration
- Manage registration details, contact details, phone number etc
- Manage hive brand details including hive brand numbers
- Record and maintain hive locations
- Notify and record sale or disposal of hives
- Notify NSW DPI of any pests or diseases
- A beekeeper can now have multiple registered hive brands as long as they are unique to the beekeeper.

To access your registration via the online portal, you will need to have an email address. At the time of your renewal, NSW DPI will provide you with a one-off access code that will enable you to set up your portal access.

Please note, your authority number IS NOT your registration number. Your registered hive brand will remain unchanged.

If you choose not to set up an electronic account on the new portal, you can continue to use paper-based communications with the NSW DPI.

A final note, there is no need to take any action until you receive advice from the NSW DPI when your beekeeping registration is due.

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## Book review – Starting Right with Bees

By: Robyn Alderton

This book was written by a Beginner in Beekeeping, H G Rowe, out of his own experience in needing help and direction during his first years of beekeeping and forms part of the A I Root Bee Library.

This book may have been published in 1922 however through reading this informative book it is clear that the basics of beekeeping has not altered significantly over almost 100 years.

There is strong emphasis on hive management in coordination or timing with honey flows, something that I believe that many new beekeepers do not really understand. This book could almost have been written by our very own Arthur Garske. The common themes in the book to Arthur's discussions are remarkable.

If you are really keen to learn more about being a beekeeper rather than a keeper of bees and you want to truly understand what Arthur has been telling us then I strongly recommend that you research some of the older texts such as this book.

On a lighter note, there are some very old references, which you would expect. The following description was found under the heading 'How to Avoid Being Stung'. I had a chuckle in comparing the visual image of high shoes and leggings of almost 100 years ago to the same named items of today and don't get me started on bloomers and aprons .....

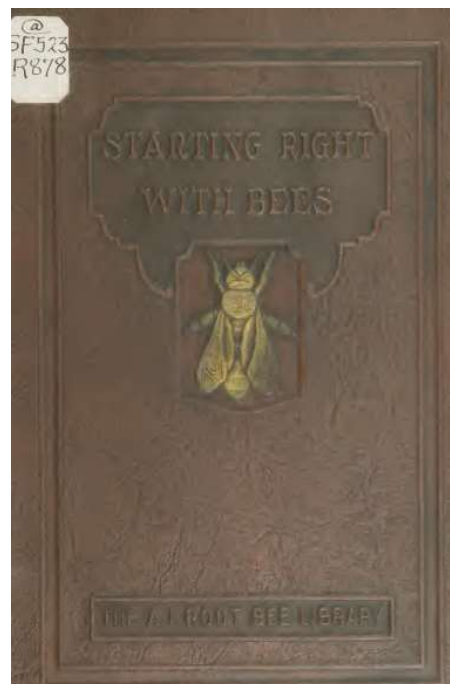
*"Women may well wear overalls or bloomers when working with bees. A full but short apron may be worn over the overalls and a short skirt over the bloomers. High shoes and leggings also add to a woman's protection against stings."*

From reading this text, I learnt why a 'super' is named as such. Do you know how the 'super' got its name?

Email me your response and members sending me the correct answer will receive a raffle ticket.

You can download the PDF version of this book from Open Library by clicking on the following link:

<https://ia800201.us.archive.org/35/items/cu31924003433483/cu31924003433483.pdf>



## Handy contact details

Position	Position Holder	Contact Details
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Secretary	Dave Wilson	<a href="mailto:parramatta.secretary@beekeepers.asn.au">parramatta.secretary@beekeepers.asn.au</a>
Treasurer	Andrew Bardsley	<a href="mailto:parramatta.treasurer@beekeepers.asn.au">parramatta.treasurer@beekeepers.asn.au</a>
Stores Officer	Lod Porretta	<a href="mailto:parramatta.stores@beekeepers.asn.au">parramatta.stores@beekeepers.asn.au</a>
Apiary Officers	Dave Wilson and Arthur Garske	<a href="mailto:parramatta.secretary@beekeepers.asn.au">parramatta.secretary@beekeepers.asn.au</a> <a href="mailto:awgarske@gmail.com">awgarske@gmail.com</a>
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## What's on in 2020

**All events cancelled until further notice and hopefully not for too much longer!**

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