

July 2020

Newsletter of the Parramatta Amateur Beekeepers Inc

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/

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!



President: Secretary: Treasurer: Robyn Alderton Dave Wilson Andrew Bardsley

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Newsletter deadline to submit material – 20th of each month

President's Report

By Robyn Alderton, President

You should have received a calendar invite (sent out Sunday evening, 28 June 2020). If you did not receive the invitation to the July online meeting, please let me know.

Following is the email you should have received (along with a calendar invite for the virtual meeting).

'Hi All PAB Members

Well, the time has come to try and meet with you online. Covid has restricted us in so many ways however the health and wellbeing of our members and the wider community remains important to your PAB Executive.

We plan to hold a virtual meeting on Wednesday, 15 July (third Wednesday of July) commencing at 7.30 pm and concluding by 9.00 pm.

Please note, this is the 3rd Wednesday of the month. The usual meeting date was moved earlier in the year to accommodate that game that stops a nation, 'State of Origin'.

We plan to record this club event for others to view at a later date.

We will commence with a short meeting then hand over to Peter Clarke (our guest speaker), Peter will speak about Bees and Pointer Mountain (a recount of a devastating bushfire event and how it affected a beekeeper.

Please join us for this virtual meeting, I look forward to seeing you.

Kind regards Robyn Alderton on behalf of your Executive"

Your Executive continues to be 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 – the list is growing!

Nominee	Reason	Nominator
Guy Challis	For supplying his Bee Hive Store photo	Robyn Alderton
Jamie Thomson	For providing a Newsletter article	Robyn Alderton
Jamie Thomson	For providing a Q&A for the Newsletter	Robyn Alderton
Margaret McGregor	For submitting another photo for the 2021 Robyn Alderton calendar	
Guy Challis	For forwarding the details of a BBC article "A Bee C: Scientists translate honeybee queen duets" Robyn Alderton	
George Gourlay	For submitting a Newsletter article Robyn Alderton	
Jamie Thomson	For providing the correct reason how a 'super' got its name	Robyn Alderton
Margaret McGregor	For providing the correct reason how a 'super' got its name	Robyn Alderton
Timothy Kotlar	For providing the correct reason how a 'super' got its name	Robyn Alderton
Norm Webb	For submitting a Newsletter article warning members about 'brood theft'	Robyn Alderton
Arthur Garske	For providing the correct reason how a 'super' got its name	Robyn Alderton
Marina Tuskan	For providing the correct reason how a 'super' got its name	Robyn Alderton
Marina Peterson	For providing the correct reason how a 'super' got its name	Robyn Alderton
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.	
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
Malcolom McGregor	For developing a Frame Making video to be used for online training.	Robyn Alderton
Bill Dick	June Newsletter contributor	Robyn Alderton

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

Note: Details in 'blue italics' above were published in the May and June Newsletters

New nominees are shown in Black type.

Prizes on offer are:



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.

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

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 attended a successful online meeting on 17 June 2020. Attending were Robyn Alderton, Andrew Bardsley, Dave Wilson, Steve Alderton, Peter Clarke, Sandy Harrison, Margaret McGregor and Malcolm McGregor. Apologies received from Lod Porretta, Arthur Garske and Bill Dick. These notes are a summary of that meeting.

Andrew Bardsley presented the financial report for May showing an opening balance of \$6,299.03. Significant items included am income of \$912.50 from the club store with expenses on purchasing swarm nuclei boxes of \$722.70. This with other items led to a closing balance of \$5,923.03.

Many items at the meeting were carried forward since the COVID-19 situation has prevented any progress.

Our club and the Hunter Valley club were the joint winners of the most recent Col Pulling Inter club competition. Dave Wilson is to organise the sharing of the shields with Hunter Valley and to arrange the lettering on the shield for this year's winners.

Pete Clarke and Steve Alderton are investigating the comparative costs between the regular wooden bee boxes and the new generation plastic bee boxes from Nuplas prior to the executive making a decision about which (or both) types of box to stock in the shop.

Dave Wilson and Robyn Alderton are developing an on-line "Beginning in Beekeeping" course based on the DPI text "Bee Agkills". Most units have been prepared and some members of the executive will review them before the next meeting.

Following the success the club has had in supplying swarms to new members Peter Clarke and Sandy Harrison are reviewing the way this is organised to ensure we have the structure in place for the coming swarm system.

Our club was approached by the new club at Wagga Wagga to allow the new club to use some of our written policies to help organise their club. Steve Alderton organised this.

Our club has been approached by the Carlingford Dundas Lions club to supply honey for resale at their Xmas functions. Robyn Alderton is investigating how this would work and is checking the likely supply of club honey in December.

Margaret and Malcom McGregor produced a series of training videos (assembling and wiring frames) and the executive is considering how these would be available to members.

The matter of the club supporting an ABA Field day in September was raised. The likely COVID-19 situation at that time is far from clear so this matter is carried forward for further consideration.

Some members have reported problems with access when we have meetings in the lecture theatre and the gate to Baker Street is locked. Andrew Bardsely will investigate.

The school has recommended some changes in the way the club access the large storage shed near the new gym. Peter Clarke is to investigate this matter.

The issue of when we could resume regular meetings was again considered. Sandy Harrison provided a summary of the current Covid-19 restrictions and indicated that it was very difficult to predict what the situation would be later in the year. It was agreed that there would not be a physical executive or club meeting in July and we would consider the situation again at the next virtual executive meeting.

The meeting also recommended that we trial a "virtual" club meeting in July chaired by Robyn Alderton with a financial report from Andrew Bardsley and a presentation from Peter Clarke.

The meeting closed at 8:45 pm. This summary of the meeting prepared by Dave Wilson

Club meeting records are maintained by Dave Wilson. Should you require further information, please contact Dave on parramatta.secretary@beekeepers.asn.au

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

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!

When to extract honey

Arthur's advice will help you understand when it is the right time to extract honey

By Arthur Garske

Honey should ideally only be "robbed" or extracted during a honey flow. Bees are less likely to rob when there is a plentiful supply of nectar available to be collected. However, once the honey flow stops, robbing becomes much more likely and will have an adverse effect on the bees - anything which moves in the vicinity of the hive will be actively pursued and stung, including neighbours, visitors and pets.

Once you recognise that robbing has commenced, shut the hive and be vigilant in not leaving anything containing honey or wax exposed. Beekeepers should be aware that it is an offence under the Biosecurity Act and Code of Practice to leave honey or wax exposed, as this encourages bees to engage in robbing behaviour and risks the possible transmission of disease between hives.

Fines can be issued.

Weaker hives should also have their entrances minimised, making it easier for the bees to defend their homes against intruders and pests.

Bees are always on the lookout for easy pickings and have good short term memory, so anyone or anything which they perceive as a threat to their forbidden food source will be aggressively pursued and driven away. It's essential for the beekeeper to act responsibly to avoid placing themselves and others in danger.

Q&A

The following is a Question and answer in relation to Arthur's June article in the PAB.

Jamie's question:

"I enjoyed your article in the June edition of the PAB Newsletter. I was particularly interested in your suggestion that a box of stickies can be stored on the hive over winter, with a cover placed over the frames of the box below. This is very appealing idea but I wonder if it creates a risk of small hive beetle infestation, or wax moth attack, in the box of stickies. My own approach to the storage of stickies over winter is laborious for both me and the bees and I would like to try alternative approaches. When I do the last extraction of the season, I cut out all the wax from the frames, remove the wires, clean the frames up and re-wire them before storing them under the house. I do this because I don't have the freezer space to store them and because I don't want to use phostoxin."

Arthur's response:

"You have nothing to lose by trying it, I have been doing it for years and can safely say that it does work. Referring to your comment about SHB, SHB like hot humid weather not the winter cold."

Could our hives at James Ruse have American Foul Brood (AFB)?

By: Dave Wilson

The ABA via Bruce White organised for clubs to contribute honey from their own and members hives to be tested by The State Veterinary Diagnostic Laboratory for AFB spores. AFB is the most serious disease of honey bee brood in NSW killing between 2% and 4% of hives each year.

If the larvae are fed honey containing AFB spores in their first day there is a strong chance that spores will hatch in the gut of the larvae to form active bacteria. This will inevitably kill the larvae either at the larvae or pupae stage.

AFB is normally detected on the diseased frame with classic signs of sunken brood cells, patchy brood appearance, roping of decayed brood and a smell like that of decaying fish.

However AFB can be detected by the presence of their microscopic spores in honey. This process involves culturing the spores in a media that promotes growth and germination over a period of several days. At the end of that time a count of the spores is made and a statistical calculation made of the likelihood of that level of infection causing the demise of the colony.

The likelihood is expressed using a simple index:

- +1 indicates a 58% chance that the colony will develop a full case of AFB where brood is affected and the classic signs of an AFB infection are evident.
- +2 indicates an 80% chance that the colony will develop a full case of AFB where brood is affected and the classic signs of an AFB infection are evident.
- +3 indicates a 100% chance that the colony will develop a full case of AFB where brood is affected and the classic signs of an AFB infection are evident.

A honey sample from a recent extraction from the hives at James Ruse was checked for AFB spores and came back as +1.

This tells us there were AFB spores in the honey that came from 7 hives. It also indicates that it was at the smallest level that is statistically reliable. It does not indicate if those spores reached the larvae on their first day. It does not indicate from which hive the spores came from.



The next step is obvious – check the brood in each hive. Arthur Garske and myself picked a warmish afternoon and checked both sides of every brood frame in every hive. No signs of AFB!

It is possible the James Ruse bees robbed out an infected hive elsewhere and brought back the infected honey. For AFB spores to cause an AFB infection in a hive the infected honey must be fed to larvae in its first day. That is the 24 hour infection window. After 24 hours the spores will not germinate in the larvae gut. If the infected honey is simply consumed by worker bees.

It is worth noting that the hives appeared in good condition all with laying queens and

adequate honey stores. Several had very strong brood patterns over several frames. Several had full super's of honey. All gave a good "shake" indicating that they were on a honey flow.

Next inspection in spring time. Fingers crossed!

My thanks to Arthur for his immediate offer of help. He brings an enormous practical bee knowledge to any beekeeping task.



In the media

Submitted by Guy Challis

A Bee C: Scientists translate honeybee queen duets

https://www.bbc.com/news/science-environment-53029218

Scientists using highly sensitive vibration detectors have decoded honeybee queens' "tooting and quacking" duets in the hive.

Submitted by Gary Christoffel

Honey Bee Virus Tricks Hive Guards Into Admitting Sick Intruders

The virus tweaks bee behaviour to infect new hives and may also spread other hive-killing pathogens and pests.

Two New Asian Giant Hornet Sightings in Pacific Northwest

The sightings, both of individual dead hornets, expand the area currently being patrolled by scientists hoping to track and eradicate the invasive insect

https://www.smithsonianmag.com/smart-news/invasion-murder-hornets-180974809/

Want to know more? Then click on the links above.

The Bee Hive Store, Taree



The Beehive Store, Victoria and Pulteney Streets, Taree. (8)

Soft drink dispensers, coffee machines and music devices are now part of everyday life but in the 1940s in Taree these items were novelties. Brothers George and John Cassimaty were Greek immigrants and fruiterers who set up a refreshments room in Victoria Street, Taree in 1911. Together they bought land which became known as the Cassimaty Subdivision and is today bordered by Marathon and Olympia Streets. George also ran a fruit exchange in Manning Street for 23 years which was similar to a café and delicatessen selling light meals and imported items such as French olive oil and coffee.

In 1943 George moved his business from Manning Street to set up the Victory Café in the Beehive Building on the corner of Victoria and Pulteney Streets. It was in this café that George changed the face of the Taree café scene by



installing a New Century Fountain Machine which dispensed various soft drinks. In 1948, he extended his business to include an amusement arcade with a modern 'Music Maker' similar to a jukebox, slot machines and a flying duck shooting game. In 1952, he installed a coffee machine called 'La Carimali'. It was these innovative ideas that made the Victory Café a popular spot with the youth who repeatedly played Frankie Laine's 'Jezebel' and enjoyed the soft drinks, milkshakes and banana splits.

Source: https://midcoaststories.com/2018/10/victory-cafe-taree/ accessed 30 June 2020

Thank you to Guy and Judy Challis for supplying the Bee Hive Store photo.

You too could plant a 'flower meadow'

By: Jamie Thomson

In April last year, I was very impressed by the "flower meadow" in the Royal Botanic Gardens. There was a board with information about the flowers they'd planted so I took a photograph of it and then ordered some seeds from an online seed supplier (www.theseedcollection.com.au).

In early summer, I established a 3x4 metre bed in our backyard, which was difficult as the ground was so hard. However, the summer was so hot and dry (and our rainwater tank was close to empty) that I didn't sow my flower meadow straight away.

By the time I got around to it (in early autumn), the weeds had taken over so I had to clear the bed again. I improved the soil with some manure from a garden centre. I then emptied all of the seeds into a bucket and mixed them with sand to give them some bulk.



Finally, I broadcast the seeds onto the ground. I watered the bed and was excited when things started to grow. However, most of the plants which emerged were weeds and it was quite an exercise to work out which plants to remove and which to leave. The end result has been very successful, with sunflowers reaching about 2.5 metres in height and a profusion of colours from the marigolds, cosmos and zinnias.

On a sunny day, there are many bees visiting the flowers and taking full pollen baskets back to their hives. Not mine, unfortunately, which are too far away to visit these flowers.





Photos:

Top right – the information board at the royal Botanic Gardens

Above left - Royal Botanic Gardens 'flower meadow'

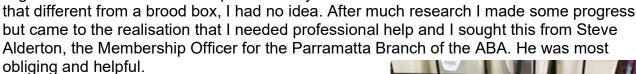
Above right – Jamie with his impressive garden showing his hard work has paid off

'My Bee experience' or maybe 'My b..... inexperience'

By: George Gourlay

The conversation wasn't even about bees but about those other buzzing biting insects, mosquitoes! It was at a family bar-b-cue just before Christmas 2019 when mosquitoes are usually at their worst when my son mentioned that there didn't seem to be as many mosquitoes around. As co-incidence would have it I had just listened to an entomologist on the radio talking about a world wide decline in the insect population and the effect that this would have on food production and so I sprouted my great knowledge on this urgent topic! I should have learned by now to keep my mouth shut.

What should I get from my children for my birthday in January but a Flow Hive Hybrid beehive in kit form with the comment "Now do your bit for the environment." If you have ever had to assemble Ikea furniture I'm sure you will know what I was facing. Beekeeping like most other occupations has its own lingo. What the heck was a "super" and why was



So the completed hive is now sitting lonely in my garage waiting for its first occupants.

After joining the club I enrolled in the beginners course only for the course to be cancelled due to the Covid restrictions.

In an attempt to ease my frustration, I saw a "bee hotel" for sale in the plant nursery in the Cumberland State Forest and thought I could make those as gifts for my children at Christmas.

So while looking for a DIY design on Pinterest I came across an article by an entomologist titled "Insect hotels: A Refuge or a Fad"

help and I sought this from Steve Branch of the ABA. He was most

https://www.pinterest.com.au/pin/184858759690067249/

O hell! What do I do now? Any suggestions?

Brood theft!

By: Norm Webb

It would seem that not all beekeepers operate under the same moral code that most colleagues would expect.

A case has come to my attention of a beekeeper visiting his hives, only to find that three or four frames had been taken from his brood boxes. One would assume that the likelihood of queens being on these frames was very-high.

These particular hives were located in a paddock, however were clearly visible from the main road. I am sure that the culprit had driven past these hives on several occasions and had decided that by taking frames and leaving the hives, the owner could also drive past and not notice any difference in the short term.

Remember that it was estimated that over twenty thousand hives were destroyed during the bushfires during last Spring and Summer. Many beekeepers would have been devastated by these catastrophic events and their livelihoods destroyed.

Although we are recreational beekeepers, I am sure nobody would like to be a victim of such abhorrent behaviour. Our income would be largely unaffected, but I am sure we would be mightily peeved.

If your hives are in your own backyard, then the above event is unlikely to occur. However, some of us have a few hives too many for a residential environment. My simple advice is to find a location for your excess hives which is easily accessible, but is not in clear view for public viewing. One sometimes is forced to think like a criminal in order to minimise the chances of becoming a victim!

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 napthanate 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.



Bee Brush

Shop email: Lod Porretta parramatta.stores@beekeepers.asn.au

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

- Beetle Traps
 Bottom Boards
 Boxes
- 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.

Handy contact details

Position	Position Holder	Contact Details
President	Robyn Alderton	parramatta.president@beekeepers.asn.au
Vice President and Bio Security Officer	Dave Wilson	parramatta.vp@beekeepers.asn.au
Secretary	Dave Wilson	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.secretary@beekeepers.asn.au awgarske@gmail.com
Events Coordinator	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

What's on in 2020

15 / 7 / 2020 7.30 pm PAB (Online) club event

Speaker: Peter Clarke Topic: Bees and Pointer

Newsletter Editor: Robyn Alderton

Mountain

Refer to your calendar invite (email sent on 28 June) for dial in details

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