

BEEBIZ November 2021

The Newsletter of the Northern Rivers Amateur Beekeeping Association Inc.

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<u>Membership Officer and Editor</u> Brian Window			

Postal Address 54 Donnans Road, Lismore Heights, NSW 2480

November Activity 28th November

The next field day will be on 28th November 2021 at the home of Josephine and Brian Window, 54 Donnans Road, Lismore Heights. Brian has some hives at his home, and about 40 out at other sites in the bush. The activity will be in three stages. One, to look through some of Brian's hives to assess their health, two, to have a lunch and celebrate modestly the end of 2021 and hopefully the end of COVID19, and, three, to hold the club AGM for the 18 months between 1/1/20 and 30/6/21.

Josephine and Brian also have an interesting garden to enjoy.

Bring your beekeeping gear, but do not bring anything that could have AFB spores! (*Not a joke Ed*)

The day will commence at 9.30 am with a welcome by the President and morning tea, and the beekeeping activities will start at 10.30 am. Lunch will be a main course of sausages, onions and salad starting at about 12.30 pm, followed by sweets with a Xmas flavour. The raffle will be held before the start of the AGM at 1.30pm.

The AGM should be very short, going on past AGM's

The lunch will be free, but all attendees are asked to bring either a morning tea item or a salad. As a guide, bring enough for twice the size of your group. We prefer to do it his way, because the contributions from members are much more interesting than what we could buy. Guests other than family will be \$5, and are welcome.

The profits from the raffle help to support the club; the prizes rely on purchasing some beekeeping items, but also donations from members; any excess produce etc would be appreciated. (*Love some chokoes or cucumbers Ed*)

So, remember to bring

- Salads/morning tea
- Raffle items
- Chairs
- Nametags

Directions

Property is at 54 Donnans Road, Lismore Heights. From Lismore, take Dawson Street towards Bangalow. After passing the SES on the right, Donnans Road runs up the hill on the right. The entrance to the property is the first entrance on the left after Pendarra Crescent. There is parking inside the property; park carefully. Look for the bee signs.

Presidents Report

Hi! Folks,

Another month has passed with not much activity in the bee club. With public health restrictions easing the committee are confident about holding the AGM in conjunction with a field day and a Bunnings sausage sizzle at Brian and Josephine Window's residence at 54 Donnans Road Lismore on the 28th of November. I encourage everyone to attend to have their say on how the club should function in the New Year and nominate to serve on the committee as an executive or ordinary member. The sausage sizzle is free to members but do bring a salad or something for morning tea.

Our Flora expert Geoff Manning is unfortunately hospitalized at the moment, and I wish him a speedy recovery. I can report that many trees are flowering but not of much use to the bees because of the constant drizzle we seem to be experiencing with green house climatic conditions persisting.

Cheers Kevin Virgen

Secretary Report

At last the COVID restrictions are being lifted and life can slowly return to normal. The next meeting is at my home and combines beekeeping activity as well as the club AGM. Documents relevant to the latter are attached to this newsletter so that members can read them before the actual meeting. All members are urged to attend and participate.

Brian

From The Hives

The hives have been going well out at Bungawalbyn; when they arrived there, there was a modest flowering of iron bark and white mahogany, and the first boxes have been removed from 16 of the 32 hives. The honey was of excellent quality, light of colour and with the characteristic iron bark taste and aroma. The other 16 which are about 1 km away will be processed next.

There are some weak hives, but they do seem to be healthy and to be queenright. Because of COVID it has been difficult to get over the Queensland border, and hence foundation has proved hard to find, Now that that is sorted out, it is time to make up some nuclei with cells with the aim to requeen the weak hives.

Brian

Flowering Report

Our flowering report is not as interesting as usual. Our reporter, Geoff Manning, had the misfortune to break his hip while playing table tennis a few weeks ago, and is now recuperating in the rehabilitation section of the Ballina Hospital. We expect Geoff will be able to contribute in the New Year.

There are flowers everywhere you look at the moment. Around Lismore, there are lillipilli varieties with a massive flowering, many of the callistemons are flowering, and many varieties of the melaleucas are flowering. And of course, it is time for the leptospermums (or jellybush) to flower.

Out in the forest, there are white mahogany and red gum flowering.

Brian

Beginner Lessons

Remember that the club is still offering to give beginners an introductory session on a beehive to get them started. Contact the secretary, or a helpful member near you.

Problems with Queens in the Mail



Important consignments of queen bees are at risk of being dead on arrival because of postal delays, breeders say.

Postage delays are causing a massive headache for queen bee breeders and keepers, who say crucial stock is turning up dead or going missing.

Key points:

- Australia Post says it continues to grapple with "Christmas-like" volume
- Breeders will trial data loggers to track temperatures and humidity in parcels, but are struggling to find a solution to the delivery problem
- Native bee breeders are also experiencing delays with hive deliveries, which is impacting emerging markets

There have been reports that some parcels of the precious cargo are taking up to 10 days to arrive at their destination.

Australian Queen Bee Breeders Association (AQBBA) president Richard Sims said that was despite the livestock being sent express.

"They're arriving dead, they're arriving stressed or just not arriving at all," he said.

"They're just disappearing ... we don't know where they go and they're just lost.

"This is a flow-on effect down to the beekeeper, who can have his hives already set up waiting for these queen bees, or he's waiting to requeen his queen bees that need to be kept at optimal level for honey production, or for the pollination industry, which is growing all the time now."

Mr Sims said the breeders did not know what was happening once parcels left their hands.

"We don't know whether they're left in postal sorting areas or they're stuck in vans — depends if the tracking numbers work," he said.

"I have recently heard of a batch that lasted seven days, but they turned up very poorly.

"Then another lot — there were 250 and they were lost for seven days and most of them were dead."



(From the ABC – probably wise to purchase locally until next year . Ed)

Honey Bee Genetics and Queen Quality

Gregor Mendel was born in Austria in 1822, the son of a poor farming family. He was academically excellent, and managed to go to the University of Olmutz to study Physics and Mathematics. He began studying to be a monk, and was attached to the monastery at Brno in Czechoslovakia as a monk. Later he went to the University of Vienna, and studied physics and mathematics under Christian Doppler (Doppler effect), and botany before returning to Brno. There he was a keen meteorologist, a beekeeper and a botanist. He was interested in how traits were passed down over the generations. He started his genetic work using mice, of which the church did not approve, before switching to garden peas. Mendel said “the bishop didn’t understand that plants also have sex”.

Mendel identified characteristics of garden peas that each depend on a single gene, such as inflated or constricted pods, green or yellow seed colour, wrinkled or smooth seeds etc, and followed the plants through many generations, meticulously noting where the characteristics showed up in succeeding generations. He used a small paint brush to pollinate the flowers. He published all the work in a somewhat obscure journal in 1865. It was not recognised until about 1900, when three European scientists independently rediscovered his rules. It is rumoured that one of the three drew attention to the existence of his work to deny the others priority for the work.



Georg Mendel



Bee shed of Georg Mendel

He is known as the father of genetics. But his work has led to what is called the "Mendelian paradox"; the ratio of dominant to recessive phenotypes in his experiments is expected to be 3, but Mendel's results were too close to 3 according to statistics. Did he fudge the results to achieve this? Would a monk do that? We will never know.

Mendel did work on the genetics of bees, but little is known about whether he got anywhere.

There is a very good video on the net, titled "Basic Honey Bee Genetics for Beekeepers" by John Chambers.

<https://youtu.be/w-pAQ6pFhM>

He starts with three statements well known to most beekeepers.

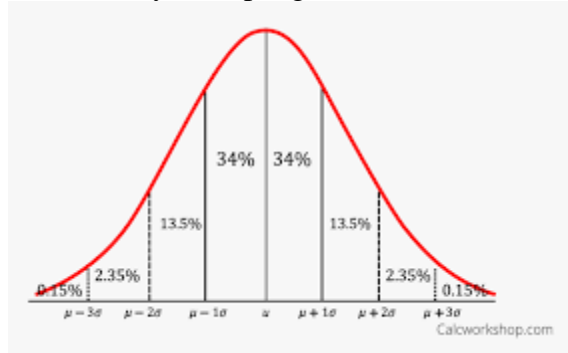
- There are as many opinions about how to keep bees as there are beekeepers.
- Work with the bees and not against them, and
- The bees know best.

He describes the way in which the six distinct European bees developed in isolation during the ice age, confined by ice in the north, and by the high mountain ranges. The British bee, *apis mellifera mellifera*, came across a land bridge from Europe and adapted to the British climate. Then the landscape was altered by man, causing the need for more adaptation as time went on. Now, practices such as importing queens (Britain imported over 18000 queens from 16 mainly European countries in 2018), and feeding sugar syrup have ruined that adaptation. Watch the video.

It is best for the bees in terms of survival of the fittest to purchase queens that are locally bred as the offspring will be locally adapted. Of course, with many migratory beekeepers in our area, there is a continual influx of non-locally adapted bees, contributing to the local gene pool through drones.

The intention of this article is to point out a few truths about the quality of queens purchased from a queen breeder or bred by you. There are few characteristics of bees that are determined by a single gene- they usually involve a number of genes, and when the male and female genes get all mixed up in the egg, the resultant offspring have a range of characteristics, something like a "Normal" or bell shaped distribution. So for a property like honey production, queens from the mating of a good queen with a good drone will end up covering a spectrum of performance; out of 100, there will be 2 excellent, 14 good, 68 average, 14 poor and

2 woeful. The same applies to other characteristics such as docility and cleaning ability, as they are controlled by multiple genes. The better breeders would shift the average towards the good end.



Bad good
the poorer performance.

So when purchasing queens (or breeding queens), do not expect that everyone will be fantastic; the one you buy could be woeful!

Queen breeders have little opportunity to assess a new queen after she returns from the mating flight and starts laying; if there is evidence, they will usually reject an inferior one. If you get a dud, you may be able to convince a breeder to give you a free replacement, but you are not entitled to it. Also, if you purchase say 10 queens and one is woeful, replace her; do not expect her to improve, unless there is a good reason for

(Repeated from earlier newsletter Ed)

American Foul Brood

There has been a report from the NSW ABA of AFB cases in the 2480 postcode. Members should be alert for the symptoms (look at the DPI website) when looking through brood boxes. Check any hives that are not expanding under the excellent conditions. If you did not inspect the brood in October, do it now.

Toad Alert

Cane toads are hopping about on the North Coast now the weather has warmed up. Hives should be on a stand to make sure that they cannot eat the beekeeper's workforce at a very convenient buffet. Some beekeepers use a cage structure made with 25mm mesh in front of the hives to keep the toads away. The bees have to fly up as they leave the entrance to get above the front of the cage.

Toads do seem to be attracted to the front of beehives. It has been suggested that this attraction could be used to advantage to clear the toads out of a reasonable area. Just go out every night with a torch and a few plastic bags to use as reversible mitts..

It is worth a trip out at night with a torch.

Volunteers

The club requires more members to volunteer for committee roles, and to hold meetings in 2022.

List of Helpful Members

Kevin Virgen	Federal	6684 9213	Brian Window	Lismore	0466 790 736
Ray Smith	McKees Hill	0427 734 954	Paul Towner	Rous Mill	0418 321 305
Geoff Manning	Bentley	0400 221 602	John Bull	North Casino	0414 842 903
David Fairhall	Richmond Hill	0444 513 771			

Services Directory

Summary of available products and services

NRABA Members

David Fairhall(queen cells, mated queens, nuclei) (Lismore) 0444 513 771

Brian Window (nuclei) (Lismore) 0466 790 736

Geoff Manning (hives) (Bentley) 0400 221 602

Ray Smith (nuclei) (Lismore) 0427 734 954

Not NRABA Members

Stephen Fowler (nuclei, hives, all sorts of bee equipment, buys wax) (Alstonville) 0418 412 621

Merv McDonald (nuclei, hives, hive care)(Alstonville) 0439 166 016

Rob Stone (mated queens, nuclei)(Casino) 0487 598 105

Ross Wood (mated queens, nuclei)(Grafton) 0421 817 710

Correction and additions welcome

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING 2021

Northern Rivers Amateur Beekeeping Association Incorporated

Time 1.30pm November 28th 2021 Place 54 Donnans Road, Lismore Heights

Agenda

- Apologies
- Minutes 2020 AGM
- Matters Arising
- Presidents Report
- Secretary Report
- Treasurer Report (Attached)
(Other Business must be sent to the secretary)
- Election of Office Bearers
- Election of Committee members

Nomination of Candidates

Nominations should be made in writing, signed by two members and endorsed by the candidate, delivered to the secretary at least 7 days in advance of the AGM. In the event of insufficient nominations, nominated candidates are taken to be elected, and further nominations are to be received at the AGM.

Minutes Annual General Meeting 2020

Northern Rivers Amateur Beekeeping Association Incorporated

Time 1pm March 1st 2020 Place Ruthven Hall, off Lismore to Coraki Road

Present Kevin Virgen (Chairman), Brian Window (Secretary), Paul Towner (Treasurer), Ray Smith, David Fairhall, Greg Booth, John Hildebrand, Barbara Joblin, Robert Joblin, Richard Howard, Jenny Howard, Alan Dickson, Colin Isaacs, Geoff Manning, Ross Wood, William Brener, Meg Winterford, Josephine Window.

Apologies Peter Dunn, Colin McMaster

Minutes 2019 AGM Outlined by Brian Window and confirmed (Moved Brian Window, seconded David Fairhall, carried)

Matters arising

Secretary reported on changes as a result of resolutions passed at AGM

- Two Steritech trips with boxes to be sterilised were organised through the club.
- A technical subcommittee has not been formed as the secretary as an experienced beekeeper opted to do the organising.
- The new constitution has been approved by the Department of Fair Trading.
- No ex officio members to the committee have been appointed due to a lack of volunteers
- The minutes of the committee meetings have been circulated after approval with the newsletter.
- The financial report for 2018 has been submitted to the Department of Fair Trading.

Presidents Report

Since I have been on the committee we have been grappling with getting the membership back to how it functioned for the past 20yrs i.e. everyone is a full & equal member of the club with the addition of an associate membership for spouses & partners. Every club or association I been involved with apply this principle so I urge everyone to vote in favour of that change to the constitution so that we can all get on with the enjoyment of beekeeping & the club will be on a sound footing going forward

Secretary Report

There have been substantial changes in the office bearers and the committee during the year; the committee met eight times, and the minutes have been published attached to the newsletter. I thank all the office bearers and committee members for serving during what has been a year of turmoil.

The NRABA had field days in 2019 in Tabulam (March), Lismore (April), Bentley (June),Caniaba (July), Rous Mill (August), Goonengary (September), Mongogarie (October), and Lismore (November). Attendance has ranged from 20 up to 60. The catering has been changed away from disposables back to washable crockery and cutlery. The club thanks all those who hosted field days for their vital contribution to the club.

An improved constitution is to be put to club members to make it compulsory to be a member of the ABA, to introduce an associate grade of membership, and to limit the tenure of presidents to 3 years. There is also an ongoing discussion with the ABA about how the membership subscriptions are displayed in Pay Subs Online.

Treasurer Report

-The treasurer presented two reports, one a list of property assets with their estimated current value and suggested diminishing value depreciation rates, and full details of income and expenditure for the year.(both attached). The property asset valuation was \$3180.

For the 2019 year ending 31st December 2019

Income and Expenditure-

Balance at as at 31st December 2018	\$5258.23
Total Income	10503.25
Total Expenditure	(9393.92)

Bank Reconciliation as 31st December 2019 6367.56

Cash Float 37.20
Total Funds available \$6404.76

The treasurers report in full was accepted (Moved by Brian Window, seconded by Greg Booth, carried.)

Change to Constitution

Secretary explained the differences between the Department of Fair Trading model constitution (the current constitution), the ABA model constitution and the proposed constitution, called “ The Constitution of the Northern Rivers Amateur Beekeeping Association Inc.” and dated 3rd February 2020. He explained that the full 21 days notice for the Special Resolution to adopt the new constitution had been given, and that a 75% vote in favour was needed to approve it.

The Special Resolution

“that the NRABA adopt a new constitution (dated 3/2/2020), modified from the current constitution by (a) making it compulsory that ordinary members also be members of the NSW Amateur Beekeepers Association, (b) introducing an associate membership category, and (c) introducing a maximum term of 3 years for President”,

was moved by Brian Window, seconded by Greg Booth, and passed unanimously.

Election of Office Bearers and Committee Members

Ross Wood took the chair for the election of Office Bearers and the Committee.

There was only one valid nomination for an office bearer, and that was for Brian Window as Secretary, and he was declared elected unopposed.. The other office bearers were nominated from the members present and elected unopposed..

President	Kevin Virgen	nominated Greg Booth seconded Brian Window
Vice President	Ray Smith	nominated Kevin Virgen seconded B. Window
Treasurer	Paul Towner	nominated Brian Window seconded Ray Smith
Public Officer	Paul Towner	nominated Brian Window seconded Ray Smith
Committee member	Geoff Manning	nominated Kevin Virgen seconded Ray Smith

Meeting finished 1.50pm

Northern Rivers Beekeeping Association Inc
Income and Expenses for 2020-2021

!st January 2020 to 30th June 2021

Balance 31/12/2019 6404.76

Income	2019	2020-2021
Membership fees	1180.00	965.00
Raffles	361.50	319.00
Lunches	641.00	410.50
Bank interest	0.75	0.17
ABA Grant	1000.00	1000.00
Steritech Collect	7320.0	1557.68
Other Income	0.0	45.00
Total Income	10503.25	4297.35

Expenses		
Printing /Stationery	140.81	379.92
Food	462.00	367.48
Xmas Party	479.42	0.00
Library	227.20	0.00
Dept Fair Trading	0.00	135.54
Affiliation Fees	110.00	0.00
Travel	116.25	289.50
Raffle Prize	382.30	227.75
Steritech Pay	4466.35	1188.00
Freight	2756.60	1111.00
Hall hire	70.00	50.00
First aid	107.99	0.00
Postage	0.00	33.65
Fuel money	0.00	26.00
Catering Eqpmt	0.00	8.00
Gift	10.00	0.00
Refund	65.00	0.00
Total expenses	9393.92	3922.93

Balance 31/12/19	6367.56	30/6/21	6815.37
Cash Float (treasurer)	37.20		-73.39
Total Funds available	6404.76		6741.98

Property Assets

Computer Lenova	210
Benq Data projector	240
Portable screen	72
PA System	225
Gazebos (3)	240
Library	270
Protective Clothing	750
Honey extractor	90
BBQ and Gas Bottle	360
Catering Equipment	90

Depreciation

(Dim Value -30%)
(Dim Value -20%)
(Dim Value -10%)
(Dim Value -25%)
(Dim Value -20%)
(Dim Value -10%)
(Dim Value -25%)
(Dim Value -10%)
(Dim Value -10%)
(Dim Value -10%)

Total Property Assets 2547.00

