

# BEE BIZ SEPTEMBER 2019

The Newsletter of the Northern Rivers Amateur Beekeeping Association Inc.

<u>President</u>	Jamie Mudge	<u>0412535823</u>	northernrivers.president@beekeepers.asn.au
<u>Vice President</u>	Greg Booth	<u>0411152532</u>	
<u>Secretary</u>	Brian Window	<u>0466790736</u>	northernrivers.secretary@beekeepers.asn.au
<u>Treasurer</u>	Paul Towner	<u>0418321305</u>	northernrivers.treasurer@beekeepers.asn.au
<u>Committee Member</u>	Kevin Virgen	<u>66849213</u>	
<u>Committee Member</u>	Ray Smith		
<u>Committee Member</u>	Vacant		
<u>Editor</u>	Brian Window	<u>0466790736</u>	northernrivers.editor@beekeepers.asn.au

## President Report

Hi Fellow members,

I hope you all have managed to dodge the recent bush fires in the region. Our thoughts and best wishes go out to those that have been affected. The previous treasurer Greg McPhee has resigned from the committee and the club. Greg was instrumental in introducing Standard Operating Procedures in to a number of activities that the club undertakes. We wish him all the best in the future and may the flower gods reward him for his hard work.

Ruth Walker, the editor of the newsletter and committee member has resigned from her position and the club. Ruth spent many hours on organising and making our newsletter informative and interesting. She contributed to our committee meetings with a caring and balanced input.

We have three new members in the committee. Greg Booth Vice President, Paul Towner Treasurer and Ray Smith committee member. We welcome the new blood into the committee and look forward to their contribution.

We had a great day at Rous Mill hall for our August field day. Paul Towner was happy to let us use his hives for an educational session at the back of the hall.

I hope to see you all at the next field day at Goonengerry.

Jamie

## Secretary Report

You can see from the different framework of this newsletter that our editor has resigned, and the secretary has taken on the role, hopefully not for long.

We need a new editor. It is an interesting job, in which you will learn new skills. You need to be able to write average English, and to not be too stressed by deadlines. This is what the secretary has learned from doing the job himself over the years.

If you are interested, talk to Jamie or Brian.

## Update on last field Day

Paul Towner provided an excellent venue for the August field day, with a lovely hall at Rous Mill and about 30 beehives a safe distance away for people to work on. He in conjunction with Leland Eglington also donated a steel bee stand for the raffle; Leland will make stands to order, and his contact details are in the services directory towards the end of the newsletter.

Paul even laid on a swarm for the club to practise on, but it left while we were having coffee. First rule in collecting swarms is to get it in a box as soon as possible!

The main activity on the hives was to swap full frames from the outside in the brood box with good quality combs from the honey super. The hives inspected were found to be healthy with active queens.

## From the hives

After the piece about not spraying macadamias in the day in the last newsletter, guess what? The neighbours who had been told in no uncertain terms not to spray in the daytime while there were bees in the trees, sprayed in the daytime.!

Fortunately, there were not many flowers out, and the bee kill was not severe. Some hives had a rather large patch of dead bees out the front, while others had only a few. Not all the hives were

concentrating on the macadamias that they sprayed.

The owners, who had returned to Sydney before the contractor sprayed, will receive a written note about what they have done. The climate has changed; it is no longer acceptable to behave like that.

Otherwise, the hives have all been inspected and found to be healthy and with a laying queen. One vigorous hive with a lousy temper and one which had no brood but a small black queen were requeened with queen cells.

On another topic, last year Rob Blair asked for some fully capped frames of honey on foundation to be used for cut comb. He heats the wires after clipping them and then pulls them out. So the foundation was put in the middle of the box immediately above the excluder. It turned out that this was not the best thing to do;. Because of the proximity of the brood nest, the bees put pollen in some of the bottom cells and they left a harbour bridge shape of unfilled cells at the bottom for the queen to lay in. This year, the experiment is being tried again with the foundation in the second box above the excluder.

Brian Window

## **Flowering Report**

If you are anywhere near heathland you will be experiencing the wonderland of winter flowering native flora. Much of which yields both nectar and pollen. The jelly bush or manuka, whilst worth a kings ransom these days for the honey, is pollen deficient. A problem for those who work it, as it comes after most of the other heath flowers are finished

The only tree to come onto the horizon in a few weeks is White Mahogany, also known as Yellow Stringy. It is not a great yielder of nectar in most years, but it does have its day. The pollen is very useful though.

At the time of writing there is still some Grey Ironbark and Red gum flowering. And of course Fire Weed. Some paddocks are growing Scotch Thistle. The continuing dry means that most landholders will put off slashing as they have very little feed. On the red soil country things have picked up with the myriad of weeds, and shrubs and ground flora that give the area some good mixed pollen. So mixed in fact that we don't really have a good handle on what is good, bad, or indifferent. In the old days when that country was all dairies and before Kikuyu, clover was a major plant in the sward. It is a Mediterranean climate

plant so battles to reach its full potential here. It produces excellent pollen, but seldom nectar of any quantity. Kikuyu grass smothered it pretty well on the red soil, but it can still be a major melliferous plant west of Lismore. The pollen is khaki coloured.

Although Macadamias are flowering they are of limited benefit to honey bees. And of course you may get a spraying.

After the White Mahogany there is only the possibility of the short budding time trees. Bloodwood, Brush Box, Grey Box etc.

Geoff Manning

## **Prize in Lismore Show**

The NRABA is sponsoring a prize of an engraved hive tool in the North Coast National in Lismore on 17<sup>th</sup>-19<sup>th</sup> October for the exhibitor in the small producer category who gets the highest point score for any grade of honey. The prize could be awarded at one of the club field days.

## **Epipen**

The committee is purchasing an Epipen for the medical kit brought to field days. These pens have come down in price to \$100 so that it is possible to afford a new one every year. It was stated at the last field day that the pen is not a complete solution, but it will add 15 minutes to the available time to get to Emergency.

There is a very good article about the effect of bee stings and the building up of an allergy written by Jim Wright of the Hunter Valley club, originally published in the ABA "Yellow Peril". It should be possible to get a copy to put in the newsletter.

## **ABA Workshop in Sydney**

The secretary attended this workshop in Sydney, with fares paid by the ABA and expenses paid by him personally. The president could not attend after an unfortunate accident which damaged his ankle.

The workshop covered essentially three items; problems encountered by clubs, accounting software for treasurers and secretaries, and the Google software linking all the clubs and the ABA.

## Venues for field days

There is always a need for volunteers to host a field day. It can be at your place or at a hall nearby, as long as some beehives can be made available to show beginners. The requirements of having car access and adequate parking seem to be limiting factors. But talk it over with Jamie or Brian.

## Services Directory

Summary of available products and services

Paul Davey (hive care) 0491 608 272

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

Leland Eglington (Steel beehive stands) 0455 555 136

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

Michael Koenen (Warre hives) 0414 621 975

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

Rob Stone (mated queens, nuclei) 0487 598 105

Ross Wood (mated queens, nuclei) 0421 817 710

Corrections and additions welcome



Macadamia flowers from Brian's yard

## Steritech Trip

There is no date for the next consignment to be sent to Steritech, but there will be one. It will be advertised when there is sufficient demand. The club made a loss on the last load, and the charge per box will be increased from \$15 to \$17. Anyone with a large number of boxes to go should notify the secretary.

## Field day Sunday September 29th 2019

The next field day will be on 29<sup>th</sup> September at an apiary of Kevin Virgen (committee member) in Goonengerry. Kevin lives close by, but the hives are not on his property. The activities during the day will be varied, including

- Demonstrations of putting foundation in frames using a spur wheel embedder (the cheapest option),
- Beginners taken through hives by experts,
- Inspection of hives for American Foul Brood disease.
- A forum of experts for beehive and club questions

Bring your beekeeping gear. The club will provide sterilised hive tools and gloves for the demonstrators.

The day will commence at 9.30 am with a welcome by the President, and the beekeeping activities will start at 10.30 am. Lunch of sausages and salad will be served at about 12.30 pm, and the raffle will be held before the end of the day at 1.30pm.

All attendees are asked to bring either a morning tea item or a salad for lunch. As a guide, bring enough for twice the size of your group. Male beekeepers in particular note, we need more salads! Lunch will cost \$5.

In the past, the club has always relied on lunch payments and the raffle to provide funds for the operation of the club. So raffle items are always appreciated. Raffle tickets will cost \$2, and you could win big.

So, remember to bring

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

## **Directions**

Property is at (no number) Repentance Creek Road, Goonengerry.

From Rosebank, proceed straight ahead past Repentance Creek Hall, cross Repentance Creek bridge, go straight on, follow [Federal Mullumbimby] sign around winding road 1.5Km, enter farm gate on left before causeway. Look for the bee signs.

From Federal, proceed on Federal Goonengerry road, turn left at sign [Minion Falls Rosebank Lismore], proceed for 1.4 Km, turn right at first gate over causeway. Look for the bee signs.

From Mullumbimby, proceed past golf course up Montecolum to top, turn right at sign [Federal ,Lismore, Crystal Castle]. Continue straight on to Goonengerry village, past school for 2km, turn right Repentance Creek Road. Go 1.4km, turn right at first gate over causeway. Look for the bee signs.

Please be considerate of others when you park

## MINUTES NRABA COMMITTEE AUGUST 2019

Time 5.30 pm Monday, 5<sup>th</sup> August

Place Room 8 Lismore Workers Club

- Members present B Window, G McPhee, J Mudge

Others Present Kevin Virgen

- Minutes of Committee meeting May 8th Accepted (Moved GM s BW passed)
- Election of new Committee member

That Kevin Virgen be appointed to the committee (Moved BW s GM passed)

- Matters Arising

-Secretary reported that he had ascertained the cost of the cheapest mailbox as \$25 application fee and \$120 annual fee. Given that he had received only one letter since taking the position, he considered it a waste of money and an imposition on him to regularly check it. He preferred his home address as had been done in the past. That the club get a mailbox; moved GM s JM lost.

-Secretary reported that the cost of an inscribed hive tool as the prize for the Lismore Show could be up to \$100, depending on the method of inscribing. He had emailed the North Coast National secretary saying that the club would sponsor such a prize in the Small Producer Category for the honey achieving the highest point score. This had to go in the schedule being prepared that week.

-Secretary provided copies of the NRABA membership list as he was requested to do. These were downloaded from the beekeepers.asn.au site, and satisfy the constitutional requirement of having an up to date list of members in NSW. They were provided to committee members so that they have contact details of all club members .

Secretary commented that \$5 memberships were not set up correctly previously and should be scrapped. Treasurer stated that he did not agree, and that the NRABA \$5 memberships were passed by the previous committee.

The President lost control of the meeting.

When order was restored, new committee member Kevin Virgen objected when informed by the President that the \$5 memberships carried with them full voting rights in the NRABA. The President said that he agreed with the Treasurer about the \$5 memberships.

Treasurer threatened to resign.

The meeting was postponed by the President at this point despite there being important items to be approved on the agenda.

Meeting closed at 6.10pm.

Meeting resumed

Time 3pm Sunday 11<sup>th</sup> August

Place Room 5 Lismore Workers Club

- Members present B Window, J Mudge, G Mcphee, K Virgen

Others present Ruth Walker

- Election of new Committee Member

That Ruth Walker be appointed to the committee (Moved JM s GM passed)

- Reports

-Treasurer submitted a report of income and expenditure with bank balances. Accepted (Moved BW s JM passed)

Bank balance at April 1<sup>st</sup> \$7416.99

-July Field Day Figures for raffle and lunch not known. Attendance 41

-Treasurer reported a loss of about \$500 on the recent Steritech trip. This was explained by the fifth pallet being only 16% full, whereas in the past all the pallets have generally been nearly full. That the price per box be increased from \$15 to \$17 for the next trip ( Moved BW s GM passed)

-Treasurer to sort out the membership dues of Rebekka Hancock by refunding \$65.

-Secretary asked the Treasurer why he had not had his costs for the April meeting refunded. It was some time ago that they were submitted. Treasurer waved around an envelope that had the receipts, and did not answer.

- Agenda Business Items

(1) Acceptances of New Members

The applications of 21 new members from May, June and July as notified by the ABA were accepted (Moved BW s JM passed). JM as membership officer to update PSO or tell Vince Schneider, BW to let the members know they were accepted.

(2) Attendance at ABA Forum and Workshop at Hornsby on 31<sup>st</sup> August

BW notified that he had arranged already to go to this and had booked his plane tickets. BW pointed out that the invitation was for two members to participate. That the NRABA provide a subsidy of up to \$300 each for BW and JM to attend this function, covering actual expenses over what the ABA provides (Moved GM s RW passed)

(3) Advertisements in Newsletter.

That Ruth look into what other clubs do ( Moved JM s GM passed)

- General Business

Treasurer resigned from the committee and the club for health reasons and irreconcilable differences with the Secretary. Secretary volunteered to take over the treasurer duties until another treasurer could be appointed.

- Meeting finished at 4.30 pm

- Next Meeting

Time 5pm on 2<sup>nd</sup> September

Place Lismore Workers Club (Check room number on notice board)

Brian Window Secretary

Signed Jamie Mudge President