

THE ESSEX BEEKEEPER



Ted Hooper MBE NBD (1918 -2010)

Monthly Magazine of the E.B.K.A

No. 545

www.essexbeekeepers.com

**May
2010**

Registered Charity number 1031419

Printed by Streamset, 12 Rose Way, Purdeys Industrial Estate, Rochford, Essex SS4 1LY.

Essex Beekeeper's Association

The Essex Beekeepers' Association is a registered charity whose object is to further the craft of beekeeping in Essex.

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Derek Webber

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Please ensure that all material for publication is received by the Editor before the 10th of the preceding month to publication.

May 2010

- 6 May *Thursday 7.30pm* **Harlow** at Kings Church Red Willow. A talk by Roy Cropley on 'Honey and Pollen in the Hive'.
- 7 May *Friday 8.00pm* **Romford** Chadwick Hall, Main Road, Gidea Park. A talk on Integrated Pest Management with Eileen Marrable.
- 8 May *Saturday 2.30pm* **Epping Forest** This is our first apiary meeting for this season and we are meeting at the Wanstead Apiary, Langley Drive. Ken Barker will lead us in a session on Apiary Hygiene. This is a very important topic as good hygiene greatly reduces the spread of disease.
- 15 May *Saturday 2.30pm* **Colchester**. Apiary meeting to be held at the Apiary of Peter Inson. Telephone 01206 382010 for more details.
- 16 May *Sunday All Day* **Braintree** Young Farmers Show at Boyton Hall, Roxwell, Celmsford CM1 4LN.
- 16 May *Sunday* **Harlow** Apiary Meeting at Sparrows Farm, Hatfield Broad Oak with David Tyler and Peter Heath, the 'disease inspector'.
- 17 May *Monday 6.30pm* **Chelmsford** Hyde Hall, Rettendon, Chelmsford CM3 8AT. 'How Does Your Garden Grow?' We are very pleased to invite you to a private tour led by Ian Le Gros, the Curator of the beautiful RHS gardens at Hyde Hall. In the event of inclement weather we will be given a presentation in the Events Barn. Numbers are strictly limited so please contact Jean (07731 856 361) by 10th May to confirm your place.
- 20 May *Thursday 10.00am* **Romford** A Disease Inspection Tour led by South East RBI Alan Byham; The Chase O/A.
- 22 May *Saturday 2.00pm* **Maldon and DH** at venue to be announced: Recognising diseases with the Regional Bee Inspector.
- 22 May *Saturday 2.30pm* **Saffron Walden** "Honey Room Meeting - 'Bring and demonstrate your favourite gadgets' with some basic demos for new beekeepers. Venue Richard and Jane Ridler's at Rundle House, Hatfield Broad Oak, CM22 7HE. Please email jane.ridler@uwclub.net if you'd like to come along."
- 26 May *Wednesday 7.30pm* **Southend** at Women's Institute Hall, Bellingham Lane, Rayleigh. A talk by Pam Hunter, 'Is Nature always Nice?'
- 29 May *Saturday TBA* **Maldon** at Mundon Village Hall. The Regional Bee Inspector will be showing diseased frames.
- 30 May *Sunday 3.00pm* **Braintree** Apiary Meeting Terling Farm, Terling CM3 2AJ. Please telephone Darren Rees for details, 01245 233759.

June 2010

- 3 June* *Thursday 7.30pm* **Harlow** at Kings Church Red Willow. A talk by Jim McNeill on Processing Honey and a review of the Apiary meeting with Peter Heath, the 'disease inspector'.
- 4 June* *Friday 8.00pm* **Romford** Chadwick Hall, Main Road, Gidea Park. A talk by Pam Hunter, 'From Stingless Bees to Honey Bees'.
- 5 & 6 June* *Saturday and Sunday 10.00am-6.00pm* **Colchester** Little Bentley Hall Garden Show. The Colchester Division will be having a stand at this event. Help will be needed during the weekend; to offer assistance please ring Penny Barker 01255 830713. For more information concerning the event see www.littlebentley.net.
- 12 June* *Saturday 2.30pm* **Epping Forest** at Willow Cottage Curtis Mill Green. Our annual meeting at Willow Cottage with speaker to be confirmed.
- 19 June* *Saturday 2.30pm* **Saffron Walden** Apiary Meeting on the subject of 'Building Nuclei' with Robert Pickford at Les Ridgewell's Apiary, Gt Bardfield.
- 21 June* *Monday 7.30pm* **Chelmsford** at Link Hall, Methodist Church, Rainsford Road, Chelmsford CM1 2XB. Best Offer Table Top Sale. If you have items of beekeeping equipment you no longer require or if you want to pick up a bargain, come and join us at Chelmsford's table top sale. Everybody is more than welcome.
- 23 June* *Wednesday 7.30pm* **Southend** at Women's Institute Hall, Bellingham Lane, Rayleigh. Jim McNeill will give a talk on Preparing for the Honey Show.
- 27 June* *Sunday 3.00pm* **Braintree** Apiary meeting. Please telephone Stuart Mitson for details, tel. 01376 340683.
- 27 June* *Sunday 11.00am– 5.00pm* **Romford** A visit to Barnard's Farm.

Note from Exam Secretary

Peter Durstan, a member of the Colchester Division, passed Module 8 last year. He has now successfully passed all modules and has been awarded with credit the Advanced Theory Certificate. Congratulations Peter.

TED HOOPER MBE NDB. (1918 – 2010)

By Geoff Mills, Hon. Life Member, Essex Beekeepers Association

Ted was born in Colyton, Devon over 90 years ago. When Ted grew up he did not wish to work in his father's joinery and decorating business and he and Joy went to Fred's beekeeping classes, and thereafter spent most of his lifetime



working with bees and instructing others in the art of beekeeping. He was in the evacuation from Dunkirk being a member of an artillery division and was later sent to Italy when the counter offensive started in World War II. He started keeping bees as a hobby but later obtained employment for five years with Rowse Honey Farms in Hampshire working more than 500 hives and perfecting his knowledge of bees and beekeeping. At that time he was living in the village of Sherborne St. John, Hampshire. He also had connections with Manley, Paddy Padmore in Norfolk and John Furzey.

He saw an advertisement for a position as a professional lecturer in Apiculture at Writtle Agricultural College in Essex in 1962 and was successful in gaining this position. He moved to Essex with his wife Joy and two daughters in 1962 and immediately started to pass on his knowledge to others. Initially, he took up residence at the rectory in East Hanvingfield where the Rev. Ost was the incumbent. The Reverend was also a beekeeper.

From 1962 until his retirement in 1984 he lectured at Writtle and in all of the ten divisions of the Essex Beekeepers Association, as he was the County Beekeeping Instructor for the same period. His apiary and workshop was situated away from the main college campus, and at the far end of Cow Watering lane. He was President of the Essex Beekeepers' Association for several years.

Having passed the many British Beekeepers Association examinations, he then successfully passed the examination of the National Diploma of Beekeeping. Later in life he became the chairman of the National Diploma of Beekeeping committee and chairman of the BBKA examination board for over 15 years.

While at Writtle he used to run hive-making classes even though he was allergic to sawdust from the cedar wood from which they are made. Also, he taught us how to make many accessories including the Rowse feeder whereby a full gallon of thick syrup could be fed in late summer to ensure production of many young bees to take the colonies through the winter. The topics taught ranged from microscopy to disease identification and good husbandry techniques.

In 1976 his book "A Guide to Bees and Honey" was published and it became the "Bible" of many beekeepers throughout Britain and the world. It has been translated into over twelve languages and has sold over 100,000 copies worldwide. It has been republished many times in both hard-back and now as a soft-backed book. Ted was a very popular lecturer in Britain and abroad, being able to explain beekeeping procedures in a way that everyone could understand. He was an excellent handler of honeybees and taught us how to read the combs, in order to know what was happening in the hive.

In 1985 in conjunction with Roger Morse, Professor of Apiculture at Cornell University in the USA, Ted co-authored the "Illustrated Encyclopaedia of Beekeeping" that was published by Alpha Books of Sherborne, Dorset, England.

Then in 1988 in conjunction with Mike Taylor of Writtle College, Ted co-authored a book called "The Beekeepers Garden", which was also published by Alpha Books. Another book for beginners has been written but not yet published.

Those of us who received tuition from Ted owe a lot to his know-how and through him many beekeepers, especially in Essex, have gained their considerable knowledge that is already being passed on to others. His book, "A Guide to Bees and Honey," is being updated to include techniques to include varroasis and its control ... a phenomenon not experienced by Ted before he retired.



Ted at EBKA Conference 2008

He had a life long interest in growing cacti and in the behaviour of many insects. He could identify most plants by both their common and Latin names. And could certainly name those useful to honeybees.

He was awarded his MBE in recognition of his services to beekeeping.

He will be sorely missed and our condolences and good wishes go to his wife Joy and their two daughters, five grandchildren and two great grandchildren. I am indebted to many beekeepers for their help in producing this tribute.

**Ted Hooper MBE, an appreciation.
'Ted Hooper, It was a pleasure to know you',
by Clive de Bruyn NDB**

W.E.J. (Ted) Hooper, came to Essex in 1962 to take up the post of a County Beekeeping Instructor (CBI) based at Writtle college. With his experience gained in commercial beekeeping with David Rouse in Hampshire and his wider studies Ted seemed to sweep through the BBKA exams and then obtained a National Diploma in Beekeeping. I started beekeeping in the mid 60s so it was only after Ted became CBI that I got to know him.

A CBI was a full time employment devoted exclusively towards educating beekeepers and every aspect of promoting the craft. During the 21 years in which Ted was in charge of beekeeping education in Essex there could be few beekeepers in the area who have not been through his hands and benefited from his presence.



You only have to tell an appliance manufacturer that you want a Modified Commercial hive 'with top bee space' to reveals Ted's influence.

The work of a CBI was largely self-determined. Ted worked hard to educate beekeepers in Essex. This involved a great deal of travelling and unsocial hours. Weekends and evenings were often the only times that beekeepers with other full time jobs had available for

instruction. In addition all agricultural and horticultural students at Writtle College had some information about beekeeping given to them.

It was with some perturbation that I arrived in Essex to follow a man whom I had admired for so long. I really did not feel I could ever replace him. Throughout my reign he never interfered, he even cut down on his lecturing in the County. For this I owe him a great deal. Ted was a real gentleman allowing me to make my own way.

Ted will leave a great legacy in many people's memories. His 'five questions' that need to be answered when inspecting a colony are a basis for anyone teaching beekeeping husbandry. A visit to Ted and Joy was always a pleasure. I well remember the fact that he always had a small hand lens with him which he would use whenever I brought a specimen to him for identification.

Margaret Thomas and I had planned to call in and see Ted on the last Sunday in March. We were both lecturing in Durham and decided to make a detour to visit the Hooper's on our way into Kent for the annual inspection of Bee Farmers colonies hired out for pollination in Kent. Alas we were too late to see Ted but we had a nice afternoon with Joy.

Ted will live on through his books. I still recommend his 'guide to Bees and Honey'. If only I was allowed one beekeeping book on my desert island this would

be it. Ted was also co-author of two other books, 'The Illustrated Encyclopaedia of Beekeeping', with Roger Morse and 'A Beekeeper's Garden', with Mike Taylor.

He will also have a continuing influence from his activities for the BBKA and NBD Board. Nationally Ted was active in the BBKA which he joined in 1946. He was elected to the BBKA Executive in 1978 and served as Chairman in 1989. He also chaired the BBKA Husbandry Committee for several years. He served on the BBKA Exam Board for 18 years and was its chair from 1972 to 1988.

Fond tales of Ted Hooper MBE

Ted Hooper was EBKA President but gave up the post during the seven years I was General Secretary when Derek Webber, our current President, was CEC Chairman. At that time we had almost exhausted the stock of small medallions, one of which is attached to the chain of office bearing the name of each President. We made fruitless enquiries in an attempt to locate the original die which was used to produce the medallions.. As it would have been costly to have a new die made I enlisted the aid of my next door neighbour, John Cook, who has an engraving business (Brunwin Engraving). In the course of trying to produce a replacement medallion John came up with a larger specimen which, it occurred to me, would be nice to give to a retiring President as evidence of his service. We had one suitably engraved for Ted and on one of his regular visits to the Queen's Head, Boreham with Geoff and Sylvia Mills, Derek Webber and I "by chance" arrived at the pub where we were able to present Ted with the medallion. I do not know whether the practice has continued with subsequent retiring Presidents.

A story I have heard concerning Ted Hooper, which others may report, is an occasion when Ted was CBI at Writtle College and was called out to deal with a swarm. Having secured the swarm Ted was told by the man, on whose property the swarm had settled, that the swarm was worth a certain sum of money, obviously hoping that Ted would pay him. Ted's reaction was, apparently, to tip the swarm out of the box or skep on to the ground saying, "If you think that then you can have them!"

Nobby Clark

When Ted retired, he and his family were living in Great Yeldham and various beekeepers including myself wished to ease Ted into his retirement and wanted to further his interest in alpine plants. We contributed to the creation of a rock garden so that the plants would be shown at their best. The presentation was made to him at a special social dinner (I believe) at a hotel in Rivenhall End.

Also on his retirement Ted and Joy were made Honorary Members of the Southend division.

David Blackwood

Letter to the Editor

I have some concerns regarding the article written by Richard Alabone on Propolis.

There is one major error in this article. That is his use of 'Surgical Spirit' to produce propolis tincture. Surgical Spirit is commonly known as 'rubbing alcohol' and is for use externally especially for blisters and other similar skin conditions.

If you look at chapter 5 in *Value Added Products from Beekeeping*¹ by R Krell (on line at <http://www.fao.org/docrep/w0076E/w0076e14.htm#5.7>), in particular the section on Propolis Extraction, you will see that denatured, rubbing or methyl alcohol must only be used for external application.

'Choice of the correct solvent is very important if the product is to be used for human consumption. Normally, only ethanol or exceptionally, glycol (as in method 4) should be used. Other alcohols may be used only if their internal and external physiological interactions are sufficiently known and safe.'

'So-called denatured, rubbing or methyl alcohol should not be used. If the extracts are intended for external application only, rubbing alcohol may be used in some cases, but different countries use different chemicals to make pure alcohol unpalatable for drinking or internal consumption. Similarly, there are different types of denatured alcohols intended for different purposes. If cheap alcohol is used, care should be taken that the chemicals used for denaturing it are compatible with the planned end use. Chemicals added to denature alcohol may interact negatively with other ingredients so reducing their beneficial effects and may cause irritations, burns or even poisoning. There have been fatal accidents caused by extracts of propolis prepared with unsuitable alcohol.'

For most preparations intended for internal use, gin, rum, or other clean, locally distilled liquors can be used. These liquors usually contain less than the optimal 70% of alcohol but for home processing, they produce acceptable results. However, for high quality commercial product, particularly for cosmetics or medicines, high quality laboratory grade or drinking alcohol (ethanol) should be used. 70% ethanol has given the best results in several studies which tested the extracts for their bactericidal and fungicidal effects.'

Ethanol or in some circumstances glycol may be used to produce a tincture that can be used externally or internally. A good quality vodka or Polish spirit is generally taken as a good medium for home production of Propolis Tincture or otherwise any drinking alcohol. Use of Surgical Spirit is potentially lethal and could cause death if enough of the product is ingested.

Barbara Dalby

Beekeeper and Apitherapist

Former Director of the American Apitherapy Society

Note 1 FAO AGRICULTURAL SERVICES BULLETIN No. 124, from the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations Rome 1996 ISBN 92-5-103819-8

Essex Beekeepers' Association
Minutes of the 130th Annual General Meeting, held Saturday 6th March
2010 Room E06, Writtle College,

These minutes will be considered correct if no objection is raised in writing (or by email) before Saturday 29th May 2010. Any point challenged will be brought before the next meeting for correction of the record.

Presiding Officer: Pat Rowland

Also present: As listed in Attendance Book.

1 **Apologies for absence** were received from Mary Heyes, Jenny Johns, Geoff Pears, Robert Pickford, Jean Smye.

2 **The Minutes of the 129th AGM were tabled.** The minutes were approved as a true record and signed by the Presiding Officer.

3 **CEC Chairman's Report**

This was published in the February 2010 edition of *The Essex Beekeeper*. Accepted *nem con*.

4 **General Treasurer's Report** and Approval of the 2009 Accounts

A report was published in the March 2010 edition of *The Essex Beekeeper*.

Fully examined accounts were tabled by the General Treasurer, Richard Ridler, who was standing down at the end of his 3-year term. Richard was grateful to Tony Edwards (a Chelmsford member) who had volunteered to take over.

Membership had doubled, which is good for filling posts. Richard thanked all the Divisional Treasurers – they also have more work with the increased membership. The 2009 accounts were dominated by the costs of training new beekeepers. EBKA had given generous grants to Divisions, resulting in a deficit for central funds, a surplus for all Divisions, with a surplus overall. Some large items had been purchased, such as a large box van trailer for the Essex Show, and a PhD student was funded. This student will be reporting on her research at this year's conference later in the year. Bank interest was down almost to zero. A grant of £2500 had been received from Essex County Council, and the use of this will be discussed at the next CEC meeting.

David Learmonth queried why the heading 'liabilities' is used in the accounts. Richard explained that the layout of the accounts was still much as used by his predecessor. It was agreed that this needs review and changes for next year.

Approval of the report and accounts was proposed by Jim McNeill, seconded by Eileen Marrable and passed *nem con*.

5 **Election of President**

Derek Webber was elected *nem con*, proposed Jim McNeill, seconded Garry Furnell.

6 **Election of County Officers**

Chairman Richard Ridler: Proposed Pat Allen, seconded Deryck Johnson.

Secretary Pat Allen: Proposed Tony Edwards, seconded Marlene Harris.

Treasurer Tony Edwards: Proposed Richard Ridler, seconded Geoff Mills.

All elected nem con.

7 Notification of the 2010 Divisional Members and of the 2011 Presiding Officer

Braintree: Pat Rowland; Chelmsford: Jean Smye; Colchester: (vacant); DH & Maldon: Roy Carter; Epping Forest: (vacant); Harlow: Eric Fenner (as non-voting member as he has finished his 3-year term); Romford: William Stephens; Saffron Walden: Craig Hirons; Southend: Jeremy Huband.

Presiding Officer 2011: From Chelmsford Division

8 Election of remaining CEC posts

Advertising Secretary: Dee Inkersole volunteered.

BBKA Delegate: Penny Learmonth volunteered.

Book of Commemoration Sec'y: Penny Learmonth to continue.

CPRE Delegate: Roy Carter to continue.

Distribution Secretary: Mary Heyes to continue.

Editor Howard Gilbert to continue.

Examinations Secretary: Jane Ridler: proposed Jim McNeill, seconded Derek Webber.

FWAG Delegate: Roy Carter to continue.

Membership Register Secretary: Pat Allen to continue.

Minutes Secretary: Eileen Marrable to continue.

NHS Delegate: Jim McNeill to continue.

Show Committee Delegate: Richard Ridler: proposed Pat Allen, seconded Pat Rowland.

Spray & Disease C'tee Delegate: Eileen Marrable to continue.

All accepted nem con.

9 Confirmation of Accounts Examiner

Emma Baker confirmed nem con, proposed Richard Ridler, seconded Deryck Johnson.

10 Presentation of BBKA Certificates

Pat Rowland handed out certificates for the successful candidates for BBKA Modules and Basic Assessments. Congratulations to all the candidates.

Derek Webber, President, spoke to say that we should celebrate the current upturn in beekeeping. It creates difficulties, but we will cope with them. Derek hoped there would not be casualties, we do not want abandoned hives. Derek was also concerned that entries for the BBKA Modules have dropped and we need to encourage people to take them.

11 The New EBKA Branding

The CEC had worked hard to produce a fresh style for EBKA. The definitive logo, stationery templates, etc, had been written to CDs. One was given to each Division and the Editor.

12 Bee Health Day 7th July 2010

This year's Bee Health Day will be held at Romford Division's teaching apiary in Dagenham, on Wednesday 7th July. Details will be published in The Essex Beekeeper.

13 2009 Conference Report: Chairman of Braintree Division

Braintree's conference went well in the end, but bookings were slow until a week or two before. Pat Rowland asked members to help the organisers by booking early.

14 2010 Conference Preview: Secretary of Saffron Walden Division

The Division was very happy to be hosting the conference in the 130th anniversary year of Essex BKA. They are making efforts to ensure it is a really good occasion. The date is Saturday 23rd October 2010, the venue Foakes Hall in Great Dunmow. There will be an anniversary cake (featuring the new logo). Speakers will be Peter Neumann, Swiss scientist; John Hall, Director of Essex Wildlife Trust; and the PhD student will present her work. The Division is hoping to use some of the ECC grant to encourage the newer beekeepers to come to the conference. Please buy tickets early; the form will be put on the website.

15 Installation of 2010 Presiding Officer & Reading from the Book of Commemoration

Robert Pickford will be Presiding Officer for 2010. As he was not present, Jane Ridler read from the Book of Commemoration.

Geoff Mills spoke a few words about Ted Hooper. Geoff sees Ted every week usually, but Ted has been ill and in hospital, though back home now. His main book is being updated by Margaret Thomas. Another book is 'in the pipeline' but not ready. Geoff suggested that Ted would appreciate contact, a card perhaps.

Pat Rowland thanked everyone for coming and wished a good beekeeping year to all. Saffron Walden Division were thanked for providing the refreshments.

The AGM business over, the meeting broke at 2.50pm for refreshments.

This break was followed by a very interesting illustrated talk by Pam Hunter from Sussex, who told us about the wonderful sex life of the honey bee.

The meeting closed at 4.30pm.

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Contact Douglas Pickford 01371870609 or douglas-pickford@hotmail.co.uk.



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in conjunction with the National Bee Unit
Bee Husbandry Workshop

at
The Millennium Centre
The Chase, Dagenham Road, RM7 0SS
Wednesday 7th July 2010

**Important you will need to bring a packed lunch.
Protective clothing for beekeeping will be required.**

Tea and coffee provided
Pre booking of places Essential- Please contact
Mrs E. Marrable on 01708 229441

PROGRAMME

- 9:45 Arrive The Millennium Centre
- tea & coffee
- 10:00 **Welcome; general outline of the day** - Essex BKA
- 10:10 **Opening Lecture** - Alan Byham SE Regional Inspector
- 10:40 **Workshop (1)**
Group 1 Varroa control, a management plan
Group 2 Nosema: An unseen enemy
Group 3 Hygiene in the apiary
- 11:20 **Apiary Session**
A look at shook swarming, Bailey comb change, open mesh floors, drone brood culling
- 12:30 **LUNCH** - please be ready to re-start promptly at 1:15
- 1:15 **Workshop (2)**
Group 1 Nosema: An unseen enemy
Group 2 Feeding - nutrition for bees
Group 3 Varroa control, a management plan
- 1:55 **Workshop (3)**
Group 1 Hygiene in the apiary
Group 2 Varroa control, a management plan
Group 3 Feeding - nutrition for bees
- 2:35 **BREAK FOR TEA**
- 2:50 **Workshop (4)**
Group 1 Feeding - nutrition for bees
Group 2 Hygiene in the apiary
Group 3 Nosema: An unseen enemy
- 3:30 **Final Lecture & Summary** - David Rudland, Seasonal Bee Inspector
Final Q&A, closure of meeting.

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The Back Page



Above: Ted at the EBKA Conference 2008, photo taken by Geoff Bazin.
Below: Ted at the microscope, watched on by Margaret Thomas and David Blackwood, photo taken by Clive de Bruyn, 1989.

