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From the President

I think spring has sprung, as we have a jasmine vine in our backyard and I always reckoned when it flowers spring is here. Well first flower appeared last Tuesday 9th so bring it on.

As a club we're lucky to have a different venue at each meeting and Woombah was wonderful. Thanks again to Maree and Sandy for providing a great spot.

The next meeting will be a bit of an eye opener for most of us as Guy is a professional beekeeper and will give us a look at a much larger operation than we experience presently. The program will start at 10am for a cup of tea/coffee which will dissolve into the club business meeting at 10.30am sharp. Bring your cuppa with you. Anyone interested in flow hives will have a get together prior to this. The rest is all about beekeeping activities/socialising/discussion with lunch and raffles in between.

All committee members please take note. The September meeting will be at my place at Schielers Rd, Tomki and if you can all stick around we will have a committee meeting at the end of the day.

See you all at Guy's.

Tony. 15/8/16

Last Meeting

The last meeting was held at Maree Givney's at Woombah.

Some of the topics discussed at the meeting are listed below:

- Entry requirements/dates for the Lismore and Gold Coast shows;
- Start time and order of the day for the Sunday meetings. In particular, holding the meeting over morning tea rather than after lunch and the earlier start for meeting of flow hive beekeepers;
- GCABS field day at Mudgeeraba at which Des Cannon will be speaking;
- Learn beekeeping course – there won't be a third course run this year.

The fine weather allowed for the transfer of a colony into Maree's new flow hive.



A Colony Transfer into Maree's Flow Hive

Many members then took the short walk to the home of Sandy Stewart where a colony was transferred from a Langstroth hive into a flow hive.

This was followed by lunch and beekeeping group discussions at Maree's home.

Thank you to all the members who brought along items for the raffle and morning tea/lunch.

Congratulations

Many happy returns to Gwen Kent on reaching her 90th birthday. Gwen is a life member of our association.

New Equipment

Stephen and Janet Fowler carry most common beekeeping equipment, including a range of extractors, both manual and electric. They also carry a range of jars and pots for honey sales.

Limited stocks of WSP and Ideal frames are now available.

Please contact Stephen or Janet for further details (see the Equipment Officer contact details above).

Hives and Nuclei

Please contact Stephen Fowler if you are able to supply hives or nuclei to other club members.

Steritech

Please contact Brian Window or Stephen Fowler regarding your Steritech requirements. Loads are organised to be sent to Steritech based on demand.

Learn Beekeeping Course

The second Learn Beekeeping Course for 2016 commenced on Saturday 6 August at the home of Brian Window. This is the last course for 2016. Applications are being taken for the 2017 course(s).

Update - Townsville Varroa Mite Incursion

Two further colonies of Asian honey bee (*Apis cerana*) have been found in the Townsville area in addition to the original find at the Port of Townsville. The first of these was found at Annandale, approximately 9 km from the port. A Varroa mite (*Varroa jacobsoni*) was found in the comb.

The most recent find was a swarm at Hyde Park, in a direct line between the two previous colonies. Most of the swarm was able to be collected, including the queen. No mites were found on these particular Asian honey bees.

The *Varroa jacobsoni* in Townsville is reported to be from the Asian honey bee and is not the *Varroa jacobsoni* on the European honey bee in Papua New Guinea (PNG). However, if the Asian honey bee and Varroa mite were unable to be eradicated, the concern is that continued exposure to European honey bees could result in the mite switching hosts to our bees. This is based on experience from PNG.

Restrictions on the movement of bees/equipment and a surveillance program are ongoing in the Townsville area. Industry volunteers are also being sought to assist with the response, commencing at the end of August.

Hive Management for August

Thank you to Brian Window for this article.

Where do you start? It is a very early spring, with flowering red gums, iron bark and tallowwood nearly everywhere. The macadamias are flowering and the hives on the red soil are going gangbusters. As I write this on the ninth August, there are many things to do.

In the shed, I am finishing repainting some boxes, cleaning and rewiring frames, and inserting foundation. I will need many foundation frames for swarm control in strong hives, and for housing swarms that I have caught.

My current big task is to remove boxes of honey from my 32 hives at Rous. Most of the hives are 3 high, most have had one box extracted a month ago, and most now have a full box of honey on top. Tomorrow, I will take up the fourth boxes for 16 hives, and place them under the top box with a clearer board in between. The following day I will bring home the 16 boxes of honey and start extracting. When taking the clearer board off, the remaining two honey supers on each hive are

reversed. This will be repeated for the other 16 hives.

This procedure gives plenty of room in the hive for nectar to be put in. If you want to maximise your honey yields, you cannot have a field bee down in the brood box waiting for a house bee to take her nectar and find a niche for it. Crowding in the brood box will cause the field bees to initiate swarming.

Reducing swarming is my next task, but I am probably already too late for many hives. But because of the site in a custard apple orchard, I am able to catch many swarms with the help of the owner. But I will be going through the hives, checking the brood box for disease as well as queen cells, and responding to what I find. I can insert three frames of foundation to replace three frames of brood moved up, removing three frames of honey for extraction. I can also make up nuclei using the queen cells.

August Flowering

Thank you to Geoff Manning for this article.

Melaleuca is flowering. This is quite late in the year, and it has also been a good flowering.

The red soil country is somewhat early this season, probably because of the early red gum adding to everything else that flowers on the red soil. Macadamias are only a part of that mix. The red soil country has been in use for spring build up for about a hundred years, Macadamias a part of that for maybe thirty.

Red gum flowers over a large part of the country including into Queensland. It is often to be found with grey ironbark and this is also flowering in places. Red gum has excellent pollen and sometimes nectar. Ironbark on the other hand has no worthwhile pollen for bees, but has excellent nectar. It is reliable in this regard, almost always yielding if it flowers. As I said the red gum and ironbark are very early this season. The red gum in particular will encourage the bees so much that swarming will start early. I have had two already and I would expect August to see swarming in

earnest. Both will continue flowering I would expect at least until September.

White mahogany is budded and will probably start flowering in October. It sometimes yields honey but is more important for quality pollen.

American Foul Brood News

Thank you to Brian Window for this article.

Members are reminded that all cases of American Foul Brood (AFB) must be reported to the NSW Department of Primary Industries (DPI) on the form provided on their website. A prominent local beekeeper is currently being dragged over the coals by the DPI with a formal interview over a perceived failure to report an outbreak, and it is conceivable he may be fined.

Another consignment will be sent to Steritech when there are enough boxes to make it worthwhile. It takes 42 boxes approx. to make a full pallet, and to keep the cost down we need a few pallets. Hopefully, with more skilful beekeepers detecting the disease in the early stages, with more utilisation of barrier systems, and with better clean up after the disease, the infestation of large numbers of hives of our club members will become rare, and longer waiting times to accrue the number of boxes will become the norm. However, there usually are a substantial number of boxes sent either because they are second hand, or the beekeeper wants some sterile gear that he can put on any hive. Bees do very well under the disease free conditions found in such gear.

Another item of interest follows. At the 2016 Conference of the NSW Apiarists in June, the following motion was passed. 'That beekeepers should not promote disease management practices that are illegal or not approved by the Bee Biosecurity Code.'

Colonel Pulling Competition - Questions

From time to time some example questions and answers for the Colonel Pulling Competition will be included in the newsletter. Thank you to Shirley Ashman for providing the questions.

Q. How many types of eggs does a queen lay, one or two?

A. Only one. The egg is/is not fertilized after laying, not inside the body. (Source: *ABC-XYZ of Beeculture p.88*).

Q. What is the normal height of a worker bee's flight path?

A. About 2.5 metres. (Source: *ABC-XYZ 40th Edition p.303*).

Q. Name three metals that must be avoided when processing wax.

A. Iron, brass, zinc and copper. (Source: *ABC-XYZ of Beeculture p.64*).

Q. When is the right time for the beekeeper to artificially swarm a colony?

A. When occupied queen cells are present. (Source: *ABC-XYZ of Beeculture p.451*).

Upcoming Events

28 August, 2016 – Monthly meeting, Caniaba.

25 September, 2016 – GCABS Field Day, Mudgeeraba (Keynote speaker, Des Cannon, Editor, Australasian Beekeeper Journal).

20-22 October, 2016 – North Coast National, Lismore.

21 May, 2017 – Colonial Pulling competition and AGM of the ABA, Ballina.

Newsletter Submissions

Thank you to all members who contributed to the newsletter.

Newsletter submissions can be emailed to Newsletter.NRABA@bigpond.com by the 10th of each month. Photos are always appreciated.

Next Meeting – 28 August, 2016

The next meeting will take place on 28 August at the home of Guy Small, 341 Fredericks Road, Caniaba.

The day will start at 9.30 am with a flow hive meeting followed by morning tea commencing at 10 am and the general meeting at 10.30 am. Lunch will be at around midday following the beekeeping activity, at a cost of \$5 per head.

The planned beekeeping activity for the day is an inspection of Guy's honey extraction plant. Guy is planning to extract honey on the day.

Please remember to bring along either a morning tea item or a salad to share. Raffle items are always appreciated.

Starting at Lismore, take the Bruxner Highway towards Casino. Continue out past Bunnings for approximately 2 km then turn right just past the Lismore Airport onto Caniaba Road. Follow Caniaba Road for 5.4 km. At the roundabout, take the third exit onto Fredericks Road. Follow Fredericks Road for approximately 3.5 km to Guy's property.

Bee meeting signage will be in place.