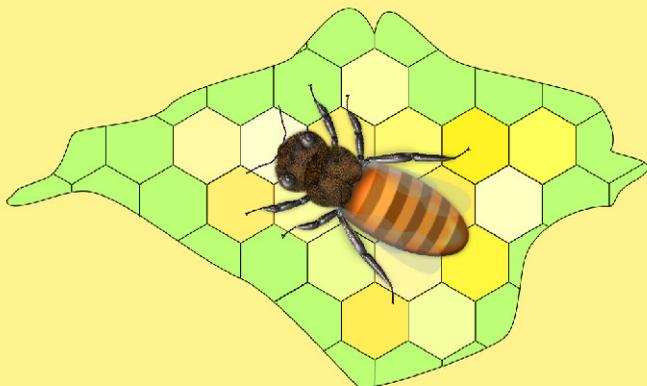


The
Wight Bee



October 2013

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Issue 107

I shouldn't think even millionaires could eat anything nicer than new bread and real butter and honey for tea.

Dodie Smith, I Captured the Castle

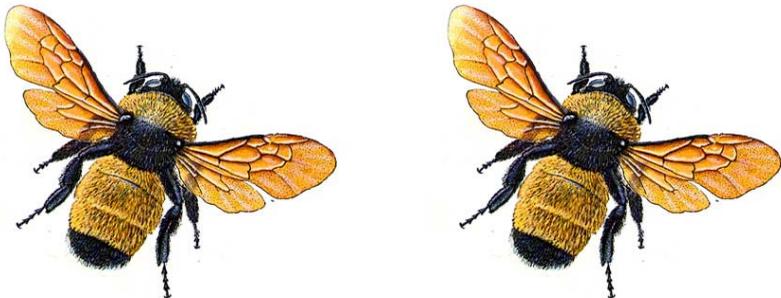
The Journal of
The Isle of Wight Beekeepers Association
www.iwbka.org.uk

I have just got back from the Honey Show. It was brilliantly organised and carried out, well done to Christine, for running the show for the first time, and her team of helpers. Congratulations to the trophy and rosette winners, this year there was a good range, some of them new to the winner's board. Christine's full report is later in this issue.

The ivy seems to have been particularly abundant this year, and until recently my bees have been very active bringing in stores, at times so weighted down the approach route looked like Heathrow air traffic control's worst nightmare. Queuing was worse than usual because entrances were still closed up following severe robbing, which in my apiary was by opportunistic bees rather than wasps. Never mind, hopefully the replenished stock from the ivy honey will set them up for the winter.

Thank you to the seven people who helped fill these pages. We have the regular contributions, and a new series has started up based on the microscopy group set up by Ian King; I now know an awful lot more about legs.

Gillian Belben



Recipes with honey
J.B. Priestley's Stew

This is not strictly a recipe, more a delightful memory of J.B. Priestley making a meal up at Brook Hill House in the late 1940s.

“Making stew. It is not often I am allowed to do this; and indeed my great stew-making time was during the darker hours of the war, when anything was about to happen. But I am always delighted to make stew. And it is unusually good stew.....One of my children, without any prompting from me, once ate four large helpings of it. My stew is thick, nourishing and unusually tasty. It has meat in it, but almost any kind of meat will do. I add all vegetables that are in season and in the house. And when I am in the mood I toss in exquisite little dumplings. After hours of simmering and thickening and thinning, for I never rush the business and keep peering into the pan, tasting, muttering a spell or two, I add any red wine I can lay my hands on, and then, at the last moment, drop in a spoonful of honey. The stew is then ready. The very smell is princely....here is a stew that has been seasoned with many onions, red wine and honey—and my delight.”

From ‘**Delight**’ - J.B. Priestly

DRIFTING—YOU READ IT HERE FIRST

Some time ago there was an article in Wight Bee describing how Continental beekeepers (Jose was his name) prevented drifting by painting their brood boxes and supers in a variety of colours. This worked even in closely spaced rows of 40 to 50 hives.

It was therefore interesting to see that Thornes now sell Beehive Paint in a variety of brilliant colours for alighting boards, entrances and broods to help prevent drifting.

Just shows they must be reading Wight Bee!

Barry Walshe

Sunlight

There was a sunlit absence.
The helmeted pump in the yard
heated its iron,
water honeyed

in the slung bucket
and the sun stood
like a griddle cooling
against the wall

of each long afternoon.
So, her hands scuffled
over the bakeboard,
the reddening stove

sent its plaque of heat
against her where she stood
in a floury apron
by the window.

Now she dusts the board
with a goose's wing,
now sits, broad-lapped,
with whitened nails

and measling shins:
here is a space
again, the scone rising
to the tick of two clocks.

And here is love
like a tinsmith's scoop
sunk past its gleam
in the meal-bin.

*The great Irish Nobel Laureate
poet Seamus Heany died in
August this year.*

*This is one of his most admired
poems.*

*I couldn't work out why the
water pump had a bucket of
'honeyed' water in it, but did
some research and think he
was referring to the colour and
flavour of peaty water that was
pumped in that part of Ireland.*

*Then I found that certain
whiskys are known to have
sweet honeyed and citrus fruit
notes; the water used to make
the whisky influences its
flavour.*

from **'North', 1975**

Report on this year's Honey Show

The honey show was held on 2nd November and provided good, Informative entertainment for everyone who attended. There were 121 entries which delivered a very good display for the IWBKA members and public who attended the show. The Honey Show Judge David Sandwell said he was impressed with the standard and presentation of the entries, especially the entries for the novice honey. The honey classes were well supported and the wax classes produced some good quality wax exhibits. The three classes of photographic entries depicted the amusing and serious side of beekeeping and natural history. The cookery section created an impressive array of baked goods and the decorated cakes added a pretty display with creations of flowers and bees. Rob Marshall and Anne Willis both worked hard to produce displays of the history of Isle of Wight bee-keeping which were very informative.

The prestigious Robert Memorial trophy awarded for the most number of points in the honey and wax classes was awarded to Dave Cassell and the BBKA Blue Ribbon Award awarded for the most outstanding item in the show was presented to Michael Boll for his entry in the medium honey class. The list of other trophy winners and the full results of this year's Honey show are published on the IWBKA web site.

Thank you to everyone who spent the time and effort to produce so many good quality exhibits, and to everyone who helped make this year's honey show so successful.

Roll on the spring when we will all be able to open our bee hives and start to plan again for next year's event.

Christine McClellan

Honey Show Trophy Winners 2013

Rosette for Light Liquid Honey	Christine McClennan
Rosette for Decorated Cake	Jinnie Bartlett
Rosette for Novice Honey	Ruth Green
Rosette for Most Popular Honey	Dave Cassell
The Reg Gallop Trophy	Jinnie Bartlett
For best article of handicraft—Class 17	
The Virginia Ford Trophy	Jinnie Bartlett
For decorated candles—Class 19	
The Ray Fitchett Award	Mike Sargent
For best natural history photo—Class 23	
The Robert's Memorial Trophy	Dave Cassell
For most points in honey and wax classes	
The Claude Cooper Memorial Trophy	Christine McClennan
For most points in the show	
The Blue Ribbon Award	Michael Boll
Given by the honey judge for most outstanding exhibit	For his medium honey

Micro Bee

A small group of Island beekeepers have recently started a study group to improve our knowledge of both bees and microscopy, in order to: Provide training in the use of optical microscopes – LP Dissecting and HP Compound; promote the welfare of our bees on our Island; diagnose Adult/ Brood Diseases and Pollen Identification; stimulate microscopical study and activities; encourage and support members to take the BBKA Microscopy Exam.

At present two of our group are working towards the BBKA Microscopy Exam to be held in November 2014. The Quekett Microscope Club have very kindly loaned the group a Vickers Stereo Microscope, which hopefully will be added to with good second-hand instruments the club can purchase when available.

It is our intention to run a series of Micro Bee subjects in Wight Bee, to help other members understand the micro world of Apis Mellifera. With this in mind the very first in our series, LEGS, gets us up and running.

LEGS

Both castes and drone have similar exoskeletons (outside bodies), although as the queen and drone are only for reproduction purposes, we are talking in the main here of the workers (30 000 to 50 000 per colony). In common with most insects, honeybees have three pairs of legs attached to the thorax, each leg having five segments, each joined to the next by a flexible membrane.

Fig 1: The last segment the tarsus(ta) has 5 sub-segments, the first and largest being the basitarsus(bt) or 1st tarsal segment and the final one the pretarsus or foot; each segment has its own separate muscle although the tarsus(ta) shares only one muscle between the 5 sub-sections.

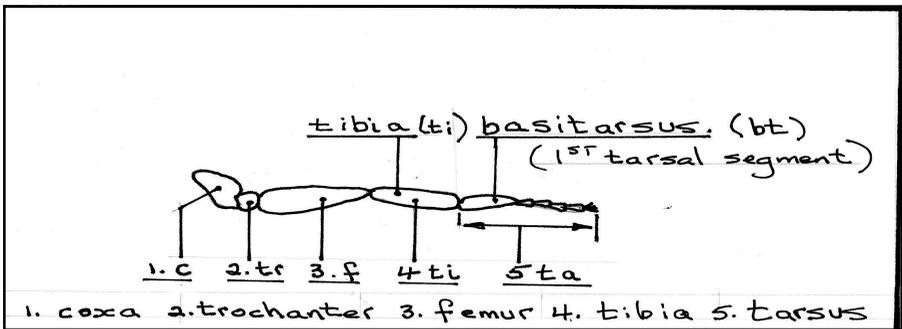
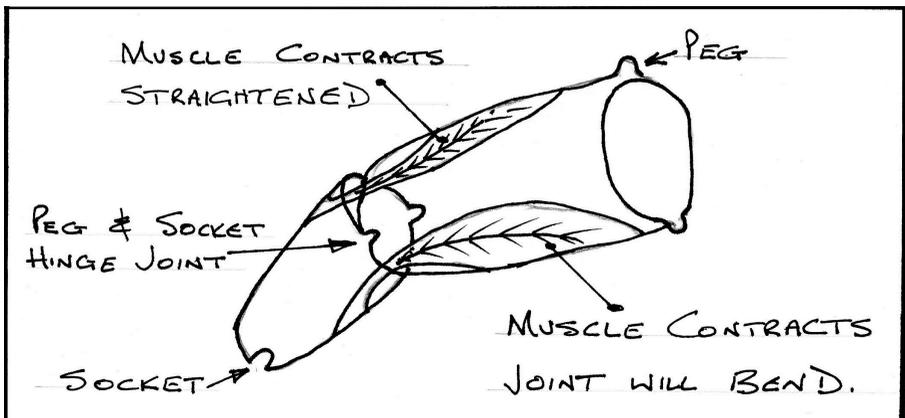
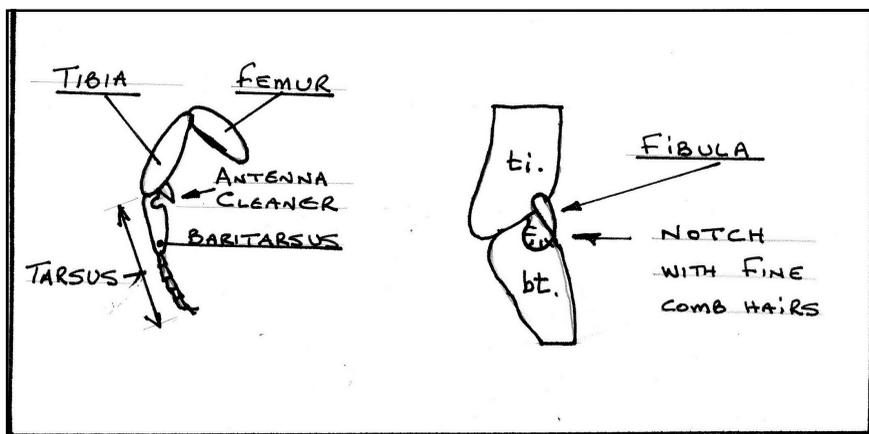


Fig 2: The larger 4 leg joints have peg and socket type joints. Muscles ending in tendons move these. In the smaller joints there is only one pivot joint allowing more directions of movement. By contracting one or the other muscles the joints can be straightened or bent; each large joint hinges in only one direction, but the 4 joints are lined up at different angles to each other, thus the whole limb can be moved in any direction.



All three pairs of legs are covered in hair, that allow the bee to clean itself all over from head to sting, this is important as the hairs covering the body become covered in pollen whilst out foraging. The pollen is moved toward the rear legs where it is packed onto the outside of the tibia called the corbicula (pollen basket). The pollen is curved around one stiff hair (The Seta) that gives the pollen load a circular helix shape.

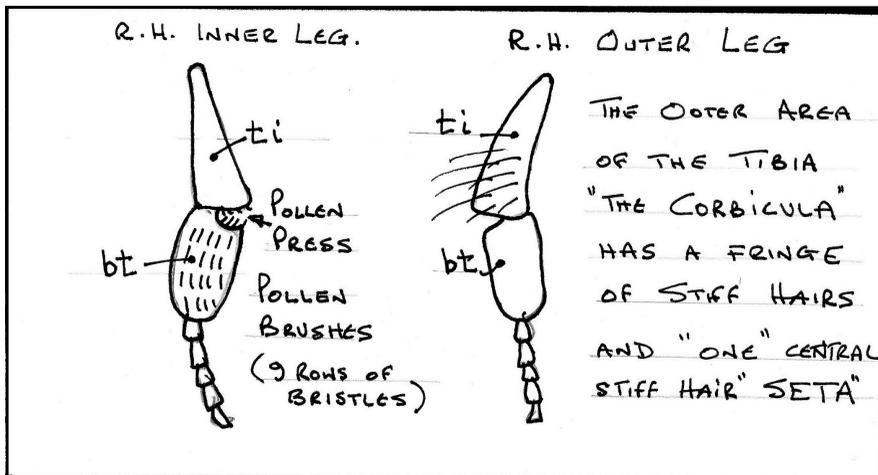
Fig 3: The point of attachment of the front legs to the thorax is just below its neck, its considerable freedom of movement allows the front legs to sweep over its entire head. It also has a specialized structure between its tibia(ti) and basitarsus(bt) – its antenna-cleaning notch. The bee raises its foreleg and passes it over its antenna, which slips into the circular notch on the basitarsus. The tarsus is then flexed and a jointed spur (fibula) on the tibia closes the notch, which is fitted with fine comb like hairs. Then the antenna is drawn through the enclosed notch cleaning off any pollen.



The middle legs have no specialist tools. However hairs covering the inner side of the basitarsus are used for cleaning pollen from its thorax and passing it to its rear legs. The spur on the middle leg has no known function. It was once referred to as the wax spur but it is now known not to be used in the manipulation of wax.

Fig 4. Rear Legs have very highly specialist structures on the tibia and basitarsus that are used to pack pollen. The inside portions of the basitarsus (pollen brushes) are rubbed together pushing pollen into its

pollen press (rastellum and auricle) and squeezing it out onto its corbicula (pollen basket). The corbicula has a central stiff hair “the seta” surrounded by a fringe of hairs, which shapes and holds the pollen in place. Returning to the colony, the worker will unload its own pollen load into a cell.



Propolis is collected from plant buds by chewing it off with their mandibles; it is deposited on the corbicula hairs via its front and middle legs and once back at the colony has to be removed by the house bees.

Ian King

Let's all move to France

The French invented the concept of ‘terroir’, (a sense of place), to describe subtle differences in wines that may have been produced just a few metres from each other and from the same grape. But they also apply the concept to honey. Each honey, as with wine, has a provenance, with colour, texture and taste determined by the area it comes from as well as the flowers the bees worked on. Some even have an AOP designation. (Appellation D’origine Protégé)

This idea has now been picked up by fashionable foodies in America. Earlier this year, for \$35, an event called ‘Taste the terroir of American honey’ took place , a tasting of seven single varietal US honeys.

Island beekeeper interview
Hazel McGovern

When do you first remember being aware of bees and honey?

Growing up in South Africa, I had a huge playground of nature to explore. I can't ever remember not being fascinated by all insects. Furry spiders, shiny beetles and giant butterflies were always so much more interesting than dolls and jigsaws.

What tempted you into beekeeping at first?

I joined a skills and produce trading scheme in Scotland and as a result a beekeeper put his bees in one of our fields. I watched over his shoulder for a while and then went and did a theory course myself.

Was it an easy beginning with lots of help or did you struggle?

A bit of both. I had loads of help from people in the IWBKA but chose one of the worst years imaginable to start beekeeping properly and spent an inordinate amount of time worrying about dreadful weather and missing queens. However, I have had lots of invaluable advice from experienced beekeepers, and a great support network of newer members.

What hives do you use and how did you choose which format?

I was given a commercial hive as a Christmas present one year, really liked it and stayed with that size. They are nice and simple, easy to construct and the frames fit in standard extractors. I also have some poly national hives for nucs that have come in on national frames but I plan to move them up into commercials next year.

How many colonies do you hope to start this next Spring with, and what sort of a journey has it been to build them up?

I hope to start with 7 colonies next Spring. I lost some colonies last winter, which was a real low point, but then gained some swarms. Hopefully a bit more experience and a lot less rain will give me a better result this winter.

What has been your happiest discovery along the way?

That happy evenings of drinking coffee, eating cake and enjoying the company of friends can lead to a beekeeping qualification! Our study

group (I use the term 'study' loosely) made the Bee Basic Exam the most enjoyable qualification I have earned to date. Also that I am really very fond of my bees, even on the days when the feeling is definitely not mutual.

Do you have any 'rules' that you observe every year leading to recommendations you could pass on?

I don't think that I have been keeping bees long enough to have tried and tested rules, but a piece of advice I found useful was to get all your feeding done early. It certainly makes life easier if the weather turns bad. I also try to avoid opening up the hives if there is no real need and spend time watching what's going on at the entrance instead.

What has been your worst beekeeping mistake?

Forgetting that there is a bee space under a glass crown board, putting it over a Miller feeder so that I could look in and drowning hundreds of bees. I now float plastic mesh in the feeders just in case the bees find a way in.

How has beekeeping fitted in with the rest of your life?

Rather than just fitting in, beekeeping has become my main hobby, my business and even a reason to travel, as I have been invited to visit some beekeepers in Romania. As anyone who knows me will testify, I have never quite mastered "fitting it all in" and am usually dashing around, 10 minutes late.

What other aspects of your life are important and enjoyable to you?

Braving the elements to watch my boys play rugby, getting ambushed by enthusiastic ducklings and dogs when I get home, putting on a roaring log fire and having a kitchen full of home grown fruit. All the little things that make you smile.

What is the most surprising thing that others might like to know about you?

I'm also an Environmental Consultant and when I'm not in one of the shops, I'm often in the middle of a landfill site measuring dust, looking for bats in barns, or digging up contaminated soil on a building site.

What are your beekeeping hopes and plans for the future?

Mainly to keep learning, and get my bees through the winter. There are so many things from queen rearing to making mead that I haven't even started yet, so I think it will be an ongoing project.

Landmarks and events of the Isle Of Wight—47

The Simeon Memorial



This memorial which stands at the junction of Castle Road and Carisbrooke Road on the outskirts of Newport, was erected by the friends of Sir John Simeon (3rd Bt) who lived at Swainston from 1815 to 1870. He owned land in the Ryde area and the cemetery was sited on his land.



Living as he did in West Wight he counted Lord Tennyson among his friends. Julia Margaret Cameron took this striking photograph of him which is at present in the Royal Collection.

After a short Naval career he was elected in 1847 as a Liberal MP for one of the two parliamentary seats available on the island in those days. His parliamentary career came to a temporary halt when he converted to Catholicism and because he felt that this could estrange him from his electorate he resigned his seat.

However, he misjudged his own popularity for in 1865 he was persuaded to stand again and was decisively re-elected. This should be viewed alongside widespread antagonism towards the catholic church in those days and he was in fact the only practising catholic in the House of Commons for some years.

Rob Marshall



Jinnie Bartlett with judge David Sandwell at the Honey Show. Jinnie received three awards for her amazing sugar and wax flower art.

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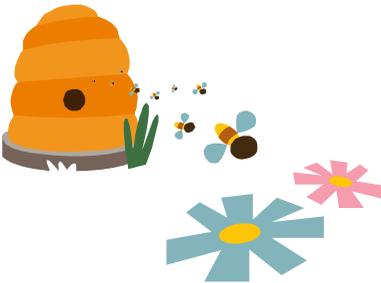
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Let's all move to California

A shortage of honey bees is threatening almond growers in the US who need the bees to pollinate their orchards.

The bee shortage has forced Californian almond growers to rent out hives for pollination with prices trebling to \$150 per hive in California, which accounts for 80% of the world's crop.

Some farmers had to pay \$200 per hive last season, which has had a knock-on effect to almond prices which have now reached an eight-year high.

Taken from the Daily Telegraph

The Bee Garden



Newport Rd, Godshill, PO38 3LY, 01983 840295



**HAPPY CHRISTMAS
AND A BIG THANK
YOU TO ALL OUR
CUSTOMERS**



News from Godshill

After months of uncertainty, the Godshill site has now been sold and Brownriggs have opened their new farmshop. They have been very supportive and are happy for the Bee Garden to stay on site. So now you will be able to pick up something for dinner at the same time as visiting us. Please see website for winter opening hours.

www.bee-garden.co.uk

Round and hexagonal jars back in stock

Fondabee £4.50, Neopoll £4.00

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IWBKA Honey Labels
Number 12
Sian and Kevin Morris



When we took our first crop of honey off our bees, we couldn't wait to extract it from the frames and have a taste. It was very rewarding if not a little bit sticky and slightly messy.

I started to look in Thornes catalogue but couldn't see anything we liked. So I then started to look online and googled honey labels, wow, there are loads! But we still couldn't find any that really caught my eye; they all seemed a bit crowded.

We then thought, why not design our own. I looked on the BBKA web site and found a leaflet to download that contained information about selling honey. The leaflet contained the measurements of the lettering sizes needed, and which wording and information should be on our own label.

I produced our label using Microsoft Word on my computer. I decided not to over crowd it so have only put a few pictures on the label, I like the white label as it makes the information clearer to see. I did try a few colour combinations for Whitwell Honey but decided on the red as it stands out. It has all the information that you legally need and after a few trial prints and measuring of letter sizes, I saved the document so next time I only have to press print.

I used Avery shipping labels 99.1mm x 57mm with 10 labels on every sheet which I bought from Staples. They cost me £22 for 1000 which is about 2p per label, which I know I have to add on printer ink cost but it still works out to be very good value.