



FRANKLIN BEEKEEPERS CLUB

JUNE / JULY 2015 NEWSLETTER

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President's Report

"Life's a dance, you learn as you go. Sometimes you lead, sometimes you follow."

John Michael Montgomery: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7k4ujBGRGf8>

I come across some people who want a beehive in the garden rather like they want a sculpture. They want to get everything just right in the beginning and then sit back and do nothing. This approach does not work well because beekeeping is a dynamic, practical skill. It is a very good idea to learn what you can before you take up beekeeping, by reading, by taking a course, and by coming along to FBC! However like riding a bike or dancing the salsa there comes a time when *"sink or swim, you gotta give it a whirl"*.

In beekeeping, like dancing, there are definitely two involved. There is the hive, and there is you - the beekeeper. Whether you lead or follow depends on your level of skill and on what nature throws at you. Novice beekeepers are often followers in the dance. They open the hive and observe, but are reluctant to do anything unless there is a problem. They follow, always a step behind, trying to catch up. More experienced beekeepers anticipate problems and lead in the dance. They open their hives with a purpose in mind and they act on what they find. They guide their partner through the seasons with confidence and skill. Many intermediate beekeepers can improve by being more proactive. Take the lead, remember your actions are not set in stone like those of a sculptor; they are steps in a continuing dance.

Talking of "giving it a whirl", one subject we have yet to cover at club days is making mead. Many members enjoyed tasting the entries in the mead and honey wine section of the honey competition at the April club day. Our guest judge for the competition David Young invited us to visit his winery in Dury Hills for the June club day and he promised to give us some tips on mead making. At the May club day Mark and Roger extracted some late honey from the club hives which we hope to use to

make some club mead in July. Personally I know nothing about mead making but I am happy to “learn as I go” and if it turns out well perhaps we will all be dancing!

Cheers

Dr Graham Dyche
President FBC

Secretary’s Report

AGM

AGM Minutes are available on our website at <http://www.franklinbees.co.nz/documents/>

Honey Competition

Congratulations to the winners of the Honey Competition, held in April.

First prize, for most overall points, is the trophy The Big Sting, awarded to Joan Leitch. Second was John Burns, and third was Miles Landon.

Special prizes of Drury Hills Wine were given for the best creamed honey, to Roger Richmond, and for the best mead, John Burns.

It will be interesting to see the number and quality of entries next year, as we improve our skills over the year (see the upcoming meeting at Drury Wines, 14 June)

Reminder - Subs of \$40 are now due

Thanks to the 50% of members who have remembered to pay.

For those of you who have forgotten, our bank account number is:

Franklin Beekeepers Club 02-0404-0090129-00

Or you can mail a cheque to PO Box 1082, Pukekohe 2340

The next newsletter will only be sent out to current members

New Members

We welcome the following new members to our club.

- Lisa Abernethy
- Trevor Bennett
- John Chung
- Sioux Ellis
- Chris Ford
- Julie Glennon
- Robert Jan
- Sandra Loudon
- Amanda Moon
- Claire Newton
- Leigh Reti

We look forward to seeing you at the next club day.

14 June 2015 - Club trip to Drury Hills Wines

David from Drury Hills Wines was the visiting expert judge at our AGM Big Sting competition won by Joan Leitch. David has kindly invited the club to a wine tasting talk about his fruit wines. He and his family for several generations have kept hundreds of beehives. He now concentrates on wine & mead creations but has a few beehives to provide honey for the wines.



David Young

They make award winning fruit wines using traditional winemaking techniques to successfully transform a wide variety of fruits into aromatic full-flavored wine that are perfect for any occasion. Only using fruit that have been grown on their rural property or by local growers and water sourced from an underground bore that has been tested pure enables them to produce a unique range of full bodied wines with very distinct flavours and rich in antioxidants.

We have taken him up on his offer for our June 14th Club day.

There will be two sessions: 10.00 am to 12 pm and from 12pm to 2pm. If numbers are few then we will all go to the 10.00 am session.

We will meet at the Beehive Drury shop carpark area at 9.45 am and 11.45 am to go in convoy to his place as it may not be easy for all to find.

Please email Sue Tetley at : tetley@clear.net.nz to book your place and state which session.

Situation Vacant

Ecrotek are currently recruiting for a Customer Service/Retail Sales role based in East Tamaki. Please contact Dave by email at dave@ecrotek.co.nz for more information.



Club Shirts

There are some club shirts which have not been returned, and we would like to get them all back in. If you have a club shirt hiding in your closet, could you please return it to Peter Biland. We use these for field days presentations, and would like to have the full complement.

Notice of club rule change

At the AGM in April 2014, a new committee position of Secretary was created. One year later, at the April 2015 committee meeting, the committee unanimously agreed to add the Secretary as a signatory on the club bank account - This requires a minor change to the Franklin Beekeepers Club Rules and Objectives.

The current club rules are on our website at <http://www.franklinbees.co.nz/documents/>

With specific reference to the following two rules;

19. The committee may make minor changes to the rules provided such changes are notified in advance in the newsletter to enable any financial member to object.
22. All monies belonging to the club shall be lodged in a bank in the name of the club; the bank to be nominated by the Treasurer and approved by the committee. Separate deposit accounts in the name of the club are permitted, and the Treasurer is authorised to move funds within these accounts to maximise any interest returns and ensure sufficient operating cash is available. Club payments must be authorised by any two of President, Vice President or Treasurer.

The committee plans to change rule 22 to (change emphasised in **underlined bold** for clarity);

22. All monies belonging to the club shall be lodged in a bank in the name of the club; the bank to be nominated by the Treasurer and approved by the committee. Separate deposit accounts in the name of the club are permitted, and the Treasurer is authorised to move funds within these accounts to maximise any interest returns and ensure sufficient operating cash is available. Club payments must be authorised by any two of President, Vice President, **Secretary** or Treasurer.

This rule change will take effect at the next committee meeting, currently scheduled for Monday 15th June 2015.

Any financial (paid up) members who wish to object to this change are requested to contact a committee member as soon as possible. Contact details can be found on page 1 of this newsletter.

FBC beekeepers and their 'free bees'

The FBC offered hive nuclei to interested members who were new to beekeeping in exchange for reports on their progress. Here is the second instalment from Nick and Emily Ryburn.

This last couple of months have been crazy! Nature has thrown just about anything it could at our bees!

Approximately 2 months ago we moved our bees from the location where they started with us, to my family's home about 4 kms down the road. We didn't see too much change in them which was a relief, as being new parents, anything and everything seems like such a big risk! Once they arrived at their new location, it didn't take them long at all to get pumping and gathering appeared to be in full swing!

It can't have been too long after the move, maybe a couple of weeks, that we started to notice the odd wasp hanging around the hive. For a week or two we watched as one wasp became two, which became 4 which got so bad we could have 10 at any time trying to intrude on our wee bees. We were witnessing them robbing from well before the time the bees emerged until well after the bees had called it a day - it was really hard to watch! By this stage we had 2 wasp traps full of rotting fruit around the hives, capturing many wasps, but not enough to reduce the numbers and instead, they were getting worse. This was beginning to get worrying for us!

Then one morning, Nick stood out by the hive, while the sun was still low, and followed the flight path of the wasps as they left the hive. So when I got home from work, we put our gumboots on and ventured on down to our neighbour's, whose property the wasps flew directly toward. He was more than happy for us to have a walk around. Just when I thought there wasn't a wasp to be found, Nick spotted one single little wasp (goodness knows how!) that flew directly to a hole in the ground, only metres away from us! We walked carefully, not knowing what we would find, until we spotted a hole, about the width of your fist, with what looked like about 20 wasps hanging out in the entrance way. We were thrilled to have found this and headed back up to our house to wait until dark, when we armed ourselves with petrol, a spade and a torch and returned. Nick poured a decent amount of petrol into the hole and in order to suffocate the wasps and stop them from being able to leave the hole, he dug the spade in, on an angle, across the hole, which he returned to the next day to investigate. I got home from work, not knowing a thing about the day's findings, to be shown an insanely huge wasp nest that Nick had dug out during the day! He was over the moon with himself and his incredible find and I couldn't get over the weight and the amount of larvae and wasps inside it! We ended up burning the nest to ensure everything inside was dead, but not before taking plenty of photos.



After this we had a huge sigh of relief and im sure the bees did too! I made the bees a sugar syrup to boost their strength after the attack, thinking they would appreciate this gesture. Turns out they didnt really, and it took them two days to finish the syrup (maybe too much water? Probably!) and next thing you know, we have robbing bees!! The first signs Nick noticed were dead bees on the ground, a lot of hovering bees around the entrance and front of hive and a lot of unsettled/angry bee noise.

So we found ourselves again, trying to fight nature. We did what only comes natural and googled what we could do in this instance. We found that somewhere, someone used an old thin shirt to cover the hive and entrance (leaving a small gap for our bees to come and go) and create confusion for the robbing bees trying to find the entrance and an extra level of security for the bees. We also read that spraying water on the hive instinctively sends them on their merry way home as they think its raining! Between the two ideas, we have managed to deter them. In between two attacks (one large, one smaller - Possibly detected earlier?) we removed the shirt and the hive seems back to normal.

We are all happy here for the time being - The bees are still covering the original 5 frames but have filled them with plenty of brood and capped honey! We even saw a young bee emerging the other day! Small things that are still very exciting.



Photos and content by Nick and Emily Ryburn

Industry Unity

In an effort to strengthen the apiculture industry, the NBA has been working to unite all interested parties – beekeepers, Federated Farmers, processors and exporters. We hobbyists are being looked after by a representative too.

While there is a call for a levy on hives to fund this initiative, it is unlikely that it will affect anyone with less than 50 hives (85% of NZ beekeepers, but we only have 4.5% of the hives). The cost to monitor and collect is too high.

As a club, we are keeping an eye on developments, and will continue to our work for our members' best interests. Please let the committee know if you are interested in becoming involved in this.

If you would like to contribute articles, recipes, photos or any other content for the newsletter or website, please get in touch we would love to hear from you.

Email John Burns @ editor@franklinbees.co.nz

AFB News

There have been a few changes to the management of AFB recently. The management agency has released some new tools – some videos through their website, www.afb.org.nz, education, training, videos from the box to the left. There is also a smartphone app for field use, 'The AFB App' from the Play Store/App Store. There is a video on the website to show how to use this.

And there are changes to how the DECA (Disease Elimination Conformity Agreement) will run, starting from 1 June 2015. Beekeepers will need to have at least 12 months experience and pass the exam before they can apply for a DECA. This will allow them to inspect their own hives only. After 2 years of practical experience, they can sit a refresher course, which will enable them to inspect other beekeepers' hives for the COI (certificate of inspection).

Our Club often holds DECA courses. If you are interested in attending one, please put your name down with Graham Wheeler (treasurer@franklinbees.co.nz) to be notified when the next course is planned.

Bees in the News

Sting targets sticky fingered bee thief

Beehives worth close to \$100,000 have been stolen in the past eight months as high prices for "liquid gold" trigger a new form of crime in the Mid North.

Full Story: <http://nzh.tw/11454237>

Bee sanctuary proposed for Niue

Niue could become a global bee sanctuary if the plans of two businessmen succeed.

Full Story: <http://rnz.to/1Qkt7W3>

Which books can help my daughter with her fear of bees and wasps?

The Book Doctor buzzes around her heaving shelves to pull out the books that might help a child who is frightened of wasps and bees

Full Story: <http://gu.com/p/4854n/stw>

More News...

The Waikato Domestic Beekeepers Association and the NZ Beekeepers forum maintain an up to date list of bee related news

Link: <http://www.waikatobeekeepers.org.nz/bee-news/>

Link: <http://www.nzbees.net/forum/forums/bees-in-the-media.16/>



Did you know that old newsletters are published 'an issue late' on our website at <http://www.franklinbees.co.nz/newsletters>

Auckland Bylaw Changes

This is a summary by Joan Leitch, our club Secretary of the new Animal Management Bylaw.

The new Animal Management Bylaw, adopted by Auckland Council and due to take effect on 1 September 2015, has guidance for beekeepers in the Auckland region. The bylaw was drafted after public consultation, and with guidance from beekeeper Kim Kneijber, and consolidates the various bylaws operating under previous councils (such as Papakura and Franklin).

The controls are intended to promote responsible animal ownership and set minimum standards of best practice related to public health, safety and nuisance. There are distinctions made between bees kept in public places (eg parks), urban areas (backyards) and rural. The following are excerpts from the bylaw:

The Animal Management Bylaw 2015 requires every person keeping bees

- to ensure their bees do not cause a nuisance to any other person;
- to ensure their bees do not cause a risk to public health and safety;
- to obtain a licence to keep bees in a public place;
- to comply with any keeping of bees control made by the council.

Flight path management Every person keeping bees in an urban area must take all reasonable steps to ensure beehives are positioned and managed in a way that has minimal impact to any other person.

Flight path management is an important aspect of responsible beekeeping. Honey bees will fly at head height for some distance from their hives unless their surrounding environment directs their flight path upwards. Honey bees can be encouraged to fly above head height if a flyway barrier, two or more metres tall, is placed 1-2 metres out from the front of the hive entrance. It is important that flightpaths are not directed across public pathways on private and public land. Barriers that can be used include shrubs or trees, a wall, a hedge or a fence. Beehives can be placed on top of sheds or buildings but it may be more difficult to work with the bees in these restricted locations.

Bee management Every person keeping bees in an urban area must maintain honey bee colonies with a calm temperament and must take all reasonable steps to control swarming.

Although swarming is the natural means of dispersal of honey bee colonies, beekeepers can undertake responsible bee management practices to minimise the occurrence of swarms in urban areas. These practices can include re-queening on an annual basis, taking a nucleus colony out of populous hives (artificial swarming) and re-queening colonies that have been started from swarms. Beekeepers should contact their local beekeeping club or the National Beekeepers' Association of New Zealand for further advice on bee management.

Maintaining a calm temperament Maintaining honey bee colonies with a calm temperament is important for nuisance to neighbours and the risk of bee stings. Honey bees are generally docile and only sting as a defensive mechanism. The genetics of the queen influences the nature of the hive, and aggressive bees release alarm pheromones to behave in a more defensive manner. Queen bees should be culled from aggressive colonies and replaced with queens from a gentle strain. If the queen is coming into her second season, the colony is more likely to swarm.

Working with bees. Beekeepers in urban areas should be considerate of their neighbours and work with bees at appropriate times of the day. During the weekend an appropriate time may be earlier in the morning. Beekeepers should avoid working with bees in wet and cold weather conditions.

Management of seasonal build up. Honey bee colonies are more likely to swarm if there are limited cells in the hive for the worker bees to store honey and pollen. Responsible bee management practices need to be undertaken during the seasonal build up to avoid such situations. Plenty of room should be provided for the queen to lay eggs and for the bees to store honey. Consider taking three-five frames of bees, brood and stores from the hive (nucleus hive) as an artificial swarm.

Provision of water Every person keeping bees in an urban area must ensure there is a suitable water source for the bees on the premises on which the beehives are kept.

Providing a source of clean water may reduce the number of bees foraging elsewhere for water and creating a nuisance to neighbours, especially if they own a swimming pool.

Bee excrement management Every person keeping bees in an urban area must take all reasonable steps to minimise nuisance to any other person from bee excrement.

Like other animals, bees excrete waste products. Honey bees going on orientation, foraging or cleaning flights often excrete after exiting the hive. This can leave distinct trails of coloured bee excrement within a 500 metre radius of the hive and can cause a nuisance to neighbours. The colour of the excrement depends on the pollen sources the bees are foraging on but is typically yellow to brown. The excrement may be hard to remove from clothing, vehicles and buildings.

Hives can be re-positioned on the property or rotated so that flight paths can be encouraged in a direction away from neighbouring properties.

Additional guidelines

For advice on how to comply with the Keeping of Bees Control, contact your local beekeeping club or the National Beekeepers' Association of New Zealand. Auckland Council advises every person wishing to keep bees in an urban area to participate in a beekeeping course. Further information on beekeeping can be obtained from the National Beekeepers' Association of New Zealand guidelines "Starting with Bees" or by contacting the association. Educational workshops and advice are also provided by the Auckland Beekeeper's Club, Franklin Beekeepers Club, and Rodney Beekeepers Club.

Consideration should be given to livestock near the apiary as well as in neighbouring properties. Beehives in paddocks with livestock should be protected from being disrupted by livestock and aggravating the bees. Bee flight paths should also be managed to protect livestock from the risk of bee stings.

Food for bees. An adequate food source for bees is important for bee nutrition and preventing bee starvation. Bees rely on nectar and pollen for their food. Without adequate food sources bees can become weak or starve, are less able to resist diseases and pests, and cannot reproduce to build up strong colonies. The Trees for Bees programme aims to research bee-friendly plants and promote bee-friendly land management in order to provide adequate nutrition for bees in spring and autumn. For further information on bee-friendly plants visit the Trees for Bees NZ webpage at <http://www.treesforbeesnz.org/home>.

As well as the need for public awareness of bee-friendly plants, beekeepers should prevent overcrowding and manage bee stocking rates. A stocking rate is about managing the number of hives in an apiary or in an area in relation to the carrying capacity of food sources for bees in the foraging environment. Bees forage in a radius of up to five kilometres from the hive, and having too many bees in a single area can cause competition between honeybee colonies.

Collection of bee swarms. Although beekeepers can undertake responsible bee management practices to minimise the occurrence of swarms, swarming is part of the natural reproductive and dispersal cycle of honey bees. Bees which have recently swarmed are generally not inclined to sting unless provoked, as they are gorged full of honey and are homeless, which reduces their defensive behaviour. Swarms that have been confined by bad weather to the same bush or tree for several days may be more aggressive.

If a bee swarm is sighted, members of the public should not attempt to remove the swarm themselves, but arrange to have the swarm removed by a local beekeeper. To find a local beekeeper call your local beekeeping club, the National Beekeepers Association of New Zealand, or the Auckland Council call centre on 09 301 0101.

Dates to Remember

Club visit to Drury Hills Wines

Date: Sunday 14th June, 2015
Venue: Convoy from the Beehive Solutions shop, Drury.
Program: 10:00am-12:00pm Group 1
12:00pm-2:00pm Group 2
Please contact Sue Tetley (tetley@clear.net.nz) to reserve a spot in either Group 1 or 2.

Club Day

Date: Sunday 12th July, 2015
Venue: At the club apiary.
Program: 10:00 am Cuppa and discussion
10:30 am Open the hives

AFB Hive Inspections

Date: 1st August – 30th November

“Every beekeeper must [either hold a DECA, or] ensure that every honey bee colony in every beehive owned by that beekeeper is inspected for American foulbrood cases by an authorised person on or after 1 August and on or before 30 November each year commencing in 1999.”

More Information: <http://afb.org.nz/biosecurity-national-american-foulbrood-pest-management-strategy-order-1998#32>

View our online calendar at www.franklinbees.co.nz/calendar

Venue Directions

The club address is 733 Paerata Road (State Highway 22), Paerata 2676, New Zealand.

Traveling on SH22 towards Pukekohe, the club house is on the left hand side. Traveling towards Drury, it's on the right. At 733 there is a red letterbox and a driveway that forks – left goes to a house, take the right that travels 100m past old sheds and terminates at a turntable by a disused concrete-block cow-shed. This is the apiary site.

When visiting the site, please ensure you park on the old turntable, taking care that the driveway is kept clear.

When leaving the site, please take great care joining the traffic. Vehicles approaching from the right are not very easy to see.

Quarantine rules

To reduce the risk of spreading disease, the committee decided (20th October 2014) to restrict the bringing of any used bee keeping equipment (including gloves) to club days – the only exception is bee suits.

Where required, gloves and other equipment will be provided by the club.

This rule is not just to protect the club hives, but to also protect you from taking diseases home to your own hives.