

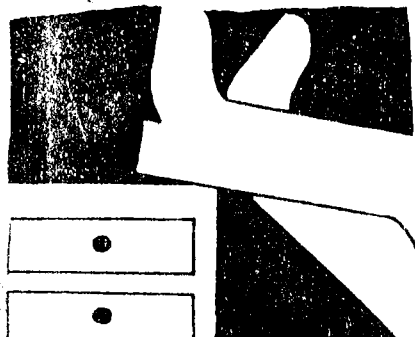
NO. 12

AUGUST 1981

**waikato
bee
notes**



Ministry of
Agriculture
& Fisheries



Editorial

Well, another conference has come and gone. One beekeeper who was there said it was a rather "low key affair, the North Island thought they had won, and the South Island thought they had won; only New Zealand lost".

Time will tell whether his observation is prophetically true or not.

In the meantime a lot of discussion will go on about how we are to successfully market next season's crop. I was talking recently to a manager of a food processing factory. It seems the supermarket war is really hotting up especially in Hamilton. In order to get back customers some chains are using "loss leaders" as never before.

They take a small range of best selling goods such as soap powder, biscuits, canned foods etc, choose the best brand in the range, and take a considerable loss on these. Honey is a favourite "loss leader" and is being sold at up to 10¢ per 500 gm below cost (I've seen the invoices to confirm this).

Some chain stores will actually stock a different brand of honey as the "loss leader" to the better known brand that appears in their advertisements. Other shops will offer a certain brand of honey on "special" but the special price may not be applied to all the stocks the shop holds of that brand. Other marketing trends involve large nationwide chains with computer buying facilities. These shops tend to purchase 2 - 3 brands only from beekeepers (or the H.M.A.) who can carry large stocks of honey and offer continuity of supply, even though they may pay more for the honey than if their branch managers purchased off a local beekeeper.

Along with computer purchasing has gone the trend to central warehouses. This can mean honey purchased from Waikato beekeepers must be delivered to an Auckland warehouse then brought back to the Hamilton shops. Crazy you say - well is it?

Central distribution means every order dispatched is entered on the computer which also keeps a current inventory and orders new supplies at a certain point. But perhaps more important than the computer even, is the fact that there are less people involved with deliveries both in and out of the warehouse. This has significantly reduced pilfering.

So, just because you see honey retailing at 95¢ per 500 gm in Woolworths don't assume the beekeeper or packer is selling below that price. In many cases the supermarket is taking the loss.

"The engine which drives enterprise is not thrift but profit"

John M Keynes

Honey Drums

While we are on the subject of marketing a lot of beekeepers now appreciate that they can no longer afford to be simply producers of honey. Beekeepers will have to be more actively involved in marketing their honey whether they like it or not.

The days of filling drums and sending them off to the HMA, or just one packer, have now gone. Beekeepers are finding it pays to have their own drums and be selective when they sell honey and to whom.

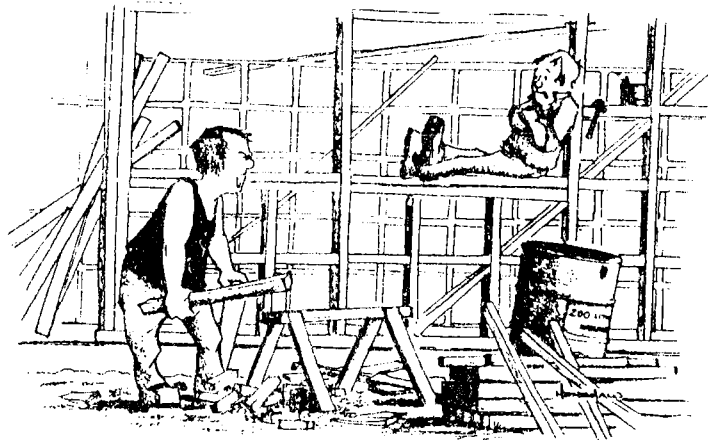
Here are some drum manufacturers or reconditioners:

- * Hamilton Drum Services, 85 Killarney Road, Hamilton 77 486
- * Rheem NZ Limited, 475 Rosebank Road, Auckland 885 127
- * NZ Drum Makers Limited, 46 Patiki Road, Avondale, Auckland 888 948
- * Pak Pacific Corp Limited, Hickory Avenue, Henderson HSN 63 009
- * Auckland Drum Reconditioners Ltd, 591 Rosebank Road, Avondale, Auckland 885 546
- * Drum Services Ltd, 33A Alfred Street, Onehunga, Auckland 662 903
- * Barrel Services Ltd, 33 Maurice Road, Penrose, Auckland 663 777

Weight for It

The "Economist" recently printed an excellent article on how complicated the American crop reports are. The bushel, for example, can be 60 lb if you're weighing soyabeans or wheat, 56 lbs if it's maize, rye or sorghum, 48 lb if it's barley and apples, 46 lb for poppy seeds, and 14 lb for orchard grass seed!

As if that's not enough cotton and hops are sold by the bale. But one weighs 480 lbs and the other 200 lbs. Brussel sprouts are sold by the drum, celery by the crate, grapes by the lug, turnips (without tops) by the mesh sack (50 lbs), bunched turnips by the crate (70-80 lbs) and tobacco by the hogshead. And they're reluctant to go metric!



② IT MIGHT BE A 100mm x 50mm WHERE YOU COME FROM... BUT IT'LL STILL FEEL LIKE A 4x2 WHEN I BELT YOU ROUND THE EAR WITH IT!

More books have been written about bees than all other insects combined; about 20,000 works in all.

Gleanings in Bee Culture December 1978

Horticultural Development in the Waikato

The Pundits have long said kiwifruit and other sub-tropical fruits could not be grown in the Waikato on an economic basis. But last season a considerable number of trays of kiwifruit were exported from the Waikato.

I was on a kiwifruit orchard some three weeks ago and the owner was gleefully telling me how his fruit had reached the required sugar levels some six weeks before those in the Bay of Plenty. Right now there are over 110 ha of kiwifruit orchards in the Waikato along with 45 ha strawberries, 50 ha raspberries, 87 ha brambles, 100 ha blueberries and 7.5 ha of blackcurrants.

That's all very nice you say and it is too. But this development is very scattered. So what? Well, in short it can be a recipe for disaster for some beekeepers. I've seen this sort of haphazard horticultural development before particularly by farmers. What happens is that through ignorance or lack of care when applying insecticides to their crops bees are going to be destroyed.

The MAF and other organisations are providing, and will continue to provide, an advisory service to growers to protect honey bees, but "accidents" still happen.

What to do if your hives get hit by insecticides? Well, what I don't want is for you to moan about it at the next NBA meeting. If we are to take any advisory, or even legal action, we need to know about the problem straight away. We need to interview the grower/farmer to find out what was being sprayed, when and how, we also need to take relatively fresh samples of bees for analysis.

Apiary staff, working with the Apiaries Act 1969, used to control poisoning of bees by agricultural chemicals. However, that section has been repealed, improved and put in a new Act which we are not empowered to administer. The Field Officer group of the MAF will look after our interests in this respect now.

Horticultural crops in the Waikato, that required cross pollination, had a gate value of over \$8,500,000 last year.

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Buzz says "Most husbands (and bosses!) would speak out of turn; if they had one"

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(4)



Putting the Blow on Bees

You either love bee blowers or you hate them; or I suspect you hate them but still use them anyway.

Just what do we hate about bee blowers? In a word "noise". One way around this problem is the portable generator and electric blower. However, the guy that called the generators portable had an unusual sense of humour. I guess they are portable but they're very heavy and expensive at about \$600.00 plus.

But we do have a new generator on the market called Rediline. This is an amazing unit as it works entirely off a 12v battery and converts the batteries DC current to AC. So you can still run an electric blower, or winch, or a chain saw, paint sprayer, skilsaw, pump etc.

The unit is very compact and only weighs 10 kg. It is 103 mm in diameter and 416 mm long and should be bolted under the truck deck or inside the engine compartment as it needs some protection from rain.

The generator has a continuous loading of 400 W and an intermittent rating of 600 W. However, for skilsaws, chainsaws etc 1200 W can be drawn in bursts of 30 seconds on and 15 seconds off. And the truck motor doesn't have to be running either. The generator only draws power from the battery when you switch on the unit you are using. It also has an automatic cut out when the battery is getting down a bit so there should be enough power left to start the truck.

I suggest you should use a good truck battery with an amp/hours rating of around 90 as the unit will need up to 52 amps if it is drawing 600 watts with a 186 volt load on an intermittent basis.

And the price? It will pay to shop around as the recommended trade price, as of August 1 1981, for the model DA3179, is \$425 plus freight. Industrial Electrical Contractors Limited, P O Box 10010, Te Rapa, Hamilton, Ph 492 935 have them in stock but they're asking \$525 plus freight. Your usual discounting hardware store should be able to obtain them from the New Zealand agents MSI Honeywell Limited, Box 2196, Auckland Phone 575 479.

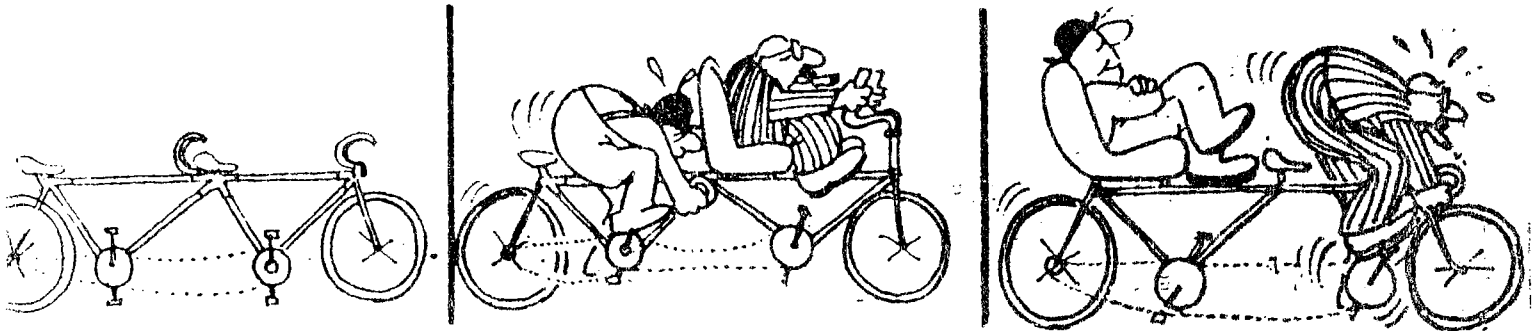
I have more brochures on the unit if anyone wants one. By the way Industrial Electrical also have model DA3251 at \$1250. This has a continuous rating of 2000 W and an intermittent rating of 3000 W.

Now for the business end of the unit. There are a number of industrial blowers on the market such as Makita, Wolf and Hitachi. A good bee blower should deliver air at about 18,000 feet/minute. The blowers mentioned all quote nozzle velocity in different units and I can't find conversion tables. However, they all seem to be suitable.

One of our members recommends the Hitachi as they have a good after sales and spare parts service. Greene Bros & Karl, 10 Milton Street, Hamilton Ph 80 090 are agents for the Hitachi.

Could I refer you to Trevor Bryant's article in the December 1980 issue of the "New Zealand Beekeeper" where he describes a tiltable blower stand as used in Alberta. The drawing is not as complicated as it seems. The idea is to tilt the honey boxes up so you blow the bees out from the bottom. The frames can be wriggled from side to side much easier from the bottom, and it saves "cracking" the frames as is usual when blowing from the top.

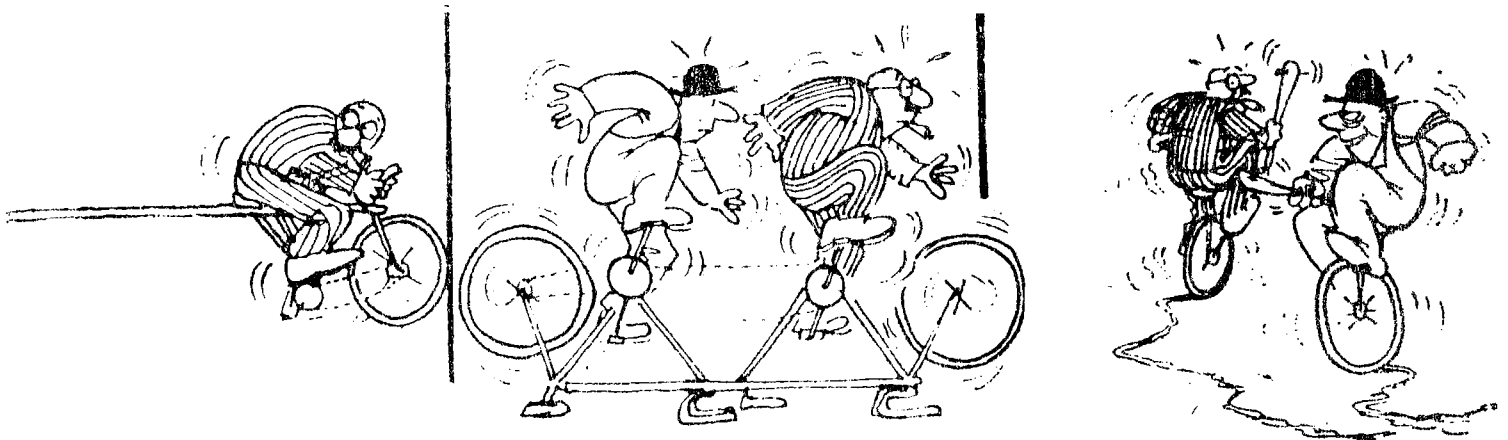
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HONEY MARKETING.

HOW THE NORTH ISLAND WANTED IT

HOW THE SOUTH ISLAND WANTED IT.



HOW GOVERNMENT WANTED IT

HOW IT IS NOW.

AND HOW THE FUTURE LOOKS!

* * * * *

Buzz wishes he had thought of this one:
"It is not enough to have a good mind, the main thing is to use it well".
Descartes 17 Century

Bits and Pieces

- * Most of you use ordinary grease or oil to lubricate moving parts in extractors, pumps and uncapping machines. Occasionally these lubricants drip into the honey. There is a special lubricant for food processing machines. It's called "Show White Petrolatum" and you can get it from the Caltex depot. A 500 gm tin will set you back \$1.60.

- * Having trouble with a stropopy hive? Then here's a recipe for calming the little beggars down. Dissolve 1 dessertspoon of potassium nitrate fertiliser in 500 mls of water. Stand rolls of smoker sack on end in 12 mm of this brew for 15 minutes or so. Dip both ends, then dry. When burnt in a smoker the fertiliser produces laughing gas or nitrous oxide. Be careful you don't inhale too much of the smoke or you might find yourself "wandering lonely as a cloud" or something.

- * Creosote is an excellent timber preservative for floor boards and lids etc - or any timber that you don't want to paint. It can be obtained from the coal mine at Rotowaro for 61¢ per litre. Take your own container.

- * Another alternative preservative which I've mentioned before is Tricunol made by the Rentokil people at 2 Angle Street, Te Papapa, Auckland 6, Phone 663 769 Onehunga. Tricunol comes in 20, 60 or 200 litres containers. It is probably the cheapest wood preservative on the market at the moment.

- * Take no notice of the statement made in the "Apiarist" that A Ecroyd & Son Ltd is the only firm in New Zealand that filters beeswax being converted into foundation. To my knowledge both Ceracell Foundation Limited (Stephen Mahon, Warkworth) and Lindsay Hansen (Whitikahu) also filter beeswax.

- * I've mentioned in my No 9 newsletter Cemenfortis as a good surface hardener and waterproofer for concrete. Here's another product that is similar in operation. It's called Polacoat Aquastop and is described as a "cementitious waterproof coating". It is a powder and must be mixed with water before application. Winstones Limited stock it. If you want to lay a new concrete screed over an old concrete floor then Winstones have a product called Cemkey Concentrate. This bonds the two floors together without needing to hack the surface of the old floor.

It can also be added to the screed to increase its resistance to acids or alkalis although it will not waterproof the screed.

Cemkey Concentrate is available in 2.3 litre , 5 litre , 20 litre and 205 litre containers.

- * That nice looking artificial turf I showed you at our last beekeepers fieldday is available from Flooring Distributors Ltd P O Box 37-469 Parnell, Auckland Ph 770 863. They're on the corner of St George's Bay Road and Garfield Street. The carpet is called Oasis and is made from polypropylene, a very tough plastic. It comes with a 5 year guarantee against fading or ultra violet degradation.

- * It's time for my disclaimer again "The mention of any particular brand name or source of supply in this publication, does not infer MAF endorsement of this product or source of supply".
- * On a happier note, I mentioned in my last newsletter that one of our members had been charged \$95 a metre for Fumigas 10 hose. It seems some clerical gnome had made a blue and the real cost was \$95 for the 5 metres. Whew!

Buzz says "May education never become as expensive as ignorance"

Sadder But Wiser

A beekeeper recently engaged a commercial pest control firm to fumigate a stack of comb honey for wax moth. And that's where his problems began. Without going into the whole story, here are some lessons to be learnt from this unfortunate episode.

- * Specify IN WRITING that you are fumigating combs of honey (or even empty combs).
- * Specify that the fumigant must be PURE methyl bromide i.e. no chloropicrin (or tear gas) must be in with the methyl bromide even for empty combs.
- * Be present when the fumigator arrives and make sure he understands the above points. The person who actually does the fumigating may be different from the guy who took your instructions.
- * Make sure the cylinder of methyl bromide is stood upright at the base of the honey stack. It should usually be in a bucket of hot water to make sure it comes out as a gas. It is also usual to place the cylinder on a set of scales so the correct amount of gas will be used for the volume of honey to be fumigated. The cylinder must not be placed on its side on top of the stack or liquid methyl bromide will bubble out all over your frames of honey.
- * It is a good precaution to place a large metal tray on top of the stack under the inlet hose to catch any liquid that might come out the hose. It will vaporise off the tray.
- * Methyl bromide is heavier than air so it must enter the top of the stack.
- * Keep the shed locked and post warning notices until the applicators come back and open up the stack for you.
- * Methyl bromide is highly toxic. It's odourless, colourless and tasteless and it can kill. Treat it with respect.

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An old proverb "Knowledge humbleth the great man, astonisheth the common man and puffeth up the little man"

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What Condition is Your Condition In?

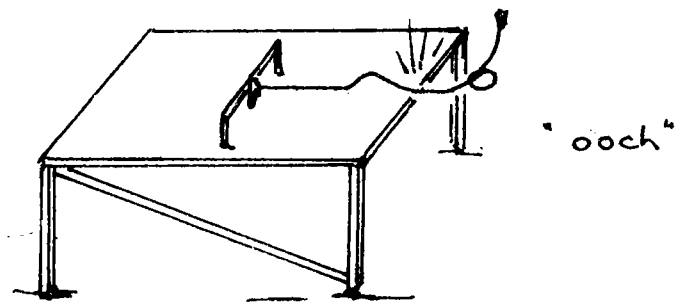
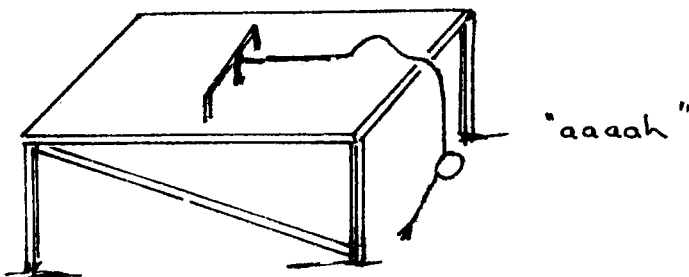
"Bending, lifting, humping, heaving", the new season is just around the corner and the old back is groaning already. So what are you doing about it?



Several of our members are doing the sensible thing and regularly work out with simple exercises to strengthen the lower back muscles and the old leg muscles. Stepping up and down off a box or squat bends (with or without a carton of paraffin wax in your arms) are good for the legs.

Lying face down on the floor and lifting each leg in turn as high as possible off the floor helps the lower back, as docs lifting up your torso to arch the back.

I was in a honey house last week and was "expected" to try out an exercise rig - a medieval torture instrument was more like it! Anyway it would be great for the back and looks something like this:



"HEAVEN"

"H...L"

Now, while you're all catching your breath again, here's a little notice that the Federation of Employers asked me to pass on!

MANAGEMENT REGRETS TO REPORT IT HAS NOTICED THAT
EMPLOYEES SLEEPING ON THE JOB ARE FAILING TO FALL DOWN.

THIS PRACTICE MUST STOP AS IT BECOMES IMPOSSIBLE
TO DISTINGUISH BETWEEN SLEEP AND NATURAL MOVEMENT
OF THE STAFF. ANY EMPLOYEES FOUND ASLEEP IN AN
UPRIGHT POSITION WILL BE REMOVED FROM THE PAYROLL.

While we're thinking about backs and heavy weights here's an extract from an information sheet published by the International Occupational Safety and Health Information Centre, International Labour Office, Geneva.

| REASONABLE WEIGHT LIMITS FOR OCCASIONAL LIFTING BY ANY METHOD | | |
|---|------------|------------|
| Age (Years) | Men | Women |
| | <u>kgs</u> | <u>kgs</u> |
| 14 - 16 | 15 | 10 |
| 16 - 18 | 19 | 12 |
| 18 - 20 | 23 | 14 |
| 20 - 35 | 25 | 15 |
| 35 - 50 | 21 | 13 |
| Over 50 | 16 | 10 |

These figures are based mainly on disc-stress factors and apply to occasional lifting by any method. Remember, with frequent lifting fatigue factors become important and the information sheet suggests these figures should be decreased by 25%. For those who practice correct lifting procedures then greater weights can be lifted.

Correct lifting means:

- * Keeping your back straight (not necessarily vertical)
- * Using your leg muscles to provide most of the lift
- * Taking up the strain easily, not with a jerk

- * Keeping your feet flat on the ground for stability.
- * Keeping arms and elbows close to your body when lifting

The Accident Compensation Commission says that in New Zealand over 17,000 people suffer serious back injuries each year

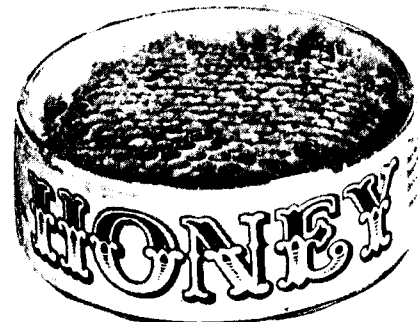
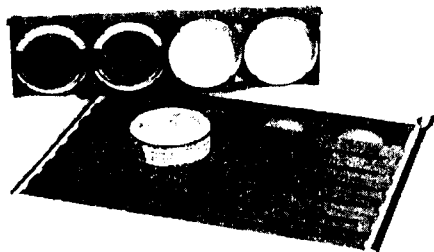
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Another bumper sticker "Put your honey where your mouth is"

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Trade Table

- * Andrew Corey of Corey Enterprises, R D 3, Hamilton Ph 63 634 has bee boxes for sale. Full-depth blanks are \$3.50 each and $\frac{3}{4}$ -depth are \$3.20 each. Andrew will rebate and hand-hold the blanks for you but adds another \$1.00 per box for this service. Andrew lives at the end of Cherry Lane on the Hamilton-Cambridge Road not far from the city boundary. Andrew is cutting a very good line of timber.
- * Dick Sturgeon at Waikato Industrial Paints Limited, 48 Mahana Road, Hamilton Phone 494-792 occasionally has galvanised drums for sale. These are excellent drums with the "wide mouthed" lid. Price is about \$10.00 each.
- * Darryl Carey was planning to build some 5 frame nuclei boxes (without bees). Darryl's workmanship is first class but check prices with him at Rotongaro 743.
- * The following price list has been received from Curtis Wicht who is manufacturing the Ross Rounds for comb honey production:



| EQUIPMENT | QUANTITY | PRICE |
|------------------------------|----------|----------|
| VISI-CHEK HALF FRAMES | 50 | \$ 46.00 |
| | 100 | \$ 91.50 |
| Carton | 250 | \$227.50 |
| SMOOTHIE SECTION RINGS | 200 | \$ 21.00 |
| | 400 | \$ 40.50 |
| Carton | 1000 | \$ 99.50 |
| SECTION COVERS | 200 | \$ 23.50 |
| Carton | 400 | \$ 46.00 |
| | 1000 | \$112.50 |
| SELF-ADHESIVE LABELS - Rolls | 100 | \$ 6.00 |
| COMPONENT PACKAGE - 8 Frame | 1 | \$ 32.00 |
| 16 half frames | | |
| 64 rings | | |
| 64 covers | | |
| 32 labels | | |
| COMPONENT PACKAGE - 9 Frame | 1 | \$ 36.00 |
| 18 half frames | | |
| 72 rings | | |
| 72 covers | | |
| 36 labels | | |

Orders to P O Box 280, Auckland. Telephone after hours Auckland 486 509, Auckland. Terms: 10% deposit with order, minimum deposit \$32.00. Balance on confirmation of order late September. Freight, customers care.

I'll talk more about these in my next newsletter and include results of trials to make an experimental frame to hold the Ross Round frames. It may be easier to make special frames and keep to standard boxes rather than make correct depth boxes, with rebates and follower boards.

* The beekeepers tour to Aussie is still underway. An itinerary has been put together by Bruce White in Sydney and I'll tell you about that in my next Bee Notes. The tour will be for two weeks with a suggested start on March 15 1982. Estimated costs have just come to hand and look like being around \$2,000 per person for 14 days. For that you get all transport (ex Auckland), twin accommodation, all breakfasts (cooked), five lunches, five dinners, portorage, airport taxes, tour escorts and prepared notes on technical aspects of places we visit. The final cost will depend on what happens to the New Zealand and Australian dollar between now and March.

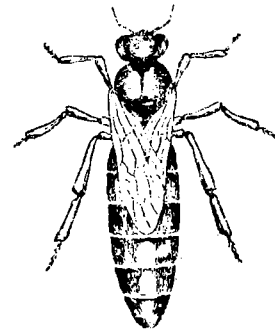


It all began with Adam, and it might
all end with atom.

News "America is to develop the
neutron bomb"

Gentlemen - The Queen!

We'll be thinking of new season's queens very soon. Breeder hives and starters and finishers could receive their first sugar syrup feeds any day now to boost them along.



* Old is best.

In some trials in the USA to determine which type of wax queen cup was accepted the best, cups from:

- old brood combs scored 86.6%
- fresh foundation wax scored 76.6%
- capping or foundation wax with equal parts of paraffin wax scored less than 70%
- paraffin wax was no good at all

Ebadi, R. & Gary, N.E. 1980. Acceptance by Honey Bee Colonies of Larvae in Artificial Queen Cells.

Journal of Apicultural Research 19:127-132

* Easy does it. Queens in cells are relatively delicate things. They are at their most susceptible when 6 to 8 days old. Queens in 10 day old cells can suffer wing damage from physical shock.

Spangler, H.G. and Taber, S.III. 1981. Adult queen honey bee storage and larval queen resistance to physical shock.

American Bee Journal 121 (1):21-22,25

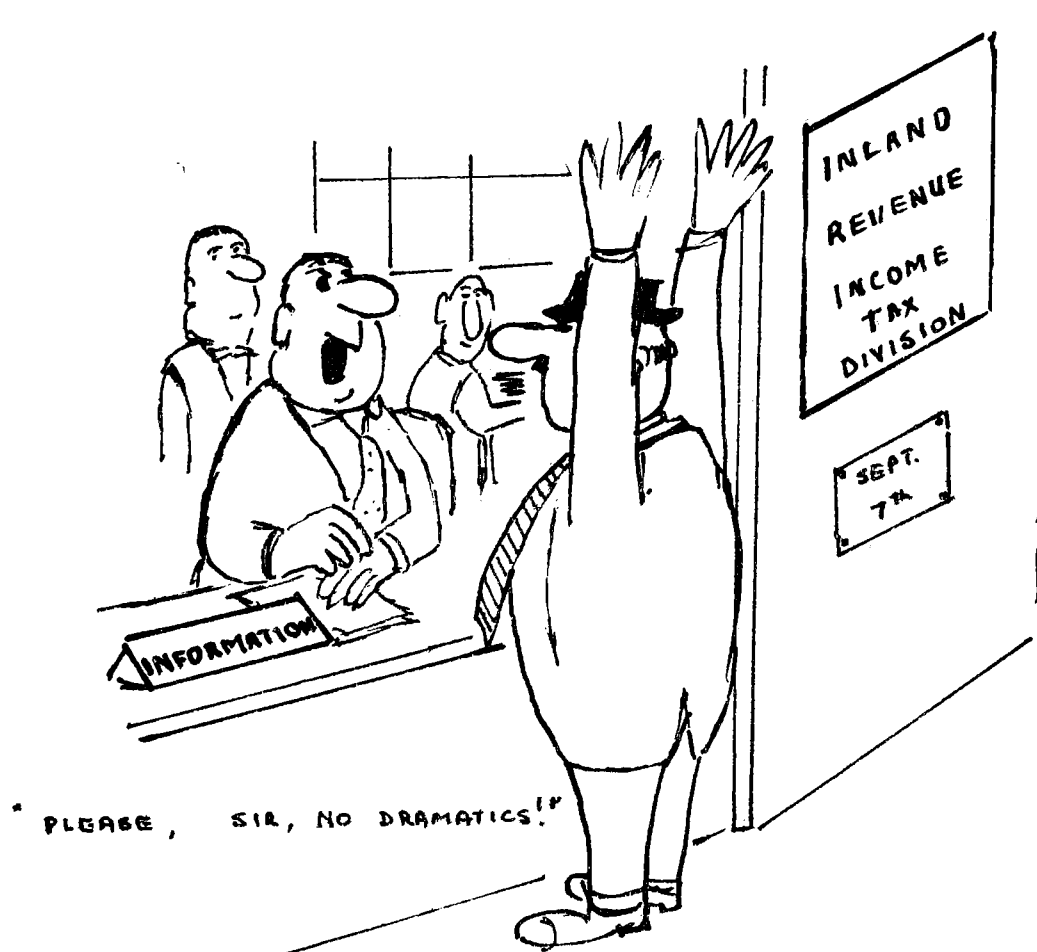
* Mini Fielddays on Queen Rearing.

I plan to hold one or more mini-fielddays sometime from mid-late September, on queen cell production. I'll send out details later but the day will involve "classroom" discussion and setting up starter hives in the morning, lunch and practice at grafting etc in the afternoon. We'll talk about selecting breeder queens, the importance of good nutrition, the art of producing quality cells, transporting and use of cells and so on.

Notlaws Constant: "If the facts don't fit the theory then ignore them"

Buzz dedicates this little story to all those who have recently contributed to the population explosion then claimed they didn't hear a thing!

Fred's wife took their small son to see a neighbour's new-born baby. He gazed intently, though without comment, at the small red wrinkled face. On his return he announced scathingly "I know now why she hid him under her coat for so long, Dad".



Here's hoping for a kind Spring. Cheers:
MURRAY REID