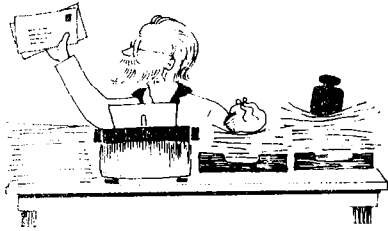


NO. 14

FEBRUARY 1982

**waikato
bee
notes**





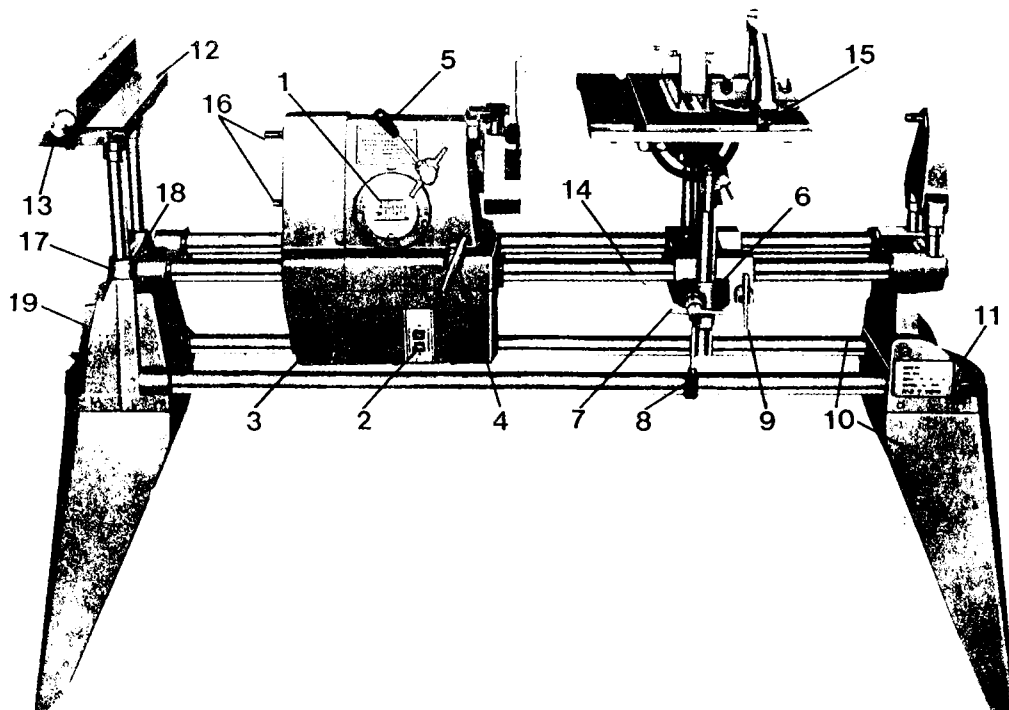
Some clown once said "New Zealand doesn't have a climate, just weather". I'm beginning to think he was right. The big honey crop that looked so promising at Christmas time just didn't eventuate. We had wind, rain, heat, cold and even hail in some places over January and a lot of the nectar the bees did collect they jammed in the brood nest. As a result many colonies are rather weak in numbers. They're picking up again now as is the flow but it still looks like a 3 tonne/100 season or maybe slightly better. Again, as with last year, young queens proved their worth. Here's hoping the penny-royal can turn it on like last year.

GUILTY CONSCIENCE?

In my last newsletter I had a gripe about how some beekeepers were very tardy in making a disease check of their hives in the spring. I was thinking of two individuals at the time, but since then a number of you have rather coyly said to me "I suppose you were having a dig at me there", or words to that effect. I guess if the cap fits ... They do say that a guilty conscience is a conscience doing its job.

Disease figures as at January 31 1981
are 71 apiaries and 110 colonies

MULTI-TOOL WOOD WORKING UNIT



This 5-in-one unit would be ideal for the commercial beekeeper or home handyman. It has a 250 mm blade, a 300 mm disc sander, an 860 mm lathe, a verticle drill press and a horizontal drill press, all driven by a 2 speed 1½ h.p. motor.

The unit is very compact measuring only 1750 mm long x 550 mm wide x approximately 1 m high. A set of castor wheels is also available as an extra for ease of moving the machine.

The basic unit will set you back \$1545.00 ex Auckland and this includes sales tax. There are a large number of other extras such as a drum sander, a face plate for turning bowls, router, mortising and moulding heads, etc.

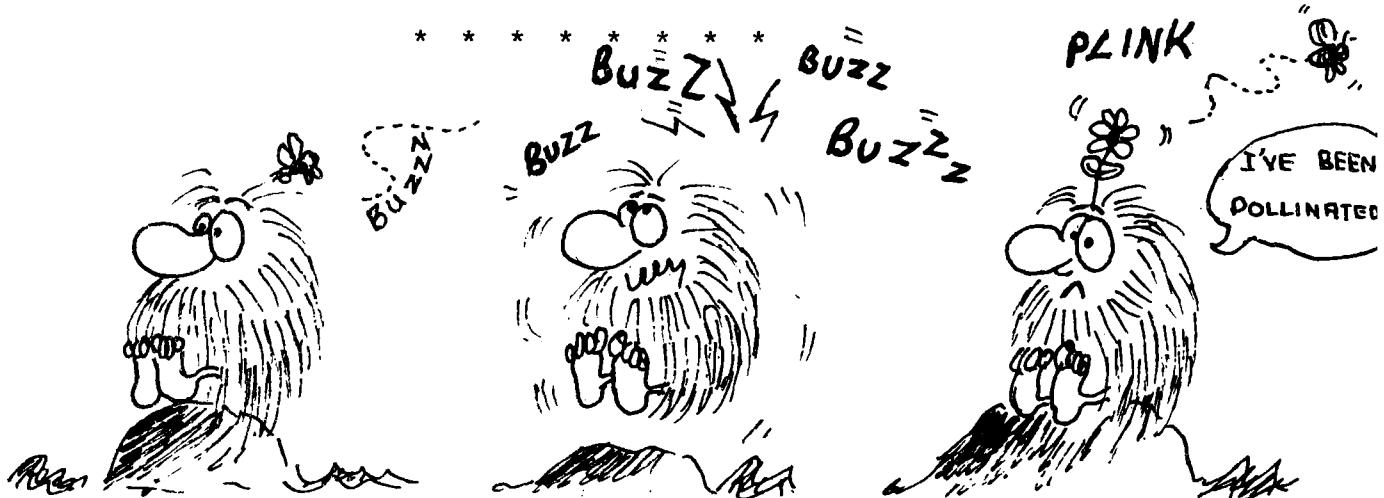
If you have an extra \$3 - 400.00 you can buy an jigsaw attachment, or a belt sander or a bandsaw or a buzzer attachment.

The units are sold by S & R Jack Ltd, 196 Station Road, Auckland 6., Phone 591-780. They also have branches in Tauranga and Hastings.

* * * * *

*The bumble bee is oddly wrought
Aerodynamically it ought
To find it quite impossible to rise
But bumble bees don't know the rule
For bumble bees don't go to school
They flies*

Joyce Greenfell



KIWIFRUIT POLLINATION COMMITTEE

The Bay of Plenty Beekeepers have now formed an association of people engaged in providing a pollination service to the Kiwifruit industry.

They held a meeting in Tauranga last Thursday February 11 to review the past season and to talk about "where do we go from here". We had over 4½ hours of very useful discussion including a report from one of the people co-ordinating the movement of hives into and out of the orchards for the Tauranga area.

The BOP beekeepers are not acting to exclude beekeepers from out of their area, and invite any interested beekeepers to attend their meetings. However, they are concerned that all beekeepers honour their contracts to supply hives capable of doing the job properly and to get them out when requested. They don't want a developing industry spoiled by a few who don't know what they are

really getting into or don't have any firm commitment, to the kiwifruit industry they are servicing.

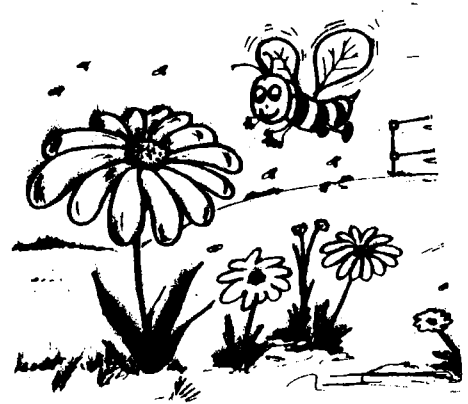
Jim Courtney from Waihi is the present Chairman and Bruce Stanley is the Secretary. If you wish to be on the mailing list to receive notices of meetings etc contact Bruce at Fosters Road, R D 1, Whakatane, Phone 35D Taneatua.

*The way to make a fortune is to come up
with something that is low-priced,
habit forming, and tax deductible.*

Sunshine Magazine

WHERE HAVE ALL THE FLOWERS GONE?

I have three newspaper clippings in front of me; one is a notice from the Senior Noxious Plants Officer reminding farmers in the Waikato County of the law which says they must trim their barberry and hawthorn hedges every year; another cutting tells me how the Waikato Valley Authority is going to spend (and is spending) over \$200,000 to clear willows along 43 km of the Puniu River; and the last item is about a plan by the Minister of Tourism to plant waste lands, road sides etc in attractive trees and shrubs primarily to impress the tourist.



At the moment the equation is not balancing because the hedges are being cut and the willows destroyed, but attempts to replace these nectar sources are only at the planning stage.

The requirement to trim barberry hedges annually seemed rather strange so I spoke to Mr Finlayson, the Noxious Plants Officer. It seems that the council spends nearly one quarter million dollars each year and employs over 12 temporary workers on clearing barberry from marginal areas. Mr Finlayson also said that if farmers want exemption from the Act they can apply to the Council and will be considered for exemption. Barberry is obviously not spreading on most of the intensively farmed properties in the county.

The move to horticulture will also hasten the removal of barberry hedges as these can harbour pests and diseases such as leaf rollers and scale insects.

On a brighter note I have been working with Mr Turner, an officer with the Waikato Valley Authority (WVA) at Taupo, on a plan to plant large areas being retired from farming with bee trees. The plan, with costs and benefits has been submitted and is now awaiting approval.

I have copies of a list of trees prepared by myself and Mr Miller from the WVA. It's called "Tree and Shrub Species Suitable for Erosion Control, Honey

Bees and Shelter". If you want copies of this to give away to farmers just ask.

* * * * *

Buzz saw these bumper stickers over the holidays:

"This car may be old but it's in front of you"

and

"This car runs on credit"

* * * * *

MATCO COOEE

This is the latest, and to my mind the best, option for shifting pallets of hives, honey or whatever.

It is basically a three wheeled, fork lift loader powered by a diesel, petrol or electric motor. It can lift up to 2.8 m and will carry over 1.5 tonnes and has an infinitely variable hydraulic controlled speed ranging from 0 to 6 km/h. The unit itself weighs 850 kg. The operator walks behind the unit and all the controls are on a handwheel.



The best feature to my mind, apart from the generous capacity, is the fact that it is a piggy-back unit. It travels at the rear of the truck by literally lifting itself up on its own forks which fit in a bracket under the truck deck.

So, here at last is a unit with the versatility of a tractor or Bob-Cat with forks and the convenience of a Hiab type unit with none of the disadvantages. The Cooee rides with the truck but doesn't take up any truck deck and can be switched easily from one truck to another.

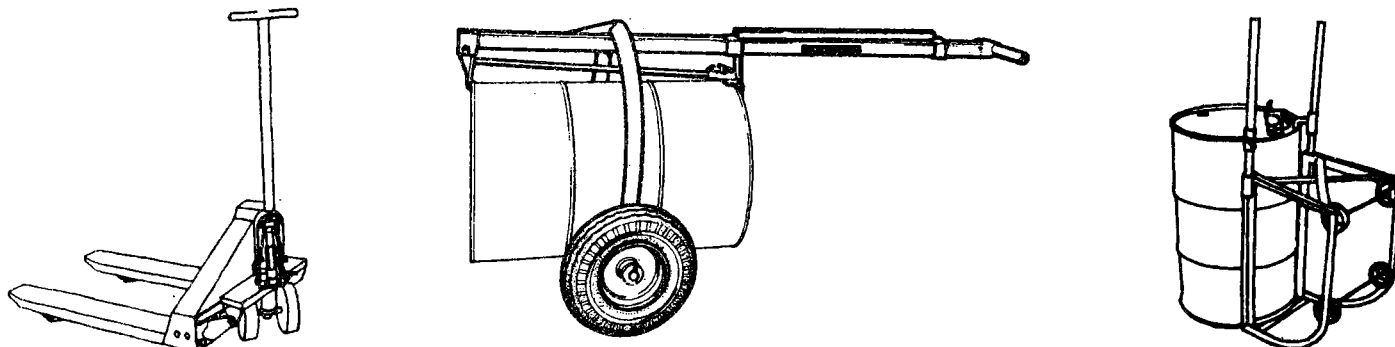
It will be ideal in kiwifruit orchards.

I'm almost reluctant to give you the bad news after enthusing so much about the Cooee. Yes, you've guessed it - the price. As at last December the twin drive model was \$17,900 and the single drive \$15,800. There may be sales tax on top. I Guess it sounds a lot but the price is much cheaper than a Hiab for instance.

Matco assemble and distribute the Cooee in NZ (its a Dutch invention). Our local agent is Wren Bartram, Phone 497-460. Their office is on the corner of Northway and Sheffield Streets, Te Rapa (Hamilton). Matco have offices in Auckland, Rotorua and Napier.

Matco also sell a large range of other equipment such as drum barrows, lifters and tippers, hand trucks, electric hoists and so on.

I'm hoping to have a Cooee and a representative from Matco at our Fieldday in March.

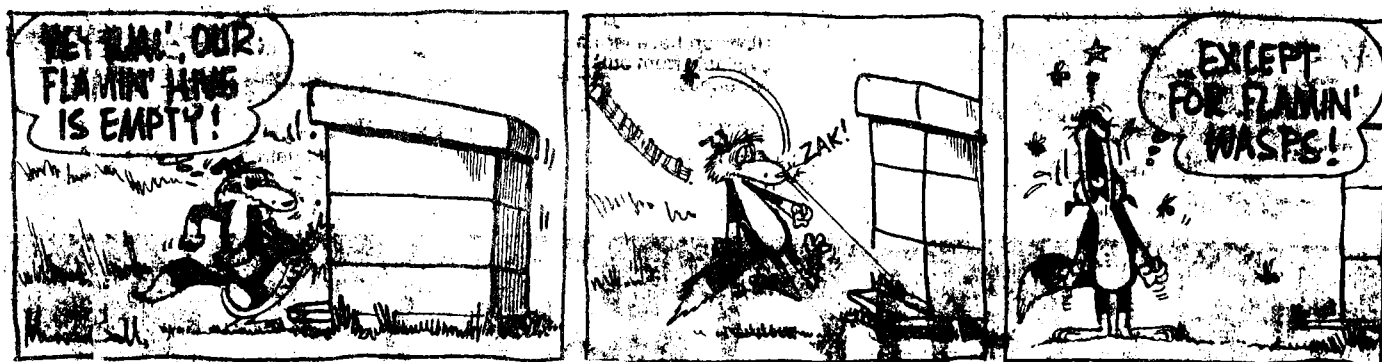


BEEKEEPERS TOUR TO AUSSIE:

We didn't get enough people to send the tour away in March, so have rescheduled it for the May holidays. The itinerary and conditions will basically be the same as in the original brochure although visits to some of the honey houses will be dropped. In exchange we will spend three days at Inverell attending the NSW Commercial Beekeepers annual conference and field day.

The other good news is that Landmark Travel and Australian Farm Industries Tours (who are organising the trip) think they can hold the price at \$1785.00 plus departure tax.

The tour is now scheduled to depart on May 14 and return on the 26. The school holidays begin on May 7 and the children return to school on the 24th. I'm expecting the revised itinerary from Landmark Travel any day now. Most of the tour cost, of course, is tax deductible as a business expense.



WASPS:

These pests will be about soon. The only sure way to reduce the problem is to find the nest(s) and kill them with petrol fumes (not near buildings), cyanogas or carbaryl insecticide.

If you're trying to follow flying wasps then can I suggest you go hunting near dusk when bees and flies etc will have gone home to bed. I've also found a light dusting of flour on field wasps makes them easier to see.

OK, so you can't find the nests then how about baiting. Every beekeeper has his favourite recipe but you usually have to experiment to see what the wasps will take. Here are some tried and proven baits:

- * Mince meat
- * Marmalade
- * Beer
- * Marmite
- * Minced fish especially trout!
- * Dry icing sugar

I personally like dry icing sugar and insecticide. Put the bait inside a can with a tear top and place beside the hive(s) that is/are being bothered by wasps. The can keeps the rain out and family pets too!!

Another good bait station is a dummy bee hive. You may need to shift the "real" hive away. Put the bait inside on a tin lid on the floor board. It seems to help if there are empty frames inside the hive as well.

The best insecticide to use is Mirex (see Waikato Bee Notes No 13 Page 10 for sources of supply). Any powered insecticide will do but Mirex is one of the few insecticides that is not in itself repellant to wasps.

* * * * *

*Apparently Eve did a streak through the Garden of Eden.
When asked where she was Adam replied "Eve is absent
without leaf"!*

* * * * *

BENZEALDEHYDE BOARDS

Honey harvesting is in full swing and many of you are using benzealdehyde. I hope you've read the label carefully on the container? You haven't!! Well, you'd better because while benzealdehyde smells nice it can be a nasty chemical.

It is corrosive and will burn your skin if you are careless. Be extra careful if you are wearing leather gloves as it will come through the leather and onto your skin.

It has one other nasty property though and that is under certain conditions crystals of benzealdehyde left on the fume boards can spontaneously ignite. This in fact happened to one beekeeper I know who had some old paint rags on top of a fume board. Fortunately he was home and the rags didn't get past the smoking stage but ...



So the message is wash the dry benzealdehyde crystals off your boards at regular intervals. Better still, copy the boards made by Arataki honey. A wooden or steel rim is covered with tin painted black just like any other fume board. However, underneath there are two cross ties made from springy curtain wire. It pays to remove the plastic covering off the wire as the benzealdehyde will

"dissolve it". These wires support about half-a-dozen sheets of newspaper which act as the fume pad. As one sheet gets sticky or crystals build up it is easily removed exposing a fresh one underneath.

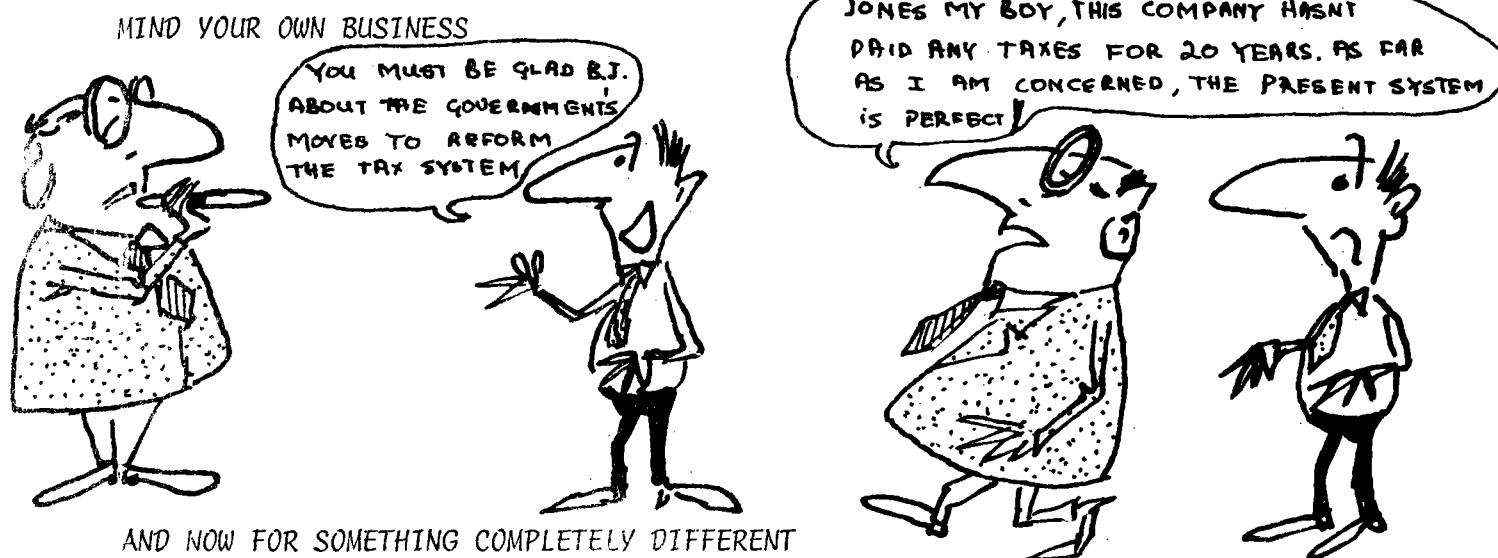
HONEY CROP ROUND-UP

What information I have suggests Northland is sitting on an average 3T/100 crop, as is the Waikato and BOP. Hawkes Bay have a good one. Nelson has bombed out at 2T/100 and the West Coast not much better at 2.5T/100. Canterbury has been affected by drought and some beekeepers don't even have winter stores.

Perhaps they're entering their seven lean years after seven good to positively excellent ones. North Otago is down on last year and Southland will probably average 3-4T/100.

Thinking of the downturn in the crop makes me recall a "truism" by one Franklin Jones (whoever he was!) - "Be thankful for bad luck (weather?), without it you'd have to blame yourself".

US Beekeepers received NZ\$1.29 - NZ\$1.50 for their bulk honey f.o.b. drums exchanged. South American honey landed in US duty and drums paid realised NZ\$1.01 - NZ\$1.30.



Are 'possums giving your orchard the treatment? If so you could be interested in this new trap designed and built by Mr J Lawrence, 390 Huia Road, Titirangi, Auckland.

The basic trap is a plastic oblong shell 175 mm x 165 mm wide x 175 mm deep. It has a metal base with a counter-balanced trip plate in it. The bait is placed at one end of the trap between 2 metal gratings. The 'possum enters the trap to get the bait, stands on the trip plate and hi ho he/she falls into a 200 li drum or somesuch container placed underneath. The trap will reset itself. You still have the problem of what to do with a barrel full of 'possums but beekeepers are an inventive lot!

And the price of the trap - just \$40.00.

STATISTICS

They say that there are "lies, damned lies and statistics", but be that as it may statistics can be rather sobering at times. According to the Department of Statistics the export value of sheep and lamb casings, used for sausage skins, was \$46.7 m. This was for the year ended June 1981. For the same period the much lauded kiwifruit earned just over \$45 million. I'm not sure if there is a message in these figures or not.

BEEKEEPERS FIELD DAY AND PICNIC

Don't forget our big day on March 6 wet or fine at the honey house of Brian and Barbara Clements 8 Short Street, Kihikihi. We start about 10.00 a.m. for a cuppa tea or coffee (supplied). There will be a small charge of 50¢ per person or \$1.50 family to cover costs.

You'll hear talks on trapping pollen and using methyl bromide. You can see the honey house in action including a Cooke & Beale honey-wax separator, and there'll be demonstrations of blowing bees out of hives, and picking up hives with loaders. There will also be hive equipment for sale and much more.

If that's not enough you can visit one of the most extensive model railway shows in New Zealand, just down the road from the honey house. Lunch will be a pot luck so bring enough for yourself and a bit extra and put it on a central dining table. Someone else's sandwiches always taste better than your own.

REMEMBER THE FIELD DAY AND PICNIC
MARCH 6 1982, KIHIKIHI

BEE THERE

I'll leave you with this little ditty:

*There was a man who loved the bees
He always was their friend
He used to sit upon their hives
But they stung him in the end*

Anon.

Cheers

Murray

Murray Reid
Apicultural Advisory Officer

