

# BEEKEEPER

AUGUST 1963

THE NEW ZEALAND



# The National Beekeepers' Association

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# THE NEW ZEALAND BEEKEEPER

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J. McFadzien, Editor

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## New Editor Appointed

We have pleasure in introducing to readers the new Editor of the 'New Zealand Beekeeper' as from our next issue. He is Mr. Leslie W. Goss, a full time publisher and part-time beekeeper of 78A Moncks Spur, Redcliffs, Christchurch.

Born and bred in London, Mr. Goss entered the publishing business straight from school, joining a well known publisher specialising in technical journals for varying trades and professions. After a number of years correcting and editing author's manuscripts, his interests were channelled to the commercial side of publishing and he was appointed advertisement director for the company's monthly publications.



With the outbreak of World War Two, Mr. Goss was called upon for full time service in the Metropolitan Police, in which he had enrolled for training at the time of the Munich crisis in 1938.

A fellow director's interest in beekeeping as a hobby in the immediate post war period was a factor in deciding the Goss household to move from a London suburb, where beekeeping was impractical, to a rural area at Amersham in Buckinghamshire, some 30 miles north-west of the metropolis. Here, a modest apiary was established with 'W.B.C.' hives of the double walled variety, each of which yielded a small but welcome surplus at the end of the first season.

In 1955, after 23 years in trade and technical publishing, a move was made to a Fleet Street news agency with world wide connections, and it was here that Mr. Goss met a visiting newspaper man, whose praise for his

native land first sowed the seeds which eventuated in the Goss family selling their house and home in Buckinghamshire, and sailing via Australia for New Zealand.

Arriving in July, 1957, a situation was obtained with a Christchurch newspaper, and Mr. and Mrs. Goss and their son and daughter soon settled down in a property at Redcliffs overlooking the sea and the mountain ranges of Canterbury and Kaikoura.

Local byelaws preclude keeping more than two hives and a nucleus within the city limits, but the yields per hive, as compared with stocks kept in

England, are so high that modest holdings on one's own and a neighbouring property provide more than sufficient honey for family consumption and a surplus for friends.

Mr. Goss is keenly looking forward to meeting members on Association business and will be visiting as many apiaries as possible. Readers everywhere are earnestly requested to forward any information of interest to beekeepers and the Industry in general for publication, and the continued support and assistance of branch secretaries and contributors will be very greatly appreciated.

## NEW ADDRESS OF 'THE N.Z. BEEKEEPER'

Will readers please note that as from September 1, 1963, all contributions, advertisements and other Journal correspondence should be addressed to:—

THE EDITOR,  
'The N.Z. Beekeeper',  
78A Moneks Spur,  
Redcliffs,  
Christchurch, N.Z.

## — — NOTICE BOARD — —

### H.M.A. Election

An election of two producer representatives for the Honey Marketing Authority will be held during September. The retiring members (who are eligible for re-election) are Messrs. J. R. Barber and J. W. Fraser.

The sitting members of the Authority are Messrs. G. E. Gumbrell (Chairman), J. D. Lorimer and E. W. Lee (Government representative).

Full particulars of the election procedure were given in the May issue of 'The N.Z. Beekeeper.' Nominations were to close on August 14.

### New Executive Members

The Dominion Executive has a new look this year with Mr. H. Cloake as President and three new members, Messrs. P. Berry, J. Glynn and G. E. Winslade.

Mr. Cloake has served on the Executive for a number of years and is well known at the Annual Conference. He operates a large commercial unit in South Canterbury. Beekeeping seems to be in the Cloake family as Harry's late father was highly regarded as a honey producer and queen breeder and his son Mervyn is now with him in the business.

Mr. Percy Berry, New Zealand's largest beekeeper, needs no introduction. His apiaries cover a wide area in eastern and central North Island. Arataki Apiaries operate in all phases of honey production and marketing.

Mr. Jack Glynn, originally a West Coaster, is now a well established beekeeper in Balfour, Southland. He is a regular attendee at Conference and has served prominently in the Gore Branch.

Mr. George Winslade keeps bees in North Otago and is President of the North Otago Branch. To George and his Committee much credit is due for the outstanding success of the Oamaru Conference.

### Executive Meeting

A meeting of the new Executive was held immediately after the Oamaru Conference and arrangements were made for the President and Secretary, in company with the Chairman and Manager of the Honey Marketing Authority, to present a prepared statement on current problems to the Minister of Agriculture, the Hon. B. E. Talboys, in Wellington.

The interview took place on Monday, July 29. Further negotiations were planned before any decisive action was to be taken.

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## Obituary

### MR L. F. ROBINS

A worthy record of achievement in honey production and beekeeping administration was brought to a close with the death of Mr L. F. Robins of South Canterbury. Mr Robins began beekeeping in North Otago, subsequently moving to Canterbury where he operated extensively first at Temuka and in later years at Pleasant Point.

During the years of N.Z. Honey Ltd., Mr Robins was a director of the company and after it was bought by the Government he was appointed to the re-constituted board as a producers' representative. The board continued to operate thereafter in an advisory capacity to the Minister of Marketing.

Mr Robins also gave his support to the National Beekeepers' Association at a time when it was becoming more firmly established, and he was Dominion President for three years from 1937 to 1940. During this period the seal levy was introduced by Government regulation at the request of producers, and 'The N.Z. Beekeeper' was inaugurated, the first issue appearing in January, 1939. About this time Mr Robins undertook a comprehensive South Island tour which was instrumental in promoting a new spirit of co-operation among beekeepers.

In recent years Mr Robins took a less active part in national affairs but his experience and advice were always available and he served for a time as secretary of the South Canterbury Branch. His service to the industry was recognised in 1952 by his election as a Life Member of the Association, a fitting tribute to his capable and conscientious work over a difficult period.

A son of Mr Robins, Mr Dick Robins, is a commercial beekeeper at Tai Tapu and is a past-president of the Canterbury Branch.

### MR F. D. HOLT

One of New Zealand's most prominent beekeepers until his retirement a few years ago, Mr F. D. Holt died recently. Mr Holt kept bees

commercially at Te Kauwhata and was at various times President of the South Auckland Branch, a member of the Dominion Executive, and a member of the Honey Marketing Committee prior to the establishment of the Marketing Authority. Mr Holt's son, Lloyd, is a well known beekeeper at Rotorua and has also taken a prominent part in beekeeping administration.

We are pleased to publish the following tribute to Mr Frank Holt, written by Mr Wallace Nelson, a former Chairman of the Honey Marketing Authority:—

#### To the Editor

Sir,

Please allow me space to pay a tribute to the memory of my good friend and comrade Frank Holt, who passed away on June 24, 1963.

Frank was a man of outstanding good qualities, and I was extremely proud of my close friendship with him over the 25 years period we knew each other.

It was not in Frank's nature to hold forth at meetings with polished orations, but when he did feel impelled to speak, his calm capacity for logical reasoning was always impressive and he frequently found himself in a position of leadership that was not of his seeking. Frank was never vacillating when an issue arose that affected the welfare of those he was elected to represent. He could always be relied upon to take up a firm stand and to tenaciously pursue the course he believed to be right. His reverence for truth and justice were his outstanding characteristics. The words of William Penn could be applied in full measure to the memory of Frank Holt:—

'I expect to pass through this life but once. Any good work therefore I can do, or show to my fellow men, let me do it now. Let me not defer nor neglect it for I shall not pass this way again.'

My personal loss of a good friend and comrade are well portrayed in the following verse:—

They told me, friend beloved, they  
told me you were dead,  
They brought me bitter news to hear,  
and bitter tears to shed.  
I wept as I remembered how often  
you and I

N. Z. BEEKEEPER

Had tired the sun with talking and  
 sent him down the sky,  
 And now that thou are lying, O friend  
 beloved best,  
 A handful of grey ashes, for ever-  
 more at rest,  
 Still are thy words of wisdom, thy  
 loyalty awake,  
 For death, he taketh all away, but  
 them he cannot take.

—Wallace Nelson.

#### MISS M. A. SHEPHERD

The death of Miss M. A. Shepherd of Rangiora on May 5, 1963, removed a unique personality from beekeeping circles. Miss Shepherd enjoyed a long and notable career in commercial



honey production. She first took up apiculture in 1905 and was exporting honey on her own account before the days of export controls. She was also engaged in queen breeding and imported queens from abroad to improve her stock. With apiaries established in both West Coast rata and Canterbury clover areas she had tremendous courage and determination and showed great faith in the honey industry. She also took a lively interest in current affairs and her quiet and dignified contributions at beekeepers' meeting always commanded the greatest respect.

Some years ago Miss Shepherd was joined in partnership by Mr C. Hill and the business became one of the Dominion's well known beekeeping units.

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During the last few years Miss Shepherd had retired from beekeeping work but she retained her keen interest in the industry until she entered hospital in August, 1962. Her kind and intrepid nature will be long remembered.

#### MR D. ROBERTS

We record with regret the recent death at Auckland of Mr D. Roberts, Department of Agriculture Honey Grader. Previously Mr Roberts had served as Apiary Instructor in the Auckland district and after being Acting Honey Grader for two years he was promoted to the specialist position in January, 1962.

Always regarding his work as a vocation, Mr Roberts was conscientious in his duties and he soon gained the confidence of producers in all parts of the country. Through his work and his advice on honey handling he made an important contribution to the welfare of the industry and his death after a short illness came as a sad shock to New Zealand beekeepers.

#### U.K. HONEY MARKET

In addition to the darker honeys, stocks of New Zealand light amber grades have now been cleared, and no further supplies are expected until next season, advises the London office of the Bank of New Zealand in its monthly review, dated July 18, 1963.

White clover is selling steadily at the firm price of 180/- with extra light amber at 160/- to 170/-. Australian light amber quotations range from 144/- to 150/-, but there is little demand.

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#### THE AUSTRALASIAN BEEKEEPER

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# ANNUAL REPORT, 1963

GENTLEMEN,

This year and this Conference will live in the memory of all thinking people for many years to come. For this year has been one of great promise for the Industry. In extreme contrast at this very time the Industry faces perhaps the greatest challenges in its history to date. A fight for its very survival in the face of significant natural enemies, Agricultural Chemicals, and the demands of greater technical ability in production and marketing.

None of these challenges is entirely new, but events over recent weeks make it abundantly clear that the time for complacency is long since past. The fundamental requirements of this industry in a strong producers' organisation and properly adequate, research, advisory and regulatory services can no longer afford to wait.

This Conference and this year will go down in history as the time in which opportunity was either seized or lost. As a time in which the responsible people in this Industry and the nation's Government either demonstrated the moral courage which this day and hour calls for, or misled the Industry with further idle lip-service.

## PRODUCTION

The past year has been notable for slightly better-than-average overall honey production, some areas experienced record crops. Other areas have recorded poor crops and some complete failures. These fluctuations only accentuate the essentially hazardous nature of beekeeping in this country. It is an occupation where returns are dictated as much by the vagaries of seasonal climatic conditions as by the skill and effort of the beekeeper and the industry of the bee. These uncontrollable factors we must accept.

There remain however many other factors which limit production and are not uncontrollable, given the resolve and the facilities to deal with them.

**Bacillus Larvae** disease remains a blot on our Industry despite the serious efforts of the Industry's administrators to eradicate it. You will recall that as a result of joint meetings between our Executive and the Department of Agriculture two years ago plans were laid for a major assault on this pestilence by beekeepers and the Apiary Section of the Department of Agriculture. The programme was to have been a re-inforcement and extension of existing procedures and regulations but required more intensive checking of apiaries by the Department and greater regulatory powers, as well as a higher sense of responsibility and effort on the part of producers. I believe that responsible producers have largely played their part but the effort has been wasted because the Department has failed to provide the extra physical policing required for the irresponsible owner of hives and the required legislative powers for dealing with him.

**Agricultural Chemicals** are another controllable factor which have had serious effects on our Industry and today more than ever threaten our very existence despite an Agricultural Chemicals Board charged with the specific job of regulating the use of weedicides, pesticides and hormone preparations. This is a matter in which our Industry is forced to rely on Government agencies. Our role unfortunately must be limited to advice in the light of practical experience. Our experience is that fantastic dangers exist which are known to the Board but that the Board often lacks the physical resources to deal with them in a positive manner.

**Production Skills and Technical Knowledge:** We live in an age of ever increasing competition and specialisation. Because New Zealand honey has for years commanded premium prices on world markets in recognition of its intrinsic purity and quality coupled with a Government grading system, some producers have tended to become self-satisfied and easy-going. The responsible producer has not been so affected but has consistently sought after better

methods and skilled techniques. Within the extremely limited confines of its resources the Executive of this Association is endeavouring partially to fill this need by the organisation of a series of district seminars in practical beekeeping subjects and management techniques. We are hopeful that this project will come to fruition within the next year and that thereafter it may become a regular part of our annual programme. The fulfilment of these objectives is again however dependant to quite a large degree on the practical participation of the Department and the availability of specialist officers to instruct and guide. There is little cause for enthusiasm at the prospects of such aid at present with the Section already overloaded.

## MARKETING

It is one thing to produce a commodity and another to sell it and yet another to sell it well. Inevitably the Industry's prosperity and future revolves around efficient marketing as much as efficient production. The two go hand in hand.

One of the most amazing occurrences in recent months has been a re-emergence of price-cutting by certain packers of top quality honeys as a result of good crops. This type of thinking is something we will never understand because all it achieves ultimately is more money for the trade which sells the product. It helps the producer not one whit! In this we could not do better than emulate our provider, the bee, who in times of plenty stores something for a rainy day. Suppliers to this type of packer would do well to reconsider their avenue of disposal.

Bearing in mind the various outlets for our produce and the fact that in normal seasons our production exceeds the requirements of the local market the marketing side of our Industry has been relatively stable over the past year. Without the slightest shadow of doubt this result has been achieved largely through the influence of the Industry's marketing body which is not only charged with the task of selling honey supplied to it at the best possible prices, but equally important the task of regulating the local market. The position on the local market was undoubtedly aided last year by the below average crop in the 1961-62 season plus strong demand for certain classes of honey on overseas markets, but even so the Industry should acknowledge the part played by the Honey Marketing Authority in the face of many lesser difficulties.

It is obvious that without a system of compulsory supply or severely restricted local sales-outlets for producers the Authority can only perform its proper function of regulating the local market by a system of economic incentives. This policy has been followed during the past year and on the basis of overseas returns has been justified. With it however has come a downward adjustment in the returns for producers of less favoured honeys and this in turn has caused embarrassment in a significant section of the Industry.

In the course of the recent meeting called by Government to assess the value and development potential of the industry it was acknowledged that production as at present established must at least be maintained in the interests of producers and the nation. If this is so (and it will be, irrespective of the Assessment Meetings' findings) then the traditional packers of the more favoured honeys can only expect increasing price competition from their less favoured counterparts who are suddenly forced to abandon the overseas market for the local one if the Authority's payout policy is maintained. Few, if any, would dispute that the Authority is morally bound to pursue and extend its present policy yet successive Conferences of this Association have consistently failed to recognise the "regulatory" part of the Authority's proper functions and similarly failed to provide it with the financial where-withall to ensure this service for the betterment of the Industry as a whole.

Relations between the Authority and the Association Executive have continued to be most cordial during the year. In a small Industry such as ours close liaison between the two executive bodies is essential and has proved its worth on a number of matters of mutual concern where the combined endeavours of

both bodies has strengthened the Industry's approaches to Government agencies and others.

Members should bear this factor in mind when considering the candidates for this year's H.M.A. Elections.

One matter which causes considerable concern in the field of marketing is the Department's apparent difficulty in maintaining the traditional honey-grading services which are so valuable to us. The retention of this service must be secured at all costs.

### **NATIONAL DIPLOMA IN APICULTURE (N.D.Ap.)**

Steps to establish this Diploma have progressed further during the year by the invitation of applications for honorary awards from those senior citizens in the Industry who might have qualified had the examination course been established in their younger days. This is quite a common practice where a degree or diploma is first established, even in professional fields of endeavour. In order to establish the Diploma as a prestige symbol and acknowledgment of high attainment the Association Executive has collaborated with the Examining Board of the Royal New Zealand Institute of Horticulture in establishing certain standards for the selection of those persons for the honorary award who are worthy of the distinction. Branches of the Association have been circularised in this regard and publicity has also been given to the matter through the Association Journal, "The New Zealand Beekeeper". The issue of Honorary Diplomas will give due recognition to many distinguished beekeepers throughout the country, which in itself is well worthwhile, but we should not forget the basic ideal behind the establishment of the Diploma is the improvement of the craft of beekeeping in this country by setting a high standard of technical attainment and understanding through a course of study and examinations on the part of our younger generation of beekeepers to whom we must look for the industry's long-term future.

Quite obviously the Institute of Horticulture must look to the Apiary Section of the Department of Agriculture for much of the writing of textbooks, training and so on for students in the course and it is a cause for concern that the Apiary Section does not even possess the capability to deal with current problem work much less this matter at the present time.

### **THE ASSOCIATION**

In many respects this period has been a "survival" year for the Association. Our year opened in the sure knowledge that our internal financial position was weak in the extreme and we were forced to rely on the steps taken by last Conference to improve our position. These steps involved the seeking of an increased grant from the Seals Fund which course had previously been rejected by both Government and the Honey Marketing Authority. Conference's application for further finance from this source was again rejected on this occasion.

Alternative methods of improving our financial position through an Apiary Registration Fee or by an increase in Association membership subscriptions were again carefully studied, the former proving impractical and the latter considered likely to be ineffectual.

New urgent and important work was nevertheless required at Executive level and was attended to with the aid of additional funds sought by way of special donations from branches and individuals. These were appreciated, as, at the time, it appeared unlikely that the Executive could attend to the problems of the day without limiting some other essential feature of the Association's work such as the production of our quarterly Journal, "The New Zealand Beekeeper." As it happens we have closed our financial year with a credit balance but this is only a fictional figure as many costs relating to the year's working have not come to charge until after our balance-date. Two Executive meetings were held to coincide with other special meetings arranged with Government committees and these were conducted principally at night to a late hour after the day's business had been attended to. Another has since been held to coincide with a special meeting held last month in Wellington.

The Journal has been maintained to its usually high standard despite a change in the Editor's private circumstances which has limited his ability to continue. The Association owes a considerable debt to Mr. John McFadzien for his tireless devotion to the production of this valuable organ over many years and the loss of his services will indeed be felt when he relinquishes his duties towards the end of the current financial year.

Branches have continued to function quite well throughout the year and some of the larger ones have fulfilled very worthwhile programmes which have included new and useful project activity. Others, principally the smaller ones, still appear to be struggling to maintain member-interest and full programmes. As always the organisation owes its existence to the small handful of dedicated branch officers who by their tireless interest and personal sacrifice hold the Association together. To them the Executive extends its ready appreciation.

One of the brighter spots in our internal picture this year has been the launching of the National Bursary Scheme following the assiduous efforts of Vice-President Trevor Wheeler aided by a sub-committee of the South Auckland Branch. It is with pride and pleasure that I can announce that the award of a first bursary is now a feasible project thanks to the generous support of the following commercial organisations which have pledged the finance necessary under a joint sponsorship:—

Kimpton Bros. (Red Carnation) Ltd., England.  
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A. Ecroyd & Son  
Frank M. Winstone (Merchants) Ltd.  
Plastic Products Ltd.  
Alliance Bee Supplies Co.  
Alcx Harvey & Sons Ltd.

It is hoped to make an award within the next three years (and thereafter at three-yearly intervals, finance permitting) to some outstanding young beekeeper to enable a brief study tour of 3-4 months duration in another significant honey-producing country, thus adding to our appreciation of changing patterns and new techniques in the honey world.

The success to date of this project has been one of the most stimulating and encouraging happenings in the industry for many years and all concerned in the project deserve your warmest commendation.

Another new project which is extremely gratifying is the formation of a National Beekeepers Library which will shortly come into being through the efforts of a few dedicated people in the South Canterbury Branch, principally Mr. Chris Dawson. It is intended to gather all available beekeeping literature at the library and to make the same available to Association members at a small rental. Although the project will be under the policy control of the Executive, the project is intended to be self-supporting. The services of the Librarian have been offered initially as a gratuitous gesture by Mr. Dawson.

To all those people who have freely given of their time and services to the industry over this past year I extend sincere thanks on your behalf and in particular to members of the Dominion Executive: A special word of appreciation is also due to Mr. T. E. Pearson, our Representative on the Agricultural Chemicals Board. The importance of his role and the value of his services can not be too strongly emphasised.

Over recent years we have been strongly critical of the Apiary Section of the Department, its administrative ineptitude and inability to deal positively with its assigned functions. In this we have recognised the unfairness to field staff and specialist officers who have been expected to complete impossible programmes both in variety and work volume. Bearing in mind the difficulties under which they have had to work we can only express our admiration and appreciation of their services. To the Director of Horticulture and his assistants we likewise acknowledge our gratitude. His task appears to have been somewhat like that of a captain of an aircraft carrier left with the crew of a mere frigate in the middle of the ocean. To even keep the ship afloat has been an achievement even if it has been impossible to do much sailing.

## INDUSTRY ASSESSMENT

You will all be aware that over the past few months a series of special meetings have been held between industry representatives (both Honey Marketing Authority and National Beekeepers' Association) and specialist Government agencies with the purpose of (1) establishing the Industry's real importance to the country and its proper role in the future; (2) the factors retarding its proper functioning; and (3) devising ways and means to ensure its future stability and efficiency. These meetings were considered by us to be essential for a proper re-orientation of thinking by Government and ourselves and we must express our thanks to the Honourable Minister of Agriculture for his sympathetic consideration in making the Assessment possible.

Time and protocol do not permit me fully to review these meetings now. I can say however that a number of highly significant factors have emerged which will have a great bearing on the Industry's future. We will be seeking the earliest opportunity of discussing these findings with the Minister and producers will be fully acquainted with the position thereafter.

## CONCLUSION

It is easy to criticise governments but easier still to forget our own inherent weaknesses and short-comings.

This Industry has never faced more critical issues than it does today and in many of them this organisation, and the producers it represents, must be prepared to take a share of heavy responsibility. If ever a strong and effective Association was needed it is now, but it can only be achieved by your unity, vision, courage and determination to suppress petty self-interest.

This day and hour calls for realism rather than emotionalism. For positive action rather than idle promises.

Greatness will be judged not by the man but by his deeds.

J. R. BARBER, Dominion President.

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# ANNUAL CONFERENCE

The Annual Dominion Conference was held in Oamaru on July 24, 25 and 26. The President, Mr. J. R. Barber, was in the chair and there was a large and representative attendance of over 100 members.

Proceedings commenced with delegates and visitors standing while the President read the Conference Prayer.

The Mayor of Oamaru, Mr. W. R. Laney, extended a welcome to delegates and the Conference was officially opened by Mr. A. Dick, M.P. for Waitaki. Mr. Dick tendered apologies from the Minister of Agriculture (the Hon. B. E. Talboys) and the Director-General (Mr. D. N. R. Webb). Referring to the recent industry assessment, Mr. Dick quoted the increase in hive numbers, the value of pollination in the production of fruit and seed crops, and the development of comb honey exports as showing the strength of the Industry. In research New Zealand was behind Britain and the U.S.A. but our technical and advisory services are ahead of those in most other countries. In opening the Conference, Mr. Dick wished delegates a pleasant and profitable meeting.

## Department of Agriculture

The Director of the Horticulture Division, Mr. A. M. W. Greig, addressed the Conference reviewing current production problems and other matters receiving the attention of the apiary staff.

## Honey Marketing Authority

An address covering the marketing situation during the past year was given by Mr. G. E. Gumbrell, Chairman of the Honey Marketing Authority. Mr. Gumbrell was asked a number of questions and a brief discussion ensued.

## Annual Report

The Annual Report and Financial Statement were read, the latter showing a credit balance of £556. After some discussion these were adopted.

## Library

Mr. H. Cloake reported on behalf of the Library Committee consisting of Mr. L. G. Lyttle, Mr. Chris Dawson, and himself as convener. A very good

response had been received from beekeepers and the Library was away to an excellent start. He commended the efforts of Mr. Dawson who had done the spade work as Honorary Librarian.

On the motion of Mr. T. F. Penrose, seconded by Mr. W. J. C. Ashcroft, it was decided to place on record an expression of appreciation to Mr. W. J. Lennon for his initial donation of books.

Mr. Dawson outlined the procedure to be followed in operating the Library, and as an indication of the interest being shown he read a list of 35 beekeepers who had already joined the Library as Foundation Life Members.

## Agricultural Chemicals Board

Mr. T. E. Pearson, N.B.A. representative on the Board, reviewed the matters pertaining to beekeeping which had been dealt with by the Board during the year. In thanking the speaker, members expressed appreciation of Mr. Pearson's service to beekeepers in this very important work.

## REMITTS

(Note: The remit numbers correspond with those appearing on the order paper. In some cases the original wording was altered slightly by the unanimous agreement of Conference).

### Procedural

(1) "That all remits whether sponsored or not by a Delegate at Conference be considered." (Mrs. I. M. Cropp/V. Rawson).

The remit was carried, 44 to 22.

(2) "That nominations for the office of President, Vice-President and Executive members be in the hands of the General Secretary one month prior to the date of the Annual Meeting and the names of the candidates be placed on the agenda." (H. Cloake/H. Knibb).

Mr. T. F. Penrose: Does this exclude nominations from the floor of the meeting? If not there is no merit in the remit as the opportunity for prior nominations is already provided. It is important that Conference should have the right to make nominations after hearing delegates.

The General Secretary said that

nominations received prior to Conference would appear on the order paper if members so desired.

The remit was amended to read "That nominations under Rule 22 be circulated to Branches with the remits" (G. E. Gumbrell/T. F. Penrose), and was carried.

### Agricultural Chemicals

(3) "That the Beekeeping Industry is by no means satisfied that sufficient investigation has been made into the repercussions of pesticides, poisonous sprays and hormones and their direct and indirect effects on nectar secretion and the Beekeeping Industry in general. We therefore urge that steps be taken to further investigations." (H. Knibb/Hunt).

Mr. J. W. Fraser: We must be fair to the Department. Pollination work and other lines of research have been urged on the Department for years.

Mr. A. M. W. Greig: There are two problems—the shortage of staff to deal with all the problems raised, and the question of priorities when they cannot all be tackled. It would be helpful if the degree of priority could be indicated when different lines of research are requested.

Mr. T. Palmer-Jones outlined some of the difficulties and limitations in certain lines of research and emphasised the importance of the pollination research which has been done so far.

After Mr. G. E. Gumbrell had assured the Conference that there was no implied criticism of the present work being done, the remit was carried.

(4) Withdrawn.

(5) "That the Department of Agriculture be requested to conduct a campaign to give all farmers a reminder of the lasting harmful effects of hormone sprays on clover and other nectar sources." (H. N. Tuck/G. E. Gumbrell). Carried.

(6) "That the Editor, Journal of Agriculture, be approached to publish with emphasis the fact that certain insecticides are deadly to bees and that the publication of such details coincide with the months of the year when the danger is greatest from spraying activities. Further that tins holding insecticide carry the statement in bold capitals that the chemical is injurious to bees and that the user should refrain from applying it during the flowering

period of the crop." (D. L. Ward/P. Berry).

Mr. T. E. Pearson said that the position was covered by the Apiaries Protection Regulations but the human error may always be present. Licensed operators are trained and understand the dangers. The legislation depends on commonsense and the co-operation of beekeepers.

The remit was carried.

(7) "That seed crops which are to be sprayed be inspected by the Department of Agriculture before a permit is issued to avoid the spraying of crops already in flower." (D. L. Ward/J. K. Bray).

Mr. S. G. Bubb referred to a case where full precautions had not been taken, the application of spray had been delayed, and damage to bees had resulted.

Mr. I. W. Forster: It is important that the permit is applied for in writing. The machinery then goes into action and proper precautions are observed.

Mr. E. Smaellie explained that sprays must be applied within 144 hours of the permit being issued; otherwise a new permit is required.

Remit carried.

(8) "That regulations regarding spraying of fruit blossom be enforced." (V. Rawson/G. Gordon).

Mr. Gordon commended the joint-committee system which had worked well in Hawkes Bay, especially in educating the growers.

Mrs. I. M. Cropp quoted losses in Nelson. Approaches to the Department had been ineffective and the orchardists seemed to be all at sixes and sevens. Therefore the Branch had brought the remit to Conference.

Remit carried.

(9) "That this Conference strongly urges the appropriate authorities to prohibit the use of 1080 poison in jam-baits used for the destruction of noxious animals." (T. E. Pearson/G. Gordon).

Mr. Pearson said there were no records of damage from jam-baits but to avoid any potential danger they should be banned.

In explaining the position, Mr. Palmer-Jones said that 1080 was highly toxic to bees but there was little likelihood of it contaminating honey.

Members expressed concern at recent publicity on the danger of 1080 occurring in honey and the need to correct the unfair inference that had been made.



Mr. T. S. Wheeler: If we can show that 1080 cannot be stored in the hive that is our rebuttal.

Mr. Palmer-Jones: We are working on that.

Remit carried.

#### Advisory and Regulatory

(10) "That this Conference of beekeepers express their appreciation of the services of part-time Apiary Inspectors and convey their desire to the Department of Agriculture for the work to be continued as previously." (R. W. Blair/J. D. Lorimer).

Carried.

(11) "That Apiary Instructors make certain that part-time Inspectors have carried out inspection of hives they agreed to do within the time stipulated by the Apiary Instructor." (C. Bird/H. N. Tuck).

Carried.

(12) "That Conference views with concern the recent loss of trained and qualified Apiary Section staff, and urges the Department to undertake a planned recruitment and training scheme." (J. W. Fraser/G. L. Jeffery).

Salaries in the Apiaries Section had lost parity with other sections, said Mr. Fraser. They should be raised above other sections in view of the importance of the Industry and the load of detail and scientific work involved. With the development of larger beekeeping units the traditional means of recruitment from beekeepers was not satisfactory and the time had come to obtain recruits at School Certificate level and offer them a worthwhile career.

Mr. Jeffery produced figures to show how the salaries of Apiary Instructors had drifted behind those of other sections. The present scale would never attract well qualified men.

It was stated that a degree in Agricultural Science was now recognised in the Apiary Section and this should raise its status. The General Division was the forgotten legion in the Department and the Apiary Section had become a depressed class within that Division. The need to raise the status of the Apiary Section should be placed before the State Services Commission.

The remit was carried.

(13) "That the N.B.A. urges Government and the State Services Commission to raise the starting

salaries and improve prospects of Apiary Instructors to encourage recruitment to the Department." (G. L. Jeffery/J. W. Fraser).

Carried.

(14) "That the Department of Agriculture implement the plan already recommended by a joint meeting of Departmental Officers and the N.B.A. Executive regarding the elimination of Bacillus Larvae in New Zealand." (P. Berry/G. Gordon).

Mr. Berry quoted cases where disease had been rampant and had been virtually eradicated by vigorous action. Treatment of sound gear with paraffin wax at 350 degrees was the solution, and boiling up the combs gave enough wax to cover the costs. "What we need," he said, "is a three-year blitz, not a lot of money. Eradication depends on men who will get stuck into their work and keep at it." (Hear, Hear).

Mr. Cloake referred to the danger from wild colonies, especially in the south where the wax moth was not active in destroying the abandoned combs. Treatment of infected supers by scorching was not satisfactory.

Stacking out wet supers to be cleaned up was a means of spreading the disease, said Mr. C. Bird, and should be prohibited altogether.

Remit carried.

(15) "That this Conference requests Government to re-imburse beekeepers with hives infected with Bacillus Larvae with compensation based on the value of the hive." (R. W. Blair/McKenzie).

Mr. D. F. Penrose: Unless we get complete devaluation we will never get complete eradication. I strongly oppose any value being placed on diseased hives.

Mr. W. J. C. Ashcroft: What is the value of a diseased hive? It is a negative quantity.

Remit lost.

(16) "That this Conference ask the Department of Agriculture to allow commercial beekeepers to use closed or prohibited areas for spring feeding between the months of June and November inclusive under seasonal permit." (D. Barrow/P. Berry).

In the course of a long debate the necessity of taking stringent precautions was accepted but it was claimed that with a strict permit system any possible

danger would be avoided and the scheme would give great assistance to adjacent commercial areas where spring build-up was a real problem.

Carried, 31 to 21.

(17) "That the Department investigate the possibility and economics of converting the darker honeys for wax production." (G. L. Jeffery/D. G. Hamilton).

Speakers suggested that trials could be carried out by beekeepers themselves, leaving the Department to do more urgent work.

Remit lost.

(18) "That in view of work being done in the development of non-nectar-secreting clover varieties an immediate approach be made to Government to safeguard beekeeping interests." (J. W. Fraser/C. Bird).

Carried.

(19) "That in view of the new technique for importing Acarine-free bees into America by transportation of immature stages the position regarding the importation of bees into New Zealand be re-considered by the Department of Agriculture." (H. Cloake/G. E. Gumbrell).

Carried.

### Marketing

(20) "That the H.M.A. consider establishing a honey receiving depot in Oamaru." (G. L. Jeffery/D. G. Hamilton).

Carried.

(21) "That the H.M.A. be urged to use 44-gallon drums for bulk honey transportation in the same way as is done in Australia and the U.S.A., as the cost of the drums and the handling is known to be cheaper than tins and cases." (R. W. Blair/McKenzie).

Mr. Gumbrell said that the Authority was already trying drums and the costs were about the same as tins and cases. The drums were cheaper to handle but special equipment was needed and the system would not suit all producers.

Remit lost.

(22) "That owing to the difficulty of beekeepers buying small runs of containers, the H.M.A. purchase metal containers of all sizes for beekeepers to be supplied through H.M.A. depots throughout the country." (R. W. Blair/G. E. Gumbrell).

Some doubts were expressed as to the wisdom of the Authority entering

this field as a trading organisation.

The remit was lost.

(23) "That this Conference recommends the H.M.A. to intensify its efforts to market the Honeygold pack in England." (D. L. Barrow/P. Berry).

Trial shipments of packed honey had proved disappointing, said Mr. Gumbrell. Cartons were unpopular in Britain, the supply was spasmodic, and the amount of honey available would not justify extensive advertising.

Remit lost, 19 to 33.

(24) "That in view of the realisations received for honey packed into retail containers and sold overseas by the H.M.A. that this avenue for the disposal of dark honey be vigorously pursued." (L. Holt/D. L. Lorimer).

Mr. Lorimer pointed out that this remit envisaged the selling of dark packs in any overseas countries, wherever a market might be found.

Carried.

(25) "That flavour testing of honey for grading purposes be considered essential." (H. N. Tuck/L. Holt).

Carried.

(26) "That a plan be evolved to give some degree of preference to regular and continuing suppliers of the H.M.A." (H. N. Tuck/L. Holt).

Remit lost.

(27) "That the supply of honey to the H.M.A. be adjusted, as the basis of voting strength, and that alteration be made to the present system to give suppliers to the H.M.A. the ability to gain representation." (H. N. Tuck/L. Holt).

It was pointed out by some speakers that suppliers were at present well represented on the Authority.

Remit lost.

(28) "That any review of the H.M.A. Regulations and the Primary Products Marketing Act should take into account: (1) The granting of a limited discretionary power of expenditure to the H.M.A.; (2) The raising of the maximum vote of 20 to a figure more in keeping with the trend to larger hive holdings." (J. W. Fraser/G. E. Gumbrell).

Referring to the first part of the remit, Mr. Fraser said that only small amounts were envisaged, perhaps £10 or £15 per year. The expenditure would be subject to audit and to questioning at Conference.

Carried.

(29) "That it be a recommendation to the Executive that they put up a candidate for the forthcoming H.M.A. Election and that they obtain his assurance that if a successful candidate he will not resign from the Executive." (K. Herron/W. Ogilvy).

Lost.

(30) "That this Conference recognise the immediate need of the N.B.A. for finance and requests that the annual grant from the H.M.A. be increased to £2000." (T. E. Pearson/D. F. Penrose).

Mr. Pearson said that the Association should be on a firm and permanent basis, with funds to give adequate payments for the secretarial services, Journal, sufficient Executive meetings, and some research and education.

Oposing the remit, Mr. R. Davidson said that the Association should not depend upon the seal levy, which seemed to be a dwindling quantity. He suggested that if some beekeepers were not members it was because they felt that the work of the Association was not required.

Also opposing the remit, Mr. D. L. Barrow pointed out that the grant could amount to £2 per ton of honey supplied to the Authority.

Mr. L. Holt: We must have the N.B.A. and we cannot afford to lose an efficient secretary. The seal levy exists through the efforts of the N.B.A. and should be used for the benefit of the industry.

The remit was carried, 45 to 26.

(31) "That Conference is in favour of de-control of honey prices." (J. W. Fraser/G. E. Gumbrell).

Replying to suggestions that the H.M.A. should control prices, Mr. Fraser said that the Authority can do little to prevent price cutting but its objective is to create conditions where there is no inducement to cut prices, or to sell to packers who cut prices.

Remit carried.

(32) "That the Executive bring to bear all pressure available to have honey released from Price Tribunal control and that the establishment of prices for retail packs be the function of the H.M.A." (L. Holt/P. Berry).

Remit carried.

(33) "That in the event of price control being retained, the Executive press for an increase in bulk honey prices." (J. W. Fraser/L. Holt).

Carried.

AUGUST 1963



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## N.Z. HONEY MARKETING AUTHORITY ELECTION

As a candidate for the above election I would like to offer some details about myself. Age 32 years. Married with four children. Born and educated in Dunedin. Studied accountancy for six years at Otago University during which time I was employed as a clerk with The National Insurance Co. Ltd. I then moved to Balclutha and commenced beekeeping as a hobby, being employed for two years as accountant to John H. Stevenson Ltd., and

four years as accountant for The South Otago Freezing Company. I resigned from this position and bought the beekeeping business of Mr. Jim Horn at Kyeburn, Central Otago, and formed my present company, Millstream Apiaries Ltd., with my wife and myself as shareholders. I purchased some 290 hives from Mr. Horn and now after three seasons have over 600 hives.

My main reason in standing in this election is that I would like to see the H.M.A. institute a scheme similar to the one operated by the meat freezing industry, whereby a farmer can have his lambs marketed for him by his freezing company 'On Own Account.' This means that the farmer receives the actual price his lambs sell for in London, less the freezing company's normal charges incurred in processing and selling the lambs.. A similar scheme in the Honey Industry would mean that the beekeeper could supply his honey to the H.M.A. and direct that it be sold 'On Own Account' and he would receive the full sale price less freight, commission, etc. Naturally, honey supplied in this way would not participate in any payout made from Seals Levy or other pool funds belonging to the H.M.A., but it would mean that a producer who felt that his grade of honey was being sold at a better price than H.M.A. pro rata payouts could take the risk of market fluctuations and try for that better price.

I suggested this scheme to the present H.M.A. but it was rejected by them, mainly, I feel, because they misunderstood how parts of the scheme would work in practice. If I am elected to the Authority it will show to the other members that beekeepers are interested in such a scheme and my being present at H.M.A. meetings would mean that I could explain any points that were in doubt. I hope that this brief explanation has not been too sketchy and that if you are interested in seeing such a scheme given a trial that you will accord me your vote in the forthcoming election.

To all who are eligible to vote may I quote a phrase which I think is very apt: 'Bad officials are elected by good citizens who do not vote.' Therefore, if you are on the roll it is your privilege and duty to exercise your vote.

Yours faithfully,  
**RUSSELL F. POOLE.**

(34) "That in the event of price control being retained, in view of the increased cost of production the N.B.A. approach the Price Tribunal for an increase in the price of all honey." (K. Herron/W. Ogilvy).

Quoting recent increases in the cost of living and in the general wage level, Mr. Herron compared these with the nett returns of honey producers to show the urgent need for an upward price adjustment.

Remit carried.

(35) "That the price of honey in customers' own containers be increased to be more in line with similar retail packs." (T. E. Pearson/D. F. Penrose).  
Carried.

(36) "That a standing committee to be known as the 'Costs and Prices Committee' be considered by the Executive to constantly review costs of honey production in relation to honey prices in order that the beekeepers' standard of living may be safeguarded during times of rising costs and currency depreciation. This Committee to report annually to Conference." (T. E. Pearson/W. T. Herron).

Inflation is the greatest enemy of our time, said Mr. Herron. A standing committee would help to cope with it by keeping the situation in view and the required information up-to-date.

Remit carried, 50 to 12.

#### Miscellaneous

(37) "That this Conference endorses the establishment of the N.B.A. Library and urges beekeepers to give their interest and support to the scheme." (H. Cloake/McKenzie).

Members commended the work of the Library Committee and the Librarian.

The remit was carried.

(38) "That the N.B.A. define the position of the Diploma of Apiculture immediately for those who wish to avail themselves of it." (G. L. Jeffery/W. Irving).

In reply to criticisms of the delay in making the examination facilities available it was explained that the Royal N.Z. Institute of Horticulture was not immediately equipped to deal with apiculture and therefore some extra work was involved in organising the course and examinations.

The remit was carried.

(39) "That it be a recommendation to the Executive to have apiarists'

employees brought under the Agricultural Workers' Award." (K. Herron/D. L. Lorimer).

In the course of a full discussion it was suggested that inclusion in an award would involve classifications of work and restrictions which would unnecessarily complicate apiary and honeyhouse work. It was also suggested that any application should come from the employees, not the employers.

Remit lost.

(40) "That this Conference appoint a sub-committee to report back on methods of insurance or compensation for losses through bacillus larvae in other countries." (R. W. Blair/McKenzie).

On the suggestion of Mr. L. Holt, Mr. Blair agreed that the Auckland Branch Executive would act as the sub-committee.

The remit was carried.

#### Notices of Motion

"That it be a recommendation to hold Conference in Hastings in 1964." (G. Gordon/D. L. Ward).

Mr. Gordon extended a warm invitation to Conference on behalf of Hawkes Bay beekeepers.

The motion was carried.

"That in view of the unsatisfactory instructions received from the Department of Agriculture concerning the areas from which toxic honey might be gathered the Government's intention to give redress to beekeepers or packers adversely affected be ascertained." (J. D. Lorimer/P. Berry).

The need for a clarification of the position was stressed by speakers and it was felt that the Association should define its views and present them to the Government without delay.

The motion was carried.

"That the Director-General be informed of the importance which the Beekeeping Industry attaches to its continued representation on the Agricultural Chemicals Board." (J. W. Fraser/G. Gordon).

Carried.

"That in order to stabilise honey prices on the local market the Executive endeavour to have wholesale and retail profit margins fixed under the existing price control system." (J. K. Bray/T. F. Penrose).

Mr. Bray said the proposal was designed to remove the incentive for

traders to take part in price cutting and to provide a more stable price level.

Some doubts were cast on the practicality of the scheme but it was agreed that it should be investigated. The motion was carried.

**"That the Executive and the H.M.A. through 'The N.Z. Beekeeper' and Field Days point out the problems caused to the Industry by price cutting and strongly recommend that suppliers to packers who cut prices should seriously consider other avenues of disposal for their honey."** (D. F. Penrose/G. E. Gumbrell).

Carried.

### Election of Officers

In vacating the chair, Mr. Barber intimated that he did not seek re-election for a further term. He thanked members for the honour of being elected to serve for the past three years, and for their consideration and support during his term of office.

The following officers were elected:—

**President:** Mr. H. Cloake

**Vice-President:** Mr. T. S. Wheeler.

#### Executive:

Messrs. J. R. Barber, P. Berry (North Island), J. Glynn and G. E. Winslade (South Island).

### Life Members

Supported by the recommendation of the Dominion Executive there were two nominations for Life Membership.

Mr. D. G. Hamilton was nominated by Mr. H. S. Wilson, seconded by Mr. G. Allan. Mr. Hamilton has been a member of the N.B.A. for approximately 33 years and has served a term on the Dominion Executive. He also acted as North Otago Branch Delegate on at least seven occasions and made his presence felt by his worthy contributions. He held the office of Branch President for nine years and acted as assistant secretary on numerous occasions. He was appointed part-time Apiary Inspector in 1939 and ably fulfilled that duty for 24 years.

Mr. L. K. Griffin was nominated by Mr. G. E. Winslade, seconded by Mr. G. E. Gumbrell. Mr. Griffin was a commercial beekeeper for over 25 years during which time he was continuously a member of the N.B.A. He carried out the duties of Southland

Branch Secretary for 15 years most efficiently and was also the Branch President for five years. He served on the Dominion Executive and held the position of Dominion Vice-President. He attended many Conferences and proved himself as a most effective speaker.

Mr. Hamilton and Mr. Griffin were elected as Life Members amid acclamation. In reply they acknowledged the honour which had been bestowed upon them, recalling some of the earlier days of beekeeping in the south. Mr. Hamilton and Mr. Griffin are now living in semi-retirement in North Otago.

At the close of the Conference, Mr H. Cloake acknowledged his election as President and thanked Mr. Barber for his service to the Industry during his term of office. He recalled that in a photo of the 1938 Timaru Conference he himself stood side by side with Jim Barber as comparative newcomers to beekeeping, and he was glad to be side by side with him today.

Mr. Barber then thanked the local Branch, the retiring Executive members, members of the H.M.A., officers of the Department of Agriculture, the Press, and others who had assisted at the Conference. The Conference was then formally closed.

## Conference Jottings

There was ice on the Oamaru swimming pool and the weather fine and cool. Over 100 delegates assembled from all over New Zealand, the attendance mounting to 180 at the social evening and over 200 at the film evening, making possibly the biggest Conference on record. North Otago had made arrangements on a lavish scale and the untiring efforts of President George Winslade and Secretary Stan Wilson, supported by local Branch Members, Direct Members and Apiary Instructors, ensured the success of the gathering.

Visitors who were able to take the trip to Benmore were favoured by a pleasant day and all hands returned with notebooks full of incredible information—a dam a quarter of a mile thick and other statistics in proportion.

N. Z. BEEKEEPER

Additional attractions arranged especially for the ladies included a visit to Waitaki Boys' High School, an illustrated talk on the poultry industry round the world, and believe it or not, an inspection of a mashed potato factory. Some delegates also visited Gillies' Foundry in Oamaru, one of the largest in the country.

At the picture evening Mr Percy Berry took delegates on a tour of Mexico where the vast beekeeping outfit of Miel Carlota aroused many questions and some gasps of astonishment. Fifty thousand hives! Whew!

No sooner home from Mexico than we were off to Australia, escorted this time by Mr Kevin Ecroyd and his camera. This trip showed quite a number of brainwaves which haven't been tried yet in New Zealand.

Venue of the social evening was the "Homestead," an historic building now set aside for social functions, and at one time the home of the pioneering beekeeping partnership of Dunn and Wyllie. It was a pleasure to have Mrs. Wyllie present at this function looking very pleased to be among such a large crowd of beekeepers. Of the hospitality at this gathering it can only be said that nothing was spared. The atmosphere, the entertainment, the visit of the Mayor and Mayoress, and the sumptuous supper made a memorable evening.

On the practical side there was an adjournment of Conference while two different types of hive loaders were demonstrated in an adjacent hall. Assisted by Mr. Kevin Ecroyd, Mr. A. Ward of Hawea Flat showed his new boom loader, a quite spectacular development in loading equipment. With a 19-foot boom which moves in a complete circle it can load or unload an entire apiary from one position, with finger-tip control.

The well known loader designed by Mr D. Ward, of Dannevirke, then went through its paces in workmanlike style. The crowd almost had heart failure when John de Wit tried the machine out, forgot how to change gear (the simplest thing in the world), marched easily up the ramp, straight across the deck, and nearly dropped over the other side!

The Conference started on exactly the right note with two happy speeches by Mr. W. R. Laney, Mayor of Oamaru, and Mr. A. Dick, M.P. for Waitaki. Both showed a keen appreciation of the value of honeybees and particularly of their social system, the latter giving rise to some witty comments on civic and political administrators, which were fully appreciated by the audience.

Congratulations to Mrs. I. M. Cropp, Secretary of the Nelson Branch, for her bright and breezy contributions to the Conference. "By putting forward her arguments briefly, simply and easily she kept Nelson on the map and showed us all how it really should be done.

Mr. Percy Berry: I don't mind giving the Department a pat on the back but later on I want to give them a pat somewhere else!

Delegate (waxing eloquent on the subject of poisonous chemicals): Moral suasion may be all right but to make it work it has to be backed up by buckshot!

How do you stop a tedious speaker when the President has forgotten to sound the time bell and the Conference is gradually falling to sleep? One delegate dropped the gentle hint by ponderously rising to his feet and interrupting the speaker in a loud voice: "Mr. Chairman, I move the member be given an extension of time." (Loud laughter).

Mr. W. J. C. Ashcroft (Havelock North) paid a neat tribute to the North Otago hospitality. "Two years ago," he said, "I challenged Bay of Plenty that anything they might do we could do better. Nobody could do better than North Otago has done and they will be our guiding star when we do our best in Hastings next year." (Applause).

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## To Readers

We regret that publication of this issue is late owing to an unfortunate delay at the printing works.

(Sgd.) The Editor

# **Honey Marketing Authority**

**ADDRESS BY THE CHAIRMAN, MR. G. E. GUMBRELL,  
AT THE OAMARU CONFERENCE**

MR. PRESIDENT, LADIES AND GENTLEMEN,

In presenting this report to Conference I feel that I would first like to express the Authority's appreciation of the opportunity given to me as their Chairman to address this representative gathering of beekeepers. It has become customary to expect to deliver and to expect to hear this report but I think we should all look upon this custom as an indication of the close co-operation that exists between the N.B.A. and the H.M.A. rather than as a prerogative.

Like any other year the past 12 months have brought their challenges and their problems but we seem to have been better experienced and equipped to cope with the various emergencies that have arisen. I suppose you might well expect this to be so, in fact you could be rightly critical of us if we did not show progressive improvement in our administration; it is equally significant that no two years are ever alike and apart from dealing with day to day problems we have to contend with big variations in the quality of supply as well as the actual quantity of supply. In all our activities we strive to achieve a level of efficiency that will give the Industry that sense of pride which is so essential to the successful operation of any commercial enterprise.

It will, I know, be appreciated that we must always look upon the Industry as a whole and not upon sectional interests, in fact the Regulations state that "The principal functions of the Authority shall be to promote and organise the marketing of honey and to assist in the orderly development of the honey producing industry." We cannot submit to the demands of pressure groups neither can we look upon the Authority as a sort of "Wastemaster" to dispose of erratic and unwanted surpluses. In addition to taking what are referred to in business circles as "calculated risks", we also have to indulge in what might be almost described as a bit of "crystal gazing". Experience has shown us just how important it is to anticipate events and so be ready to meet them.

It is hard to realise that it is now 12 months since I returned from overseas but this is a fact and it was not without a certain amount of trepidation that I looked back at last year's Conference report and re-read my address that was given at Tauranga. However, I did gain a certain amount of satisfaction in the realisation that apart from one or two very minor details, my comments and estimates have proved very accurate and factual and the wisdom of that overseas visit cannot be doubted.

## **Supplies, Returns and Conditions of Supply**

The Chairman's report to the Minister is now almost history and although the report and the attached accounts was a true record at the time, the markets have absorbed honey at a greater rate than ever before and an entirely different picture pertains today from the position as at 31/8/62.

The Authority's intake of honey this year at 30/6/63 was 1,485 tons which is an increase of 160 tons on the previous year. The supplies of Light Amber honey dropped from approximately 600 tons to 355 tons while white clover supplies rose from approximately 100 tons to over 500 tons. These differences in categories of supply result in a completely different set of circumstances from those existing at this time last year and it is not possible at this date to determine accurately just how much the Industry will benefit from these more favourable supplies.

Returns from export have been satisfactory and it is pleasing to note that the large increase in white clover honey supplies has not unduly depressed the market and that the lower quantities of Light Amber honey available has resulted in a firming of values for these grades. The returns from Light Amber



honey sold on the local market are considerably in excess of nett realisations from overseas sales and the proceeds from these sales are quicker in reaching our bank account. This reflects favourably in our finances.

In accordance with the Industry's wishes we extended the category payment system last year and in doing so achieved a better measure of relationship between costs and realisations. There is nothing to guarantee that the categories and differentials will be the same in each trading year but I am quite definite when I state that the system has proved its worth and will be continued for as long as may be deemed expedient. No difficulties have been experienced with the new Kamahi pro-rata system and everyone appears satisfied.

### **Plant**

The plant is now operating at a level of efficiency never before achieved. This does not necessarily mean that there is no room for improvement but the main difficulties have been overcome and further modifications and improvements have been agreed to. The whole of the activities in our processing and packing departments are under the control of one man who not only supervises all these activities but is also responsible for the servicing and maintenance of all plant and equipment, a very vital factor in ensuring efficient operation.

### **Markets**

Despite a high intake last year we were literally out of stock for export at the beginning of the season. The hard winter in Europe did not commence until December, so it would appear that the activities of our London agents—helped perhaps by my visit last year—were responsible for this happy position. Since the beginning of the year there has been a good movement of all grades of honey and at no time have our physical resources been taxed like they were last year. This year saw two trial shipments of honey in 44-gallon drums and over 13,000 cartons for single export tins have gone into use in the South Island. At the time of writing this report we have no actual knowledge as to what reception these shipments received but there is every reason to believe that the new packs for bulk export honey have come to stay.

The Comb Honey exporters unanimously decided that they did not wish the Authority to step in and appoint a sole agent to handle their sales in Europe. While the Authority is happy to maintain the "status quo" in regard to this trade, the recommendations re grading still apply and the usual permits are necessary. I repeat that there is a big potential in this trade but I must also repeat the warning I have often made regarding flavours, presentation and suitability of honey. This trade could suffer a severe setback if any unsuitable honey was shipped.

The past year has seen a big increase in the local sales of the Authority's packs, Honey Gold being mainly responsible for this. Considerable publicity has been given to this grade of honey in the new plastic pack which has been an unqualified success: we have also marketed a liquid honey pack. No honey above an Imperial Bee standard has been packed for the local market.

### **The Seals Levy**

At long last the new regulations are in force, and evasion of the levy should now not constitute any appreciable loss of revenue. Admittedly there was some falling off in revenue at the end of the last financial year but to make comparison on any one date is not necessarily a true indication of the actual position regarding seals revenue.

### **Advertising**

This year the Authority entered into its first comprehensive and fully planned advertising campaign. A total of £5000 has been appropriated, £3000 of which is being spent on advertising honey in general. We are also assisting Branches of the N.B.A. to sponsor trade exhibits at shows and exhibitions.

## **Gift Parcel Scheme**

This continues to grow and last year reached the impressive total of 2044 parcels. Apart from fulfilling a useful purpose this must also be a valuable advertising medium for New Zealand honey overseas.

## **Joint Committee of Statutory Boards**

The cessation of European Common market activities has lessened the number of times the Joint Committee has met but nevertheless the Committee is serving a useful purpose and its mere existence is an asset to our Industry.

## **Export Development Conference**

I attended this conference and apart from obtaining some valuable knowledge I was able to get a remit passed covering internal freight and other costs and we will be conferring with the other Statutory Boards with a view to implementing decisions reached at the conference. This should be of marked assistance to producers of lower grade honeys as reduction in costs is as effective as a corresponding rise in price.

## **Facts, Fallacies and the Future**

(a) **Export Policy:** Producers of white honey are becoming interested in the prospect of selling overseas on their own account. It is evident however that there is some misunderstanding over the extent of the Authority's control of exports and the conditions under which approval to export will be given.

Some producers who do not wish to supply the Authority are faced with a surplus of honey which they know is in excess of local requirements and some of these producers have shown an interest in the prospect of selling overseas. One of the Authority's functions is to organise the marketing of honey overseas and to this end an agreement was entered into some years ago with Messrs. Kimpton Bros. (R.C.) Ltd., London. It is obvious, therefore, that all applications to export honey are referred by the Customs Department to the H.M.A. for approval.

The Authority does not however withhold approval of applications to export, provided there is an assurance that the prices obtainable are at least comparable with those at which the Authority itself is selling, and that the effect of approving the application would not be to depress the prices for New Zealand honey, neither would the agency agreement be in any way jeopardised or infringed.

Some producers have already sold New Zealand honey overseas on their own account, with the Authority's approval. The Authority could not approve an application to export honey to the United Kingdom or Europe, or to export bulk quantities to any overseas country. This would be in direct conflict with the Authority's own marketing policy. We will consider applications to export small consignments packed in retail containers provided the exporter complies with certain requirements.

These requirements are more exacting than many producers realise and I do urge the utmost caution in entering this field of disposal as considerable losses could occur and so add to an already existing difficulty. We have had an instance this year of honey packed with the intention of being exported that could not have complied with the conditions demanded by the Export Regulations.

There are a number of honeys peculiar to New Zealand and in relatively small quantities that could well demand a premium in certain markets. The Authority is at all times willing to advise producers concerning the marketing of these honeys.

(b) **Price Cutting:** There is ample evidence that some packers of top grade honey are not securing the maximum price allowable for their product. This is hard to understand when the Authority makes adequate advances for honey as soon as it is in the tin and makes a final payment which compares favourably with the price offered by any packer. The bulk supplier shares with the H.M.A. and the packer the responsibility of ensuring market stability.

(c) **The Year Ahead:** Any Chairman who attempted to forecast the events ahead would indeed be foolish. At a gathering such as this there is no need to stress the uncertainty of crops and fluctuating supplies and the effect this has on our trading activities: Perhaps it is just as well that we do not know what lies ahead. However, you can take satisfaction in the fact that your Authority is in a better position now than it has ever been before to cope with any eventuality and we face the future with confidence.

#### **Honey Grading**

You will all have been grieved at the death of Mr. D. Roberts, or "Robbie" as he was known to us all. During his term of office as Honey Grader he earned the trust and respect of all producers and his position will be hard to fill.

In view of the difficulties in attracting personnel to the grading duties, the H.M.A. has been conferring with the Department with a view to lessening the more exacting duties that the Grader is called upon to perform and at the same time maintain the high standard that has been instrumental in securing a premium on world markets for our honey.

#### **Ourselves**

During the last year the Authority has held four meetings and has addressed several Branches of the N.B.A. and attended Field Days in many places. I would like to place on record my appreciation of the hospitality that has been extended to my colleagues and myself.

#### **Manager and Staff**

During this year a reorganisation of the Factory Staff took place and the services of Mr. Peake became redundant and the General Manager himself is now responsible for the blending and operation of the plant and he is well served in the factory by Mr. Bill Whitby who is in charge of the receipt and despatch department, and Mr. Michael Bradstock who operates the plant and supervises the packing operations. This is an admirable set up.

The office staff is exactly the same as this time last year and despite considerable extra work caused by increased through-put and packing, this team has coped efficiently with the position.

The overall picture of both office and factory is highly satisfactory and the coming year should present no difficulties that cannot be coped with. Considerable credit is due to the General Manager, Mr. Gosse, for the able manner in which he has administered the Authority's affairs.

I would like to express my personal thanks to all who have helped to make the year's work the success it has been and to assure you all that your Honey Marketing Authority is there to serve you.

G. E. GUMBRELL, Chairman, H.M.A.

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# Department of Agriculture

## Horticulture Division



ADDRESS BY A. M. W. GREIG, DIRECTOR, HORTICULTURE DIVISION,  
DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE, AT THE OAMARU CONFERENCE

### Introduction

During the past year, Mr. President, I was privileged to act as Chairman of the Beekeeping Assessment Committee and that experience has added to my knowledge of your industry and of your problems. You have always been renowned for your individuality which I respect but many of your problems, such as toxic honey, or the impact of agricultural chemicals, can only be tackled in a joint or partnership manner not only in association with fellow beekeepers but also with workers in associated fields such as the research, advisory, regulatory, marketing or administrative aspects of the Beekeeping Industry.

Today the most important economic fact facing all New Zealanders is that the volume and value of our exports must be increased to a marked degree if our standard of living is to be maintained. The Beekeeping Industry is playing a part. I believe it could play a bigger part and Government is seriously interested in any way in which your products could earn more overseas.

### Production

Last season's production for the year ending May, 1963, was approximately 5900 tons compared with 5400 tons average. Except for the West Coast-Nelson area, all South Island districts were above average—the figures for Canterbury being 1040 tons compared with 770 tons average, and for South Canterbury-North Otago (based on Oamaru) 1025 tons compared with 625 tons average—these two districts alone raising the Dominion average by 670 tons. We are therefore meeting today in Oamaru in one of the most important honey producing districts in the Dominion. Beekeeping is closely linked with agricultural practices and the fortunes of beekeepers usually fluctuate according to farming trends. Two current local changes are the development of pastures in certain high country areas and the increased acreage in wheat production. Two questions are posed—will the high country eventually provide stable honey producing areas and will the expanded acreage in wheat affect beekeeping?

### Grading

For many years the grading of honey for export and on receipt at the Auckland grade store has been by the Honey Grader of the Department of Agriculture based on three factors—flavour, colour and condition and a composite grading was based on these three factors in the ratio: 45 flavour, 35 colour, 20 condition. On this basis, flavour was of major significance in grading and the grader was required to grade into one of 18 classifications: 60, 65, 70, 75, 80, 85, 87, 90 and at each level from 91 to 100. Discussions have been held with the Honey Marketing Authority and the joint recommendation of the department and the Honey Marketing Authority is to reduce these 18 classifications down to six by a grouping or broad banding—as follows:

Extra Delicate	....	100 points
Delicate	....	95 points
Mild	....	90 points
Medium	....	80 points
Strong	....	75 points
Extra Strong	....	70 points

A new term, Extra Delicate, has been introduced, the meaning of the flavour terms when converted into points—has been altered. The current procedure for defining colour by the Pfund Colour Classifier would continue (out of 100 points) and the condition would also remain based on the body of the honey, the presence of any defects and its cleanliness, and be graded out of 100 points.

The weighting of these three factors, 45: 35: 20, would be abolished and any weighting necessary to determine payments would be the responsibility of the Honey Marketing Authority.

To put these proposals into effect will require an amendment to the Honey Export Regulations, 1950, and before I make such a recommendation I would appreciate the views of the National Beekeepers' Association.

### Bacillus Larvae

On October 17, 1961, a special joint meeting was held in Wellington to discuss the eradication or control of Bacillus larvac disease. The full implementation of the recommendations from the meeting has not yet been carried out primarily because other major problems such as Tutu and toxic honey have had to be given priority. However, arrangements are in hand for the implementation this year of the Committee's recommendations. These include an educational campaign regarding recognition of the disease and notification by property owners of unsupervised or wild hives on their properties and furnishing of inspection declarations by beekeepers. In general, beekeepers will be advised when inspections have been made in their apiaries; and also the procedure to be adopted for dealing with diseased hives when found by inspectors. The provisions of the Apiaries Act relating to the transfer of hives and equipment to new sites are to be enforced. Normal field inspection has continued and reports indicate that the overall incidence is low but in some southern areas, relatively widespread. Diseased colonies of bees established in buildings and in trees appear to be the major sources of disease.

### A Review

At your Annual Conference last year I gave a review of the problem of tutu and toxic honey. This review was published in full in the "New Zealand Beekeeper," August, 1962.

During the past season, by field observations, technical officers of the Department observed passion vine hoppers secreting honey dew on tutu plants in various localities. The Department therefore issued a circular to all beekeepers in the North Auckland, Coromandel and Bay of Plenty districts, emphasising that it was important for all honey harvested after January 1, 1963, to be used for beekeeping purposes and not offered for human consumption.

At the same time honey from test hives throughout these districts was collected and forwarded to the laboratory for check testing with guinea pigs as was indicated last year. This check testing procedure would only give results after the normal prudent beekeeper had harvested his honey for marketing. The tests could not be available till after the season's operations were completed.

You will recall also, that 12 months ago I emphasised how essential it was for each beekeeper to know the sources of his honey in case toxicity was found in a sample of his straight production or blended honey. This meant adequate coding of honey extracted so that all retail and wholesale packs could, if necessary, be traced back to their origin.

During the past fortnight, I am sorry to say, the Medical Officer of Health, Hamilton, reported that a child had shown mild symptoms of honey poisoning and there was circumstantial evidence that honey was involved. I repeat what

I said a year ago—"I am aware that untold harm could be done to your industry if the public as a whole came to regard honey with suspicion and if any consumer digestive upsets where the cause was not really diagnosed, were unnecessarily attributed to honey."

You will recall that in 1961-62 season most suspect honey was impounded and subsequently destroyed. The greatest difficulty was experienced, and continued to be experienced in determining beforehand and afterwards, what honey must be regarded as suspect. Also it is not possible to determine by guinea pig or chemical test, whether any honey produced in a passion vine hopper—tutu zone is completely free from toxicity. I am aware that there is a real responsibility on all concerned—to safeguard human health and at the same time not jeopardise commercial beekeeping.

In this instance, action is being taken to hold suspect honey until sufficient facts are available and the appropriate action determined.

Last year I indicated that entomologists were confident that biological control of the passion vine hopper is feasible and could result in a practical solution within five to seven years. During the past season Dr. R. Cumber has studied the situation in New Zealand and his interim report is less optimistic regarding biological control because some parasitism already exists in New Zealand. However, it is now intended that Dr. Cumber visit Australia during the 1963-64 season to study the situation there, where I understand the passion vine hopper has never reached the numerical strength it shows in New Zealand. It is still hoped that there is an additional parasite in Australia which is not recorded in New Zealand and that such a parasite, if introduced, could make a marked reduction in the number of hoppers in New Zealand.

#### **Staffing**

The apary section of the division is one of the smallest and most specialised as it works entirely on beekeeping problems. The approved establishment is 15, consisting of 1 Superintendent, 1 Honey Grader, 2 Apiculturists and 11 Apiary Instructors. This section has suffered severe losses during the past 12 months through the death of Mr. D. Roberts, Honey Grader; the retirement of Mr. C. R. Paterson, Apiculturist, and the resignation of the section's first professional officer or university graduate, Mr. G. Jeffery. No member of the section is prepared to accept the responsibilities and duties of the previous Honey Grader. It is hoped that the proposed simplified grading procedure in relation to flavour testing may make the situation less acute, but the Department's responsibilities in regard to honey grading may require to be redefined. The resignation of Mr. Jeffery re-emphasises my sense of disappointment in an inability to attract, train and retain apicultural cadets as the future advisory staff for beekeepers. No occupational group has yet been established for Apiary Instructors so the recruitment of beekeepers as Instructors remains difficult within the terms we are allowed to offer.

In view of a continuing difficulty in obtaining and retaining an Instructor for the West Coast-Nelson-Marlborough with headquarters at Greymouth and to provide a balanced service we have made recommendations for a transfer of headquarters for this district from Greymouth to Nelson.

On April 1, 1963, the four Assistant Horticultural Superintendents at Hamilton, Hastings, Nelson and Dunedin were promoted to the status of full Superintendents. The effect of this change on apary section staff is a shortening of the line of control on non technical matters between the individual and Head Office and vice versa. All horticultural Superintendents are responsible to the Director whereas previously the Assistant Superintendents were responsible to a Horticultural Superintendent.

You will be pleased to hear that an offer has been made to an overseas applicant for the position as Scientific Officer, Wallaceville, as assistant to Mr. Palmer-Jones on beekeeping problems and research work associated with them.

#### **National Diploma in Apiculture — N.D.Ap.**

You are aware that by an amendment to the Royal New Zealand Institute of Horticulture Act and subsequent gazette notice the Institute is authorised

to award diplomas in apiculture to those who study for and sit certain examinations after a period of practical beekeeping. It is hoped that future Apiary Instructors of the Department will have gained this qualification before appointment and I trust that the N.B.A. will give the younger men in the industry encouragement to study and qualify for this diploma. It is customary when establishing this type of diploma to grant exemptions to those who have had a lifetime of experience but who have passed the age when anyone would expect a man to sit an examination. These honorary diplomas or diplomas without examination are restricted to persons over 40 years of age who have had over 20 years' experience in beekeeping and who are recognised as competent practical men who have earned the respect of their fellow beekeepers and who have been nominated and accepted nomination for this award. Final authority for the Institute to make such awards expires on September 8 so any further nominations must be forwarded at once for consideration. A supplementary list is being prepared and will be issued after approval by the Examining Board of the Institute. In the meantime, I am pleased to bring this Award to your notice and officially, on behalf of the Institute to announce that the following 26 persons have been awarded the National Diploma of Apiculture (without examination).

### NATIONAL DIPLOMA IN APICULTURE (without examination)

#### N.D.Ap.

#### Southland

R. C. ABERNETHY, Owaka  
 W. C. CALDWELL, Invercargill  
 J. W. FRASER, Invercargill  
 N. E. GLASS, Gore  
 J. GLYNN, Balfour

W. T. HERRON, Gore  
 R. H. HOBBS, Gore  
 J. S. SPENCE, Gore  
 G. F. TOOGOOD, Gore

#### Otago and South Canterbury

E. O. BALL, Waimate  
 R. D. BENNIE, Ranfurly  
 H. CLOAKE, Timaru  
 R. DAVIDSON, Timaru  
 I. W. FORSTER, Oamaru

J. FORSTER, Timaru  
 J. G. MCKENZIE, Waimate  
 A. H. SIMPSON, Geraldine  
 J. H. WATSON, Geraldine

#### Canterbury

F. J. ARMSTRONG, Christchurch

#### Westland

R. V. GLASSON, Blackball

#### Manawatu

F. F. WILSON, Otaki

#### Hawkes Bay

W. J. C. ASHCROFT, Havelock North  
 J. McFADZIEN, Havelock North

#### Wanganui

E. J. WHALLEY, Wanganui

#### Taranaki

W. G. BASSETT, New Plymouth  
 J. LLOYD, Manaia  
 M. H. OLSEN, New Plymouth

#### Waikato

B. W. FORSYTH, Ohaupo  
 J. D. LORIMER, Hamilton  
 H. N. TUCK, Kihikihi

#### Bay of Plenty

J. H. LOWE, Tauranga

#### Auckland

W. W. NELSON, Takapuna  
 L. RIESTERER, Papatoetoe

#### Northland

W. I. HAINES, Kaitiaki



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## AGRICULTURAL CHEMICALS BOARD

### REPORT OF NATIONAL BEEKEEPERS' ASSOCIATION REPRESENTATIVE AT THE 1963 CONFERENCE

LADIES AND GENTLEMEN,

It gives me pleasure to present my Fourth Annual Report.

I have recently been appointed for a further term as your representative on the Agricultural Chemicals Board. I count it a privilege to serve in this capacity for another period.

It might reasonably be expected that, after operating for about three and a half years, the Board would have overcome its initial problems and reached a stage where its duties would be lightened appreciably; but when it is realised that sales of agricultural chemicals last year were in the vicinity of £1.2 million and tend to increase each year, it will be readily realised that the Board's work, in all its phases, must continue at a high level, either under the present administration or a revised administration.

#### Rome Conference

Responsible governments the world over recognise the need for control in the use of agricultural chemicals. Two technical officers of the Board recently attended an F.A.O. Conference in Rome. The main items discussed were:—

- (a) Pesticide residues in agriculture.
- (b) Registration and marketing of pesticides.
- (c) Hazards in the use of pesticides.
- (d) Effects on wildlife and beneficial insects.

This could well have been an agenda for a meeting of the N.Z.A.C.B. for our business is centred round these self same topics. In a report to the Board on the Rome Conference the officers stated "It was evident that the New Zealand approach to these problems had been sound. Our existing legislative control, advisory services, testing services and applied research programmes were equal to anything overseas, although analytical and research work must be expanded."

In spite of this, however, there is certainly no room for complacency.

It is apparent to the Board that the Agricultural Chemicals Regulations cannot fully achieve the objectives desired; unless adequate analytical services are provided and research work is considerably expanded.

An endeavour was made in Rome to set up international standards for toxicology, test methods, residue tolerances and methods of analysis. The adoption of such international standards would be of great benefit to all concerned, and would be of especial benefit to New Zealand as an exporter of primary produce.

#### Aims of the Board

The Board's main concern during the past year has been:—

- (1) To keep residues in meat and dairy produce within prescribed limits.
- (2) To eliminate, by education and regulation, the misuse and careless application of hormone type herbicides.
- (3) To give full registration only to those chemicals which meet the Board's requirements of quality, effectiveness and labelling.
- (4) To continue its publicity campaign at the highest possible level in the interests of correct useage of agricultural chemicals.

Publicity is regarded as being of the utmost importance. Officers of the Department of Agriculture are taking every opportunity at farmers' meetings, agricultural colleges, per medium of the Press, by radio, leaflet and personal contact to acquaint all users of their responsibilities and obligations under the Agricultural Chemicals Regulations. The Journal of Agriculture and all other farm journals feature articles in this connection regularly.

### **The Apiary Section**

Spare no effort to keep fully informed on all aspects of the use of agricultural chemicals and their likely effect on the Beekeeping Industry.

Mr. T. Palmer Jones renders invaluable service in checking the effects on bees of all new insecticides. His findings are tabulated and are available to the Board.

A classified list of insecticides, with indication as to their relative toxicity to bees, is available. This excellent guide provides a ready reference to all seeking such information.

Field Officers of the Apiary Section are continually on the alert for evidence of damage to bees, and new developments in the agricultural chemical field are observed closely.

The Superintendent of the Beekeeping Industry, Mr. E. Smaellie, is thus particularly well informed on all aspects of the situation.

### **Seven Remits on Agricultural Chemicals**

Notwithstanding all the above action there are seven remits on our agenda on the subject of agricultural chemicals. Without a doubt, this fact indicates the continued concern of beekeepers, despite the work of the Board and the Apiary Section. Whether or not the adoption of these remits can further safeguard our livelihood, they certainly have the effect of keeping your representative on his toes.

### **Factors Which Affect Honey Production**

In a previous report I have pointed out that some present farming trends are not favourable to honey production, and variable yields cannot automatically be attributed to the application of agricultural chemicals. Likewise heavy bee mortality may, or may not, be a result of the use of toxic material.

The widespread use of leafy, sparse flowering strains of clover pastures left down for many years, maintained by liming and topdressing, extensive subdivision of farms into relatively small pastures, all have a bearing on honey crops from farm lands; as have altitude (800 feet is the limit for really high production in Canterbury), early frosts, ground temperature and moisture content.

Over a quarter of a century I have been puzzled at times as to why clover did not yield, when all the circumstances seemed favourable. I have, as yet, no answer.

Sudden storms during the height of the honey flow can take the equivalent of a swarm out of all the hives in an apiary in one fell blow.

I am firmly convinced that Nosema is a very serious bee disease which can take heavy toll in bees at a time when they are most needed. Sprays of various kinds no doubt take some, but I doubt whether much more can be done to protect beekeepers from this hazard than is at present being done.

### **Here to Stay**

Agricultural chemicals are here to stay, whether we like it or not. They are regarded as being essential to modern farming practice and their use seems more likely to increase than diminish.

In comparison with the farming giant, the Beekeeping Industry is small.

I firmly believe that all things considered we are being fairly treated; that our losses are not excessive, and that we can live with agricultural chemicals under the representation and protection we enjoy.

Misuse and downright carelessness by the applicator are our greatest danger. Use, in accord with the regulations, and as advocated by the Agricultural Chemicals Board and the manufacturers of agricultural chemicals, will do us little, if any, harm.

Indeed in some respects our Industry has received benefit from the use of chemicals. Land development has been accelerated, providing vast new areas of excellent bee pasture and the heavy toll of porina and grass grub on clover fields has been largely eliminated.

### **Extensive Use of Spray**

In Mid-Canterbury there are few periods of the year when spraying of one kind or another is not being carried out. Chou, rape, turnips, thousands of acres of wheat, fruit trees, gorse, broom, raspberries, potatoes and—yes—even clover are all sprayed, sometimes more than once.

What is the result? In drought years we get no honey and put it down to spray and the weather; but, in seasons when climatic conditions are favourable, we get crops equal to those obtained before sprays were in general use.

### **Vulnerable to Loss by Agricultural Chemicals**

I once thought that beekeepers were the most vulnerable producers to agricultural chemicals but my experience on the Board has taught me that this is not so. Our apiaries are scattered in such a way that, at most, only a part of our hive holdings can be affected by a particular spraying incident.

Risk of damage by hormones to vineyards, orchards and commercial vegetable crops is vastly greater by comparison.

In the Otaki market garden area (near Wellington) the growers were virtually wiped out for two seasons in succession by hormone drift from aircraft spraying gorse some miles away.

Reports of damage are frequent and damage claims run into thousands of pounds. One claim alone is for £7000. Growers find it exceedingly difficult to get compensation from insurance, or other sources, and in most cases have to carry the loss themselves.

Grape growers in the Henderson area and elsewhere have suffered severely over the years. Vineyard protection regulations have been applied in an effort to afford protection. These folk live in fear that some irresponsible person will apply hormone to eradicate weeds, without thought that, under the conditions prevailing, they may destroy the whole season's work of a neighbour, or, in the case of a grape-grower, ruin his vineyard for a number of years.

### **Board and Apiary Section Are Safeguarding Our Position**

The fact that no losses of bees definitely attributable to toxic spray or dust have been reported to me is, I consider, encouraging. I believe this is not a coincidence, but rather that the work of the Board is safeguarding our position.

### **Beekeepers Can Help**

Every beekeeper must play his part in his own district. The slogan "Do not apply toxic material to plants in flower, which are attractive to bees," is an easily remembered, simple, safe maxim. It is our greatest safeguard in all circumstances.

### **1080 Poison Jam Baits**

I have obtained the widest possible information on this subject. The matter was brought before the Agricultural Chemicals Board and received a full airing at a meeting held on May 30, 1963. The facts are as follows:—

1080 poison is used by the Destruction Council for the destruction of rabbits, opossums and other animal pests. For this purpose 1080 compound is usually applied to carrots, boiled oats and other dry type baits. Such baits are not normally attractive to bees. 1080 jam baits have been used experimentally and in certain circumstances provide an effective poisoning medium during late autumn and winter. The usual bait mixture of 1080 compound, pollard, jam, aniseed and dye is not particularly attractive to bees. The extent to which bees might be attracted to these baits would depend on the time of year, the honey flow conditions and the proximity of apiaries to the points where bait is laid.

No bee losses have been reported to me as a result of the practical use of 1080 compound.

On the basis of evidence at present available, the A.C.B. has recommended that the use of 1080 jam baits be confined to the months of May, June and July and that no jam baits be laid in, or immediately near, apiaries, in order that risks may be avoided.

Should new evidence highlight any danger whatsoever to the interests of beekeepers regarding the use of 1080 baits you can be assured that I will bring it to the notice of the A.C.B. immediately.

#### **Changes in Personnel of the Board**

Mr. J. W. Woodcock has relinquished his position as Chairman of the Board and has retired after long service in the Department of Agriculture.

The Grain and Seeds Merchants' Federation representative, Mr. P. J. Oakley, has retired from the Board. Mr. J. C. Paterson is the newly appointed representative of this Federation.

The present would seem to be an appropriate time for a general review of the facilities available to the Board, and a stocktaking of its achievements in the light of existing facilities. It is not beyond the realms of possibility that certain changes, as to the constitution and composition of the Board, could be made. What effects such changes could have on the Beekeeping Industry cannot, at present, be assessed.

#### **Acknowledgments**

I again wish to express my sincere thanks and appreciation for assistance so readily given throughout the year, to: The Director of Horticulture, Mr. A. M. W. Greig; the Registrar of the Board, Mr. R. Odinet; the Superintendent of the Beekeeping Industry, Mr. E. Smaellie, and Officers of the Apiary Section. The knowledge that their wealth of information, their experience, and advice is at all times so freely available has assisted me immeasurably in my task.

I also thank our President, the General Secretary and Members of the Executive for their interest and encouragement throughout the year.

I may not always be able to bring to you the answers you desire, but you may be assured that I will guard your interests to the best of my ability, and also endeavour to play my part in the wider work of the Board.

I look forward to another year of service as your representative.

T. E. PEARSON, N.B.A. Representative on the A.C.B.

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## Industry Assessment

The 15-page report of the combined meeting held in Wellington on March 20-22, 1963, gives a broad assessment of the Beekeeping Industry in New Zealand. Opening with an outline of the extent of the Industry and its physical requirements, it then discusses its impact on the country's economy through honey and beeswax production and its indirect impact through pollination of fruit and seed crops. Following this it reviews the general marketing procedure and the research and technical services available.

In defining the role of beekeeping in the country's economic development in the next decade the report says:—

'It was agreed that the production of honey and beeswax should be continued in association with honey bees in seed producing areas. It was considered that the size of the Industry at present was meeting these basic functions and carrying out its role in exporting what is appropriate to keep the local market adequately supplied. In the past the Industry has shown its capacity to earn overseas exchange and although overseas markets seem fairly strong at the present time some further market research seems desirable.

'If it can be demonstrated that markets exist every encouragement should be given to the Industry to expand in the future and its present level of production should not be allowed to decline.

'If in the future it was found there were insufficient bees in the white clover areas for pollination purposes, it was considered this would be a matter for seed producing growers to negotiate directly with beekeepers as Government would not wish to be involved. In the past some paid pollination service has been in existence (South Canterbury) but recently this service has tended to lose ground.'

Factors which are limiting the Industry's proper role are given as:—

- (1) Uneconomic returns to some producers.
- (2) Changing farming practices.
- (3) Shortage of skilled labour.
- (4) Bee diseases.

- (5) Use of agricultural chemicals.
- (6) Availability of untapped suitable nectar sources.
- (7) Passion vine hopper.
- (8) Marketability of certain honeys.
- (9) Lack of control of stocking of production areas.
- (10) Uneconomic size of some beekeeping units.
- (11) Limited advisory and research services in both production and marketing development.
- (12) Lack of co-ordinated consideration of Industry problems.

### General Conclusions

It was agreed that the Beekeeping Industry was of vital importance to certain economic seed crops and the traditional role of producing honey and beeswax should be maintained and expanded. It was the consensus of opinion that the Industry was of no major significance in relation to grass-land farming.

It was considered that the meeting had proved well worthwhile, and the breadth of knowledge and experience contributed had enabled those attending to appreciate better the Industry and its problems. As a result it was now possible to plan more clearly for the Industry's future.

### SUB-COMMITTEE MEETS

A further Sub-Committee meeting was held in Wellington on June 21 when Mr. A. M. W. Greig was again in the chair and representatives of the N.B.A., H.M.A., Apiary Section, and Wallaceville Research Station were present. Consideration was given to the 'limiting factors' listed above, with special attention to the possibility of providing more honey for the Dominion export drive.

At this meeting recommendations were made for improving the instruction and research facilities for the particular problems of production and marketing. In the course of its report the Committee endorsed the following observations:—

- (1) Although departmental services have on some occasions in the past been regarded as the almost sacred

business of the departments concerned it is indisputable that the serviced Industry either suffers or prospers in more or less direct ratio to the adequacy or inadequacy of the service given. There would therefore be some merit in the contention that primary producers have a legitimate interest in the services of various state departments, their project programmes, their efficiency and so on.

(2) When previous joint meetings have been held between Industry representatives and departmental officers on specific problems the resultant consensus of opinion has been that they proved highly valuable, not only in the solving of the problems themselves but also in the fact that misunderstandings and misconceptions which had developed on both sides were inevitably brought to light and resolved in the light of wider knowledge and the better understanding which resulted. This has often enabled producers and their official organisations to materially assist the department in the carrying out of its important and onerous tasks.

This further illustrates the very real progress which can be made with

properly co-ordinated consideration of Industry problems.

#### General Conclusions

(i) The Minister should be approached regarding the establishment of a standing committee for further discussion on the problems of the Beekeeping Industry.

(ii) While this committee felt there was benefit in this series of meetings the success or failure of them would ultimately depend on what action resulted from them.

## ASSESSMENT REPORTS AVAILABLE

Copies of the Report of the Beekeeping Assessment Meeting held in Wellington on March 20-22 are available at the price of 2/6 each. Orders should be sent to the General Secretary, P.O. Box 19, Foxton, not later than the end of September, and should be accompanied by a Postal Note for 2/6. (Please do NOT send stamps).

## DOUBLE-GRAFTED ITALIAN QUEENS

### Orders Taken for October Queens

A written order would be appreciated from all those who have already indicated that they wish to be supplied.

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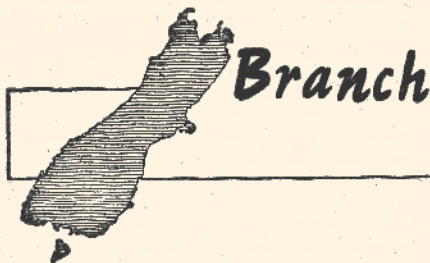
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## Notes



### FAR NORTH

The Branch has concluded what will most probably be its most difficult year, which opened with a very grave threat to its survival and followed by the worst season that has been known in this area.

The Branch held two meetings during the year and in addition several 'get togethers' were held at which many beekeeping problems and topics were discussed fully.

The Branch delegate and other members attended three meetings in Whangarei and one in Dargaville. The delegate attended one meeting in Wellington and the Annual Conference in Tauranga.

Mr Rope, Apiary Instructor, and Mr Walsh, Apiculturist, visited the district and gave talks and advice on many problems. We wish to record our thanks to these officers. We also thank Mr Rope and Mr A. Tucker for their work in the inspection of apiaries.

Crops were the worst ever recorded in the area, owing to the wet conditions in October and followed by the long dry summer. The future for the district seems bright in the export of comb honey.

Show entries were very disappointing and although to some extent this can be excused owing to seasonal conditions, we feel members should make every effort to give the A. & P. Association the support it deserves.

We thank the General Secretary and Executive for their services during the year in the interests of beekeeping.

Although the year has been most difficult, the season closes with the typical beekeeper's conviction that next year is the bumper one we have been looking for.

### Election of Officers

President: W. G. MacPherson.

Vice-President: Mrs N. Dean.

Secretary: D. D. Matthews.

Delegate: W. I. Haines.

Committee: A. J. Tucker, G. A.

Johnson, W. J. Thornton, W. I. Haines.

—W. G. MacPherson, 30/5/1963.

### HAWKES BAY

The weather in Hawkes Bay is living up to a 'traditional winter'—with rain, more rain, and snow to very low levels, gale force winds and heavy frosts—not a bit of 'beekeeping weather'! However the flowering gums, golden wattle and tree lucerne are all in full flower and the willows in leaf, with a promise that spring cannot be too far away.

A successful and well attended Annual General Meeting was held in May and the members were privileged to see a series of colour slides with taped commentary, depicting the life of a bee. These slides, all taken by Mr. M. Leete, are a credit to the photographer's art. These were followed by another series showing a motor tour of some of the lesser known roads and areas of Hawkes Bay, depicting some wonderful scenery.

Later in the month members had the opportunity of viewing the sound film in colour prepared by Dr. Moon, of America, called 'The City of the Bees.' A wonderful documentary and a classic of photography. This was followed by an interesting series of travel slides of a motor tour of the Continent, through Germany and up into Soviet Russia, presented by Mr. Littlewood.

The Branch members now look forward to the report by our delegate from the recent Annual Conference.

—F. D. Maultsaid, 31/7/63.

N. Z. BEEKEEPER



## SOUTH AUCKLAND

From Mr. C. Bird comes a report of addresses given at the Beekeeping School at Okoriorie on July 8, an instructive and highly successful function. The principal talks were on Nectar Sources and Recognition of Plants (Mr. C. R. Paterson), Budgeting and Beekeeping Accountancy (Mr. Alan V. Berry), Packing, Handling and Marketing of Honey (Mr. A. K. Ecroyd), and Comb Honey Production (Mr. G. B. Sharp). Unfortunately space is not available in this issue for the full report.

Mr. Bird writes that he inspected one or two yards in early August. The bees had started on the heath and just an odd bit of new white comb was visible. The hives were strong, three to four combs of brood and plenty of new pollen.

## WEST COAST

Here we are again preparing for another season—boiling, repairing, preserving gear. The latter half of July gave Coasters a taste of winter—six to 16 degrees of frost with a few bush fires by way of contrast. By the law of averages August should be dry and after that anything can happen.

Bees have been flying purposefully between 10 a.m. and 3 p.m. on most days, working fuchsia, gorse, some rata vine and probably other sources. This may bring a problem later for active colonies, like energetic children, consume much food. Regular hefting will be a must.

Already there are many lambs in sheltered localities and the many types of spring blossom add a bright and fresh look to the country. Truly nature changes her dress to very good effect.

—Tom Holland, 29/7/63.

## CANTERBURY

(from President's Report, 1963)

My term of office has been a happy one for me and I would like to thank all those on whom I have leaned so heavily during the year. Our secretary has as usual done his job efficiently and unobtrusively, and I consider that without the help of 'Des' a president's job could be most onerous. It is even more gratifying to realise that our membership has increased by 18.

It is however, my unhappy duty to report that four of our members, three

of the older brigade and one of the younger, are no longer with us. Namely, Miss M. Shepherd of Rangiora, Mr G. J. Keast of Lincoln, Mr W. J. Mead of Rakaia and Mr J. Tairaoa of Leesdon. It is sad to recall the passing of these four beekeepers, especially Mr Joey Tairaoa—a young man of outstanding promise and one from whom we as beekeepers and individuals could have gained much had he been spared from his untimely death. Miss Shepherd will also be missed by the beekeeping industry throughout New Zealand, especially by those of the older generation who knew of her work with bees both in Canterbury and Westland. Her business at Rangiora, in partnership with Mr Hill, has always been known for its integrity in the business world and that is something which I am sure would mean more to her than monetary gain, for it was by this code that she lived.

Our Branch must extend to Mr Griffin, our Resident Apiary Instructor, its thanks and appreciation for his help and advice so readily given throughout the year, especially with regard to his active help with the new hobbyist section. Also I would like to extend the thanks of the Branch to our Press Officer, Mr J. K. Bray, for the excellent material he has made available for publication.

The season has passed and left many honey houses bulging at the seams and others only just full. We were fortunate this year with our pre-Christmas weather and those bees which were well fed and strong, gathered well. However drought conditions in January upset what some of us thought to be the big year we have waited for. But we must remember 'Griff's Graph' and so next year, may I venture to prophecy, our fortunes will be made.

—David Penrose.

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## Dark Honey Production

A meeting of those interested in dark honey production, arranged by the South Auckland Branch, was held at Okoroire on June 10, 1963. There was a good attendance of beekeepers from northern areas. Mr. D. Carey was elected Chairman and Mr. W. L. Holt Secretary.

The agenda covered the following points:—

- (1) Scope of Comb Honey Production.
- (2) Scope of Sale Overseas for Comb Honey.
- (3) Scope for use of dark honey in raising queens.
- (4) H.M.A. Policy.
- (5) Should Production of Dark Honey be encouraged?

After the Dominion President, Mr. J. R. Barber, had given a review of the Export Development Conference a full discussion took place on the possibilities of export for comb honey and dark honey packs. The following resolutions were carried:—

‘That the N.B.A., in conjunction with the Northern Comb Honey Producers’ Association, provide information in “The N.Z. Beekeeper” as to the future potential and development of the comb honey export market.’

‘That the meeting support the policy of the sale of dark honey on the New Zealand market at standard prices.’

‘That New Zealand honey sold overseas in retail containers be promoted as a product of New Zealand.’

The Chairman, in summing up discussion, concluded that:—

(1) There was a great scope for producers in dark honey areas in the production of comb honey for the overseas market, but beekeepers should keep in touch with the Northern Comb Honey Producers’ Association.

(2) The H.M.A. should see that New Zealand honey was sold on the overseas markets as ‘New Zealand Honey’ as New Zealand had a great name for its primary products.

## Dunedin Convention

A representative attendance of beekeepers was present at the Otago and Southland Convention held in Dunedin on June 4. In the afternoon business matters were dealt with expeditiously under the chairmanship of Mr J. Heineman and addresses were delivered by Mr H. Cloake (Dominion Executive) and Mr J. W. Fraser (Honey Marketing Authority). A full and frank discussion of all matters affecting the industry followed, both of the speakers dealing with many questions to the satisfaction of the meeting.

In the evening the Otago Branch President, Mr E. Shepherd, welcomed over 50 members and friends to the Convention. A full programme included addresses by Messrs R. Hobbs, I. W. Forster and V. Cook, and a colour film ‘The City of the Bees.’ After supper the Convention closed at a somewhat late hour.

## ‘Silent Spring’

Mrs. G. O. Dorward, Secretary of the Hawkes Bay Branch, was invited by the Royal Society to take part in a symposium on the subject of insecticides, which was to take place in Napier on August 12. The symposium, which was prompted by the well known book ‘Silent Spring,’ was to bring together the views of producers, research workers, manufacturers and others interested in food production, on the dangers of agricultural chemicals.

Mrs. Dorward is a competent speaker and is well qualified to represent the beekeeping point of view.

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# Notes for Beginners

## The Handcuffs

If he does not realise that he is shackled to the weather, the beekeeper who is too keen to get the season's work started can do more harm than good. If the wintering-down had been thoroughly carried out with ample stores and bees in cosy hives, there should be no need to disturb the colonies during the cold weather, but now, if the days are warming up there are many things that might need attention.

As soon as the weather allows—and not before—the hives should be inspected and prepared for spring progress. Assuming the hive is two storeys high, the procedure would be as follows:—

(1) Take off the lid and place it, inner side up, on the ground beside the hive (some apiarists always place it in front of the entrance).

(2) CHECK FOR DISEASE. Fold back the mat or remove the crown-board and lift some frames from the middle of the cluster. Look carefully for signs of disease—these are described later.

(3) If the colony shows any sign of disease, replace the mat and lid and close down the front entrance until it has about one inch opening only. As it is possibly not your fault that your hives have contracted disease, there is nothing to be anxious about when you contact the Apiary Instructor and you will find him a splendid fellow who is most anxious to help you cope with your problem. If this is not handled expertly you will find that your other hives will develop disease and you will lose the lot.

Diseased hives are a menace to your own bees and all other hives within a wide area. If you know of any wild bees in buildings or trees or neglected hives within flying distance, these

should be destroyed as they are possible sources of disease.

After you have closed down the hive, take your smoker, hive tool and anything else you have been handling while dealing with the diseased hive, and don't touch another hive until you have washed this gear, and your hands in disinfectant.

## Healthy Colonies

If the colony is found free of disease, proceed as follows:—

(3) Place the top super on the lid and lift the bottom super aside on to a spare lid or hive mat.

(4) Clean off the bottom board. During winter, there accumulates a layer of litter that bees with good housekeeping habits will not tolerate during the breeding season.

(5) Place the top super on the bottom board and check stores, queen and combs. Begin by setting aside any frames with patches of drone comb, holes, broken lugs or faulty in any way. While doing this, take a careful look at the Queen to see if she is vigorous and healthy. Look, too, at the pattern of her brood and, if this is irregular, the queen is probably failing and will not build a colony that will bring in a profitable crop. If the queen is allowing the colony morale to deteriorate, it would be better to destroy her and paper the colony on to another colony where the bees are needed.

Also, check the stores—there should be enough honey to at least carry the colony over to the first honey flow. In placing the frames, keep the frames of brood to the centre with frames of stores next the brood and empty frames (if any) against the outside walls.

(6) After the top super (which is now the lower super on the bottom board) has been sorted, place the other super on top. Sort all frames discarding any that are faulty, and place those with brood to the centre with stores next.

## Stores

The average colony should have not less than five frames of stores and at no time should the stores ever be allowed to fall below two frames of honey.

## Recognising Disease

There are very few bee diseases in New Zealand and none of them affect human beings but the most prevalent is *Bacillus Larvae* brood disease, usually referred to as B.L.

You will know that the bee begins life as an egg and grows through the stages of larva and nymph before emerging as a young bee. The egg is small as a carrot seed and translucent white. The larva grows from egg into nymph all the time looking fat and glistening white. When the cell is sealed over the nymph grows to maturity under the lid of the capped cell. It is during this latter stage that the presence and effects of B.L. are seen. Instead of growing white and beautiful, the nymph changes into a coffee coloured mess. Therefore, when looking for disease, you look amongst the sealed brood for cells with holes in the cappings. If the capping is opened the cell is found to contain a nymph in a stage of decomposition. There could be only one or two cells or there could be many.

If you wish to make one of the tests, take a matchstick or straw and poke into the cell where the decomposed nymph is lying. If the decayed matter can be drawn out to a thread like treacle, you can be quite sure that brood disease is present and urgent action is necessary.

## Feeding

Should you find that any colony has insufficient stores, there are several ways of feeding.

(1) Dry Sugar: This can be spread over the tops of the frames on a sheet of newspaper provided the cluster would be just under the paper and the bees will soon chew through the paper and take the sugar down for feed. Dry sugar can also be poured into empty combs and placed close to the cluster. As an urgent measure, dry sugar can be poured over the top bars of the frames at the ends farthest away from the front entrance. Much of this will fall down on to the bottom board. Usually, at first, as soon as

bees discover this dry sugar in the hive, they begin throwing it out but shortly the message gets around that it tastes good and they begin storing it. Dry sugar will keep the colony from starving but it will not thrive.

(2) Honey or Sugar Syrup: In the lid of a honey tin (or any tin with a good-fitting press-in lid) punch some holes with the point of a nail. Fill the tin with syrup and press the lid into place. Place the tin, lid side down, over the frames and although some syrup will flow out at first, quite soon the air vacuum in the tin will hold the syrup so that the bees can cluster

## SPRING FEVER



A beekeeper engrossed in typical spring apiary work.



Nuclei amid spring flowers.

—Photos by Chris Dawson.

N. Z. BEEKEEPER

around and by sucking through the holes, they soon empty the tin.

### Syrup Proportions

In making syrup, the proportions of sugar or honey and water are decided by the purpose of the syrup. For feeding to keep a colony going or to supplement their existing stores, a proportion of two of honey or sugar to one of water is suitable. Equal parts of sugar and water will improve brood rearing but to stimulate brood rearing a syrup of two parts of water to one of honey or sugar will, provided outside conditions are satisfactory, stimulate active laying by the queen and brood rearing by the colony.

### First Aid to a Casualty

If you find a colony that has been starving and looks almost lifeless, it is wonderful what the following treatment will do: Close down the front entrance to about one inch and remove as many empty frames as possible without overcrowding the bees. Sprinkle with syrup of equal parts of honey and water and invert a press-in-lid feeder as before described over the cluster. Pack round with some sacking to conserve heat and leave until the next day, when, on inspection, you will find that every bee that had the slightest spark of life has revived and will be doing its part to revive other bees and the queen will have a retinue licking her and encouraging her to start laying.

### Now That's a Good Idea!

In every home apiary there should be an old easy chair. Comfortably seated amongst the joyful music of this clamour of activity, it is pleasant to watch those train loads coming in

slowly and deliberately while the empty wagons leave as if they must catch the express that has just departed.

While seated relaxed and resting—enjoying my bees—just letting their joyfulness soak into my whole being, a young gentleman opened the gate and walked toward me. He urged me not to rise as he was happy to sit on the lid of the nearest hive. The purpose of his visit was to tell me, in a delightful American drawl, of the latest invention for the beekeeper.

It is evident that the use of plastics and electronics in beekeeping is much more advanced where he came from than in my quiet country town and he was able to offer me a device that fitted on to the smoker. When I called out "Where's that jolly smoker?" to nobody in particular the smoker, wherever it was, gave an answering croak by which I could immediately locate it.

When my American visitor explained that the price was quite reasonable, I could only exclaim "My boy! That IS a great idea!" Just then, I heard in the far distance, my wife calling "Tea O!" and when I opened my eyes my American visitor had gone. How I do wish I could find that young American gentleman.

### Book of the Century

In its first 12 years this book sold over 80,000 copies and that is really remarkable when you consider that those years were the first 12 years in our century. Maurice Maeterlinck had no idea when he wrote it that the public was going to enjoy his book "The Life of the Bee", so greatly that they would buy it in thousands. Today, it is one of the classics that beekeepers read for enjoyment and instruction.

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# Beekeepers Technical Library

(The Library of the National Beekeepers' Association of N.Z. Incorporated)

Through the enthusiastic support of a small number of beekeepers scattered throughout New Zealand, the establishment of this Library has been made possible and in the next issue of "The N.Z. Beekeeper" journal a list will be published of the books given by these enthusiasts and their names. Two persons have each given 12 books and booklets and a number of smaller gifts and promises have been received. Life Members are now being enrolled.

**COMMITTEE:** The following administrative committee, which is responsible to the Dominion Executive, has been appointed: Mr H. Cloake, Chairman (representing the Executive), Mr L. G. Lyttle (representing the Local Branch), and Mr Chris Dawson, Honorary Librarian and Secretary to the Committee.

**RULES:** The following Rules have been adopted:—

---

**NAME:** The Library is called "The National Beekeepers' Association of New Zealand Technical Library."

**MEMBERSHIP:** Membership is available in two forms.

(a) **Life Members:** Life Membership is bestowed on payment of a subscription of £5/5/-. On the enrolment of a Life Member a book will be inscribed as having been presented by him and henceforth he will be entitled to borrow from the Library free of charge.

(b) **Ordinary Members:** Ordinary Members are all Members of the National Beekeepers' Association of New Zealand Incorporated.

**DONATIONS:** Books donated to the Library will, if the donor approves, be suitably inscribed with the name of the donor.

**LOANS:** (a) In ordering a book, the borrower must send the appropriate Loan Fee and state the branch of which he is a member.

(b) **The Loan Fee** is 4/- for each book in Class A. (There would be only a few of the most expensive books in Class A); 2/- for each book in Class B; 6d for each pamphlet in Class C. The Loan Fee includes outward postage and the borrower pays return postage.

(c) **Loan Period:** A Member may borrow one book at a time and the Loan Fee entitles the Member to keep the book for up to one calendar month.

(d) **Overdue Books:** Members who do not return books within three days of the due date incur an Overdue Fee of 1/- per week.

(e) **Loan Renewal:** Renewal of the loan of a book may be granted by the Librarian provided the book is not on order and provided a further Loan Fee is sent with the application before the loan period expires.

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**LIFE MEMBERSHIP:** After the announcement at Annual Conference at Oamaru of details of the Library project, sufficient applications for Life Membership were received to ensure the scheme a good start. Those interested in promoting the success of the Library are invited to become Life Members and the subscriptions may now be sent to the Librarian. Each Life Membership will be commemorated by the purchase of a suitable book which will be inscribed with the donor's name on a specially engraved Book Plate.

**DONATIONS:** Assistance can also be given by making gifts of books on bees and all subjects connected with the industry. It is probable that Members

have useful beekeeping books which they no longer require; gifts of such books will be welcomed and the name of the donor will be inscribed in each book.

**BOOK PLATE:** To ensure that a worthy Book Plate adorns books in the Library, an approach was made to an English lady who is considered to be the best bee artist in the world. She has graciously agreed to produce a suitable design.

All communications on Library business should be sent to the Librarian, Mr Chris Dawson, 11 Cain Street, Timaru.

## *Plastic Combs : Second Season*

By G. de la M. NICHOLS,

Senior Scientific Officer, Ruakura Animal Research Station

### **Introduction**

In the previous article printed in the N.Z. Beekeeper of November, 1962, it was shown that during the 1961-62 season six plastic combs were distributed among various hives. Of these combs, five were eventually drawn out into distorted shapes with prolific drone comb and with large areas left blank, whilst the sixth comb was perfect with worker cells filled with honey.

Inspection of the five poor combs revealed that the blank areas of plastic foundation had no wax coating. It was therefore decided to strip the combs of all wax and to try various methods of coating the plastic foundation.

### **1962-63 SEASON**

#### **Experiments in Wax Coating**

The old wax was removed from the five poor combs with boiling water. For coating the first comb the wax was dissolved with chloroform. A little chloroform was applied to the plastic frame with no apparent ill effect, but when the wax solution had

been in contact with the plastic foundation for some time it was noticed that everything was softening. Eventually the hexagonally embossed surface became a spongy mess.

Two combs were placed in a domestic electric range, small pieces of wax were placed on the plastic foundation and the grill heater switched on. The wax started to melt slowly and was brushed evenly over the surface with a lin. paint brush. Suddenly the combs sprang into a badly distorted shape with the sides at an angle to each other and to the top bar, and the bottom bar buckled badly. Attempts at annealing and straightening failed.

One comb was placed in a solar wax extractor with small pieces of wax on the plastic foundation. Again the frame buckled and could not be straightened. This left one comb. Heat had ruined three of the previous four combs so it was decided to leave the combs cold and to melt the wax in a tin which was heated with hot water. A lin. paint brush was left in the molten wax to acquire the same temperature, and wax was then

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brushed rapidly over the surface of the plastic foundation. This method proved very satisfactory, but a 6in. brush would have completed the work much faster.

Four more combs were begged from Plastic Products in Hamilton, and these were coated in the same way.

### Experiments in the Hive

The one perfect comb from last season was placed in a hive on November 10, 1962 and removed full of honey on February 4, 1963.

The first comb to be coated successfully was placed in a hive on January 3, 1963, and was pulled out with worker comb, filled with honey and capped by January 12.

The other four combs from Plastic Products were placed in hives rather later and were pulled out more slowly.

Two plastic frames were placed in one hive on January 19. By January 26 one comb had been started all over on both sides and had some sealed honey. The other comb had been partly drawn out. On February 2 one comb had been completed, filled with honey and capped. The other comb was almost completely ignored, so it was taken from this hive to a more active neighbour where it was full of honey and capped by February 20.

One plastic frame placed in another hive on January 19, was almost full of honey on February 2, and was extracted on February 20.

The remaining frame was placed in a hive on January 19, had just been started on February 2, and was not filled until March 27.

All six plastic frames were extracted at a speed which smashed combs with normal wax and wire foundation, whilst the plastic frames were unharmed.

No drone comb was drawn out, though this is not unusual with new foundation placed well away from the brood chamber. Next year all six frames will be used as brood combs to see whether any drone comb is produced.

### Conclusions

The great strength of these combs is a real advantage during extraction. No combs were broken during high speed running. They may also be of use in the brood chamber, as the bees

may possibly find it difficult to build drone comb from wax covering worker-sized plastic hexagons. (This has yet to be shown experimentally).

The plastic foundation must be properly coated with wax. The first season's experiments were nearly a complete failure due to over economy with wax.

If the plastic combs can be produced at a price which competes with the present wooden frame, wax and wire foundation they should prove a real boon to all beekeepers. Incidentally they will spoil one of the pleasantest of winter beekeeping operations, i.e. wiring wax into frames.

## World News

### AUSTRALIA

The £2 million a year Australian honey industry is having one of its best export years, thanks more to high export prices than to the level of local production. In an average year export prices of red gum honey run at about 9½d a lb. This year it is bringing up to 1s 2½d a lb.

Western Germany and Britain are the best markets, where our main competitors are Mexico, Argentina and Communist China. This year we should net better than the £1,113,000 received from honey exports last year.

Unfortunately this is proving to be a poor year for local honey production, particularly in Victoria, where over a wide area honey-bearing gum trees have either failed to flower or have little nectar in their flowers (90% of Australian honey comes from gum trees). Other States are less affected. (N.S.W. produces 34%, Victoria 24%, S.A. 19%, and W.A. 18% of Australian honey in a normal year). The overall crop will be the lowest for many years. Last year Australia produced 44 million lbs. of which 25,300,000lb. was exported.

The aim of Australian producers is both to lift exports (where the strong-flavoured stringy bark variety is most favoured) and to stimulate local consumption, lifting per capita consumption from 1lb to 2lb a head. (Yellow Box variety is most popular here).

—Australian 'Bulletin,' 1/6/1963.

N. Z. BEEKEEPER



## Supering Package Colonies

By Henry W. Hansen, in  
'American Bee Journal'

We never put our supers on until the hives are full of bees and brood. We would rather crowd the bees than to put the supers on too soon. When we give this first super we like to have the bees come boiling out when we take the inner cover off. One thing we want to do and that is to conserve heat. Nothing will set the bees back faster than adding supers too soon.

In this respect package bee management differs greatly from the management of over-wintered colonies. In wintered colonies you want to prevent swarming by adding supers and giving plenty of room. But, with package bees there is little trouble with swarming and if supers are added too soon there are not enough bees to keep the top super warm on cold days and nights.

We have had hives around the first of June where the bees have been hanging outside and the whole front of the hive was covered with them. We just had the small entrance open. We have tried putting supers on half the yard

and leaving the supers off the other half because the bees still had room in the hives. The ones we supered were further behind than those not getting supers until later.

There is a happy medium. They must not be too crowded and they must have room. If I sound contradictory it is because I am trying to stress the fact that conserving heat means everything to the buildup of a package. We have in the past felt sorry for the little critters and pulled the plug on some of them. Then cold weather hits and they get a setback from which they never recover.

## Honey in the Desert

Experiments have now shown that bees can live happily, busily, and profitably in the Kara Kum and Kizyl Kum deserts of Uzbekistan U.S.S.R. thanks to the thorn and wild desert grasses which blossom in summer. Many collective farms are now setting up apiaries in these areas, but to protect busy bees from heat prostration, their hives must be set up under tents which are kept sprinkled with water.

—Unesco Courier, Nov., 1962.



**FAR FROM THE MADDING CROWD:** This picturesque stone cottage serves as store at Mr. Chris Dawson's apiary at Claremont.

## Bees Taken Across Lake Wakatipu

By V. A. COOK

(See photos on opposite page)

During the 1962-63 season Mr Irving (Dougall) Boyd of Frankton shipped the first bees ever to be taken across Lake Wakatipu to Mt Nicholas and Walter Peak Stations.

They were taken primarily to satisfy an urgent need for pollinators of clover in recently established high country pasture areas.

The bees which were originally packages from the North Island, were installed in the spring. When they had built up into two storey colonies, they were loaded onto a truck and taken to Queenstown. Here, bees and truck were winched aboard the lake

steamer 'Earnshaw' and transported across the lake. The bees soon settled to work in their new surroundings where white clover was flowering abundantly.

The outcome of this venture is that both beekeeper and farmers are very satisfied with the results. The three apiaries which were established temporarily will remain permanently.

How is Mr Boyd going to work these bees? He has just become part owner of an Auster aircraft and he hopes to obtain his pilot's licence very soon. He lays claim to being the only flying beekeeper in New Zealand.

### Exporting Bees

An Auckland domestic beekeeper, Mr Phil Muir, is developing a modest export trade in bee colonies.

Recently two orders have been shipped per the 'Tofua', the first going to Nuie Island and the second to Apia, Samoa. The orders involved special packing in that the front entrance had to be bee-proof and still give ventilation while an extra top about the size of a half super with a gauze top was flush stapled to each super of bees. The supers were stapled to the floorboards and the lids shipped separately.

Both shipments were given special airy but sheltered positions on the afterdeck and the chief officer was asked to give each hive a half cup of water daily. Each hive constituted two to three frames of brood with queen and the balance of space filled with sealed stores so that only water was necessary to ensure safe delivery into warmer conditions up in the islands.

A report has been received that the Nuie shipment arrived in perfect condition and now Mr Muir is anxiously waiting to hear how the Apia shipment landed but he feels confident the bees will survive the longer trip with his method of packing.

Strange to say the Islanders generally are not honey eaters. At the present time honey on the Islands is almost an embarrassment on account of the lack of demand but bees have proved

their value with increased crops through pollination. The honey flow lasts some 10 months (imagine it) and almost astounding results are obtained. One figure reported was some 400lb per hive but the figure is not confirmed. The bees are so happy and busy they are reported to be almost stingless and the departmental head works them in shorts and singlet without a veil.

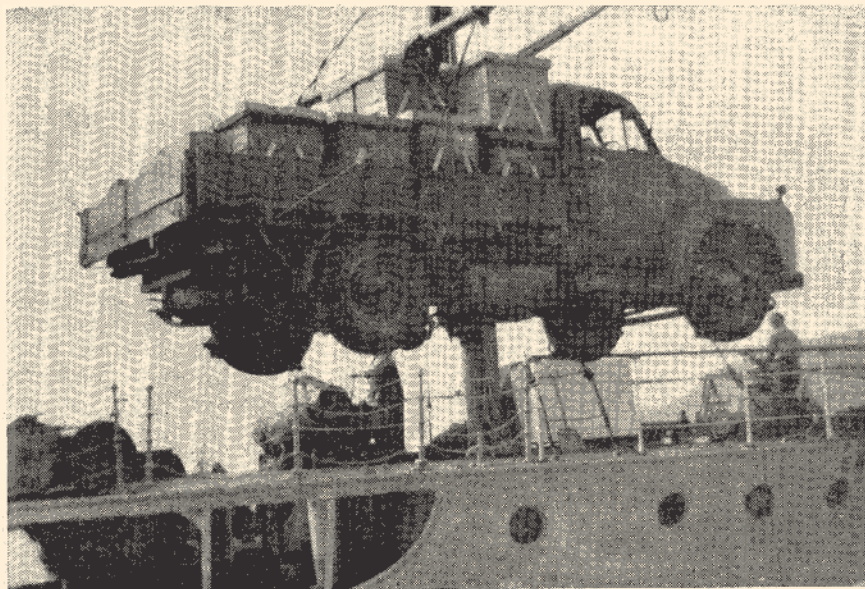
Information of conditions in Apia is not available so far but Mr Muir intends to visit Apia shortly to obtain first-hand knowledge. One of the missions in Samoa has had bees for some years but this latest order came from the Administration.

The procedure of shipping proved interesting in that the Union Company required two Boat Notes, one for livestock and the other for equipment, while the New Zealand Customs classification for export purposes after much research into their schedules was decided as: 'Live animals not elsewhere included, including zoo animals and animals of a kind commonly kept as pets.'

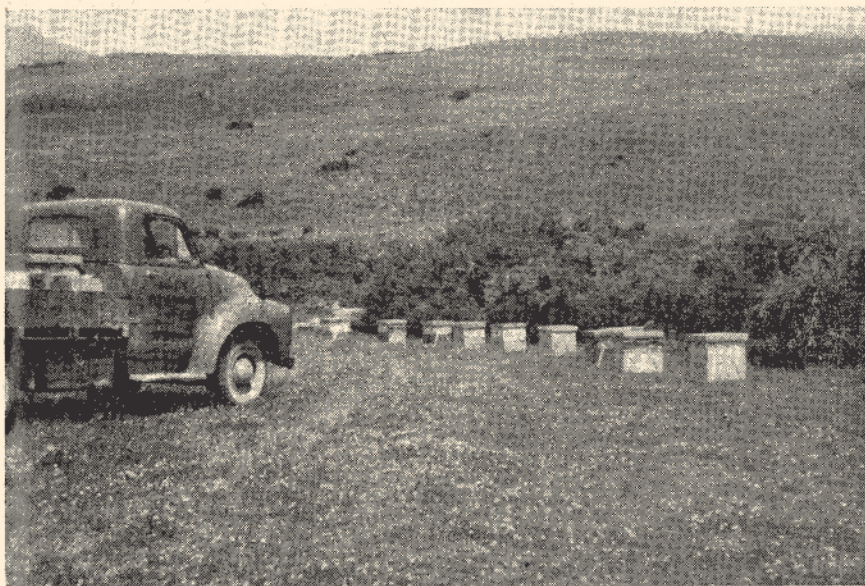
Who said animals?

The queens supplied, incidentally, were from Mr Fred White's stock of Kamo, North Auckland, and were leather coloured pure Italians.

Altogether these orders have been of interest to the shipper and it is hoped will cause further interest among the Pacific Islands for New Zealand bees.



**Bees and truck being winched aboard the steamer.**



**West of Wakatipu: A group of hives on their new location.**



## Reflections . . . . . from the Editor's Desk

After 15 years in the Editor's chair it is with mixed feelings that we put together an issue of the Journal for the last time. The work has been interesting, stimulating, exacting, and at times demanding, but it has brought its rewards. If the sense of achievement has not always been apparent there has at least been the satisfaction which comes from grappling with problems, and the problems which come to an Editor's Desk are considerable.

Since 1948 the Beekeeping Industry has had its share of adventures and has proved enterprising and versatile enough to see them through. In marketing, the establishment of the Honey Marketing Authority, and in production, our recognition on the Agricultural Chemicals Board have been prominent features. In technical progress our Industry has kept pace with a fast moving age.

How do we stand, as an Industry, in the year 1963? Surely there is no more

precarious, and no more challenging, and no more satisfying craft that can be imagined. By its nature it has attracted a body of independent and resourceful men who cherish their freedom more than security. Basically we are well organised to handle our affairs. A goal for the future should be to retain our freedom as far as possible and to remember that the strength of the Industry is not that it is large, or important, or prosperous, but that it stands on its own feet.

To a retiring Editor the memories that will remain are not of material considerations but of personal ones. The courtesy and tolerance which have been shown to us by readers, the hospitality that has been given to us in beekeepers' homes, and the many firm friendships that we have gained over the years—these we will never forget.

With the change of Editorship, 'The N.Z. Beekeeper' will benefit from a new pen and a fresh outlook. We wish the Journal every success in the years to come and the new Editor a pleasant and satisfying term of office.

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Tall Timber: Bees and trees on the Canterbury Plains.

—Photo by Chris Dawson.

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