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## ADVERTISING RATES ON REQUEST

The *New Zealand BeeKeeper* is published eleven times per annum; February to December. All copy should be with the Editor by the 1st day of the month of publication except for December when copy should be received by 20th November.

# Notes from the Executive

## Welcome to new Executive members

It gives us great pleasure to welcome two new members to Executive: Mr Lin McKenzie and Mr Bruce Stevenson, both of whom are experienced beekeepers with a wealth of knowledge to bring to the Executive. Mr Tony Taiaroa, an existing member of the Executive has been duly re-elected for another two years - Tony is a very active member putting a great deal of effort into the Journal and other matters.

The Executive wishes to thank Mr Nick Wallingford for standing for the NBA Executive. It is important that people put their names forward for Executive to allow beekeepers to make their democratic choice. Thank you Nick.

## Our thanks to Mr Keith Herron

Sadly Mr Keith Herron has not been able to stand because of health problems. It is 50 years since Keith attended his first Beekeepers' conference. His humour, knowledge, memory and above all, his ability to get to the heart of a problem, will be missed on the Executive, but all is not lost as he has agreed to become an Advisor to the Executive. We wish him good health and thanks for all he has done for the beekeeping industry and look forward to many years of assistance from him in his advisory role.

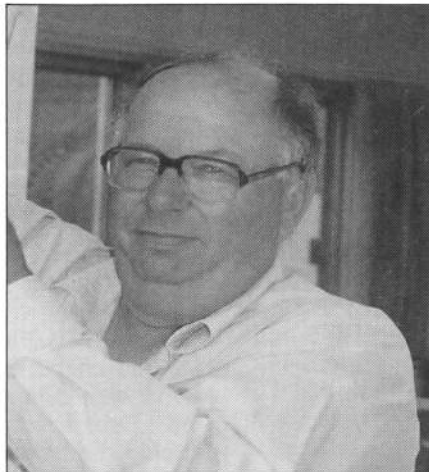
## Why you should come to Conference

We strongly urge members to attend our annual conference. Not only is it important to have your say in running the affairs of the industry, but what it is really about is communication with fellow beekeepers. Whether this is at a social function, the seminar, the speciality meetings or at the conference of branch delegates, we guarantee you will come away from conference brimming with enthusiasm and new ideas, ready to tackle the new beekeeping season in a different way. Those who do not attend conference can really miss out on the fellowship of beekeepers from all over New Zealand and overseas and those beekeeping stories and tips one hears at the social functions and elsewhere.

## Our library

The New Zealand Beekeeping Industry is very fortunate in having such a large library of books and tapes for us to borrow. Thanks to the people who have donated so many books and tapes over the years - please continue to do so.

This wonderful library is no small part due to Mr John Heinmann. Thank you John for 20 years of voluntary service. He has steered many a person to the books appropriate to their needs. This is only possible with an intimate knowledge of what he has in the library.



Russell Berry, President

For as long as I care to remember John has been responsible also for 'Notes for beginners and others'. Well done John. These notes are even more important now that we have so many more part-time beekeepers as members.

Please do not throw bricks at John, borrow lots of books and tapes, return them on time, pay your bills and give John some words of encouragement for his 20 years of service as our honorary librarian.

## NBA's future

The Executive have been looking at a number of matters during the year. We are aware that we should be making the NBA into an organisation which the commercial members cannot afford not to belong to and the smaller beekeepers want to belong to because of increased enjoyment. We believe long term we cannot just keep on increasing apiary levies to generate the income required and that we need to look at income generating ideas.

For example, a few months ago we made a recommendation to the marketing committee that they should be developing brochures suitable for selling to beekeepers, packers and marketers of honey for distributing to different outlets - one for children, one for consumers of honey and a really swept up brochure for major honey buyers. We believe that the marketing committee has the expertise to generate such brochures at cheap prices because of the volumes required. Private enterprise within the beekeeping industry would not be able to compete with these prices. The marketing committee should be able to sell these brochures to the industry at a profit. We hope they are proceeding with this suggestion as we know of a number of people waiting to buy them.

Another classic example of successful income generation from something other

than levies is what the Packers' Association did years ago. They produced their own die for making plastic pots which generated untold income for them. Many of our older beekeepers have ideas which they would be willing to share with the beekeeping industry to help us generate income. They would appreciate the opportunity to pass on their ideas to the industry. Should we have a commercial branch within our organisation?

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## The New Zealand BeeKeeper THIS ISSUE

3-4	Notes from the Executive
4	Where have all the wasps gone?
5	Letters to the Editor
6	Matters Editorial
7	Purple brood
8-9	Notes for beginners and others
10	Good morning America
12-13	Beginning bees with Barry
16	Beekeeping Memoirs
17	Library News
18-19	Mead
22-23	Book review
24	Honey has its moments
25	Recipes
27	From the Colonies

Front cover...

The unspoilt beauty of The Bay of Islands. Photo courtesy: Frank Habicht.

Lin McKenzie is writing an article about our Journal using his knowledge gained as a correspondent for the Otago Daily Times. This is one of the advantages of having had Lin as an observer at our meetings since it was known to the Executive that he would be the South Island new member.

#### **Our Association Rules**

We believe that during the next year we should be having a good look at the rules of our association. We feel the Executive should be representing commercial beekeepers, small beekeepers and geographic areas of New Zealand. Perhaps the Executive could be made up of one commercial beekeeper from the lower half of the South Island and one from the upper half of the South Island, and one from the lower and one from the upper half of the North Island and one beekeeper with less than 50 hives from somewhere in New Zealand. Is this the correct balance? We now have many small beekeepers as members.

We may also be looking at putting greater input into the PMS contracts and running the Register. We are at a time of rapid change. **We do not recommend any major rule changes at this stage.** Let's all look at the rules over the next year and encourage all members and branches to put their ideas forward.

#### **PMS Update**

Your Executive has been very busy working with Government officials mainly on the AFB National Pest Management Strategy Order In Council. This Order In Council with the Biosecurity Act 1993 and its Amendments, is what turns our PMS into law.

We received the first draft of the Order In Council and it was a real mess, very annoying when you consider the amount of work our industry has put into a correct set of drafting instructions for the AFB PMS, including a number of meetings at Wellington.

We are now advised that the next draft of the Order In Council will have to wait until after the Bovine TB PMS has been dealt with by Government. It now appears that our Order In Council will not be in place before Conference, in fact it is suggested it will not be in place until early August. Let us hope that Government can keep to this date and not be delayed to later in August as the Order In Council must have 28 days elapse after passing, before it becomes law.

This means it is like trying to run a football game with a draft set of rules only. Not easy when trying to negotiate a contract and trialing a Disease Elimination Conformity Agreement (DECA). We are currently trialing the DECA on a limited basis and we will be trialing it more extensively shortly. This will hopefully iron out most potential problems with the DECA. No tenders have been let yet for carrying our the

PMS. The Executive apologises for the inconvenience this may have caused to those who sent in tenders.

Your Executive is taking advice from a computer consultant and a PMS consultant at the present time. Government is prepared to give us their Apiary Register for us to use and maintain, but we have not received from Government the conditions for its use, which we have to abide by if we choose this option. These conditions will be spelt out by MAF in a Contract which will allow MAF to issue export certificates with confidence.

One of the additional issues we are looking at is that MAFQual is going to be made into a State Owned Enterprise shortly and it is anticipated that this SOE may well be sold off. This puts the future of MAFQual in an uncertain position.

The Executive is carrying on negotiating with all possible contractors to get their best possible offer, but at the same time is firming up prices and procedures for doing more of the work ourselves and employing beekeepers from branches to do the auditing of beehives. This will return some of the money spent on the PMS back to the beekeeping industry.

At this stage it looks as though, if we do some of the contracts ourselves instead of accepting the tenders as they currently stand, cost savings could be made for the industry so keeping the increase in the apiary levy down to the minimum. But we also hope to have negotiated tender prices down to make them more competitive before Conference.

We will come to Conference with two firm options to present to you and after hearing your opinions on these options we will make the final decision.

The Executive all agree that long term the industry should have maximum direct control over the Register and the PMS by employing people ourselves, so looking after the interests of the beekeepers we represent in a more direct manner.

#### **Executive Secretary and Editor**

The Executive read with shock the remits regarding our Editor and Secretary. We suggest that some of the members perhaps should have got to know the man a bit better and had a look at what he is currently doing before bringing forward such remits to our Conference. Never before have we had an Executive Secretary/Editor who has worked so hard for the good of our membership.

Harry has taken the trouble to learn about beekeeping, he goes to the trouble of attending field days and meeting beekeepers. He receives an honorarium out of which he pays accountants fees, office accommodation, computers and when you divide the number of hours of work he does into the remaining honorarium, there are very few

beekeepers who would work for the hourly rate that Harry is working for.

Please remember that when voting on these remits, we need Harry Brown more than Harry Brown needs us. Harry got off to a difficult start with minimal guidance from the Executive and yes he did make some errors because of the pressure he was placed under, but with the current support he receives from Executive he has become an extremely valuable man to our industry. The whole Executive wish to express their support to Harry Brown as Executive Secretary and Editor.

*Russell Berry, President*

## Where have all the wasps gone?

Some years ago the German wasp numbers were very large and then over several years the numbers of German wasp nest numbers had dropped considerably. The drop in German wasp numbers coincided with the arrival of the Common wasp so we thought the Common wasp was just more competitive.

Now we have something similar happening. Last year wasp numbers were lower than usual. Perhaps it was the weather? However this season the wasps are virtually non-existent. Perhaps the wet weather associated with El Nino was the cause?

But in many places on the Canterbury side of the Island where drought conditions have prevailed, wasp numbers are also low in some areas while normal in others.

If the paper wasp had arrived I would have thought that perhaps competition was the reason as we deduced with the German wasp, but my feeling is that in fact we have something like the RCD virus in rabbits. A virus would explain the loss of wasps as even when nests were operating in summer they very quickly dwindled away to nothing. Even on beech honeydew.

If wasp numbers continue low again next season, then I think the virus ideas will be supported.

*Anon, name and address supplied*

### Goss Korner

Congratulations to the Ecroyds on the new arrival. All well, including dad.

# Letters to the Editor

**Letters are invited on the understanding that they must include the writer's full name and address. Non-de-plumes or initials will not be accepted for printing. Letters should be no more than 200 words, if longer they will be abbreviated. Letters not for publication should be marked NOT FOR PUBLICATION. Opinions expressed in the magazine are not necessarily the opinions of beekeepers in general.**

Dear Sir

Oh dear! It's Mother Nature.

I am becoming very tired of the wonders of Mother Nature and of the wickedness of our over paid, well educated doctors.

When I was a small child, just at the end of World War I, we lived much nearer to Mother Nature. The average life span was about 35 years, we had epidemics of smallpox, diphtheria, scarlet fever, typhoid, dysentery, typhus, people died of lockjaw, many women died in childbirth, many babies never reached the first year of life.

Starvation aided many of these diseases. Farmers just could not produce much food when all they could put back was animal manure from their own farms. Surplus chemicals were sold off the farm as meat, milk, vegetables, wool and were never replaced. Very few people seemed to realise that plants live on a diet of inorganic chemicals.

In those far off days vitamins had just been discovered but had certainly not become a means of exploiting the gullible and the hypochondriacs. Our main food disaster of the 1990s is too much of everything and this includes too many vitamins which are already present in our food without any expensive additions from health food shops and, unfortunately from chemist shops. I always thought that chemists had better ethical standards. Luckily for us these

surplus vitamins are readily excreted from the "back door".

It is well known fiction that beekeepers who are regularly topped up with bee stings never suffer from arthritis.

If any of my customers want pollen I give it to them free, they can have a lick of a dandelion flower. If they are that desperate for the B vitamins they can buy a jar of Marmite or a few grams of brewers yeast. If they want propolis they can have that for free too, they can come to my honey house and scrape a frame or two, much good will it do them.

**George Nichols**

Dear Sir

I am a 33 year old American citizen.

I have no drug dependencies. Would love to visit your country.

Have had seven years of commercial beekeeping experience. I spent the last six years working for the same company.

Work reference: 808-328-9016.  
My number: 808-328-2545 call me collect.

**Kevin Fick, PO Box 601, Kealahakua, HI 96750-0601**

Dear Sir

I would like to thank the beekeepers who voted for me in the recent NBA Executive elections. Your support and confidence in me was sincerely appreciated. I extend to winner of the election, Bruce Stevenson, my full support now and into

the future.

I would also like to thank the more than 50 people who signed an open letter delivered to the Executive to consider at their last meeting. The letter was not mentioned in the Executive minutes. I personally value the extent to which you went to indicate this support for me in a very trying time in dealing with the Editor and the Executive.

I have often said I don't expect to be necessarily 'liked' for the work I have done with the industry. I do, however, hope for acknowledgement for integrity, attention to detail and a sincere desire to support and promote the beekeeping industry.

**Nick Wallingford**

The open letter was received on Friday 22nd of May, three days before the Executive meeting. The writer was advised that there was no guarantee, due to its late arrival and a very full Agenda, that it would be placed on the Agenda. It has been the Executive policy for a number of years, not to have late items added to the Agenda unless the issue is small and requires urgent addressing and then only if the Executive approve of the item being added to the Agenda.

The open letter was placed on the Agenda of a Conference Call on the 22nd of June, the writer advised of the outcome on the 23rd of June.

**Russell Berry, President**

## Another point of view

It was with concern that I read the NBA reorganisation proposed by the Bay of Plenty branch. The actual concept looks good on paper but it is fundamentally flawed. The concerns that I have with the reorganisation proposed are as follows:

Beekeepers do not have a vote as to who is on the management committee and who is the executive director? Once appointed they would be impossible to shift. The executive director is only accountable to the management committee and the management committee is entirely at the discretion of the executive. We do not have one damn say to who we want to run our industry. After we elect our executive member from our respective branches its out of our control. Quite a bit like Parliament. Enough said.

I do not see a real need for the management committee to exist. I'm sure if the executive can set policies they can implement them as well. It is a logical

progression. This way all executive members are accountable for the whole policy process.

It is perhaps quite naive to think that this reorganisation change from an implementation body to a policy setting body would allow for fewer meetings and no dramatic impacts on the cost of the management of the association. Even with the more efficient use into the future of modern communications technology, members would have to meet more than twice a year to sort out the logistics that policy setting requires.

I have confusion with the type of person who can be executive director. The reorganisation says the executive director should have a strong understanding of beekeeping technical matters, but in the official rule changes the executive director does not necessarily have to be a member of the association. What is needed are persons who are prepared to work for the good

of the industry rather than their own or corporations ego. Beekeepers need to wake up and control their own industry.

I think it would be rather stupid to have to vote at the conference on this one idea of reorganisation when it may not necessarily have been properly thought through. If there is the concern of distribution of workload and the need to be more professional then it would be a good idea over the next 12 months for other individual branches or individuals to come up with their own ideas for the reorganisation of the NBA. Any change has to be the right change since it will impact on the association for many years. The Bay of Plenty branch should be congratulated for the time and effort that has been put into producing this particular reorganisation concept. Just a pity that it would be disastrous for the industry if implemented.

**Gerard Martin**

# Matters Editorial

The tenor of recent issues of *The BeeKeeper* and the depths to which some of the content has sunk are causing real concern regarding both the content and standards of editorial policy. Asking around indicates there are really no guidelines in place and the editor probably does his best on the day. This in turn has probably led to a 'management by crisis' situation whereby the crises are dealt with as they arise, but there is no plan set up to avoid the next one.

It seems to me we can expect little else without a game plan. The first requirement of course is a goal, so what is our goal regarding *The BeeKeeper*? What do we expect our journal to be? A source of entertainment and amusement? A forum at which those members whose bonnets abound with bees can grind various axes (how's that for mixing metaphors?). A means of dissemination of information, be it technical, political or commercial? A means for our advertisers to reach their clientele? Or a blunt instrument with which to beat the heads of those we disagree with? I suggest the first and the last suggestion have been attained in the last few issues.

I have asked one or two people for their opinions and preference seems to come down to the dissemination of information and opinion in the technical, political, commercial and personality arenas (I said personality, not personal). The dissemination should be a two-way thing so Letters to the Journal are at very least desirable. Aren't they? Or do we need them at all?

This of course brings us to the vexed question of letters to the editor, or the journal or whoever. These epistles of course are really to the subscriber via the editor, so does the editor have the right to decide whether they should appear, be abridged or commented on? I feel most strongly that he has perhaps his most important role to play here. These letters are the interface between readers, contributors and those who put the publication together and as such are, I suggest, sacrosanct in that they must be credible above all else. I have discussed this at length with the managing editor of a leading provincial newspaper who tells me his paper goes to great lengths in dealing with 'Letters to the Editor'.

Here are some of the rules used by The Otago Times:-

*The editor (read 'organisation'?) has the right to reject any letter, without explanation.*

*Letters should be brief, say 200 words, and original.*

*Non-de-plume or initials should not be accepted, unless the person can provide a valid reason for not signing his or her*

*name, such as losing a job. In all cases full names and addresses of correspondents must be supplied, even if they are not published.*

*As with all material for publication, the editor must check for legal problems - libel, human rights, race relations and so on. If any doubt arises on these counts he has three choices: edit the letter and publish a note to say it has been abridged; consult a lawyer to have the material checked before deciding on publication; or reject it outright.*

*A rule of thumb is that if something comes forward that would lower the reputation of a person or company it should be regarded with caution unless it can be proven to be true and said without malice.*

*In law the editor, printer, publisher and/or owner and everyone connected with a publication are liable for the content of the publication; but usually the owner ends up paying because they are the best target to sue. Therefore editors need to be given strict guidelines on their responsibilities and warned if they transgress.*

As well I am told the newspaper goes to some lengths to verify names and addresses are correct, checking electoral rolls and ringing the writer for verification are but two of their checks.

In our case I feel there is no reason to ever publish a letter unless the writer is prepared to stand up while the counting is done. If there is any whistle blowing to be done there are probably other ways to do so with protection afforded the blower.

It goes without saying that any letter addressed to The Editor, The Secretary or The Executive should always be addressed very precisely to the intended recipient and it would of course be prudent to mark it so, if it is not for publication.

## **What else do we expect of our journal and its editor?**

It seems at least two surveys have been conducted on the subject, one in the earlier years of this decade and another around 1984, both in the era of an editor with very little technical knowledge. I have been unable to source the results of either survey but certainly neither resulted in any surviving rules.

Now a little knowledge may well be a dangerous thing and ignorance may well be bliss, but in this case I submit that ignorance can be dangerous and a little knowledge might help. Particularly when some of the wordy stuff needs pruning. We are all aware of those who don't believe in using one word when ten will do, sub-editors love them. One of a sub-editor's jobs is to cut all the padding, and all the repetitive stuff. Another is to check accuracy and readability. Very important

this readability stuff!

So it would seem fair to say we need someone at the helm who has some grasp of what our industry is about; who is aware of industry personalities and where they are going to and coming from; who is able to maintain a neutral stance; and who has some sub-editing and layout skills. About here is where my wife started making 'you be very careful, I'm nervous' noises!

So much for the personnel. What about content? Do we want page after page after page of obscure stuff about some part of the industry most will never get into on any sort of commercial basis? Wordy lecturing on the benefits of giving all our money to some marketer who has done a good job of marketing himself to ourselves? Stuff lifted from other journals? Column for beginners? Good practical stuff from knowledgeable beekeepers? Technical stuff about research? Recipes using product? Reminiscing and perhaps the odd profile on some of our people? Reports on industry trends? And of course all the political stuff.

In my humble opinion most of the above (I did say most) is what we want to read, so who is to sort it all out? Chivy late contributors along and decide whether this load of drivel from the President should see daylight. Check out whether the letter received from a 'Disgruntled Beekeeper' or 'Alarmed Owner of Seven Hives' is genuine, not actionable, of interest, need abridging or should have been sent to the local school magazine or the Chinese Emperor or the nearest wastepaper basket. Sub-edit the wordy and the difficult to read stuff and lay it all out, arrange advertising, proofread it all and get it off to the printer inside the deadline. The editor, that is who.

I submit for discussion the following:-

- a that we lay down guidelines for letters based on the above rules
- b that the editor checks with the publication committee in full anything he has doubt about
- c that anything published must be attributed to the source or author, ie articles as well as letters
- d that veracity in all things is sacrosanct

And I ask whether you feel we have a need for an editorial committee, perhaps with overriding editorial responsibility, and if so who should be on it?

It is my belief that democracy is based on free and frank discussion, the right to hold an opinion and the right to express that opinion. This is what our magazine should be about. But remember, democracy always has a price.

Everyone is entitled to an opinion; no matter how bloody stupid it is!

**Lin McKenzie**

# Purple brood

In beekeeping as in all things in life, it tends to be the often repeated experiences that lead to a sense of fulfilment and a feeling of contentment but it is the unusual that add excitement and interest. Even after 25 years keeping bees strange things appear out of nowhere to surprise and interest me. One of the weirdest I've seen was when we were requeening back in February and John came across a hive with purple, or at least bright mauve, brood. John reckoned that he had seen it years ago way up in the back of Willow Flat (Northern Hawke's Bay), but I couldn't remember ever having seen it before and neither could dad. The young larvae were coloured purple right through, but they lost it part way through the process of pupation. The colour of the cappings on the brood affected was very dark, very much like the intact cappings that you sometimes find on chalkbrood, which was what had made John suspicious in the first place. It was, to put it mildly really weird but it didn't seem to be doing them any harm. I doubt if it is of any real significance but it is one of those intriguing things that pop up every now and then in beekeeping to keep us interested and on our toes.

I put out an appeal over the Internet but

no one on the Net had seen anything like it in New Zealand and that included Ted, who was most intrigued and was keen to follow it up as soon as he had the time. James Bolger however had seen it in Georgia in the USA and I quote from his email.

*"In the southern USA, a condition known as "Blue Brood" is quite well-known. In Honey Bee Pests, Predators and Diseases (ed R Morse), it is discussed under the name "purple-brood". It is caused by bees feeding on *Cyrilla racemiflora* (summer titi, southern leatherwood). According to Morse, affected brood turns blue or purple then dies. Moving combs of honey to healthy hives will kill their brood too. My own experience is slightly different. I spent two seasons working for a queen producer in Georgia, where "Blue brood" was an accepted part of every beekeeping year. When the titi bloomed in early summer, hive build-up slowed or stopped. Much of the brood in some sites would take on a blueish tint, but seemed to develop normally. This lasted for a couple of weeks, then presumably the bees moved on to other sources. It was regarded as a minor nuisance, worse in some years than others."*

I have never seen anything similar in New

Zealand, and would be interested to know how many people have. Perhaps someone with a good library on native plants could see if there are any *Cyrilla* species in New Zealand?

So that's the story on purple brood so far, if any one reading this has seen purple brood or something similar, please write in to the *BeeKeeper* or see me at Conference, especially if you have some idea what the cause of it is.

And my quote for the month:

"If you don't know what something is you should treat it as suspicious first and interesting second."

Peter Berry

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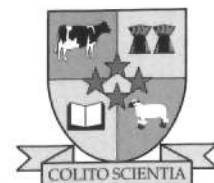
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# Notes for beginners and others

John Heineman

It's getting on for the shortest day while writing this and we have had a series of cold frosty nights here in Otago but the days have been pretty good with a good bit of sunshine. Temperatures during the day don't go high enough to tempt the bees outdoors. Not to worry, they will be alright so long as there is enough tucker within reach. The consumption of stores is not very high at this stage, that will increase when brood rearing gets under way again. It is really amazing the relative small amount a cluster consumes during these coldest months. Shows what a marvellous source of energy honey is. When this issue of *The New Zealand BeeKeeper* arrives in your mail box it will be well into July, still a winter month with little doing in as far as the bees are concerned. Bit different for the beekeepers with the Annual Conference and the seminar coming up. Those who can make it to Waitangi are fortunate. It is always an experience and there is always something to learn. Discussions on the remits etc are probably not the most interesting topics for many beekeepers. But for all that it is important that all those involved in our industry take part in running it. If you cannot make it to Waitangi then at least make sure that the branch delegate carries your vote(s). Sure the bigger beekeepers carry more votes than the small fellows, fair enough I think as their wellbeing depends for a much greater degree on NBA activity and they also carry the bulk of the running costs. However there are a far greater number of people with a single or a few votes than those classed as the "big ones". Even if you do not have a vote as an NBA member but are a member of one of the beekeepers clubs you have the opportunity to make your opinion known. Having your say about the affairs of our industry's organisation

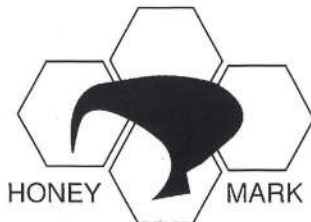
and providing your personal input, however little that may be is important. Under a democratic system it is not only a privilege but also a duty.

Winter is a good time if you have to shift hives short distances. A good number of years ago a cocky in the process of developing a pretty rough block of land kept pestering us to bring in hives. Did not seem to be economical from our point of view but after the council put in a so-called back block access road we obliged. Found a good sheltered spot, gorse at the back, dry, a ditch in front draining a small swampy area. Those colonies just did not thrive at all that year even with the season being one of the better ones. Winter came, phone went, please could you shift those hives as we want to put up a fence? We did it on a cold, dull day, new site about 100 metres away. Following days no better, so the bees did not go out, we did not lose any to speak of through drifting back to the old site after the weather warmed up. The remarkable thing is that these hives have done well since they were shifted a mere 100 metres. Why? I have not been able to work that one out.

One early spring we moved hives from inland fairly high altitude country to a place nearer the coast and lower down. Inland it is real beautiful clover country but the winters are harsh and spring build-up slow. The coastal site is situated in the large forest (pine), facing at the time onto an open slope and close to a native bush reserve offering good spring sources. The colonies did very well indeed that year. Good rapid development and a couple of boxes with bush honey before it was time to move them back to the clover. The extra effort paid dividends. The next move took place in the autumn. We

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thought they could just as well winter at this coastal site and we would not be hampered by wet paddocks or even snow next spring. It did not work out. We lost about half the shifted colonies and the remainder were in poor condition after the winter. The reason for that disappointment is that part of our coastal ridge seems to attract and hold clouds with accompanying rain and drizzle for long periods. That is worse than frost and snow. The great expanse of pretty near mature pine trees may well have created this particular climate.

It just goes to show that there is always something to learn and to discover even after many years of beekeeping. The sad part is that most of these lessons come at a price, they are costly. But at least no one else can be blamed, not the MAF or the PM or the treasurer, it's all part of the game.

Anyway we found out that moving hives a short distance while the weather is still cold and dull so that the bees do not fly for a number of days after being moved causes no detrimental effects through drifting back to the old site. To play it extra safe one can always leave a hive or super behind to catch lost souls in case a very nice break in the weather occurs shortly after the shift.

If you need to shift a few hives in the garden because of redevelopment or some other reason it is best to do it gradually. Say a metre at the time and repeated after a few days till they have reached their new destination. No worries about drifting back, especially not in the winter.

Now let us go back to the April issue. The article about wintering, the amount of honey needed and the use of spring scales to determine the weight of hives.

One of my cobbers told me that when the scales registered 20kg it would indicate inadequate stores, 25kg would be more like it. You will remember that those spring scales hooked into the handgrip of the bottom super of a two storey hives and "hinging" up the two supers will give half the total weight. So the difference in the weight shown is not 5kg but in fact 10kg. Why so much more? Neil is right of course in his circumstances for he (not on his own) manages something like 2000 hives with a good proportion a fair distance away from home on higher country where snow in August is normal and in September not a rarity. It takes time to get around that lot and with delays on account of weather and ground conditions it makes good sense to provide that extra safety margin.

Notes for Beginners and Others are aimed mainly at those beekeepers with a small number of hives. They will be in the position to check their colonies as soon as the weather warms up a bit. Anyway I would expect this to be done sometime in August no matter where one lives in the country.

To take some of the guess work out of it I resorted to our honey house scales and found the following weights, all full-depth gear:

Empty fd super 4.5kg; with 10 good quality fairly light coloured dry brood combs 7kg; same with 10 dry dark old combs 12kg (note 5kg difference); with 10 wet extracted combs (some granulation) 10kg; super with 10 well filled feed combs 30kg (combs at outsides not quite full); one frame with dry good brood comb 0.5kg; a well filled sealed fd comb 3.2kg.

Calculation of weight of honey in a hive registering 22kg on the spring scales:

Gross 2x22kg		=	44kg
Less supers + combs 2x7kg	14kg		
pollen (approx)	2kg		
bees (20,000+)	3kg	=	19kg
	<u>Honey</u>	=	<u>25kg</u>

The experts differ somewhat as to the winter needs of a colony. Andrew Matheson in Beekeeping in NZ quotes 16 to 20kg, earlier articles by MAF officers say 50lbs = 22-23kg while in

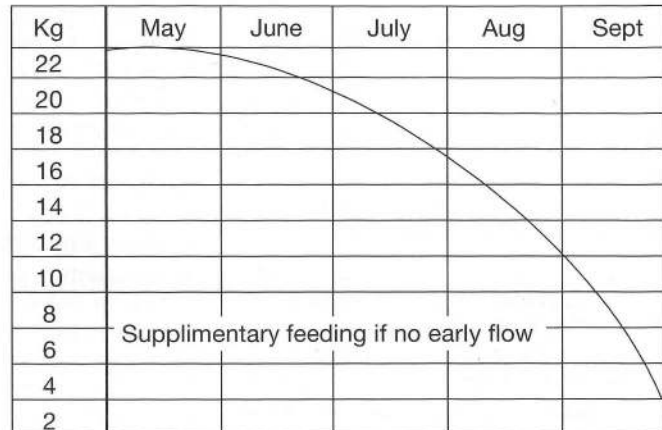
the USA colder parts 90lbs (41kg) is prescribed.

Best is of course to be on the safe side, without over doing it.

Consumption during the earlier part of our cold season is not great but it increases rapidly when brood rearing gets under way. The following simple graph gives an indication of the rate of consumption and the subsequent weight loss.

Allow for the geographical and climatic variations. Spring in Kaitia comes earlier than in Invercargill. No hard and fast rule, depends on your particular patch.

CORRECTION: Did anyone notice? Somewhere along the line the illustrations with this column in last month's issue got mixed up, Figure 3 supersedure should be 2 and figure 2 should be 3 emergency.



**"I think there is a world market  
for maybe five computers."  
(Thomas Watson, chairman of IBM, 1943).**

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TAURANGA.

# Good morning America

What a month!... Sandee and I had work for another client in the USA last month... (we were teaching USA chefs how to use and market New Zealand Greenshell Mussels) so while over there we took the opportunity to sit down with the USA National Honey Board's Sherry Jennings, and look at our countries respective marketing strategies and how we could work together.

We were very impressed with what the USA has been doing... in fact a few months ago I suggested in this column that they were picking up our strategies... that was unfair (bordering on arrogant?)... I should have said that it looks like our strategies are good because, independently of us, the USA is following a similar line! (Sorry about that, American Honey Board!).

During our discussions with Sherry she invited us to that National Honey Board's Annual Strategic Planning Meeting and that was invaluable! I'll be presenting a paper to the NBA Conference on the discussions and conclusions of the meeting... and how it can benefit the New Zealand beekeeper, and a copy of that will be in next month's *BeeKeeper* magazine.

We enjoyed meeting with American beekeepers and it looks like the 'beekeeper profile' is an international one. Individually different from one another... but there's a collective look or personality that seems to stand out.

Very interesting to find that the issues and personality clashes and 'social dynamics' that pervade our industry is virtually identical to what is happening in the USA. I was invited to speak at the Strategic Planning meeting and seemed to hit the right spot on a number of issues. After the former session had been discussing divisiveness amongst beekeepers I was asked "do you have problems like this in the New Zealand beekeeping industry"?

I replied that the New Zealand industry was characterised by a membership that was fiercely individualistic... and that prided itself on that fact... and that there were in effect two political parties... plus a lot of amused and bemused on-lookers. (That got a good laugh and an acknowledgement that things were the same in both countries).

Peter Molan and his research work is very highly regarded in the USA... and we'll be looking at how the USA can pick up on some of Peter's work and turn it into profitable commercial opportunities.

What really impressed us was the willingness of the American industry to assist us on the basis that their size and resources enables them to do that, and because they believe that the overriding objective should be to get honeys eaten

by more people in more countries... and that benefits everyone!

Got to try a number of American honeys while over there... sorry I couldn't bring any back for the honey tasting at Conference... I've made them my favourites this month, (see *last paragraph*).

## **Honeydew's time is coming...**

A few months ago I mentioned the potential for honeydew as a nutraceutical food because of the oligosaccharide content... a potential value that Peter Molan discovered. So it was very interesting to note that in the USA now there are dozens of products, especially yoghurts, that promote their oligosaccharide value as being important and good for you!

## **Honey's antioxidant values...**

Antioxidants... early research reports based on collaboration between Peter Molan and a UK research team show that New Zealand honeys definitely have antioxidant values... especially manuka... and for reasons we've still to determine... active manuka seems to have the highest percentage.

## **Honey... the Quintessential power food**

But most exciting news for me this month... maybe this year... researchers have established that a catalase in honey may be responsible for promoting glucose action on the myocardium (the heart muscle)... and that eating honey instead of glucose may result in less lactic acid build up in muscle tissue for athletes... and that honey 'deposits' a higher and more persistent accumulation of glycogen in liver, muscles and the heart than glucose does (ie sustained energy available!).

So all those years ago when Arthur Lydiard recommended that Snell and Walker have honey before an event, he really knew what he was doing!!!

It looks like it has to do with the presence of acetylcholine in the honey (and that's not in refined cane sugar or glucose!!!)... and this means that anyone engaged in sport will benefit from honey instead of sugar products, and that is a huge international opportunity for honey.

Maybe the Aussie Olympic swimming team knew what it was doing when it took on the Australian honey industry as its sponsor!

It also looks like honey may help increase haemoglobin in milk and help magnesium absorption... and that dark honeys may be more effective than light honeys in helping to prevent anaemia.

And there's lots more too. I'll be tabling the information at Conference 98... and it'll be in next month's *BeeKeeper*. The reference is the Italian Clinica Pedistica 1968.

Thanks to Peter Molan's Masters Degree student, Paulo Galimberti, for doing the translation of the paper, the information has simply phenomenal potential if we publicise it well and use it to encourage multinational companies to create new honey products based on it. And that's where we'll be joining forces with the USA's National Honey Board. Worth emphasising that the research has been around since 1968!... time to start marketing it!

## **My favourite honey's this month... (also tasted and opinions corroborated by Sandee)**

Gene Brandi puts out a Sage honey... and it's beautiful! Incredibly thick and full-bodied yet with the silken smoothness of a classy New Zealand vipers. Lovely butter and oak flavours... Gene said he likes to think of it as the Chardonnay of honeys... (and here's me thinking I was the only one to talk like that!).

Tropic Bee of Florida puts out an Orange Blossom honey that has subtle but quite superb citrusy flavours... but what really impressed me was their Key Lime honey. This is a Citrus honey that has natural lime essence added (it's promoted as a honey with added essence). I'd not thought of adding lime flavours to honey... but it's a marriage made in organoleptic heaven!... a beautiful result! The lime softens the honey's sweetness and the result is clean and refreshing... and indicates the potential for honey in lime mayonnaise and the like.

Third honey we tried was Pure West Virginia honey from Thistledeed Farm. Lovely light golden colour and a flavour reminiscent of almond icing and orange peel... vaguely like a New Zealand vipers bugloss/nodding thistle blend.

And lastly... a quick hello and thank you to our luncheon companions: Wally Diehnelt, Ashippun (brilliant honey peppermints Wally); Don Smoot, Montana; Manly Bigalk, Iowa, Lyall Johnston, Colorado, Darrel Rufer, Minnesota and Steve Conlan, West Virginia. Thoroughly enjoyed your company! (We know many of you read *The New Zealand BeeKeeper*).

**Bill Floyd**

*Footnote: Had just written the above and was talking with Ben Rawnley about the perils and delights of five-lane dodgem driving on American Freeways when I told him about 'acetylcholine'... to which Ben enjoyed remarking that acetylcholine is one of the major compounds in Royal Jelly... and explains many of the energy advantages of Royal Jelly for people.*

**\* I don't know the key to success,  
but the key to failure is trying to  
please everyone!**



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# Beginning bees with Barry

Well, you have decided that you want a beehive.

Do you realise that once you get a beehive your life will never be the same again. You will be governed by weather reports that are either inaccurate or too general to be of any use.

You will find that your bees will sting if a cold front is on the way. I remember my bees were ferocious for the week before the Waihine sank in Wellington Harbour.

Bees are definitely addictive. If you get one hive, very soon you will convince yourself that you need a second hive as one will support the other if it becomes queenless etc.

Not long after you get the second hive you will want a few more and will be offered sites by friends so will end up with a few hives scattered all over the district. You will also find that you will never find time or an excuse to visit the spread hives often enough, so you build up each site to make visits worthwhile.

Soon all your weekends will be taken up with your hives so you may as well go full-time. And now you are hooked for life.

Next, choice of hive. My first hive was a box hive and the bees soon glued the lid on and I soon found a removable frame hive would be better. Actually the law states that bees must be kept in a moveable frame hive for inspection purposes. However a neglected frame hive is definitely immovable.

If you are ever offered a neglected hive, the best approach is to push the hive over on its back and use a spade to separate the boxes. Then the frame can be moved if you turn the box upside down and stand on the frames as you lever the box up with your hive tool. Next you need a knife to clean up each frame from surplus wax. Don't forget to save the propolis separately. Store in the deepfreeze until you get enough to sell, otherwise the wax moths will get into it.

If you collect a swarm to start, make sure you put it onto a new foundation to eliminate disease. Do not use old gear unless certain of its history. To have to burn your first hive is terribly depressing.

If you get tired of the hive, sell it while it is worth something. If you just neglect it, the value will drop quickly and it will be a problem producing swarms.

The assortment of possible moveable frame hives is as endless as your imagination. You could go back to basics and establish the swarm in a half drum like I have seen in Fiji. Top bars spaced across the open drum with strips of foundation to give the bees a guide are the basic arrangement. The bees build combs down into the curve of the drum.

Sacking and a waterproof lid cover the frames and palm fronds reduce the heat of the sun. Not the best set up with more problems than benefits.

You could think big. I remember Robert Davidson's multiqueen hive. Four full-depth boxes together with excluders connecting the four into a large super with double length full-depth frames. You would have to be a champion weightlifter if the super was full. Robert said the idea did not work out in practice.

An interesting variation of a hive was one we inspected in Christchurch. When we lifted the lid, it fell to bits, when a frame was picked up it also fell to bits. It turned out that the owner had bought a new hive and carefully put all the interlocking pieces together and added a swarm. Only thing, he didn't know that nails were a necessary addition.

As far as nailing hives goes. You need to realise that propolis is one of the best glues available. Any frames, boxes etc need much better nailing than you thought necessary, or everything will pull apart as you operate on the hive.

I nowadays like to use a 1¼ inch nail sideways through the end bar into the top bar and then into the far away end bar. This has the advantage of not needing two nails in the top bar, and also the nail doesn't tend to be hit by the extracting knife. The bottom bar needs two nails even if you think one will do.

The Langstroth sized hive is the preferred option here with a 20x16 inch outside dimension. However there can be variations on this by varying the depth of boxes.

For the fit, the Dadant type of hive with frames about twice the depth of threequarter-depth frame does provide a good broodnest but I would prefer to use two threequarter boxes as they allow reversal of boxes during manipulations, swarm control etc.

To cut down the lifting a number use threequarter depth boxes for honey. When used with a double full-depth broodnest, problems arise. The main problem is when wintering honey in the threequarter boxes can not be added to the top brood box for winter stores.

The better option is to run a full-depth bottom box and a threequarter in the second position. This allows movement of brood into the third box when more brood room is needed and to move honey down into the second box for winter stores.

My own preference now is to use a full-depth brood nest with an excluder above and then all other boxes above are threequarters.

Using a single full-depth box for brood

results in a good box of brood throughout the season without the buildup in pollen that occurs in double broodnest hives. At times brood will be from wall to wall with little pollen and all honey above the excluder.

Swarming is reduced by requeening, preferably in the autumn. This reduces the risk of queen losses as can occur in the spring.

If swarm cells are made regardless, the queen can be allowed into an empty box by lifting the excluder. Honey is lifted above the excluder. She is put back into the bottom box when the flow starts.

Swarming can be triggered by two things apart from queen age. If honey is sealed above the brood cells swarming will be started. Bruising the cappings will persuade the bees to move the honey above the excluder. Feeding syrup stimulates swarming more than feeding dry raw sugar.

The breed of bee also contributes toward swarming. If you use swarm cells for requeening, very soon you will have a strain prone to swarming.

Darker bees are also more likely to swarm, but this is also often related to sealed honey over the brood.

The half-depth box if oversized is okay for cut comb but generally the half-depth frames are a nuisance for extracting honey. However if section honey is to be produced, the use of a full-depth brood nest and half-depth boxes for the sections works quite well.

It is better to remove sections as they are finished repacking into the centre frames any unfinished sections. Supering can result in the lower sections having odd cells of pollen as if there is a break in the weather a few cells of honey can be emptied leaving room for pollen.

Never put dark combs above comb honey and make sure the side of the lid is free of old wax or any other material that the bees can use for capping the honey as they don't waste anything.

## **Multiqueen hives**

Honey production relates a great extent to having colonies at the peak of their strength as the main honey flow starts.

This can be achieved by using two queens in a variety of ways. Everyone has heard of the productive capacity of two queen hives, but such hives can be a liability if the large bee population cannot be used up by a late honeyflow.

The earliest type of two queen hive with the fewest long term problems is what some describe as the "top" system.

This involves dividing the colony in half about mid or early October. The old queen is left in the lower position and a young queen or queen cell is added to

the half above a division board. When the division is made, place a double thickness of newspaper on the division board and if the paper sags over the entrance staple the paper up to the box. If this is not done the lower colony will often rob out the "top" as returning bees let the others know about the unprotected honey.

If a ripe queen cell is used, then allow three weeks before checking for the new queen to lay.

After the new queen has hatching brood, the two halves can be exchanged as this allows bees to drift and even up the strength of both halves. It also reduces the strength of the old queen's colony and reduces the risk of swarming.

When the main flow starts, as indicated by drawing off fresh wax the old queen is killed and the two halves united using two thicknesses of paper between. If the excluder has a piece removed from it to allow the escape of drones, this will act as an entrance for the top colony after the division board is removed.

Using queen cells instead of caged queens can be a risk in some areas as if the virgin is lost the strength will drop. However the old queen can be reunited. If mating from a top the entrance should face the back or side as otherwise the young queen can be attracted to the lower, more active entrance.

I found that mating from the lower unit and placing the old queen above the division board has advantages. Generally the mating percentage is better. Also as the top has its own laying queen, drifting is less and swarming nearly eliminated.

The only modification I make is to place an excluder above the brood box and add a super. While the virgin is mating there is a break in the brood and often a lot of honey can accumulate in the lower brood box. As soon as the young queen

starts to lay, excess honey is moved through the excluder to the super.

If this operation is delayed until near the main honeyflow, it can be a good way of producing comb honey. Instead of uniting the top unit it is united with others at one end of the apiary. The field bees drift back to the lower unit and the united tops are strong enough to gather winter stores for the parent hives.

To establish a two queen hive is a modification of the top system. Once each half is operating okay, the uniting can be done. The principle of the two queen hive is to establish each queen in her own brood box with an excluder between. A second excluder is needed above the second brood box also or the top queen will move up into the supers.

I have had various methods explained to me. Some use up to 12 sheets of newspaper between each half. With so many thicknesses it is necessary to have a top entrance to replace that on the division board as uniting can take some time.

Another successful method involves shaking two frames of the top colony diagonally across the broodnest of the lower colony, and then uniting can be done with only two sheets of newspaper.

Another method that appears quite successful is to use the nick in the excluder between the two colonies as the entrance for the top and under the excluder is placed a sheet of aluminium insulation foil. As the bottom colony gets stronger the bees gradually eat a hole through the foil and eventually you have a two queen colony.

Once united, each queen seems to compete with each other and soon you end up with the start of the main honeyflow.

Only attempt two queen hives if the flow

is expected to continue for a while. In a good flow the top queen can sometimes be crowded out and will disappear, so during the flow make sure the brood nests are exchanged if necessary to place the youngest queen in the lower brood chamber.

Sometimes the second box will have sufficient honey for winter stores but this depends on a heavy honey flow.

The best result I have had from two queen hives resulted in 10 hives averaging 150kg from clover and then when moved to beech honeydew averaged another 75kg from honeydew.

Two hundred and twenty five kg average, makes the thought of two queen hives bring a sparkle to the eyes. However I must tell you that these hives accidentally became two queen hives when brood added above the single brood nest hives to give them a boost all reared additional queens. I had to remove two threequarter boxes of honey each week as in the competitive environment of Canterbury I didn't want neighbouring beekeepers to see I was having a good season. Beekeepers use the reverse of the fisherman's description to keep other beekeepers away. Even then the hives rapidly reached a full-depth and nine threequarter boxes in height and were still trying to swarm because of lack of room.

On the West Coast experiments with two queen hives were disappointing. With the warm climate a single queen can easily take hives up to five or six boxes of bees, so having the extra queen creates supering problems. In a poor season one went to a full-depth and 10 threequarter boxes high so in a normal season the whole idea becomes quite impractical unless some other arrangement for brood and supers is worked out.

*Anon, name and address supplied*

## Something about chalkbrood

Chalkbrood spores can be spread through pollen in the field and through common water sources. American experiments with CB free bees showed that foraging bees returning from certain sites were carrying CB spores that they had picked up when foraging. It was deduced that these sites had been contaminated by other bees and the trial bees and later picked up the spores.

Bees foraging for pollen regurgitate stomach honey to soften the pollen and if the bee is carrying CB spores in its gut, some of these will be left at the pollen site and will almost certainly be picked up by another bee visiting that site.

These experiments were the first to show that CB spores can also be transferred through a common water source.

Another part of the experiment was to evaluate the degree of infection. To this end the CB mummies were collected and counted and the number of mummies expressed as a percentage of total brood rearing. Although an infection level of 11.8% was recorded in a badly infected hive, the range was as low as 2.5% and averaged at 4.8% showing that the level of infection is not always as severe as it may appear to be.

In one experiment, bees and brood were regularly sprayed with a mixture of syrup and CB spores. Despite the fact that they were sprayed three times a week, there were only two periods of major infection and within four months of the cessation of the spraying, the hive was completely free of CB spores. The periods of major infection came firstly, within a week of

the beginning of the spraying, but later, significantly at a period of nutritional stress.

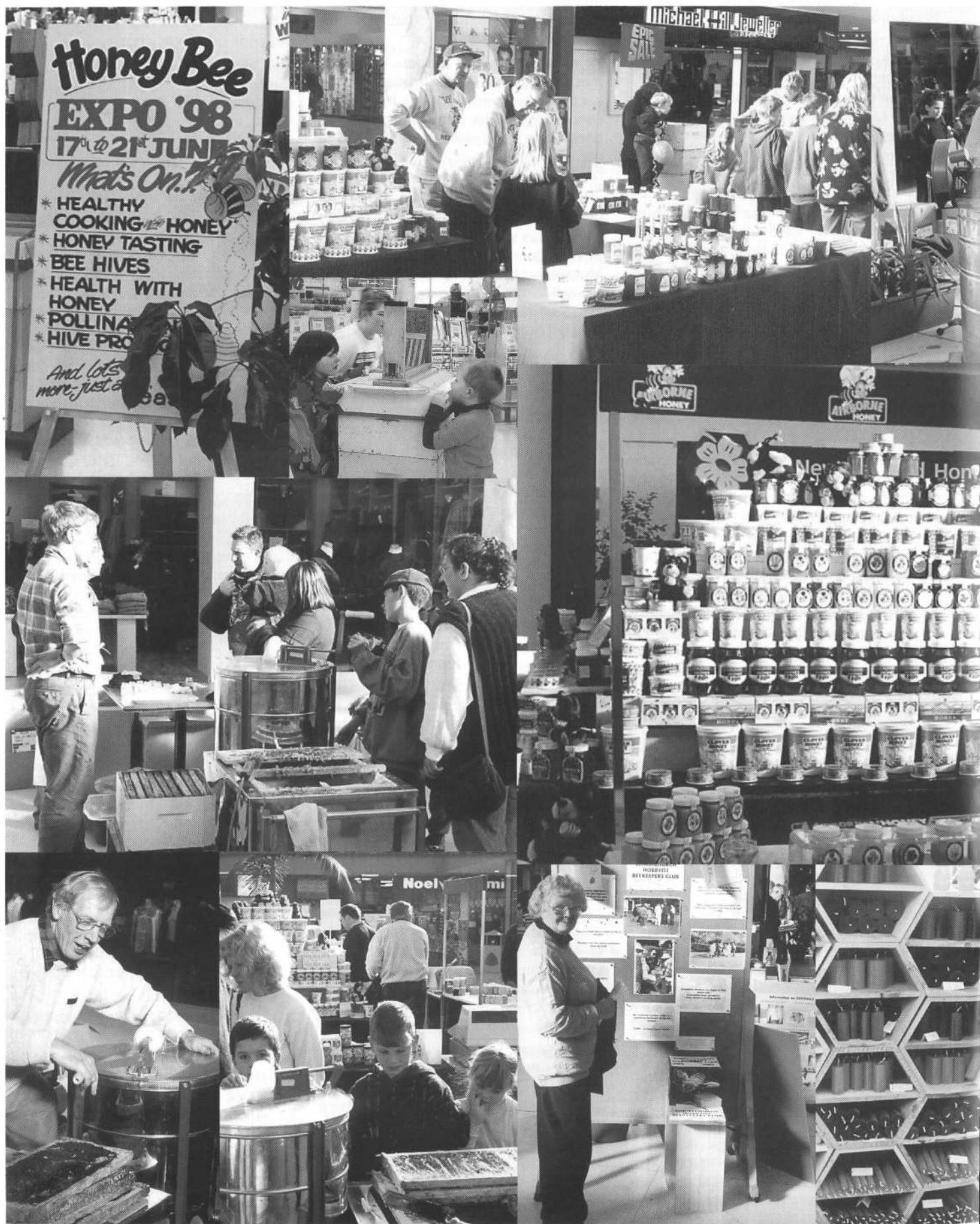
The results of this experiment show that;

- CB is an opportunist pathogen that kills individual larvae only when they are subjected to some other stresses.
- There is a great variation in the susceptibility to CB between various colonies. It may be possible to breed for CB resistance.
- There are many factors that can cause stress and the "stress" in one apiary may not be the same in a similar apiary, even one that is nearby.

*Taken from the International Bee Journal Apidologie*

# High Eastgate Honey Promotion, Eastgate Mall

organised by Canterbury Branch, 17-21 June 1998



# , Linwood, Christchurch

photos courtesy Mr Russell Berry)



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# Beekeeping Memoirs

## Floorboards

by Ron Mossop

For a bit of a laugh, at the March Waikato Field Day I took along a concrete floorboard for a "Guess the Weight" competition. The first prize for the nearest guess to the weight was five bags of jelly beans; the booby prize was one bag of jelly beans. The winner was exactly right with a guess of 36kg. Both the winner and booby prizes were won by a husband and wife team. I hope they still like jelly beans.

The concrete floorboard has a history that may interest beekeepers. It was made by an early Tauranga beekeeper who had concrete lids as well as concrete floorboards. If you did not break your back lifting the hive, you would most certainly break your foot if you dropped a concrete lid on to it. When Don and Charlie Barrow bought this beekeeper's business out they changed over to normal lids and floorboards. Most of the concrete floorboards went to the dump, whilst the lids were used for pathways and shed floors. They gave about 40 floorboards away to another beekeeper who, like most of us, could not resist a bargain, since they were no doubt a bargain as they would last for ever and cost nothing. The new owner took them home and scattered them about kiwifruit orchards, put his splits and swarms on them and gave the orchardists free pollination service, as well as rent honey for the privilege of letting him keep his hives on their orchards. This was in the days before anybody had thought seriously of charging a fee for the pollination of kiwifruit or chinese gooseberries as they were then known.

I personally think that the pollination of kiwifruit was done in those days by some of our 20 species of native bees that are good pollen collectors. In those times to meet export requirements the orchards had to be heavily sprayed with a poison to kill leaf roller and other pests. Unfortunately the native bees lived in holes in the ground and were soon killed off by the poison being washed into their nests. This made it necessary for orchardists to pay beekeepers to put their hives into orchards for pollination. The beekeeper who was giving a free pollination service did not get very rich, and to make enough to live on, he had to repair and make beekeeping woodware for other beekeepers who charged for their pollination service. Unfortunately one of these particular beekeepers got his hand caught in a woodworking machine and lost most of his fingers. He had to give up beekeeping which was a sad ending for an



Ron Mossop

enthusiastic beekeeper. Eventually he sold his hives to me.

One evening my son and I set off in my Jeep and trailer to pick up some of these hives to take them out of the orchards. We thought they were very heavy hives and that they must have had loads of feed honey for the winter, but when we arrived home and changed them on to our floorboards, we found that the concrete floorboards weighed about 30kg and that there was little feed honey in the hives. The orchardists had been on to a good thing with the other beekeeper and resented me taking the hives away. They were appalled at the thought that they may have to pay for their pollination and hinted that they may have to get their own hives. Hence, as a special favour, I left over 30 concrete floorboards in the orchards so that they could get a good start with their new beekeeping venture. None of them took up the challenge but they must have shifted the floorboards before they started to mow their orchards because I had no complaints about broken mowers or tractors.

This early Tauranga beekeeper had other ideas that were more successful than the concrete floorboards and lids, such as new ways of overcoming the wax moth problem. Many of the older beekeepers will remember the battles we had with wax moth. An early method of dealing with the moth was the liberal use of cynogas, which to say the least could be injurious to your health. In fact if you were not very careful you could be as dead as you hoped the moth would be when you finished the gassing job. The next thing was moth crystals. They were messy and not very successful. Our Tauranga beekeeper found that if he

stored his supers in a draughty shed the wax moth did not thrive to the same degree. He built a shed with a slated floor to let the draught flow up through his supers, and used fly gauze to keep the bees out of the bottom part of his shed. We copied his method with a few refinements and now have several sheds for comb storage, and have used them for years to keep wax moth under control. The two comb sheds are built 15 yards apart so that in the event of fire we would lose only half our supers at one time.

There were many types of lids made during and after the war when galvanised sheet steel was scarce, as many of the steel works had been destroyed during the war. One lid was wooden and covered with malthoid, another was wooden and made waterproof by stretching some sacking over the top of it and giving it several thick coats of tar. The only good thing about these lids was the fact that they burned very well. There have also been many types of wooden floorboards made. The most popular around this district at the moment is the one that is most convenient for migratory work, but with more beekeepers changing to palletisation of their hives, floorboards as we now know them may become less common.

If the Roy Paterson Trophy for innovation was about then I would have given him top marks for wax moth control, but he would get the thumbs down sign for his concrete floorboards.

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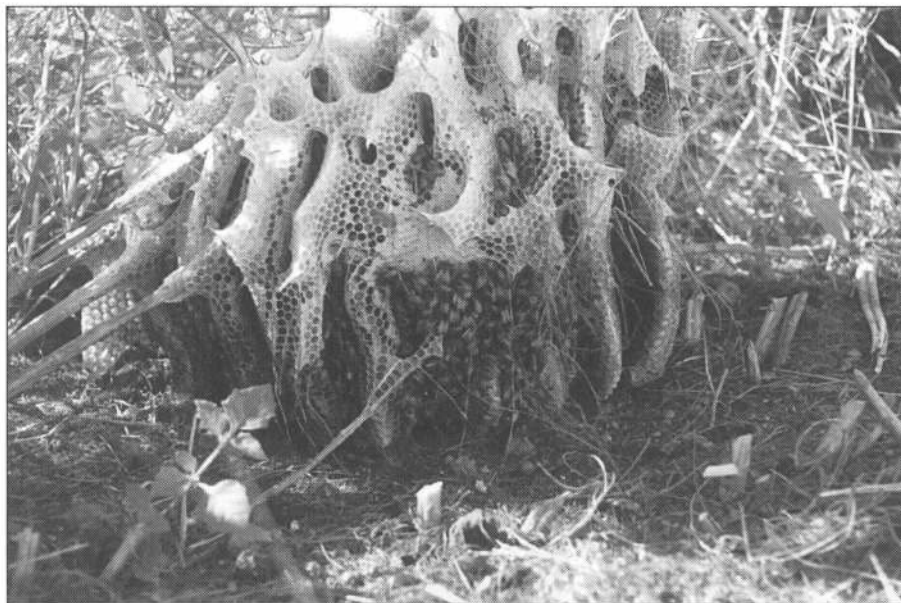
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# What a hive!!!



*These pictures were taken some years ago, before I became a commercial beekeeper.*

*It was after a mild winter. I was cutting asparagus ferns down on a Hastings property I worked on when I came across this in a paddock.*

*Tom Taylor, Onga Onga, Central Hawke's Bay*

## Library News

*Sixty Years with Bees by Donald Sims, 1997, 282 pp, UK.*

Published by Northern Bee Books, an attractive paper back with many sketches, colour photographs and diagrams. Mr Sims, a part-timer managing some 40 hives, starting as a 12 year old boy shares his observations, experiences and criticism with his readers in a clear and very readable style. Not just the reminiscences of an old-timer the book is a source of information, describing good management methods with many practical hints and ideas as relevant to present beekeeping methods as to those of half a century ago. With New Zealand beekeeping having standardised its hive equipment for 99% of Langstroth and Hofman the comparisons of the many types of hives are of little value and the mixture of imperial and metric measurers are not helpful, especially not to the younger generation brought up with the metric system. All-in-all the book has a lot to give to hobbyists and part-timers and probably to some commercial operators too. Mr Sims was a busy man, operating his colonies in the most efficient manner to gain the best possible returns and deriving the maximum satisfaction in the time available to him.

Thanks Harry Brown for passing this book on to our collection.

*The Animal Health Status of Niue by P Saville, 1996, lopp, Fiji.*

This includes diseases information on the bee population.

Thank you Dr Saville.

Following a request by the Secretariat of the Pacific Community this library has donated some surplus material towards establishing a collection of beekeeping literature in Fiji.

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# Mead

Traditional or Authentic Mead is defined as a beverage produced by the fermentation of honey, water and yeast, with no addition of fruits, herbs or spices. The alcohol generated by the fermentation of the honey sugars would normally be between 5% and to 14% by volume.

Sweetness ranging from dry (no residual sugar) to sweet up to say 20 degrees SPC. The recipe would require about four pounds of honey made up with water to one gallon or six 750ml bottles.

## Spiced and fruit flavoured MEADS, and AMBROSIA

It must be remembered that over the centuries Mead has developed a sub culture of fermented honey and fruit mixes, all still loosely referred to as "Mead". Mead with small amounts of malt, fruits, herbs and spices have evolved, in some cases I suspect these additions were made to trigger off or sustain a difficult honey fermentation or in the case of Payment to sweeten up grapes that were not sufficiently ripe at harvest... However these additions must never be allowed to overpower the basic flavour and aroma of the honey.

Each of these sub meads has its own historic and distinctive name characteristics and in some instances specific uses.

These come under the usual titles of:

Fortified mead	AMBROSIA
Honey and malt	BRAGGOT
Honey and apple	CISER
Honey, grape/spices	HIPPOCRAS
Honey and fruit	MELOMEL
Honey and grape	PAYMENT
Honey and spices	METHEGLIN, from this came the English word MEDICINE

Naturally there are many subclasses to the above categories, these can create problems of definition by name. For customer education they should all be labelled as Mead, but clearly defining what category they belong to.

## MEAD AMBROSIA

In Greek mythology **AMBROSIA** was the drink of, or a gift from the Gods. I understand that the faithful would take their humble "Mead", in the true sense of the word (14% alcohol) to the priests, who understood the secrets of distillation. The priests then returned a portion of the distillate, to the believers it was known as AMBROSIA. I have no doubt that a fortified Mead, in which all the alcohol including that used for fortification, has been produced by the fermentation of honey, should be called AMBROSIA.

If the added alcohol is from any other source eg grain, fruit, or some cases even whey, the resultant product, at the best, could be described as a honey liqueur, and certainly should not be passed off as AMBROSIA or a Mead product.

The most famous of these fortified honey products is Drambuie which I am told was originally a very sweet Mead and whisky mixed. This story may well be true, as honey was the only readily available source of sugar in Europe in the days of Charles the First.

We make a fortified honey liqueur mainly for export, 14% of the alcohol is produced by the fermentation of honey with added grain alcohol, giving a finished alcohol level of 22% by volume. Even under these circumstances where the greater volume of alcohol is of honey origin, we feel we would be misrepresenting our product to call it either Mead, or Ambrosia which it is not. We label it as a honey liqueur with no reference to Mead.

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### Havill's Mead making and marketing history

Our sole source of income since 1980 has been from the sale of Honey Mead.

"Beer making is simple, wine making is easy, Mead making is very near impossible." We were told this 35 years ago and believe me it is true. So why is Mead so hard to make?

Honey is of course the food for the hive for the winter. If the bees don't do their house work properly and the honey ferments in the hive you will end up with a hive full of drunken bees... and no food, they will die of starvation leaving none to breed another generation of careless house keepers!!

By this type of natural selection, over millions of years, the honey has developed a natural resistance to yeast and other spoilage organisms.

On the other hand fruit is made to carry the seed of the tree. It ripens falls to the ground ferments and rots away, providing a nice little heap of personalised fertiliser for the new tree.

My wife Gabrielle and myself started our making experiments in 1964. At the time we were unaware that we were taking the first steps along the path of an ancient tradition, filled with rich legends of fact and fiction. That we would be reviving the lost craft of Mead making in New Zealand. That we would develop the "Havill Process", a world leading technology in the science of honey fermentation. Traditionally the mead making process could take from 18 months to seven years. Most Mead was consumed while it was still fermenting, fully fermented Mead was only consumed by wealthy people who could afford to store the Mead for many years. Over the first 13 years, and over 850 changes of recipe later, we were assured by customers and friends we had a pleasant and remarkable product. Today we have a modest market of discerning customers who know and appreciate Havill's Authentic Mead.

Over the years we have developed several of our own Mead yeast strains for various honeys. These yeasts have developed a "taste" for particular honey types. They will overcome the natural resistance of the honey and convert honey sugar to alcohol fairly rapidly. Normal wine yeast finds it very difficult to convert honey to alcohol and will not normally multiply and thrive in honey and water solution. We have spent well over 30 years, and over \$150,000 developing the "Havill Process" of natural fermentation, using our especially developed strains of Mead yeasts, custom-built Mead fermenters, and processing machinery. Without this machinery, specialist plant, yeast and years of continual practical Mead making and marketing experience, we would not be in the Mead making industry today.

In some overseas countries research into Mead making seems to have been the domain of retired university professors. I believe they are genuine in their efforts and observation. They have written many papers and books on the subject. I am sure they write in good faith, but their research seems to have little relevance to the serious or commercial Mead maker. They never seem to try their recipes on several different honeys drawn from various sources, seldom take into account the variables in the honey crop and have probably never tried to sell their Mead commercially, and that is where the rub comes. There is no point in making Mead if you can't sell it.

We believe each hive produces it's own challenges for the mead maker, after all one can never be sure where the bees have foraged. A small amount of "foreign" honey or other substance can create endless problems. To bring about a successful conclusion to a particular honey fermentation, we believe you could require one of at least 50 different recipes and one of several specialist yeasts. What applies to one fermentation does not necessarily apply to another.

These problems can only be overcome by a sound and practical understanding of what is to be achieved. One also requires an understanding of the market requirements, (regarding sweetness and flavour) for any particular country.

Recently we have heard of beekeepers calling on wine makers to make small quantities of something they call "Mead" for export. Believe me I have seen and tasted some of these efforts and they do not have much to recommend them. Even worse I can see the faults or future faults from a couple of meters away! Asking a wine maker to make Mead would be similar to someone asking us to make a shipment of wine for export. We are not wine makers, we are Mead makers. We would suggest you ask a wine maker to do the job. This begs the question, "Why do the wine makers accept such an offer, and not refer the customer to us?". I believe I know why, the wine makers must be laughing all the way to the bank, being paid by the beekeepers to produce a faulty, second rate product, that will totally discredit New Zealand Mead in the eyes of the world. Thus getting another competitor off the scene and leaving the market open to their own fruit based wines.

Wake up, if you want someone to make Mead for you, get the people that have a record of making good Mead. With a combined total of 70 years continuous production we believe we do know what we are doing, and have no wish to destroy the good name we have generated for New Zealand Mead internationally.

If you want Mead of reliable and consistent quality for the domestic or international market contact us. We can use your honey or ours, your labels or ours, it makes no difference to us. All we want to see is consistent quality Mead being exported from New Zealand with the subsequent rewards flowing back to the beekeeping industry and maintaining the good reputation we have built up for New Zealand Honey Mead.

**Gabrielle and Leon Havill,  
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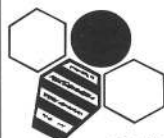
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## The bees knew it all the time

The honey-bee (*Apis mellifera*) makes the bulk of the world's honey by harvesting the nectar from the nectaries of flowering plants. The sugar content of nectars from various plants varies from 5% up to 80% with great differences in the types of sugars present and their proportions. Evaporation of water in the hive leads to fully ripened honey with a water content of no more than 20% at which point fermentation cannot occur. Chemical alterations then occur particularly with the inversion of sucrose to glucose and fructose. The wax cells are then sealed preventing the absorption of water and thus avoiding the risk of fermentation.

Honey is usually marketed in one of two forms, as liquid or granulated (crystallised). Granulated honey results from the formation of glucose hydrate which contains 9% water of hydration. As this increases the water content of the honey it is easily possible for it to reach a point where fermentation by osmophilic yeasts can occur. The chief sources of yeasts in honey come from flower nectar and the intestine of the bee. A wide range of different yeasts have been found in unprocessed honey but the yeast type of greatest importance are the osmophilic yeasts which can cause fermentation.

The composition of ripened honey can vary widely depending upon the composition of the nectar. Climatic conditions and extraction procedures have only minor influences. Generally, the fructose content is the highest at between 35%-45% with glucose being between 30%-35%. The pH usually lies between 3.2 and 4.5. Moisture content can be as low as 15%.

Spoilage of honey results from the growth of osmo-tolerant yeasts which produce an alcoholic fermentation and the critical moisture content at which this fermentation can begin is 21%. It is possible to prevent yeasts spoilage by heating honey to a point where the yeast spores are killed but there is a high risk of recontamination by spores in the air and on equipment. Control of these yeasts is best achieved by holding the water content at below 20%.

*Adapted from Microbial Ecology of Food Commodities,  
Blackie Academic and Professional*

## A rose by any other name

The saying "busy as a bee" has been around for years and anyone who has watched a honey-bee flit from flower to flower while it gathers pollen and nectar will know that bees are industrious. But bees, in their search for nectar depend more on their noses than their eyes. Bees see in black and white though their near vision can see some colours. But their noses can smell nectar sources a kilometre away.

This can be a disadvantage if hives are deliberately placed in order to pollinate a crop. However research in the USA suggests that bees can be "trained" to visit specific flowers. This research centred on alfalfa crops whose flowers are not always the most attractive to bees. To "whet" the bees appetite for the less palatable flowers, sugar water in which alfalfa blossoms had been soaked, was put into the hives. Most hives converted to foraging on alfalfa within a day and the remaining ones within two days.

*Previously published by RG Fowler in Gleanings in Bee  
Culture*

## A day at the races

Bint Hamloul (Daughter of Hamloul) became the most expensive racing camel when she was sold for NZ\$1,000,000. According to an AP report, top racing camels are treated luxuriously, being fed a diet that not only includes barley and clover but also eggs, nuts, lard and honey!

*Taken from Gwenyn Kernow, the magazine of the  
Cornwall Beekeepers Association*

## Mad Bee Disease

The French Government has launched an urgent investigation into why honey-bees are becoming disoriented and dying in their millions. The bees appear unable to find their way back to their hives.

So-called *Mad Bee Disease* has been blamed on a widely used insecticide which beekeepers believe is destroying the insects' sense of direction. The phenomenon has drastically affected the bee population in Western France. It has reduced production of its famed honey - more than a third of France's total output - by some 60%. Only insects collecting nectar from sunflowers appear to be affected.

Environmentalists suspect the problem lies with... the chemical imidaclopride, made by German agrochemical company Bayer SA. It is used to protect sunflowers from parasites.

French officials first became alarmed last year when beekeepers reported that increasing numbers of bees were becoming disoriented and failing to return after gathering pollen and nectar from sunflowers. A bee unable to get back to its hive will die after a few hours. "A poisoning problem from insecticide is the only explanation for the behaviour of the bees and their systematic disappearance during the first week that the sunflower bloom," says Frank Allaitru, of the French Agricultural Union. The investigation will cost about 6,000,000 francs (about NZ\$1,800,000). Half the money has been provided by the European Union. Bayer has agreed to contribute 5% but says the accusations have no scientific foundation.

The use of imidaclopride has been suspended in west and central France... to see if the bees there recover. The French Green Party wants the product taken off the market. Imidaclopride went on sale in 1994 and some beekeepers say they observed a change in bee behaviour as it began to be used. One honey producer said, "Starting... in the first days of July, my bees went to gather nectar from the time the first sunflowers opened. After just one day, the activity around the hive was sharply reduced and the bees were wandering all over the field, completely disoriented and dying."

Imidaclopride is registered for use in New Zealand, marketed under the name of *Gaucho*, on crops including potatoes, cereals, maize, brassicas, grasses and squash to kill all the usual pests including aphids and grass grubs. It is also registered as a flea treatment. If pesticides get on bees it can alter their smell. There have been cases of bees returning to their hives only to be attacked by the guard bees.

*Previously published by Ben MacIntyre in The Dominion*

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# Book review

## 'William Charles Cotton, Grand Bee Master of New Zealand, 1842-1847'

1997, Peter Barrett, BanjoBee Books, Springwood, NSW  
Since 1996 readers of *The New Zealand BeeKeeper* have been variously bombarded by a series of historical articles by Peter Barrett of New South Wales and Bruce Stevenson of Kerikeri. Taken together, these more or less document the establishment of beekeeping in New Zealand in the early 1840s, explore fascinating facts of past beekeeping practice and paraphernalia, revive the excitement of 'beekeeping under virgin frontier conditions, and introduce some engaging historical characters, ranging from the methodical Mary Bumby through Father Petitjean of the Roman Catholic mission to most lively and memorable of them all - the Rev 'Bee' Cotton.

In *'William Charles Cotton, Grand Bee Master of New Zealand, 1842-1847'*, Barrett sets out in 1841 to follow the young and ebullient 'Bee' from England to the Bay of Islands via Sydney, Bee coming out as part of the entourage of the first Bishop of New Zealand, George Selwyn. Mad about bees from infancy, the hyperactive cleric and classicist was at this time bursting upon English beekeeping consciousness with his beautifully illustrated, impressively informative but above all bubblingly eccentric *'My Bee Book'*. Though Bee's ingenious if involved and confidently trumpeted scheme to ship chilled bees out from England came to a mysterious naught, once ashore in New Zealand he soon had beekeeping - then in its bumbling infancy - established on a sound footing, disseminating knowledge, experimenting with hive types, and above all crusading against the barbaric and 'ungrateful' method of asphyxiating hives before harvesting the honey.

Unaware that Mary Bumby and Father Petitjean had imported bees before him, in 1843 Bee persuaded James Busby (thenceforth clandestinely 'Buzz Bee') to bring three hives back from Sydney. From the sole surviving swarm - immediately and naturally christened 'The Queen' - he soon hived a plethora of swarms, all, inevitably, named for members of the burgeoning Royal Family. These were distributed between Busby and the Bay of Islands missionaries, who took up beekeeping with alacrity. Whilst playing a key (if highly individual) role in the founding of St John's Theological College, first at Te Waimate (1842-44), and then in Auckland, the mercurial 'Te Katene' also went to great and markedly successful lengths to interest and instruct Maori in beekeeping, his Maori beekeeping manual, *'Nga Pi'* (of which the author provides an English translation) being published in 1849, a year after his pioneering classic, *'A Manual for New Zealand Beekeepers'*. Although Barrett does not pursue the obvious commercial interest of Bay of Islands missionary beekeepers in this area - Henry Williams for one set out to establish 100 hives at Paihia and the Kemps built a large beehouse at Kerikeri - early Maori ventures into commercial beekeeping, and late prejudice against them and their highly effective and original methods, form an interesting sub-plot.

Illustrated with charming vignettes from Cotton's journals, *'My Bee Book'* and other contemporary sources Barrett's book teems with both beekeeping and more general historical interest. Extended quotations from Bee's own journals and correspondence are particularly rewarding, throwing an intensely human and original light not just on their author's



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oscillating yo-yo of a personality, but on everyday people and events of 150 and more years ago, Bee's cordial but guarded encounter with the Roman Catholic Bishop Pompallier - he was ashamed of his shabby tartan trousers and terrified about being seen playing the Good Samaritan and so 'talked about' by the rabidly biased Anglican missionaries - is a classic of its kind. As is his meeting with Governor Robert Fitzroy, the again shabby but observant Bee typically concluding on the basis of their personal chat that 'it is a defect in the Governor's character to be too ready to listen to everything that everybody has to say'!

Aided by his own knowledge of beekeeping, Barrett has put a great deal of careful research and insight into this interesting book. The history and much of the technology associated with the introduction of beekeeping to New Zealand stands well grounded in it, particularly when backed by his own and by Steven's earlier articles. Given the interest and scope of the material and characters he has brought together, the book deserves wide readership. Unfortunately, the likelihood of this being achieved is marred by the fact that the text does not string together convincingly as a narrative, being made up of a largely disconnected series of vignettes which, however boldly headlined, tend too often to baffle and so aggravate even the sympathetic reader. This problem - rather too gently hinted at in *The Australian Beekeeper's* review of Barrett's earlier and similarly useful *'The Immigrant Bees, 1788 to 1898'*, - is evident from the outset, where much of the biographical sketch dealing with Cotton's later descent into insanity might have served better as an epilogue. But that is but the tip of an iceberg: this author could use a good editor. The wider recognition and readership the subject matter and the historic characters associated with it so plainly merit will only be achieved through a more cohesive marshalling and presentation of information into something approaching flowing narrative form. In short, while a compellingly written, well illustrated and readily available history of pioneer

beekeeping in New Zealand has yet to be written, the basis for it has been well laid.

As for the late Bee Cotton cum Te Katene - it is plain from Barrett's work that his New Zealand journals demand publication in their entirety, they throwing an intriguing and intensely personal light on life in the Bay of Islands, Auckland and beyond at a formative stage in the country's modern history.

*Fergus Clunie,  
Historic Places Trust, Kerikeri*

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**or fax: (06) 843-4845**

# Honey has its moments

Using a steam knife can result in a build-up of beautiful caramel. My children used to love to feast on the caramel whenever they could. One teenage daughter was remarking how lovely and crisp a particular lot was and then realised she was crunching on a bee.

Perhaps we could use caramelised bees as a new marketing ploy.

Griff, one of the characters of the Apiary Section, some time ago related his experiences as a migratory beekeeper in Australia. He said that beekeepers had to have a good knowledge of the various eucalyptus. Some only yielded when it was dry while others only yielded if wet.

They would move the hives several hundred miles to a good eucalyptus source that was heavy in bud indicating a good season. After arrival it might rain and the eucalyptus in question would drop their buds, so it was plan two. The hives (a brood box and a super) would be loaded about 200 to a truck, jacked up and driven perhaps another 50 yards onto solid ground. Then the hives would be carried the extra distance and reloaded. After another few hundred yards down she would go again and the whole process would be repeated. This might occur several times before reaching a real road again.

Once the road was reached, there could be a journey of a thousand miles to reach a type of eucalypt that yielded after rain. I don't know if beekeepers are a tough breed or just stupid.

Perhaps Griff was one of a tough breed. He was working hives one night and a bee stung him on the pupil of the eye. Apparently the eye closes automatically if a bee tries to sting the eye, but this mechanism doesn't work at night.

Griff had to drive 50 miles in the dark

with one eye swollen out of its socket to reach a doctor.

Griff had a dream one night and arrived at work the next day saying he thought he had forgotten to pick up one apiary when shifting. He was quite upset about the thought and was practically convinced that the apiary was still there. Perhaps you can claim salvage rights if you come across the hives if on holiday in Australia?

Apart from making caramel, heating honey can have its moments. I remember having a 30lb tin of very hard honey some years ago. I removed the lid and put it on the stove element to heat. After some time although I could hear the simmering, there was no sign of the honey softening. "Never mind" I thought, "it will soften sooner or later," it did. All of a sudden there was a minor explosion and half the contents hit the ceiling and dripped back down. Learning by trial and error has its moments.

Used to have as neighbours a family that in today's politically correct climate could only be described as disfunctional.

They had a tearooms, and a number of children. One day one of the children placed a 25lb carton of butter on the top of the stove. Unfortunately another child turned on one of the elements. Eventually as expected the butter melted out of the carton and reached the floor. No one would clean it up as all said it wasn't their fault.

Now Murphy's Law comes into effect.

The father had bought a 60lb tin of honey which was quite hard, so ignoring the butter he placed the tin in the oven to soften. Being a large tin he had to place it on its side, but melted honey has a tendency to run, so very soon there was a lovely blend of butter and honey on

the floor that no one would tackle for over a week, all claiming that it wasn't their fault.

Perhaps provision of bread may have resulted in help from some of the younger members of the family?

## Something to remember

Some things remain in the mind for a very long time.

For instance you never forget seeing the comet like trail of drones following a virgin queen as the sun glistens on their wings.

However one comet of bees is even more clearly impressed upon my mind.

As a school boy with my first hive I arrived home just in time to see a comet of bees about half a metre in diameter and 20 or so metres long streaming down the hill toward the hive.

As the sun was setting the shadow on the hill served to emphasis the sun shining on the wings.

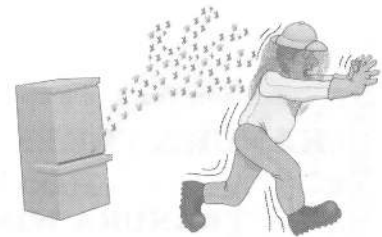
Soon the whole lot had landed, covering the front of the hive before going inside.

The next day I found out why. A rather irate friend who also had one hive had apparently removed a super of honey and placed it in the open shed covered by the bee escape. Unfortunately some clever bees found they could force the escape springs and get inside. Before long the whole hive was occupied working this windfall.

When my friend returned home he saw the commotion and shook out all those nice plump bees who returned home en mass.

At least he learnt one thing new. An escape has limited uses.

*Anon, name and address supplied*



## Welcome to Portoroz and to the International Symposium on Apitherapy

Researchers and specialists working in different areas associated with apitherapy now have the opportunity to inform the professional public of the latest results of scientific investigations and applications of products and preparations based on products from bees in maintaining human health and their therapeutic use in various fields of medicine.

Today ecological consciousness has become the primary concern. For this reason, this symposium has a wider significance as it should contribute to the

use of natural matter and food provided by nature for the benefit of health.

So that the symposium runs smoothly and efficiently, organisers plan to complement plenary meetings with other forms of communication and co-operation. To this purpose, the committee of specialists will consider the proposed papers to be delivered at the symposium.

*Acknowledgement, Medex International d.d., Ljubljana, Linhartova 49a, Slovenia*

**Our lives are filled with simple joys, and blessings without end. And one of the greatest joys of all is to have, or be, a friend.**

**"I have travelled the length and breadth of this country and talked with the best people, and I can assure you that data processing is a fad that won't last out the year."  
(Editor in charge of business books for Prentice Hall, 1957).**



**Melon and Berry Wine Bowl**

Although this recipe is best with fresh fruits, it makes a delicious dessert for a hearty meal any day of the year.

- ½ watermelon
- 1 honeydew melon
- 2 cantaloupe
- 2 cups blueberries (or a combination of berries)
- 1½ cups Chablis or other dry white wine
- 2 tbsps orange liqueur or 1 tbsp undiluted frozen orange juice
- 3 tbsps honey
- mint sprigs

Halve melons, scoop out seeds and use a melon ball cutter to scoop out balls of fruit. Place in a large bowl, if you have a glass bowl, put fruit in layers. Add berries on top. Combine wine, liqueur and honey. Pour over fruit. Cover and chill at least 2 hours. Serve in bowls (looks wonderful in glass bowls). Garnish with mint sprigs. *Serves 10-12.*

**Honey-Blueberry Muffins**

Although you can add blueberries to your favourite muffin recipe, here is one that uses whole wheat flour. Always serve muffins fresh and warm with a drizzle of honey.

- 2 cups whole wheat flour
- 1 tsp salt
- 3 tsps baking powder
- ½ cup fresh blueberries
- 1 cup milk
- 4 tbsps honey
- 1 egg, beaten
- ¼ cup melted butter or shortening

Grease the bottoms of 12 muffin cups. Combine dry ingredients. Add blueberries and stir gently. Mix milk, honey, egg and melted butter or shortening. Add to dry mixture. Stir quickly, just enough to moisten dry ingredients. Fill muffin cups ¾ full. Bake at 400° for 25-30 minutes or until delicately browned.

**Blue Moon**

Here is a drink recipe that is refreshing. It can be used as a breakfast drink or to revive you on a hot summer afternoon. Since it can be made with fresh or frozen fruits, you can enjoy this any day of the year.

- ½ cup orange juice
- ½ cup fresh or frozen blueberries
- ½ cup chopped fresh, frozen or canned peaches
- 1 scoop vanilla ice-cream
- 1 scoop orange sherbet
- 2 tbsps honey
- 1 cup crushed ice
- lime and/or orange cartwheel slices

In blender, combine all ingredients except citrus slices. Blend until smooth. Garnish with citrus slices. Makes 3 cups (two 12oz or three 8oz servings).

**Blueberry Rhubarb Tart**

Rhubarb has a pleasantly tart taste that blends very well with blueberries. Here again, you don't have to wait for summer to enjoy this

- 1 single 9-inch pie crust
- ½ cup honey
- 3 tbsps cornstarch
- 2 cups sliced ¼-inch fresh or frozen rhubarb
- ¾ cup apple juice
- 1 cup fresh or frozen blueberries

Prepare pie crust and bake at 375° for 10 minutes. Meanwhile, in 2-quart saucepan

combine apple juice, honey and cornstarch. Gradually stir in rhubarb. Cook over medium heat, stirring constantly, until thickened, about 5 to 7 minutes. Remove from heat; stir in blueberries. Pour into crust. Bake for 40 to 50 minutes at 375° or until centre is bubbly. Cool completely. The top can be decorated with whipped cream to form a lattice, if desired.

**Blueberry/Apple Conserve**

Blueberries can be made into jam, but for a change try this conserve with apples.

- 1 quart blueberries
- 4 medium tart apples (about 1 quart chopped)
- ½ cup raisins
- 3 cups honey
- ¼ cup lemon juice
- ¼ cup chopped nuts

Core and chop the apples. Combine all ingredients except the nuts. Cook rapidly for about 20 minutes or until thick. Stir frequently as mixture thickens. Add the nuts during the last 5 minutes of cooking. Spoon into hot sterilised jars to within ½-inch from top. Complete seals and process in a boiling-water bath for 10 minutes.

*Acknowledgement, Ann Harman*

**Mocha Hot Chocolate**

- 2 squares unsweetened chocolate
- G tsp salt
- 3 cups milk
- 1 tsp vanilla
- 1 cup water
- ½-½ cup honey
- 2 tsp instant coffee powder

Place chocolate, water, honey and salt in medium-size saucepan. Bring to boil, stirring until chocolate is melted. Continue boiling, stirring frequently, 3 minutes. Add coffee powder and milk. Heat until very hot (do not allow to boil). Stir in vanilla. *Makes 4-6 servings.* Each serving may be topped with whipped cream and chocolate sprinkles.

**Special Cole Slaw**

- 1 cup mild flavoured honey
- H cup finely chopped onion
- 1 large head cabbage, finely chopped
- 1 cup wine vinegar
- 1 tsp salt
- 1 cup diced green pepper
- 1 cup diced celery

In a small saucepan, combine honey with vinegar, onion and salt. Bring to boil; reduce heat and simmer 5 minutes. Cool, pour the cooled dressing over prepared vegetables and toss lightly. Cover and chill several hours to blend flavours. *Makes 10-12 servings.*

*Acknowledgement, Sarah Toot, 1996 Kansas Honey Queen*

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# Organic honey

## USDA to make fundamental changes in Revised Proposed Rule on Organic Standards

Agriculture Secretary, Dan Glickman has announced that the US Department of Agriculture will make fundamental revisions to its proposed national organic standards as a result of the 200,000 comments USDA received on the initial proposal.

"USDA is committed to developing national organic standards that organic farmers and consumers will embrace," Mr Glickman said. "Thousands of commenters requested that USDA issue revised proposed standards, and we intend to do so. Most importantly, the revised proposal will contain fundamental changes from our initial draft."

The earlier draft, published on December 16 1997, proposed standards for growing, processing, labelling, importing, and certifying organically grown food. But it did not take a position on certain controversial issues; instead, the proposal asked for public comment on these items. The bulk of the extraordinary number of comments opposed including the products of

biotechnology, the use of irradiation in food processing, and the application of biosolids (municipal sludge) in organic food production.

"Biotechnology, irradiation, and biosolids are safe and have important roles to play in agriculture, but they neither fit current organic practices nor meet current consumer expectations about organics, as the comments made clear," said secretary Glickman. "Therefore, these products and practices will not be included in our revised proposal, and food produced with these products and practices will not be allowed to bear the organic label."

Similarly, many of the comments asserted that national organic standards must be rigorous and credible. Otherwise, commenters expressed concern that consumers will lose faith in the organic level.

"If organic farmers and consumers reject our national standards, we have failed," Mr Glickman said. "Our task is to stimulate the growth of organic agriculture, ensure that consumers have

confidence in the products that bear the organic label, and develop export markets for this growing industry."

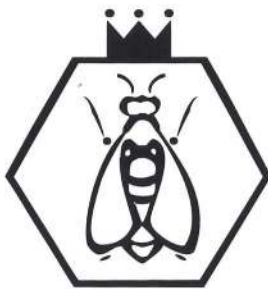
Before publishing the revised proposal, USDA will evaluate the comments submitted in response to the December 1997 proposal. This record will guide the drafting of the revised proposal, which USDA will issue for public comment later this year.

"This additional opportunity for public comment will assist us in crafting rigorous, credible national standards for organic farming and handling that organic farmers and consumers can support," said Mr Glickman.

*Acknowledgement,  
American Bee Journal*

"Computers in the future may weigh no more than 1.5 tons."  
(Popular Mechanics, forecasting the relentless march of science, (1949)).

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### The Secretary

If secretaries write tactfully, they're verbose;  
If they're brief, they're tactless.

If they draft a report, they're wrong;  
If they don't, there's nothing to work on.

If they advise the committee, they're butting in;  
If they don't, they're useless.

If they send a reminder, they're being a pest;  
If they ask for a resolution, they're cheeky;  
If they don't get things done, they're incompetent.

If the meeting's a success, it's due to the committee;  
If it's a failure, the secretary's to blame.

If they ask for instructions, they're not showing initiative;  
If they don't, they're swollen-headed.

Ashes to ashes, dust to dust,  
If others won't do it, the secretary must.



# From the Colonies

## Conference Attendees!

### Important notice from Northland Branches

The Hotel would like some definite numbers for catering a week before conference ie Monday night mix and mingle, seminar, lunch.

Please help us by registering now. No need for money now - just numbers.

For those driving to conference.

The Waitangi Bridge is scheduled to be closed from July the 20th for six weeks for major repairs. There will be foot access. A detour is around Haruru Falls Road. (Just past the Twin Pines Complex) and down through the golf course. A beautiful 10-minute scenic drive. Look for Detour signs at the roundabout (Puketona Road - Waitangi end)..

We did our best to bribe the Council.

## Canterbury Branch, NBA

### NOTICE OF MEETING

#### JULY EVENING MEETING

**Date:** Tuesday, 28 July 1998

**Time:** 7.30pm sharp

**Venue:** Burnside Cricket Clubrooms, Burnside Park, Avonhead Road,

Christchurch.

**Programme:** 1. Delegates report on Conference

2. Honey Expo 98 report

3. General Business

*Supper provided at \$1.00 per person*

**TW Corbett, Secretary**

### National Beekeepers' Association of New Zealand (Inc)

Notice is hereby given that the 1998 Annual General Meeting of the National Beekeepers' Association of New Zealand (Inc) and Conference of Branch Delegates will be held at the Copthorne Resort, Tau Henare Drive, Waitangi, Bay of Islands on Wednesday 22nd and Thursday 23rd of July 1998, commencing at 9am on Wednesday the 22nd of July 1998.

**Harry Brown, Executive Secretary**

**Please note** that the Special meeting to consider proposed Rule changes will be held on Thursday the 23rd of July at 8am — same venue.

A second special meeting to be held 1.30pm Thursday, the 23rd of July 1998 at the Conference venue. Copthorne Resort, Waitangi, Bay of Islands.

Your Executive recommendations as to the Pest Management Strategy (PMS) implementation and why.

The effect this and other government cost recovery will have on your Apiary Levy.

Increase Proposed for next year Minimum 10% expected 25%.

Same venue.

## Auckland Branch Meeting

**Date:** Thursday, 13 August 1998

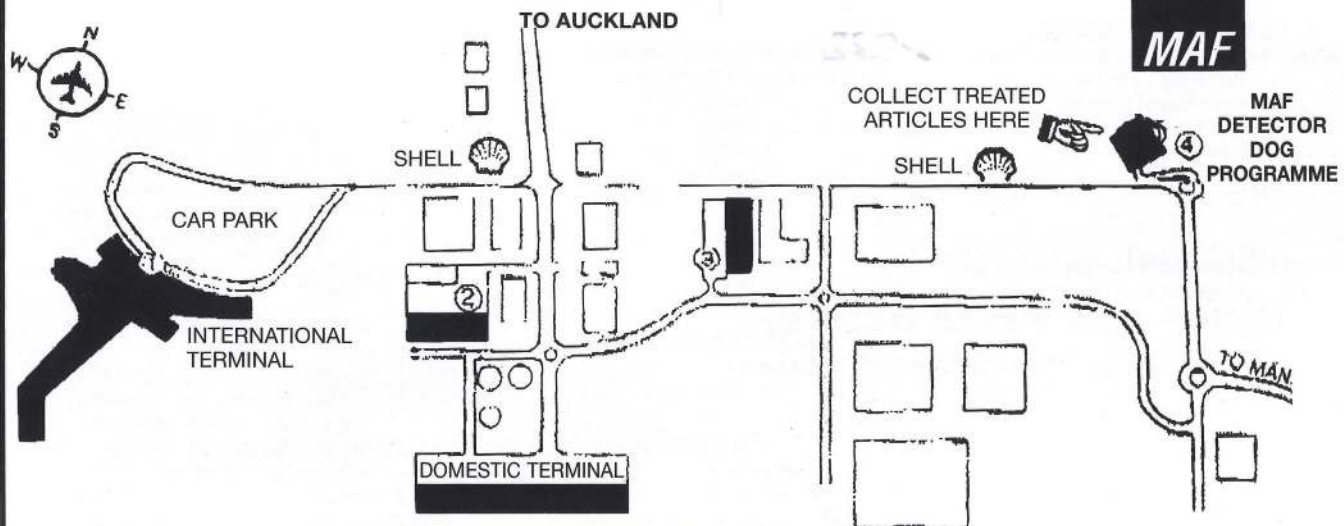
**Time:** 6.50pm

**Venue:** MAF Detector Dog Programme, Auckland Airport (see map below)

**Programme:** After being shown the dogs etc, we will be going back to G Cammell's place (approximately 10 minutes away) to have the Delegates Conference Report

### MAF QUARANTINE SERVICE

#### Airport Facilities



# IMPORTANT DATES FOR 1998

BRANCHES SEND YOUR MEETING DATES IN FOR 1998. NO CHARGE.

## EXECUTIVE MEETING DATES

JULY 19TH - WAITANGI

**MAGAZINE** Copy/advertising deadline 1st of month. EXCEPT for DECEMBER issue. DEADLINE 25 NOVEMBER

### COMING EVENTS...

#### Diary Now!! 1998 Conference

1998 NBA Conference is being Hosted by the Far North and Northland Branches. It will be held at the "Cophorne Resort", Waitangi (Bay of Islands).

**Dates:**

Specialties meetings, Monday 20th and Tuesday 21st, Conference Wednesday 22nd and Thursday 23rd of July.

Hotel Phone number:  
(09) 402-7411  
Fax: (09) 402-8200.

*Branch contact details on the inside the front cover of the magazine.*

#### Diary NOW 14th, 15th, 16th of August 1998 for a BUZZ weekend

A full weekend of training and hands on for all you budding beekeepers and those who need to feel comfortable working with bees.

Venue: Pohangina Valley Camp.

Full cooking and accommodation facilities.

Cost: \$50.00 - Food, Accommodation and Course.

Another Southern North Island venture to assist you.

*Any questions call: P.J. (alias BUZZ) on (06) 378-7632*

### ★ ★ ★ BRANCHES... PUT YOUR MEETING DATE IN HERE... FREE ★ ★ ★

**AUCKLAND BRANCH**  
Call: Jim (09) 238-7464

**AUCKLAND BEEKEEPERS CLUB INC**  
SECRETARY - Terry Buckley  
Phone: (09) 415-9853

**NORTH CANTERBURY CLUB**  
Meet the second Monday of every month  
March to November inclusive.  
Contact Mrs Hobson  
Phone: (03) 312-7587

**SOUTH CANTERBURY BRANCH**  
Peter Lyttle  
Phone: (03) 693-9189

**CANTERBURY BRANCH**  
Meets the last Tuesday of every month.  
February to October.  
Field Day November.  
Contact: Trevor Corbett  
Phone: (03) 314-6836

**CHRISTCHURCH HOBBYIST CLUB**  
These are held on the first Saturday each month, August to May, except for January on which the second Saturday is applicable. The site is at 681 Cashmere Road, commencing at 1.30pm.  
Contact Peter Silcock  
Phone: (03) 342-9415

**DUNEDIN BEEKEEPERS CLUB**  
We meet on the first Saturday in the month September - April, (except January) at 1.30pm. The venue is at our Club hive in Roslyn, Dunedin.  
Enquiries welcome to Club Secretary, Dorothy phone: (03) 488-4390.

**FRANKLIN BEEKEEPERS CLUB**  
Meet second Sunday of each month at 10.00am for cuppa and discussion.  
Secretary — Yvonne Hodges,  
Box 309, Drury.  
Phone: (09) 294-7015  
All welcome — Ring for venue.

**HAWKE'S BAY BRANCH**  
Meets on the second Monday of the month at 7.30pm.  
Arataki Cottage, Havelock North.  
Phone: Ron (06) 844-9493

**MANAWATU BEEKEEPERS CLUB**  
Meets every 4th Thursday in the month at Newbury Hall, S.H. 3, Palmerston North.  
Contact Joan Leckie  
Phone: (06) 368-1277

**NELSON BRANCH**  
Phone: Michael  
(03) 528-6010

**NELSON BEEKEEPERS CLUB**  
Contact: Pete and Kevin  
Phone: (03) 546-1422

**OTAGO BRANCH**  
Phone: Mike (03) 448-7811

**NORTH OTAGO BRANCH**  
Bryan O'Neil  
Ph: (03) 431-1831

**POVERTY BAY BRANCH**  
Contact Barry (06) 867-4591

**SOUTHERN NORTH ISLAND BRANCH**  
Phone: (04) Frank 478-3367

**SOUTHLAND BRANCH**  
Contact Don Stedman,  
Ph/Fax: (03) 246-9777

**TARANAKI AMATEUR BEEKEEPING CLUB**  
Phone: (06) 753-3320

**WAIKATO BRANCH**  
Call Tony (07) 856-9625

**WAIRARAPA HOBBYIST BEEKEEPERS CLUB**  
Meet 3rd Sunday each month (except January) at Kites Woolstore, Norfolk Road, Masterton at 1.30pm.  
Convener Arnold Esler.  
Ph: (06) 379-8648

**WELLINGTON BEEKEEPERS ASSOCIATION**  
Meets every second Monday of the month (except January) in Johnsonville. All welcome.  
Contact: Shauna Tate, 6 Martin Street, Porirua East.