Volume 14 No. 5
June 2006

The New Zealand BeeKeeper

Happy 100th Anniversary, Waikato Branch!

New Zealand Permit No. 154506
Permit

Caption on page 15.

Photo: Fiona O'Brien

IN THIS ISSUE

ISSN 0110-63325
The Official Journal of The National Beekeepers' Association of New Zealand Inc.

Published by South City Print
P.O. Box 2494
South Dunedin, New Zealand

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Overseas Airmail
US $55.00

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President's Report

We beekeepers get ourselves into some great predicaments, don't we? Especially when the season is ending and the pressure is on to get the honey off the hives before the varroa mites kill the bees and wasps take all the honey from them, leaving us with fewer hives than we began with in spring.

The other day Tony and I were trying to get our last few apiary sites done. As many of you know, the weather in the Hamilton region has been atrocious, with rain almost every day. We travelled in convoy in case we could not get our truck into and out of the sites. We had spent the morning doing a couple of sites and, as is often the case, I was now looking forward to a comfort stop as I headed to the next site. Normally we travel along a particular route, but I was thinking about where I could find a private spot, so was not taking as much due care and notice as I drove across the paddock. To my horror, I came to a very sudden halt at the bottom of the slope with the front wheel of the truck having dropped into a newly opened tomo hole (mutter, mutter!!). We almost burnt out the clutch of the ute trying to pull the truck out. Finally we had some luck when a 4WD tractor came into sight and pulled the truck out of the offending hole! No noticeable damage was sustained to the truck — only to my pride and frayed tempers for wasting time by getting ourselves stuck!

Conference

The conference planning committee is now making good progress towards making this a memorable occasion to attend. Please check in other parts of the journal for more information on the conference.

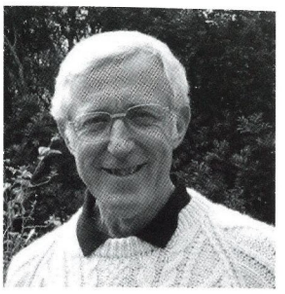
The seminar sessions will allow a considerable amount of time for audience participation at the end of presentations. We also will run two specific interactive sessions:

1. The American Foulbrood National Pest Management Strategy
2. the future direction of our industry as a result of the potential impact of honey imports into this country. What are our options? What are the possible benefits and what could be the negative impacts to the honey industry if imports are permitted?

We sincerely hope that you will come prepared not only to listen to our speakers, but also to participate by asking questions and sharing your ideas. Our aim with these interactive sessions is to assist in giving us direction for the future, or to outline specific concerns that we may need to address. The feedback given may also result in a late notice of motion going to the AGM on Thursday, 20 July 2006.

- Jane Lorimer

Meeting our members



The Executive Council is looking forward to meeting NBA members at our annual conference in Hamilton next month. While I have been fortunate to meet many members before during my years of association with the beekeeping industry, this year will mark my attendance in my new role. Pam Edwards, the Executive Secretary, is looking forward to meeting you too.

We have already met some NBA members during a visit, along with Rex Baynes, our AFB NPMS Manager, to the Hawkes Bay and East Coast branches. I was also able to attend the Southern North Island Branch AGM. *[Editor's note: see pages 3 and 7 for more information.]*

It is important that we get to know you better, because our understanding of your work and the pressures on the industry will enable us to better serve the NBA.

The NBA has been actively involved in two research areas: varroa control technologies, and pollination. The latest varroa report from Dr Mark Goodwin and Michelle Taylor at HortResearch has just arrived. By the time you read this, we will also have participated in a pollination workshop involving both the beekeeping and horticultural industries. We will be sharing information from these research projects next month and at conference.

We look forward to meeting you in Hamilton.

- Jim Edwards

Deadline for articles and advertising

July 2006 edition: ***10 June 2006***

August 2006 edition: ***10 July 2006***

All articles/letters/photos to be with the Editor via fax, email or post:

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Responding to AFB outbreaks

In early May, Jim and Pam Edwards and I met with local Hawkes Bay and Poverty Bay beekeepers, during which we engaged in free and frank discussion on a range of subjects.

A major item of interest in both meetings was the perceived level of urgency accorded by the Management Agency when notified of AFB outbreaks. To be honest, the overall comment was not overly complimentary, but I likened it to my love of rugby, especially the Hurricanes, where a comparison can be made that both have had their highs and lows in performance.

However, I am pleased to report that several weeks ago, both the Management Agency and I were tested in our ability to react as quickly as possible to an outbreak situation notified to us in the Auckland area. Within 36 hours, I sought the approval of the Management Agency to make available the necessary funding so that local disease coordinator Bob Blair could undertake the necessary inspections.

If we are to eradicate AFB, it is essential that you notify outbreaks either directly to me or via your local disease coordinator. I'm not concerned about which communication channel you use as long as the message gets to me. If I am not told, I cannot respond.

Speaking of communication, I am pleased to report (and indeed encouraged by) the number of people who have taken the time to correspond both electronically and by way of ordinary mail. I have broad shoulders and am prepared to receive both criticism and constructive comment. You can be assured that I will reply. To those who have bothered to write, thank you.

Beekeepers will by now have received your levy invoices and ADRs for return. I am happy to report that payments are being returned along with completed ADRs.

In an earlier edition of the journal I indicated my concern at the apparently high level of ADR, COI and levy defaulters during the 2005–2006 year. If you are a defaulter and not playing by the rules, if you have not already been contacted you will shortly receive a call seeking an explanation as to why you have not complied. The completion of the documents and the payment of the levy is a legal requirement, so please support our efforts in trying to meet our objectives.

- Rex Baynes
Manager, AFB NPMS

[Editor's note: You can find Jim Edwards' account of the Hawkes Bay meeting on page 3 and Ron Morison's report on page 7.]

Do you believe that it is not worth alternating your treatment if your neighbours aren't as well?
Well it is actually very worthwhile to alternate because at least you will be killing any resistant mites in your own hives plus any invading resistant mites which come from your neighbours. While your neighbours treatments will be getting less effective, yours will still be highly effective and you won't run the risk of having to treat twice.

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VARROA AGENCY INC

Varroa Agency Incorporated News

Update from Varroa Agency Chairman Duncan Butcher, June 2006

Accounts

South Island beekeepers will be aware by now that accounts from the Varroa Agency Inc have been sent out for the 2006–07 varroa levy, and are due to be paid (in full) by 1 July 2006. The levy is set on the number of hives a beekeeper owns on 31 March 2006.

We're still following up on a small number of debtors from last year. The amount owed by these beekeepers, which is accruing interest, will be added on to this year's levy account.

Surveillance about to start

613 beekeepers were selected for testing of their hives for varroa, which covers 1909 apiaries and 26,200 hives. Only 500 beekeepers returned the letters and documents sent to them by AgriQuality advising the status of their apiaries and hives, so another selection had to be made and sent out. It is expected that around 1500 apiaries will be sampled this autumn.

Sampling kits have been sent to nearly all of the Authorised Person Level 2 contract inspectors. A significant number of sticky boards have been returned and sent to the lab. If you are taking part in the surveillance programme, we ask for your assistance in getting the boards back to us as soon as possible so we can test them. Thanks for your help with this programme.

Hive testing will start on the priority sites along the main highways of the South Island.

Feedback from those attending courses for the Authorised Person Level 2 training has been very positive. We're pleased with the number and the skills of the AP2 people available — we have a good sized pool of testers.

No bees found on grape shipment

Truckloads of grapes going from Hawkes Bay to Marlborough in April were audited by AgriQuality as part of the varroa permit process. Inspections of the vineyards and equipment, (especially the tractors and hoppers), storage sheds where the hoppers are held, and loading trucks from the hoppers, showed no bees or wasps in the vineyards. No bees were found around the sheds or during the loading process, even though the weather was reasonably favourable to bee flight. At this stage there appears to be very little risk of taking bees to the South Island via these 'grape trucks'.

Notice

Annual General Meeting

National Beekeepers' Association of New Zealand Inc.
to be held at the
Glenview International Hotel & Conference Centre
254 Ohaupo Road
Hamilton
Commencing at 8:00 am
Thursday, 20 July 2006

Jim Edwards
Executive Officer

Have you completed your conference registration form?

Spring into action today!

- Fun
- Photos
- Friends
- Food
- Future of beekeeping
- Find out the information at two full days of seminars
- Finally, have your say as a member of your Association at the AGM

Conference registration form is inserted in the April 2006 issue of *The New Zealand Beekeeper*

Executive members visit Hawkes Bay

Executive Officer Jim Edwards, Executive Secretary Pam Edwards and AFB NPMS Manager Rex Baynes met in the boardroom of Arataki Honey Ltd with 13 Hawkes Bay beekeepers at 4 pm on Friday 4 May.

Locals were invited to lead off with items they wanted to discuss, resulting in animated dialogue on a variety of issues, including:

- outstanding AFB NPMS levies
- examples of people receiving threatening letters after their levies had been paid
- calls for sharing an up-to-date and accurate data base
- action against those who fail to pay levies
- more importantly, action against those who fail to register their hives.

There was a call for greater use of modern electronic methods for ADRs and COIs, although it was appreciated that not all beekeepers have access to computers. It was agreed that the importance of reporting incidents of AFB in writing should be disseminated, and that e-mail should be acceptable for this.

Jim drew attention to the NBA website and his hope to make this a must for members to view. He also stated that some pages were available to non-members.

In reply to the question of research into control technologies for varroa, Jim said that current research was looking at the possibility, at the end of the research project, of utilising bees that had been identified to have resistant genes.

Hive numbers for pollination was mentioned, as was the fact that the problem of insufficient hive numbers for American almond pollination had been overcome by the financial aspect of the law of supply and demand.

Jim stressed the hope that he would see many local members at Conference starting 17 July in Hamilton.

The locals thanked the visitors for making the effort to visit, and the meeting ended at 6 pm.

- Ron Morison
Secretary, Hawkes Bay Branch

2006 NBA Conference Seminar Programme

18-19 July 2006

Horses in bee suits, honey imports, RMPs, toxic honey, economics and disease

This year's programme celebrates age. This is the 100-year anniversary of the Waikato Branch and we intend to celebrate where we have come from, discuss pressing issues and forge new paths.

Horses in bee suits

Snapshots of early beekeeping in New Zealand will be presented by speakers, including one who is still beekeeping after 70 years.

What about African bees and Carniolan bees?

Dr Mike Allsopp from South Africa will discuss how South African bees are kept and the Capensis problem from a New Zealand perspective. New Zealand beekeepers will provide insight on beekeeping with carniolan bees.

Is it fact or fiction?

HortResearch will present research results about clover pollination (Dr Mark Goodwin), and viruses (Jacqui Todd). Michelle Taylor will discuss how you can become a DIY researcher. Dr Peter Molan from the University of Waikato will update us with the latest honey research.

Are you spending more than you need to?

Truck maintenance — can you get more mileage from your vehicles?

Thinking outside the honey box

Maureen Maxwell will discuss ways to add value to our products, and Fiona Kerry will discuss future technology in beekeeping.

MAF explains why we need foreign honey and why it is safe

Bee product imports will be discussed, including policy, risk assessment and Import Health Standards. These sessions will enable you to ask questions about the process and the decision. The MAF speakers will be led by the Assistant Director-General of Biosecurity, Dr Barry O'Neil.

Are you affected?

NZFSA will update us on plant alkaloid issues, provide a progress report on RMPs, discuss the results of the Tutin toxin audit, and discuss export certification issues.

Our AFB control programme

NPMS Manager Rex Baynes and Byron Taylor from AgriQuality will reveal all.

"Have your say" sessions

These interactive sessions will provide a forum for you to ask all those pressing questions and discuss issues. The first features a panel on the AFB NPMS. The second will be led by Jim Edwards on how the industry can mitigate the effects of bee product imports if these are permitted.

Look out for the finalised programme on the NBA website and through your local NBA branch. Please register early as seats in the main auditorium are limited to 200.

Photo supplied by Barry Foster: march on Parliament, 4 April 2006.

Beekeeping Specialty Group Meetings

Monday, 17 July 2006

Glenview International Hotel & Conference Centre, Hamilton

NZ Queen Bee Producers Association: General Meeting followed by AGM

10.15 am – 12.00 pm

* Carniolans in kiwifruit orchards?
* What are the risks, what are the advantages of the AFB NPMS in queen raising?
* Could the AFB NPMS be changed to take the risk out of queen raising?
* What is involved in exporting queen bees?
* Is the NZFSA and Biosecurity user friendly to queen bee exports?
* How can NZFSA conditions be made more user friendly?
* The importance of Fumidil B in queen raising — when will it be available again?

NZ Honey Packers & Exporters Association: AGM

1.00 – 3pm

NZ Honey Bee Pollination Association: General Meeting followed by AGM

3.15 – 5pm

Pollination in the Year 2015: Guest Speaker on number of hives required for pollination in 2015 and the reasons why.

* Will there be enough hives?
* Will we have EFB?
* Will we have to feed Terramycin?
* Do we then still require an AFB NPMS?

Come and join us for Conference Dinner

Wednesday, 19 July 2006

Dress Casually, Country if you like, but most of all Comfortably

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Packets contain 20 strips, cartons contain 800 strips. For orders of up to 100 strips please add $6 incl. GST for freight. Orders of 100 strips or more are despatched freight free to anywhere in New Zealand. Payment is required prior to despatch by Visa, M/Card, Cheque or Electronic Banking.

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Wool-carder bee, Anthidium manicatum, *from the Old World, newly established in New Zealand*

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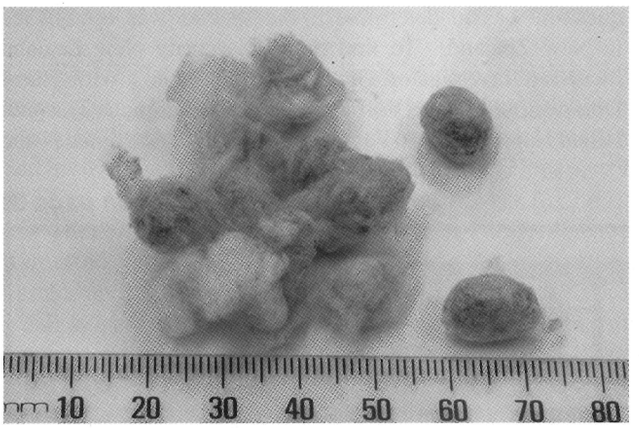
Lincoln
Private Bag 4704
Christchurch

Graham Burnip
Bede McCarthy
Biosecurity New Zealand
Investigation and Diagnostic Centre, Lincoln
PO Box 24, Lincoln 8152

Discovery of a nest at Napier

On 28 January 2006 a resident of Bluff Hill, Napier, found a billiard ball-sized nest of woolly looking fibres in a gap between an aluminium window and its surrounding frame. Embedded in the fibres were 30 cocoons, each about one centimetre long, plus five similar-sized masses of pollen (Fig.1).



Nest of *Anthidium manicatum. Photo: Mark Braithwaite*

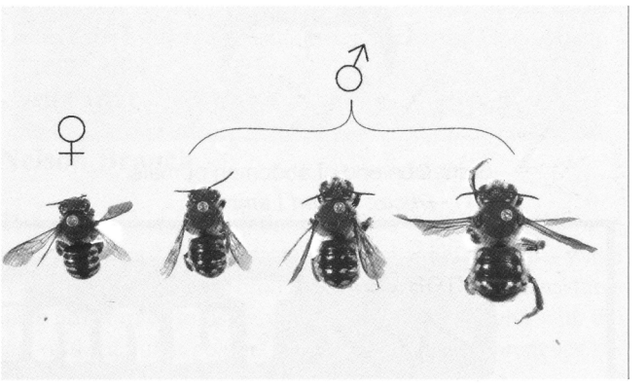
A couple of days after the nest arrived at Biosecurity New Zealand's Investigation and Diagnostic Centre at Lincoln, bees began emerging from the cocoons. It was immediately obvious to Bede McCarthy that the bees were unlike any known from New Zealand, and he soon identified that they were most certainly *Anthidium manicatum,* known in the United Kingdom as the wool-carder bee. This identification has since been confirmed by Dr. Terry Griswold of the USDA bee research laboratory at Logan, Utah.

Outline of bee's biology

The wool-carder bee is, in fact, a type of leafcutting bee. Female leafcutting bees can be readily distinguished because they carry their pollen on the underside of the abdomen, and not on the rear legs as do honey bees and bumble bees. Like most of our native bees the wool-carder bee is solitary, in that there are just males and females, and females each make their own nests without any help or cooperation from other females. Nests are made in cavities that originally would have been in plant material, but as shown by the site of the nest from Napier, nests can be constructed in man-made materials. Overseas there are said to be two generations a year, with new bees emerging from overwintering cocoons in spring, their progeny emerging from nests around mid-summer, and adults all dying by autumn after constructing more new nests. The name 'wool-carder' is derived from the habit of females 'carding' fibres from the surface of plant stems, in a manner reminiscent of the process by which wool is 'carded' between spiked brushes before being spun. The fibres are packed into cavities, and cells containing pollen and nectar are formed within the fibres. An egg is laid on each mass of pollen and nectar, and after eating all the food the resulting larva spins a cocoon from which a new bee will emerge.

Distinguishing features of adults

Females are somewhat smaller than worker honey bees, but males can range in size from slightly bigger than females to as large as a small bumble bee (Fig. 2).



Female and males. *Photo: Mark Braithwaite*

Both sexes have broken yellow lines across the upper aspect of the abdomen, which makes them look a bit like wasps, but the bees are much stouter, and of course both sexes regularly visit flowers.

Range of the species overseas

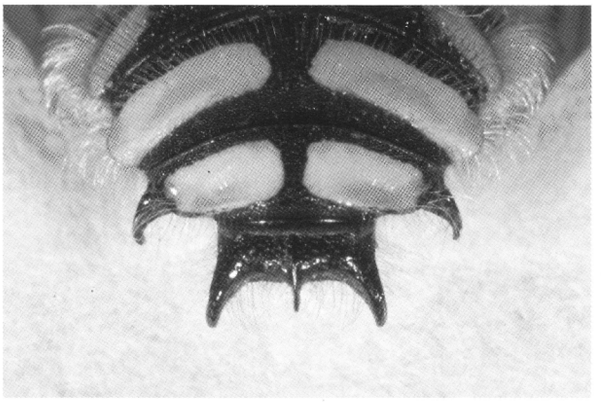
The original range of the bee is said to be Europe, North Africa, and west Asia, but by 1901 it was well established at São Paulo, Brazil (Schrottky 1901), and by 1964 it had colonised much of southern Brazil, northern Argentina and Uruguay (Jaycox 1967). By 1958 it was present in the Canary Islands off the west coast of northern Africa, and by 1963 it was recorded from Ithaca, New York State (Jaycox 1967). Now it is said to occur as far west as Logan, Utah (Terry Griswold personal communication to Bede McCarthy). The species also reached Ontario, Canada by 1990 (Smith 1991). The most likely means by which the species has spread to new areas is through nests in cavities of various items of commerce, such as shipping crates and containers.

Continued on page 12

Continued from page 11

Territorial behaviour of males

A major characteristic of male wool-carder bees is that big males 'stake out' patches of flowers up to a couple of metres across. Other flower-visiting insects, including smaller males of its own species, other species of bees, and some species of wasps, are physically attacked by being flown at and impacted, which often causes the surprised insects to fly off. However, sometimes honey bees and even bumble bees may suffer torn wing membranes and even broken wing veins, rendering them incapable of flight. Males of the great majority of species of bees are quite lightly built, much as are drone honey bees, and of course all male bees are without stings, so how are male wool-carder bees able to damage other bees? Well, they are quite strongly built, with a thick outer integument, but also they have five large, fearsome-looking spines on the rear of the abdomen (Fig. 3).



Spines on end of abdomen of male.
Photo: Robert Lamberts.

As they impact another insect, the male carder bee swings the end of its abdomen forward, plunging the spines into the target insect. If the spines are thrust into the wing, the membrane tears, and veins may break. Overseas studies have found that crawling bees, unable to return to their hives, soon die of exhaustion. Of 1,979 honey bees attacked in Germany, 54.6% left the territory, and 2.5% were wounded (Wirtz et al. 1988). Sitowski (1947) in Poland claimed that big males would use their spines to tear their victims apart after knocking them to the ground and biting through a wing vein, but his observations have not been confirmed by other observers.

Benefits of territoriality

Female wool-carder bees visiting flowers guarded by males benefit from a greater availability of pollen and nectar. The payoff for the big males is that they are able to mate with the females that come to their patch of flowers. Small males are unable to hold territories against large males, so their strategy is to roam around, sneaking into guarded patches where they try to mate with females while the big male is busy attacking other insects or is also mating.

Bee collections at Napier

After the discovery of the nest at Napier, an immediate question was to determine if the species was established in New Zealand. To find out, Biosecurity New Zealand Incursion Investigator Graham Burnip, along with Barry Donovan, searched Bluff Hill and the contiguous Hospital Hill at Napier on 9–10 February. We caught two females and

Continued on page 25

From the colonies

Waikato Branch

The deciduous trees in the southern regions have changed into the beautiful hues of autumn; another couple of weeks and the leaves will have fallen altogether. The more northern regions of the Waikato are a little further behind, but we only need a decent cold spell to change that. Next month is winter and a chance to wrap up all that was the 2005–2006 beekeeping season.

The rain and damp have come, making transversing the paddocks tricky. Some beekeepers still have honey on the hives to remove and extract. This is causing concern for neighbouring beekeepers as to how varroa has been treated, and is perhaps one of the reasons that mite reinvasion is on the increase this year. The branch inspection for the AFB NPMS also needs to be done. All in time.

Wasps have done a lot of damage! In some areas large numbers of hives in the apiary have been decimated. Queen wasps can be found hibernating in the strangest of places: in the handholds of boxes left on their sides, in the doorjamb of the car, in clothes taken off the clothesline and folded into the drawer and in other nooks and crannies, ready for spring.

Conference planning is well underway and registrations are coming in. The opportunity will also be made available to visit HortResearch's Ruakura Laboratory (Dr Mark Goodwin and his team), and the Waikato Innovations Park (Fiona Kerry and Xen-Apiary) on the Friday of conference week (21 July). More details will be available at conference. For Conference dinner on Wednesday 19 July, the dress code is 'country, casual, and comfortable'. That's got you thinking, hasn't it? It is intended to be a time of relaxation and a chance to catch up with friends, in an atmosphere denoting the 100th anniversary of our branch.

The branch held its 100th AGM on 12 May 2006 amidst much discussion, laughter, food and wine. See pages 14-15 for a report and photos.

- Fiona O'Brien

Hawkes Bay Branch

Rain, rain, rain — it has certainly been a wet end to autumn. Although I have not heard of any hive losses there has certainly been a lot of damage to roads. Fortunately most bee work has been finished for the year so it shouldn't cause too many problems. Personally I am going fishing for two weeks, and I hope that things have dried out by the time I get home. As usual, some areas have done better than others in Hawkes Bay but overall it will be an average crop, except for Manuka, which is well down on normal.

- John Berry

Southern North Island Branch

We held the Branch AGM on 1 May and elected the following people:

Chairman and Ward Delegate: Neil Farrer
Vice Chairman: Peter Ferris
Secretary: Frank Lindsay
Treasurer: Mary-Ann Lindsay
Committee: Robin McCammon, Bryon and Sonia Bluett, Lottie Ferris, George Jonson, Allan Richards, Mary Allen.

- Neil Farrer

Nelson Branch

Things have been very quiet in the bee world here. We have had a wet April, receiving twice our normal rainfall. Was I really talking about the drought not so long ago? The pastures have now turned a lush green and it is quite a sight, with the last of the autumn colours still clinging to their branches.

We have just moved some of our hives from the higher altitude areas with native bush nearer to Nelson for the winter, and the bees think that it is Christmas. There are a few jonquils out here already and the heather and tree lucerne pollen is coming in. I couldn't resist a look into these hives on a day when the temperature was a modest 24 degrees, and couldn't believe the amount of new pollen clogged into the three to four half frames of brood after only a week in residence. The queens had started laying again and I had a stern word to them that winter has yet to come!

There have been a few letters to the editor in the *Nelson Mail* about the importation of honey into New Zealand, and Philip Cropp featured in a full-page item in the *Nelson Mail* on the same issue. I hope that all of you have written your letters of concern to your MP and to Hon Jim Anderton, the Minister for Agriculture and Biosecurity. Remember: it is the squeaky wheel that gets the oil!

- Merle Moffitt

A wonderful occasion

On 12 May 2006, the Waikato Branch of the National Beekeepers Association held its 100th AGM. Present for the auspicious occasion were:

- National Beekeepers' Association Life Members (LM): Dudley Lorimer, Murray Reid, Tony Lorimer
- Waikato Branch Life Members (LM): Ray Robinson and Norman Finlay (Absent: Darryl Carey)
- Current and re-elected office holders: President – Russell Berry; Secretary – Cameron Martin; Treasurer – Tony Lorimer (LM)
- Current NBA President Jane Lorimer
- Waikato branch members and guests: Annette Berry, Stephen Batters, Dave West, Brian and Barbara Clements, Lewis Olsen, Stephen Black, Pauline Bassett, Jeremy and Fiona O'Brien, Bill and Margaret Bennett, John Thompson, Byron and Michelle Taylor, Heather McBrydie, Dr Mark Goodwin, and Harlen Cox.

The meeting probably started a little differently than that of 100 years ago, with wine, women and song. By way of explanation:

- the wine and grape juice were supplied by Russell and Annette Berry, proving an excellent way in which to toast 100 years,
- women are playing a more active role in beekeeping businesses, not only as beekeepers but also as managers, therefore leaving spouses/beekeepers to pursue the beekeeping and field work.
- song: because it was our happy birthday!

In due time the general business of the meeting was discussed, including a reiteration from Branch President Russell Berry of the importance of keeping political pressure ongoing about the proposed importation of honey into New Zealand from Australia and the Pacific Islands. Many beekeepers have been receiving replies from the Minister for Biosecurity, the Hon Jim Anderton, hinting that the decision will be made earlier than June, and in all likelihood will "BEE" for importation. A comment was later made at the meeting that we understand that it is also 100 years since the initial ban on importation of honey into New Zealand, and that in 1946 a total ban was imposed.

In his report to the meeting, the Branch President congratulated the branch on what has been a busy year. The branch will be hosting the NBA Conference in July, has played a huge role in the importation of honey protest, and members have joined the "10 percent" club; that is, 10% of hives have been lost to wasps and varroa. Amber honey production was great this year despite honey being difficult to sell due to a number of factors, not least of all waiting for the Minister's decision on whether or not imported honey will be permitted. We have also seen the birth of the carniolan race, which Russell Berry terms "the four-minute mile" (the length of time it takes to get away from the bees, whether they have come to greet you as you head to an apiary or if you are working in the kiwifruit

orchard). Last, but not least, 2006 has seen the rise of the paper war. It paints an interesting picture.

From our older members

Dudley Lorimer still has around 80 hives, and commented that the amount of laughter at the branch meetings was wonderful in the face of all that is against us. Dudley is 91 and a half, and acquired his first hive in 1937 working for Bert Davies. In 1938 he bought his first 100 hives. [Editor's note: see the feature on Dudley Lorimer on page 16.]

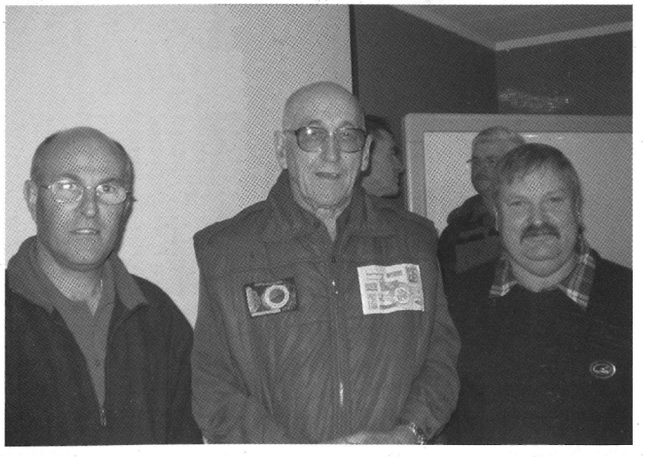
Norm Finlay remembers the last time that he was present at a branch meeting was when he and Ray Robinson received their Life Membership. He started beekeeping in 1942–43 with George Menkolow. Norm still produces bellows and wax melters, among other things, and when asked if he still has any hives replied, "if you have one hive you will have 100". No! Norm is 78, acquired his first hive in 1943 and has been beekeeping for 57 years.

Ray Robinson is known for working his jumbo hives, and cautioned beekeepers to watch their backs and to mechanise as much as they can. In his beekeeping lifetime, Ray would have lifted "thousands of tonnes of honey" which ultimately has affected him. Ray is currently growing persimmons and lives in Waihou. He is 78 and had his first hobbyist hive in 1960.

The worst year Dudley recalls was when they purchased 24 tonnes of sugar and only produced 17 tonnes of honey, making around a £40,000 loss.

- Fiona O'Brien

Dudley Lorimer blowing out 'Happy Birthday' candles on three pavlovas spelling out '1 0 0'.



Jeremy O'Brien, Ray Robinson and Lewis Olsen.
Ray sold some bees to Jeremy and Lewis in the early 1990s.

Postscript

Waikato Roll of Honour

- National Beekeepers' Association Life Members (LM): Wallace Nelson (deceased), Tom Pearson (deceased), Alan Bates (deceased), Des Williams (deceased), Ernest Sage (deceased), Jim Barber (deceased), Dudley Lorimer, Tony Lorimer and Murray Reid
- Waikato Branch Life Members (LM): Norman Tuck (deceased), Albert Pearson (deceased), Darryl Carey, Thereas Broadley (deceased), Jim Hishon (deceased), Cliff Bird, Ray Robinson and Norman Finlay.

Left to right: Dudley Lorimer, Ray Robinson, and Norman Finlay.

Front cover caption:

Left to right: Back row: Jeremy O'Brien, Bryan Clements, John Thompson, Stephen Batters, Cameron Martin, Stephen Black, Russell Berry, Lewis Olsen, Norman Finlay, Margaret Bennett, Dave West and Bill Bennett.
Front row: Barbara Clements, Pauline Bassett, Tony Lorimer, Jane Lorimer, Ray Robinson, Dudley Lorimer
Absent: Annette Berry, Fiona O'Brien (photographer)

Photos: Fiona O'Brien

Memories of a special Waikato man — 91 not out

Dudley Lorimer must have been born around 1915. His family had dairy cows but at the age of 15 he became tired of being whacked around the head with a wet and dirty cow's tail at milking time. He decided to go down the road to Bert Davies, who needed an apiary assistant. This was when Dudley's love of bees began. His interest in bees has lasted 76 years, for at 91 he still has hives and retains a love for the tiny creatures that he grew to understand and care for, and which in turn cared for him and his family over all those years.

Dudley worked for Bert Davies until the outbreak of war in 1940, at which time he enlisted and went overseas. By that stage he owned around 100 hives, and while he was away Pearson Bros looked after his hives. On his return, Bert said that he would sell his hives to Dudley if he wanted them. This was his dream: he was now to become a commercial beekeeper!

My first meeting with Dudley was at a conference around the late 1950s or early 1960s. I was so lucky to see him on the debating floor with the likes of Harry Cloake, Percy Berry, Jasper Bray and Jack Frazer, to name but a few. They were vigorous and robust debaters — leaping to points of order, refusing to be seated when ordered to by the chair — because in the white-hot debates generated at the time, these powerful orators were certain that their points were valid.

Dudley standing proudly in one of his apiaries with Mt Maungatautari in the background.

Dudley would sit back and listen. You could tell when he became moved by the debate: the telltale smoke cloud would begin to issue from his pipe, becoming like smog over Christchurch on an autumn evening. When the debaters were beginning to run out of steam he would rise to his feet and with a few well-chosen words, sum up the debate as he understood it, then deliver his interpretation of the essence. Almost without fail his comments would become the substantive issue on which members would vote, often bringing consensus to a widely divided group of 'rugged individualists'.

Dudley also had a substantial effect on me, 20 years his junior, during my early years on the NBA executive. His quiet manner, sound judgement and ability to sum up the essence of a debate played a pivotal role in industry decisions. His promotion of the use of the "inch-to-mile" map series led to apiary registration accuracy, which then led to the early war to control AFB. Also at this time, when we sometimes would gather in some hapless member's room after dinner to "down a dram", he would tell me of this wonderful area around Taupo that was being developed. They added molybdenum super, clover and ryegrass and the area became a beekeepers' paradise. "Ten ton to the 100" was the norm and to service it, Dudley bought a funny Japanese truck called an Isuzu. This 'funny' truck proved to be not so funny when it was finally pensioned off after 800,000 miles — not bad for an investment. But it wasn't all work in Taupo. Dudley would also recall how he would lie under a willow after lunch, smoke a pipe, while one of his staff would tempt a trout for tea. Not a bad boss — not a bad job!

No wonder he has a smile on his face – this hive was very full of honey!

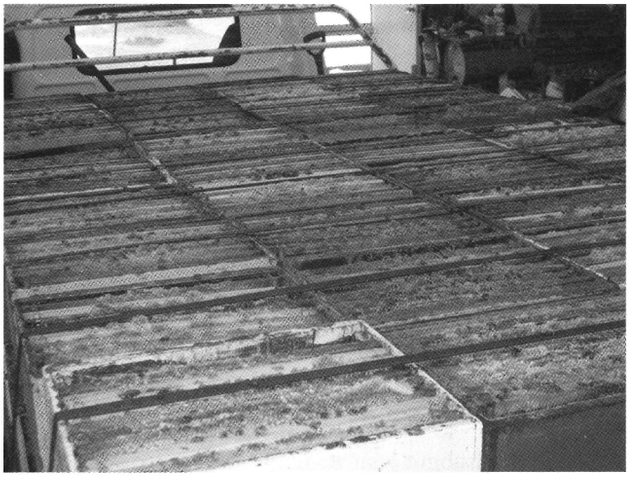
Dudley standing by his 2006 honey crop after a hard day's work.

His strong beliefs in single-desk selling lured him away from the NBA executive to the board of the Honey Marketing Authority (HMA). His passion for doing the best for the industry, together with his finely honed debating skills, saw

him guiding the Authority through difficult times, and his gentle nature was often tested in the robust debates of the day.

I am proud to have known Dudley — the beekeeper, the orator, the sage and the man. May the sun always shine on his hives and may the young queens he raises produce copious quantities of honey!

- David Penrose



Most of his crop for 2006 that Jane and Tony helped to remove from his hives. He went out a couple of days later to remove the last few boxes of honey with his car and trailer.

Photos supplied by Jane and Tony Lorimer.

Report on Apiguard® trials in Waikato and the King Country

On 9 March 2006 a group of Waikato/King Country beekeepers, along with visiting Welsh beekeeper Wally Shaw, treated 26 hives with Apiguard®. This is one of a number of varroa treatments. All hives were two storeys, with honey having been removed at the end of February. All hives had wooden rims, either under lids or between brood boxes. A variety of hive gear was used to test the effectiveness of Apiguard®, including:

- different hive lids: telescopic and sprung-loaded migratory
- different floors: ventilated and unventilated
- entrance guards on some
- different hive mats.

With the Apiguard® now in the hive, sticky boards were inserted for 24 hours to see what the mite drop would be. It was reasonable. We applied two treatments using the foil trays method, each two weeks apart (day time temperatures were above 15°C, as specified for product use). The intention was to get the group back together (6 April); however, at this time most of the beekeepers were in Wellington, participating in the bee products import protest at Parliament.

At the end of the treatment time, Apistan was applied and there appeared to be little change in the 24-hour mite drop; however, hives that had the wooden rim in the middle of the brood boxes showed significantly less number of mites on the 24-hour drop.

Why were the mite levels still so high? Some possible reasons included:

- the honey flow continued later this season
- invasions were quite high during this process due to high swarming in spring
- it later became established that beekeepers still were in the process of removing honey and other hives were starting to break down without treatment.

With the results from this apiary, we felt we needed to rethink the application method, and we were lucky enough to have another apiary under Apiguard® treatment, which was two weeks behind the initial apiary. As the daytime temperature was still above 15°C, we changed the wooden rims from under the lid to the middle of the brood boxes for the second half of the treatment, anticipating a better efficacy. In hindsight, we really needed the full treatment in the middle to be able to clearly see if there was any difference.

The outcome was that we felt it was good to try an alternative treatment. From Wally Shaw's experience he was confident of the ability of Apiguard® but felt we may have to adapt some of our hive gear, which indicates that more research is needed on how to use this product in New Zealand. After talking to the New Zealand agents it appears more testing is under way, so we await next year.

- Jeremy O'Brien

RMPs, Export Approved Premises and IDs

Risk Management Programmes (RMPs) are being submitted to the New Zealand Food Safety Authority (NZFSA) for registration by 1 July 2006 in fairly good numbers. However, many bee product processors appear to be delaying registering their RMPs. NZFSA encourages bee product processors to submit RMP applications as soon as possible. Even if you will not need to operate your RMP until well after 1 July, it is better to have everything in place well in advance.

RMP identifiers

At the time of RMP registration, many bee premises will be required to change their IDs. This is because the IDs used in the current Bee Product Premises List cannot be transferred over to an RMP identifier. One of the main reasons for this is that registrations in the bee products industry are changing from identification of the **place** where the processing occurs to identification of the **processing** that is being done by that business. A "Bee Products Premises listing" just tells us that at a particular location we can expect to find bee products that someone wants to be able to export. An RMP registration tells us what kind of bee products we will find when verification is being done, and also what sort of processing activities are being undertaken (e.g., extraction, packing, encapsulation etc).

"Export Approved Premises Listings"

There may be a few bee products premises (generally those without RMPs) that need to be on our "Export Approved Premises List". This listing is required *if you require export certification* for bee products that are not food for humans or animals, and you do not have these products included under a registered RMP. An example is beeswax that is going to be made into candles.

The legal basis for this listing is the Animal Products (Export Approved Premises Notice) 2006.

An Export Approved Premises listing is not an RMP and it is not an alternative to having an RMP. For instance, you cannot apply to have your export honey extraction activities carried out at an Export Approved Premises. Export eligible honey extraction, and other food processing and storage activities, must be done under an RMP.

SOME ANSWERS TO FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

**How do I become an Export Approved Premises?*

All premises that are on the current "Bee Products Premises List" on 30 June 2006 will be automatically transferred across to the "Export Approved Premises List" on 1 July 2006. So for currently listed bee product premises there is no specific action required.

For anyone who is not on the current list on 30 June 2006, and after 1 July wishes to list their premises as an Export Approved Premises, they will have to apply for listing in a way that is very similar to the application process for current Bee Product Premises listings. Please note, on 1 July 2006 the "Bee Products Premises List" will cease to exist.

**So, does that mean each premises will have two IDs?*

Yes, every premises that is currently on the Bee Products Premises list will, after 1 July and as long as they have submitted their RMP in time, appear on two different lists:

1. the RMP Register and
2. the Export Approved Premises List.

These two lists will have different IDs for the same premises. The RMP will have a new ID, and the Export Approved Premises list will continue to use the IDs from the Bee Products Premises List. Why? Because the RMP registers the activities that are being undertaken, and the Export Approved Premises List identifies the premises, and they cover different types of product that will be used for completely different purposes.

If you do not submit your RMP in time for registration on 1 July your premises will still be moved across to the Export Approved Premises List. But this will not allow you to store, handle or process Bee Products for food or animal consumption. Remember, Export Approved Premises Listing **is not a substitute** for an RMP.

**What if I don't want/need to be an Export Approved Premises? Or rather, why is NZFSA listing my premises as an Export Approved Premises without asking first?*

NZFSA is doing this because of the limitations of the current Bee Products Premises List. That is, NZFSA does not know the full range of activities being undertaken at any given bee products premises right now, and it is not possible to easily figure out who to include and who to exclude within the necessary timeframe. This is not an ideal situation, but NZFSA considers that it is better to include those premises that don't need to be there than to exclude those premises that need to be on the list.

**How much is this transition going to cost?*

Nothing. The transition to the Export Approved Premises List will not attract a charge.

If you do not produce anything that requires Export Approved Premises listing, then there will be no verification associated with the listing and hence no ongoing costs.

You can write to the NZFSA Approvals and ACVM Group and ask to be removed from the Export Approved Premises List and this will not cost anything. NZFSA would appreciate being informed of Export Approved Premises listings that should be removed, but it is entirely up to you whether you do it or not.

You can ignore the listing: it will lapse in two years' time and your premises will automatically drop off the Export Approved Premises List, and this will not cost you anything. You will receive a letter close to the end of the two years saying that the listing is up for renewal. You can ignore that letter if you don't want to remain listed. You may also receive another "final reminder" letter after the two years is up, which will say your premises will drop off the Export Approved Premises List if you don't renew. You can ignore that letter too and your listing will be dropped soon after. This **will not** affect your RMP registration.

Of course if you do need to remain on the list, then the two-yearly renewal will require a renewal fee to be paid. There is also an annual verification requirement for Export Approved Premises that will require verification charges to be paid. The NZFSA cannot tell verifiers how to schedule their verifications, but it would be sensible for premises that have both an RMP and an Export Approved Premises listing to have one verification to cover both things. Since most of the issues of interest for Export Approved Premises are equally of interest for RMPs (i.e., traceability), then any Export Approved Premises component that is added to an RMP verification will be minimal in terms of cost.

**To avoid any sort of additional costs, can't I just include the non-food processing in my RMP?*

Yes, you can.

Even though an Export Approved Premises listing **cannot** be used as an alternative to an RMP, an RMP **can** be used as an alternative to an Export Approved Premises listing.

There is one catch: you can't register an RMP where the only activity is non-human/non-animal consumption related. RMPs are all about producing things for human and/or animal consumption. So you can't have an RMP that covers the processing of beeswax for candle making by itself. But you can have an RMP that covers beeswax for candles as a side product of the main outcome of an RMP that produces bee products for food (e.g., honey).

**What if the RMP I have just submitted includes beeswax processing in it?*

A number of RMPs that have been submitted do actually include beeswax within their scope. This means that for the beeswax processing within an RMP the Export Approved Premises Listing will not apply, but your premises will still go onto the Export Approved Premises List.

People who have included all of their beeswax processing in their RMPs can basically ignore the Export Approved Premises listing — as mentioned above — and allow it to lapse in two years' time, or write to NZFSA to request that they be removed from the list immediately. But people who have only included part of their beeswax processing within their RMP will need to decide whether they remain as an Export Approved Premises or not.

If you need to discuss these issues further, your verifier will be able to answer most of your questions, and they will be able to get answers for any questions that they are not sure about.

Greg Zemke-Smith
Programme Manager
NZFSA Export Standards and Systems – Animal Products
PO Box 2835
Wellington
Phone: (04) 463 2500
Fax: (04) 463 2591

About the apiary

May has not been kind to me weather-wise in Wellington. The high-pressure systems forecast for New Zealand in the first two weeks of May did not eventuate as indicated in Ken Ring's *Predict Weather* almanac. Instead we have had lows and warm fronts sitting over New Zealand and off to the east, resulting in cloudy, wet days for those sitting just off the centre of the country.

So much for my long-range autumn planning. Ken's predictions generally are correct around September–October, when I plan my queen rearing so that mating occurs during a week of fine weather — hence the book is a good investment for me. The only improvement to *Predict Weather* I would suggest is that Ken adds in the wind speed and temperature; however, I generally take the temperature of Timaru as a guide in the spring, as that region tends to reach 20°C a few weeks earlier than Wellington. (You get better queen matings at 20°C, provided that you have also been producing drones a month beforehand).

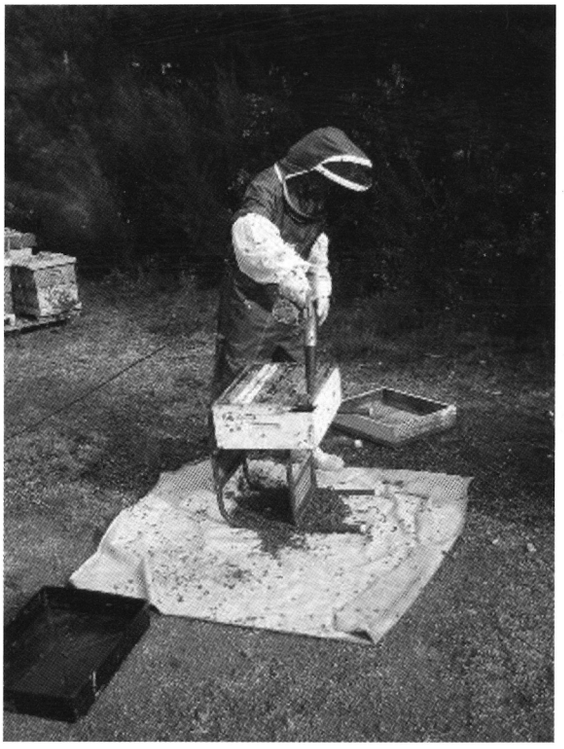
All this rain has made the clay tracks slushy and I've changed to winter tyres on the truck. These are knobbly, off-road ones that hopefully won't see me getting stuck somewhere out the back of a farm. When you are away from help and out of cellphone range, you have to be self-sufficient. If you think you ought to put on mud chains, then do so, as the five minutes it takes often pays off handsomely. It's no fun trying to put on chains when you are buried in mud. Even light snow chains will provide extra grip and will make a two-wheel drive perform like a four-wheel drive on a flat soggy paddock, but don't get overconfident. Idle over the paddock, as once you break through the surface you usually get stuck. It also pays to take along a spade, a few wire ropes, a fencing strainer and a bit of pipe to give extra leverage. These will usually get you going again, provided there's a tree or fence post handy.

So I was slightly uneasy about proceeding onto a site on a greasy clay track to take off a small amount of manuka honey, and relieved to discover that the tracks had partially dried. These hives had built up well from nucs I'd put in as an afterthought to relieve congestion in some of my apiaries.

Taking honey off at this time of the year is easy. Early on a frosty morning the bees leave the top super(s) to cluster, so there's no problem in removing the honey. Later in the day the bees move back into the supers. As the bees are somewhat sluggish, you have to handle the frames carefully so you don't roll bees when inspecting for disease. Strong hives with new queens still have brood in a couple of frames, while most have a smattering in just one frame in the middle of the cluster.

There are two easy methods to remove the bees from the supers: escape boards or blowing. Escape boards work well overnight, clearing almost every bee from the supers, but the boards can become clogged with broken brace comb if there is too much between the bottom bars and the top of the frames from the super below. Escape boards also necessitate two visits to the apiary and with the ever-increasing cost of fuel, it's not wise to use this method unless you're planning to pick up honey supers from another apiary or you have a load of firewood to take home.

Blowing is a relatively easy method but also more disruptive. The bees cling only lightly to the sealed honey frames but they can be lost if blown into the air or in front of a hive, as they will become chilled before they are able to get back to the entrance. However, if you put a sheet on the ground and blow down on to it, most the bees will stay put. After you have finished blowing all the supers from a hive, the sheet can be folded in half to form a chute and you can put the bees directly on to the top of the hive. With a little smoke they quickly go down and you can safely close the hives without squashing any bees.



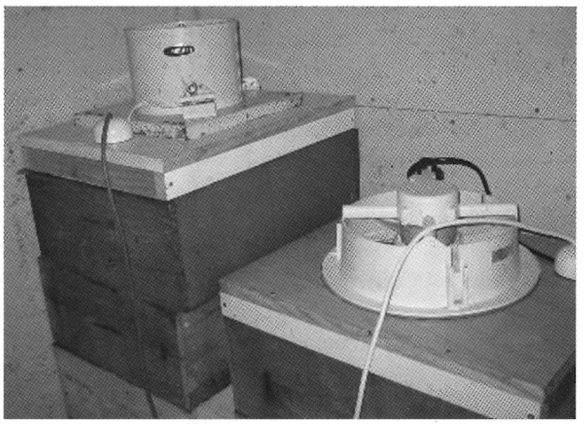
Blowing bees

What to do with humid honey

With all this rain I've had to become a bit of a commercial beekeeper, working the occasional day in the rain. I say "a bit" as I put off going out in the rain as long as I could, mucking about in the garage building little bits to help improve my extraction process, but eventually you just have to go out and bring in honey.

I got a surprise when I took my last lot of honey off. We've had a dry summer (drought conditions, in fact) so the honey has been relatively dry, below 18% moisture, but this last lot was rather watery. I measured it and found it contained 20% moisture, so it was into the hot room with it. I stacked supers slightly off the drip trays to provide an airflow and put fan units on top of each stack. I then turned the dehumidifier on full (32°C) and two days later, after extracting 15 litres of water, the moisture content measured 17% — a much better result.

I can hear you asking, "Where do you get the fans and dehumidifier? What's does this all cost?" I found mine at the recycle shop at the local refuse dump and paid five to ten dollars each for the fans and dehumidifier, plus the cost of new cords because they cut off the plugs for safety reasons. (A tip: Refrigerant has oil in it. Look over the cooling unit and joints for oil. If there's no oil, there are no leaks.) Throw in the costs of a friendly electrician, some wooden frames to sit the fan units on (a new use for the old kitchen cupboards), and you are away. For a hobbyist in this situation, sit a stack of up to four supers high over a 60-watt incandescent light bulb for a week. That is, put the lamp in an empty super, place a queen excluder and a sheet of oven foil completely covering the excluder, then put on the supers and cover. The queen excluder supports the oven foil, which dissipates the heat from the bulb evenly across the surface, thus preventing a meltdown immediately under the bulb.



Fans

Surveillance and monitoring

Generally in the autumn I do surveillance work for AgriQuality. I've had to stop checking hives for exotic diseases, as the bees and their owners don't like you taking their hives to bits in this kind of weather, and the bees get rather upset when you have to reopen them up again next day to remove varroa strips. Unfortunately a few beekeepers out there are still not monitoring their hives and are not putting strips in early enough. I've found the occasional hive dead or about to die, crawling with mites. It's rather sad, as brood rearing occurs year round here and those mites keep reproducing. I have also found a few of my own hives dead, mostly because I feel I didn't get the strips in early enough, and in some hives I didn't put the strips close enough to the brood. A surprise for me also!

Quite often a hive that has been severely weakened by mites can be restored fairly quickly. Shake the bees off the few brood frames that remain, remove them and treat the hive for a day or so. Then add three frames of capped/emerging brood from a clean hive (always check for AFB before doing this). Otherwise it takes a full couple of months of mite-free brood rearing cycles for the bees to recover, and unfortunately they won't recover under winter conditions.

Bees, gardens and gardeners

Autumn is also a time when beekeepers are invited to speak at gardening meetings and clubs. Gardeners are interested in what's going on in the industry following the recent publicity on honey imports, so don't turn down the opportunity to

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spread the word. Some are surprised that varroa mites are still causing damage: they think that once you treat them, the problem's gone. Gardeners have also noticed the difference in not having bees around in the spring: there's hardly been any fruit although this past autumn, being warm, was an exception. Some say they are pleased if they see two bees in their garden. Bumblebee numbers have increased in the absence of honeybees, and the queen bumblebees are doing valuable spring pollination. Unfortunately there are not a lot of them — one or two can only do so much. Some gardeners are surprised at just how many bee visits to takes to set fruit. As in Auckland, Wellington-area gardeners are now asking what they can do to increase bee pollination during fruit tree blossom. Distributing nucleus hives through the city is one way to achieve this, but a better way is to encourage more people to take up beekeeping.

If an interested person approaches you, encourage them to start small and buddy them up with a hobbyist in their area. Loan them an old suit and give them ideas of cheap ways to make gloves; for example, rubber kitchen gloves with parka nylon sleeves will get them started. Parka nylon putties will protect ankles or stop bees going down gumboots. Most beekeepers have an old smoker sitting on a shelf somewhere, and a file, ground to a flat edge, will do as a hive tool to start with. These modifications allow a new beekeeper to go out with an experienced beekeeper to discover whether they like what they see and do. The first sting is the worst, but as beekeepers never the get a full dose of venom through a suit, novices should experience only mild swelling. Suggest that they take a few vitamin C tablets before going out, as this can alleviate swelling.

As to obtaining bees, a split from a hive that's about to swarm in the spring will get them going, but first get a beekeeper to visit their home or wherever they intend to place the hive. Siting a hive is most important for the bees, the beekeeper and the neighbours. Sometimes out of sight is out of mind. A windbreak or a water supply may be needed if there's a swimming pool close by, as bees go to them for water during summer and can bother your neighbours. Provide a water source close to your hives if this is the case.

And then there are the countless books they can read, either in the NBA library, or perhaps through your local library. If the person's not much of a reader, there are now a number of DVDs that can be purchased from overseas. Perhaps your local bee clubs might have some you can borrow.

I believe beekeepers don't really know the workings of a bee. They know how to handle them, but don't understand the finer points of what makes bees tick. I marvel at the knowledge some people have, like Clarence Collison of Mississippi State University. He writes a 'Do You Know?' question and answer column in *Bee Culture*. Where does he get his knowledge? Perhaps it's in *The Hive and the Honey Bee* by Dadant, but unfortunately I only skim through it, picking out information as I need it. A few days reading by the fire this winter wouldn't go amiss but if it's a fine day, I'll be told that I'm in the way or that perhaps I should be doing something else …

I have frames to sort, rejecting any that are dark, have broken lugs or are distorted with drone comb. I need to make up supers, frames, nucs, boxes and baseboards before spring, and our overseas holiday is coming up pretty fast. I don't think I'll get it all done in time but then again …

Things to do this month

Render down cappings and old brood comb. I tend to burn my old dark broken frames one at a time in the fire, but make sure you have had your chimney cleaned as the heat will easily set all the soot and creosote alight. Make up equipment for the new season.

For the commercial beekeeper, take a family holiday somewhere warm, or go to some hot pools if the budget is tight. Perhaps go to Australia, taking in one of their conferences if you can. You'll learn heaps for the locals and it recharges your batteries.

For the hobbyist who eventually wants to become a commercial beekeeper some day, try to attend branch meetings every now and again. I used to go to these and learnt a lot just listening to the discussion during lunch. Tips can save you time and money as everybody has at some stage expanded hive numbers. Make a plan and discuss it with other beekeepers. They will generally point out difficulties and easy ways to resolve them.

And don't forget Conference in Hamilton next month.

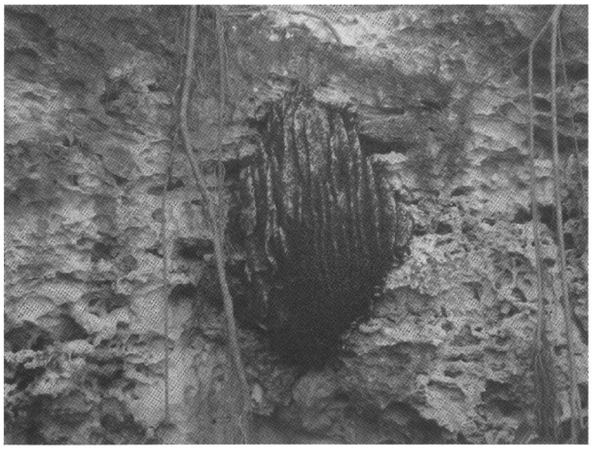
- Frank Lindsay

Honey bees as an invasive species — a different perspective

Byron Taylor
Apicultural Officer
AgriQuality Limited

In the warm tropical region of the South Pacific Ocean off the coast of New Caledonia lies a tiny island called Ouvea. Ouvea is a part of the Loyalty Island group and boasts the longest coral sand beach in the group. The people of Ouvea are a mix of indigenous Polynesian and Melanesian people as well as French nationals.

Ouvea is also home to the parakeet of Ouvea *(Eunymphicus uvaensis),* which is unique to the island and is highly endangered. As at April 2005 there were thought to be about 300 breeding pairs on the island, of which only 100 pairs had successfully reproduced the previous season. One of the reasons for the apparent failure of the majority of the parakeet population to reproduce is the lack of available nesting sites. Parakeet mating pairs will select a nesting site and return to it every year to rear their young. If they return to the nest and it is occupied another suitable nest must be found, which may mean that they are unproductive for that season. Honey bees have been identified as being a threat to the remaining parakeet population due to feral colonies establishing nests in tree cavities previously occupied by parakeets.



A large feral colony on Ouvea. *Photo: Byron Taylor*

In 1994, five Italian *(Apis mellifera ligustica)* honey bee colonies were brought to Ouvea in order to develop apiculture on the island. The colonies were managed well for the first few years but were eventually left to fend for themselves. This led to significant problems with swarms that survived very well in the winterless climate with an ample food supply and few pests or diseases.

While a local parrot conservation group has managed to destroy a significant number of feral honey bee colonies, it is estimated that about 250 feral colonies currently remain on the island, some of which are occupying nesting sites in trees that would otherwise have been occupied by parrots. The population growth of the bees, if left alone, is estimated to be around 20–30% per year so that, if uncontrolled, the population would be 433 colonies in 2007, rising to 845 colonies in 2010. Between 2010 and 2015 the population would reach a plateau of around 1000 colonies, with density varying depending on the availability of nesting sites in the area and the tolerance of locals to swarms in built-up areas. The average density of bees would likely be in the order of seven to eight colonies per square kilometre. The density would be higher in areas with more nesting sites, including areas occupied by the parakeets. At this level the Ouvea parakeets would be at great risk as reproduction success would be very low.

Currently four beekeepers on Ouvea manage 27 colonies between them, mostly located in the centre of the island. Swarm control in these managed colonies is variable, with one beekeeper reporting one swarm in three hives over the past three years and another reporting 100 swarms from 16 hives in one year. These beekeepers are intending to expand their total hive holdings to around 60 colonies in the next two to three years.

In order for Ouvea's parakeet and honey bee populations to co-exist, depopulation and swarm control in managed hives is necessary. There are two methods of hive depopulation being undertaken: destruction of colonies with the use of an insecticide (Carbaryl), and harvesting of colonies for transportation off the island.

Application of carbaryl insecticide to a feral colony. *Photo: Byron Taylor.*

Several insecticides can effectively depopulate honey bee colonies. Carbaryl is used on Ouvea due to its low avian toxicity. Colonies within reach can be quickly treated by dusting the Carbaryl powder on the nest or at the entrance to the nesting cavity with the aid of a squirt bottle. Colonies disperse the powder throughout the nest and the bees quickly die. Colonies that are high in the cliffs, or otherwise out of reach, are not able to be treated with Carbaryl currently but methods of longer-range dispersal of the insecticide are being investigated. Killing feral hives using sugar or honey baits and insecticides has been considered but is not an option at this stage because of the risk to managed colonies and also other native species.

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Harvesting swarms for commercial use is also undertaken as an alternative to poisoning, as there is a market for nucleus colonies on Ouvea's neighbouring islands and it is hoped that income generated from the sale of these colonies could be used to fund parrot conservation efforts. There are no endangered parakeets on these neighbouring islands.

Feral colonies already have a negative impact on the parakeet population. If no action is taken, colony reproduction through swarming will cause an even greater demand for nesting sites and could ultimately contribute to the extinction of the parakeet on Ouvea.

With a feral depopulation program in place and education efforts under way to minimise the swarms generated from managed colonies, the population growth of feral colonies will hopefully be reversed. Eventually the feral population will reduce to the point where remaining colonies are either unable to be reached or unable to be found. At this point the population will be kept static with less regular depopulation efforts.

Through a combined process of depopulation of feral colonies by harvesting or poisoning, and the education of beekeepers on swarm control in managed hives, a balance between conservation of the parakeet and the beekeeping industry will be found.

Have you registered for conference yet??

Conference is not that far off: 17–20 July 2006 in Hamilton!

Do you have photos/memorabilia for display at Conference? I am keen to receive more display material. I am happy to copy your precious photos so that they won't be damaged, and I can prepare captions for the display.

I am also looking forward to receiving your business history montage — photos, papers, whatever you have as a record of your business, mounted on a sheet of white A2 size card (can be purchased for $2 from your local stationer).

Please send to Pauline Bassett, Waitomo Honey Ltd, 44 View Road, PO Box 387, Te Kuiti, Ph/Fax 07 878 7193, email waihon@actrix.co.nz

- Pauline Bassett
for Conference Committee

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one male over an area of about 1.5 km. Both females were collecting pollen, which indicated that they were nesting, and which in turn strongly suggested that the species is established there.

Occurrence of the species at Nelson

The following Monday, Dr Jo Berry from Landcare Research Ltd, Auckland, emailed to inform us that on 6 February 2006, Jo Rees of Landcare Research, Nelson had caught a female bee which Jo Berry had tentatively also identified as the wool-carder bee. Also, Jo Rees had seen several other bees hovering among and visiting flowers.

Bee occurrence and behaviour at Nelson

On 6–7 March 2006, Barry Donovan found wool-carder bees to be plentiful at two sites at Nelson up to 1.8 km apart. Four females, all collecting pollen, were easily caught, along with 14 males. Large males were quite noticeable, as they often hovered completely motionless before targeting and then flying directly at and striking honey bees, bumble bees, and the solitary eumenid wasp *Ancistrocerus gazella.* Nearly all attacked insects immediately flew off, but a few moved to other nearby flowers, perhaps just 20–40 cm away, where they continued to forage. Female wool-carder bees were soon mated by the big males after they arrived at a guarded flower patch. After mating for about 6–10 seconds, both sexes fed in flowers.

No insects were seen to fall to the ground after being attacked, but one worker honey bee was found crawling on grass under flowers being guarded by a big male wool-carder bee. Subsequent inspection showed that the honey bee was apparently undamaged. Overseas reports indicate that some insects have been stunned by attacks but recovered (Wirtz et al. 1988).

Potential impact on New Zealand honey bees

The occurrence of the wool-carder bee at Napier and Nelson, and its obvious ability to colonise a very wide range of habitats overseas, very strongly suggests that the species will soon spread over both the North and South islands. So will the bee cause problems to our apicultural industry? Based on available foreign information and the limited observations at Nelson, almost certainly not, as nowhere are wool-carder bees considered to be pests of honey bees. Certainly a few honey bees will be killed, but because wool-carder bees require existing cavities in wood or man-made materials within which to make their nests, and because such cavities are not usually numerous, the number of wool-carder bees will probably be fairly limited. Also, although female wool-carder bees have been recorded visiting at least 44 species of flowering plants (Kurtak 1973), they are unlikely to be significant competitors for pollen and nectar because their numbers will never be great.

No records of enemies of wool-carder bees seem to have been published, and the nest recovered from Napier was pest free. Also, as the life cycle of the wool-carder bee is so different from that of honey bees, there seems no possibility that they would be able to attack honey bees, even if pests did arrive with the bee.

Where to look for wool-carder bees

Apart from the capture of one female on flowers of *Sempervivum* (a succulent), all of the plants that wool-carder bees have been associated with at both Napier and Nelson have been the purple linaria, *Linaria purpurea.* This plant is present in gardens throughout New Zealand, but is also common outside gardens in suburbs with weedy roadsides, and it springs up from such places as cracks between garden fences and the seal of footpaths. Numerous stems grow up to a metre tall, with each stem carrying narrow leaves about 6 mm wide and 80 mm long, and many small purple flowers about 8 mm in diameter. Where the wool-carder bees are common, usually one to several males will be easily seen as they hover in one spot before attacking visitors to flowers. It is likely that other flowering plants will be similarly favoured by wool-carder bees.

Impact in native environment as yet unknown

The impact that the wool-carder bee poses to other native fauna is unknown. However, if the species establishes in our native environments, its interactions with native bees could be of some concern, especially if males drive native bees away from flowers.

Where to from here?

Biosecurity New Zealand is in the process of finalising its decision on future management of this species and a report is due to be completed by June 2006. At this stage no action is likely as *Anthidium manicatum* is well established, impacts are anticipated to be relatively low and eradication is considered unfeasible.

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Letters to the editor

Dear Editor,

The American Foulbrood Pest Management Strategy is exactly that: a strategy only. Why? Because when I found a big hive in a Lombardy poplar at our local rest area, I did my duty and took it out, and yes it was loaded with foulbrood. So I closed it up again, and went back at night with heaps of petrol to exterminate it. The nature of the tree and its internal galleries didn't allow this. The hive survived. So I went through the proper channels with MAF, requesting assistance such as fumigation and/or tree removal. Lo and behold, there is no assistance.

I know that hive has foulbrood and every time I drive past I think, "there goes another useless government plot, full of taxes, rhetoric and good intentions, but when it comes to the crunch it is toothless and like a jellyfish with no guts".

We call on the Management Agency to wake up and get real. Put the money where your mouth is.

Yours sincerely,
Clark Family (Canterbury)

Response from the NBA

I would like to invite the Clark family to contact me direct at their earliest opportunity, either by emailing me at rbaynes@ihug.co.nz, or via post at PO Box 44282, Lower Hutt.

Yours sincerely,
Rex Baynes
AFB NPMS Manager

Response from Biosecurity New Zealand

Dear Editor,

The Clark family have done absolutely the right thing in investigating this wild hive, and trying to destroy it after discovering it infected with American foulbrood.

Destruction of wild hives is outside the normal operations of the American Foulbrood National Pest Management Strategy, but obviously action is desirable if this wild hive poses a risk to managed beehives. I have contacted the local NBA Branch Chairman, and we agree that this problem is best dealt with locally.

The best approach would be for the writer to contact the Strategy Manager, Rex Baynes, at the address on the inside cover of the magazine, giving as much detail as possible on where to find the problem hive, including grid references. The Manager can then inform the local authority, and also check for an experienced beekeeper in the area who would be willing to assist in killing the hive and destroying diseased material. If the beekeeper finds it necessary to remove the tree, the local authority would need to be involved. It may also be possible at the same time to collect a live bee sample for analysis, which will be useful for later analysis of the AFB status of the hive and local area.

I would like to try and clarify the roles that MAF and the industry have in operating the strategy. MAF has not had an operational role in managing American foulbrood since the strategy came into effect. Disease control is now industry-managed and industry-funded. The strategy was written by beekeepers for the benefit of beekeepers, not imposed by government.

The NBA is the Management Agency, which has responsibility for carrying out all the operations and functions of the strategy. MAF's role is to oversee the strategy and provide support through the framework of the Biosecurity Act.

Yours sincerely

Ian Govey
Senior Policy Analyst
Biosecurity New Zealand
Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry

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Smith, I. 1991: *Anthidium manicatum* (Hymenoptera: Megachilidae), an interesting new Canadian record. *Proceedings of the Entomological Society of Ontario 122:* 105–108.

Wirtz, P., Szabados, M., Pethig, H. and Plant, J. 1988: An extreme case of interspecific territoriality: male *Anthidium manicatum* (Hymenoptera: Megachilidae) wound and kill intruders. *Ethology 78:* 159–167.

Figures

Fig. 1. Nest of *Anthidium manicatum*: mass of plant fibres containing cocoons. Photo: Mark Braithwaite, Biosecurity New Zealand.

Fig. 2. Female and two males of *Anthidium manicatum*, dorsal view. Photo: Mark Braithwaite, Biosecurity New Zealand.

Fig. 3. Apex of the abdomen of a male *Anthidium manicatum*, rear view, showing spines. Photo: Robert Lamberts, Crop and Food Research Ltd.

NBA Library report

It was nice to arrive home from holiday to the news that the new librarians will be Linda and Roger Bray. The library will be in good hands, and they will continue the work begun on the database linking to the website. We will be facilitating the transfer around about July, and all current users of the library will be kept informed of progress.

Some time ago Julie Ryan called in to the library to do some research, and the result of her work is a very interesting book, *Beekeeping in Xanadu,* about the beekeeping history of the Haines family and, in particular, Julie's father Bill. She has donated a copy to the library, a gesture very much appreciated, and it is available for issue now. *[Editor's note: see April 2006 issue, p.49, for an excerpt from the book and an order form.]*

Earlier this year the International Bee Research Association (IBRA) sent notification that their two publications, *Bee World and the Journal of Apicultural Research,* were to be combined into one journal. The cost of the new publication is considerable but, after much thought, a subscription for the library has been taken out. The new magazine will be sent out in the magazine posting packs, and available for general loan after that.

If any NBA members would like a copy of the catalogue of the library book stock, please contact me.

The proceedings of the 2005 Christchurch conference, as well as the New South Wales Apiarists' Association conference held at Orange, NSW in May 2005, are available from the library on DVD. No loan fees are levied on these DVDs — postage only is payable. As always, the efforts of Frank Lindsay in editing and processing these are much appreciated.

- Chris Taiaroa
Hon. Librarian

Apimedica 2006

Apimedica 2006, the first international forum on apitherapy, will be held from 12–15 October 2006 at the Athens Ledra Marriott Hotel, Athens, Greece. The forum is being run under the auspices of the Greek Scientific Apitherapy Center and Apimondia.

The organisers have released their first announcement and call for abstracts. Although the deadline for abstracts had passed by the time this information was received by *The New Zealand Beekeeper,* please note that the deadline for reduced registration fees is 30 July 2006.

Those interested in attending should refer to the forum website: www.apimedica2006.gr

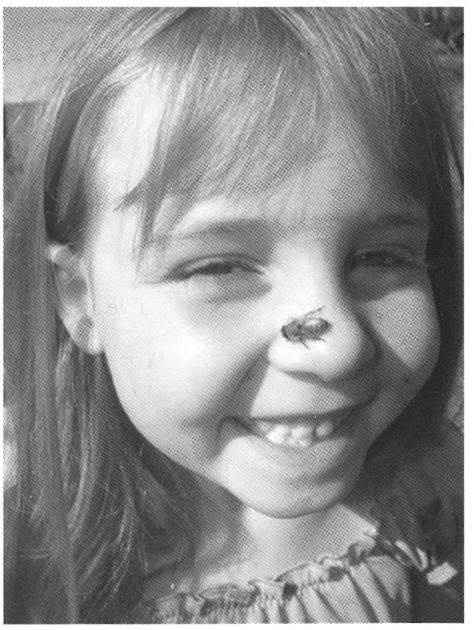
Computer tip

If you can easily hear your hard drive working, or it's over five years old, consider buying a new hard drive. It's far quicker to mirror (ghost) all the information across to a new drive than to start again after the computer has crashed. We were lucky in two ways after our computer crashed: a bumpy ride allowed the computer to reboot again, and my son, a computer engineer, replaced the drive without any loss of information in half an hour. Some people have two hard drives running concurrently mirroring the information into both drives, so nothing is lost if one drive crashes.

- Frank Lindsay

Budding beekeeper

These two photographs of six-year-old Zoe Mitchell were taken in April 2006 by her mother Jody. Jody and Ralph Mitchell recently purchased 230 hives and will be operating as small commercial beekeepers in the Bay of Plenty.



Zoe loves bees and her ambition is to be a "beekeeping artist". Jody reports that Zoe will be her parents' first "apprentice-in-training".

Trees and Shrubs of New Zealand

Cordyline australis

Maori name: Ti-Kouka
Common name: Cabbage Tree

There are four members of the Cordyline family in New Zealand. *australis* and *banksii* are the most common, with *indivisa* (mountain cabbage tree) and *pumilo* (dwarf cabbage tree) also occurring. *Pumilo* is found in the north of the North Island. *australis* can reach 17 metres in height, while *banksii* and *indivisa* grow about 3 metres high.

The cabbage tree gives the New Zealand landscape a tropical appearance, which is true as Cordyline is found in many of the Pacific Islands.

Cordyline is the tallest lily in the world. The early settlers named it 'cabbage tree' because they ate the young tender heads when food was scarce.

Cabbage tree flowers are white or cream and give out a strong scent, carried on much-branched stems that flower from October to December. The honey is medium-amber coloured and can have an acidic flavour depending on the species.

Some older beekeepers used to say that when the cabbage tree flowered, it was a sign that beehives should be self-sufficient and not require any more feeding.

The roots of the cabbage tree are very sugary (in Hawaii the roots were often sold as a sweet), and the early missionaries used them to make an acceptable-tasting beer. The root and inner stem were a staple food of Maori, although this practice was soon done away with once sugar became freely available.

Maori used the clear sticky liquid from the leaves to apply to cuts and cracks in the skin. The liquid was drunk to cure diarrhoea or dysentery.

- Tony Lorimer

Have you registered for Conference?

See April 2006 issue of *The New Zealand Beekeeper* for registration form

Contact: **Tony Lorimer, Kahurangi-o-Papa,**
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E-mail:hunnybee@wave.co.nz
Phone 07 856 9625; Fax 07 856 9241