



April from Albert Hinds' Countryman's Diary

<u>April 2009</u>			
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Tempora mutantur, nos et mutamur in illis.

Dragged kicking and screaming into a brave new world Durham Beekeepers Association now has a web site.
www.durhambeekeepers.org

One of the items to appear will be this magazine so the editor will have to be doubly careful over matters of copyright.

On it you will also find links to other associated sites of interest.

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BEECRAFT.

The Beecraft magazine went digital in January. You can sign up to receive it by subscription at www.bee-craft.com

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Bryan Hateley

I regret to inform you of the death of Bryan Hateley on 19th January after a short illness.

Bryan had been an active member of Cleveland BKA since the mid 70s. Over the years he held a variety of offices within the association including secretary and long term editor of their newsletter. For 15 years he ran a training course at his home in Grindon.

During 1993 he was Seasonal Bees Officer for MAFF.

Many of our members will remember his regular visits to us when he gave well researched talks. He was in great demand as a show judge and speaker. In 2006 he spoke at the BBKA Spring Convention on Observation Hives

about which he had just published a book. In 2008 he did "the Scottish Tour" which consisted of 4 different lectures in 4 venues over 4 days.

Bryan was closely involved in the North of England Beekeepers' Convention held annually now at Grey College, Durham.

Bryan was a man of many talents, patient and courteous in his demeanour. He will be sorely missed by his wife Sheila, his children and grandchildren, and the beekeepers who knew and respected him.



Tasks in the Apiary ,in April and May June

Your first job is to spring clean. On a warm day transfer all brood combs into a clean brood chamber, and provide a clean floor and crown board. Check that your hive stands are sound. Any old, broken or misshapen brood combs can be removed and replaced with good drawn comb or frames of foundation. Remember, old combs harbour disease. Try to change two brood frames a year in each hive. In this way all frames will be replaced in a five year cycle. If the frames you want to replace have got brood and honey in them, put them horizontally in an eke above the crown board with the feed hole open. Propped up so that the bees can reach both sides of the comb, the

frames can be left until all the brood has hatched and the honey taken down by the bees. This is the best time to find, mark and clip your queens. It becomes much more difficult to find them once the colony has expanded. '

This is a critical time for colonies as the laying rate of the queen increases. Check that colonies have sufficient room and stores of both pollen and nectar. Bees can get caught out at this time of the year if the weather takes a turn for the worse after a warm spell and there are a lot of hungry mouths to feed. They will soon use up their stores if they can't get out to forage. If you find you need to feed your bees, give them about a gallon of syrup made up of 6lb sugar to 6 pints of water in a contact feeder placed above the hole in the crown board.

Check that the bees and brood are healthy. To examine the brood, shake or brush all the bees from the comb -you can't see the brood properly with bees walking over it. Check both sealed and unsealed brood. The unsealed brood should be a nice pearly white and lying naturally in their cells. Check the capings of sealed brood. Do they have any perforations? Are they sunken or moist in appearance? If the combs are soiled the bees may have nosema, in which case you will have to treat them with Fumadil B. If you are worried or unsure

about the health of your bees, do not hesitate to ask for the assistance of one of the Disease Liaison Contacts in the Association (namely George Eames, John Newton, John Simon, Trevor Green, John Childs and John Metson), In May colonies should be well-established with brood on 7, 8 or 9 frames. Check for queen cells. Have a good idea which swarm control method you are going to use - Demaree, Snelgrove board, Horsley swarm board or Shook Swarm method. It is no good trying to make something up on the day you discover queen cells. Make yourself familiar with one of the methods that you feel comfortable with.

Remember to add supers over a queen excluder with frames of drawn comb or foundation well in advance of colonies' need of them.

Beginners should remember that if they want any help or advice they shouldn't hesitate to get in touch with one of the many experienced beekeepers in the Association.

Usually the spring flow comes to an end during the last days of May. The queen will reach the peak of her egg laying during June. The brood chamber will be full of brood. Continue vigilance for queen cells. June is the most likely month for swarming owing to possible congestion when the colony has a maximum population. Supers filled with oilseed rape honey will

have to be removed. Oilseed rape honey will crystallize in the combs very quickly. Care should be taken to ensure that the honey is ripe. You can test a comb by shaking it over the frames. If any liquid comes out the honey is not yet ripe and should be left with the bees a while longer. I usually leave my oilseed rape honey on the hives until the end of June.' By this time the honey is rock hard and has to be melted out of the combs. The reason I leave the rape honey in the comb until the end of June is that one year I was caught out by bad weather and had to feed my bee's sugar syrup in June. Of course, if you don't have the means of melting your honey out you will have to remove it and spin it out before it crystallizes.

Stray swarms are attracted to existing apiaries. Keeping a bait hive in the apiary can lead to a pleasant surprise when a stray swarm takes up residence. I usually have a couple of empty nuc boxes in each apiary with three frames of foundation and two frames of empty comb which has previously had brood in. Try not to leave any honey or pollen in these frames as the other bees apiary bees will rob them out and may cause robbing within the apiary. Frames which have been laid in appear to attract swarms. Don't forget swarms can carry disease and Varroa mites. There being no

brood with the swarm all the varroa mites will be on the bees. Treat your newly hived swarm by dusting them with icing sugar; this is now the recommended method. If anyone saw Ian Molyneux talk at the September meeting he explained this method in fine detail. I have made a fine sieve for dusting colonies with icing sugar, I intend to use this next year. I purchased the fine mesh from JT Wirecloth, a piece about 18 inch by 18 inch made of stainless steel will cost you about £10. The stainless steel mesh is fitted to an eke the same size as the brood chamber. A bee space is created by tacking a piece of wood about 8-10mm by 12mm under the eke. For a full brood chamber you will need 100mg of icing sugar which is placed on the fine mesh and brushed into the colony through the mesh. Ian recommends doing this on four consecutive weeks. This will dislodge a lot of mites which will drop through the open mesh floor. You must use an open mesh floor otherwise the mites can walk back up onto the bees if a solid floor is used. This method can be used at any time of the year. Ian also stated that the NBU would like us to stop using Bayvarol and Apistan as mites are resistant to the Pyrethroids used in these products. You will also need to monitor your colonies for the daily mite drop. This can be done in many ways. Count the daily

mite drop, this is to time consuming. Try placing the tray under the open mesh floor for a week and count the mites, divide the number of mites dropped by seven and this will give you the daily average mite drop. You could also uncap Drone brood to see the extent of the mite infestation. Also get the latest CSL, MAFF hand book on Varroosis-a parasitic infestation of honey bees. This can be had from the secretary of your association

Get the newly hived swarm on to foundation. A swarm can draw out 10-20 frames of perfectly drawn comb in no time you will need to feed the swarm to help them do this. Anyone intending to take their bees to the heather in August need to start getting their hives really strong in June. An egg laid on 15th June will hatch around 6th July. It will then be a hive bee for three weeks, and it will start to forage on or about 27 July: It will then forage for a further three weeks. It is important to have your hives really strong and with a new queen when going to the h e a t h e r Queen-rearing should be started in June when there are plenty of mature drones around to mate with your new queens. You will need a good nectar flow and this can be simulated by feed-ing syrup. There are many ways to raise new queens - the books are full of them. Have a go at raising your own queens. Be selective about your breeder

queen whose eggs you will use. I always go for good temper as my main priority when raising queens. There is no joy in tackling bad tempered bees. You know which are your best tempered bees when you're working with them throughout the season. You should breed from these.

Try queen rearing. Even if you just want one or two for yourself, there is a lot of satisfaction to be gained from raising your own queen, uniting her in a hive to go to the heather, maybe getting a bumper crop, and bringing this queen successfully through the winter with a good early build-up ready for the rape - and all the while working with nice-tempered bees. George Eames



Once upon a time part 5

Once upon a time, before Varroa covered the land, I was a bee's officer for the Min of Ag.

It was always said about bee's officers that they saw more bees in a year than a lot of beekeepers saw in a lifetime. You also bumped into some strange hives.

So what's strange about a WBC? Nothing really until people start messing about with it.

The hive was born at a time a little after Langstroth's discovery of the "bee space" and when a score or more beekeepers and equipment manufacturers jumped

on the bandwagon of hive design each believing that they alone had the answer to the best design for a beehive. Out of this mêlée Britain got, amongst many others, the WBC. Ireland got the CDB.

William Broughton Carr designed a double walled hive which had the benefit of insulating the bees in the inner compartment with a gap between it and the outer wall. The hive has henceforth been known by his initials. (CDB wasn't a person it was the Congested Districts Board.)

It's design has changed a little over the years, The original upright sides have given way to sloping sides the better to through off the rain. The roof too has altered at times, sometimes a backward sloping roof and sometimes pitched. The hive has been oblong and changed to a square.

Painted white it is the beehive of the garden standing beside a herbaceous border with roses climbing round a cottage door.

Whatever minor changes have been made the hive still works well although going to the heather is difficult. It is heavy, bulky and not really the easiest of things to move unless you have a fork lift truck or two strong lads to lift the thing or even to close up unless it is fitted with a proper heather floor which has a hinged entrance built into it which screws closed with a wing

nut. However my current WBC is square in shape and large enough to house a National at 18 7th inches square within its outer lifts. The best of both worlds,

On days when the wind would make examining a brood box difficult you can still go through a WBC. Take everything off down to the queen excluder then put two lifts back on. The bees will or should stay down in the darkened shelter of the brood chamber and you can lift frames up and examine them just below the rim of the top lift. If they don't, is it the weather, have you just kicked them or should you really re-queen this lot. It is a good hive to over winter in. There is a beekeeper some way beyond Middleton in Teesdale who regularly brings three colonies through their winters in WBCs while would be bee keepers around him struggle and usually fail with Nationals.

So how do people mess them about? The surrounding air space is there for a purpose but there are people who fill it with rolled up newspaper, curtains, tatty old cloths or anything else that comes to hand. This not only overcomes the whole purpose of the design but becomes a haven for all sorts of pests that you really could do without having there. Pity the poor bees officer who has to examine the colony. If the beekeeper isn't there

not only does he have to remove all this packing but he has to put the rotten stuff back.



Honey Beer.

I know I have mentioned honey beers before in these columns. I am sure many of you are familiar with Waggle dance which had it's origins at Vaux Breweries before going to Young's Lion Breweries which have now joined forces with Wells. Waggle Dance has a subtle after taste of honey.

My children in their never ending search to improve their dear father's enjoyment have come up with a really super honey beer. "St Peter's Honey Porter" from the St. Peter's Brewery in Bungay, Suffolk. It is described as a traditional English porter finished with honey for a truly unique aroma. The beer is presented in a delightful flask shaped oval bottle which is a copy of one produced c1770 in Gibbstown just across the Delaware river from Philadelphia.

Forget subtle flavours, a strong scent of honey rises from the glass ahead of any flavour and lingers on. Definitely one to look for but you might have to search for a while. The Beer Shop on the corner of Knaresbrough Market Place is a good spot to start, at least that's where mine came from



Putting on your bee suit....

It's a while since I had a picture of a bee clad person.

This is Professor Norman Gary a



Californian Professor of Entomology and a leading world expert in bees. He was seen on the BBC1 programme at 9pm on Sunday 4th Jan smothered in bees. Just a bit of a cheat perhaps, he was wearing an all enveloping material suit covered with a queen bee pheromone which leads the bees to believe that he is their queen and so smother his body to protect him - her.

The programme and the one on 11th were full of extreme examples of nature's swarms. In bees they included a swarm of America's killer bees stopping a soccer game

by attacking the players and another almost enveloping a motor bike.

Locusts, crickets and birds were all beautifully illustrated.



Some thoughts on CCD from Larry Peiffer of Maine State Beekeeping Association

CCD anyone?

Have any of your members experienced anything like what we are calling Colony Collapse Disorder or CCD? Our State of Maine Inspector was the first to notice the beginning of the collapse from migrant pollinators. He told them they needed to pay better attention to their hives or they would loose them. At that time they were heavily infested with mites (varroa destructor) and were showing severe affects from it. A month or so later, they had major problems. Some of the commercial beekeepers lost a high percentage of their hives. We have been very fortunate here in Maine. We haven't seen it here yet. They say it's probably just a matter of time before we do. What research is now starting to show us, is all the hives have experienced some form of stress. Sometimes from the varroa destructor, other times from the transportation of migrating/trucking hives. The colonies have also been found to have

as many as 17 different chemicals and pesticides embedded in the wax and honey. Five different ones have been found in all of the collapsed hives. The neonicatoids seem to be the most representative of helping aggravate the situation. Then there has also been some form of disease in all of the hives as well. Some people seem to think it's not any one thing, but rather a combination of several or all of the above. I had the privilege of attending the Eastern Apiculture Societies yearly conference and short courses this past summer. I was able to hear this information from several different sources. Some of them were the geneticist and researchers that are doing the actual research. As you probably have heard, the US lost nearly 40% of it's commercial hives in a single year. That's millions of hives. Our government has passed a research bill allowing millions of US dollars to be put to the research of this catastrophic situation. However, they now seem to be dragging their feet, as a bill needs to be passed saying where these funds are to be spent and how much at each research institute. We have since read an interesting article in our *Bee Culture* magazine. It points out that the pharmaceutical companies that are apparently creating the pesticides and fertilizers that endanger our bees are the very same companies

that create our medications that seem to keep our bees alive and healthy. So we have a major dilemma with funding the research that's going to prove this. Then how to deal a blow to the companies that create our medications. So, that's where we stand with CCD at this time. And that's a bee dilemma.



First appearing in the American bee Journal in February 1984 comes a perhaps unusual view of the Africanised Bee.

Author - David DeJong
Department of Genetics, University of Sao Paulo, Riberiao Preto, Brazil

This article is reprinted by kind permission of the editor of the ABJ.

Advantages of Africanized Bees

Now that Brazilian beekeepers have learned to work with Africanized bees, they also recognize the bees' positive qualities. Africanized bees produce more honey in tropical climates than do European races. In a test conducted in Brazil in 1958, African colonies produced 35 kg in 1 1/2 months, while German bees in the same apiary produced only 9 kg. A similar test run for three months in 1959 showed a honey surplus of 42 kg fro African bees, 24 kg for Italian

bees, and 12 kg for German bees. F1 hybrids were proved equal in productivity to African bees. In 1968, a one-month test in a Eucalyptus forest in Minas Gerais resulted in a 9 kg surplus for "pure" Africanized colonies as well as Caucasian/Africanized hybrids, while pure Caucasians had no surplus honey.

Beekeepers discovered that they could produce honey in areas where bees had once barely survived. Before the arrival of Africanized bees, the northeast had produced no honey. By 1973 much honey was available for the local market, and the Pernambuco beekeepers exported 80 tons in one year.

Wild or unmanaged Africanized colonies swarm frequently, so during certain seasons swarms can be obtained easily. Virtually all beekeepers are using these bees to increase colony numbers. A few have gone one step further and are practicing a peculiar kind of "beeless beekeeping." They transport empty hives from Sao Paulo several thousand km north to Piaui at the beginning of the wet season. Six months later the beekeepers harvest the honey and bring the hives, now full of bees, back to Sao Paulo. Beekeepers consider the wild Africanized bees a free commodity. They have only to make suitable boxes available to the bees to ob-

tain all they need.

Today most commercial beekeepers express a preference for aggressive Africanized bees. They feel that their bees should be able to defend themselves against people pilfering honey. In fact, beekeepers were very upset when a researcher at the University of Sao Paulo announced that he had created a new mutation, a stingless African bee. The beekeepers made a strong resolution requesting that this new bee not be propagated, since they feared that their own bees would become less able to defend themselves. Although this consequence was unlikely, since the nature of the mutation would prevent it from propagating without intensive manipulations, the beekeepers' reaction clearly illustrates their change of attitude toward Africanized bees.

By carefully watching and comparing flight activity of Africanized and Italian bee colonies, Brazilian researchers determined an interesting fact. Africanized bees are foraging in very large numbers early in the morning before the Italians begin. This allows them to get all of the nectar secreted by the flowers during the night, and may be one reason why Africanized bees out produce the European races.



Nucleus Hives

There used to be a British Standard laid down for nuc's unfortunately this was scrapped in 1984.

With the current shortage of bees unscrupulous beekeepers are taking advantage and supplying nucs with a doubtful queen, *some* bees and not a lot of food. Certainly one such was collected by a beekeeper in a neighbouring county for about 200 miles away.

To help guard against this BBKA have published a guidance leaflet. This can be viewed on a BBKA website at www.britishbee.org.uk/information/leaflets.php

The site also includes a long list of advisory leaflets published by BBKA all of which I am specifically prohibited from circulating.



Cash to help put the buzz back into beekeeping

The Journal 12th January 2008

Karen Dent

« karen.dent@oncjmedia.co.uk

A NORTHUMBERLAND beekeeper says £4.3m promised by the Government to help the industry overcome the loss of one in three colonies is welcome - but he believes a lack of expertise has contributed to the problem.

Defra announced the increase in funding to research issues behind the devastating drop in bee numbers following two bad summers

and infections caused by the varroa mite.

But Willie Robson, who owns the Chain Bridge Honey Farm near Berwick, says the Government should never have ditched its beekeeping experts, who were able to help novice farmers deal with difficulties.

He said: "About 20 years ago the Government of the day decided to dispense with the services of the county beekeeping instructors.

"They were able to relate to the experiences of the past and were a link between inexperienced beekeepers and the abilities of those that had gone before. Once these links are removed beekeeping becomes very difficult."

Mr Robson is concerned that the money will not help people on the ground if they don't know what they are doing.

"There are a lot of amateur beekeepers who started with little skills and commercial ones that have started after changing career," he said.

"The varroa is a different thing - the rest is a lack of skills. They have to have these meetings where someone says 'this is where you are going wrong'.

"Beekeeping depends entirely on skills, the long-term experience, going from father to son. But if you had the advisers, they could help."

He pointed to similar problems of

colonies dying out during the 1930s, 50s and 60s and said today's difficulties have been exacerbated by the number of imported bees in the UK that are susceptible to infection.

"You can't medicate for disease. It's like all agriculture, they keep medicating and medicating. You've got to have bees that are as strong as a badger," said Mr Robson.

It is estimated that the value of commercial crops that benefit from bee pollination is between £100m and £200m annually, while honey production is valued at £10m to £30m.

The Defra money - split into an initial £23m over the next two years and a further £2m over five years - will support the National Bee Unit's re-research and enable it to provide expert advice on tackling bee diseases.

Environment Secretary Hilary Benn said: "We must get to grips with this, to see just how serious a problem it is and what the impacts on pollination are, and what we can do in response."

A cross-industry group has been putting pressure on the Government for more money to investigate why colonies are being lost at such a rapid rate.

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Staying with Willie Robson the following short article about him

appeared in THE TIMES Tuesday 23RD January.

"The Family Business"

Willie Robson 64 years

My youngest child, Frances, 25, will take over the business once I go. The other two are intelligent, but Frances has that determination and that resolution.

I started working full-time here when I was 17. All my friends had proper jobs and were earning proper money. I thought perhaps I might like to have a bit of that. But my mother said no matter what happens. I had to stick at it. That's the only way family business can work.

Especially a beekeeping business. Nothing ever changes in bee-keeping. You can't alter the process because you can't alter the bees. And you can't learn the real secrets of bee-keeping in a book. The knowledge has to be acquired through decades of experience and handed down through the family.

My family has been keeping bees in Horncliffe, near Berwick, for five generations. We've gone from 100 hives to 2,000 and it's taken so much hard work. Fortunately, we haven't been affected by the financial crisis at all. We've always been hugely forward-planning and we have no debt. Also, it's becoming harder for young people to find work and security. Working in a family business offers both.

My daughter, Heather, left the farm for ten years to be a journalist. She went to university and was working on a newspaper in Cornwall. But I think she eventually realised that she would always be just a number there, so she came back.



Mobile phones and the birds and the bees

By Ken Banks, IDG News Service
19 Dec, 2008

(Ken Banks, report to the Vodafone Group Foundation, December 2002)

Exactly six years ago, a research paper on lowly house sparrows launched my mobile career. Back then, rumors were circulating that the proliferation of mobile phone masts were wiping out Britain's sparrow population, and Vodafone wanted to know more. It was an interesting if not odd piece of research to do, but one far less technically challenging than a lot of the work that was to follow. It also loosely fitted in with my conservation and technology background, a theme that I've managed to continue to this day.

Although I concluded that there was no clear link, that was far from the end of it. More recently, in fact, mobile phones have been blamed for the monumental decline in many bee populations. Firstly birds, and now bees.

What next?

Links between mobile phone use and human health have long been a point of study and contention, as have the many theories surrounding the mysterious and sudden decline of some bird and bee populations.

Speculation about mobile phone masts affecting birds is nothing new, but blaming them for the decline of bee populations is a little more recent, and, because of the importance of bee pollination in many ecosystems, it's potentially more worrying (unless you're a sparrow, of course).

Both arguments hinge on the effect of electromagnetic fields on the ability of birds and bees to navigate, and there is evidence to suggest there might just be some truth in it. A racing pigeon fancier reportedly lost two-thirds of his birds when a mast was built next to his farm, and entire bee colonies have been known to literally abandon their hives in an event known as CCD (Colony Collapse Disorder). In the U.S., between 50 percent and 90 percent of bee colonies have been affected by CCD in the last four years, so much so that beeladen hives are now literally driven around California in an attempt to keep the economically vital fruit-growing industry going.

Pollination is more than just economically and environmentally important, however. Estimates suggest that one-third of the human

diet can be traced directly, or indirectly, to bee pollination. If our obsession with wireless technologies continues, we could very soon find ourselves in trouble. In an experiment carried out on eight bee colonies at Landau University in Germany, three hives exposed to mobile phone radiation eventually broke down. One hive saw no bees returning at all, and only six returned to another. Looking at these figures, it might come as no surprise to hear that research going back decades has regularly highlighted the phenomenal sensitivity of honeybees to electromagnetic fields.

The airwaves -- extremely valuable real estate in today's wireless, digital world -- are literally packed with chatter and noise, much of which is passing silently through our bodies every minute of every day. Even though you and I may not notice it, there's every chance that the birds and the bees do.

Ken Banks, founder of kiwanja.net, devotes himself to the application of mobile technology for positive social and environmental change in the developing world and has spent the last 15 years working on projects in Africa.

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No doubt you will have read in the BBKA News reports on the January ADM and the votes on the proposals concerning BBKA's financial rela-

tionship with a number of agrochemical companies. Since this started we have had a number of new members who will not know about our involvement so I am repeating below the original document from which the whole debate started. It might also remind everyone about the background.

Those of you who are interested could also visit, [www.britishbeekeeping.com](http://www.britishbeekeeping.com) the privately run site of British Association of Radical Beekeepers (BARB) where you can sign up for BEEAWARE and find all the stuff that the BBKA hid away from sight in the depths of their private site.

**Durham Beekeepers' Association  
President Ian Copinger wrote in  
2003**

1. I have written this note as no more than a basis for discussion on the grounds that you've got to start from somewhere. It contains all the published announcements and dealings between BBKA Enterprises and the agrochemical industry that I can find, mostly in BBKA news. There may well be more somewhere??

2. I thought BBKA Enterprises Ltd, in the form of Mr. Badger, would welcome this proposal. It is an arrangement which the company directors have made without any referral to the membership. I suspect that Mr. Badger will believe that he can convince the delegates at an ADM that his cause is right and that, on a vote, he will carry the day. Suddenly BBKA Enterprises Ltd will have our permission to do

whatever they want.

3. Proposal: That B.B.K.A. and B.B.K.A. Enterprises Ltd. end their present financial relationship of endorsement and sponsorship with all (or with agrochemical-) companies as soon as contractually possible.

4. BBKA Enterprises Ltd., hereafter called "the company" is the trading arm of the registered charity BBKA. Its formation was made necessary by the rules governing charities.

5. Over the last two years it has come to light that the company have, without reference to or discussion with the members come to arrangements with some agrochemical companies to endorse certain of their products in return for financial sponsorship. The company has signed contracts with these manufacturers.

6. It might not be quite fair to say that the transactions were carried out under a veil of secrecy but equally it cannot be said that they were carried out in the full glare of publicity.

7. in BBKA news 129 May 2001, Mr Davies the Chairman, announces "new financial management through our trading company BBKA Enterprises Ltd., and newly negotiated sponsorships with interested national companies and trusts". On page 4 is published the announcement by FMC Corporation that BBKA endorses Fury as a BEE SAFE product. It is also stated that Fury contains zeta-cypermethrin. There is nothing in the chairman's statement or FMC's announcement to necessarily link the two together since the chairman carefully failed to mention agrochemical companies being involved in the sponsor-

ship.

8. BBKA news 139, February 2003 carries a statement by the treasurer of the company announcing a "turnover of over £12,000 which mainly came from sponsorship and donations" The short article specifies the receipt of £5,000 from Aventis, £5,000 from BASF and £2,000 from FMC. which was mostly spent on the purchase of equipment. It is perhaps unfortunate that the article does not specify that these are agrochemical companies or make it clear that the sums involved were not donations but money paid for our sponsorship of insecticides.

9. It took until BBKA news 140 April 2003 for the words "income", "negotiated contract", "agrochemical companies", "endorsements" and "specific chemicals" to come together. Even then it was not in an announcement by the chairman or any of the executive committee or the directors of the company, (who are largely the same people). It came from the Middlesex Federation Delegate in an article giving "A Delegate's View of the 43rd ADM". He wrote:-

"The BBKA Enterprises last year produced an income equal to plus £1.50 per member by negotiated contracts with agrochemical companies. These were endorsements of the applications of specific chemicals, all very bee friendly". The wording, whilst mathematically correct unintentionally gives the impression that the income is being used to bolster the BBKA purse against the need to raise capitation fees. In fact the money was used to finance the purchase of new equipment.

10. "Beecraft" of July 2003 carries a letter from Mr Harty of Suffolk who rightly questions the lack of openness by BBKA and indeed questions the propriety of the relationship. The editor, who I consider to have been absolutely unbiased in publishing the letter, replied that the sponsored pesticides were "certified as bee-friendly" and had "been rigorously tested to international guidelines and met the conditions laid down". Historically of course these have not always been faultless qualifications.

11. In none of the publications has it ever been made openly public exactly who the companies were, which of their products were being endorsed in return for financial gain or what there active ingredients were.

12. They are, or at the time I enquired, were:

**C o m - P r o d u c t A c t i v e  
p a n y      n a m e      i n g r e d i -  
e n t**

B a y e r    Decis & Pearl    Deltam-  
C r o p    S c i - M i c r o    e t h r i n  
e n c e  
(Aventis)

Syngenta    Hallmark with Lambda  
(Zeneca)    Zeon Technol-    C y h a -  
o g y                            l o t h r i n

B A S F F a s t a c A l p h a -  
(Cyanami (Contest)    c y p e r -  
d)                            m e t h r i n

F M C      F u r y    1 0 E W    Z e t a    c y -  
M i n u e t                            p e r m e t h -  
r i n

(Syngenta have al-  
ready notified an intended  
change in the name of their  
product)

13. Deltamethrin is also the active ingredient in an American product 'Delta Dust' which is marketed as an insecticide and "Provides quick control of ants, bees (especially carpenter bees), etc."

Lambda cyhalohrin appears on a web site of 'Extoxnet' a pesticide information project maintained by several USA universities. Under the heading Effects on other animals (Nontarget species) it notes that "Lambda cyhalothrin is highly toxic to bees"

Zeta-cypermethrin is the active ingredient in an American product 'Mustang'. In accepting its registration the relevant authority note that "It is, however, extremely toxic to bees"

Perhaps through my in expertise I have found nothing good or bad about Alph- cypermethrin. In my ignorance I am nevertheless puzzled. If two other "...methrins" are toxic to bees can somebody explain why Alpha methrin isn't.

Is there anyone out there who has the knowledge to search the Internet properly for information on these products? I suspect that you are more likely to find fuller information on USA sites than UK sites.

**14.** At the open forum in 2003 the pronouncement was made by one of the company directors that "they are perfectly safe if used properly". It cannot possibly be advisable to `endorse' a product the safety of which relies wholly or entirely on proper usage. My memory is that the incorrect use of sprays was the problem in the first place. Add to the ever-present possibility of human error the fact that farmers frequently mix several chemicals together into a spraying cocktail. This is quite contrary to the manufacturers instructions is therefore incorrect usage and is inevitably a recipe for an eventual disaster to somebody's bees. At some time in the future some ones bees are going to be seriously damaged by a product endorsed by the BBKA as BEE-FRIENDLY.

**15.** The company cannot pretend that their endorsement of these products is anything less than a money making exercise. At the same forum it was stated by a director of the company that a manufacturer had approached them for endorsement of a product. The endorsement had been refused. Not because of any shortcoming in the product but because the manufacturer had not offered enough money for the endorsement. That surely is totally dishonourable.

**16.** For some years BBKA has boasted of an increasingly improved relationship with the agro-chemical industry with whom they could discuss better and safer methods for the use of sprays. They are particularly proud of a safety plan which they drew up and which has been voluntarily accepted

by the industry. I applaud that relationship but I persist in my opinion that an engagement in financial sponsorship and product endorsement forms too close a relationship.

**17.** Proposals are supposed to carry an estimation of the cost to BBKA of carrying it out. I suggest that the cost is "Nil". It is true that BBKA have had an income from the company of some thousands of pounds. It's continuation is not guaranteed in any case.

**18.** I do not pretend that, through the ADM, we can stop the use of these chemical but we can stop them being used in our name, an arrangement which we never agreed to in the first place. We should circulate all other associations with information about the proposal and urge them to consider this matter seriously and to mandate their delegate to support our proposal. We should also invite them to consider writing to BBKA General Sec. asking to be associated with the proposal when it is circulated prior to the ADM

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When it did go to an ADM we lost 3 to 1. The most recent vote on the subject was, I am told by someone who did mathematics, 6 to 4. Clearly more people are disenchanted with the arrangement.      ISC