

Monthly Newsletter

Issue 183 April 2020

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Upcoming Events and Notices

This Club Day: 4th April – **Cancelled due to Covid19**

Next Club Day: 2nd May **TBC**

Whareora Hall 10.00am

What to bring:

- Your **Membership card** to show at the door
- **Cash** for the produce table
- **Produce** for the produce table
- **Library books** you have borrowed
- **Bee suit** (Club has some for members to use also)

Directions:

From SH1, turn off to *Kensington*. Turn left onto *Mill Road*, then right at *Whareora Road*. Keep on this road until it joins *Pataua North Road* and carry on for a few more minutes.

The hall is on the right. Please **do not** park on the road, use the paddock adjacent to the Hall when the car park is full.

The following library books are overdue:

Beekeepers Lament & Hive Check - Rosie McCann October 2019
Starting With Bees - Syd Parata November 2019

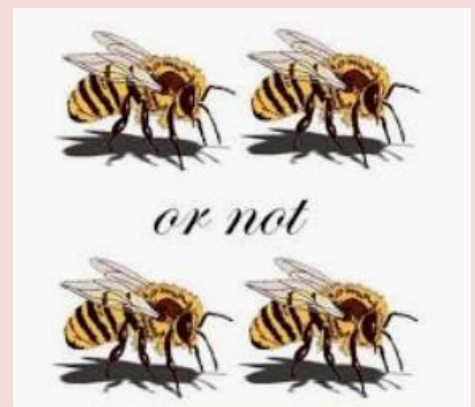
AFB checks

Trevor Clifton is available (0.72 cents/ km and \$20 / hive).
Email: puwerahoney@gmail.com
Ph: 4329511 or 0274330155

Club Day Duty Roster

Set Up Hall From 9am	Dave Loschiavo
Help in Kitchen 9am and Lunch	Uwe Werhan, Anna Noall
Wash up Kitchen from Lunch	Brian & Lyn Codlin
Pack up / Clean Hall From 12-30	Dave P

Remember that all of these jobs are easy and require a very little time and effort. Please sign up on the roster at Club Day. A big "THANK YOU" to those that help.



Message from Paul Martin, Club President

Hi Members,

As you will understand given the latest events surrounding Covid-19, it is not possible for the Whangarei Bee Club to hold its April club day scheduled for 4th April. This club day is thus cancelled, and we will stay in touch with you regarding future club days as New Zealand works its way through the virus crisis.

The AGM was scheduled for 4th April and is thus postponed until a later date that we can safely meet as a club.

Our annual Honey Competition was scheduled for the April club day, and this too is postponed until a later suitable club day. For those of you that have honey ready for entering in the competition, Maureen Conquer's (honey judge) recommendation is to place your pottles of honey in the freezer. This will prevent the honey from deteriorating or crystallising further. It can then be thawed out closer to the competition, with no ill effects.

*Please note that honey extraction services are exempt from the government's new Covid-19 lockdown, being classed as essential services. Therefore, Northland Pure Honey continues to extract honey, and will likely remain operational until late April. Whilst classed as essential services, strict hygiene and personal distancing protocols must be observed. If this does not occur, we risk the exemption being withdrawn by the government. Please don't be offended if Dennis keeps a greater distance from you than usual when you are delivering or picking up your honey, and no-one other than Dennis will be allowed to be present in the plant during extraction.

These are unprecedented times, but we will get through them.

In the meantime, stay safe and I look forward to catching up with you when we emerge from our lockdown.

Regards, Paul

Paul Martin

WBC President

Sarah Frost is a teacher at Back 2 Basics Childcare centre in Maungatapere. They are looking for someone who could visit to bring hives etc to show the children. Their tamariki are showing a strong interest in bugs and insects at the moment, and especially bees. It would be really awesome if someone was able to go out to the centre. Please contact Sarah on sarahfrost@outlook.co.nz or 09 4346797.

New biosecurity visual aid from MPI

MPI have released a bee [biosecurity guide](#) to help beekeepers identify pests and diseases. It contains the most common apiculture pests and diseases, as well as some of the worst organisms that New Zealand is trying to keep out. All beekeepers play a vital role in protecting New Zealand from biosecurity threats. If you see anything from this guide (or anything else you're unsure about) give MPI a call on 0800 80 99 66.

News from last Club Day

Club Day Summary 7 March 2020

This club day was run by Dave and Mike and covered the following.

The Extraction Plant will be in operation up to the 15th April.

Dave will get clarification from Dennis on the process for people wanting a tutin test only. They should be able to add their sample to the composite tutin sample and pay \$18.

Mike thinks this is the best honey season in 10 years. The flow was strong up till the end of January.

Be careful where and how you store honey frames, or frames generally, because of possible infestation by the greater wax moth / honeycomb moth (*Galleria mellonella*). Freezing is ideal to kill the moth and its eggs. Using carbon dioxide to control moths was also mentioned, although strong caution is urged when creating enclosed atmospheres at concentrations above 30% CO₂. It is heavier than air so displaces oxygen.

Strong hives can handle / repair minor moth damage to frames.

Best to take off excess honey rather than leave it on over winter. It is a sink for atmospheric and metabolic moisture and so can become mouldy and ferment and be attacked by moths.

Capping has been good this season, probably because of the dry weather.

Dennis has noted that the average extraction weight per super this season is 17kg, a few kgs down from last year, and moisture is around 18%, which is good for storage and may be related to extracted honey starting to go solid just a couple of weeks after being extracted.

Deal with AFB quickly. If in doubt get Trevor to have a look (see his ad in this newsletter/details on our website).

Drones have stopped early. Oxalic treatment is still working for varroa control. Dave is already closing down most of his hives for winter (1 or 2 boxes + oxalic towels / strips + AFB checks).

When it cools down as we get into winter it might be best to remove the oxalic strips as the glycerine attracts moisture and keeps everything damp.

Mangroves are providing good late season honey, as are Towai and Hebe varieties.

Dave mentioned he thought the 'quality' of queens was not so important. Buying queens late in the season can be tricky – not as many drones around so they may not be well mated.

Very few wasps around this year. A (hessian) sack hanging over a fence is a good way to trap over-wintering queen wasps.

Robbing in earnest hasn't started yet. Propolis is worth \$350/kg at present.

Honey Competition

Early start next club day because of the honey competition.

8-30am set up the hall. Registration of honey entries is from 9 to 9-30am. Judging starts at 9-30am. You have to use the 500g square plastic container available from the club.

AGM

This will be run first thing once the honey comp judging has started.

Stuart Hamilton's Varroa Control Method

Stuart uses an oxalic acid vapouriser. Doses his hives every seven days for a month, month on then month off.

Dear Whangarei Beekeeping Club

The Big Buzz Festival Charitable Trust is presenting a fun and unique Kiwi project for summer 2021 that will involve the local community of Matakana but most importantly the wider beekeeping communities of Aotearoa. In fact, on February 14th, 2021 at Matakana Estate, the first ever NZ Honey and Bee Festival - the Big Buzz Festival, will take place in Matakana and we want you to join the buzz!

The festival will be a fun, family friendly, free event to celebrate bees and honey varieties with an emphasis on ethical beekeeping and conservation. Great entertainment, stalls, keynote speakers, workshops, vendors of all things bees and of course good food & honey will set the tone for the day.

Community engagement is a building block of The Big Buzz Festival and an extensive educational program has started with six local schools on board plus various community groups' involvement and assistance.

Attendance expectations are for 2,000 people in 2021 with progressive increases in successive years. Recent statistics from similar events around the world show that honey festivals' attendance rates are consistently high, often generating repeat visits from customers seeking genuine honey varieties and quality honey products.

The Big Buzz NZ Honey & Bee Festival will "bee" a buzzing event for everyone involved, thus we would like to invite your club to join this initiative by letting your club members know about it, by getting in touch and by spreading the word.

Should anyone in your club or wider beekeeping community be interested in having a stall at the Festival we invite expression of interest now. Please note that as we have a limited number of spaces available preference will be given to showcase a wide range of products from NZ. Please check our website for further details.

www.thebigbuzz.nz

Instagram @thebigbuzznz

[Facebook](#)

We look forward to your club members being part of the buzz and to your feedback.

Book Review by John Beauregard Bee-Keeping at Buckfast Abbey, Brother Adam, 1971 (In the club library)

Karl Kehrle was sent as a German schoolboy in poor health to live at Buckfast Abbey, Devon, England, in 1909. He recovered his health and became a Benedictine monk, (Brother Adam) where he was put to work with the bees at the age of 17. Two years later he was made the principal beekeeper at the precise moment when tracheal mites eradicated all native stocks of British honeybees. With an active, independent and curious mind Brother Adam sought out strains of honeybees that were rare or absent in Britain, settling on Italians and Carniolans which displayed strong natural resistance to these mites. Tracheal mites are absent from New Zealand and are unrelated to varroa. Because beekeeping at the Abbey was a commercial activity Brother Adam sought to simplify all activities in the interests of efficiency. His twin principles of beekeeping were to give the queen plenty of room for egg-laying and to ensure the hive had plenty of honey in the autumn to carry it through the winter months. He **forbade** all of the following practises:

- stimulative feeding (spring feeding of a thin sugar syrup to encourage the queen to greater egg laying)
- brood spreading (placing additional combs within the brood chamber to give the queen additional laying room)
- removal of pollen-clogged frames from the hive
- too-frequent hive examination by the beekeeper

Brother Adam developed a strain of bee that was hard-working, easy to handle, disinclined to swarm and resistant to parasites. Isolation was the key to his breeding programme. He located his queen-rearing operation in the middle of what is now Dartmoor National Park, far from Buckfast's production apiaries, wild hives and "foreign" drones. The breeding programme was a success because commercial honey production at Buckfast immediately tested the quality of the queens. Most, of course, were rejected. Few New Zealand queen-rearing businesses also produce honey commercially hence the testing of queens and the queens' sons (the drones) cannot be rigorously assessed for honey production, ease of handling, disinclination to swarming and parasite resistance, all of the things Brother Adam considered important. The book concludes with several mead-making recipes, all made in the traditional manner without added yeast nutrients.

Financial Statement

Bank Movements will be updated in next month's newsletter

News/sites to check out

[Apiarist's Advocate](#)

[The Big Buzz Festival 2021](#)

[University of Otago study reveals links between bee brains and human brains](#)

[Coronavirus stings world's top honey makers with China beekeepers locked down](#)

[Waipā beekeepers fly under the radar, avoiding resource consents](#)

[Honey market in a state of flux](#)

[Podcast: Interview with Alan Bougen from Comvita](#)

[Native trees straight from seeds](#)

Call for contributions

All you budding writers out there, we are looking for contributions to the monthly newsletter. It can be a one-off article or an ongoing piece. If you have something to add, then please email it to wbccommunication@gmail.com



Thanks to all contributors of the Newsletter



Thanks to our sponsors for their support of the Honey Competition at Whangarei Bee Club:

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