



**Wellington Beekeepers Association Inc.
Newsletter-March 2011**

**Next Meeting: New time and Place
Wednesday March 2nd, Main Hall, Ground Floor,
Moorfield Rd, Johnsonville Community Centre. This room is
at the base of the stairs to the old meeting place**

**7.00pm Beginners meeting
7.30pm General Meeting**

Return address PO Box 11-089 Manners Street Wellington (ph 04 565 0164)



WELLINGTON BEEKEEPERS
ASSOCIATION

WHERE TO FIND US
Meetings Johnsonville
Community Centre
Main Hall, Ground Floor,
Moorfield Road

1st Wednesday of the month
Main Meeting @ 7.30pm
Beginners Tuition @7.00pm

WHO TO TALK TO
President

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cept January. Members contri-
butions to be with editor **by 20th**
month. Word document format
preferred.

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**MINUTES OF THE WELLINGTON BEEKEEPERS' ASSOCIATION
MONTHLY MEETING HELD AT THE JOHNSONVILLE COMMUNITY
CENTRE ON WEDNESDAY 2 FEBRUARY 2011, COMMENCING AT 7.30 PM**

Present: Andrew Beach (President), John Burnett and 52 members signed in.

Apologies: Rob Wilkinson, Jo Salisbury. Kristen Morse.

Visitors: Marcus Weight, Island Bay; Tara Vessa, Mt Cook; Chris Gibbons and Jess Hughes, Paremata; Jo Millar and Leon Roborgh, Seatoun; Russell, Dave, Pip and Jean Nelson from Lower Hutt; Richard Barne, Taupo; Leolie Rentsch, Kilbirnie; Megan Higgins and Werner Strauss, Hataitai; Chris Daly and Ingrid van Aalst, Hataitai; Paul Brinkman, Island Bay; Keita Kirchin, Lower Hutt; Shane Rempala, Lower Hutt; Hayden and Sue Miller, Makara.

Minutes of the last meeting: Accepted, moved Amor, seconded Ken Braydon.

Matters Arising

Swarm List

Two have been collected.

Lobbying – Australian Honey and Associated Diseases

Tony Coard led a discussion regarding the dangers posed by the potential import of Australian honey. There is concern that the Ministry is not fully aware of these dangers and is not taking into account the concerns of local beekeepers in this regard. In particular it is understood that the Ministry of Agriculture review panel doesn't include any beekeepers. The Ministry is also not keeping the industry informed of its deliberations and decisions. Tony stressed the need to support the media campaign being done by people like Jo Salisbury of the club to raise awareness of these dangers and pressure the Ministry to not allow honey imports. Many of the new (and some older) members are not aware of this issue and don't know what to do to assist

Action Point 2/2/11-1 Frank to ask the NBA what the outcome of the December meeting with the Ministry was regarding Australian honey imports

Action Point 2/2/11-2 John to prepare a summary of the issues and dangers associated with the importation of Australian honey for the next newsletter.

General Business:

Beginners Sessions.

A new round of beginners' sessions will commence from next month. Beginners at 7pm before the regular meeting commences at 7.30.

The big increase in new beekeepers this season has required a lot of support from Frank and other experienced beekeepers in answering questions and assisting inexperienced newcomers. This year, all new beekeepers wanting to purchase nucs from the club will need to have attended the beginners' sessions and to have their equipment ready for the

spring. The club wants to ensure all new beekeepers know what to do when they take possession of their nuc.

Wax dipper.

Welcome back to Wayne Wild. Members were reminded that the club's wax dipper is intended for dipping boxes only. Dipping bigger items such as lids is very time (and wax) consuming.

Moved Amor, seconded Tony: The Wellington Beekeeper's Club wax dipper to be used for hive boxes only. Other equipment may be dipped at the discretion of the wax dipper (currently Wayne).

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Hive Doctor bottom boards.

Some members had reported problems with the size of the gaps in the bottom grills of the plastic Hive Doctor bottom boards. This was referred to the manufacturer who has acknowledged a problem with a production run resulting in the gap being too large, allowing bees to fall through. The manufacturer has offered to replace any faulty bottom boards with new Mark II versions. Please see John Burnett regarding this.

Valley View Honey buyer.

Valley View honey is looking to purchase excess honey from members. John Burnett has the details

Other Business

Question and Answer Session

Q. When should varroa strips go in?

A. Varroa strips should go in at the end of February (end of nectar flow. Remember to take honey off first.

Slide Show

Frank showed a few slides relating to current seasonal problems. The rain and high winds over Christmas were very disruptive and some hives will have been stressed by that.

Demonstration

John demonstrated a "benchtop hive". This is new type of hive – a hybrid of the Langstroff and topbar hives, which uses conventional frames without foundation comb in a single row in a long rectangular box. This method allows bees to develop comb more naturally (as in a topbar) but allows conventional frames to be used for easier extraction. The box can be partitioned horizontally to create two or more "hives" or left as one large hive. It also has the advantage of being at bench height and requires a minimum of lifting and disturbance of the bees for inspection. John is experimenting with the bench-top hive. John can supply these hives, ready-made, for \$400.

Meeting ended at 8.45 with supper.

Next Meeting: 2nd March 2011, Johnsonville Community Centre. New beekeepers at 7pm, regular meeting follows at 7.30pm.

Volunteer wanted to host an Autumn field day or....

'Free inspection from randomly selected group of 'experts' on offer'

James Scott has commitments thru March so the association is asking other members if they are willing to host an inspection/ honey extraction field-day and workshop for members in March. If you are able to, please let committee know at the Wednesday meeting.

Whether you are rural or city based with your bees—all situations are of interest to other beekeepers.

These workshops are really vital for new beekeepers to gain experience and for anyone that attends, no matter what their experience, level there is always plenty of good information to share.



Bee friendly magazines—check out the new issue of '**Lifestyle Block**' for articles on beekeeping and providing food for your bees year round.

From The Chicago Tribune

The business agent for several honey importers has been arrested on federal charges lodged in Chicago, alleging she conspired to illegally import Chinese honey, prosecutors said today.

Shu Bei “Kathy” Yuan, a Chinese national, was arrested Tuesday in Los Angeles and appeared in federal court in Los Angeles late Wednesday, prosecutors said in a news release.

Prosecutors allege that Yuan claimed the honey came from South Korea, Thailand and Taiwan rather than China to avoid paying higher import taxes.

Yuan’s indictment on charges of evading about \$500,000 in import taxes on about \$200,000 worth of honey is part of [a larger probe into German-based Alfred L. Wolff, Inc.](#), and related companies that [began to result in indictments in 2009](#). A federal grand jury indicted 10 Wolff executives and five companies in an \$80 million honey-import fraud scheme. So far, 20 people and companies have been charged in honey-related investigations, according to the release.

Yuan worked for Blue Action Enterprise, Inc., a California honey importer, and related companies, including the now-defunct 7 Tiger Enterprises, Inc., and Honey World Enterprises, Inc.

She worked with a man named [Hung Ta “Michael” Fan](#), who owned the three companies, to bring the honey into the United States between March 2005 and June 2006. Fan pleaded guilty last year to conspiring to import Chinese honey illegally to skirt about \$5 million in import duties. He was sentenced to 30 months in prison. Yuan is alleged to have falsely declared that six shipments of Chinese honey came from South Korea, Taiwan and Thailand. Honey from those countries was not subject to “anti-dumping” duties at the time of the scheme, prosecutors said.

“The stability of our domestic honey industry is potentially threatened when importers illegally dump low-cost Chinese honey into the U.S. marketplace,” Gary Hartwig, U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement special-agent-in-charge in Chicago, said in the release.

If convicted, Yuan could face up to 20 years in prison and a \$250,000 fine for the most serious charge against her.

Another useful link:

http://straightfurrow.realviewtechnologies.com/?xml=Straight_Furrow

Check out pages 6 & 7 for the farmers take on Bee industry concern re insecticides.

End of Days – Future Proofing (Fiction) - Jo Salisbury

'The people knew it was coming, they knew!', as Jonquil's voice rose, the background class noise died away.

'Stick to the words of the saga, Jonquil', his teacher's unremitting grey eyes glared down at him. 'There is nothing in the sagas to suggest that people knew that the End of Days was upon them. Afterwards there was widespread famine and disease, the population of our planet is estimated to have reduced by 90%. If people knew it was coming, how could that be so?'

'But my granddad has been a beekeeper for his whole life and in the final years he said people in cities were flooding to their club to learn beekeeping, city people keeping bees in cities. That's not all, in the final years he said more and more people were keeping chickens and goats in cities and growing their own vegetables and fruit.' 'There will always be exceptions Jonquil', Murawai said.

'He cut me off Grandad', Jonquil complained at home after tea that night, his fists clenched and 12 year face red with anger. 'Told me I was disrupting the class and made me learn 20 lines of the middle saga before I could leave the schoolroom.' 'Ah well, it is only my theory that people knew Jonquil', Grandad's jaunty grin from his favourite battered deck chair belied his humility as they soaked up the evening sun. 'Murawai is a rationalist, if he can't feel it with his own farmers hands he won't believe it, never had any time for city folk, least of all me. What use have we for a psychiatrist he rightly asked when I applied to join the Community. I was plenty busy using my first profession after the Crisis though, for people who'd lost their city livelihoods and family and friends. But I stick by what I say, they knew, the herds know don't they when a storm is coming?'

The two were silent as they gazed west from the solid second story roof garden of their house on the hill, to the herds of sheep and cows in the fields surrounding the village. In the centre of the village was a large village square with a well in the middle. Looking at it from a distance Jonquil despaired at his inability to hold his temper that morning in the school hall which, along with the white and gold trim church, ran along made up the northern boundary of the quadrangle of buildings around the square. He recalled his relief at escaping the stuffy classroom at lunchtime, trading it for field duties after completing his lines. Jonquil could smell the smoke drifting up from chimneys of the two long dusky brown buildings spanning the western boundary of the square, the men's and women's single dormitories or 'longhouses' as everyone called them and often married men and women stayed a night or two there for the companionship of their own sex. A grey all-stone building ran along the southern boundary of the square, comprising the library and storehouse, candles were banned from here, so it was empty now. Murawai said the library was the most important building of the village as it protected their heritage. Grandad reckoned the most important was the cheerful tudor style building with it's adjacent walled garden which completed the eastern boundary of the square,. Laughter could be heard from the bar now. He said that was the heart of the community where ideas for the future were thought of, the pub of course. Other buildings spread out along the four roads leading to the square, reflected the spectacular spring sunset from their windows, Charlies Chandlers, Sam's Smithy, Bess's Bakery etc . The warm sunset colours ruddied the turned earth and greenery of the commu-

nity's orchards and vegetable gardens circling the village, finally giving way to the fields where Jonquil could hear the soft baa of spring lambs. Topping the hills dotted around the edge of the community's land were the homes of each extended family, solid stone or brick quadrangles, impervious to fire. What could not be seen was the central courtyards of each, housing a well, home garden and lawn and often chickens and rabbits. This gave each family the privacy of their own rooms but protection of numbers and fresh food in case of raids.

'I wasn't the only one whose first profession was rejected either', said Grandad. 'The funniest one was the G.P. I remember him well.'

'A "G.P". What's that Grandad?'

'A General Practitioner, a doctor.'

'Oh, a doctor, but don't you mean homeopathic doctor or naturopath doctor or herbalist?'

'No, I mean Doc Gubbins but in those days he wasn't a homeopath, wouldn't have said hello to one in the street. He came in the first wave of refugees you see.'

'What are refugees?'

'People who didn't belong to our community to start with, who left the city after the End of Days. He was first in the line outside the gates when we opened them that first day after the Crisis, he'd got here in his big flash car while there was still petrol. Up he strode to the door, not begging like some but bold as brass saying 'I'd like to volunteer my services in return for joining your community'. I was on interviewing duty that day so I showed him in and he sat himself down doubtfully in one of Matt's home-made chairs, like he didn't think it would hold him.'

'But Matt's a master carpenter.'

'Not in those days he wasn't and that chair was pretty rough. Stop interrupting anyway or I'll set you some chores instead (silence ensued).'

'Well you're in luck', I said, 'we're in need of some labourers and skilled workers.'

'I'd be skilled of course', said Doc Gubbins confidently.

'Right', I said, 'that means you're a:

Blacksmith, chandler, thatcher, cheesemaker, sustainable health practitioner...'

'That last one, that would be me, I'm a G.P. he says.'

'Sustainable?', I asked.

'What do you mean, sustainable? I'm not going to lose my knowledge', he said and he was getting pretty worked up by now, so big Bob came and leaned over him.

'Well unless you have 50 years worth of drugs in that car you're only half a doctor', I said. 'We need a homeopath (if they can make their own remedies), herbalist (if they come with seeds), acupuncturist (if they have their needles).....'

'Quackery, I wouldn't pass the time of day with such a person', he snorted.

'Well, what are you going to do without your drugs or medical tests or Xrays...?' I asked him. 'Cheer people up by diagnosing them with something serious and then try to grow some mould on some cheese? If you're willing to work for your place I'll put you down as, unskilled labourer', I told him, 'or possible health apprentice if you change your attitude and we get someone you can learn from. You'll sleep in the communal men's long house'. I did enjoy dismissing him and just roaring Next!'

'Grandad, if you didn't get in as a psychiatrist you weren't a 'serf' were you?'

'Where did you learn such language, we're either 'members' or 'stake-earners' that's our names, what do they teach you in your school? The refugees earnt their stake and still can, although there haven't been any new refugees for over 20 years. As it happens I was a founder member, one of the original future-proofing hobbyists. Of course my first hobby was beekeeping'

'What's a 'future proofing hobbyist?', Jonquil asked.

'Well before the End of Days the work week was 5 days, not six and the two days off were called a weekend. I had my work and house in the city and buying my weekend bach in the community gave me membership. The community needed us weekend bach hobbyists to buy enough land to get the Kapiti Community started. They couldn't have raised the money without us hobbyists, you can bet I don't let the likes of Murawai forget that. It wasn't called the Kapiti Community in those days, we called ourselves the 'Future-proofing Hobbyists and in the weekends we came out to our baches and learnt the skills we use today. At the time we thought of them as hobbies'. Grandad looked ruefully at his calloused hands and laughed.

'But why did you call yourselves hobbyists? It sounds serious not hobbies, hobbies are playing.'

'It was playing, we meant it to be fun. City life had gotten so complex and stressful, we wanted to get back to the simple life in our weekends, as an escape, a holiday. I reckon deep down we knew what was coming and we'd need these practical skills but at the time we were just playing at it. We called it 'future-proofing' as an insurance against some sort of world crisis but none of us really believed it would happen.'

'But where did the beekeeping fit in, why have we got so many hives?', asked Jonquil.

'Oh, that one hasn't really paid off yet. We thought the communities would trade with each other and we would need a trade item, they haven't yet of course. With all of the bush nearby for bee food and wood to construct the hives it was logical for our trade items to be bee products. Of course in the early days before our crops and hunting skills developed it saved us from starvation that first couple of winters, I tell you any objection to eating insects disappears pretty quick when you haven't had any protein for weeks. The hives gave us sugar for preserving, protein from pollen and brood, light from candles and medicine from honey and propolis.'

'Did they all start like that, all the Communities of Aoteroa?'

'No, your teacher's right about some of them, some just sort of fell into it after the End of Days, they used to be rural poly-techs, or farms, or fancy lodges with land attached, you won't know what those were of course and it doesn't really matter. In some of them they didn't prepare and the landowners really did make newcomers serfs but we did it the right way. Anyway, that's enough bugging your Grandad for today, you'd better decide whether you're going to please your teacher by writing what he wants for your history project or poke trouble by quoting me. Off with you, it's due tomorrow so you'd better get started.' Sam listened to the thumps along the hall as Jonquil scampered off towards his room, followed shortly after by the squeak of the courtyard gates. He trotted along to look out a back window and sure enough a small figure followed a path down to the stream where squeals could be heard coming from the swimming hole. He laughed, 'the times might change' he thought 'but kids don't change that much'. Then he trotted agilely up and down the stairs to retrieve a bottle of his best brew from the cool room, he didn't feel one bit of his 60 odd years. Leaning on the low parapet wall to look out at what they'd built, he reflected that he didn't miss his old stuffy city office at all. Jonquil ignored his splashing younger cousins and climbed to the top of the big willow by the swimming hole. Sitting on the topmost branch he peered over the stone border wall at one of the potholed old roads which passed their village. He inhaled the ashfelt smell of the road carried to him on the wind, to him it smelt of otherness, of adventure. His gaze jealously followed the stream of the community's many bees flying up the road to the bush at the top of the hill across the valley. One day he'd travel beyond the walls, he knew there were bandits but he wanted to see other communities, the sea or

even the cities. There were rumours that there were such things as city communities, although how they would grow enough to eat he didn't know. One day, he'd see for himself. The wind was still warm but even so he couldn't suppress a shiver. He stayed until the sun went down then snuck home to finish his history homework by candlelight.—Jo

What not a late newsletter again—Fire the editor!

Well as the editor that is exactly what I am thinking at the moment. I've been doing the job for about 18 months, since before I had bees in fact, as I saw it as a great way to learn as much as I could as quickly as possible—being the information hub.

Now my time commitments have changed and the meeting dates have also changed to accommodate our increasing numbers. Unfortunately I am no longer able to attend regularly due to kids activities etc on Wednesday nights. So am feeling just a little bit isolated. Not the associations fault at all—make that clear at the outset.

But the end result of time pressures etc is that I don't want to become unreliable with this vital piece of info for the rest of you and wish to offer this job out to association members. If anyone is interested in being the editor please let me or other members of the committee know ASAP. You need to be computer literate and have a publishing programme of some sort. You have free reign to change the format and write what you want etc...you just have to be able to get it out before the end of each month!

In the mean time—no volunteers for this job means no moaning about time frames eh—you have been warned...;-) - Kristen

Thanks to Dave Clayton and Jamie Walker for each taking one of my hives on. Thanks guys—I hope the bees behave for you. Anyone in the top end of Upper Hutt that can give Jamie some pointers probably most welcome as he is new to beekeeping.

We still have 2 hives at home and council willing will continue to keep them here as they are easy to attend and a pleasure to work.—Kristen

New home required for the club library—can you take this off my hands? Are you able to attend the meetings regularly? And bring a carton of books with you when you go? If so I would really like to hear from you—thanks—Kristen

Selling honey at the farmers' market

By Anne Hulme

There are many rules and regulations to consider if you want to sell your small amount of spare honey to the public.

Sometimes you might think that it isn't worth the cost. Selling honey at the market has more regulations to comply with than selling homemade jams and pickles.

I can only tell you about the rules for our comparatively small local market because I don't have any experience elsewhere, but I do know that all the farmers' markets in New Zealand have set regulations that every market organiser should be following.

First of all, consider the honey regulations. Your honey must be extracted in registered premises, or a commercial honey house, or you do it yourself in a rented registered kitchen. It is not good enough to pay a commercial beekeeper to extract it for you so that you can take it home to pack it into containers in an unregistered place. It must be packed in registered premises also. Gone are the days when we used to extract in the garage and pack it into jars in our own kitchen, to give away to our family or barter with neighbours.

The Wanganui District Council is authorised to inspect small honey houses for hobbyists. There are many points for you to consider when building new or altering an existing room or shed, so it would be best to talk to your local Environmental Health Officer before you start planning. We didn't do that when we built my new premises in town, and so we had to make two changes before I could gain an A grade. I had to change the hot water to make it come directly from the hot water cylinder, and put a water-repellent silicone sealer around the floor of the cupboard under the tub. There is an annual registration and inspection fee to pay, and the council inspector can come at any time without warning.



Selling honey at the market. Photo: Graham Pearson.

Now that we have the new tulin regulations, the inspector is very thorough. He or she is well versed in the tulin laws and will ask to see your traceability records, checking the batch numbers on the labels of the containers of honey. (I label my buckets with a batch number as soon as the honey comes out of the extractor and use that same number on the jar label.) It is important to keep your written records up to date.

The inspector will check your cleaning schedule (that should be displayed on the wall) and that you have recorded and dated when you did certain jobs. He/she will ask to see the cleaning materials you use, and look at the drain and will check the rubbish bin. The inspector is even interested in the dates you laid ant bait outside and set rodent traps if the area has a problem.

At our market there are more food safety requirements. It is compulsory for you to gain and have on display a current NZQA

food safety certificate (e.g., number 167), or else you could attend a different food safety course that is specially designed for honey producers and sellers, run byASUREQuality Limited. Hobbyists would find this particular course more useful, as it is more pertinent to a beekeeper and doesn't include the whole meal preparation and practical kitchen work that is required for the NZQA food safety certificate number 167.

Another market regulation requires the stallholder to prepare a Food Risk Assessment document and submit it for approval. It is filled in and dated every time you go to the market. If someone else is selling your honey for you, that person has to complete the Food Risk Assessment document and keep it up to date. The district council health inspector or the market organiser can ask to see it at any time, so you must have it with you. All of these requirements are necessary to ensure that the honey you prepare is safe for the customers.

**Wellington Beekeepers Association Library held by Editor
all titles are available for lending.**

For the love of Bees – Story of Bro Adam of Buckfest Abby – Lesley Bill,(HB, 1989 B/W illus.)

Practical Beekeeping Handbook for Australia & New Zealand. Ray Chapman Taylor & Ivo Davey (PB 1988)

How to keep Bees & Sell honey – Walter T Kelley (PB 1978 B/W)

Diary of a Honey Bee – Bill Kerr (PB 1990 Colour) Children's introduction to Bees

NZ Standards Model General Bylaws – The Keeping of Animals, Poultry & Bees NZS 9201 SANZ (PB 1978 B/w photos, illus.)

Nector & Pollen Sources of New Zealand – RS Walsh (PB 1978 B/W Illus/Photos)

Beekeeping the Gentle Craft – John F Adams (HB 1972 B/W illus)

Backyard Beekeeping – William Scott (PB 1977 B/W illus. photos) x 2 copies

Bees & Beekeeping – A V Pavord (HB 1970 B/W illus. photos)

Teach yourself Beekeeping – A N Scofield (PB 1971 B/W illus. photos)

Practical Beekeeping & Honey Production – D T Macfie (HB B/W illus)

Manual for NZ Beekeepers – W C Cotton (HB no illus. 1848 - 2 x 1976 reprints)

Elimination of AFB without Drugs – Mark Goodwin & Cliff Van Eaton (PB 1999 Colour Illus)

Beekeeping in New Zealand – NZ Dept Agriculture bulletin no. 267 9 HB 1961 B/W illus. photos)
3 copies

The Dancing Bees – Karl Von Frisch (HB 1955 B/W Illus. photos)

Honey Cookbook – Peter Russel Clark (PB 1985 colour Illus)

The Complete Guide to Beekeeping – Roger A Morse (HB 1974 B/W illus. photos)

Honey – Natural Sweetness – Jill Norman (HB colour illus. photos)

Beehive – Source of Youth Vitality & Longevity – MS Landis (PB1982 no illus.)

A Box of Bees – Emily Dobson (PB 2005 – Poetry)

A Book of Bees – Sue Hubbell (PB 1988 B/W illus)

The ABC & XYZ of Bee Culture – A I & E R Root (HB 717pg B/W Illus. photos 2 copies – 1913 & 1975)

The Hive & the Honey Bee – Dadant & Sons (HB 1976 740pg B/W illus. photos 3 copies)

Sixty Years with Bees – Donald Sims (HB 1997 282pg Colour/BW illus. photos)

Anatomy of the Honey bee – R E Shodgrass (HB 1956 334pg B/W Illus)

Guide To Bees & Honey – Ted Hooper (HB 1976 260pg B/W illus. photos)