

**June meeting**

**Wednesday 6<sup>th</sup> June 2012**

Beginners Session 7pm - **Essential Bee Equipment**  
 Main Meeting 7:30pm - **Gadgets and Gizmos**



**For Sale – Two Million Blossoms by Kristen Traynor**

A guide to the medicinal benefits of honey, based on historical research and the published results of laboratory experiments, case studies and clinical trials.

Includes a forward by Dr Peter Molan, Director of the Waikato Honey Research Institute

Available from the Treasurer at \$40 per copy



**Editors Indulgence**

I was recently reminded of an old quote and thought it worth repeating here. For future newsletters, please send me any Bee quotes you would like included.

**Favourite Bee Quote**

“The drone is a gross, stingless bee, that spendeth his time in gluttony and idleness. For howsoever he brave it with his round velvet cap, his side gown, his full paunch, and his loud voice, yet is he but an idle companion, living by the sweat of others’ brows. He worketh not at all, either at home or abroad, and yet spendeth as much as two labourers; you shall never find his maw without a drop of purest nectar. In the heat of the day he flyeth abroad, aloft and about, and that with no small noise, as though he would do some great act; but only for his pleasure, and to get him a stomach, and then returns he presently to his cheer. But for all this there is such use of him, that he may not be spared, as without whom the Bee cannot bee.”

Charles Butler: The Feminine Monarchie, or the Historie of Bees



**NBA Beekeeping Clubs’ Survey – Preliminary Findings**

A total of 115 beekeeping club/hobbyist beekeepers responded to this survey.

**1. Which beekeeping club do you belong to?**

Wellington Beekeepers Club	49%	Central Otago Region	0.75%
Auckland Beekeepers Club	33%	Dunedin Beekeepers Club	0.75%
Franklin Beekeepers Club	7%	Nelson Beekeeping Club	0.75%
Wanganui Beekeepers Club	5%	North Canterbury	0.75%

**2. Are you a member of the NBA?**

Yes: 24% No: 76%

**3. If you are not a member of the NBA, please list the three main reasons why.**

Because this was an open ended question, we received a wide and varied range of answers.

The two predominant responses were:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Too expensive</li> <li>• Unaware of the NBA or unaware of what benefits the NBA could provide to hobbyist beekeepers</li> </ul>
Other common responses included:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The NBA only looks after commercial beekeepers’ interests or “industry”</li> <li>• Don’t see value in the NBA</li> <li>• My club is a member, and they provide all of the support I need</li> <li>• Some responded that they didn’t know if they were a member or not.</li> </ul>
A few anomalies in responses:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The NBA is too political and not democratic</li> <li>• The NBA is presented as ‘not a good idea’ by the club</li> <li>• Disagreement with policy stances</li> <li>• The NBA’s support of Bayer.</li> </ul>

**4. We would like your views on the relative importance of the following specific services which the NBA provides to members. On a scale of 1-5 (1 being not very valuable and 5 being extremely valuable) please rate the value of these services which are part of the NBA’s core business.**

NOTE: NBA services are noted here in order of their average rating (out of 5).

Consulting with Government over GIA biosecurity processes	4.18
Research	4.125
Influencing government policy to benefit the beekeeping industry	4.105
Fighting Australian honey imports	3.965
Representation on local issues of concern to beekeepers	3.84
Promoting beekeeping to the general public	3.745
The Beekeeper Journal	3.725
Providing advisory booklets on beekeeping	3.66
The NBA website	3.27
Providing member benefits	3.045
Bee Week	3.03

**5. On a scale of 1-5 (1 being not very effective and 5 being extremely effective) how effective is the communication between the NBA and you as a club member?**

The average rating was 2.46 out of 5.

**6. How would you prefer the NBA to communicate with you?**

Email	29%	Electronic newsletter	22%
The Beekeeper Journal	22%	NBA Website	14%
News feed of industry related news	6%	Forum	3%
Facebook	3%	Twitter	1%

**7. What are the three biggest issues you would like the NBA to tackle for beekeepers and what do you think the Association should do about each?**

Again, because this was an open ended question we had a lot of diversity in answers.

The two predominant answers were:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Varroa research</li> <li>• Better communicating with clubs/giving them a voice</li> </ul>
Other common answers included:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Preventing Australian honey imports</li> <li>• Representing the beekeeping industry at a government level</li> <li>• Keeping beekeepers on track with AFB policy</li> <li>• Biosecurity controls</li> <li>• Research</li> <li>• Educate beekeepers</li> </ul>

**Hive sites available**

Two sites have been recently offered to Wellington Beekeepers:

- 1.Norfolk St., Belmont Lower Hutt
- 2.Overtoun Tce., Hataitai

If you are interested in either one of these please contact the Treasurer

**Beekeepers wanted!**

We are looking to host beehives in our orchards in Pekapeka and Seatoun. If you're an aspiring urban beekeeper, keen to set up your own hive but without the room to put it, look no further. Make our plants happy and your honey tasty with infusions of feijoa, apples, cherries, strawberries, tamarillos, apricots, nectarines, blueberries and more.

Email:

For Pekapeka, [tink@onemeall.org](mailto:tink@onemeall.org)

For Seatoun, [gardener@garden.geek.nz](mailto:gardener@garden.geek.nz)

Q. How long keep strips in?

A. Apivar 12 weeks, Bayvarrol 6-8 weeks.

Q. It is getting cold, what temperature can you open a hive at?

A. Roll your sleeves up and if you get goosebumps don't open the hives.

Inspections for AFB

You also need to get the hives checked for AFB now. Please see John Burnet if you are a DECA holder who is willing to check other's hives (can charge a fee – see last minutes). We need more in Wellington.

Andrew Beach did 24 inspections last month and no AFB found. John burnt 2 hives this season for AFB, just past Leecroft Nurseries in Pauatahanui. NB) the club will reimburse \$60 per hive if you do find AFB, only a 0.3% incidence in NZ.

Q. What do you do for wasps?

A. Narrow entrances to 4 inches.

Q. When should we start beekeeping?

A. Build equipment now and wait for spring to get nucleus hives (can order through the club August/September). We will have another hive building field-day this winter.

Donations

A member kindly donated a strainer, the club will take it and offer it for use by members when they use the extractor.

Another member offered some free blue borage plants.

Rob Wilkinson spoke about the Food Bill

There is a bill before parliament and the MAF will need to put out regulations subsequent to this. We can expect a call for consultations soon.

Tutin

Wellington City Council is currently planting Tutin. Tony will contact them about it.

New Beekeepers

New members of the club will receive a free booklet "Starting With Bees". We also recommend you buy 'Practical Beekeeping' a book on beekeeping in NZ, which is available at a discount from the club. There are a lot of programmes on Youtube. Frank commented that the bees are very tolerant so there is no really wrong way of doing things (NB Secretary's comment: *there is, however, always plenty of debate on the right way to do things!*)

Frank presented on Bee Biology and history.

Meeting ended with supper.



queen in the dark with a torch to get her in the hive! Richard thanked John Burnet for all his time in organising this and setting this up. The NBA also provided posters and pamphlets for us.

### NBA Survey

Thanks to all those who contributed to this. Our club had a huge response, of the 115 responses 49% were from our club.

### Executive Committee

We met a week ago. Two topics are worth bringing to the general meeting. That we consider making the membership list available to other members, will bring this up at the AGM. Also to bring to the AGM is a proposal for a commission arrangement to compensate John Burnet for his now considerable time spent on bulk purchasing on behalf of the club.

### Library

Suzanne spoke to this. People are using it more. There are a few new editions, some DVDs and videos, will add the Queen of the Sun DVD. Suzanne has discussed newsletter access with James. 15 years of newsletters are on the website although not easy to find. They are in the members' only area. What we may do is keep the first 12 months in the members' only part of the website as they are a member benefit for which we do pay a membership fee. The website is a work in progress. Also at the committee meeting we spoke about further development of the website.

### Next Meeting Topic

This is 'Gadgets and Gizmos'. Please bring along anything you have made to for beekeeping. Email or ring Richard if you would like to present something.

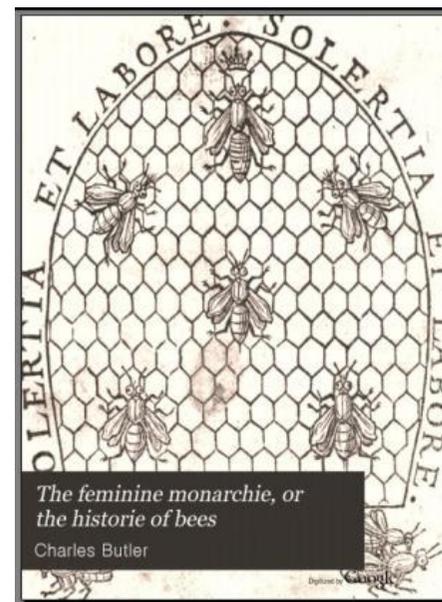
### What is Happening In the Hives this Month

You should have been treating for varroa since mid February; all hives are different even if sited next to each other. 3 mites a week are O.K, more than that is too much and treatment is required. There are a lot of feral hives breaking down at this time so reinfection rates are high. Check whether your hive needs feeding, with the late autumn this year there may still be lots of brood to feed. Ensure 6 frames of honey in each box if you have a 2 box wintered down hive. Do the 'heft test', try to lift both boxes together, should feel heavy. To make sugar feed fill a container with sugar then add boiling water to the top, stir until dissolved. See books or the web for more instructions. You can also feed spare 'wet' wax cappings or your own saved honey even if you have mildly heated it. Don't feed bought honey as it could contain AFB. Give a lot at once eg a litre a day for 4/5 days, a dribble will stimulate brood laying. Remove your honey supers if you have not already done so. Combine weak hives with strong ones. Make sure you have a good non leaking roof and good ventilation, add a match under each corner of your hive top inner cover or if you have a mesh bottom board this should be enough.

- Q. Fogging seems to be a controversial varroa treatment using food grade mineral oil. Does anyone know if it is effective?
- A. Wayne swears by it but he uses strips as well. Frank said that fogging kills mites on bees only one day, need to use cords as well. There can be a problem if there is wind. Don't do fogging more than once a month. Some commercial beekeepers are using cords with Thymol (need a mask when making cords).



### **Book Review – The Feminine Monarchie, or the historie of bees**



Are you interested in historic literature?

Are you interested in what was known about bees in the 17<sup>th</sup> century?

Written by Charles Butler in 1609, *The Feminine Monarchie* is described as "The truth found out by experience and diligent observation, discovereth the idle and fond conceits, which many have written anent this subject".

The book is well indexed, with the contents of each chapter clearly described at the front. Even though there are no page numbers, it was relatively easy to identify a section from the index and contents pages, and then find it in the main text.

Be prepared for old English spelling (or lack of it) and typography, and plenty of latin to be translated.

This book is now available as a free download in pdf format from Google as part of Google's project to make available books that are out of copyright.

[http://books.google.co.nz/books/about/The\\_Feminine\\_Monarchie\\_Or\\_the\\_Historie\\_o.html?id=f5tbAAAAMAAJ&redir\\_esc=y](http://books.google.co.nz/books/about/The_Feminine_Monarchie_Or_the_Historie_o.html?id=f5tbAAAAMAAJ&redir_esc=y)



**Into the Beehive**

## The Food Bill

Following on from the information given by Rob Wilkinson at the May meeting.

Celia Cunningham has been in touch with Rob about drafting the regulations under the new Food Bill Act, she has advised that "If you were selling your honey for a charitable cause (on a non-commercial scale on less than 20 occasions a year) you would not need to operate under a national programme or register your business. You would just need to operate under any food handler guidance that applies." This means that licensed premises would not be required to pack honey for small scale sales in support of a charity, rather that compliance with food handling guidance is all that is needed. We are not sure yet quite what this will mean, but Rob expects Celia to come back to him when the time for submissions and discussion about the new regulations draws near. (Thanks Rob)



Editor's note:

Reading the above, it is obvious that this does not cover the majority of us who just want to sell our surplus to friends or an occasional market stall. Pete did some follow up investigation:



### Food Bill – current provisions (2012-05-25) (By Pete Matcham)

Currently extraction and packing of honey is covered in national programme level 1. This is identified in **Schedule 2 - Food sectors subject to national programmes.**

Part 4 of Schedule 2 covers "Food sectors subject to national programme level 1 - Extractors and packers of honey"

General description for Extractors and packers of honey:

"This food sector covers food businesses that extract and pack various honey and honey-based products."

Part 4 of the schedule also includes "Horticultural packing operations (packhouses)" which is of relevance when considering the provisions for small scale operators (see below).

The degree to which these provisions will affect members will ultimately be determined by the Regulations that will underpin the Bill once it is enacted. Development of the Regulations will not be undertaken until the Bill is enacted, and the process will be subject to consultation (personal communication with Celia Cunningham Ministry of Primary Industries 2012-05-25)

## Useful Websites

**Club Website:** [www.beehive.org.nz](http://www.beehive.org.nz) From the *Home* page, create your own username and password

**Club Library:** <http://www.librarything.com/> Username: wellingtonbeeclub  
Password: buzz



## MINUTES OF THE WELLINGTON BEEKEEPERS' ASSOCIATION (WBA) MONTHLY MEETING HELD AT THE JOHNSONVILLE COMMUNITY CENTRE, WED 2th May,

Present: John Burnett, 53 members and 13 visitors.

### Matters Arising

#### Introductions

Member: Peter Northcote, joined with his wife Lisa. Peter got interested last year from the National Radio programme. He got two nucs in December at the back of his property in Days Bay, they are near the bush and reasonably near the chicken coop. Lisa's father kept bees in Canada. He enjoys it, makes mistakes and worried last year that had lost the queen, re-queened then thought he had lost it again. Richard said it was O.K. they still had a queen. He said he was very impressed with the support from WBA.

#### Supper

Thank you for Willie and Tony for doing the supper in the absence of Jane Harding and to Gary for donating the lemon and honey lamingtons tonight (delicious).

#### Matters Arising

Tony said that the secretary had missed out a good description of core-flute from the last minutes.

Q. What is core-flute?

A. An exotic that randomly happens on walls or on fences in rural and suburban locations.

best harvested after dark by hand screwdriver.

safest harvested in its adult form, look for SOLD sticker.

in Wellington easiest varieties are Tommies and Harcourts as these have square drive screws – fastest to remove in dark.

#### Better Home and Living Show

John Burnet reported back on this. Ten new people attended tonight's meeting because of it. Thanks to the 20 volunteers who staffed the stand for two/three hour slots or in some cases all day. The show organisers complimented us on the stand and would like us to come again. The show had 700 visitors. Thanks especially to P.K. for building the observation hive and finding the

## WELLINGTON BEEKEEPERS ASSOCIATION



Meetings Johnsonville  
Community Centre  
Main Hall, Ground Floor,  
Moorefield Road

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

### WHO TO TALK TO

#### President

Richard Braczek (04) 973 3028  
ibraczek@paradise.net.nz

#### Treasurer

John Burnet (04) 232 7863  
johnburnet@xtra.co.nz

#### Secretary

Jo Salisbury (04) 977 5250  
salisburynz@yahoo.com

#### Newsletter Contributions:

Sandie Matcham (04) 565 1083  
smatcham@actrix.co.nz

Newsletters are published in the **last week** of each month, except January.

Members contributions to be with editor **by 20<sup>th</sup> month**.

Please submit articles in Microsoft Word document format.

If recommending articles from the web, please confirm whether these can be reproduced or have copyright.

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Of particular interest to members is the potential for non commercial beekeepers to be included in the provisions signaled on the Foodsafety website. It is unclear what legal status these pronouncements have, but they clearly reflect the current thinking of the Ministry and Minister.

Three areas are relevant.

1. **Donating produce.** Here the intent is clear. The site states that: 'The Food Bill does not cover food grown at home or made for personal consumption, any food given away or shared with anyone.'
2. **Bartering.** Here the degree to which non commercial beekeepers would be impacted is much less clear. The site states that: 'The current Food Act 1981 includes barter in the definition of sale. The Food Bill does the same. This is aimed at people in business who barter food commercially. Anyone bartering food must ensure the food is safe to eat' Whilst this clearly identifies the target as '*people in business who barter food commercially*', and thus is unlikely to be applied to local and small scale barter between friends and neighbours it would be prudent to have this made explicit within the regulations.
3. **Small scale operators.** As a result of wide adverse publicity, the Minister has declared that 'small scale operators' selling horticultural produce will be exempt from the National programme regime and will only need to operate within the food safety guidelines. The relevant paragraph is "Operators who sell only their own fruit and vegetables direct to consumers such as at roadside stalls or farmers' markets, only have to continue to sell safe food. There is no registration or check involved and free food safety guidance will be available from MAF. Small-scale growers who sell their fruit and vegetables to another outlet, such as a supermarket, a store, or someone else's store at a farmers' market will come under National Programme Level 1."

There appears to be no logical or procedural reason why similarly defined small scale operations should not be extended to sales of honey. This will require however appropriate submissions when the Regulations are drafted.

Finally, the provision exists within the Bill as currently drafted, for individuals to apply for exemption from registration in the Level 1 National Programme.

Ministry staff have been very helpful in providing information and have undertaken to continue to do so. If this further information results in any change to the status of the information above, I will pass this on. (Thanks Pete)



Leaving the Beehive

### Bee careful with Bee pollen

Bee pollen supplements can cause anaphylactic reactions

Paper published in the Canadian Medical Association Journal

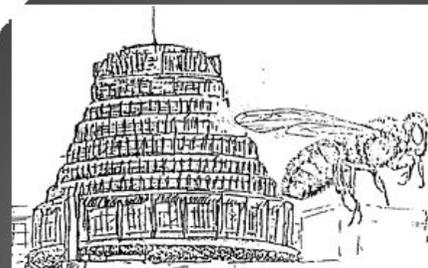
Although many people take bee pollen as a health supplement, it can cause severe anaphylactic reactions. However, most people are unaware of the risks, states an article published in *CMAJ (Canadian Medical Association Journal)*.

A case study in the journal illuminates the possible hazards of ingesting bee pollen. A 30-year-old woman with seasonal allergies but no history of allergies to food, drugs, insects or latex had an anaphylactic reaction after taking bee pollen. She had swelling of the eyelids, lips and throat, difficulty swallowing, hives and other life-threatening symptoms. After emergency treatment and discontinuation of the bee pollen supplements, there were no further reactions.

"Anaphylaxis associated with the consumption of bee pollen has been reported in the literature, but many people remain unaware of this potential hazard," write Dr. Amanda Jagdis, University of British Columbia, and Dr. Gordon Sussman, St. Michael's Hospital and the University of Toronto.

Anaphylactic reactions after ingesting bee pollen have been reported in people with no history of allergies or only seasonal allergies. In a Greek study in which atopic participants underwent skin tests for reactions to bee pollen, 73% (of 145 patients) had positive skin test reactions to one or more types of bee pollen extracts.

"Health care providers should be aware of the potential for reaction, and patients with pollen allergy should be advised of the potential risk when consuming these products — it is not known who will have an allergic reaction upon ingesting bee pollen," conclude the authors.



June 2012



## Wellington Beekeepers Association Incorporated Newsletter

**Next Meeting: Wednesday 6<sup>th</sup> June 2012**

**Main Hall, Johnsonville Community Centre, Moorefield Rd.**

**7.00pm - Beginners Session - Essential Bee Equipment**

**7.30pm - Main Meeting – Gadgets and Gizmos**

Return address: 280 Major Drive, Kelson, Lower Hutt

