

## KENT BEE-KEEPERS' ASSOCIATION

### WESTERHAM BRANCH NEWSLETTER January 2019

Dear Fellow Beekeepers,

A Happy New Year to us all! For those not at the Annual Meeting in November, I'm happy to report that the 2018 winner of the Miller Cup (for set honey) was James Cash and the Veness Cup (for liquid honey) was Becky Champion. Well done to both!

Here is the schedule of our Winter and Spring meetings:

*Light refreshments will, as usual, be served after each talk (50p).*

#### **Wednesday, January 30th, Westerham Hall, 7.30pm for 8pm**

Kay Wreford, Master Beekeeper, will talk on the important subject of 'Common Bee Diseases that we can all be unfortunate enough to meet' – and will add some timely reminders on how to avoid/manage them. Kay has kept bees for 14 years and is an examiner for the BBKA basic and general-husbandry assessments. I retired from being a General Practitioner three years ago and became a Seasonal Bee Inspector for Kent. And yes I did work on the Asian Hornet incursion at Dungeness...!

#### **Wednesday, February 27th, Westerham Hall, 7.30 for 8pm**

Georgia (Gigi) Hennessy, a doctoral candidate at the University of Sussex, will tell us about her special subject, the solitary bee – and also touch on another aspect of her research, honey-bee foraging and the weather.

#### **Wednesday, March 27th, Westerham Hall, 7.30pm for 8pm**

Our secretary, Diana Pickard, will lead a practical hands-on session making Asian hornet traps... (This is a new departure for the branch. A sort of 'Knit and Natter' for beekeepers with wire and plastic bottle instead of wool and knitting needles.)

#### **Wednesday, April 24, Westerham Hall, 7.30pm for 8pm**

Steve Riley will be hosting a presentation on the progress of treatment-free beekeeping in the UK and an update on the Westerham Beekeepers' project. This will be followed-up with a visit to Steve's treatment-free apiary on **June 15th**.

*Directions for Westerham Hall: From the A25 in the centre of Westerham (by the Green), take the London Road towards Biggin Hill; turn first right into Quebec Avenue; the car park and Westerham Hall is on the right-hand side. OS Ref: 447542.*

Do please come to as many of these evening events as possible. New members and beginning beekeepers are especially encouraged and will be made very welcome at the get-together afterwards. Advice will be available from seasoned beekeepers and books on the craft may be borrowed from the branch 'library'.

In addition to the apiary meeting in June (*see above*), two others have been scheduled on **May 18th** and **July 20th**. Let me know if you'd be willing to open your own apiary for these enjoyable and instructive Saturday afternoon gatherings. There will be an autumn talk at Westerham Hall on **September 25th** and our annual meeting and honey competition will be held on **November 27th**.

\*Finally, Bob Jackman, of the Bromley beekeepers, extends a warm invitation to Westerham beekeepers to attend a significant talk to be given in Lower Sydenham next week:

**Gerry Stuart on 'The Asian Hornet'**

Tuesday, January 15th at 7.30 pm

*The Pavilion, Kent House Road Allotments, 91A Kent House Road (entrance opposite Woodbastwick Road), Lower Sydenham, London SE26 5LJ*

All are welcome. Refreshments available during the interval.

Gerry Stuart is Vice-Chairman of Torbay Beekeepers. He has been in the forefront of the setting up Asian Hornet Action Teams. During the 2018 season, Jersey beekeepers had to deal with 52 nests. Gerry has been well involved with Jersey beekeepers over the past couple of seasons, so his knowledge certainly isn't theoretical. He is concerned, informed and passionate, so expect a lively session.