



# YORKSHIRE BEEKEEPERS ASSOCIATION

## The Yorkshire National

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conference online](#)

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Edition 11

January 2019

### Contents

[Chairman's Notes](#)

[YBKA Education Information](#)

[Basic Assessment updates](#)

[YBKA Spring Conference schedule](#)

[Conference Workshop info](#)

[YBKA Study Days progress](#)

[YBKA Study Days left to come](#)

[January in the Apiary](#)

[District Events for all](#)

[Science and Beekeeping](#)

[Asian Hornet updates](#)

[YBKA Spring Conference  
application form](#)

[Adverts from sponsors](#)

[Classifieds](#)

[Committee Details](#)

[District Contacts Info](#)

[Calendar of YBKA Events](#)

[Allan Campbell Jefferson Obituary](#)

[BBKA Module Exams Deadline](#)

### Chairman's Notes

#### Chair's Notes

Welcome to the January 2019 edition of the YBKA newsletter.

Here we are at the start of a New Year and the time to inspect all of your equipment and to polish your smoker ready for Spring.

Most would agree that 2018 was a challenging year for beekeeping but that comes with the territory and is what makes our hobby unique.

The first event of 2019 is the BBKA Annual Delegates meeting on Saturday 12 January. Our newly appointed delegate, Michael Badger, will report back to the GPC on the day's events and will present his report at the YBKA Delegates meeting on Saturday 23 February.

Tickets for our Annual Spring Conference on Saturday 6 April are now available with full details on how to book shown on our web.

On a sad note we have been informed of the passing on 23 December last, of Alan Jefferson, father of Tony Jefferson. Alan had been ill for some time and our condolences go out to the Jefferson family.

Three generations of the family were involved in beekeeping and Alan had kept bees since he was 12 years old. Alan was

Chairman of YBKA from 1995 to 1998 and will be sadly missed by all that knew him. There is a full obituary at the end of this newsletter.

A HAPPY NEW YEAR TO YOU ALL. Phil Gee - YBKA Chair

YBKA CONFERENCE 2019 "A Taste of Honey"

Saturday, 6th April 2019 (8.30am to 4pm)

Manor Academy, York (YO26 6PA)

## YBKA Education Information

1. The deadline for submission of applications for the BKA Module Exams (23<sup>rd</sup> March) is FEBRUARY 10<sup>th</sup>. Application forms can be downloaded from the BBKA website & sent to Elaine Robinson with a cheque for £30 & she will record / send onto BBKA (Elaine Robinson, Middlefold Farm, Hebden Bridge HX7 7PG).
2. Study days are to be arranged later this year for Modules 4,5 and 8, to cover the remaining Modules, so all modules will have been covered in a 2 year period. Dates tba, though likely to run between October and Feb 2019/20. We need experienced beekeepers with good communication skills and knowledge on these subjects to help as tutors. Anyone who is prepared to come forward to help should contact Elaine ([education@ybka.org.uk](mailto:education@ybka.org.uk) or mobile 07734306895. **These courses are only possible with the help and support of tutors, who are willing to share their knowledge & help other, less experienced beekeepers**
3. There will be a WAX and CANDLE Day to be held in the Hives and Honey & YBKA Pavilions at the Great Yorkshire Showground over the weekend 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> May. This is a ONE-DAY course so you can book for EITHER Saturday or Sunday. Places will be allocated equally between the 2 associations. Tutors are John Chandler, Janice Fulton, Shirley and Richard Bond and Sarah Haynes. Please contact Roger Chappel (07905 190701) for further information/booking.
4. BBKA are also running General Husbandry training courses in 2019 in 3 locations (Sheffield, Stoneleigh and London), with limited places. See BBKA website.
5. A Mead and Melomels course will take place on September 14<sup>th</sup> in Harrogate run by Tony Jefferson and Dave Shannon. Applications to Roger Chappel.

Basic Assessments update from 2018

20 candidates achieved a Credit and 10 a Pass. A great result!

30 out of 31 beekeepers passed their exam, a 96% pass rate, in line with National figure of 95%

Top YBKA Associations for entries were:

Richmond 8; Bradford 6; Doncaster 4; Beverley 4; Leeds & Huddersfield 3

# YBKA Conference 2019 "A Taste of Honey" Schedule

**Saturday 6th April 2019 (08.30am to 4pm) at the Manor Academy, York, YO26 6PA**

**09.30-09.15 Registration and refreshments**

**09.15-09.30 Welcome and Introduction**

**09.30-09.45 Tony Jefferson, Jim and Geoff Pearson, Dave Shannon and Chris Coulson will explain how, where and when they will be running their workshops and drop-in clinics through the day**

**09.45-10.30 Dr Nicola Kay Simcock - Food for thought, the honeybee as a model animal for the study of physiology**

**10.30-11.00 Coffee break**

**11.00-11.45 Peter Lewis - The sensory analysis of honey**

**11.45-12.30 Tom Aspinall - Bumblebees and their ecology**

**12.30-13.45 Lunch**

**13.45-15.15 Workshops and discussion groups**

**Preparing bees for the heather - Tony Jefferson**

**Preparing honey exhibits for the show - Dave Shannon**

**Steam wax extraction - Chris Coulson**

**Selection of breeding stock - Jim Pearson**

**Skep making- Geoff Pearson**

**Asian Hornet trap construction – Committee members and NBU**

**15.15-15.30 Comfort break**

**15.30-16.00 Beekeepers' Question Time**



## Workshops

01.45pm-02.30pm

- 1a Tony Jefferson Preparing the bees for the heather - Main hall
- 2a Jim Pearson Can I improve my bees by selective breeding - Balcony
- 3a Dave Shannon Preparing honey exhibits for showing - Performing Arts Studio
- 4a Chris Coulson Reclaiming bees wax - Activity Studio

02.30pm-03.15pm

- 1b Tony Jefferson Preparing the bees for the heather - Main hall
- 2b Jim Pearson Can I improve my bees by selective breeding - Balcony
- 3b Dave Shannon Preparing honey exhibits for showing - Performing Arts Studio
- 4b Chris Coulson Reclaiming bees wax - Activity Studio

There will be on-going demonstrations and practical guidance on skep making (Geoff Pearson) and Asian Hornet trap construction (members of the committee and NBU) in the Main Concourse throughout the day

Please note that delegates will this year be able to book the workshops they wish to attend in advance but these will be allocated on a first-come-first-served basis so early booking is advised. Delegates should choose a reserve workshop for each session.

### Workshop Notes

**Tony Jefferson.** Tony has many years of experience keeping bees in the Whitby area. He has always specialised in the production of Heather Honey being surrounded by the moors over on the East coast. Year on year he produces tons of honey which is always in very high demand. Tony has written several books on this topic and regularly wins prestigious competitions with this high-quality honey and has recently qualified as a Senior Honey Show Judge. This is a workshop not to be missed and all bee keepers are sure to pick up numerous valuable tips which will help improve their honey production.

**Dave Shannon.** Dave is an extremely experienced bee keeper (Doncaster BKA) who has excelled in the art of producing honey products to the highest possible standards. He has held the role of Chief Honey Steward for the YBKA for many years and is a fully qualified Chief Honey Judge officiating in the various Honey Shows throughout the year. If you are keen to hear the strategy you need to adopt to stand a chance of getting the top accolades and the tips from one of the top judges in the country then you won't be disappointed.

**Jim Pearson.** Jim is an experienced bee-man and a master bee keeper. He has dedicated a great deal of time to the art of improving his bees (he claims to be in search of the 'perfect bee') and does this by precise selective breeding. His aim is to help other bee keepers breed good-natured and productive colonies and he will go in to minute detail looking at all the pros and cons. This is a practical workshop which will benefit all bee keepers.

**Chris Coulson.** For over 40 years Chris has been a 'DIY bee keeper', has written and talked extensively on the subject and has recently made a couple of videos on DIY techniques. Initially, he confesses, the DIY angle was for economic reasons but then environmental ones took over. He now uses as much reclaimed and recyclable material as possible, ranging from food tins to church pews, cooker parts to old pans! He has made his own foundation since he started bee keeping, hence his interest in reclaiming and recycling bees wax. His session will deal with these matters and he'll discuss the methods he has adopted, some successful others not! He has recently built a steam wax extractor which needs more thought. Over the years he has tried to improve his wax recycling but considers this an ongoing process. Feel free to bring your ideas and comments to the workshop.

**Geoff Pearson.** Geoff needs very little introduction, he is well known for his humour and relaxed style. This workshop, which demonstrates the skills needed to make your own skeps, also gives further insights into how the skill of basket weaving can assist the bee keeper.

01.45pm-02.30pm

Tony Jefferson (session A): Main hall (1a)  
Jim Pearson (session A): Balcony (2a)  
Dave Shannon (session A): Studio (3a)  
Chris Coulson (session A): Activity (4a)

02.30pm-03.15pm

Tony Jefferson (session B): Main hall (1b)  
Jim Pearson (session B): Balcony (2b)  
Dave Shannon (session B): Studio (3b)  
Chris Coulson (session B): Activity (4b)

Elaine Robinson, YBKA Education Officer has arranged 4 Module Study Days this Autumn to cover Modules 1, 2, 3 and 7 held in the Pavilion at Harrogate. The first was run in November 2018. 42 members attended from a cross section of Yorkshire associations. Feedback from the attendees was very positive, with members enjoying the opportunity to network with fellow bee keepers. The day was interactive, with great presentations and quizzes from Clare McGettighan, lots of information pitched at the right level, aimed at bee keepers with more than 1 years' experience. Whilst there was no obligation to sit an exam after attending the Study Day, many attendees felt Elaine gave good advice on exam techniques and how the Modules fit into the overall BBKA education curriculum

The remaining Study Day in February is featured on the YBKA website and already we have around 40 members per event, so just about at capacity. Roger Pool, David Shannon, Ivor Flatman, Derrie O'Sullivan, Wendy and Simon Maslin are all very experienced bee keepers and will be delivering the sessions: a big thank you to them.

For those members interested in applying for a Module Exam, these are held twice a year. 2019 dates are March 23rd and November 9th. Full application details can be found on the YBKA website under 'Education'.

### 2018/19 Winter Module Study Dates

Only 1 more session left

Are you thinking of taking any of the BBKA Module examinations, or currently studying for them?

The YBKA winter module tutorials are the ideal way to learn and study with a group of like-minded bee keepers.

Each tutorial will cover an overview of the syllabus, with an expert tutor, who will guide you through what is required within the module.

Held at the YBKA pavilion at the Yorkshire Event Centre, Harrogate, from 10am - 3pm

Saturday 9 February 2019 with Wendy and Simon Maslin - Module 7 Selection and Breeding of Honeybees

These tutorials are free and are a great way to learn together in informal surroundings. There is no obligation to take an exam.

To book a place please contact Elaine Robinson YBKA Education Officer: [education@ybka.org.uk](mailto:education@ybka.org.uk)

indicating the which Study Day(s) you'd like to book for and which Association you belong to

# Book the YBKA Spring conference

## online

## Click here

## January in the apiary

I would like to begin this New Year's edition of 'In the Apiary' by wishing all our members a very happy New Year. Here's hoping your bee keeping season ahead goes as planned, with great results and no mishaps! January is a quiet time in our apiaries, but there is still plenty to do and plans to make for the season ahead.

Our bees still need attention, whether in full or partial cluster (this dependent on the ambient temperature in you area).

The first thing we must remember is to keep a regular check on food supplies in each hive. The least intrusive way to do this, is by "hefting" the hive - lifting the hive from the rear to assess the overall weight. Beginners may need to seek help from a more experienced beekeeper to try this technique at first. It's not a time of year to disturb your bees too much. If colonies are low on supplies, then it is important to act quickly, but do **not** give liquid feed. Sugar fondant is used in the winter months. To apply fondant, you will need to use an eke: a 2" frame of timber with the same dimensions as your brood box. Remove the roof, any insulation, crown board and super (if you left one on top of the brood box). Fit the eke to provide space for a patty of fondant and one of pollen, if you wish, directly on top of the frames in the brood box. Replace everything removed and then leave undisturbed.

If your food supply is adequate, you can carefully check that your bees are fine. This is best done by removing the roof and insulation and looking down through the crown board hole(s) with a good LED torch to check for movement within the hive. That's it! If all is well, replace everything straight away.

Now there is just time (dependant on temperatures) to apply a dilute oxalic acid treatment via the trickle method. Traditionally, this was done as near as possible to the time of the Winter Solstice, as the queen's rate of lay would have reduced to a minimum, thus preventing a significant loss of brood when the procedure was performed. Treatment should be given when the outside temperature is no lower than 4C, but to be most effective, the bees should be clustered, rather than flying freely. The dilute mixture is applied at a rate of 5ml per seam of bees. There are various gadgets to help you administer the correct dose.

Regularly check that your hives are secure. You can place a heavy object on flat roofs to stop them blowing off in winter gales. Check your mouse guards are still in place and if you are in an area prone to woodpecker attacks, check that your "security netting" is still standing.

Repair and treat any spare hive boxes with a suitable preservative. You can paint the hives in use within the apiary on a dry, cold, day when your bees aren't flying. Block the entrance and apply a good coat of preservative to the exterior of the complete hive. Leave blocked whilst you do the next one. Remove the first block and continue like this for the rest of your hives. All done and protected for the season ahead!

If you are a new beekeeper, make sure your hive(s) are registered with BeeBase (<https://secure.fera.defra.gov.uk/beebase/public/register.cfm>) to ensure you receive updates of any diseases affecting colonies in your area and get timely updates of management issues, such as checking the need to feed your bees at times of forage dearth. If you are an established beekeeper, make sure your colony record on BeeBase is up to date.

Do try to attend to all these matters, before the February update!

Dave Shannon

## District Events for All

Yorkshire Beekeepers Association is made up of 21 district associations that run events through the year. Details are given below, of those associations holding events, who are happy to include visitors:

### **Richmond and District BKA 2019.**

We meet monthly, on Monday evenings at 7.30pm at Richmond Golf Club: [Web site here](#).

#### Winter Programme

- Mon 7 Jan Ian Glastonbury - Top bar Hives
- Mon 4 Feb Louisa & Michael Ells - Our First Year
- Mon 4 March Gerry Collins - Selection and Queen Rearing for the Hobbyist Beekeeper
- Mon 1 April Mike Samworth - Using Microscopes for Beekeepers

### **Beverley BKA 2019:**

Winter meetings held at The Darby and Joan Hall, Finkle Street, Cottingham, HU16 4AZ.

Meetings start at 7.30pm and run until about 9:30 pm. We have a refreshment break and raffle.

- No Meeting in January 2019
- Monday Feb 4th - Hull Allergy Unit
- Monday Mar 4th - An Introduction to Bee-Watching, Dr Africa Gomez
- Monday Apr 1st - An update on the Flow Hive and the Bentley Hive, John Tunnicliffe

## Halifax and District BKA 2019 Events Calendar

Please note: **all winter meetings** start at 7.30pm at St Paul's Methodist Church, Sowerby Bridge, Halifax. HX6 2EQ

HBKA **summer meetings** have venue directions or a contact telephone number.

Wednesday 9th January - Beekeeping using several different types of hive. A series of short talks by Association Members

Saturday 26th January 10.00am until 3-30pm - Joint Microscopy session with Huddersfield BKA, St Pauls Methodist Church, Sowerby Bridge. A pie and pea lunch will be served. Please book

Wednesday 13th Feb 2019 - The Asian Hornet lifecycle, reproduction and nesting sites, and how to protect our bees. A talk by Kirsty Stainton, NBU

Wednesday 13th March - Preparing Heather, Rape and other Special Honeys, A talk by Dave Shannon

Wed 20th March to Wed 1st May - HBKA Beginners' Course – 7 weeks 7.30 - 9.30

(Price - £75), Good Shepherd RC Church, Cragg Vale, Mytholmroyd, HX7 5EA, Phil Gee – Tel: 01422 886114

Wednesday 10th April 2019 - "Simple Methods of Making Increase" - Making new colonies and raising queens without fancy methods. A talk by Wally Shaw, Anglesey BKA (A joint meeting with Huddersfield BKA)

Saturday 27th April 2019 - Joint Nosema Screening Day with Huddersfield BKA, Bring your own bee samples for testing. Taylor Hill Centre, Close Hill Lane, Huddersfield HD4 6LE.

Saturday 11th May HBKA - HBKA Auction with Mike Joyce, Brickhill Farm, Scholes, Cleckheaton, BD19 6LY. Tel: 01274 869644

Saturday 1st June - Preparation for Basic Assessment, Redacre Barn, Westfield Terrace, Mytholmroyd, HX7 5DQ

Saturday 15th June - HBKA Social and BBQ Lunch 1pm - 4pm (Speaker to be confirmed.) Brickhills Farm, Scholes, Cleckheaton, BD19 6LY. Tel: 01274 869644

Saturday 29th June - Basic Assessments, HBKA Association Apiary, Church Lane, Southowram

Saturday 13th July 2pm - Garden and Apiary Visit, Also "Heathers and Honey" – A talk by Tony Jefferson, Middle Fold Farm, Edge Lane, Hebden Bridge, HX7 7PG

Saturday 10th August - Halifax Show and Honey Show

Saturday 17th August 2.00pm - Apiary Visit, Also "Bees and Human Health" – A talk by Alan Brook

Saturday 14th September 2pm, Honey Extraction, Dianne and Jeff Gill Tel: 01422 367003

Wednesday 9th October - HBKA AGM

Saturday 26th October 10.00—12.00 Beginners and Mentors Review (Followed by lunch at the Hinchcliffe Arms Woodland View, Cragg Vale Halifax HX7 5TB. Tel: 01422 886114

Wednesday 13th November - "Research into hive activity and lessons learned" A talk by Jane Mossley, Eat Natural – Pollination

If your Association is running an event and is happy for members of other districts to attend, please e-mail details to me at: [newsletter@ybka.org.uk](mailto:newsletter@ybka.org.uk) and I will make sure it is included in the next issue

**Book the YBKA Spring conference**  
**online**

**Click here**

## Science Behind Bee Keeping

Genome published of the small hive beetle, a major honey bee parasite.

Beekeepers and researchers will welcome the unveiling of the small hive beetle's genome by scientists. The small hive beetle (SHB) is a major parasite problem of honey bees for which there are few effective treatments.

Completing the SHB genome takes on even more importance when you realize that among the SHB's close relatives are the destructive and invasive Asian long horned beetle. [Click here for full article.](#)

Stronger pesticide regulations likely needed to protect all bee species, say studies

Regulators worldwide currently use honeybees as the sole model species failing to account for potential threats posed by agrochemicals to the full diversity of bee species from bumblebees to solitary bees, which are probably more important for pollination of food crops than managed honeybees. They are potentially more vulnerable to pesticides given they nest in the ground and bumblebee queens have different life cycles that could increase exposure. [Click here for full article.](#)

Bee gene study sheds light on risks to hives

Efforts to protect the UK's native honey bees could be helped by research that maps their entire genetic make-up. [Click here for full article.](#)

## Asian Hornet Sightings

Asian Hornet sighted this last month and confirmed in three places by the NBU.

In Fowey, Cornwall a nest has been destroyed and two new sightings confirmed in Liskeard and Hull

THE BBKA IS URGING ITS MEMBERS TO ACT NOW IN ORDER TO HELP THE GOVERNMENT IN THE DETECTION OF ASIAN HORNETS

Defra has issued new advice that all beekeepers in areas of the country where there are no Asian Hornets at the moment should set out MONITORING traps for Asian Hornets baited with meat or fish

[For an NBU guide on how to make a trap, click here \(PDF document\)](#)

[For an NBU video guide on how to make an Asian hornet trap, click here \(you tube video\)](#)

[Government news article here. UK sightings in 2018](#)

[An excellent online article here by an Englishman in France who talks about his initial losses and his defence tactics which include stand skirts, muzzles and an electrified fly bat. Full article here.](#)

# YBKA Spring Conference

[Book online here or fill in the application form below.](#)



ANNUAL CONFERENCE (April 6<sup>th</sup>, 2019)

Application Form (Cost: £10 per person + optional buffet)

|                      |  |
|----------------------|--|
| Full Name            |  |
| District/Association |  |
| Address              |  |
| Postcode             |  |
| Telephone(s)         |  |
| Email address        |  |

#### LUNCH PREFERENCE

Own Packed Lunch (no additional charge)

Cold Buffet (£10)

#### WORKSHOPS

|                         |  |                         |  |
|-------------------------|--|-------------------------|--|
| Session A (1.45 – 2.30) |  | Session B (2.30 – 3.15) |  |
| Session A (Reserve):    |  | Session B (Reserve):    |  |

To book: either visit the YBKA website [www.ybka.org.uk](http://www.ybka.org.uk) and book on-line, send a cheque (payable to Yorkshire Beekeepers Association) for £10/£20 to the YBKA secretary (Roger Chappel) :4, South View, Brafferton DLI 3LB  
or pay by card over the 'phone:  
01325 315741/07905 190701.

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# Natural Bee Husbandry



On its 3rd year, currently on issue 9, a great magazine about the modern conservation of bees and the use of natural beekeeping methods.

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\*UK Subscriptions only. Valid until 31 May 2018

## Classified Adverts

Do you have anything for sale, if so please email [newsletter@ybka.org.uk](mailto:newsletter@ybka.org.uk) the editor for a free sales listing:

**9 frame stainless Steel extractor with large German motor. The extractor is spotless and like new. I kept the manual bits but the motor was bought and retro fitted, it's a German motor. Like new £500 or best offer.**

**Stainless steel and Cast Iron Mountain Grey Heather press, £150**

**Can deliver to Harrogate or YBKA Spring Convention or can be picked up at Redcar**

**Contact Vera Rider, email: [vera.rider@gmail.com](mailto:vera.rider@gmail.com) / Tel:07828 199 739**

Don't forget that Maisemore, Thornes and Paynes all have their respective sales in January 2019. Selling woodwork and poly equipment. All are well worth a look.



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# Committee

| Position  | Name              | Contact Information  |
|---|-------------------|--|
| Chairman<br>School Days Organiser<br>Area Rep: Halifax, Huddersfield, Wakefield & Pontefract      | Phil Gee          | pjgphilgee@btinternet.com<br>01422 886114 / 07769 650059       |
| Vice Chair<br>General Secretary<br>Area Rep: Northallerton, Thirsk, Darlington, Richmond, Ryedale | Roger Chappel     | yorkshirebka@gmail.com<br>01325 315741 / 07905 190701          |
| Treasurer   | Norbert cooper    | norbert.cooper@btinternet.com<br>01937 834 809 / 07957 404 047 |
| Education Officer<br>Area rep: Beverley   | Elaine Robinson   | education@ybka.org.uk  |
| Webmaster<br>Area rep: Bradford   | David Lamont      | davidlamont431@btinternet.com<br>01274 619787 / 07968 817153   |
| Honey Show Chief Steward  | Mark Millard      | mark.millard@yahoo.co.uk<br>01924 271 203 / 07497 429 646      |
| Bee Health Liaison Officer<br>Area rep: Barnsley  | Ivor Flatman      | ivor.flatman@homecall.co.uk<br>01924 257089 / 07751 061 753    |
| Newsletter Editor   | Chris Barlow      | newsletter@ybka.org.uk<br>07849 150 837                        |
| Equipment/Resources Officer<br>Area Reps<br>Leeds   | Derrie O'Sullivan | derrie@ntlworld.com<br>07801 953 145                           |
| Rotherham   | Kirit Gordhandas  | ybkarep@leedsbeekeepers.org.uk                                 |
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| York & Malton   | Dave Shannon      | 01302 772837 / 07907 856515                                    |
| Airedale & Scarborough  | Vicki Leaf        | vicki@glade-farm.co.uk<br>07847 327 861                        |
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|   | Tony Jefferson    | stoneleabees@yahoo.co.uk<br>07749 731945                       |

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## YBKA Calendar of events

Friday 11th January: GPC Meeting (Harrogate) 6pm

Saturday 12th January – Module 3 Tutorials 10am till 3pm (Harrogate)

Saturday 12th January: BBKA ADM (10.30 am) Kenilworth

Saturday 9th February – Module 7 Tutorials 10am till 3pm (Harrogate)

Saturday 23th February: Delegates Conference (Harrogate) 10am

Saturday 23rd March: BBKA Module Examinations.

Saturday 6th April: YBKA ANNUAL CONFERENCE (YORK)

12th, 13th & 14th April: BBKA Spring Convention (Harper Adams)

Friday 26th April: GPC Meeting (Harrogate) 6pm

June 4th/5th: YAS Schools' Days

July 9th – 11th: Great Yorkshire Show (Harrogate) – Helpers always welcome and required at the YBKA display

Friday 19th July: GPC Meeting (Harrogate) 6pm

Saturday, 14th Sept: Mead Workshop (Harrogate)

Friday 4th October: GPC Meeting (Harrogate) 6pm

(Proposed) Sunday 6th October: Study Day

October 19th/20th: Countryside Live & YBKA Honey Show (Harrogate)

October 24th – 26th: National Honey Show

(Proposed) Saturday 2nd November: Study Day

Friday 8th November: GPC Meeting (Harrogate) 6pm

(Proposed) Saturday 9th November: Module Exams (Harrogate)

Saturday 30th November: AGM 10am (Harrogate)

(Proposed) Saturday, 7th December: Study Day.

### BBKA Forum

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## Obituary

### Allan Campbell Jefferson

Stonelea Apiary

1 Dale House Bank

Staites

Saltburn

Cleveland

TS13 5AN



Date of Birth: 6th June 1934

Died: 23rd December 2018

Allan Jefferson was born and raised in the North Yorkshire village of Hinderwell and has lived in the Hinderwell Parish all of his life. His only period of living outside the area was during his period of National Service with the Royal Engineers from 1955 to 1957 where he served in the rank of Corporal.

Beekeeping was a constant part of his life from an early age when he used to assist his Great Uncle Harry. Uncle Harry was also the gardener of the local Rector of St Hilda's Church in Hinderwell village. During this period the Church also played an important part in his early life, he was a choirboy up to his period of National Service commencing. The Jefferson family have enjoyed a long relationship with St Hilda's Church where one of the main stained-glass windows at the front of the church bears a dedication to the Jefferson family.

Whilst at the parish junior school the then Headmaster Mr Jack Milburn used to encourage the young lads to assist him with his beekeeping. An after-school club was formed and a number of them would be taken under his wing to carry out various beekeeping manipulations in the headmaster's back garden. Sadly, the building is no longer used as a school but still exists in the village as a community centre. If you closely inspect one of the main classroom windows there is still evidence of where Mr Milburn used to maintain an observation hive on the window sill with the bees flying from a hole in the wooden window frame, the bees would then fly in & out directly above the school playground.

Allan's first colony of bees was obtained at the age of 13 when he acquired a prime swarm of bees from an elderly and experienced beekeeper living in the nearby village of Kettlewell. Around the time (1947) obtaining bees was actually quite difficult due to the problems with beekeeping caused by the then titled "Isle of Wight Disease" The bees obtained were classed as the Dark European honeybee (*Apis Mellifera Mellifera*) and this is where his desire to maintain the Dark bee commenced, all beekeeping effort was based around maintaining the characteristics, and explaining the benefits of the Dark European honeybee.

He often told the story about going to collect his first swarm, travelling from Hinderwell to East Barnby, about 5 miles by bus and then walking the 2 miles to Kettleless, collecting the swarm in a cardboard box, covering it with a sheet and then walking back to the bus stop to catch the bus back again. What is surprising is that the conductress was not even surprised when a lad of 13 got on the bus carrying his home-made bee veil and a cardboard box of bees with a few escaping from beneath the folds of the sheet.

Allan and his beekeeping friends from school maintained a number of colonies together, under his headmaster's guidance. His friends were from farming background which made it easy to obtain locations to site beehives. The band of friends maintains their interest as beekeepers today.

When he returned home from National Service (in 1957) he decided to join the local beekeeping group; the Whitby and District Beekeeping Association. Within a very short period of time his youthful enthusiasm and organisational skills were recognised and he was invited to take up a position on the committee. His first appointment was as Treasurer (14years), then as General Secretary (16years), then as Chairman (17years) and currently Vice-President (4years). Lord Normanby is the current President of WBKA.

In 1992 ITV were on the lookout for an enthusiastic beekeeper to produce a series of programmes featuring local notable characters, Allan was selected over a number of semi-commercial beekeepers in Yorkshire to be featured in the TV documentary, "The Dales Diary", narrated by Luke Casey. The filming process followed the build-up of honey bee colonies in readiness for the August heather honey flow and the subsequent harvesting and bottling of the honey in preparation for the point of sale. His beekeeping commitment and enthusiasm was obvious to all, making the TV episodes a success, all serving to enhance the reputation of beekeeping using native / local bees and especially local heather honey for its quality and flavour.

Throughout all his beekeeping activities he was always keen to offer his services in any capacity mainly as lecturer or demonstrator at meetings or as a honey judge at any local show. Allan specialised in "simple / no queen excluder beekeeping" and was been responsible for many new beekeepers taking up the craft in the area. Many of his demonstrations resulted in him throwing Queen Excluders over the fence in Frisbee fashion, followed by a long rant about why use the dammed things. He was always keen to offer help and assistance. In 1996 Allan was elected by Whitby Beekeepers to serve as representative on the Yorkshire Beekeepers Executive Committee, around the same time he was also presented with a Yorkshire Beekeepers Certificate of Merit for his services to local beekeeping.

In 1998 he was elected to the position of Yorkshire Beekeepers Association Chairman for a 3-year period. He also served as the YBKA delegate to the British Beekeepers Association for a period of 6 years. Due to ill health mostly concerned with a fall from scaffolding whilst assisting his Grandson house building activities, which exacerbated his knee problems he stepped down from these positions from 2004 onwards passing the work down to his youngest Son (Tony).

In 2002 Allan's work at local, district and national level was recognised with the award of Honorary Life Membership of Yorkshire Beekeepers Association. One of the main contributions to this prestigious award was for the work carried out to assist the establishment the YBKA pavilion at the Great Yorkshire Showground in Harrogate.

The Normanby Pavilion as it is now known, has proven to be a great asset to YBKA, a measure of its success led to the requirement to double it in size, which was completed in 2007.

The work carried out by a committed group of beekeepers to establish the Normanby Pavilion was one of the reasons Lord and Lady Gisborough proposed Allan should be recognised for his beekeeping services, resulting in him being invited to attend the Queen's Garden party at Buckingham Palace, for him this was quite a proud day.

Up until he fell on Christmas day and broke his hip, he continued a semi-commercial operation maintaining up to 140 colonies but with most of the general and lifting duties carried out by his Son and Grandson, but still managed to issue 'instructions'.

Inspection of the Whitby Association meeting records indicates that he had demonstrated and hosted meetings at one of his apiaries for a continuous period from 1962. He attended the British Beekeepers Association Spring field day and the National Honey Show regularly.

In 1992 Whitby & District Beekeepers hosted the Yorkshire Spring field day at Mulgrave Castle near Whitby, the home of the present Marquis of Normanby. Allan made the extensive arrangements with close discussion and assistance of the Dowager Lady Normanby. The number of people attending the field day is still a record with an attendance of 423 beekeepers and families, contributing to one of the finest field days to be held.

Supporting honey shows formed a large part of his beekeeping activities at local, county and national levels. Maintaining a glass sided observation hive throughout the summer months proven important to provide information and education to the general public.

In the mid 1960's the National Honey Show became a focus for his attentions and in 1967 he won his first major award. Many of the trophies at the National Show contain engravings of the Jefferson name. Notably in 2006 the top award for heather honey was added to the list. Apimondia in Dublin in 2006 was also entered with success in two classes, the prize cards are displayed with great pride.

## Summary

Allan Campbell Jefferson was widely known and recognised by the Stonelea Apiary branding he contributed 70 years of beekeeping experience, right until the end he was still firmly at the helm of the activity assisted by his Son, Tony and Grandson, Richard continuing the craft. Collectively a total of 130 years of Jefferson family beekeeping activity exists – all aspects of the beekeeping work are still strictly organised to Allan's methods and practices.

He was widely known throughout the country for his simple, good husbandry no-nonsense methods of beekeeping, still attending meetings and contributing to lecturing, demonstrating and providing practical help and assistance.

His committee work for Whitby Beekeepers had been continuous for 60 years

He was a Yorkshire Beekeepers Association committee member for 45 years.

## Allan Campbell Jefferson

6th June 1934 - 23rd December 2018



# BBKA Module Exams Deadline

The deadline for submission of applications for the BKA Module Exams (23<sup>rd</sup> March) is FEBRUARY 10<sup>th</sup>.

Application forms can be downloaded from the BBKA website

[Click Here](#)

And sent to Elaine Robinson with a cheque for £30

Elaine will record and send on to the BBKA

Address: Elaine Robinson, Middlefold Farm, Hebden Bridge HX7 7PG).

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