

SWANSEA & DISTRICT BEEKEEPERS' SOCIETY

Minutes of Annual General Meeting

Minutes for the Annual General Meeting of the Society which was held at Gowerton Conservative Club at 7.00 pm on Tuesday 10th February 2015

AGENDA

1. Welcome:
2. Apologies for absence: Paul Lyons, Gill Lyons, Hilary Rose, Elaine Gale, Sophie Henson, Ali Reeve, Richard Salkilld, Claire Miller, Robert Jones, Martin Davies

Present: : Ian Algie, Gerti Axtmann, Jeff Booth, Adrian & Miriam Bowen, Jonathan Bowen, Chris Bown, Simon Bromham & Tracey Prosser, Julian & Marilyn Caruana, Geoffrey Corbett, Russell Davies, Stephen Davies & Nicola Oulton, Dexter & Jackie Ford, John Gale, Michael Grinter, Joan Power, Ian Roberts & Stephen Greenslade, David & Jean Salkilld, Karen Squires, Eric Thomas

In Attendance: Rod & Max Sewter (from E.Carmarthenshire)

3. To approve Minutes of AGM held on Tuesday, 11th Feb. 2014

The minutes are a true representation of the previous meeting

Proposed: Eric Thomas

Seconded: Ian Algie

Carried:

4. Matters arising from the minutes:

Nothing arising from previous minutes.

5. To receive reports from:

I. Chairman: This will be my last Chairman's Report as, I'm sure you're all aware, I am standing down from the post and would like to take this opportunity to say a big 'Thank You' to all members who have helped through the years to make the Society such a success.

For the past five or six years, adverse weather has been against beekeepers in Wales so I am glad to report that we had a good summer at last, with many hours of sunshine, which enabled the bees to get out to the

plentiful forage. A number of people have told me that 2014 gave the best yield of honey they have ever had.

In 2014, things went well in the Society and I will mention just a few of them. Please forgive me if I don't mention everyone by name, there are just too many to do so.

The Apiary

This past year the Apiary, under the watchful eye of the Apiary Management team led by Stephen Davies, has gone from strength to strength. For the first time it produced a surplus of honey, 120 lb, which was sold to Llys Nini and bought from their shop almost as fast as Steve could deliver it. Also a number of nucs were produced by the team and sold to members of the Beginners' Class. I understand that 7 colonies are looking good and will be going into next season.

The apiary also saw a number of 'Taster Days' being run which introduced people to the craft of beekeeping.

The Bee Tent

In 2014 there were again 5 outings for the Bee Tent namely: the RWAS Spring Fair in May, the Wales Game Fair in June, the Bridgend Show in July, The Gower Show and the Vale of Glamorgan Show, both in August. The team, led by Julian Caruana, enthralled the public with the display which encouraged a number of people to join our beginners' classes.

The Education Group

The classes were again held at Pontarddulais Comp, moving out to the Apiary as soon as the weather permitted. The Education team, led by Nicola Oulton, taught a number of people who have since gone on to get colonies and become beekeepers in their own right. Three Swarm Class sessions and a Disease Recognition workshop were also held at the school. This year Nicola Oulton and Steve Davies passed the Microscopy module exam, with Stephen also passing module 7 'Selection & Breeding of Honey Bees' and module 8 'Honey Bee management Health and History', this year ahead I have been told 12 people are taking the Basic Assessment.

The Gower Show

Our premier show of the year at Penrice Castle again saw us in our own marquee, thanks to the efforts of the team, led by Gill Lyons, who persuaded the Gower Agricultural Committee that we were worthy of the privilege. Indeed, many visitors to the show told us that ours was indeed the best tent in the show. In 2014, a new class was introduced in the schedule, the 'Novices Class', aimed at encouraging beginners to show their honey for the first time and in that, it was very successful. It was wonderful to see the reaction of people who managed to win a prize card for the first time, the joy on their faces made it all worthwhile.

Society Events

The Con Club meetings have gone from strength to strength, often with talks on the second Tuesday of the month including some fun things like the Society Honey Show and How to Make Wax Flowers. Other events were a Nosema Check evening and a Wax Day at Hilary & Mike Rose's house.

The Christmas Dinner at the Greyhound was well attended and the raffle prize of a turkey, donated by Ian Roberts, was won by Tom Davis's daughter, Jane.

My thanks go to Committee members who have helped steer the Society and to those who have volunteered their help through the year. Without you, this Society could not exist. And now, I would like to wish my successor as Chairman, all the best in the task and offer my help, if required, in any way that I can.

David Salkilld

II. Secretary; Firstly I would like to mention our outgoing Chairman. I first joined in 2001 when I did the beginners course with David.

The Newsletter was distributed by Royal Mail as was other communication. Luckily there were less than 35 members. David kept doing the beginners class which is now being led by our Education Officer and the total Membership is up at about a 100 each year. I'm quite sure if it was not for David's efforts we would have not had a growing Society. Both David and I were able to cover all of the WBKA and MSWCC Meetings. It has been a delight working with David and I look forward to continuing to work with him.

It has been another busy year with the general public contacting me about bees, members having problems with the temperament of their bees, redoing the Constitution and over the past six weeks doing the membership renewals.

The general public contacted me about swarms and provided they were accessible, I'd send an email out to everyone. If the bees were inaccessible, I pointed them in the right direction to get their problems sorted out.

This year was the first year that I have had problems with the 'June Gap' and my bees and some other people's bees became anti-social. The 'June Gap' is when there is a break in the forage that the bees can feed on and in my case, it meant that they were dive bombing anyone who went out in the garden. Like other people who had a problem, I had to move my bees.

This brings me to the native bee project on Gower and the bees I would like to have – steady, consistent, less likely to swarm and nice to work with just to name a few traits. I want to draw people into this project.

Apart from the 'June Gap' and if people had been able to stop their bees from swarming, many people had a good crop of honey this year.

The WBKA has seen the Chairman, Secretary and Editor step down this year. They also have a problem with minutes coming out weeks after the meetings. I'm not sure what is going on.

The MSWCC had an excellent Convention at Pershore and it has got problems with some counties not being able to run it, however, the next one will be at Cirencester in 2015 followed by us in 2016.

Redoing the constitution has been a challenge. The present version isn't perfect, but what we will be doing is to pass it through in its present version and look at it again in the future.

Although our membership goes from the 1st Jan to the 31st Dec in a year, by the cut-off date of the 25th Jan, less than half had re-joined by this date. We are now up to over 80 members.

III. Treasurer; I am pleased to present the Annual Accounts for the year ended 31st December 2014. These have been audited by Roger Thomas, Chartered Certified Accountant.

These Accounts have been circulated to all of our membership by email in what I call a "one-sheet summary". Should you wish to see the breakdown of the figures please let me know and I can email the full 3-page edition which goes into more detail.

2014 was a successful year. The income exceeded the costs by over £1000. The weather was better than in the last few years. The Class was well attended, The Bee Tent continued in popularity – although the individual donations were disappointing – but this is to be discussed by the Committee. The sales of honey were better – which reflects on the happiness of the bees and the weather; and this also resulted in the Apiary being able to offer honey to Llys Nini for sale under their label. Of course, this has already been mentioned by our Chairman, David Salkilld.

Of course success requires costs. The only sum that may require some clarification relates to the Apiary. It is expanding and needed additional

equipment, such as the 5 hives required. This Apiary is a great asset to our Society. Not only does it act as an addition to the Class but it is a benefit to ALL members. Some may appreciate it to extend their knowledge (no-one can claim they know everything about beekeeping, you can always pick up tips/useful wisdom), others may be able to assist by demonstrating to new beekeepers). I am probably one of the worst to say this but I would recommend it to ALL members. Visit it, see what is going on, participate..

It is the duty of the Treasurer to present the Accounts to Members but the substance, having been audited, is beyond question. It is unusual at an AGM to answer questions but I am willing to break this convention and answer short queries on content.

Oh!, as a Footnote:

There is one small piece of useless information I will share with you.

In spite of all that has happened in the last 4 years – the introduction of the Bee tent, the apiary, grants received, etcetera – The difference between the current account opening balance on 1st January 2011 and the closing balance on 31st December 2014 is a decrease of £84.75

Acceptance of accounts Proposed Adrian Bowen

Seconded Julian Caruana

Carried

Please see pages 9 &10 for one page summary of accounts. To see full breakdown of accounts for the year contact John Gale.

6. Election of Officers for 2015:

Jean Salkildd nominated Nicola Oulton for the position of Chair

Seconded by Jackie Ford

Carried

As Nicola Oulton was minuting the meeting she asked if David Salkildd would remain in the seat to the end of the meeting, David Salkildd agreed.

Gerti Axtmann nominated Stephen Davies for the position of Vice-chair

Seconded by John Gale

Carried

Paul Lyons has stated he is happy to continue in position of Secretary
Adrian Bowen has nominated Julian Caruana for the position of Secretary

Jean Salkilld commented that in committee it had been discussed that Treasurer and Secretary should be consistent and 12 people had voted on that.

Eric Thomas asked if we could clarify that the position was open for nominations.

As stated in the constitution it is up to the members to put forward candidates for the position of officers each year.

David Salkilld then said there would be a ballot and for each member to put either P or J on the paper supplied which John Gale would then collect.

Adrian Bowen said Paul Lyons has worked very hard for the society but over the last few years he has complained that he hasn't had time for his own bees due to the demands of the post.

Nicola Oulton commented that Paul Lyons was not available to answer those comments.

The count

Julian Caruana 13

Paul Lyons 11

Therefore Julian Caruana has been elected secretary.

Dave Salkilld thanked Paul Lyons for the hard work that he had done in the post for over ten years.

Julian Caruana thanked the members for the position having only been the society for three years, and thanked Paul for his hard work.

John Gale said he was not standing down as Treasurer. No-one standing against. John Gale remains the elected treasurer.

7. Election of Honorary Members:

Tom Davies and Margaret Charles

Tom Davies will be seen each year at the Gower Show and writes regularly for the newsletter.

Proposed David Salkilld
Seconded Nicola Oulton
Carried

8. Setting Membership fees for 2016:

John Gale recommends that the membership fee remains the same as it has changed this year. The society is not short of funds and there is no need to raise membership each year.

Proposed John Gale
Seconded Mike Grinter
Carried

9. Confirmation of affiliations to WBKA & MSWCC & election of delegates:

Julian Caruana queried the need to vote on this as it is in Constitution that we are affiliated.

Proposed Julian Caruana
Seconded Chris Bown
Carried

Delegates for WBKA and MSWCC;
The delegates attend the three WBKA meetings a year and the one MSWCC meeting. Any decisions that need to be made are brought back to committee where a decision is made and the delegate takes the committees decision back. There is very little to be done for WBKA but more with the MSWCC. The delegates can vote, but though others can go as friends they are unable to vote. The delegate does not need to be a committee member as any member can be co-opted to positions. David Salkilld felt that it would be good to have someone new attend the meetings.

It is proposed that David Salkilld and Paul Lyons remain in post of delegate by Mike Grinter
Seconded by Julian Caruana
Mike Grinter and Gerti Axtmann will attend as friends this year
Carried

10. Ratification of Constitution update:

Updating of the constitution fell to Julian Caruana, John Gale, Paul Lyons and David Salkildd, which has been a difficult task. The matter arose after the AGM 2014 was held on a Tuesday rather than a Saturday as stated in the constitution. It is about 95% done and just needs a bit of 'tweaking' during the coming year.

Adrian Bowen asked for clarification of section 4 "member is anyone who has beekeeping as a hobby". When members sell honey and bees etc. are they precluded from being a member?

David Salkildd clarified that unless a member is a bee farmer with 400 colonies then they are hobbyists.

Proposed Adrian Bowen
Seconded Mike Grinter
Carried

11. Any other business:

Eric Thomas nominated David Salkildd for life membership of the Society. David Salkildd thanked him but commented that only Committee can confirm that.

As all Committee present they voted in favour of David Salkildd having Life Membership of the society.

David Salkildd asked if newsletter stories and photos could be forwarded to him.

Adrian Bowen has been approached by Pontarddulais Classic Car Show for the bee tent, this will be taken to committee. Jean Salkildd asked who Bee tent matters would be taken to. David Salkildd said that it would still be Julian Caruana as committee members can hold two posts as Nicola Oulton is Education Secretary and Chairman. Julian Caruana said that this would be discussed at Committee.

Committee members.
No-one wishes to stand down
No-one new wishes to stand for committee
Proposed Eric Thomas
Seconded Jean Salkildd
Carried

12. Date of next AGM: Tuesday 9th February 2016

Officers Elected at the AGM 2015

President Margaret Charles

Officers:-

Treasurer John Gale

Chairman Nicola Oulton

Secretary Julian Caruana

Vice Chairman Stephen Davies

Committee members: (includes Secretary, Treasurer, Chairman & Vice Chairman)
Ian Algie, Chris Bown, David Salkilld, Jean Salkilld, Paul Lyons, Gill Lyons,
Dexter Ford, Jackie Ford, Gerti Axtmann.

Sub-committee to be decided at March committee meeting

Bee Tent Manager: Julian Caruana

Membership Sec: Julian Caruana & John Gale

Education Officer: Nicola Oulton

Apiary Manager: Stephen Davies

Newsletter Editor: David Salkilld

Events Secretary: Jean Salkild

Gower Show Sec: Gill Lyons

Website: Selina Taylor

Honorary Librarian: Paul Lyons

Spray Liaison Officer: Paul Lyons

