

# BEEBIZ FEBRUARY 2022

The Newsletter of the Northern Rivers Amateur Beekeeping Association Inc.

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## **February Activity 6<sup>th</sup> March 2022**

The next field day will be on Sunday 6<sup>th</sup> March at the farm of Colin Purkis, 446 Gwynne Road, Georgica. Colin has an assortment of hives, including Langstroth hives, a flow hive and horizontal Langstroth hives. It is a great opportunity to see the features of these hives, and to hear about their performance. The flow hive will be tapped. There will be a special section for beginners to work on a hive.

Jiggi/Georgica is a beautiful area, and the opportunity to visit a custard apple farm in good company does not come around that often. So come along, as we recover from the COVID blues!

Bring your beekeeping gear. The club will provide sterilised hive tools and gloves for the demonstrators.

The day will commence at 9.30 am with a welcome by the President, and morning tea, and the beekeeping activities will start at 10.30 am. Lunch of sausages and salad will be served at about 12.30 pm, and the raffle will be held before the end of the day at 1.30pm.

All attendees are asked to bring either a morning tea item or a salad for lunch. As a guide, bring enough for twice the size of your group. Male beekeepers in particular note, we need more salads! Lunch will cost \$5. In the past, the club has always relied on lunch payments and the raffle to provide funds for the operation of the club. So raffle items are always appreciated. Raffle tickets will cost \$2, and you could win big.

So, remember to bring

- Salads/morning tea
- Raffle items, such as vegetables, bee gear, jam, potplants etc
- Chairs
- Nametags

### **Directions**

Property is at Jiggi. From Lismore, take the Nimbin Road, take the left turn to Jiggi at Goolmangar General Store, and dodge the potholes as best you can. Pass Jiggi Public School on left, turn left into Gwynne Road (still with potholes), proceed for a km or two until the end of the bitumen, and continue on the gravel ( more potholes) until you see 446 Gwynne Road on the right after a dogleg ( it should be 4.46 km from where you turned into Gwynne Road).

Look for the bee signs.

The driveway can get slippery. The space immediately to the left of the chookpen is for two wheel drive vehicles. Four wheel drives should go past the house and park on the lawn to the left.

Please be considerate when you park.

## **President Report**

Hi! Folks,

The new look committee has met and after some robust debate some new ideas were formulated for the club going forward. All going well a field day will be held at Jiggi. Further details will be included in this newsletter. With covid health restrictions easing I'm urging all our members to make the effort to attend this our first field day for some time. I believe that our host has some interesting hives to show us and hopefully the gods will shine on us weather wise.

I have found it a rather trying period in the apiary. I think we have had approximately 90 rainy days out of 100 days in the past 3 months which doesn't leave many fine days for wrangling bees and those hives without sufficient stores of honey are struggling without supplementary feeding. That's all for now folks, Hope to see you at Jiggi.

Cheers Kevin.

## **Secretary Report**

It looks like the paralysis that set in during the pandemic has been cured. We are arranging a field day at Jiggi, and I urge all members to attend. These field days are an important tool in educating people to become skilled beekeepers. You will only learn a little of what you need to know by attending courses.

Brian



### **From the Hives**

The hives have had all the honey above the excluder extracted, and been moved as brood boxes plus one empty honey super from Bungawalbyn to a tea-tree site at Coraki. Unfortunately, the move came too late to catch the first flowering of the broad leaved tea tree, (picture *melaleuca quinquinervia*) but the trees are in the middle of the second flowering now. This tree gives good honey supplies and is a highly rated source of nutritious pollen. It was clear out at Bungawalbyn that the bees were bringing in very little pollen.

Brian

## **Flowering Report**

Unfortunately, our flowering report writer is still unable to get around to see what is flowering. Geoff is progressing well, and has basically moved from his wheelie-walker to a walking stick. A fractured hip takes a while to heal.

There are lots of flowering melaleucas, a very good tree for beekeepers.

Brian

## **Beginner Lessons**

Remember that the club is still offering to give beginners an introductory session on a beehive to get them started. Contact the secretary, or a helpful member near you.



## Donated Hives

The two hives donated by Garon of Lismore have gone to beginner beekeepers Jeremy Melder of Mullimbimby, and Adri Mueller of Cawongla. They looked like very calm stock, and excellent for a new beekeeper. The photo came from Adri; my reaction was I wonder how long the cat will be parading around there!

Brian

## History of Beekeeping in Our Area Part 2

*(Geoff Manning has contributed an article about the development of beekeeping in our area-- Ed.)*

We left off the history lesson mentioning the Tableland beekeepers. As soon as Lorries were large enough the Tableland boys were coming down to the heathland for winter, unless there was a winter flow at home. Like the locals they would then move to the Scrub

country, where we now grow macadamias. Some of these beekeepers also went to the coast further south, east of Grafton.

The Tableland beekeepers have the advantage of being half way between the coast and the slopes and at times the eastern plains. Like us their most reliable choice honey Yellow Box is pollen deficient.

As time moved on and it was realized how good the Yapunyah was, fewer and fewer came down here but went to the western watercourses for autumn and winter. Great weather as well. The problem is that the Yapunyah grows in or beside watercourses, Paroo, Bulloo, Wilson Rivers and the Cuttaburra Channel. The Yapunyah flowers fairly regularly if they have wet feet. The rain may of course have occurred a long way north, not locally. Like our Grey Ironbark and Yellow Box the tree is pollen deficient. The pollen in the main must come from ground flora which needs local rain. Should the stars align then a good crop and good bees result. Get the pollen wrong and it can be disastrous. A mate got it wrong one season and lost half their seven hundred hives from lack of pollen. A case of turning bees into honey.

Time moved on again and Almonds became all the go. You got money from the almond pollination no matter what. So now most of these Tableland beekeepers move to Almonds and pick up some Canola on the way home.

Geoff

## Treatment of Timber Boxes

New beekeepers often purchase timber boxes and in a burst of enthusiasm paint them without treating them with a timber preservative. The service life of radiata pine boxes without treating with copper naphthenate is about three years, compared with a life in excess of 20 years if treated. Some beekeepers want to avoid chemicals, and various approaches not using copper have been developed, most of which do not work very well.

*(The following was extracted from a document from Preschem --Ed)*

The Australian Honey Bee Industry Council hold a permit for use with the APVMA, for timber preservatives containing 2% copper as copper naphthenate as their **only active ingredient**. This permit states the exact nature of use and how to use it, as well as the data to prove that it is safe to do so. AHBIC has applied for this permit to be extended from the current finishing date of 30/6/22.

This permit does state that you can use single active 2% copper as copper naphthenate product as a beehive timber treatment. There are conditions attached to this use which we will outline below.

## Conditions for use

The following summary is taken from the [permit for use No: 13026](#)

Products containing 2% copper as copper naphthenate as a single active only may be used.

## Treatment method

### Soak

- Dilute 1L of product in 1L of solvent
- Fully immerse (weighted down with spacers) in preservative solution for minimum of 8 hours
- Air dry for minimum of 14 days until solvent has evaporated

### Soak and wrap

- Dilute 1L Product in 0.6L of solvent
- Soak as above (for Soak only method) for 1 hour, then while wet, wrap tightly in plastic for a minimum of 3 days
- Air dry for a minimum of 10 days until solvent has evaporated

CRITICAL: Do not use until it's painted with suitable food safe paint.

Observe the full safety directions of both the product and solvent selected for dilution.

## Notes in addition to the APVMA approved beehive timber treatment Permit

- The solvent selected can be most hydrocarbon solvents such as kerosene, thinners or mineral turpentine
- The minimum air dry times stated will likely be longer during winter. Be sure to
  - space and fillet (gap) the timber so it dries all round
  - if possible dry in a warm place
  - the longer you leave it, the better the drying result
- For best results use an oil based primer first. Preferably a food safe “tanin blocking” primer from Dulux or Zinsser.

*(End of extraction --Ed)*

## Supply

Beekeeping equipment suppliers such as Quality Beekeeping Supplies in Brisbane usually have the correct chemicals available. One manufacturer called Preschem have a product called Timber Preserver, and they say that Mitre 10 and Home Hardware are stockists. Other paint suppliers may stock it or similar brands. Do not purchase products that have a heavier oil base or that contain active chemicals other than copper naphthenate.

It is difficult to stop the green colour bleeding through subsequent coats of paint; even the stain blocking primers show it. The green colour is from the copper and unavoidable.

Many users do not follow the permit that closely. It is clear that more or less dilute mixtures for shorter or longer times will work well. Do not use commercially treated pine (H grades) in the hive as some have insecticides added. If used outside for eg cleats, they should be dipped to treat the sawn ends.

## **List of Helpful Members**

Kevin Virgen	Federal	6684 9213	Brian Window	Lismore	0466 790 736
Ray Smith	McKees Hill	0427 734 954	Paul Towner	Rous Mill	0418 321 305
Geoff Manning	Bentley	0400 221 602	John Bull	North Casino	0414 842 903
David Fairhall	Richmond Hill	0444 513 771			

## **Services Directory**

Summary of available products and services

### **NRABA Members**

David Fairhall( queen cells, mated queens, nuclei) (Lismore) 0444 513 771

Brian Window (nuclei) (Lismore) 0466 790 736

Geoff Manning (hives) (Bentley) 0400 221 602

Ray Smith (nuclei) (Lismore) 0427 734 954

### **Not NRABA Members**

Stephen Fowler ( nuclei, hives, all sorts of bee equipment, buys wax) (Alstonville) 0418 412 621

Merv McDonald (nuclei, hives, hive care)(Alstonville) 0439 166 016

Rob Stone (mated queens, nuclei)(Casino) 0487 598 105

Ross Wood (mated queens, nuclei)(Grafton) 0421 817 710

## MINUTES NRABA COMMITTEE November 11th 2021

Time 10.30 am Thursday 11<sup>th</sup> November 2021

Place 54 Donnans Road, Lismore Heights

- Members present RS, BW, KV
- Apologies GM
- Minutes of Committee meeting October 14th 2021 accepted m BW s RS
- Matters Arising
  - BW and KV to get thank you letter to Flow
  - BW had sent letter to Lyall Zweck asking for the \$1000 grant
  - BW had decided not to participate in the ABA forum.
- Correspondence
- Reports
  - Treasurer
    - BW purchased two hive tools at \$9 ea for the raffle. Boxes were not available
  - Editor
  - Membership
    - New memberships
    - Full Belinda Kehoe, Frewoini Baume, Oliver Bridger accepted m BW s RS
    - Associates Timothy Greenwood accepted m BW s RS
- Agenda Business Items
  - Field Day and AGM
  - Field day to include examining hives
  - Lunch to be as in the past, with extra sweets and soft drinks.
  - Guests other than family members to be charged \$5

Finished 11.10 am

- Next Meeting
  - Time to be decided
  - Place 54 Donnans Road Lismore Heights