



The official newsletter of the Far North Coast Beekeepers Inc. Est. 2020

Website: www.beekeepers.asn.au/far-north-coast

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Honey Extraction

Editor Jenna Vos

Honey foraging probably started with our nearest living relatives the chimpanzees, baboons and other great apes. Pictures can be seen of chimpanzees using pieces of grass to insert into hives and sucking on the end. Honey is energetically dense, easy to consume and digest. It potentially links the development of neural expansion and nutrition in homo sapiens supporting the importance of honey extraction.

The Archaeology of honey collecting is largely invisible. There is palaeolithic rock art to be found depicting bees and honey in Spain, India, Australia and Southern Africa spanning the periods from 40,000 up to 8,000 years ago especially at Didima Gorge in Namibia where 4,000 sites can be found portraying bees, honeycomb and honey collecting. In prehistoric West Africa (3500 -1,000 BC) early agriculturalist, the Central Nigerian Nok culture, created terracotta fired vessels which when gently heated were able to separate wax, honey and larvae.

The Ancient Egyptians believed that when the Tears of Ra or Re, the sun god, fell to Earth they transformed into bees who provided it's followers with liquid gold (honey). The Egyptians were probably the first to create artificial hives during the 1st Dynasty of the Bronze Age 3100 BC. They built horizontal log hives out of stick, grass and mud sealing the one end with a wooden plug and allowing an entrance for the bees on the other. These they amassed together with mud into an apiary wall which were tended by the temple priests. They would harvest the honey comb as part of a religious ritual with incense to appease the gods and remove the honeycomb from the rear end of the loghive.

NEW Covid-19 Vaccinated and Unvaccinated Regulations and Restrictions .

Please familiarise yourself with the new vaccinated and unvaccinated rules and regulations given out by the Australian Government Health www.health.gov.au and NSW Services before attending any gathering and/or meeting.

Date Savers and Activities.

Tuesday 9th November 2021 18h00: Committee meeting: 5 Robb St, Russelton Industrial estate Alstonville, NSW 2477.

Sunday 12th December 2021 10h00 - 13h00: Xmas Lunch Gathering at Clovass-McKees Hill Soldiers Memorial Hall, c/o Figtree Lane and 1639 Bruxner Highway, McKees Hill NSW 2480

FOCUS: Xmas lunch will be provided by the Club.

What to bring: Yourself, a chair to sit on and your own soft drinks.

RSVP: Please RSVP Janet on 0420 358 122 before Dec 9 2021. .

Sunday 13th February 2022 AGM: start 9h00 for 10h00 AGM Meeting: Clovass-McKees Hill Soldiers Memorial Hall, c/o Figtree Lane and 1639 Bruxner Highway, McKees Hill NSW 2480

Due to the new Covid restrictions and regulations it was deemed better for all involved to delay the AGM so that all members could be present. An extension will be requested from the Dept of Fair Trading.

Presidents Report by Peter Laughton

A good turnout of members and friends attended out latest FNC Beekeepers Field day held at Robb street. Thanks go to Stephen and Janet for providing the space in front of their shop and arranging the demonstrations of candle wax castings.

There is a very interesting article on mental health especially for PTSD in veterans “Heroes, hives and a journey of healing “ that you might like to read.

<https://www.abc.net.au/news/2021-11-14/healing-power-of-bees-for-traumatised-military-veterans/100532362>

Just a reminder to all beekeepers and potential beekeepers. You must be **registered with the DPI** and have your **registration number** prominently **displayed on your hives**. Even if you only have one box, you must still be registered. Also, there are minimum inspection standards and record keeping requirements as well. Check out the DPI web site at

<https://www.dpi.nsw.gov.au/animals-and-livestock/bees>

Note the penalties for non compliance are quite severe.

Peter

Far North Coast Club News

From our secretary Stephen Fowler

At last we are able to put all things behind us and have a meeting.

The weather was not the best but with the aid of the gazebos we were able to hold the meeting outside and comply with Covid regulations and rules.

Robert Stone was also able to demonstrate splitting a hive and how to install a mated queencage into the new split with her little workers. By the way she has successfully escape her little “Lockdown” cage and is now hard at work laying eggs. For further questions regarding queen rearing and replacing get in touch with Robert Stone at 0432 277 317.

For all those who had a go at candle making; great successes were achieved once the wax set and the candles removed from their moulds. Please fell free to pick up your results at Robb street.

Look forward to meeting you all at the Xmas Gathering on the 12th December 2021 at the Clovass-McKees Hall on the corner of Figtree Lane and the Bruxner Highway between Lismore and Casino.

Please be sure to RSVP Janet before the 9th Dec 2021.

Stephen



Streritech Run

We have had many requests to organise another run to **Steritech**. We have been informed that they are way behind and have a four to six week wait. At present we are looking to collect hive boxes to fill a pallet on the second weekend in February 2022. To book a spot for your boxes please ring Janet 0420 358 122 with the number of boxes you want processed.

Far North Coast Beekeepers Inc Committee

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Committee Members	<i>To be nominated</i> (3)		

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When the hive grew too large they would imitate the sound of a piping queen, enticing the queen out of the hive and then place her into a new hive thus “artificially” swarming (splitting) the hive. Hieroglyphs show the method they used to harvest, crush and sieve and finally store honey in fired earthen ware jars sealed with wax.

Most ancient and or traditional methods of harvesting honey causes a great disturbance and damage to a hive and/or colony. Smoking has been/is used to calm the bees but the removal of comb is non selective. Brood comb containing eggs and larva are very often removed with the honey comb plus the potential loss of a queen. This practice is still relevant in Africa, Nepal and India where certain families traditionally harvest the honey from feral wild hives. However since the “**bee space**” was discovered, removable frames in Langstroth hives invented plus the use of a Queen excluder and clearer board, honey extraction has become less invasive. Flow hives also allow honey extraction on a small scale without disturbing the brood.

Even though honey has some remarkable qualities as a fermented food (anti-microbial, anti-fungal etc) it is primarily a **food** and needs to be treated as such (see **Food Act 2003(NSW)** and **Food Regulation 2015(NSW)**). As soon as the capped honey frames are removed from the hive the honey becomes susceptible to contaminants eg. temperature and moisture, soil, dust, yeasts, pests, microbes etc (see **AG Guide: A practical handbook, “Honey harvesting and extracting”** issued by the NSW Department of Primary Industries) . As soon as a beekeeper wishes to sell honey on a larger scale in shops or markets they need to approach their local council regarding licensing, labelling plus food health and safety measures (see **NSW Food Authority, <http://www.foodauthority.nsw.gov.au> and email: food.contact@dpi.nsw.gov.au**).

Modern day extraction will vary according to the beekeeper and the number of hives they farm. For the ‘one to five hive’ beekeeper (even one hive needs to be registered with the DPI) who intends to keep and share their honey with friends, the low cost crush and sieve method is favoured or a hand extractor or press. The beekeepers with more than five hives learn very quickly the value of a motorised decapper and extractor, cappings spinner and various other equipment to make the job easier. Food grade stainless steel equipment is preferred throughout the honey extraction process eg. decappers, extractors, spinners, buckets, storage containers etc. for the ease of cleaning and lack of contamination. BPA approved food grade plastic storage containers are also acceptable as long as they have not been scoured. eg. IBC’s are used to store large quantities of honey or smaller 20L buckets can also be used



Footnote:

All information has been sourced from; Kritsky, Gene. (2015) “**Tears of Re: Beekeeping in Ancient Egypt**” Oxford University Press, New York, USA; Dunne, J., (2021) “**Honey collecting in prehistoric West Africa from 3500 years ago**” <https://www.nature.com/nature-communications/articles>.; **AG Guide: A practical handbook, “Honey harvesting and extracting”**, 2017, NSW Department of Primary Industries). Owen, Robert (2015) “**The Australia Beekeeping Manual**” Exisle Publishing, NSW Australia;

Special Note from the Editor:

I would like to thank Barry, Danna and Elspeth who have offered to write articles every other month. I would also like to advise all you readers that I will be giving up the editor position at the AGM. If anyone is keen to take on the job please advise either Sephen or myself.

Hosting a Field Day

We would love to visit your yard and/or apiary for one of our field days. Please get in touch with the Secretary Stephen Fowler to discuss details and dates.

Disclaimer – the views and opinions expressed in this newsletter are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the official policy or position of the FNC Beekeepers Inc. FNC Beekeepers Inc. accepts no liability for the consequences of any actions taken on the basis of the information provided.