SOUTHSIDE BEEKEEPERS MISSION STATEMENT

We work to ensure a thriving and sustainable beekeeping industry. To this end we advocate for beekeepers’ interests, support honey bee health, research, deliver practical training, education, mentoring and information.

PRESIDENTS REPORT

Hello members, even with the isolation, the year is flying by and the activity of the bees is slowing but there is still plenty to do.

If you have children aged 5 - 12 years old, remember to print out the colouring competition on page 13 and get your young ones colouring for the chance to win a $10.00 Red Rooster gift voucher and a set of coloured pencils.

We are discussing many options to keep the communication going with all our members, and at this stage keep an eye out for emails and the Sting to stay informed.

We are also asking for photos, story’s and questions you might have and would be happy to share.

We have run a test to see if we could e-stream out monthly meetings and our guest speakers. So far we have had mixed results using Microsoft Teams. Some committee members had great results, while others suffered lags of 1-2 minutes and had no video feed.

Continued on page 2
Office Bearers

President    Graeme Gill
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Vice President    Mark Collier
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Treasurer    Angelo Pannacci
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Southside Beekeepers Meetings

We meet at Monterey Secondary College,
Silvertop Street, Frankston North 3200
Assemble 7:00pm 4th Wednesday of each month.
Meeting starts 7:30pm

Contact Info
M: 0413 104 191
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PO Box 3008 Frankston East VIC 3199
Post box emptied monthly

The Sting

Editor Mark Collier
mark@southsidebeekeepers.com.au
Copy for The Sting must be received by the 15th of each month.

COMMITTEE MEETINGS

Our committee meetings are on the second Wednesday of each month however with the Covid-19 issue, they are conducted via Microsoft Teams. Members are always welcome but please call Ted Cottle on 0428 429 547 for Microsoft Teams set up details.

EXTRACTOR HIRE

Extractors are now available at 4 locations.
Dion Riches at Safety Beach 0417 292 269
Ted Cottle at Frankston South 0428 429 547
Steven Rose at Brighton 0416 120 170
Angelo Pannacci at Patterson Lakes 0423 094 087
Hire is now $70.00 for 2 days. This includes a $50.00 deposit, refundable upon the return of the extractor in a clean condition.

This Month’s JOKE.

I went into a pet shop and asked for twelve bees.
The shopkeeper counted out thirteen and handed them over. “You’ve given me one too many.”

“That one is a freebie.”

Presidents Report - continued

The committee would like to hear back from members on how they see the meetings running and would they be willing to attend in person (once the restrictions are relaxed) or would they be interested in a streamed version of the meeting (or even do both).

Please email your thoughts to Mark Collier - mark@southsidebeekeepers.com.au

Now is a perfect time to conduct repairs and maintenance of the hive in preparation for next season. Ted will share more about this with you in this issue of The Sting - see page 5.

Stay safe and well from myself and the committee.

Regards
Graeme Gill - President

https://www.facebook.com/southsidebeekeepersclub/
Web: www.southsidebeekeepers.com.au
Let’s Celebrate World Bee Day - by Marita Johnson


WORLD BEE DAY is commemorated on 20th May every year which is the day that Anton Janša was baptized in Breznica in Slovakia in 1734. His actual birth date was never recorded.

Anton showed promise at an early age of becoming an artist and was sent to Vienna with his brother and they both enrolled in the engraving school there. However he didn't graduate and would go on to a different field, that of Beekeeping, following his father’s footsteps who had 500 hives at his home. By 1769 Anton entered full time work as a beekeeper and went on to become the first royally appointed teacher of apiculture for all the Austrian-owned lands.

He travelled throughout the Austrian empire, as it was then, changed the shape of hives so that they could be stacked on top of one another and used his experience as a painter to paint the front of hives that previously had been bland and uninspiring!

Anton wrote two books - “Discussion in Beekeeping” and “A Full Guide to Beekeeping" In the latter one he wrote: Bees are a type of fly, hardworking, created by God to provide man with all needed honey and wax. Amongst all God's beings there are none so hard working and useful to man with so little attention needed for its keep as the bee.

He also popularized the method of smoking bees out of their hives for the honey.

- continued on page 4
Janša rejected the belief at that time that the male bees were only water carriers for the hive, and without being able to prove it, he assumed that the queen is fertilized mid-air. He also advocated moving hives to pastures.

He died in 1773 in Vienna of typhus.

The 19th century saw further developments in apiculture, although the 20th century would see a push on, in an attempt to eradicate the bee.

Anton is considered one of the fathers of European apiculture, and Slovenia today is the only country in the world that officially protects its national bee.

The Janša Beehive was preserved by Slovene beekeepers and in 1884 a plaque was put on the house where he was born. The Museum of Apiculture in Radovljica was also named after him.

In 2018, to honour his legacy and to raise awareness of the importance of bees and bee products, the Beekeepers Association of Slovenia with the support of the Republic of Slovenia created the initiative with the United Nations Organization to commemorate Anton Janša, on May 20 each year as World Bee Day.

So let’s celebrate 20th May 2020 — 286 years after Anton Janša became the father of the world’s beekeepers!

See page 4 for Southside Beekeepers to help celebrate World Bee Day colouring competition.
Bee Box Maintenance - By Ted Cottle

Now that we are heading into the winter another aspect of packing down hives is to swap out any old and decrepit boxes and refurbish them over winter. If you don’t have any spare boxes then buy some, as a couple of spare boxes is useful for this practice and managing swarms etc in spring.

There are many different types of boxes available on the market if you’re into good looks then various dove tailed and finger jointed types are available and from a practicality perspective rebated boxes are also a good choice.

The problem with untreated (not wax dipped) pine boxes is that over time water gets into them particularly the joints and they begin to rot, if they are not attended to, they will rot quiet quickly.

Give your boxes a visual inspection and check for any rot (soft spots) or water staining around the corners. Also check where any previous filled holes or nail and screw holes have been filled and putty has become loose. If you find areas that are rotten then depending on the amount of rot you can clean it out and fill / repair. If the paint if flaking or has become thin, then simply sand lightly and re-coat with a water based paint. Another option is to run over them with a belt or orbital sander to give them a good clean up prior to repainting.

Boxes also get a build up of wax and propolis on the inside so take the time to clean the sides and the rebate where the frames hang as well.
'Murder hornets' in Washington state threaten bees and whip up media swarm

From the Guardian by Amanda Holpuch in New York Sun 3 May 2020 06.02 AEST

Murray said it was important for people to learn to recognize the insect now, while the population is small and still new to the region.

“We need to teach people how to recognize and identify this hornet while populations are small,” he said, “so that we can eradicate it while we still have a chance.”

The hornets are about the size of an adult thumb, with a yellow and orange head. They are most destructive in the late summer and early fall. One telltale sign they have visited a hive is the remains of decapitated bees.

Some researchers refer to the insect as a “murder hornet”, according to a New York Times story published on Saturday.

In Japan, up to 50 people a year die after being stung, though the hornet is usually only aggressive to humans if it is disturbed.

The Times story prompted a slew of comments on social media, noting the appearance of the hornets in the US in 2020, alongside famine, pestilence and war.

“Whomever had murder by hornet on their apocalypse bingo card, please step forward to collect your winnings,” wrote Kaz Weida, a freelance journalist.


The author Rabih Alameddine posted: “I really think that was missing from my life this year was murder hornets.”

https://www.theguardian.com/environment/2020/may/02/murder-hornets-washington-state-bees-twitter

The Asian giant hornet (Vespa mandarinia)

Researchers and citizens in Washington state are on a careful hunt for invasive “murder hornets”, after the insect made its first appearance in the US.

The Asian giant hornet is the world’s largest and can kill humans. But it is most dangerous for the European honeybee, which is defenseless in the face of the hornet’s spiky mandibles, long stinger and potent venom.

Washington state verified four reports of Asian giant hornets in two north-western cities in December. The species becomes more active in April, prompting local officials to invite the public to help beekeepers by creating their own hornet traps.

“It’s a shockingly large hornet,” Todd Murray, Washington State University Extension entomologist and invasive species specialist, said in a statement. “It’s a health hazard, and more importantly, a significant predator of honeybees.”
Books About Bees

The club has an extensive library which should, as well as talking to members, be a first call when looking for information on all things bee related. I would like to encourage members not only to read more of the clubs library books but to also provide reviews, describing what they found useful, any failings etc. Don’t hesitate to also review books the club does not have, as a good recommendation means we can consider purchasing a copy for the club. Reviews should be sent to the editor, at mark@southsidebeekeepers.com.au.

To kick off this new section, Marita Johnson has provided a review of Honeybee Democracy by Thomas D Seeley. I hope you enjoy her review, and when we can finally meet again in person, rush to see Cassidy Fong Lip, the club’s librarian, to borrow a copy.

Honeybee Democracy by Thomas D Seeley.

If you are a beekeeper you may have often sat and watched your bees working and thought as I have - wouldn’t it be wonderful if our world could be as productive, organized and as peaceful as the world of the bees.

I was lucky enough during our lockdown to have borrowed this book by Seeley, from our library (Paul, thank you for suggesting it!) and I have been fascinated by the way Thomas Seeley has studied and evaluated the process swarming bees adapt to decide where they will inhabit once they have left their original home. Bees have existed for at least 30 million years, and as Seeley states - we can maybe look at the bees as a time tested method for achieving collective wisdom and effective decision making.

Seeley says that bees demonstrate several principles of effective group decision making and has listed them in his book after studying the bees for many years and applying these concepts in town meetings and University settings. He calls them:

“Five Habits of Highly Effective Groups.”
1 Compose the decision-making group of individuals with shared interest and mutual respect.

Obviously like minded people in the group are important. They need sincere and positive goals paramount for the group. Each members personal value needs to be respected by all. (Bees all are looking for a new home)

2 Minimize the leader’s influence on the group’s thinking.

The leader serves mainly to shape the process, and not over influence the results. (The queen in fact does not take part in this decision making at all)

3 Seek diverse solutions to the problem

Uncover a profusion of possible solutions in the hope that one will prove excellent. A democratic group can greatly surpass that of a lone individual. Group numbers need to be sufficient, diverse and independent, and each member is encouraged to search for solutions individually. (Bees travel many kilometres and inspect many places, and need to consider many factors looking for a possible home)

4 Aggregate the group’s knowledge through debate.

The group demonstrate that a democratic group can function effectively, without a leader if the group members agree on the problems they face and on the protocol they will use to make their decisions. First identify the available options, by agreeing on the problem they face and on the protocol needed to make the decision.
(Bees attempt to convince others of a possible home, even lead them to view it and then give up when they have inspected another’s place.)

5 Use quorum responses for cohesion, accuracy and speed.

Voting can reduce an ongoing problem issue. If there are dissenting members who are outnumbered, for the sake of achieving consensus, they need to accept and follow with the majority, but only when say minimum of 80% are in agreement. Otherwise more discussion is necessary. (Bees finally give in gracefully and thereafter totally support the final decision, when they see the home they picked is not the majority choice).

There is lots more good stuff in the book about these five habits, and lots of interesting stories gained during Seeley’s years of research. When we get back to “normal” I hope someone else will borrow this book and enjoy it as I did.

Perhaps members would like to write reports about books they have read from our library, or books from other places for that matter. Or anything else to do with bees for our monthly newsletter for the benefit of others, like I do from time to time. Mark is always looking for articles to go in the Sting. I for one love to read anything about our wonderful bees. I always think there is lots to gain from different people’s experiences, however basic they think there knowledge is.

Marita Johnson
Buzzing Bees & Beautiful Blossoms

As beekeepers, we often come across interesting occurrences in our hives and we are also attuned to noticing plants that bees favour. Our monthly newsletter is a perfect place for members to email pictures of bee friendly plants they have encountered. This can provide a great resource for members who want to add some plants to their garden, with the added benefit of providing a feed for our bees.

Please email any pictures of plants you have observed that are favoured by bees as well as any unusual pics from your hives to mark@southsidebeekeepers.com.au and I will include them in the next issue of The Sting. If possible provide the species or common name of the plant with your submission. This will assist members purchasing from a nursery.

White Butterfly Bush - *Gaura lindheimeri* - Image Sally Cooper

Flowering Ginger - *Hedychium gardnerianum* - Image Sally Cooper

Royal Grevillea - *Grevillea victoriae* - Image Sally Cooper

An interesting picture of a frame of honey Ted Cottle harvested this year showing multi-coloured honey. Bees obviously feeding on different flowers. Image Ted Cottle
G'day my name is Bryce and I’m a chef at Arco Cafe Bar and Restaurant located in Dandenong South. We are hidden away in an industrial estate but customers come from all over Melbourne for our delicious meals. We offer a variety of modern Italian cuisine and pride ourselves on quality, presentation and service. We provide takeaway meals to workers needing a feed during their lunchbreaks, catering packs for office meetings or parties but our best feature by far is our 120 seat, fully licensed restaurant that has indoor and outdoor seating that overlooks a lovely lake. My main role at Arco is on the pans – that means that I will generally be the one to cook your favorite pasta dish!

Method

Sprinkle the yeast over 1/2 cup of warm water, and let the yeast bubble, about 2 minutes. Sift the flour onto a clean work surface or into a large bowl. Make a well in the centre and fill with the water. Add the oil, sugar and salt, and slowly begin to incorporate the flour into the centre hollow, combining with each addition, until dough forms. Add a few drops more water if needed. Knead the dough until smooth and let rest in a lightly oiled bowl until it doubles, about 1 hour.

Preheat the oven to 170° and oil a 26cm cake pan.

Using your hands, press out the dough into a circle about 26cm in diameter. Place on the prepared pan. Pierce the dough throughout with a fork.

Carefully cut a cross on top of one of the figs, halfway down, so the fig opens like a flower. Press it into the centre of the dough.

Remove the stems from the 17 remaining figs, slice them in half, and arrange them around the focaccia, cut side up, pressing them into the dough as far as possible. (Cook’s note: if you can’t find small figs, use medium or large and just cut them in thirds or quarters)

Put the honey and rosemary into a small bowl and heat for a few seconds in the microwave or over boiling water. Stir in the lemon juice. Using a pastry brush, spread the mixture over the top of the figs and focaccia dough. Bake for about 25 minutes, until golden and cooked through. Remove from the oven and drizzle with more honey and sprigs of rosemary. Serve warm.

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**Figure and Honey Focaccia**

**Ingredients**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ingredient</th>
<th>Quantity</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bakers Flour</td>
<td>2 cups</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yeast</td>
<td>1 satchet, 7 grams</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EV Olive Oil</td>
<td>2 tablespoons</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sugar</td>
<td>1/2 cup</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Salt</td>
<td>1/2 teaspoon</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Figs</td>
<td>18 small</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Honey</td>
<td>3 tablespoons, plus more needed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fresh Rosemary</td>
<td>a few sprigs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lemon</td>
<td>juice of 1/2 lemon</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Biosecurity Manual for Beekeepers now available

Dr Jenny Shanks from Plant Health Australia has given the club permission to print copies of the Biosecurity Manual for Beekeepers v1.1 (©Plant Health Australia 2016) for members. Jenny kindly informed us that there are no royalty payments required.

Copies of this 64 page full colour publication can be ordered through the club and will cost members $15.00 or a free pdf copy can be downloaded from the club’s website.

Order or purchase copies at monthly meetings.

As you may be aware the honey bee industry, represented by the Australian Honey Bee Industry Council, (AHBIC), in consultation with all beekeepers and governments, has worked to develop the Australian Honey Bee Industry Biosecurity Code of Practice (Code). In July 2016, AHBIC endorsed the Code and its gradual adoption across Australia.

The Code provides a clear framework for all beekeepers to engage in best-practice biosecurity. Its purpose is to help improve the management of established pests and diseases, as well as increase preparedness and surveillance for exotic pests and diseases that threaten our honey bee industry, such as the Varroa mite.


The new Livestock Disease Control Regulations 2017 incorporating the Code came into effect on 12 June 2019. The new regulations cover activities that all beekeepers should already be undertaking to minimise the impact of pests and diseases on their own hives and those of their fellow beekeepers.

Some new regulations apply to all beekeepers; others apply only to beekeepers with 50 or more hives.

There are consequences for failing to comply with all apiary legislation in Victoria which may include being issued with an infringement notice or court action for more serious or repeat offences. It is your responsibility to familiarise yourself with the requirements that relate to you or seek assistance if you are not sure.


Biosecurity Signs

A4 Biosecurity signs can be purchased from the club for $10.00 each. Contact Mark Collier on 0407 553 022, email mark@southsidebeekeepers.com.au or see Mark at the next monthly meeting.

Please respect this apiary belongs to:

Call in the event of an emergency do not enter this apiary without prior approval.
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We would like to give a great thank you to our wonderful sponsors:

- Bunnings
- Frankston City Council
- Bec's BeeHive: Beekeeping Supplies & Equipment Australia
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  - Fax 03 9798 3121
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- Pro-tax Accounting Services
  - Kathy Li
  - CPA Registered Tax Agent
  - Mobile: 0430 560 779
  - 10 Maroo Street, Hughsdale Victoria 3166
  - E: kathy@protaxaccountingservices.com

- KEITH EDWARDS landscape consultant
  - M 0408 355 307
  - E keithmaxed@outlook.com
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KEITH EDWARDS
landscape consultant
MO408 355 307
E keithmaxed@outlook.com

World Bee Day
20th May

World Bee Day
20th May

Save the Bees
May 20 World Bee Day
Who Can Enter?
Children aged 5 - 12 years old

There are three categories
- 5-7 years old
- 8-10 years old
- 11-12 years old

Prizes
One prize per age category comprising a Red Rooster $10 gift voucher and a set of coloured pencils.

When are entries due?
Colour in the world bee day picture on page 13 and post back to Southside Beekeepers Club care of:
PO.Box 3008
Frankston East, Vic 3199

or email a scanned copy to
mark@southsidebeekeepers.com.au

by Wednesday the 3rd of June 2020

Entries will be judged by the Southside Beekeepers Club committee.

Winners will be announced by email on the 24th of June 2020.

Unfortunately we cannot return physical copies of drawings to their owners.

Could entrants please let us know if they are happy to have their drawing displayed in future editions of The Sting

All entrants please fill in the following:
Name: ...............................................................

Age category entered - Please tick
☐ 5-7 years old
☐ 8-10 years old
☐ 11-12 years old

Address: ...............................................................

Email address: ...............................................................

Please tick yes or no to let us know if you are happy for your drawing to be included in future issues of The Sting.

☐ Yes, please include my drawing in future issues of the Sting
☑ No, please do not include my drawing in future issues of the Sting