



## **Surrey Beekeepers Association AGM 7th December 2019**

### **2019 Surrey County Show Report**

Once again our team worked brilliantly to produce an excellent bee display at the Surrey County Show on 27<sup>th</sup> May. Last year the bee tent was awarded 'Best Major Marquee' by the Surrey County Agricultural Society. This year we couldn't expect it again (we have to give the others a chance!) but we were a very creditable 3<sup>rd</sup>.

Our new Chief Steward Mike Axford organised a very efficient rota and made sure that all our stands were well staffed. We have over 40 stewards and it takes a lot to organise them and fine tune duties on the day as required. Mike did a great job and introduced a number of innovations. As usual every steward received a sit-down lunch. Once again Mike Axford and Julie Hogarth organised goodie bags for the first 100 families to visit our marquee. A great idea to encourage visitors to seek us out. The contents generously donated by Bee Inspired and Keith McMahon.

Mike and I had a constructive meeting with the manager of the Surrey County Show during the summer and we think we have built a good working relationship with her.

Our new treasurer Keith McMahon took over seamlessly from Jeremy Andrews. Well done Keith.

We are grateful to Rosalind and David Clague for kindly supplying two hives of flying bees and to Steve Cotney for stocking our observation hive. As a special feature this year, Mike Axford and Julie Hogarth invited Dale Gibson and Sarah Wyndham Lewis from Bermondsey Street Bees to bring their 'globe' observation hive in which the public could watch bees foraging on flowers – a big hit with our visitors.

The show bench looked splendid with over 150 entries, well over the 100 required to make us a 'Blue Ribbon' event. As usual all ran smoothly thanks to our very efficient Show Bench Secretary Daphne Thomas assisted by Hazel Sharples. Our judges this year were Sue Carter and Bill Fisher from Buckinghamshire BKA with Judges Stewards from Epsom BKA – Sofia Welsby and Geoff Dowse. The opportunity to be a Judges Steward is a great learning experience. We share this opportunity around the divisions and in 2020 it will be the turn of lucky members from Farnham BKA. Peter Dawson won the Blue Ribbon for the best exhibit in the show for the third year running, the Coleman Cup for cut comb and the Composite Cup. A tremendous achievement from probably the county's best showman. The Vincent Challenge Cup for the division with most points in show was won by Guildford. It is pleasing to see that after so many years when the Vincent Cup was a two horse race between Guildford and Farnham, other divisions are coming up on the rails. Let's see some new names on the cup over the next few years.

Other trophy results were:

Golder Memorial trophy for novices – Adela Brnakova

Ken Reed Memorial Trophy for wax – Clive Mence

Do encourage your division to raise your number of entries in 2019. All you need to do is delegate one member to bring all the division entries to stage on Saturday morning and another to collect them at 5pm. You don't all have to get up early!

Our honey show pays the bills by running a straw draw, taste of honey, candle rolling and taking a small commission on the sale of members' honey. Every year Elizabeth Knight who runs our straw draw needs hundreds of small honey



potlets, small candles and other small gifts as straw draw prizes. Thank you to all who stepped up and produced a fantastic variety this year. If you can help next year please contact Elizabeth, Mike Axford or myself.

Hugh Coakley's candle rolling stand was a popular attraction all day. This year Hugh was understudied by Sue Keystone who will be taking over from Hugh in 2020. Thank you Hugh for all you have done for the show and welcome Sue. Thanks also to Chris and Rob Chisholm who ran our honey sales so well as they have done for a great many years and to Jill Tyndale for feeding the 5,000 at the taste of honey.

Many thanks to all our hard-working committee and to our wonderful band of stewards for making the day a success.

I look forward to seeing you all at the next Surrey County Show on Monday 25<sup>th</sup> May 2020.

Bob Maurer  
Chairman – Surrey Beekeepers Association Show Committee  
November 2019

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