

MINUTES for Valley Bees Meeting - Sunday 11 March 2018

Meeting opened 1-30pm. Apologies received from Michael Condon, Reg and Marj Hatch, Jimmy MacIntire, Louise Fraser, Skaidra Craig, Eric Jordan, Barbara Sullivan, Jae Parker.

Sound System - Decided to use microphone system. Working well, much better audibility for all in the hall.

Minutes from February meeting have been received, open for discussion.

Shed demands attention, will have discussion in general business.

Lenny Weller guest speaker last meeting. Acknowledged and thanked.

Research that Denis Anderson has done on Qld Muck Disease has come to hand after meeting, that research proved that MD was not a bacteria / virus (pathogen) but that the research threw suspicion on aluminium or iron.

Noted that MD coincided in the native hive at the same time as the honeybee hives.

Culprit is the nitrate being dumped by storms, noted that on SBS program: 20 tonnes of nitrate every day is being dumped on the planet by storms. The nitrate being dumped in the breaking of drought results in dissolving of aluminium and iron into sap, and then on into nectar, then into bee food/pollen. Only larva feeds on the pollen through Royal Jelly and Bee Bread.

Moved that Minutes read – Kaye, 2nd Joan.

Treasures Report

MRCCC account

\$3408-08 last meeting

1 new membership

\$3428-08

Bendigo Account

Last meeting \$3102-23

Deposits \$449-00

Payouts \$831-71

Total 2719-52

Total in both - \$6127-60

Jeanne moved, 2nd Shirley. Noted that new Apithor paid out, that's why payouts a little high.

Vic Report – Landcare

Landcare first Saturday session, Nice roll-up, lot of interest in sessions. Continual role of new people as well. All hives in reasonable condition, most places do not have a lot of honey at the moment, seems fairly scarce except for some pockets.

No honey at Landcare.

Back up to 5 hives again, lost the marked queen hive - she had absconded.

Burnt frames from that hive, kept box. But because of recent events, decided to burn boxes as well. Doing all we can to eliminate the AFB. Everything else okay.

Sat around and had long smoko and discussion on bee diseases (sounds good!)

Next month we'll be doing an extension to the native hive.

Phil Report – Honeybee Cottages

Similar report and status to Landcare. Great turnout of people from far and wide, new people as well. Hives in reasonable condition, no honey either.

Mid January had collected a swarm, in great condition.

Hive number 5, AFB discovered. We decided to leave the hive until evening, taped entrances and destroyed hive. Burnt the lot and buried. Sad day.

Had taken a sample, sent to DPI in Kelvin Grove. Positive AFB identified.

We've checked the other hives for AFB, keeping all under observation.

Other hives all active and good numbers of bees.

Honeybee Cottages Workshop Status: as per form at base.

Mark and Greg made up an incredible set of shelves, big thanks to them.

We will use an old kitchen unit.

Estimate of total cost \$3300

Noted: Phil and Vic – new BioSecurity requirements, it must all be written down and documented accurately. New requirements, we must fulfil these as a registered group.

It's very important that everybody documents AFB outbreaks.

Keep records. No good just to say it verbally. Must be written down at the time and documented - A personal record in a book.

Also if honey amounts are large, they must be documented as well.

Anybody produces over 1500kg pays a levy to AHBIC.

If you sell to packers, they pay the levy for you on your behalf.

Noted also:

The yeast in a slime-out SHB can be ingested through lungs and can be quite toxic. The SHBeetle produces a yeast which can be very bad. Plenty of articles available on the web, or go the Valley Bees page: <https://www.valleybees.org.au/biodiversity/>
Always best to wear a mask when dealing with AFB.
Use of pool chlorine 13% diluted down to 3%. Douse all boxes, pressure hose.
Discard all the wax. Let it dry in sun and air-dry. Beetle is a pest, not a disease.
Domestic bleach is 10%.

1st Native Bee Conference (and Australian Honeybee Conference)

First ever Australian Native Bee Conference to be held Sunday 1st July and Monday 2nd July, though 90% is happening on Sunday 1st July. A field trip is being organised for Monday 2nd).

Note that the Australian Honeybee Conference is on 27th to 30th June.

Note also that our Valley Bees website calendar has been updated with all these conference details on it.

<https://www.valleybees.org.au/calendar-events/>

Moved that VB send a delegate to the Native Bee Conference on Sunday 1st July. \$133 cost. Derek moved, 2nd John.

Glenbo is working with Tim Heard on the booklet for the Conference and will ensure there is a Valley Bees spiel in booklet.

They are Calling for prospective speakers – 1½ weeks left for a submission as speaker.

Derek - Native Bees

Before the meeting we added 2 empty hives to the native hives here. The attempt we made to create new hives here hasn't been successful. One has ants, the other hive lid bowed and let light into box. Native bees had blocked off 2 entrances.

We've got to give them good boxes to move into.

Next month at Landcare, we will try different types on boxes

Glenn mentioned Dean Bryant making boxes out of cypress pine. Good boxes, he does classes. 45mm cypress pine.

Peter Velenski uses cures – good quality. Russell Zabel uses cypress pine. If seasoned smell goes away quickly.

Cypress works when it is fresh, if not protected will not suit. White ants won't touch cypress.

Dan and Marilyn report on trip to Cambodia

Remarkable journey, went with Max Lindegger. Visited small farms where Max working with people for decades through aid organisations. Mostly to Ockenden in Cambodia. Max helps small farmers to diversify and be more sustainable, away from chemicals and insecticides. Providing instructions in different languages. Lot of poisoning of fish and frogs happening at the moment. Teaching also to diversify crops so if rice fails, they have cucumbers or corn or other crops to fall back on.

Doesn't just give money, but help build a pond, install a tank, give a pig, something they can build on - very inspiring.

Max has played an integral part in building of a dam, piping water with running water into houses.

The people there are the poorest of poor.

Inspiring thing - building a demonstration farm, they brought a bare block, setting up accommodation for tourism, volunteers pay to work and help set up the whole sustainable system. Farmers come and observe how to work their own farms, observe and learn and take away the skills.

Visited schools - how basic and primitive, how much more aid needed on so many levels.

Honey over there is \$30 a kilo (and black and horrible!) Dan and Marilyn brought over honey – it was like gold, giving it away - we can take honey over, we just can't bring it back.

Glenn Otto Noted that Ann and Jeff Ross have been invited to Abu Dhabi to a bee-related conference. Funny thing is that over there they buy in 400 honey bee hives twice a year for a couple of weeks only, then they kill them all off! The hives are only brought in for a certain period, for pollination of the date palms. Sadly, they can't understand to keep the hives alive!

More notes on native bees Native bee workshop held with Rob Raabe, near Bli Bli. Range of beneficial flowering plants, talks with experts etc. Noted that Australis is a lot quieter species of bees. Log split was very aggressive. One lady early she was terrified, as opened hive, being shown around, overcome her fear.

Gympie Show

Athol ordered jars from Plasdene, on the day that they were organising a new warehouse system, didn't arrive, so rang up and our order has disappeared. So expecting jars this coming week. They will be available for collection at the April meeting. They are free for contestants, as the QBA has provided these. Members can hand in entries at the May meeting. All entries will go on to the Fraser Coast Show (Maryborough) and then some entries (??) will go on the Bee Conference at the Gold Coast.

Noted that comb honey has changed from a small slab of comb in a jar, to a larger slab of comb in a horizontal tray, similar to a take-away. There will need to be 1cm of the same honey in the base as well. These containers will also be available for free at the April meeting. There will be an advisory sheet for the show entries uploaded to our Valley Bees website from 4th April. This sheet will explain the comb entries, and have the details for the honey entries. Show Schedules will also be available at the April meeting.

QBA - QBA Wide Bay meeting either 20th or 27th April at Childers.

Noted that at last QBA meeting, it was stated that all beekeepers, just for the duration of when they are looking through their hive, MUST have a sign up saying "Beekeeping in Operation." This is a new rule, and Biosecurity states that it must be followed. So the sign just needs to be posted at the front of your property / home, just during the time that the hives are open. It needs to have your Hive Registration number and phone number on it.

A template for the sign will be made up by Glenbo, and be available for all at the April meeting.

Labelling of honey

It was discussed the requirements of your sites if your honey is declared as "organic."

Bee Open Day – Saturday 15 September

Rang the Imbil School, August out because of Imbil Show, Gympie Muster, 1st Sept is out because of Little Kids Day Out in Gympie. Bee Open Day will be held on Saturday 15th September. Discussed and finalised. Maree moved, 2nd Jeanne. Athol / Pauline to meet with Alison (head teacher). John and Veronica to let Rob Raabe know. Send an email out to previous and potential exhibitors.

Bench - Greg can pick up the bench required for the Honeybee Workshop area, from Brisbane. Arrange with Phil to go down and pick it up.

Scott - Last meeting he offered to pick up orders from Plasdene, did so for Chris and Dina. Encouraged share space to pick up, saved \$140 in shipping.

Native bees settled into his bathroom – while shaving, resin bees on mirror.

No honey in hives in Cooran for a long time, but a sudden increase in production, and suddenly lots of light honey.

Top Bar Hive

Less than convinced that Top Bar is for him. Feels there is even more disturbance of bees in the Top Bar than with the Langstroth. Learnt to approach bees slower and calmer, own energy calmer and slower. Lot of brood in Top Bar, not much honey. Production of bees is enormous - not much honey that is free of brood as full combs honey.

Mixed feelings, not convinced a good way to go.

What is flowering at the moment

Tea-tree is lowering at moment – you can smell the Tea-tree honey when walk past hive. There is also some Iron Bark out west. Tea-tree needs humidity, but humidity brings rain, and rain washes out nectar - Catch 22.

Foundation sheets

Foundation sheets are expensive at the moment, due to increased cost of wax. \$218 for a box of 100 sheets. Pauline to find out if we can get a better deal. Paying up to \$23 per kilo for buying wax.

Proposal to stock foundation sheets at Valley Bees for our members, and to stock a bit of everything, now that we have a locked workshop area.

'Ideal' supers

Moving towards ideals - Dan and Marilyn. More handle-able. Suggested to buy 'ideal' foundation as well. Do some pricings.

Honey Press

Scott enquiring about a honey press to get the honey out of his Top Bar frames. And he also has some frames with very tough, dark comb / wax. Scott to get back to us – looking up honey comb crusher.

Honey in cool room

Janelle asked what is minimum temperature to store honey. 20 degrees C for coolroom. Has a big chest freezer, bagged and put stickies in freezer. Refrigerated pantry - constant 20 degrees.

General rule, don't refrigerate honey for a long period. Don't heat above 45 degrees.

Cattle and bees

Bees in paddock, usually put electric fencing wire, cows are very inquisitive, will knock hives over. Best to put electric fence around hives.

Dan - Bloodwood honey fermenting in capped cells? Wildest tasting honey ever tasted. Very thin. Fermented it (and making something out of it, we're not sure what ☺).

Mostly on the coast and in humid conditions, the honey can ferment in the hive. Makes gas under the caps, pushes caps off.

Last thing: Remember our Gympie Show is a QBA Show, not a Valley Bees one. We are assisting and volunteering. Must enter 2 jars per entry this year (it was only one jar required last year due to extreme shortage of honey).

Meeting closed at 3-20pm

Valley Bees Workshop

Status at 11 March 2018

Completed – internal walls, plastering, electrics (light, fan and 3 double power points)

To be done: install door, plumb sink (sink provided by Allan Rainbow), install window sills x 2, paint floor and install aluminium coving

Expenditure to date:

Internal walls, ceilings and external cladding: \$2,000

Due to P Browne - Oz-Tac to fabricate flashing for sills: \$128

Paint internal: \$181.50

Entrance ramp: estimate \$100 for concrete

Total to date: \$2,409.50 (Net \$2,190)

Items to complete project:

Install window sills – by VB members

Install door, frame and furniture - \$375 fitting by VB members

Install sink and plumb – PVC pipe and fittings – estimate \$100 fitting by VB members

Paint floor and install aluminium coving – estimate \$450 by VB members

Work benches, shelving, cupboards – estimate \$250

Tools and equipment - ?? donations by VB members??

Total estimated costs to complete: \$1,175 (Net \$1,068)

Total cost: \$3,584.50 (Net \$3,259)

A special mention should be made of the many VB members who have put in many hours already helping to get the workshop to its present state – thank you.