

# BOURNEMOUTH & DORSET SOUTH BEEKEEPERS ASSOCIATION



## Newsletter

December 2020

**Dear All,**

Hi,

I hope this newsletter finds you all well. It is a little sad that we are still facing difficult times. Christmas is a time of year for my family where we all normally meet up. We may not have seen each other for quite a few months but this year, that will only be possible on a lesser scale. We must count ourselves lucky though as nobody in my family, from very young to very old, has had a health problem due to covid yet. My sympathy goes out to those who have been affected.

Winter so far has still been relatively mild. We see our bees out and about often. Around the end of December it may be time to think about treating with oxalic acid and putting a little fondant on to get them through January and February.

Previously in the fondant area, Paul Mann and Kelly Smith did sterling work for us. Purchasing fondant and takeaway containers to make up fondant packs which were sold for £1 at meetings. Sadly, we could not do that this year. If you want to make them up yourself, they normally bought the fondant from Friars Pride Ltd. 213 Haymoor Road, Poole.

It still looks like we will have to run a Zoom meeting for the AGM, which will be on Tuesday January 19th at 7.30pm. Links and details of this will be distributed nearer the time of the meeting. Please have a serious think whether you would like to put your self forward to be on the committee. We have a nice and easy going committee and you may find it fun. We meet about every 6 weeks on a weekday at 19:30. People with fresh ideas are very welcome. Apart from just being a committee member, posts which need to be filled this year are:

- Chairman
- Vice Chairman
- Education Co-ordinator

It was good to see members at the Zoom talks we have organised. The last talk was on "Queen Introduction" by Jonathon Getty on Tuesday 15th December. The next talk

will be by Dr. Keith Delaplane MBE on the 26th Jan titled "Biology and Practical Application of Honey Bee Multiple Mating". Thanks to Natalie Sewell for organising these. Watch your email for details nearer the time.

So it is only left for me to wish you all a great Christmas and a Happy New Year!

**Dave Neal**

Chairman@bads-bka.org  
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### Association Diary Dates

#### *West Parley Memorial Hall*

No meetings till further notice but do look at the emails for virtual meetings. Let's hope next year we can meet face to face again.

### Commentary

#### Ways of working...

In the supers you can let the bees grow their own foundation and comb from a starter strip or a run of their own wax on the top bar, the adjacent frames already having formed comb. This is nothing new. There are potential advantages compared to purchasing super foundation... less traces of field pesticides and hive treatments, letting the bees behave more naturally, easier to clean frames and the ability to harvest "natural" cut comb...

At the end of the season there are often frames which don't merit the labour of a further spin. These frames, if they have matching capping on both sides of the frame of a sufficient size and shape, can be harvested as cut comb. Once cut out, you can be reasonably confident the bees will reconstruct the comb the next season as in this example....



**Adrian Rozkovec**

### **Uncapping and uncapping....**

For the professional there are electric uncapping knives and motorised uncapping machines. Most of us are used to using elbow grease and uncapping knives, forks or scratchers. These are mostly messy to use, some honey is taken off with the cappings, and the process is slow.

Peter and I have just used this uncapping roller for the first time. There are various uncapping rollers. We used this one with metal teeth but there are also ones constructed with plastic teeth but can't vouch whether they are as effective.

Uncapping is faster, less honey is released into the uncapping tray, and for frames where the comb surface is not proud or even, it is easier to open the comb cells. To use this sort of roller we have found you need to do cross strokes as if you were whitewashing a wall with a broad brush. This way you can guarantee puncturing the caps sufficiently so that when the comb is spun, there is no impediment to releasing of the honey. As the roller picks up honey this acts as a glue picking up the cappings at the same time as puncturing the cells.

You are still left with a supply of fresh cappings for wax although less than if you used a more traditional method.

Definitely going to continue to use a capping roller.....



**Crushing in a press for heather honey....**



Heather honey is a wish of most beekeepers. You may be lucky in your normal location, or choose to move your hives to the heather for a short period late in the harvesting season. The honey is thixotropic (jelly like but liquefies when agitated or stirred) but can be spun if uncapped and then needled with a perforating uncapping roller. However, the usual practice is to completely remove the comb, or alternatively stripping down to the foundation midrib, and then put into a heather press lined with a straining cloth.

The comb taken for extraction should be fully capped. If high quality wax is also required, then this is taken from the comb before removal.

The comb is compressed until the honey stops flowing into the bucket. High quality heather honey, in contrast to "ordinary" honey, has small air bubbles due to the pressing process, and whilst it looks bright, it is opaque.

Alternatively, rather than extraction, just cut out the comb. This sells at a premium. Heather honey is also valued for making mead and used in Drambuie....

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**Peter Darley and Adrian Rozkovec**

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### **Baklava Recipe – An alternative for those that don't like Christmas Pies**

- Prep Time: 30 mins
- Cook Time: 40 mins
- Total Time: 1 hour 10 minutes
- Yield: 24 pieces

#### **Description**

This baklava recipe combines layers of honey-soaked crisp filo pastry and a cinnamon-scented nut mixture with pistachios, walnuts, and hazelnut (or you can use any combination of nuts). Baklava is the perfect make-ahead dessert because it's even better the next day!

I tried making this and found that the top layers separated and fell apart, so next time I will use more butter on the top layers to see if that works better. The orange essence added to the honey syrup made the house smell wonderful.

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#### **Ingredients**

##### **For the Baklava and Nut Filling....**

- 175g shelled pistachios, coarsely chopped
- 175g walnuts, coarsely chopped
- 175g hazelnuts, coarsely chopped
- 50g cup sugar
- 1 to 2 tbsp ground cinnamon (start with less if you're not sure)
- large pinch of ground cloves
- 2 x 220g chilled or frozen filo pastry, thawed
- 200 to 250g of unsalted butter, melted

##### **For the Honey Syrup**

- 150g sugar
- 250ml cold water
- 340ml honey
- 1 tbsp orange extract (optional)
- 5 whole cloves
- 1 lemon, juice of

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#### **Instructions**

Preheat the oven to 350 degrees F / 180 degrees C / Gas Mark 4

**Make the Honey Syrup:** Place the sugar and water in a saucepan and heat stove-top, stirring occasionally, until sugar dissolves. Add the honey, orange extract if using, and whole cloves; stir to mix. Bring to a boil, then lower heat and let simmer for about 25 minutes. Remove syrup from heat and let cool to lukewarm. Add lemon juice. Remove the whole cloves.

**Make the Nut Mixture:** In the bowl of a food processor fitted with a blade, add the pistachios, walnut, and hazelnuts. Pulse a few times to chop. Transfer to a large mixing bowl and add sugar, cinnamon, and ground cloves. Mix well to combine.

**Prepare the Filo Pastry:** Unroll the thawed filo pastry and place the sheets in between two clean kitchen towels. This will help keep the filo from breaking while you work.

**Assemble the Baklava:** Prepare a 9"x 13"x 2" baking pan. Brush the interior of the baking pan with some of the melted butter. To assemble the baklava, take one sheet of filo and place it in the pan (for this size pan, I typically fold my filo sheet in half, and it fits perfectly. You can also do a bit of trimming using a pair of kitchen shears). Brush the top of the filo sheet with the melted butter.

Repeat this process a few more times until you have used up about 1/3 of the filo pastry, each layer being brushed with the melted butter.

Now, distribute about ½ of the nut mixture evenly over the top layer of filo.

Continue assembling the baklava, one sheet of filo pastry at a time using another 1/3 of the filo. Again, brush each layer with a bit of the melted butter.

Distribute the remaining ½ of the nut mixture evenly over the top layer of filo.

Finish the remaining 1/3 of the filo pastry following the same process, laying one folded sheet at a time and brushing each layer with melted butter. Brush the very top sheet of filo with butter.

**Cut the Baklava Pastry Into Pieces:** Using a sharp knife, cut the pastry into 24 diamond shaped pieces (you can get up to 36 smaller pieces)

**Bake:** Place the baking dish on the middle rack of your heated oven. Bake anywhere from 35 to 45 minutes or until the top of the baklava turns golden and a skewer inserted in the center comes out clean. (IMPORTANT...Because ovens vary, be sure to check your baklava half-way through baking).

**Pour Syrup Over Hot Baklava:** As soon as you remove the baklava from the oven, pour the cooled syrup all over the hot baklava.

**Cool Completely:** Allow baklava to sit for a few hours before serving or for at least 1 hour. Cut through the earlier marked pieces. Serve with a garnish of chopped pistachios, if you like.

#### Notes

- **Cook's Tip:** Before you begin thaw the filo pastry package in the fridge overnight (review package instructions). Take it out of the fridge 1 hour before you start.
- **Cook's Tip:** To save time, while the syrup is simmering begin to assemble the baklava.
- **Let Baklava Sit a While Before Serving:** Make sure baklava cools completely before serving. Baklava is even better the next day when it's had time to absorb the syrup.

- **Storage and Freezer Instructions:** Ensure baklava is completely cool before storing. Cover it very well and store it at room temperature the first night, if you like. To store for a longer period, transfer the baklava to airtight glass containers and leave at room temperature or in the fridge for a few days or freeze for later use. Thaw frozen baked baklava in the fridge overnight or at room temperature for a few hours before serving.



Kind regards

**Anne Moran – Membership Secretary**

#### Bees for Development Update



Following the success of Bees for Development Ghana's work with cashew growers - helping them raise crop yields by up to 50% - we are taking a similar approach with growers of oranges and other fruits. Citrus growers have lost their market with the closure of a regional fruit processing plant, so we have begun beekeeping training with 20 people, representing 100 citrus growers from communities in the area, taking them on a supported journey towards reliable income.

We are delighted that our President HRH The Duchess of Cornwall is donating all proceeds from her honey sales this year to support our work. We are hoping that other beekeepers may follow her wonderful example!

Bees for Development can offer talks to beekeeping groups via Zoom. There is no fee for including them in your talks programme but a donation to the charity is encouraged.

The Bees for Development shop in Monmouth, South Wales is open again. The team would welcome your visit, but if you can't make it, many products are available online at ..

[shop.beesfd.org](http://shop.beesfd.org)

**This is YOUR Association Newsletter.** Please feel free to share your beekeeping experiences – good or bad – along with photos, honey recipes, hints and tips, anecdotes and links to any interesting articles.

Please email Adrian Rozkovec: [newsletter@bads-bka.org](mailto:newsletter@bads-bka.org)

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