



Gravesend Branch Newsletter

March 2026



Here comes the sun!

Good to have some sunny weather that will enable beekeepers to see whether their colonies have survived, bees returning to the hives loaded with pollen is an indication that brood is being raised within.

The Ancient BEgyptians...

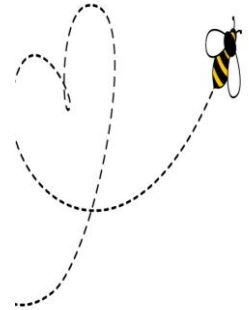
It is very well documented that raw honey was discovered in the pyramids and to be honest, honey would definitely be on my afterlife luxury list!

But what did the Ancient Egyptians think about honey bees.... Well, honey was used across the board by many different trades. It was used for paying taxes (!) and labour, sweetening foods (cakes, bread, fruit & wine), healing wounds (wounds, burns, and infections due to its natural antibacterial properties. It was also used to remedy tummy aches, coughs and eye infections), and embalming dead bodies. Due to its preservative qualities, honey was used in the mummification process, and beeswax was used to seal coffins and seal small body orifices.

It is true that Ancient Egyptians believed that honey bees were sacred, sent from the sun god Ra, formed from Ra's own tears. Additionally the buzzing was believed to be the voices of souls in the afterlife. Perplexed by how bees seemingly produced honey out of 'nothing', the Ancient Egyptians were in awe of these marvellous creatures. These beliefs resonated with the Pharaohs and the love of bees and their honey was held in high esteem so much so that they also take it to their graves to be enjoyed in the afterlife. Today, we know exactly what is going on and yet, we still marvel at the magic they bring!



Branch Lunch



The annual branch lunch at Bartellas on 28 February went very well, good food and fab company and most enjoyable. Thank you everyone that could be there! Lesley's bee raffle was a nice touch and everyone went home happy with full tums & a surprise bee acquisition!

Wishing Michelle a speedy recovery! And, best wishes for her continued recovery from being poorly and hospitalised.



Dates for your Diary.

The next Branch meeting is on Sunday 29th March, 2pm at the NT Visitor Centre Cobham. Roy Taylor our vice-chair will be looking at what makes bees swarm and the "Hardy" method of queen raising to replace/deal with the problem, followed by the usual chat and refreshments. Please park in the farmyard opposite avoiding obstructing the barn doors

Bee Equipment.

Hilde Koets has surplus equipment for sale that she will post on the WhatsApp group for your interest.