



NEWSLETTER

January 2022

www.aycliffebees.com

For all newsletter items: Contact Roger on 01325 315741
or e-mail us at : aycliffebka@gmail.com

All articles and photographs, items for sale etc are welcome.

HONEYLAND

To be shown on Wednesday, January 19th (7pm – 9pm): HONEYLAND – the award-winning feature film...Oak Leaf Sports Centre.

Nestled in an isolated mountain region deep within the Balkans, Hatidze Muratova lives with her ailing mother in a village without roads, electricity or running water. She's the last in a long line of Macedonian wild beekeepers, eking out a living farming honey in small batches to be sold in the closest city – a mere four hours' walk away. Honeyland chronicles a period of Hatidze's life when her ancient methods of beekeeping came up against, and conflicted with, those of a newcomer to her remote home region. Hatidze first appears on a dangerous cliff edge wearing no protective mask, a cloud of bees swarming as she removes honeycomb from a hive in rocks. She is an incredible woman, a natural optimist living in poverty - Her life might not be the one she would have chosen, but Hatidze lives it with gusto, licking the plate clean.



Hatidze's peaceful existence is thrown into upheaval by the arrival of an itinerant family, with their roaring engines, seven rambunctious children and herd of cattle. Hatidze optimistically meets the promise of change with an open heart, offering up her affections, her brandy and her tried-and-true beekeeping advice. It doesn't take long however, before Hussein, the itinerant family's patriarch, senses opportunity and develops an interest in selling his own honey. Hussein has seven young mouths to feed and nowhere to graze his cattle,

and he soon casts Hatidze's advice aside in his hunt for profit. This causes a breach in the natural order that provokes a conflict with Hatidze that exposes the fundamental tension between nature and humanity, harmony and discord, exploitation and sustainability. Even as the family provides a much-needed respite from Hatidze's isolation and loneliness, her very means of survival are threatened.

Honeyland has much to say about conserving nature, but its lessons are also about human life and relationships. It's a tough and tender portrait of the delicate balance between humankind and nature, a glimpse at a fast disappearing way of life, and an unforgettable testament to one extraordinary woman's resilience. The film is set in an unearthly land, unattached to a specific time and geography, unreachable by regular roads, and yet, only 20 km away from the nearest modern city.

Honeyland really is a miraculous feat, shot over three years as if by invisible camera – not a single furtive glance is directed towards the film-makers. As for Hatidze, you could watch her for hours. In a heart-tugging scene with one of Hussein's sons, a favourite of hers, he asks why she didn't leave the village. "If I

had a son like you, it would be different," she answers. They both look off wistfully, dreaming of another life, a world of harmony. The honey she sells at the market in the capital of North Macedonia, Skopje, is her sole source of income. She takes only half of the honey, leaving the rest for the bees. She lives by that simple principle. "Sharing with bees and with nature is the key to her survival," To be able to communicate with bees you need to have a personal strength to approach them, patience to learn how to tame them, and this way of life requires not force but wisdom.

Hatidze gets very close to the bees, often using no protection. She does not get stung, the bees seem to trust her. Everything we've heard from Hatidze refers to bees. She has been working with the bees all her life and everything she has learned, she learned from them. Wild beekeeping was something that only a few people in the region learned how to do. It was never the main source of income for the villagers, but the families passed it down through generations. In Hatidze's family, learning the skill skipped a generation - she learned it as a girl from her grandfather, rather than her parents. Hatidze acts with the bees as if they were her family and she takes care of them as if they were her children, and through that, even though her life is very harsh, Hatidze doesn't feel lonely.



Wednesday, February 9th (7pm – 9pm):. Speakers: Roger & Chris ('Ant & Dec') : Preparing for the new season. Roger and Chris will cover a wide variety of things including preparation for the BASIC assessment and what to look for when choosing an apiary site..... Oak Leaf Sports Centre.

Wednesday, March 16th (7.30pm – 9pm): Speaker: Tony Jefferson (Whitby BKA): Dealing with SWARMS..... Tony will talk about dealing with swarms and how best to prepare bees for increase. Tony is a very well respected beekeeper with over 50 years of experience in the Whitby area. He'll probably go of on different tangents and there'll be plenty of opportunities to ask questions. Another talk not to be missed. Oak Leaf Sports Centre

April 16th – 18th : BBKA Spring Conference, Harper-Adams University, Newport

Sunday, April 25th : OPEN DAY at the Eco-Centre (2 – 4pm)

May 7th/8th : Beginners Course : (Eco Centre/St. Oswalds Apiary)

Beekeeping Equipment and Supplies

Equipment, tools and Foundation are all readily available. You can contact Stuart (our equipment officer) by phone: **01325 320236** or email **equipment.aycliffebka@gmail.com** to enquire or order. Please ask Stuart if you would like him to send you a Price List.

BEES

We are now into the New Year and it won't be long before your bees start to wake up. It has been a relatively mild winter and the bees have been quite active during it. This being the case, for many of our colonies, food supplies will be getting quite low and this is a crucial time of the winter as we go in to Spring. Once the bees emerge they will try to find nectar and pollen but there's not much around at this time of the year and therefore they could easily starve if you don't help them out. We keep a supply of fondant on the hives between September and March but we would advise adding some now if you haven't already done so.

Assessments; Modules; Training for 2022

Assessments will be taking place again this year subject to covid-19 restrictions being lifted and availability of tutors. Though we don't recommend members to do lots of studying for studies sake, we would certainly urge members to look at what modules are available and which would best enhance their beekeeping skills. The BBKA run various courses as part of their education programme. If you are unsure what this would involve please contact Chris Barker to talk it over.

Contact : Chris Barker for more information.
training.aycliffbka@gmail.com Tel: 07421 471581

Winter Jobs in the Apiary.

1. Make sure the hives are sound and water-proof.
2. All supers and spare equipment is stored properly
3. Attend meetings and try out new activities.
4. Check your colonies every 2 – 3 weeks to ensure all is well.
5. Check and refill fondant supplies
6. Read a good beekeeping book.
7. Assess your equipment provisions and clean, re-paint etc...
8. Is your bee suit sound...are there any holes in the veil?
9. Which gloves do you use...have you tried nitrile or latex gloves?
10. Consider what social media links you can tap into and read newsletters.

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