

In May, 2011, I began a search to trace the development of the Lancaster County Beekeepers Association (LCBA). Since then, I have met with most of the charter members, some current members, and friends and supporters of the local association. Thanks to their effort, time and assistance, some of its history has been pieced together. It has been a pleasure and a blessing talking and sharing time with them. Some of their pictures, ideas, contributions, and stories have been included and will be updated as its history continues. This segment covers only the beginning years, 2001- 2003.

Thomas “Kip” Beam was the Clemson Cooperative Extension Agent for Lancaster County, in 2001.



During an interview with Kip, this past August, I ask him how the bee association came about. He said it started with a phone call, in June of 2001. “Somebody called wanting information on **how to split a hive** and I didn’t know anything about it.” I got in touch with Joel Shuler, a local beekeeper, from Ft. Lawn. Joel had about 6 hives and learned a lot of his beekeeping skills and knowledge from Georg Burbach. Very soon, Joel and I put on a beekeeper’s workshop for small farmers and fresh fruit and vegetable growers. It was held at USC, Lancaster. Joel brought in some tools of the trade and hive boxes and we discussed beekeeping and answered some questions. What surprised me the most was the turnout - about 20 people showed up. Many of them expressed an interest in forming a county association.

A few days later, Kip contacted his counter part in York County, Henry Nunnery, regarding the formation for a local bee chapter in Lancaster.



Henry helped establish the York County Beekeepers in 1987 and has played an integral part in that organization. Carroll Moore, president of YCBA said “Henry’s dedication to his position as county agent is very evident to all, through his enthusiasm for our program, and the professionalism, which he exhibits in his support and guidance of association affairs. Many of the accomplishments of our association would not have been achieved without Henry’s influence and sincere desire to help us achieve our goals.” At the next meeting, Henry met with the members of the York County Beekeepers Association and they provided Kip with a copy of their constitution and by-laws and they agreed to help out in anyway they could. In fact, in February of 2002, two of York’s members, Charlie Johnson and Jim Benware were the instructors for the first certified level beekeeping course offered by the newly formed Lancaster association, along with Dr. Mike Hood

The Lancaster Chapter planned its first meeting on Aug 30, 2001, at 7pm at the Hopewell Methodist Church on Heyward Hough Rd, just off highway #9.



Dr. Mike Hood, Clemson University apiculturist and beekeeper would present a program. Dues were \$15.00 per year. Beam said the association's goal are promoting better beekeeping, generating interest in beekeeping and increasing interest in the use of bees for pollination of fruits and vegetables.

Kip also added "I don't know that much about beekeeping but we have people like Georg Burbach, who has a wealth of knowledge when it comes to bees. You'd be surprised with what a lot of these people can do."

Both Georg and Magdalena have been a constant source of help, information, and generosity for many beekeepers and for many years. He learned a lot of his bee keeping from his grand father, on his mother's side. They raised bees in Yugoslavia. His grandmother tended the bees in WW1 while his grandfather was stationed in Macedonia. She was very successful, growing their collection to 75 hives. Georg continued the family traditions after they arrived in the U.S. In 1957, a tornado broke a tree in Jefferson, revealing a bee hive. Georg was doing some carpentry work in the area and collected the bees in a nail keg to take them home. Then a neighbor called him about a swarm in an apple tree. Georg went and got those, too.

That's how he got started. In 1988, Georg and Magdalena had 127 Hives.

In 2007, Georg was named Beekeeper of the Year for South Carolina. In his nomination letter to the state association, Wayne Bell wrote: “When we have a question, we ask Georg. When we lose a queen during the middle of a honey flow, we ask Georg—he might just have one. There is not a beekeeper in Lancaster County who has not been helped by Georg Burbach. Whether it’s helping a sick friend to work his or her colonies or patiently coaching and coaxing a newbie, Georg’s willingness to give of his time and wisdom are without equal.” Wayne said Magdalena is also an important part of beekeeping here because she extracts the honey and gets it ready for sale.”



The picture below is the “old Davis building” on West Dunlap Street, given to me by C. Lindsay Pettus. Lindsay has been extremely helpful in piecing together some of the early history of the LCBA. The planning committee for LCBA met at the Davis building for several years. The Davis building also housed the County’s Cooperative Extension Service Office, in 2001. The Davis building was demolished several years later and the Extension Office moved to its new location, at 107 South French Street, Lancaster.



More recently, Mike Adams, arranged for LCBA to meet at the Marion Sims Theater at

Springs Memorial Hospital.



The **first officers** of the LCBA were the following:

President: Eugene "Cricket" Harper

Vice-President: Wayne Bell

Treasurer/Sec.: Denise Keating

Chaplain: Randolph Mackey

"Cricket" Harper, 2011.



Cricket served as President of the LCBA from 2002-2003, and 2003-2004. He was involved in many activities and programs and a friend to many in Lancaster and the surrounding communities. More recently he has been very active with the American Red Cross. He spent most of September, 2011 in Hazelton, Pa., helping out in the aftermath of Hurricane Irene, in 2011.

The following picture is of Wayne Bell. Wayne served as vice- President for the first two years, and has taught the certified bee keeping course for many years. He has worked very hard on behalf of the association and its bee keepers. More importantly he was Cricket's right hand man and completed many tasks. Later, Wayne served several terms as the President of LCBA. He has given a lot of time, energy and support to both the local association, many bee keepers, and has performed various tasks at the State level. We are indebted to him for his many years of service. Wayne will continue to teach part-time, in the certified bee course in 2012. His topics will include the various diseases, integrated pest management, and related topics.

Wayne was recently nominated as President - Elect for the South Carolina State Bee Keepers Association. Congratulations from all, for your help and achievements.



CHARTER MEMBERS

Georg and Magdalena Burbach, Jim Garrison, Eugene "Cricket" Harper, Eddie Brunson, J.E. Hinson, Wayne Bell, Denise Keating, Randolph Mackey, and Kip Beam

The first Chaplain was Randolph Mackey



Randolph Mackey is a man of many talents. He's a first rate carpenter, and excellent cook and interior decorator, and accomplished piano/organ player. He has performed at several churches in the area. One of the center pieces in his home is an organ, dating back to 1900, a gift from his mother-in-law, upon passing. He is an outstanding beekeeper, and a helpful friend and supporter to many beekeepers.

Randolph's interest in bees began when he was a youngster. He spent his summers at his grand daddy's farm, helping him and his uncles, picking cotton, tending the animals, and doing various chores. One day, he visited one of the neighbors, who had some bees. That's when Randolph had his first taste of raw, pure, honey. From that day on he knew that someday, he would have his own bees. He bought his first bees with his buddy, Charlie Johnson, from York. They attended bee meetings there. After a while, they approached Kip Beam about having some meetings in Lancaster and forming a bee club. About the same time Kip was getting calls from others in the area, and you know the rest.

Mr. Mackey has 26 hives that run up almost into Liberty. He operates a very successful honey business. His honey house has had routine inspections by Angie Culler,

from SC Dept. of Agriculture. She noted that his honey house was clean and well kept and suitable for honey production, always an “A” rating.

Mr. Mackey has some swamp land on his 100 acre farm and enjoys the darker honey that he harvests there. He’s a firm believer in the greater health benefits derived from darker honey. He shared some facts from an article written by Dr. Myles H. Bader, “Darker Honey Is Better For You”. As we bantered back and forth about Nature’s Golden Treasures, we touched on “Tests Show Most Store Honey Isn’t Honey” and “Top Pollen Detective Finds Honey a Sticky Business”. Perhaps we should hang a sign on the shelf in stores, where the “fake honey is displayed”!!!

As he stacked up more info from the National Honey Board., Randolph shared stories about a Veteran and his surgeries in PA., and his own accident, while cutting some farm machinery with a torch and the role of honey in the healing process from these events. He has a passion for his bees, at many different levels. At the end of the day, I invited Mr. Mackey to come to the Lancaster group and talk about the “Medicinal Qualities of Honey” and he graciously agreed to share his knowledge and information.

Besides tending his own bees, Mr. Mackey found time to help with the formation of the Farmers Market in Camden. Here, he had many opportunities to talk with the public about the bee industry and many of the misconceptions about bees.

Later, he worked with other bee keepers to establish the Wateree Beekeeper’s Association. Many “newbies” find their way to his farm and he continues to be of service to all, new and old alike. His love and personal foundation for bees are based on many of the 51 passages in the Bible, beginning in Genesis 43:11 to Revelation 10: 9&10.

While we were looking at some of his hives, Mr. Mackey gave me a recipe for preventive treatment of mites and beetles. He finds this works for him.

Recipe: 4lbs. Granulated Sugar

1&½ lbs. Of Shortening
¼ to 1/3 cup of Mineral Salt - Pink
½ lb. of Honey
3 TBSP of Natural Wintergreen 45 cc’s

He blends the ingredients together, stores in a covered bucket. It looks like a dull white paste, with the consistency of clay, that you can roll with your fingers. After frames are placed in hive box, he scoops out the mixture with a putty knife and daps it **between** the end spaces of adjoining frames, **but only at the ends** of the frames, on both sides, where they butt together and rest on the hive box, **not along the whole frame.**

J.E. Hinson at his work shop in Lancaster.



JE Hinson is a charter member and he said that he made the best honey in the City of Lancaster. He and his buddy Crickett, were very instrumental in getting the LCBA off the ground. JE donated two observations hives, that he constructed to LCBA, so members could visit schools, churches and other organization.

There are two other charter members, Jim Garrison and Eddie Bruson. Jim has been a keeper of bees for the past fifty years. Jim's connection with Eddie date back to the early 1970's, when Eddie was hired as a tire builder for General Tire and Rubber. This began a friendship that would last 40 plus years. Jim says "we were hunting and fishing partners and it was at Deer Hunting camp that Eddie started cooking. After the hunt was over, he would cook strips of deer meat for the hunters. Over the years Eddie developed a

cooking process for steaks, BBQ, BBQ Chicken and Chicken Bogg. He could feed two or two hundred people.

When Eddie showed an interest in bee keeping, we became partners in bee keeping. Eddie's first hive of bees was purchased from Lester Waldrop, a long time friend and bee keeper. We bought our equipment from a bee keeper that was giving up bee keeping. This included a honey extractor, decapping knife, hive bodies, supers, etc. This is a picture of Jim Garrison at Eddie Brunson's house.



Over the years, we collected swarms of bees from bushes, shot limbs off trees to get to the bees, or climbed the trees and cut the limbs and then carried limb and bees to the ground. If a bee yard was needed, to instruct new members on bee keeping methods, Eddie volunteered his hives and equipment. Eddie also volunteered his shop's dining room, an area that could seat 30 plus bee keepers, when a place to meet and eat arose. If other bee keepers needed to extract their honey, Eddie volunteered our equipment and our help. Eddie enjoyed bee keeping and was glad to share his knowledge and methods to other bee keepers. He never said no to a request or a need. His bees and his keeper of bees partner will miss him. Eddie passed away on July 2, 2011.

This is a picture of Eddie Brunson and his wife Louise, vacationing in Hawaii.



Like all new associations some “seed money” was needed to support the fledging Lancaster group. President Cricket met with the Farm Bureau here in Lancaster. They discussed the importance of pollination to the farming industry, crops, etc. The Farm Bureau made a generous donation of \$300.00 in support of the association.

Eddie Brunson was “famous” for his BBQ and a fundraiser event was held. With the help of the members, somewhere between \$ 400-500 was raised in support of LCBA.

Later, Mr. Jack McCauley, a member of the Lancaster group, contacted and received Grant monies from the Exxon Corporation, in the amount of \$500.00. Some of the money has been used to build a collections of books and materials for the beekeepers. Bill Powers took charge of this project for a number of years.

After a few more meetings, Kip Beam contacted Dr Hood, on December 28, 2001

regarding the planning committee recommendation for the first certified level beekeeper short course, in 2002. This was their recommendation:

Date	Topic
Feb 9 9am-1pm	Introduction to the honeybee Selecting the Apiary Thinking like a honeybee Things bees collect Instructors: Charlie Johnson and James Benware York County Beekeepers Association
Feb 23 9am-1pm	Sources of nectar Diseases and pests of the honeybee Pesticides and the honeybee Honey and minor products of the honeybee Instructor: Dr. Mike Hood, Clemson University
Mar 9 9am-1pm	Starting a beehive Building equipment Honey packaging and labeling Swarms and Swarm Control Instructors: Charlie Johnson and James Benware
Mar 23 9am-12pm	Working with Honeybees Lighting a smoker Identifying stages of development of the honeybee Seasonal Hive Management Lunch
1pm	Certified level Beekeepers written test (optional) Certified level beekeepers practical test (optional)

This year's class had 24 participants and it was a huge success.

The membership list for 2002 was:

Mike and Mary Ann Adams

Martha Barrineau

Kip Beam

Wayne and Antoinette Bell

Ken Blackmon

Eddie Brunson

George & Magdalena Burbach

Ann Christie

Jim Garrison

Strait Gaston

Eugene "Cricket" Harper

J.E. Hinson

Noel Hurley

Denise Keating

Randolph Mackey

Jack McCauley

Lindsay Pettus

Tim and Lane Phillips

Jo Anne Sachs

Patricia and Robert Smith

Lester Waldrop

Al Whisonant

Charlie Whisonant

An important discovery, **the recognition and capture of small hive beetles at two different sites in Lancaster County was made on November 15, 2002.** Kip Beam notified Dr. Hood and samples were collected from both sites for tests and analysis.

The membership grew quickly. Records as of Sept. 1, 2003 show the following:

Mike and Mary Ann Adams,

Joe R. Bailey

Martha Barrineau

David Baker

Kip Beam

Wayne and Antoinette Bell

Ken Blackmon

Eddie Brunson

Georg and Magdalena Burbach

Anne Christie

Steve Cox

Lee Evans

Jim Garrison

Eugene "Cricket" Harper

J.E. Hinson

Noel Hurley

Denise Keating

Kent Jewell

Randolph Mackey

Bruce Martin

Jack McCauley

Lindsay Pettus

Tim and Lane Phillips

Bill and Mary Powers

Len Robinson

Jo Anne and Stuart Sachs

Jarvis Steen

Joel Shuler

Lester Waldrop

In addition to regular meeting, LCBA conducted two public education activities. Toni Bell, Jo Anne and Stuart Sachs manned a booth at Andrew Jackson State Park, on March 16, 2003. In spite of the rain there was a good turnout. Several people expressed interest in LCBA and a gentleman from Africa, ask for help to establish beekeeping in his homeland. Also, Denise Keating, Wayne and Toni Bell presented a program for 25 children and their parents, at the Covenant Baptist Church, on April 4, 2003.

Please send suggestions/corrections, events, stories, etc. to Don Carrier

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