

Bee-keeper busy as a bee

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By LISA MCKNIGHT

Like Winnie the Pooh bear almost everyone enjoys the sweet, succulent taste of honey. What we usually try to avoid are the bees which produce the honey.

However, not everyone avoids bees. Many people in Southern Ontario are keeping as busy as bees, keeping bees.

William Blyderveen, from Burgessville, has been a bee keeper for most of his life. He raises bees to sell to other bee keepers across Canada, and also extracts a bit of honey to sell at a store located on his farm called the Honey Scep. However, most of his honey is imported from Manitoba.

Mr. Blyderveen keeps 250 hives on his farm, each hive nesting approximately 80,000 bees. He said that bee-keeping is almost extinct as a full-time occupation but explained many do it as a hobby.

He said the local and provincial government is at fault for the drop in honey production since they spray unnecessary chemicals on flowers and weeds everywhere. Once the flowers are gone, so is the supply of nectar for the bee. Thus the bee cannot produce honey.

The bees are kept outside where they are free to leave the hives. In the winter the bees cluster together to keep from freezing.

"If you look after the bees really well during the winter you may have to replenish your dead stock but you will not have to buy an entire new stock," said Mr. Blyderveen.

A worker female bee which cannot lay eggs will survive from four to six months in the winter but in the summer it has a short life-span of approximately six weeks.

The new bees brought in each year are shipped in two or three pound packages from Alabama or Georgia.

A queen bee can live up to five years, but Mr. Blyderveen likes to replace them after one or two years. Since they only lay eggs once a lifetime, he replaces the queen with a new one who has not laid her eggs yet.

Mr. Blyderveen imports only a few queen bees. For his own purposes he enjoys creating his own queen cells.

A six-hour-old larva from a normal bee is put into an artificial queen's cell which is made out of wax. This is placed in a queenless hive. The other bees feed it and eventually they will hatch into a queen bee. If two or three queens are left in the same hive, they will fight until death to see who will rule the hive.

All bees produce honey. The two main types are Italian and Cocasion bee. The Italian bees can live in warmer climate than the cocasion or black bee and are slightly larger.

Skunks are a major problem with bee keeping, said Mr. Blyderveen.

"You're safe if they are fenced out but if they get inside to where your hives are they can destroy you." A skunk has an appetite for bees and can consume 40,000 bees per night.

According to Mr. Blyderveen, the Northern Hemisphere will never be faced with the problem of the dangerous South African Killer bee.

"I know 50 years ago there were killer bees in Africa. The trouble started long before Brazil imported the bee which survived so well in the Brazilian tropics."

Killer bees are dangerous because they swarm in thousands, noted Mr.

Blyderveen. The killer bee, which is the smallest of all bees could never survive in a non-tropical area because they do not know how to cluster and therefore they would freeze. They have no need to cluster in the tropics and therefore are not accustomed to doing it.

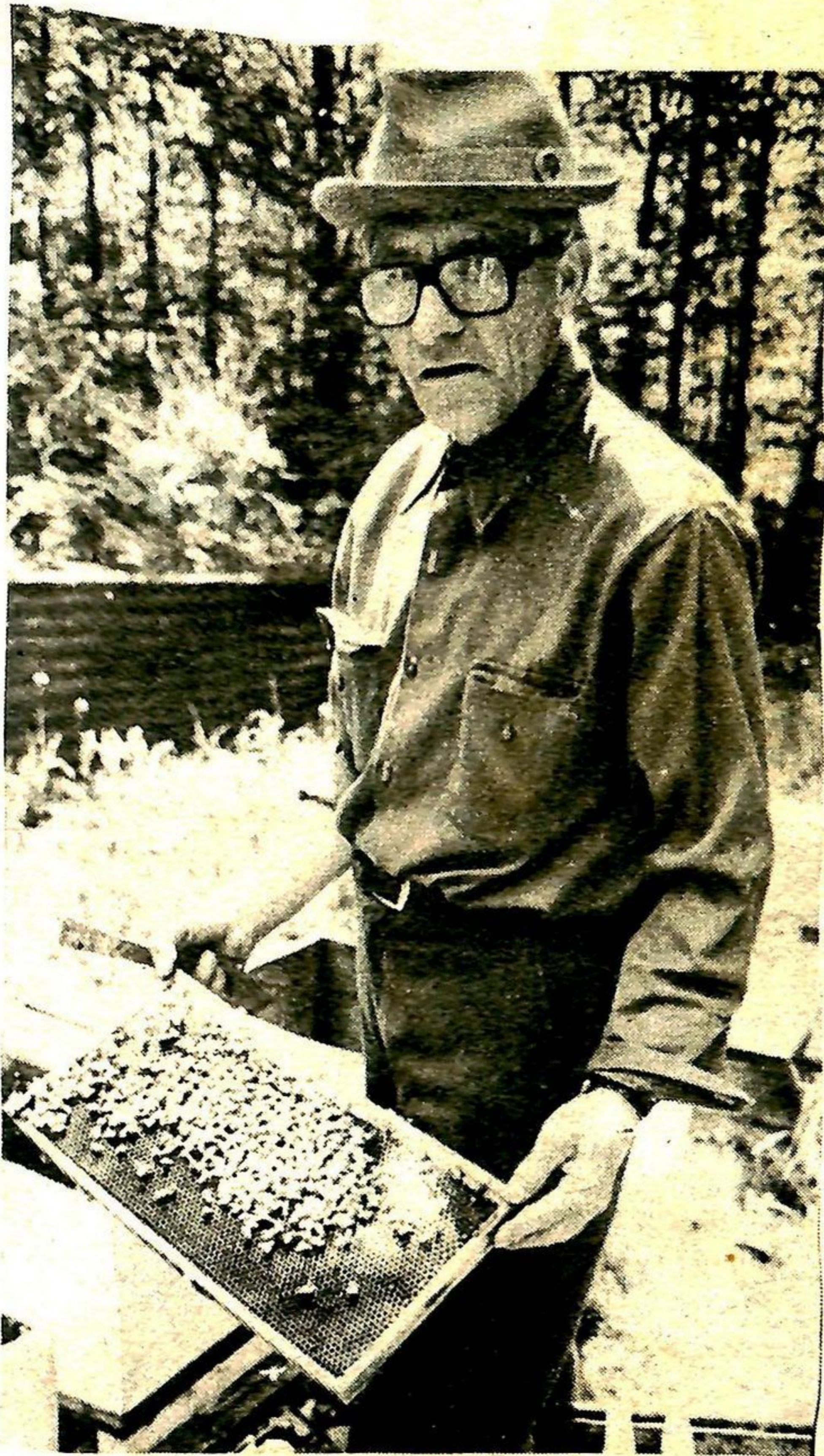
Mr. Blyderveen's interest in bee keeping came about

when his father, who had raised bees, gave up to the practice due to the chemicals which were sprayed in Holland over the flowers.

Mr. Blyderveen said the chemicals were as bad in Holland then as they are in Canada now. At the age of 10, Mr. Blyderveen took over where his father left off.

He doesn't wear any protective gear when taking care of the bees. He claims he's been stung so many times that he is now immune to the sting and cannot feel it.

Unfortunately, most people are not immune to bee stings, and like Winnie the Pooh, we must grin and bear those painful stings.



Bee keeper William Blyderveen shows a small example of the bees which he keeps on his farm, in Burgessville. He also operates a store which sells honey called the Honey Scep on his farm. (NG Photo).

Ernest Turner

Ernest Turner of 130 King St., Tillsonburg, passed away at Tillsonburg District Memorial Hospital on Wednesday, January 20, 1982, in his 87th year.

Born in North Norwich Township, November 1, 1895, he was a son of the late Henry Turner and the former Amy Elsie Otis. Mr. Turner was a member of Houghton Brethren in Christ Community Church, Frogmore. A retired dairy farmer, he farmed in the Burgessville area.

Mr. Turner was predeceased by his first wife the former Mae Hammond in 1964 and by his second wife the former Hazel Pearl McHardy in 1975.

Surviving are his third wife, the former Mildred Hall; one daughter, Mrs. James (Mavis) Deer of Burgessville; and two grandchildren, Jeffrey and Lisa Deer.

Resting at the Ostrander's Funeral Home, Tillsonburg, where the complete service will be held Saturday, January 23, at 1:30 p.m. conducted by Rev. John R. Sider of Houghton Brethren in Christ Community Church, Frogmore.

Interment in Harris St. Cemetery.

Memorial donations to the building fund of Houghton Brethren in Christ Community Church, Frogmore, would be greatly appreciated by the family.

William Robert McMillen

William Robert McMillen of 41 Church St. E., Burgessville, passed away suddenly at his residence on Tuesday, January 26, 1982, in his 61st year.

Born in North Norwich Township, he was a son of the late Mr. and Mrs. John Robert McMillen. A life-long resident of the area, he operated a garage business in Burgessville for 31 years. He was a member and treasurer of Burgessville United

Church; member of the Woodstock Chapter of the Barbershoppers; member of the IOOF; and a member of the Royal Canadian Legion Branch 190, Norwich, serving as an air frame mechanic in World War 11.

Surviving are his wife, the former Mildred Ruth Turner; a daughter, Mrs. Shirley Thompson of Norwich; a son, Edward McMillen of Toronto; two step-daughters, Mrs. Murray (Colleen) Cole of Woodstock and Mrs. Malcolm (Sharon) Mann of Port Dover; a sister, Mrs. Raymond (Merla) DeMontmorency and a brother, Jack McMillen, both of Norwich; and seven grandchildren.

Resting at the Arn and Son Funeral Residence, Norwich, where the funeral and committal service will be held Thursday, January 28 at 2 p.m. conducted by Rev. Cyril Dyke of Burgessville United Church.

Temporary entombment in Norwich Mausoleum with spring interment in Burgessville Cemetery.

Ross Albert Palmer

Ross Albert Palmer of Burgessville passed away at Norvilla Nursing Home, Norwich, on Saturday, January 16, 1982, in his 78th year.

Born in Burford Township, he was a son of the late Mr. and Mrs. Charles E. Palmer and farmed for many years in the East Oxford area. He retired to Burgessville in 1966. Mr. Palmer was a member of East Oxford Baptist Church, and a former member of the East Oxford School Board and Norwich District High School Board.

Surviving are his wife, the former Mildred L. Stevenson; one son, Ronald Palmer of Woodstock; one daughter, Mrs. James

(Lois) Pepper of Chatham; two grandchildren, Janet and John Pepper; one sister, Marion Palmer of Burgessville; and one brother, Stanley Palmer of Woodstock.

Rested at the Arn and Son Funeral Residence, Norwich, where the funeral and committal service was held Tuesday, January 19 at 2 p.m. conducted by Rev. Alex Gray of Dresden Baptist Church.

Spring interment in Norwich Cemetery.