

75 Million Workers Toil In One Honey of a Business

Has 75 Million Workers
Seventy five million bees are currently working day and night for a Hornby man making honey in area fields.

About 35,000,000 of them will drop dead from exhaustion after their summer of frantic toil.

The 750,000,000 bees work for Hornby beekeeper Ed Robertson who produced 100,000 lbs. of honey last year for such big wholesalers as Billy Bee and Beekist companies.

The beekeeper and his 16-year-old son Jack are getting their machines and storage drums ready for the extracting season which runs from mid-August until end of September.

1.053 Miles

As they clean and prepare their equipment in the beehouse at this crossroad hamlet seven miles south of Georgetown, the bees are hard at work in 1,000 colonies or hives in 23 different locations. The furthest one is 22 miles away. Robertson buys the bees and the hives but leases the land they sit on from county farmers.

Robertson has been a beekeeper for more than 30 years and his father and grandfather were beekeepers before him. Young Jack will probably keep it in the family for many more years to come, his father said. The Robertsons, who live next to the apiary, enjoy their own product. They eat about 100 pounds of honey a year.

Good Year

The 100,000 pounds last year was exceptional, the beekeeper said, but this year expects only half that because of the dry summer. The dry weather dries the clover and alfalfa blossoms right up and the bees are denied the nectar they need to make the honey.

If the crop is down this year, it won't be the fault of the bees. They're working at it day and night. The worker bees which do all the work are females. Included in the 75,000 bees in each hive are the drones, male bees who don't do a tap of work the whole time. The guard bees keep watch on their own colonies and bar any bees from other hives.

Then there are the queen bees but just one to a hive. Their job is to produce the young bees and keep Robertson's beeyards in a constant state of procreation except for a period of rest during the winter.

"The queen bees are important to the proper function of a hive, and except for the winter, have to be laying all the time for you to have a good hive," Robertson explained.

Buys Queens

He gets his queen bees from Alabama. He buys 250 every year at about \$2 each, marking down their ages and keeping track of them in the hives.

Production of a queen bee starts dropping off after two years, he said, so he kills them off and gets new ones.

Normally a queen bee could live up to ten years but the life of other bees is very short, especially for the worker bees who fly from hive to clover and back again gathering nectar at such a frantic pace that they wear themselves out and die.

Two or three 'honey supers' are placed on top of the hives and these boxes of cones are where the bees deposit the honey they make. During the extraction season coming up next month, the beekeeper and his son go around to the various beeyards in their truck and wearing veils, hats, gloves and coveralls, load the honey supers on the truck.

Nasty at Times

"You have to know how to handle bees — with great care," noted the expert when asked

about their stinging capacities. "They get nasty in bad weather so you have to be extra careful when there's a storm in the air," he added.

Back at the beehouse the boxes of honey cones are placed in a heat room of 80 degrees to warm the honey so that it will extract and run freely.

From here the flat rectangular cones are put through an 'extractor' which takes a capping of beeswax from the cones to expose the honey. The cones then go into a big drum called an extractor and the honey runs out through a pipe and is pumped upstairs where it is strained and runs into 3000 pound barrels to settle for one week. Last step is to pour it into 650 pound barrels for transportation to the honey wholesalers.

Customers Stop

Beekeeper Robertson, last year sold 8,000 pounds of this natural honey in pails to customers shopping at his Hornby honeyhouse.

The by-product of beeswax which leaves the uncapper machine is not wasted but used to make new cones and sold for use as candles and a basic ingredient for women's cosmetics and in the manufacture of ammunition.

Robertson, understandably, is a honey man. "Honey's about the only food that doesn't have to be processed before going to the consumer."

LIMEHOUSE

W.A. Women Cater For Anniversary

Congratulations to Mr. and Mrs. K. C. Lindsay, who celebrated their golden wedding anniversary on the weekend with a dinner for family and friends numbering fifty-five, catered to by the W.A. ladies in Limehouse Presbyterian Church, where both are members and he an elder, on Saturday evening. The family held open house at the home of Mr. and Mrs. Donald Lindsay, the family homestead, where a large number called to extend their good wishes on Sunday afternoon and evening.

We regret the loss by fire of another large barn in our area. Mr. Neilson Stark's large barn and the seasons' crop burned to the ground on Sunday afternoon.

We extend sympathy to the family of the late Mrs. Andrew Clarke, who lived here for a

time some years ago. She was mother of Cyril Clarke formerly of Limehouse. She died at Halton Centennial Mandir on Saturday a week ago and her funeral was held on Tuesday.

We are sorry that little Peter Stevens must wear a cast for a cracked bone in his elbow, the result of a fall from playground equipment.

Mrs. Robert Storey of Toronto, who has been visiting her sister, Mrs. Mills, for a few weeks has returned home.

Misses Linda and Velma Linham, and Catherine Sinclair enjoyed a motor trip to Algonquin Park and Ottawa a few days last week.

— Mrs. A. Benton

NEW LIBRARY BOOKS

NON FICTION BOOKS
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Wolff, Sula: Children Under Stress
Gribble, Leoard: Famous Stories of Police and Crime
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Feuer, Lewis S.: The Conflict of Generations
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Ripault, Christian: Children's Gastronomique
Higgins, Alfred: Common-Sense Guide to Refinishing Antiques
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Ormsbee, Thomas B.: Early American Furniture Makers
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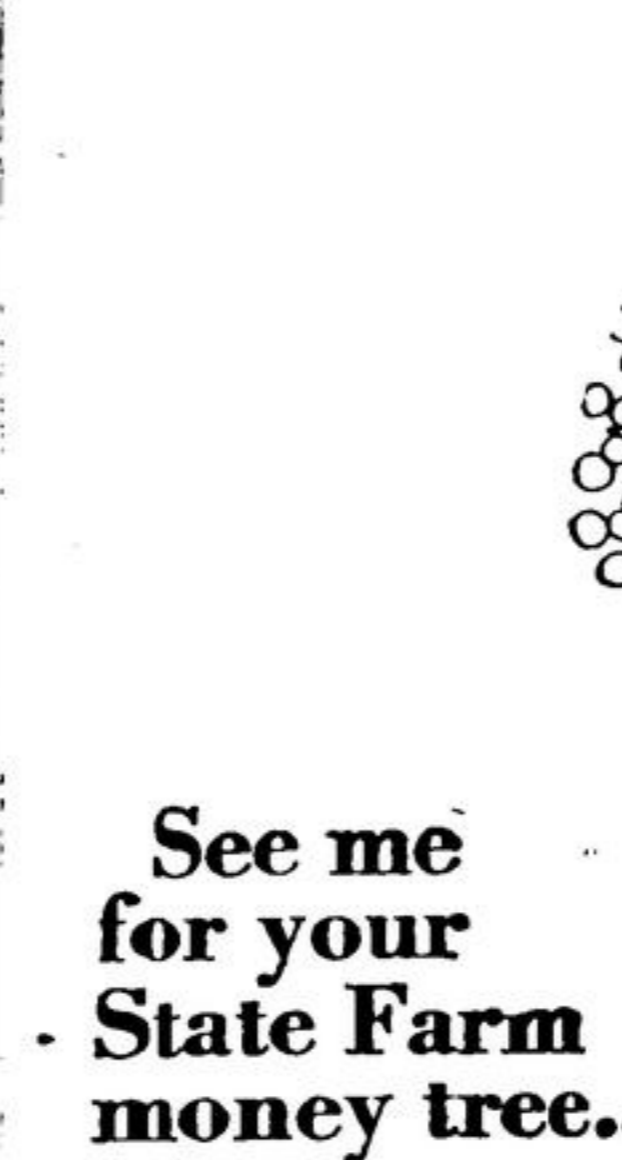
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THURSDAY, AUG. 21st, 1969
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BRIDGE CLUB

Twelve tables of duplicate bridge were in play at the Georgetown Duplicate Bridge Club in the Legion Auditorium on Tuesday, August 12.

North-South winners — Reg Frid, Ted Kendrick; Cam Sinclair, Mike Lorusso; Mr. and Mrs. P. Jeffers and Mr. and Mrs. All Hunt.

East-West: T. Brown, R. Fish; Mrs. Phyllis Campbell, R. Raymond; Mrs. Marguerite Taylor, Mrs. Aileen Bradley; Miss Olive Logan and Miss Margery Mackenzie.

Grand Valley Bridge Competition

On Friday evening ten members of the Georgetown Duplicate Bridge Club competed in the Grand Valley Bridge Association Charity night. Georgetown is a member of the Grand Valley Association.

The first place winners for the night were two members of the local club, a father and son combination, John Coats and his son Bill Coats. Their win pays their entry fee and qualifies them to play in the next step, towards the Olympic Bridge team.

Those attending from the Georgetown club were George Ellenton and Mrs. Sue Sullivan, Bob Dickson, Cam Sinclair, Mrs. Helen Hyde, Miss Margery Mackenzie; Duke Wilson and Mike Lorusso and the winning pair John and Bill Coats.

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