



Heavens Abuzz (part 2)

Good Morning Ambrose! and how are you today. I love this time of year don't you? Everyone winding down and looking forward to the Festivities!

Yes....I suppose so.

Well, you don't sound very cheerful I must say!

I'm sorry, its just that I can't help worrying about the bees, Bernhard.

Ah yes, I know; and its been going on for quite a while now hasn't it. Is there an answer yet, Ambrose?

Well Bernhard, we seem to be groping towards what we THINK might be PART of the problem, but the trouble is not everyone agrees, nor believes it.

What do some folk think is partly responsible then ?

Neonicotinoids.....a new group of insecticides..

InSEcticides?...I see...I suppose it makes sense-if they're being sprayed onto plants and put into seeds as "improvers"; they must be indiscriminate in their effect, musn't they.

Yes of course.

Ambrose, let's not worry about that now, after all it's Christmas! And I see we've got some new guests.

Yes— and some surprising ones at that Bernhard. Did you know that Don Camillo is here.

Is he!-I must call on him.

And his old adversary Peppone is here also.

Really!!-well I never! I expect they're still at it hammer and tongs.

Peppone can't believe what's happened to him although I expect Don Camillo always knew the two of them would come here at the end.

Well, who else has arrived.

According to Peter a lot more souls are heading in the other direction currently for some reason; that old Devil will be having a great party.

Oh no! the "D" word—please not that, I feel quite ill now, my halo is all aquiver! b Why my old friend you look quite pale. Here, sit down. I'll make a cup of tea—no as it's the festive season, let's have some mulled wine and I think we'll have some of Mrs. Riome's Parlie cake, that'll warm our cockles and soothe your nerves.

What a good idea, I feel better already.

Do you know how Parlie cake came to have it's name –no? apparently they were a favourite of the members of the original Scottish Parliament.

Ah yes, Scotland. They had old Johnny Knox with them for a spell if I remember rightly. They recently celebrated St. Andrew's day. Yes...a people with a troubled history; still quarrelling amongst themselves: whether to fly St. Andrew's flag or the British flag from Edinburgh castle on Andrew's day, and as for football, well we had better not start on that!

At least their parliament is refusing to allow G.M. crops to be grown, and the Scottish Beekeepers Association are distancing themselves from their English counterpart as far as the pesticide controversy is concerned.

No! Please don't start that again.

Well I hope the BBKA know what they're doing –you know what they say– if you sup with the Devil, you need a long spoon.

I can't cope with this—the “D” word again PLEASE let's just have a nice quiet evening and talk about what else has been happening.

You mean a gossip.

Well yes, what else is there? I say, this wine is delicious!

Well I heard that a group of Cherubs got together at the weekend and decided to have a party for one of their 500 year old birthdays and it got a bit out of hand...well you know what youngsters are like –anyway they became slightly over excited and decided to play a prank on old Peter, so they got hold of a pumice stone from old Mrs. Malone who uses it to keep her Donkey's feet trim, and wedged it under the Pearly Gates. When Peter tried to open them in the morning they jammed and he couldn't see what was causing it. The queue was becoming restive and the old boy was tugging and heaving and becoming almost apoplectic. As you know there are always bees at the Gates with milk and honey for the newcomers after their long journey and they quickly spotted the problem and alerted Peter.

Some of them buzzed off gleefully to tell everyone what had happened, and the culprits were soon identified. I'm surprised you haven't heard.

No I haven't, but go on tell me what happened next. I wish I'd seen Peter's face! When Peter had finished for the day—you're so right, this wine really is delicious- - he went swiftly over to where the Cherubs were waiting, trembling. Mind you by this time I think he was beginning to see the funny side of it, and the punishment was gratefully received. He made them polish the Pearly Gates three times, then they had to go to Mrs. Malone and apologize, and spend the weekend singing and playing to her and her animals whatever she or they wanted. Not much of a hardship really as they love to do that anyway.

Since then, they've been very well behaved.

Yes....Mrs. Malone and her animals. She visits Francis nearly every day with her troupe following her, except the Robin which flies ahead singing, as if to proclaim her arrival. When she first arrived, being carried by her Donkey and Peter said to her “ come in Mother and sit by the Throne, there's room for one more”, well she couldn't believe it. That's what she said every time a starving creature presented itself at her door seeking sanctuary and she took them in, despite the fact that she was starving herself with barely a crust to feed on.

Well she'll be all right here...anymore of that wine Bernhard...you're looking quite flushed...I feel a bit drowsy myself I must admit. I hope Peter calls this evening so that he can give his version of today's events.

Yes let us have another glass and some more Parlie cake, then we can have forty winks and wait for Peter.

MRS. RIOME'S PARLIE CAKE.

8oz. Flour. You can use either SR or Plain.

4oz. Brown sugar.

1 oz. Ground ginger.

4oz. Unsalted butter.

4oz. Treacle.

1/4 tsp. Black pepper.

Melt butter and treacle and add to the well mixed dry ingredients. Combine to make a paste. As soon as it is cool enough to handle roll into large cakes 0.5cm or just under 1/4ins. thick. Mark into squares with a knife and cook at 160/325F or Gas3 until firm but not much browned at the edges. Separate squares while still warm and then allow to cool.

This recipe comes from Clarissa Dickson Wright's book “Hieland Foodie” and has been adapted by Mrs. Riome to make the recipe suitable for the average domestic goddess, as Clarissa was at the time of publishing her book doing the catering for the café at Lennoxlove House and using huge quantities of ingredients.

Ayr and District Beekeepers Association

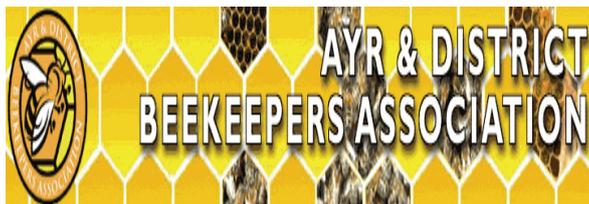
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We love Honeybees



A Very Merry Christmas to beekeepers everywhere and best wishes for 2010 from Buzzword.

Many thanks to all those who contributed to Buzzword in 2009; in alphabetical order: Elizabeth, Eric, Ian J, Joyce D, Lindsay, Rosie and Tony.

Anyone who feels they would like to contribute something of interest, or controversial, or a recipe or tales of yore regarding beekeeping, I would be delighted to hear from you.

Any suggestions to improve or change Buzzword will be gratefully received. Buzzword is now one year old. I hope you have enjoyed reading it as much as I have enjoyed compiling it.

Suzanne.

Things heard in the Playground

The three kings gave Jesus nasty Christmas presents.

People like to have babies at Christmas

Mary had Jesus so that she could get a house.

I think Jesus would be upset if he knew what went on at Christmas!

Everybody loves Jesus even my uncle and both my brothers but I don't. I love the three wise men best because they brought presents.

Once I saw a Christmas tree being put to death.

When you are a baby your mother feeds you from her bosom but she can only do milk.

You have to love your own baby because everyone else finds them a nuisance.

My brother looked horrible when he was born but I didn't say so because they wouldn't let me change him.