

Apiary is really buzzing!

Have a go at producing your own glistening honey

A LOCAL bee keeper is simply buzzing with enthusiasm over his new found hobby and his honey production echoes the sweet smell of success.

Cliff Herring is a Consultant Project Manager, which can be stressful, so he wanted to capitalise on his countryside retreat on the edge of Leighton and find a hobby that he could totally lose himself in during the evenings and weekends.

The idea of bee keeping was born after he met a hive maker.

Totally inspired and fascinated, Cliff bought three hives and joined the Bedfordshire Bee Keeping Association, which has over 200 members, 17 from Leighton.

Many are professional people, just like Cliff, and youngsters who are concerned about the environment. Cliff's daughter Melissa, 12, is one of them and helps her dad with the bees.

By the summer, the hives will be buzzing with up to 60,000 bees made up of 1 breeding queen, approximately 400 drones (males) and the rest workers (females) plus eggs, larvae, pupa and food.

Bees have a three mile flying range so will normally find food (nectar and pollen) quite easily. The interesting thing is hives can be kept in many locations and some of the best honey is produced from hives in the centre of towns.

Last summer, Cliff and Melissa harvested 80lb of honey which they jarred and gave away to family and friends. But this year the pair mean business and plan to install another three hives shortly. They have

sourced tasteful jars and had decorative labels printed for their next batch of the sweet liquid gold. Wax, royal jelly and mead may also be on the menu. But Cliff has no plans to turn it into a cottage industry just yet.

Honey on toast is simply yummy! And starting up needn't cost a fortune, you'd expect to pay about £250 on the basics.

As a BBKA member you can benefit from a network of support and learn from a series of seminars,

and courses etc.

The Apiary in Stockwood, Luton, provides hands on experience, and gives people interested a chance to see a queen cell, and the life cycle of a bee.

Anyone interested can accompany Cliff to Stockwood to watch the queen and her hive at work. Give him a buzz on: 07802 466 023.

Meanwhile, start looking out for Cliff and Mel's honey towards the end of the summer, again ring Cliff for more details. Go on Give It A Go!