



THE UNIVERSITY OF THE THIRD AGE

# Romsey and District U3A

Registered Charity N° 1082501

## THE HONEY MAN – ROY GODFREY 21 February 2008

The “Honey Man” Roy Godfrey gave a fascinating talk on bee keeping to Romsey and District members at their February meeting. Roy has been keeping bees for forty years and has sixty two hives with twenty more to come in April. He takes obvious enjoyment from sharing his knowledge of the art of bee keeping which he has built up over a lifetime of caring for bees. He runs courses for those who either wish to become bee keepers or who already have bees but need to gain more skills.

From very early times people have used honey to sweeten their food and wines but once sugar became more available the need for honey decreased but it is still a very popular product. Nowadays many people use honey as a spread on bread and butter as well as a basis for preserves and an ingredient for cookery. It also has medical uses both as a useful smear to help the healing process for minor abrasions and as part of medicines such as cough mixture.

Honey can only be produced by bees so it is considered a very naturally pure product free from pollutants. Bees need nectar to make honey which they gather from flowers, so honey is produced in the summer. As the bees leave their hive they fly in a square pattern with ‘wiggles’ on the sides which differentiates their hive from others. Bees tend to swarm about April and sometimes the inexperienced bee keeper will need help to deal with this but help is always at hand from those who have been keeping bees for a long time. It takes about two hours to get the bees into a container in which they can be taken to a hive.

At the end of Roy’s talk he was bombarded with questions from the floor which he answered fully with humour and good nature. A vote of thanks was given by Don Grimshaw and thoroughly endorsed by everyone present.

Pat Morgan