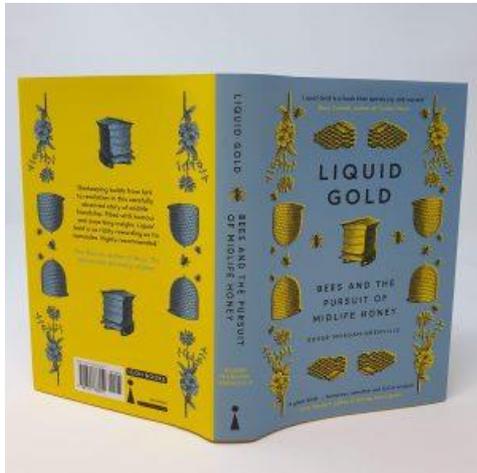


## Liquid Gold

We were recently contacted by a publishing house called ICON books. They have just recently published a book called *"Liquid Gold: Bees and the Pursuit of Midlife Honey"* by Roger Morgan-Grenville.



The book was published last month and understandably they and Roger have had to cancel all events they were due to attend. But, they feel as though the book's story could resonate with many beekeepers and the people of Lancashire through this difficult time and I have to agree. I have just started reading it and it is really enjoyable, a light-hearted and amusing story about his journey into beekeeping and his life and friendships formed and what he gains from the hobby.

**'Behind the self-deprecating humour, Morgan-Grenville's childlike passion for beekeeping lights up every page. His bees are a conduit to a connection with nature that lends fresh meaning to his life. His bee-keeping, meanwhile, proves both a means of escape from the grim state of the world and a positive way of doing something about it. We could probably all do with some of that.'** Dixe Wills, BBC Countryfile Magazine

**'Beekeeping builds from lark to revelation in this carefully observed story of midlife friendship. Filled with humour and surprising insight, Liquid Gold is as richly rewarding as its namesake. Highly recommended.'** - Thor Hanson, author of *Buzz: The Nature and Necessity of Bees*

**A light-hearted account of midlife, a yearning for adventure, the plight of bees, the quest for "liquid gold" and, above all, friendship.'** *Sunday Telegraph*

The author, Roger Morgan-Grenville, was a soldier in the Royal Green Jackets from 1978 to 1986. After leaving the army he ran a small company developing kitchenware. In 2007, he helped to set up the charity Help for Heroes.

Hopefully, we can link in with Roger in the future but in the meantime, Roger has very kindly written us the following piece...



## **EAST LANCASHIRE BEES**

*It wasn't meant to be like this, either for you, or for me.*

*You were supposed to be in the middle of your Spring get-togethers, your training and the day-by-day camaraderie that makes us all so happy to be beekeepers. And I was supposed to be out there discussing my new book, Liquid Gold, at book festivals and retail events. But I'm not, and you're not, so let's make the most of it.*

*My new adventure is a Flow Hive, and I spent part of yesterday, Day 15 of the lock down, preparing it for action by painting it for the season. Obviously, I didn't paint it anything sensible like white, but rather a fetching eau-de-nil blue where I happened to have half a pot left from painting the front door about five years ago. I have to say, it looks quite smart.*

*People have violently conflicting views on Flow Hives. Life's 'early adopters' seem to love them, while traditionalists can't stand them. The idea is that the honey in the super is stored in little plastic tanks that you can crank round and decant into pots whenever you feel like taking some. The only person I know, who actually has one says that it works brilliantly, so long as you only want a sixth of the honey that you would get from a standard super.*

*They cost about £600, and I wouldn't want you to think that I bought it. No, a friend gave it to his wife for her 60<sup>th</sup> birthday so that she could take up beekeeping, only to find that she was allergic to bee stings. Luckily, she found out before buying all the bees and other equipment, so their losses were limited, and my gain was a brand new, unused Flow Hive. Anyway, I have bought a new nuc from my Ukrainian friend at Honey bee Supplies, and they will arrive next week, ready to go.*

*One of the odd things about writing a book on beekeeping is that people assume from the word 'go' that you are extraordinarily competent, and the fount of all knowledge on insect matters. Nothing could be further from the truth, as anyone who reads the book will quickly find out. But, for what it is worth, here are some of the things we are doing this year to get more pollinators in our garden. (Remember, honeybees are lousy pollinators, and doing quite well; we all need to be helping the bumble and solitary bees, who are basically good pollinators, and doing rather worse.)*

- 1. We are doing a 'no mow May', and probably a 'no mow June' as well*
- 2. We have banned any non-organic pesticide or herbicide from the garden. Ever.*
- 3. We have decided that weeds are just flowers in the wrong place, and are encouraging all but the worst ones.*
- 4. We are putting bee hotels up in a few places in the garden.*
- 5. We are leaving small saucers of regularly topped up water on the terrace.*
- 6. We are buying an organic veg box scheme. The extra cost of the produce is more than offset by the lack of waste at the end of it all.*

*And finally, with the start of the cricket season horribly delayed, we are going to be as good as gold with our weekly inspections.*

*Good luck, stay well, and happy beekeeping!*

*Roger Morgan-Grenville*