

Island's Allen Burt Learns Bee Keeping From His Father

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purpose in life, and that is to mate with the queen. Mating occurs outside the hive, in mid-flight, up to 300 feet in the air. The drone mates with the female, and then dies, because the sex organ is barbed and is torn away, along with parts of the internal anatomy, when the queen separates from the drone.

There are a number of reasons that people keep bees. People have done so for thousands of years. Honey collection is certainly part of the attraction. Mr. Burt has collected two gallons of honey this summer, which he has shared with family and friends. Approximately 10 gallons of honey has been left in the hive to feed the bees throughout the winter.

Besides producing honey,

bees are important pollinators. Honeybees account for about 80% of all pollination by insects, and it is estimated that without the honeybees' services, more than a third of the fruits and vegetables that humans consume would be lost. Bees also produce other products, including beeswax, propolis, and royal jelly.

Mr. Burt is not the first member of his family to keep bees. His father was also a beekeeper. At his house he showed me a small box that had been made for his father, known as a "beeline box." The purpose of the box was to help locate a wild bee hive. The keeper would place a food source in the box and catch a honey bee. He would release the bee, which would go back and tell others about the food. Other bees would come back

to the box. The bee keeper would release the bees, noting the direction of their flight, and eventually be able to follow the bees back to their hive, as bees fly in a straight "beeline" back to the hive.

You can get stung by honeybees when working with them, although Mr. Burt says that he has yet to be jabbed. For the most part, honeybees are docile. I spent several hours with Mr. Burt working at the hive, and was not stung by a honeybee. We did wear beekeeping masks to help protect our faces while removing parts of the hive, but the bees did not seem particularly interested in us. Another precaution

that he took when working with the hive was to smoke the bees. He took a clump of cotton and lit it on fire and placed it in the smoker. Cotton produces a thick, cool smoke which calms the bees. The smoker has a small bellows within it that can be used to blow the smoke around the hive. One theory is that smoke reminds bees of a forest fire and causes them to return to their hive, where they fan the brood furiously to keep them cool. They also begin to collect the honey in the hive in case they have to abandon their home. The thought is that they are so busy that they ignore the beekeeper. Another

explanation is that the smoke covers the alarm scent that is given off by worker bees to put them in attack mode. The smoke confounds the bees' ability to communicate. Whatever the reason, smoking the hive seems to work.

I have just begun to touch on the fascinating world of bees and beekeeping. There is a lot more to it, and plenty of information available. I am sure Mr. Burt would be happy to talk with you about it. He also asks that if anyone thinks that they have found a hive that the honeybees have been building, please call him, and don't just destroy it. He'll be happy to help you with it.

Cathedral of Tomorrow Project Faces Challenges

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acquired a 23-story office building, the Akron National Tower, and a private jet plane.

Humbard's twin goals for Mackinac Island were to reopen Mackinac College as a non-denominational Bible college and to develop Stonecliffe as a winter ski resort. In the fall of 1971, bulldozers went to work to clear swathes of old-growth cedar and other tree life from sections of Mackinac Island's far West Bluff. In early 1972, the cleared strips of bluffland were

redesigned into ski slopes, and a chair lift was erected. Rev. Humbard's Ohio money created jobs for some Mackinac Islanders who would otherwise have had trouble finding employment during the cold winter months. The preacher would be flown from Akron to Mackinac Island in his jet to inspect the work. In fall 1972, the second Mackinac College opened at Mission Point; 140 students were present, hoping to study in a Christian environment, and maybe go skiing up at Stonecliffe.

Severe challenges, however, soon faced the Cathedral of Tomorrow organization. Rev. Humbard, in 1971, had also broken ground for a 750-foot-high broadcasting tower in Cuyahoga Falls near the church. Governmental permits were required to build this large structure. The Cathedral of Tomorrow had already begun to face significant criticism from those who mistrusted the evangelist's financial optimism and the aggressive material growth of his ministry. The church leader was defiant in the face of these critiques. As he explained in "Miracles in My Life": "I don't worry, because miracles happen every day and, with God's help, I shall continue to borrow and build, borrow and build, so that more souls can be born again in Jesus Christ."

Various governmental regula-

tory agencies began asking questions about the financial stability of the Cathedral of Tomorrow financial empire, and the legal validity of Humbard's claim that all of it was exempt from property and income taxes. These inquiries uncovered the fact that Rev. Humbard's assets had come to include a wide variety of properties, including a women's girdle factory in Brooklyn, New York. Ohio securities regulators reportedly discovered that the Rev. Humbard's church had borrowed quite a lot of money in that state and did not have the means to adequately service its debts.

Under these circumstances, the news that Mackinac Island's far West Bluff was completely unsuitable for skiing was one of Rev. Humbard's smallest problems. The Akron-based Humbard organization was reported to be facing severe financial challenges. In 1973, work on "Humbard Tower" stopped and never resumed. Mackinac College also closed its doors that spring.

Beginning in the summer of 1973, the Cathedral of Tomorrow and its creditors reorganized the Mission Point campus as a summer resort complex, and began to take steps with a Michigan businessman, George Staffan, to have Stonecliffe developed for summer housing. These steps continued throughout the 1970s as the Humbard organization unwound its more diversified interests. Under post-Humbard owners, the Mission Point Resort and the Inn at Stonecliffe are key Mackinac Island assets today.

Rev. Humbard continued to preach on television until 1999.

Upon his death in September 2007, "Brother Rex" was honored as one of the founding fathers of televangelism. He is survived by his widow, Maude Aimee, and many children and grandchildren.

Island Wedding on Style Network

Filmed in July, the Mackinac Island wedding of Meghan Hesse and Darren Buford of Colorado will be on the Style Network's series, "Married Away" Tuesday, October 23, at 9 p.m.

Mackinac Island wedding planner Carole Erbel, who operates "For the Love of Mackinac!," helped the couple arrange their elegant July 20 wedding at The Inn at Stonecliffe.

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