

*Tiny travelers survive 800-mile journey*

# Northeastern beekeepers collect sweet cargo

**BY DONNA TOMMELLEO**  
OBELISK — Amid high winds and unseasonable weather, 1,500 pounds of honey bees cruised into Perkiomen Valley Apiaries, Inc, on Saturday, less than a day after departing from a balmy 85 degree Georgia climate.

No, it wasn't an annual migration of Southern insects returning to their summer home.

Instead it was a pre-planned bee drop that supplied several Northeastern beekeepers with 500 colonies

Delphi beekeeper Bill Nostadt and PVA owner Robert Brooks packed 500 colonies of bees, each containing one queen and three pounds of workers, into an open-topped truck and accompanied the buzzing cargo from Georgia

springtime to Pennsylvania's persistent winter.

Brooks and Nostadt lined the \$12,900 cargo with cardboard and sealed the top with plywood. The pair stopped several times during

the 19-hour journey to check the temperature of the load, said Nostadt. Brooks estimated the grueling trip may have claimed no more than four or five packages, despite whipping winds and

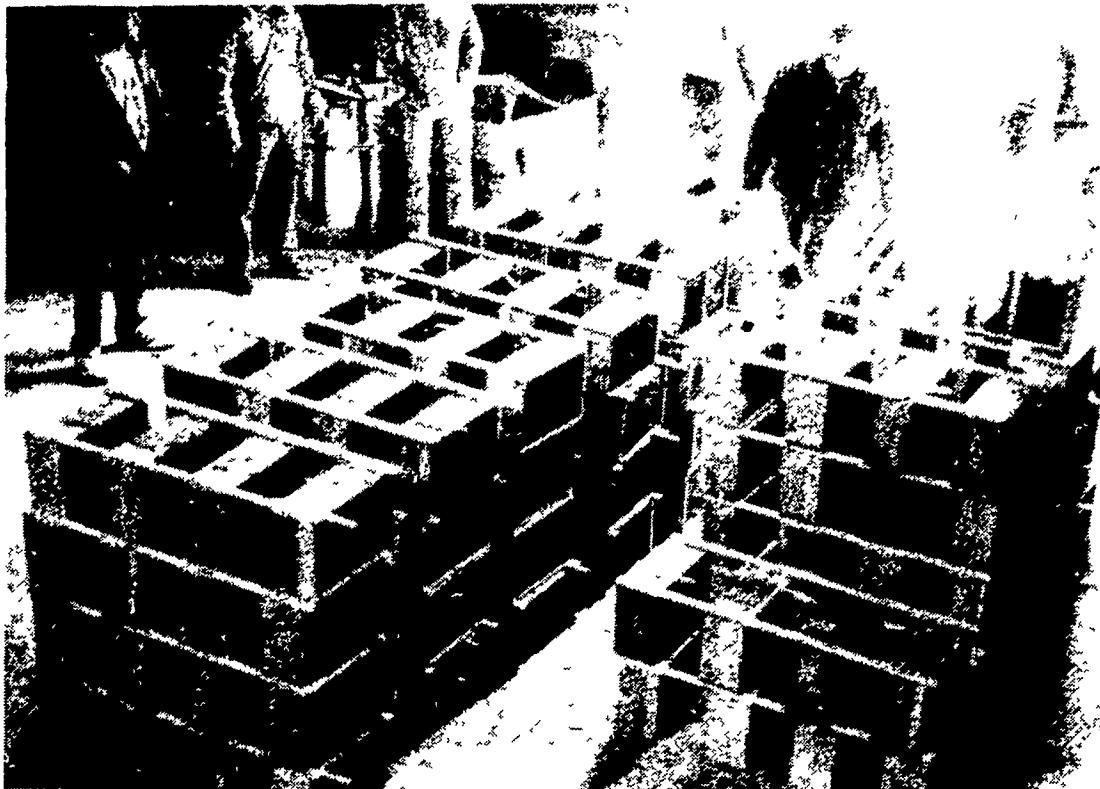
chilling temperatures in the Northeast.

A previous trip, by Brooks, caused more than 30 percent or

(Turn to Page B13)

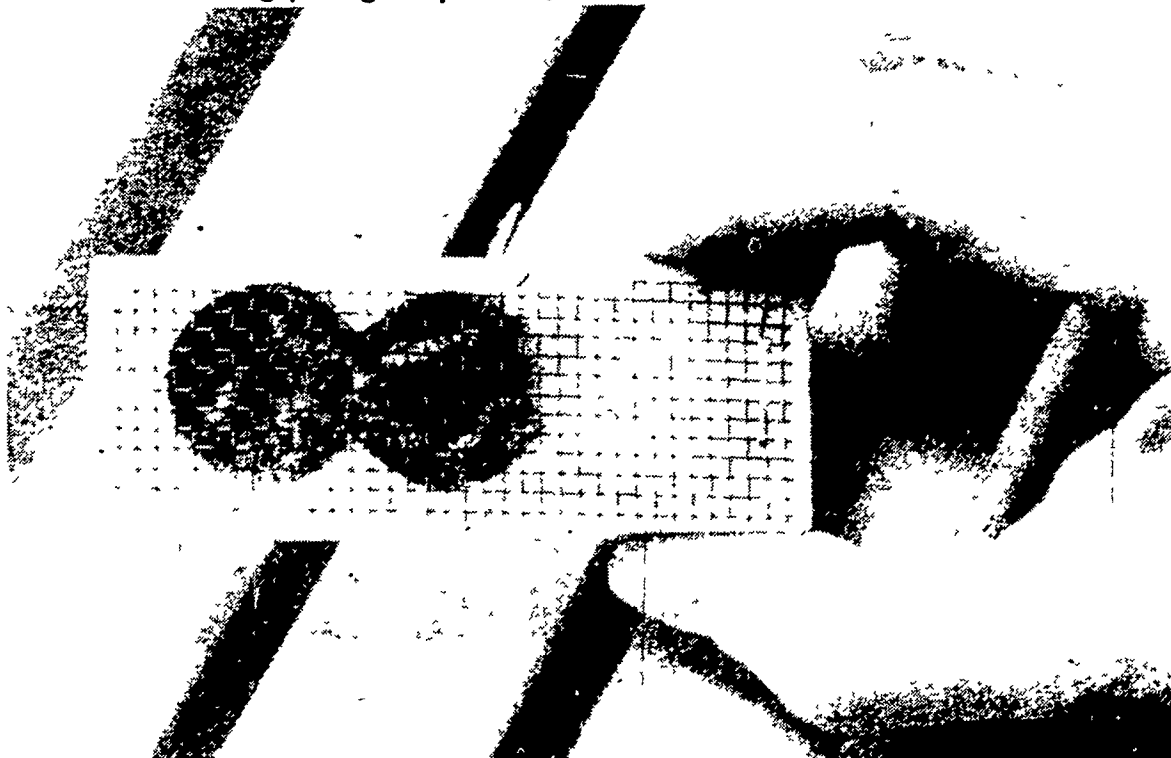


Robert Brooks locates the queen as he explains how to requeen a hive. Earlier in the day, Brooks, a physiologist who specializes in bee venom for arthritis control, just completed an 800-mile trip with \$12,900 worth of honey bees.



The 500 packages of honey bees begin to warm up a bit once unloaded into PVA's large warehouse. Following package inspection to

determine damage and loss, new bee owners will cart their buzzing brood home to awaiting hives.



The queen bee arrived segregated from the colony via this tiny wire enclosure. However, she wasn't entirely alone as a half dozen

workers remained with her to feed the royal head of the hive with sugar candy contained in the far right compartment.



Brooks, without hat, gloves and veil, introduces a colony of bees to their new hive. His method? Shake them in!



Astrid Brooks, center, explains the process of acquainting the queen with her new colony of workers. Brooks and husband Robert own

and operate Perkiomen Valley Apiaries, Inc., which maintains about 500 hives a year.