NORTHERN GOLDFISH & PONDKEEPERS SOCIETY

A Nationwide Society

NEWSLETTER

Online Version June 2015

Bill Ramsden's Prizes

After a lifetime of winning prizes for his privately bred Fancy Goldfish, Bill decided to dispose of the huge collection.

Here are just a few…many more have been donated to NGPS to recycle and reuse.

Pins, certificates, badges, shields and cups – all are a memory, but Bill insists the time has come to let them go. Owing to the passing years he has had to dismantle his fish house, so there will be no more trophies. But Bill's loss is our gain; we now have many prizes to reuse.

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Minutes of June Meeting

There was a small turnout for this meeting with apologies from Tom Hindley, Alan Ratcliffe, Richard Rizzotti, Dean Roberts and Pat Davies being reported by Sherridan. However, the President, Vice President and Chairman *were* present and they discussed Pond problems with David Padfield until late.

As reported in the April Newsletter Minutes, David had received a female Veiltail from Sherridan's winter-grown spawning, but he needed a male for line-breeding. A good specimen of these CalicoXMetallics was delivered…with winter warmth it had reached three inches and developed male tubercules.

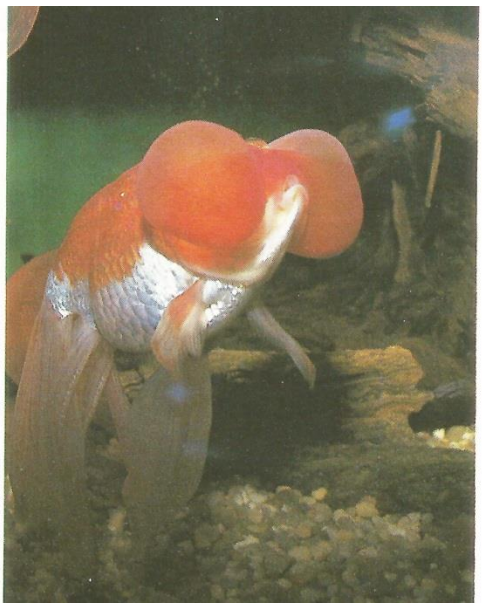
The fish has good pectorals and dominant dorsal as well as the Veiltail but the colour needs improving, which David hopes to achieve with late spawnings.

The fry of Sherridan's Bubble-eyes and Pompons spawnings continue to develop and the thousands have been reduced to hundreds for better growth.

Arnie's funeral was reported (see later) and the fate of BAF and FNAS discussed.

It was agreed that the bi-monthly printed Newsletter will end….David Ford will send this Newsletter via email every month. Only by special request will a printed version be posted, produced on a home printer.

Tip of the Month



The petrified log behind this Bubble-eye Goldfish has been varnished to stop it staining the water and to protect such sensitive fish from sharp edges.

The most natural ornament to use in the show tank is a log but, if not completely petrified, it will stain the water brown (Tannins) or develop fungal growths. Prevent this happening by pre-coating with a clear varnish. This also gives a smooth finish to protect fish such as Bubble-eyes from any damage.

The varnish must be a polyurethane or two-part epoxy resin and ideally should carry a 'safe for fish' label (or 'unsafe for fish' - avoid!). At one time any polyurethane varnish would do, but with the popularity of garden decking, paint manufacturers have now added MIT (methylisothiazolinone). This cytotoxin stops wood rotting (via micro-organisms) but is deadly to fish. Use aquatic stores, model shops or artist suppliers, rather than DIY stores. Pure Polyurethane Varnish (not Yacht Varnish – that has a mollusca killer added) is the easiest to use – but no additives, check the label. The gloss version looks attractive but the satin finish is more natural – your choice. Paint the wood at least three times, drying for 24 hours between coats. This is to ensure there are no pinholes for the water to gain access. Otherwise there would be a white area around the pinhole due to water reflecting under the resin coat and looks as bad as the fungus patches it is used to prevent. It is best to leave the log for a week in air to ensure the resin is fully cured and volatile chemicals evaporated, and then soak for another week to dissolve anything else. The ornament will then last for many years and gives the fish a safe, natural aquascape that must be less stressful than a bare tank.

Another tip – if it floats, Silicone-seal it to a piece of slate and cover that with sand. Or even tie it to a rock with fishing line – use the same tie to hold plastic plants. Be artistic.

Science for Aquarists

This month it is the turn of Bill Ramsden…he wrote the following article for Practical Fishkeeping magazine about his fish-house filtration system. Many years ago, but it is just as relevant today…

Beautiful BARTOL

When you keep as many goldfish as Bolton specialist Bill Ramsden, any labour-saving ideas make sound sense. Here he shares a few of his own — which depend on inexpensive pipework and fittings you can buy from most DIY shops . . .

Over the years, my fish house has grown until now I consider I have reached the limit. It is a lean-to, built on to the outside of the kitchen wall, which in itself is handy for several reasons.

First, by putting two holes through the wall, I have been able to lay on both hot and cold water supplies. Second, I can stand at the kitchen sink and look through the window to check that all the fish in my sixteen aquariums are okay.

Each tank is equipped with cold water taps and an overflow system, connected direct to the drain, so I never have puddles on the floor.

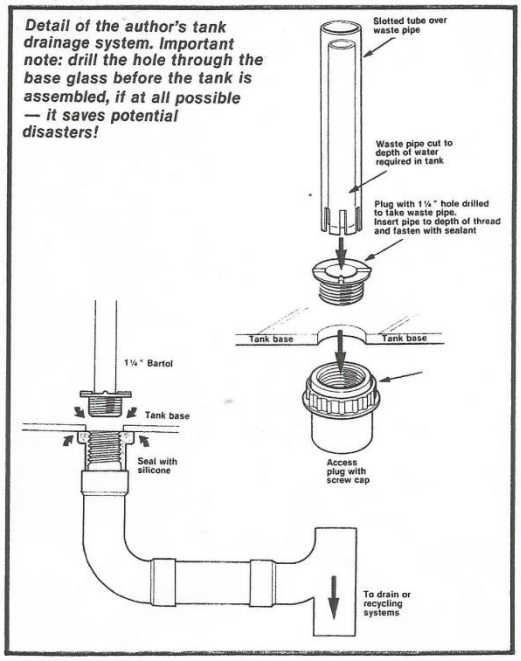
An electric cable passes through the wall and connects with a fuse box which, in turn, supplied me with six 13-amp plugs and overhead lighting.

In the past, it took me as long as six hours to clean all my tanks. It was a case of siphoning, part-filling, siphoning again and topping up. That was what decided me to install a drainage system.

The trade name for the plastic tubing and fittings I use is **Bartol**. All connections are fitted with a rubber sealing ring, so no solvent cement is needed — everything is a push-fit. Tubing size is 1¼" (32mm).

To install such a drainage system, each tank must be drilled with a 1¼" diameter hole through the bottom glass, centrally between back and front and four to five inches from one end. It is best to ask a specialist to do this for you, and if you are starting a system from scratch it is essential that such holes are drilled *before* you make the tanks — there is much less risk of cracking the glass.

Next step is to buy Bartol access plugs. Each plug needs to be cut away around the top to a depth of ¼" and a diameter of 1¼", to make a recess that will fit into the base of the tank (see diagram). Now insert the overflow pipe and fasten in place with sealant. It should be as tall as your intended water depth.



Detail of the author's tank drainage system. Important note: drill the hole through the base glass before the tank is assembled, if at all possible — it saves potential disasters!

To finish off this system, a larger diameter pipe with four slots cut around the base is slid over the waste pipe. It should be an inch taller than the overflow when in place. This will draw water along the bottom of the tank, through the slots, and lift it to the top of the overflow.

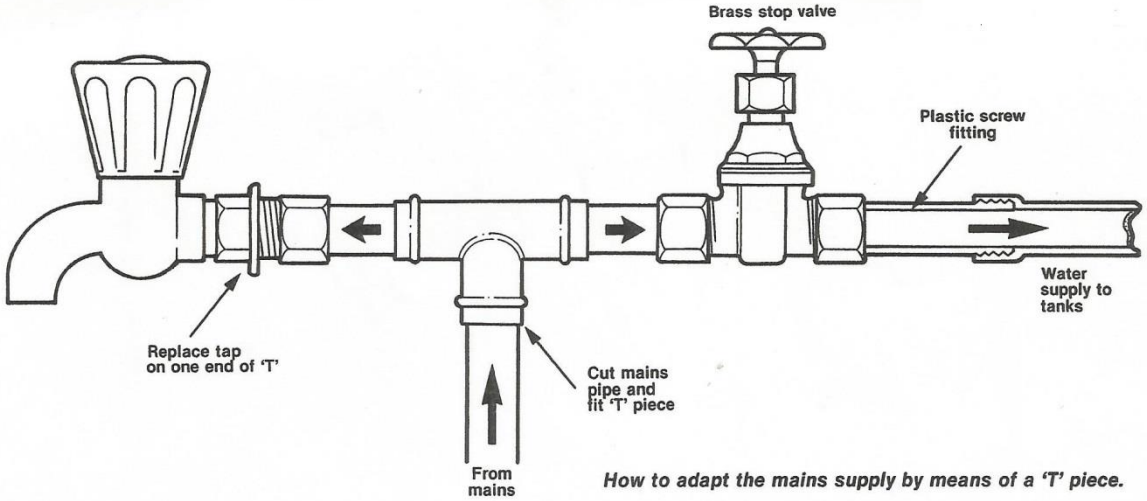
You can, if you wish, make the overflow pipe quite short and, by using an extension joint, vary the depth of water in your tanks.

My next suggestion is for a tap over each tank. If you already have a water supply into your fish house, it is a simple matter to cut the copper supply pipe several inches below the tap and fit a T-junction. The existing tap can be re-fitted to one end, and on the other goes a brass stop tap. My connections are actually cast-iron, but it is best to ask your supplier which material is best suited to your needs. A plastic screw fitting is now required to join the stop tap to the pipe supplying water to your tanks.

All you need now do is fix your pipes over each tank by means of T and elbow joints. All unions must be glued together with solvent cement, or they will come apart under pressure... they are not fitted with rubber rings.

The taps themselves can be bought at home wine-making stores. They are of the type used on storage kegs.

Air supply to a fish house can be provided by a commercial blower (i.e. Rotron), one or more conventional airpumps, or a home-made compressor. Whichever option you choose, there has to be a way of delivering a regulated supply to each tank. My tanks are on three levels and take up three



How to adapt the mains supply by means of a 'T' piece.

sides of the fish house. Above the second row is fixed a 1¼" Bartol tube, blocked off at both ends to make it airtight. A small-bore plastic tube makes the union between the air supply pipe and my compressor.

You can now bleed off air at any point around the perimeter of the fish house by means of airline tube and inexpensive plastic valves (e.g. Algarde). When you drill holes to take the airline, use a bit very slightly smaller than the valve fitting and don't forget to use silicone sealant at the valve/airline and airline/Bartol unions.

My last idea is for recycling water. There are two reasons why this might be necessary in the future — if water metering is introduced, then anyone with more than a single aquarium or small pond is going to find their water bill rocketing, and when the water industry is privatised, I have a feeling that the quality of what comes through the tap might be even more suspect than it already is.

The recycling system is tailor-made to a fish house with overflows on the tanks and supply taps to each. The main items you will need are a ballcock, a water pump, a mercury switch, and two large plastic cistern tanks.

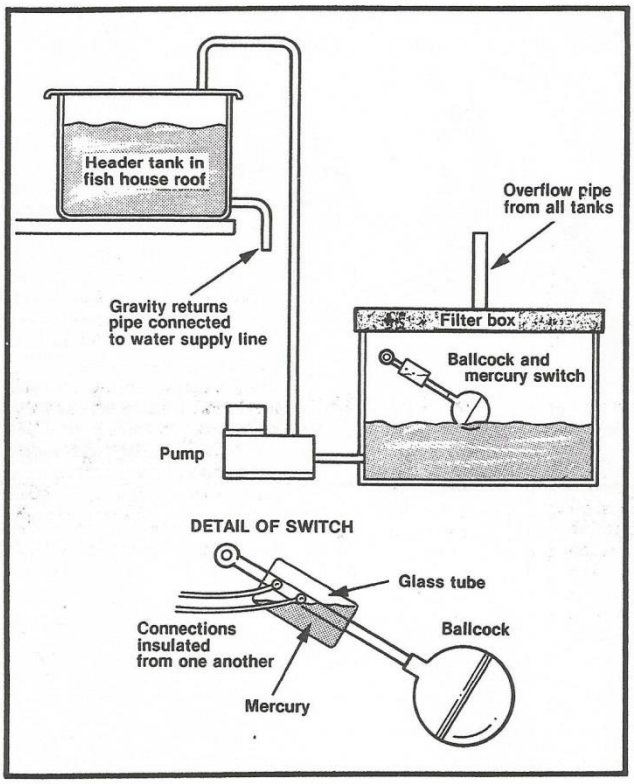
One of the tanks is placed on the floor, underneath your aquariums, so that instead of the water from your overflows going direct to waste, it feeds into the tank via a filter box.

The second tank is used as a 'header' and should be sited as high as possible and certainly above your top row of aquariums. If it actually has to go outside on the roof, it should be securely covered.

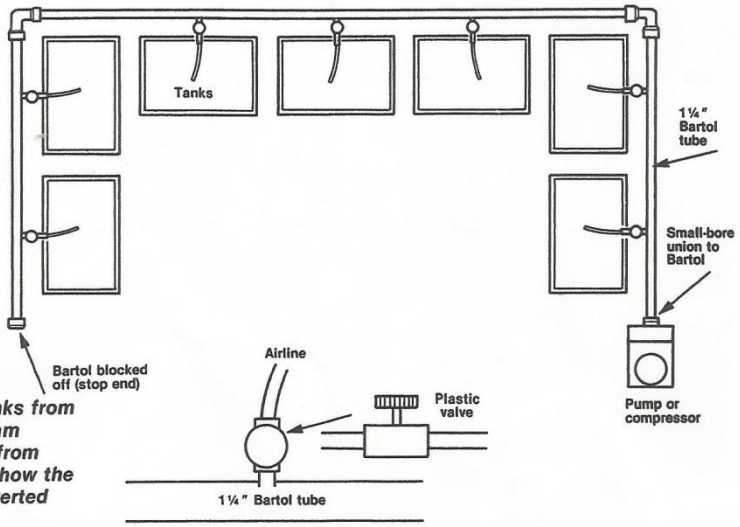
The pump that takes water from the lower to the header tank is controlled by a mercury switch. Once the lower tank begins to empty, the switch cuts out until the level has risen sufficiently to activate it again.

A mercury switch is simply a glass tube attached to a ballcock, containing the connections from the pump which are insulated from one another, so that the circuit is not complete. The tube is part-filled with mercury, and as the ballcock pivots and the tube tilts horizontally, the mercury covers both connections. As it is metal, and an excellent conductor, the circuit kicks in.

I do not claim any of these ideas as entirely original, but by adapting what others have tried, my fish house runs like clockwork and I no longer have to become a beast of burden every time I need to change water!

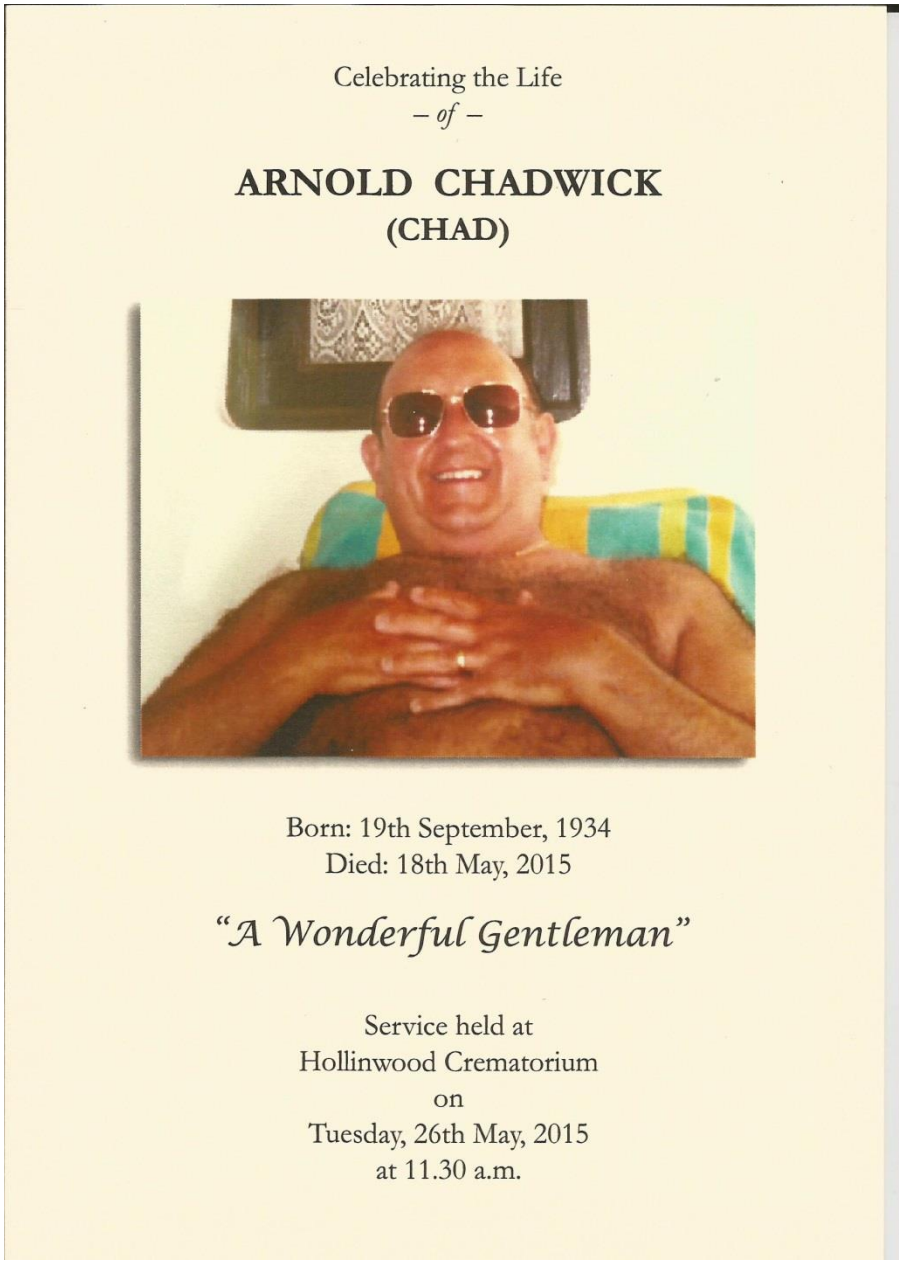


To recycle water around your fish house, a header tank needs to be installed. The overflow feeds the lower tank, whose level is controlled by a mercury switch.



Supplying air to all tanks from one source. The diagram shows the fish house from above, and a detail of how the main air delivery is diverted into each aquarium.

....finally, a sad report.



Celebrating the Life
– of –

ARNOLD CHADWICK
(CHAD)

Born: 19th September, 1934
Died: 18th May, 2015

"A Wonderful Gentleman"

Service held at
Hollinwood Crematorium
on
Tuesday, 26th May, 2015
at 11.30 a.m.

Our member (he was once our Treasurer) Arnold Chadwick has died. He was involved in many aquatic events; in fact he *was* 'BAF' (the British Aquarist Festival) which ran the Champion of Champions for Tropical and for Coldwater fish for nearly 50 years. He helped establish the FNAS (Federation of Northern Aquarists Association – we are members) and became its President.

The funeral was held last month and Chairman Sherridan and VP David Ford attended, along with several members of the FNAS Committee.

The Service Order shows Arnie in his favourite place - sunning in Torremolinos!

Most of the mourners were Arnie's large family. It was a secular ceremony with his granddaughters singing his favourite songs and the wake was held at the Ashton Golf Club where a splendid buffet was served of Arnie's favourite foods. He will be greatly missed by that family and indeed all the aquatic world.

The attendance of the FNAS committee members resulted in an agreement to meet again formally and discuss the future of the Association and indeed BAF itself. See www.fnas.co.uk for the updates.

Next Meeting is July 14th at The Church Inn – see you there, and at AMGK Open Show, Saturday 20th June at West Orchard Church Hall, Bagington Rd., Stivitchall, Coventry CV3 6FP.