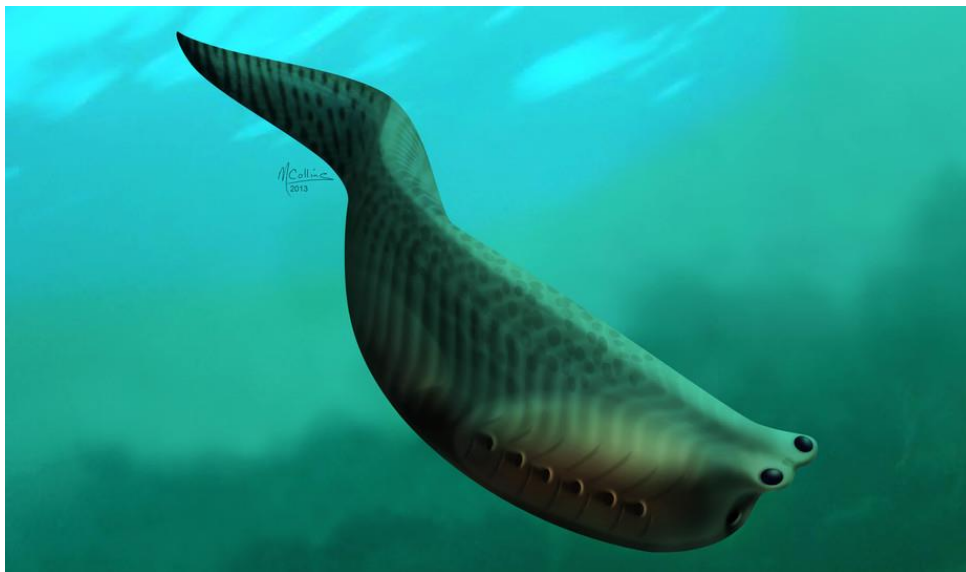




**NORTHERN GOLDFISH
& PONDKEEPERS
SOCIETY**
A Nationwide Society
NEWSLETTER



March 2017 - A nostalgia issue!



The Goldfish's Ancestor

Found in the famous Burgess Shales site in British Columbia, Canada, this artist's drawing from the fossil is *Metaspriggina walcotti*. It is the oldest known true fish and is 518 million years old. Our Goldfish can be traced all the way back to this fish!

Ancient Ponds

Historians say pond-keeping began in Mesopotamia 5,000 years ago. The land called 'Sumer' which is now Iraq and Kuwait, had fishermen who transferred wild fish to ponds as a food source.



They spoke a Semitic language so probably called a pond " 'ayg " and to build one "ta 'ayga" but that uses a modern alphabet – they used cryptic symbols like this ...

So heaven knows what it was or how it was pronounced.

5,000 years later, we know what they are.

A History of BAF

Not quite so old, BAF (the British Aquarist Festival) started as the annual Open Show for the FNAS (Federation of Northern Aquarium Societies) in 1951. It ended in 2013 when Sherridan held what is probably the last BAF OS in the Highfield Working Men's Club, Darwen.

Over the 60 years of its history, BAF invented many aquatic innovations. The Champion of Champions (both Coldwater and Tropical awards) is still famous. They promoted the tradition of designing Club Tableaux and awarded cash prizes to winning fishes' owners. It is a long story and I (David Ford) have compiled a 30 web-page history on the FNAS website. Visit to read the incredible story at www.fnas.co.uk and click/tap Page 2 to download it as a PDF.

The NGPS has often been involved with FNAS and BAF. Over a few years, when we had our Open Shows in Altrincham, we combined with BAF; our Goldfish Show was on the Saturday followed by BAF on Sunday. But read all about it on the FNAS web site. Also, note that a meeting will take place to see if the FNAS (and perhaps BAF) can be saved – the details are on page 6.

An Old Mug

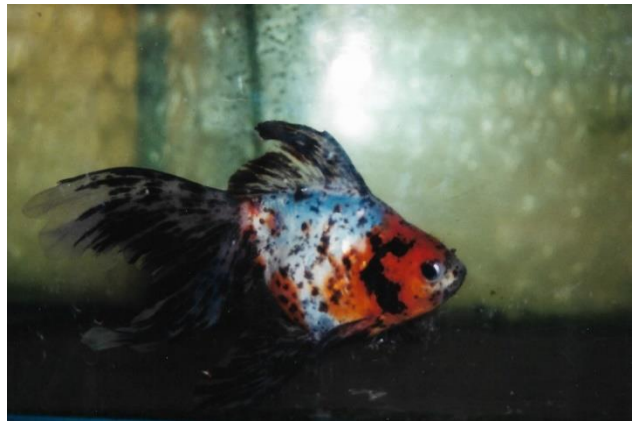
Last month we showed Sherridan's mystery cup – this brought the following comment by Manchester member Charles Ornstein:

"My impression is that it'll be from 1907 and is in a very white glaze associated with this sort of ware made mostly in Germany and Austria around the turn of the last century.

One can never be entirely sure these days but judging from style, colour and decoration (and the complete impracticality of the mug's rim), 1907. A peek at the base may help a little bit."

In fact, there was nothing glazed into the base - which Charles said gave added confirmation of its Germanic origin. But we still do not know what 'T2 Trumpet' means.

Bill's Old Fish



More photos of our President's home-bred fish from his records of a life-time's showing and judging. More next month.



Aquatic Karma

Forgive the personal feature, but this old story is mine (David Ford). Clearing out the loft I found a Folder of magazines that I had designed back in the 1950s, when I was a teenager. Just starting with my newly discovered hobby of fishkeeping, I collected articles from aquatic magazines (mainly 'The Aquarist' in those days) into



five volumes – Part 1 – Breeding, Part Foods, Part 3 – Plants, Part 4 – Equipment and Part 5 – Species.

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I really had forgotten all about them and marvelled that, well over 60 years later I would still be writing and designing aquatic articles! Talk about destiny.

For interest I took the scrapbooks to the February Meeting – members were amazed at the relevance of those ancient articles to the current hobby. And the prices in the adverts.

Famous names were present, such as Jack Hems, Arthur Boarder, Laurence E. Perkins, A. Fraser-Brunner, Dr Myron Gordon (of New York Aquarium), E. C. Taylor (Editor of the New Zealand Aquarist Magazine), and more.

The Goldfish section had a piece by Chi Yen-Lang who described how a fisherman in Peking (in the 1940s) landed a bright orange Carp among the green-brown Carps they caught as a food fish. Taking this curiosity to the nearby University it was seen by Professor Cheng Cheng (then the leading Zooligist in China), who identified it as the 'Golden Chi'. A genetic mutation that was first seen 1,000 years earlier when it was kept and bred by the Chinese to become the modern Goldfish.

In the Foods booklet there was the first advert for 'Liquifry' at 2/6 (two shillings and sixpence – 12 pence now) for No.1 (Egg Layers) and No.2 (Livebearers). Angel thermostats were 8/11 (about 45 pence) and the Stratford Mk 4 ('Extremely Quiet') air pumps were 24/- (£1-20p).

There was an article on how to build a concrete aquarium – which I must have copied, and so killed my first Goldfish. Another story, another destiny.

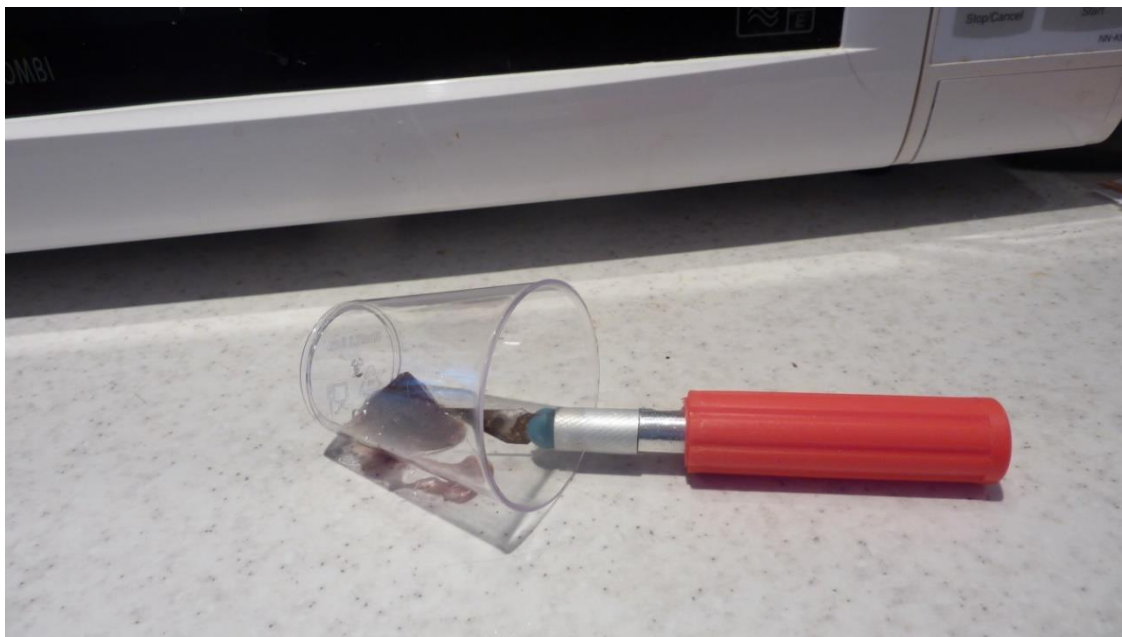
Back to 2017 – the monthly Top Tip



This is my method for feeding frozen fish food. The packs of frozen blocks of food are kept in a food quality polybag (for health & safety) in the freezer. One block is ejected and placed in a One Shot Polyglass (the Pound shop sells a pack of 12) and then placed in a microwave oven. For my 1000 watt oven I need 20 seconds on the defrost setting. It is best to defrost rather than a 'high' microwave cooking setting. You need to just soften the block, not cook it, so the nutrients are retained.

Never forget to choose 'defrost' and not a high setting because the smell of over-cooked worms is disgustingly foul and will hang around the kitchen for days (experience!).

Using a micro knife (another item from the Pound shop) you can tease a bite size clump of worms (blood, white, tubifex etc.) and drop it into the aquarium. For fry or baby fish, the worms can be cut into mouth-sized pieces by slicing against the Shot Glass side. If Daphnia, Artemia, Mysis, etc. the blade can be used as a spatula.



If any food is left, wrap the pot in kitchen foil (for health & safety) and leave in the 'fridge. When empty, just throw it away.

There is no evidence that feeding frozen foods to fish causes any problems but it must be better to have thawing portions ... we like ice-cream that is just soft for its mouth-feel and flavour, so do fish, I believe.

That message about the FNAS



Federation of Northern Aquarium Societies



Are Holding a meeting on Sunday 23rd April 2017; commencing 1pm at the
'Blue Club' 19 Victoria St, Chadderton,
Oldham, Lancashire, OL9 0HH|



Anyone who wishes to attend may do so.

The meeting will be centering on looking for a way forward for the Federation, after a couple of years of inactivity mainly in part due to retirements and the deaths of two of the Executive Committee.

Due to there being no election of the committee held in recent times, all committee positions are now vacant. If the decision is taken to move the FNAS forward, then a new committee will be elected on the day.

It is hoped that many former FNAS members and potential new members that can attend will do so.

It is essential that the FNAS not only continues its traditions and standards but that it also caters for the modern world of fishkeeping, hopefully, this meeting will go a long way in bringing back the much loved and needed FNAS.



Meeting coordinators:

Mr. Adrian Taylor: taylormedaka@gmail.com

Mr. Bill Ward: william.ward63@ntlworld.com



AGM April 11th 2017

Please note that your April meeting is the AGM. Please try to attend because officers need to be voted-in for the next year.

Note that we still need a Treasurer. You?

Our Chairman is having to do this job, so if you want to receive the April Newsletter (and it is a good one this month) you will need to be a paid-up member. So please send your subs to Sherridan now – or as soon as possible before that April AGM date. Better still, come and pay at the AGM.

If you use a cheque you need to write 'Northern Goldfish and Pondkeepers Society' - the bank will not accept 'NGPS' (they say). You can PayPal to Sherridan too.

The subs are the same as they have been for many years – and are low, in fact, if you receive the Newsletters in a printed form via the post, the cost is more than your subs per year!

Subscriptions are: £15 for the year to April 2018, under 21s are £5 and there is a family option to include your partner at £18 – 50p. Please request a digital Newsletter by supplying an email address. Only if you cannot access the internet at all can you be posted a printed version – register that with me: David Ford at 26 Clare Hall, Prescott Street, Halifax HX1 2HQ.

Minutes of the March Meeting

A busy meeting – we were pleased to see our President Bill Ramsden attend again.

Most of the conversation was about the AMGK's meeting the previous Sunday. Several of our members attended and found the Andy Metcalf talk so interesting many of its content were discussed.

For example Andy revealed that using a slice of ripe melon will draw white worms from their culture base and cleanse them too. Sounds better than the usual glass sheet method. Also Andy believes LED lighting will cause algae cultures to bloom, which can then be fed to daphnia for a nutritious fry food.

We all hoped he could talk to NGPS too.

After the meeting members visited A5 Aquatics at Nuneaton and were impressed. They have lots of stock and some good quality Goldfish.

Well worth a visit – find them at CV11 6BG.



President Bill commented that he believed modern Goldfish Judges were not as good as he was and suggested that what they needed was his magnifying glass to help assessment – then produced the biggest magnifier we have ever seen – here is Alan Ratcliffe trying it out...on this very Newsletter too!



Next meeting at the Church Inn, Prestwich is April 11th

It is the AGM so let Sherridan know if you cannot make it.

