

December 2022–January 2023

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AKA Reporter





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AKA Reporter



December 2022–January 2023

Administrative members and contact details _____	2
President's Report by <i>Ian Andrews</i> _____	3
Meeting Notices and Agendas, News, New Members, Auction Dates _____	5–6
AKA Mid Northern Region _____	7
2022 AKA Pond Tour by <i>Paul Miglionico</i> _____	9
The 58th ZNA International Koi Show by <i>Kate McGill-Andrews</i> _____	13
Buy, swap and sell _____	23 and 26
AKA supplies _____	Inside back cover

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Clear Water Koi ProfiDrum _____	24–25
The Pond Man _____	28
AllCare Ponds _____	Back cover

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Our cover this month: koi being loaded into special vehicles at the The 58th ZNA International Koi Show, Narita.

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AKA Reporter

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Ethel Allen*; Ian Andrews; Joe and Rita Borg; Jack Cohen*; Mary Cohen; Max Farrugia; Ron Farrugia; Barbara and Bryce Hough; Arthur Johnston; Gordon Kilborn; Yvonne Louis; Betty and George Ludbrook; Kate McGill-Andrews; Dorothy Miglionico; Paul Miglionico; Ken Newton; Dave Pogson*; John Rhodes; Arthur Robinson; Alan Walter*; Barbara Walter*; Harry Watson*; Robert Wood*; Heinz Zimmermann. *Deceased

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Australian Koi Association, 17 Westmore Drive, West Pennant Hills NSW 2125

President's Report to the AGM



After a long absence due to the COVID-19 pandemic it is my pleasure once again as AKA President to report to the AGM on the activities and achievements of the AKA over the past twelve months.

2022 saw our AKA Mid Northern NSW

chapter successfully hold their first koi show. Congratulations to Gavin Gribble and his team on this wonderful achievement—may this be the first of many.

On Sunday 29th May we successfully co-held with the KSA our Sydney Koi Show in the main arena complex of the Sydney International Equestrian Centre. Preparation for the Sydney Koi Show took up a lot of time for a lot of people whom I have to say a huge thank you to. Especially to Richard Power and all of the show executive, the exhibitors and the helpers.

We were able to invite international ZNA Judges for the first time in three years. For months we were concerned we would have insufficient koi entries to justify the huge arena at the Equestrian Centre; however, the final tally was beyond our dreams, at over 600 koi. Our sincere thanks to the Judges Mr Teddy Li (Hong Kong), Mr Wiwi Santoso (Indonesia), Mr Yang Goh Kang (Malaysia) and Mr Spencer Tan (Singapore) for contributing to our highly successful show.

This year saw Kevin and Misa Wong take out the GC A with a wonderful Sanke. GC B went to Kate and I for our shiro utsuri. Reserve Champion went to Dung Tu for a beautifully put together Size 6 Showa. Once again Dave Keen took Jumbo with his massive 93 cm Yamabuki Ogon.

AKA has this past year replaced all our collapsible show vats with 20 new-ridged blue show bins. Coupled with that we purchased our own 40-foot shipping container to house our show bins. A major expense at nearly \$20,000, but one we feel will enhance our hobby. I need to express our sincere gratitude to long time AKA Member Bill Yacoub for his generosity in allowing us to store both our container and auction trailer at his premises.

Congratulations also go to Heinz Zimmerman

for taking home the coveted Dave Pogson Memorial Breeders Trophy for 10 high quality Yamabuki Ogons, Kim and Tai Trieu took out best Tategoi this year with a great little KGR Showa to win the Jack Cohen Trophy.

Meeting nights this year I think have been really well attended, with talks by John Zammit, Agus Djafar, Ralf Boehner, Paul Miglionico and Kate to try to educate and expand our koi knowledge. 2022 saw the launch of AKA's WhatsApp Group founded under the stewardship of TK Hing. I'm happy to report that this is creating a wonderful sense of camaraderie and improving friendships amongst the active participants and I believe has also flowed over to our auction days also. I sense there is a real increased team spirit in play at these events and I must say I'm very pleased by the outcomes.

Our auction days are back in full swing at our new site at Fairfield. I'd especially like to thank Heinz, Joe, Mark and Paul for their dedication and efforts to ensure everything is in place for the day. Since moving to Fairfield we have upgraded the way we display our koi thanks to the insights and ideas from Adam Holden who has overseen all the camera, tech gear and monitors to modernize our Auctions. Our auctions are so professional and a lot easier on our backs. Whilst on auctions I'd also like to thank Judi Rea for again modernizing our payments system through the introduction of credit card transactions across the whole range of club activities. A huge amount of time and effort has gone into making this work and as we head toward a one-day cashless society, AKA is poised well for the future.

I'm pleased to report that we held a very successful Pond Tour just recently and like to thank all those that attended. To Joe and Rita Borg for hosting the first visit, to Kate for all her baking efforts to ensure morning tea went off well at our ponds and lastly to Mandy and Dave Keen for rolling out the red carpets for lunch at their beautiful home and ponds at Somersby.

Once again I'd like to thank our great Committee for another year of managing the workings of our AKA club.

Firstly to Judi Rea our hardworking Treasurer has done a sterling job throughout the year. Our club is in strong financial position...my sincere formal thank you for a job well done. Thank you to Heinz Zimmerman for all the great



Great night at the AKA Christmas Party 2022

efforts involved with memberships and auctions, to Gordon Kilborn for his efforts on supplies and shows. Paul Miglionico for standing as my Vice Chairman as well as our fantastic koi auctioneer. It's amazing how Paul can extract every last dollar bid available at our auctions. To John Ling for all the terrific show photos used throughout our magazine. To Adam Holden for your insights and secretarial work. John Rhodes, our Public Officer, who after many many years is sadly standing down. To our supplies team, Gordon, Anthony, Phil and Judi, and now Heinz, your efforts throughout the year have ensured our income level remains strong. TK Hing has introduced the WhatsApp Group, does our auction promotions on Gumtree and also sends texts to past bidders at each auction, my thanks TK.

To Mark Robinson for all the efforts with our trailers used at koi shows and auctions, we are grateful for your kind support and your willingness to help. A special thank you this year goes to Ron Farrugia for all the efforts over many years of attending our koi auctions to handle the cash receipts on the day, something we are very appreciative for. I'd like to thank Andrew Delahunt our Honorary Auditor and anyone else I may have overlooked.

Finally special thanks to Kate for all her support and to the members of the AKA for allowing me to serve as your President. I'd like to wish you and your families a very happy Christmas and a successful koi keeping year for 2023.

Yours in koi
Ian Andrews, President, AKA ■

AKA KOI AUCTIONS

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AKA News and Events

Meetings of the AKA

Our monthly meetings are held at the Georges Hall Community Centre. Meetings are on the second Monday of each month with the exception of December when no meeting takes place. Details of all our meetings are also on AKA's Facebook page.

Remember all members and visitors must register, preferably using the QR code via the Service NSW app, as AKA is now a registered COVID Safety Plan business. ■

Meeting of the AKA, Monday 16 January 2023

The January meeting of the AKA will be on Monday 16 January 2023 at the Georges Hall Community Centre 188 Birdwood Rd, Georges Hall, 7.30 pm. Note changed to 3rd Monday of the Month.

1. Welcome to members and guests
2. Apologies
3. Confirmation of minutes of previous monthly general meeting.
4. Raffle
5. Reports
6. General Business
7. Guest speaker.
8. Raffle Draw ■

Koi food

It is hoped that we can continue to provide as necessary any koi food requirements from our four outlets. We will require payment upfront or similar, and with no direct contact—our suppliers (see advertisement in this magazine) can arrange

for food orders to be left out ready for pick up, having nil face-to-face contact.

Have you tried AKA's Sinking Koi Pellets yet? Seems that many of our more experienced koi keepers have given this food a big tick and are getting great results feeding it to their koi. It's best to feed one lot of floating and next feed give them the sinking. Give it a try and I'm sure you will see the improvements in your koi. ■

New members

New members are always assured of a friendly welcome when attending the AKA's monthly meetings. Help and advice is available if required and our Supply Officers can provide you with koi food and accessories at favourable prices. Call our membership officer (details on page 2). We welcome the following new members:

Greg and Julie Babbage
Warwick and Carrol Beeby
Jowel Bondoc
Haada Cheng
Howard Hill-Esbrand
Rudi Hombergen
David and Masoud Humphries
Paul King
Leon Kougias
Van and Thu Nguyen
Tony Panyanouvong
Ben Tracey
Bob and Sue Williams
Mark Younes ■

AKA's banking details

*Australian Koi Association,
NAB BSB 082 343
A/C 8525 90813.*

*Please always enter your
name on the transaction.*

New outlet for AKA Supplies

*We have a new outlet for
AKA Supplies. Thanks to Heinz
Zimmerman (0428 478 594)
for establishing the Bass Hill
location for koi food, etc.*

HONORARY LIFE MEMBERS OF THE AKA

At the completion of AKA's November AGM there was a surprise announcement when Ian Andrews declared that it was unanimously agreed by the executive committee to award Honorary Life Membership to Joe and Rita Borg.

Joe and Rita have long been recognised as very valuable members of our koi club. Their dedication, incredibly hard work and support is always in evidence at our auctions, koi shows and meetings. It is a privilege to have them with us as part of the koi hobby in Australia. They are truly worthy recipients of Honorary Life Membership. Congratulations to them both.

The inscription on their plaque reads: 'In grateful recognition of your efforts on behalf of the Australian Koi Association over many years and for your invaluable contribution and support of the advancement of the koi keeping hobby.'



AKA Membership Renewal

After more than 15 years, regretfully, it has been acknowledged we must increase our Club's Membership fees to \$40. All our costs year on year, have risen continuously and have been absorbed by the Club but we have reached the point where the margin is becoming too large.

Remember, AKA provides many benefits to members (subsidised koi food and events) and will continue to do so, as well as publishing your AKA Reporter Magazine.

Membership renewals were due 1 July.

KSA Auction Dates

Saturday 7th January 2023
Saturday 4th March 2023
Saturday 6th May 2023
Saturday 8th July 2023 (Northern Branch)
Saturday 2nd September 2023
Saturday 28th October 2023 (Cumberland Branch)
Saturday 9th December 2023

Current Covid-19 restrictions as administered by Fairfield Council means that all these dates are tentative and will be confirmed or cancelled at a date closer to the auction date.

New venue for KSA auctions is Fairfield City Showground (bottom of markets), Smithfield Road, Prairiewood

AKA Mid Northern Region Chairman's Report

Chairman's Report



Firstly let me congratulate our Mid Northern Executive on a really successful year.

Our Chapter conducted its AGM on Sunday Nov 6th where the following positions were filled as follows:

Chairman—Gavan Gribble (0430 930 936)
Deputy Chairman—

Greg Collins (0411 406 519)

Secretary—Peter Hemmings (02 6567 7576)

Treasurer—Pooney Pun-Gribble (0409 675 673)

Events Coordinator—Steph Nicholson (0428 493 566)

Equipment and Supplies Officer—Aidan Dawson (0412 882 806)

Technical (Fish) Officer—Peter Colgan (0407 182 709)

Membership Officer—Greg Collins (0411 406 519)

An interesting line up, with some very sound personalities in key positions.

In this issue of our magazine I would like to focus on our members up here in the Mid Northern region and perhaps give a chance to highlight a individual member and their pond set-ups.

So it gives me pleasure to introduce new member Glen Jahn to tell us a bit about his lovely koi ponds.

Gavan Gribble

Chairman, AKA Mid Northern Region ■

A member's pond in the Coffs Harbour Chapter

Dear fellow members, I'm Glen Jahn from South West Rocks up here on the superb Mid North Coast of New South Wales.

When I was young, and due to my father's influence, we built a one-metre square fishpond and put goldfish in it. We soon built a bigger pond 7 x 2 x 1.5 m, and of course koi were involved.

During construction, we went to Bringelly Koi Farm to obtain fish, Hans obliged, gave us advice and got on with building his new fish house. In fact I asked Hans if he needed help, 'yes', he did, and after many afternoons and weekends a lifelong friendship was formed. I was paid in some spectacular koi, advice and experience. When I married Sharron, we had the wedding by the koi pond we had made for ourselves. Now for the 'but'—isn't there always one?

Trouble struck, as it does. We went away for a weekend, returning to find that there had been a power failure and all our fish were dead. Friends said, 'never mind they are only fish and you can get more'. True in part, but as you will understand, they had become friends and part of our life. We were devastated. So, we ended up with no koi for a while. Time was needed to recover and regroup.

Just on a decade ago we moved to South West Rocks. My Dad passed away five months after and that convinced me that koi were not meant to be part of my life; it was all too hard. Sharron had an aquarium, and wanted to move the fish in it to a new outside pond. Yep, I built another pond. This time it was a small fiberglass boat that we sunk below ground level and turned into a pond.

Not big enough, and I soon found a 10,000 L tank at a mate's farm—free and





available. I populated it with mass-spawned koi from Hambley's Fish Farm, not one or two but 15 or 20. Why muck around, straight into the deep end! Another 10,000 L ex-farm tank followed. Now each pond runs with its own filtration system.

The first pond runs with a simple Japanese matting pre-filter and a secondary 200 L K1 bed.

The second pond runs through a bog filter. Each pond pumps water back through its individual system. Ponds have conical bases and the pumps are raised off the pond bottom (400 to 500 mm).

Initially I was experiencing cloudy water but found that after throttling back the 20,000 litre-per-hour pump the water quickly cleared and now remains perfect. I use the ATI Test Kits and I test my water parameters every four days or so, nothing abnormal.

No surprise here: I have generator back up just in case!

This next comment may raise an eyebrow or two, especially regarding cloudy water. In the top pond I hold about 60 koi, each around 15 to 20 cm. I am about to cull that pond by 40 fish. The second pond (bottom pond) holds some 20 large koi—some that are up to up to 70 cm or more in length. Both ponds are netted for protection from predators and koi trying to escape, and our ponds sit on a 2.5-acre property.

My preferred koi varieties are Asagi and Hariwake, but if it is a koi I love it.

Glen Jahn ■



2022 AKA Pond Tour

Paul Miglionico

With COVID-19 shutting down the club for social activities from February 2020, this was an amazing event to start activities rolling again!

Over 35 members attended, and the weather, given all the torrential rain this year, actually behaved itself and stayed dry and warm, a massive bonus to our day out. In fact, Ian had told everyone beforehand, if it was raining heavily that morning, the pond tour would be cancelled, great that that eventuality was avoided.

First home visited was Joe and Rita Borg's place at Oakhurst. Joe has spent over 30 years creating an oasis all built by himself with help from his son and cousin. Definitely, a multi-talented man, Rita ably assisting. I was very impressed by the quality of the ponds and the koi in them. He has a beautiful collection and I was quite surprised over the number of Tancho koi he has bred and raised to the highest of standards. A top quality Tancho variety does not turn up often. I remember years ago being told the more Tancho turning up out of Kohaku spawning, the better the breed?

Joe had Tancho Showa, Sanke, Kohaku and Joe and Rita bred 99% of all the koi on display. He has built a lovely gazebo with bridge. There were also growing on ponds with hydroponics set up plus two long ponds with viewing windows; always a bonus. There was an outside pizza oven in the yard and a large seating area. Pavers were done with a koi inlay. I could have stayed for hours admiring what they have achieved together.

The next pond was Ian and Kate Andrews'. The main pond was built from an existing swimming pool and was extensively modified to become a world-class koi pond with Lars and Roz Lindberg doing the construction (Allcare Ponds) with Ian and Kate. The project took two years of hard labour to complete, every weekend! The gardens surrounding the pond have topiary, bonsai and bromeliads as well as some Japanese maples in a variety of colours. I tried to get photos of different features around their garden but could not show the ambience. Ian has been creating a cloud Japanese maple and with all the new leaves it really stood out. There is a Japanese-style teahouse at the back of the main pond. Ian and Kate have two other ponds. One for fry and very small fish and a second, constructed upon first moving to the property in 2007, for their younger collection to grow on in.

After a lovely morning tea of scrumptious morsels it was time to leave and head to Dave



First pond of the day was Joe and Rita Borg's.



Lovely to see the AKA members on the pond tour.



Conversations around koi.

and Mandy Keen's at Somersby. This home has been four years in the making. Dave has built some impressive ponds over the years and I would have to say his main pond is the most technically advanced I have seen. He has the advantage of spring fed dams, bore water and ponds and has worked hard to get optimum quality of water for the koi to show their best potential.

Mandy and Dave were exceptional hosts on the day. When we all arrived there was charcuterie platters and drinks galore. After looking at the ponds (and Mandy's lovely horse) an incredibly generous BBQ and roast lunch was provided. What a feast! It was above and beyond anyone's expectations. Very many thanks to both Mandy and Dave for such a wonderful spread. After having seconds and thirds it was time to wobble on down to Dave's large koi dam complete with bottom drain. Although the water was green it was possible to see some of the koi surfacing for food and they looked impressive by any standard. After everyone asked a lot of questions, plus some buying of koi Dave had caught earlier, it was back to the main home for dessert. Mandy makes incredible apple pies!

For new members and old alike there was something for everyone to see and enjoy.

I thank all volunteers for opening their homes for probably the best pond tour I have been on. ■



Rita shows Joe's doorway to filters.



A chance to ask questions.



Mimi dressed for the occasion.



Paul thanked Joe and Rita for allowing our visit.



Pond two was Ian and Kate's, and the sun was shining brilliantly.



Kate and Ian's beautiful pond and gardens.



Koi facilities at Dave and Mandy's at Sommersby.



Conversations over morning tea.



State of the art filtration system beneath Dave's impressive pond.



Koi enjoying the visitors and sunshine after such a long period of wet weather.



Gin clear water in Dave and Mandy's modern main koi pond.



Mandy and Dave rolled out super lunch for the lucky visitors.



Dave's dams (mud ponds) where he grows all his babies.



Sign at Dave and Mandy's depicting their champion 93 cm Yamabuki Ogon.



Raising ponds to determine which koi get kept and which get sold.

The 58th ZNA International Koi Show, Tani Fish Farm Narita 2022

Kate McGill-Andrews

After the 'koi show desert' since 2019 I was delighted to hear in September this year that I had been invited to be part of the judging team for the ZNA International Show, held at another new venue for me—Tani Fish Farm, Narita (photo 1), only 60 km outside Tokyo, therefore promising to be warmer than Niigata! Ian and I have visited Narita before, when we have had a few hours to spare before a flight. The quaint old shops, temples and gardens are lovely sites to visit.

We were very lucky to be able to accept this invitation. I knew that my laboratory at work was expecting a major inspection, probably in November. Originally, the date was thought likely to be late November, so not an issue, but to my horror, our lead pathologist—who has to be present for the inspection—was not available towards the end of that month. Some very anxious weeks followed, assignment of a date for the inspection was agonisingly slow. I was unable to accept the judging assignment until I knew that I could take leave at the end of the second week in November. Finally, at the end of October, only two weeks before the show dates, I heard—the inspection was on Thursday 10 November. Sod's Law strikes again! The show began on the 11th. Having despaired, I realised the judging was on Saturday 12th therefore there was a chance we could still get there in time! After a frantic search for flights—nothing on Thursday night—we managed to book with JAL for the Friday

morning at 9.15 am, reaching Hanada, Tokyo at 5.15 pm, coming home Monday night. A very short trip, but well worth while, given practically no judging over the last three years plus knowing a great many of our koi friends were attending the show.

We duly set off on Friday morning just after 5 am—definitely advisable to leave plenty of



Photo 2: Catching up with a lot of very good international friends



Photo 1: The Tani Fish Farm main building.



Photo 3: Early morning judges' meeting.



Photo 4: A view of the show ground at Tani Fish Farm.



Photo 5: ZNA Grand Champion 94 cm Sanke bred by Sakai, owned by Kazuhiko Odawara.



Photo 6: With my teammates.

time before flights these days. We had no issues however, apart from knowing we had to catch a bus to Narita airport on landing at Hanada and we were invited to meet up with a group organised by Shoji Saito for dinner at 7.30 pm at the hotel in central Narita—another trip to organise from Narita airport. Unfortunately the express bus does not go through Narita town, the highway goes directly to the airport. Our flight actually arrived early at 4.30 pm into Hanada and our hopes of catching the 5.30 bus soared, only to be dashed because, despite completing all the complicated entry requirements post COVID-19, getting through Hanada airport was still painfully slow. We missed the early bus by five minutes! In hindsight, we still would have been late; Friday night traffic in Tokyo makes Sydney look like a walk in the park. The

expressways were a car park for a huge distance. We finally reached our hotel just before 9 pm, but our group had saved us some dinner and it was so good to catch up with people we haven't seen for years (photo 2). The International Show this year was truly 'international' with representation from around the world. We have never seen such a turnout at one show before.

Knowing there was an early start for the judging next day, it was not a late night, but a very merry one! The bus set off after breakfast at 7.45 am, reaching Tani Fish Farm in about 30 minutes. We had never visited it and found it to be a pretty large establishment with a shop, cafes and plenty of space for the show. We all had our photos taken; were given a judges' briefing (photo 3) and team assignments then moved out to take our first look at the koi, 1,022 of them over 224 bins (photo 4)! I was assigned 80 bu to judge with Ueda Masahiro and Hayashi Toyohiro, Zulfiya Shafiyeva interpreting, wonderful, because she is so good. Zulfiya understands koi appreciation (quite a few interpreters do not) and is able to translate everything for all the team members, making the experience so much better for us all. Our first task was to select a single koi each, individually, as a Grand Champion nomination. All the judges participate in this section—quite a task, I can tell you, because the standard of the koi was incredibly high, especially for the larger sizes. GC is selected from usually 80, 85 and >85 bu groups, but in reality, 80 bu koi are unlikely to compete at this level. This occasion was no exception and a magnificent 94 cm Sanke really stood out from the crowd and attracted over 75% of the votes from 32 judges (photo 5). Three other koi attracted a few votes, but no re-selection was necessary, The Sanke was a clear winner. (I later discovered this koi, owned by Mr Kazuhiko Odawara (ZNA Hiroshima Chapter), was six years old and bred by Sakai).

Each judging team now assembled with assistants wearing highly visible, bright fluorescent yellow jackets to lead the way to each bin housing a koi to examine. The assistants at these shows are Assistant Certified Judges gaining experience prior to being made up to fully Certified Judge. We had Rene Shoenmaker from South Africa and Ng Yit Kok from Malaysia on our team. Rene made us all laugh—he is such a big tall guy, unmissable in the yellow jacket—all we had to do to find the next bin was look for Rene (photo 6)!



Photo 7: Superior Champion over 85 bu Kohaku. A good example of the superb quality of the koi at this show.



Photo 8: 80 bu Best in Size Sanke.



Photo 9: Variety Champion Showa.



Photo 11: Zipangu GC named a Shiro Karashigoi.



Photo 10: Variety Champion Kujaku.



Photo 12: Best Kawarimono and AKA Friendship Award, a very unusual koi.



Photo 13: An unusual Kanoko Ochiba Shigure.



Photo 15: Best Koromo, a rare developing Goshiki Showa.



Photo 14: Rarely seen, a Kin-Rin Char-Utsuri.



Photo 16: A lovely Matsukawabake.



Photo 17: A special young Kuro Goshiki.



Photo 18: Ian's favourite, Variety Champion Hikari Utsuri, a lovely Kin Showa.



Photo 19: Enjoying the Saturday night official ZNA evening with our international friends.



Photo 20: Mr Odawara received the Grand Champion trophy.

Our largest group of koi to judge was Kohaku with fourteen entries; almost any one of them good enough to take first place. The quality and conformation of these koi was incredibly special (photo 7). In the final analysis, only relatively minor demerits distinguished the first three places in this group. Sanke also proved a real challenge to judge. Probably the best quality Sanke we have seen were presented this year at the International. Out of the seven entries we had, two really stood out from the crowd but were so different. Both had almost perfect quality shiroji (white skin), hi (red) and sumi



Photo 21: Presenting the GC banner.



Photo 22: Alan Nementzik presenting the Singapore Koi Club Friendship Award.

(black) with cleanly cut kiwa (trailing pattern edges) and stunning conformation. One koi had what I would call classical sumi, fairly small, very neatly arranged sumi markings, while the other demonstrated a very heavy but perfectly formed sumi pattern. Both were magnificent but I had to admit that the heavier sumi really did give that koi tremendous strength and ‘presence’. After much discussion, we finally selected the koi with the heavier sumi as first (photo 8). This koi



Photo 23: Kate presenting the AKA Friendship Award to Benedict Campos of the Philippines accepted by Kentaro Sakai of Sakai Koi Farm.



Photo 24: Loading Sakai’s amazing lorry.

went on to become best in size for 80 bu with the lighter style Sanke selected as runner up.

Sadly we only had a single Showa and Utsuri in 80 bu—very unusual for this show (photo 9), but we did have a fair selection of other koi to judge. Kujaku was the special variety this year (photo 10), and there were some excellent examples presented. This variety has proved difficult to clean up in Australia, black stains on



Photo 25: Walking down the Omotesando towards the temple.



Photo 26: One of the magnificent buildings in the Naritasan Shinsho-ji Temple grounds.



Photo 27: Stunning autumn colour in the temple gardens.



Photo 28: Very different, a bonsai chrysanthemum.

head and fins are very common and Kujaku looks best with clean white fins and unstained head. Our team progressed smoothly and completed our assignment well before lunchtime; plenty of time to discuss the koi—particularly one that caused a lot of controversy in the over-85-bu group. It appeared to be an enormous Shiromuji (single coloured white koi) with a dirty, brownish head—very unattractive and not a koi you would expect to see at a major show and certainly not to be selected as a winner! We heard that it was



Photo 29: Some of the magnificent chrysanthemums on display.



Photo 31: We very much enjoyed our tea. Such an interesting little venue.



Photo 30: A small teahouse along the Omotesando.

the offspring from a Kohaku/Karashigoi (apricot-coloured koi) cross performed by Sakai and called a ‘Shiro-Karashigoi’, but this is unconfirmed (photo 11). However, quite a few of the judges did not agree with this koi’s selection as Zipangu (non-Go-Sanke) Grand Champion—we felt that it really had nothing to offer but its sensational size and conformation and it did not fulfil the selection criteria for the award, that is, the koi must yes, be huge, but also represent its variety well. The ‘Shiromuji’ was a koi a lot of us felt should have been culled, years ago! Always something controversial at a koi show!

One exceptionally interesting koi deservedly won quite an array of awards, including the Australian Koi Association (AKA) Friendship Award. Difficult to classify past Kawarimono (something strange) it looked to certainly have some Ochiba Shigure (grey koi with orange/brown patterns) in its background, but quite what else was a bit of a mystery. It was slightly



Photo 32: Two children in lovely traditional costumes seen at the temple.

metallic with a satin sheen and had matsuba ‘pine cone’ reticulation over a bronze-coloured body. The head was a mix of pewter (metallic grey), cream and silver-white with a grey stripe along part of the dorsal ridge. This was a very eye-catching unusual koi of superb quality (photo 12) reminding me of a similar koi seen many years ago at the Shinkokai show in the 1990s although that example had a black and white head and bronze body. Overall, there were quite a few unusual koi at the show, including some Kanoko (dappled fawn—photo 13) examples plus a Kin-Rin Char-Utsuri, (rarely seen—photo

14) and Goshiki-Showa (photo 15). I always enjoy looking around a show to find something completely different and this show certainly turned up trumps. As always, there were very many special koi to admire (photos 16 and 17), including Ian's favourite variety, a lovely Kin Showa (photo 18)

Later on, Ian took me around the 'for sale' bins outside the main Tani Farm outbuildings. Prices on the whole were fairly reasonable, you could buy some really nice young koi for around \$500 to \$1,500, although there were a few with a much higher price tag, including a lovely Shiro Utsuri—only \$30,000! It would be great to be able to send a couple home, but even if we were allowed to bring koi into Australia, the thought of inadvertently introducing KHV is highly off-putting, to say the least. Any koi, elsewhere in the world, could be harbouring this dreaded virus.

At the end of the afternoon, (with rather sore feet by this time), we caught the bus back to the hotel for a short rest before the official ZNA dinner at 6.30 pm. The evening was a lot of fun (photo 19), with all the usual table-hopping to chat and share glasses of beer. An excellent menu was presented with a lot of interesting and tasty dishes enjoyed by all. We did wish however, that some translation could have been made for the slide show of the winning koi displayed throughout the meal. Zulfiya was present that evening, and when asked on Sunday morning, said she was surprised she had not had a request the previous evening to translate the commentary on the selected koi. Perhaps next time!

The weather on Sunday was not as good as on Saturday, a cold wind got up, blowing leaves everywhere, including into the bins. Ian was glad he had managed to take most of his photographs on Saturday. The morning was taken up with the awards and closing ceremonies (photos 20–23) after which the show began to be dismantled in short order. The size and complexity of some of the specialised lorries was unbelievable, all in stainless steel with massive bins inside to house the koi (photo 24). We left the showground at 2 pm but at the rate things were progressing it was likely the entire ground of 224 bins would be cleared by the end of the day.

We had planned to take a walk through Narita to the Naritasan Shinsho-ji Temple and gardens that afternoon with Teddy and Kandy Li (Hong Kong) Jason and Jenny Lim Poh Chai (Malaysia), Ng Yit Kok and Wong Hee Heng (both also from Malaysia), but we had only reached

the first interesting shop along the street leading to the temple, (called the Omotesando), when it began to rain. We all beat a hasty retreat to the hotel and agreed to meet up for dinner later, instead. In fact, it turned out to be a good decision—my feet very much appreciated the rest! We had a wonderful dinner with the group that evening, although saying our goodbyes at the end is always so hard—you never know how long it will be until the next meeting.

Monday morning saw packing, more goodbyes to people after breakfast then Ian and I set out to explore the Omotesando street (photo 25) leading to the Naritasan Shinsho-ji Temple and grounds. The fascinating shops and restaurants lining the Omotesando have apparently served visitors and pilgrims for hundreds of years and it is truly amazing to think that the temple was founded over 1,000 years ago, in 940 AD. The architecture and ornamentation of the buildings is stunning (photo 26); everything assembled without a nail in sight. We had a wonderful morning looking around and walking through the beautiful gardens with their streams and small lakes full of carp and some koi. The autumn colour of some of the maples was quite breath taking (photo 27). We also enjoyed a lovely chrysanthemum display (photo 28); some of the flowers were the largest I have ever seen in a wonderful array of colours and petal shapes (photo 29). After our visit, and gasping for a drink after the long walk, we discovered a delightful little teahouse (photo 30), down an alleyway behind the Omotesando and very much enjoyed a delicious cup of tea (photo 31).

All too soon it was time to head back, collect our luggage and start our travels back home. We took the local train back to Narita airport rather than find a taxi then bought our tickets for the Hanada bus. We were lucky on both counts; train and bus left within 10 minutes of us reaching the station and the airport, so very little time to wait, for which I was grateful. Monday was decidedly cold! A very strong wind was still blowing, but fortunately it was a dry day. Our plane from Hanada was delayed an hour but the time was made up during the flight and we arrived back in Sydney at 6.30 am Tuesday morning. Another successful adventure over, so much seen and done in a short time; so many friends rediscovered; definitely worth the long trip (photo 32).

As always—until next time! ■



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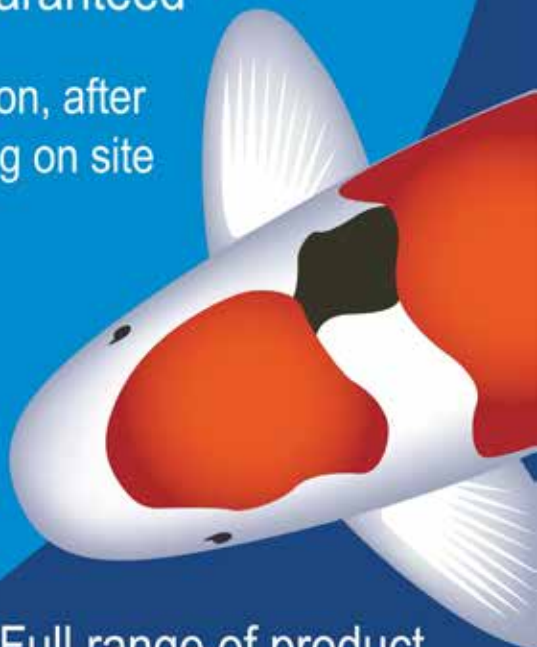
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