

Mr. K Dinner Party, Lake Forest, June 2004

By JACKSON SELLERS



Yutaka and Masako Katayama, or Mr. and Mrs. K as everybody calls them, are amused by a little “ice cube” that lights up and pulsates in a drink glass. Masako was born 90 years ago in San Francisco, where her father was working for what would eventually become the Bank of Tokyo. As a young child she was sent to Japan for education and proper upbringing. The couple have been married for 66 years. They have four successful children and a number of grandchildren.

Mr. K on the patio overlooking Yoshi’s backyard garden. The half-full ashtray is mine. Mr. K hasn’t smoked for years. His father was a chain-smoker who died in his mid-50s of lung cancer. I was pleased to see Mr. K so fit and relaxed after 10 days of International Z-Car Convention activities. As usual, his autograph was much in demand. That very morning, he had signed 250 items. The father of the Datsuns and Z-cars can’t escape such duties. Masako asked me the name of the smooth-bark tree rising from a clump of pansies just behind Mr. K. I replied that it was crepe myrtle, and then the two of them helped me recall the Japanese name, which translates as “monkey-slip tree.”





Here I take a photo of Mr. K who is taking a closeup of Yoshi's roses. One of Mr. K's virtues is that he is happy wherever he is. It may even be the secret of his longevity. He will turn 95 in September. He was born in 1909, the same year as my father, and that somehow makes me feel closer to him.

Stewart and Michelle Moore are engrossed here in conversation with Mr. K at the main dinner table. Lovely Michelle is obscured in the photo, but she shines forth in the one below. The Moores are Lake Forest neighbors. Michelle has owned and driven three Z-car models — the 240Z, the 280Z and the 300ZX.



The dinner was magnificent. I can say this because neither Yoshi nor I had anything to do with it. Stewart and Michelle brought tender pork ribs and a baked dish consisting of five different types of beans. The ribs and beans were praised by Japanese who appreciate food not overwhelmed by seasonings. *Sushi* chef Toshi and his girlfriend Maki slaved away in the kitchen preparing marvelous *sashimi* and *sushi* delicacies for our 14 guests.

