

THE LISBURN OILY RAG

The Newsletter of Lisburn City Old Vehicle Club

March 2016



Spring Issue

Lots to read about inside . . .

It's time to get those Old Vehicles out on the road

The Editor's Letter

Hello - and welcome to another edition of the Oily Rag. This is my first as editor and I would like to take this opportunity to thank Tommy for all his hard work and input to editing the magazine until now. (I'm afraid that means that there will be fewer photos of Land Rovers from now on!)

This edition has articles on Minis, Motorbikes, Medics, and much more which shows the eclectic mix of interests and ideas that are held within our wee club.

Remember, it's your magazine so keep on supplying us with your articles of interest, and share your stories and photos with us all.

All the best,

Paul.

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Front Cover

On Friday 29th January, the very last Land Rover Defender rolled off the assembly line at Solihull. This is not it. This is Tommy Moore's 1951 Series 1 eighty inch model which was just three years into a monumental production run.



CLUB

Regatta Jacket £35 Sweat Shirt £20 Fleece £25 Polo Shirt £20

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The Chairman's Letter

Hi Everyone,

Hopefully by the time you read this, winter will have ran out of surprises and we can look forward to getting the cars (and the bikes) fired-up and ready for another season on the road.

Since my last letter, we have enjoyed a very successful winter season, with the accent on social activities and our well attended Club Night Meetings. One of the main attractions of our evenings is of course our guest speakers, who



give of their time to educate and enthral us and again we have been lucky to have enjoyed insights into some very interesting lives and activities. In January we welcomed Yvonne Craig, a senior paramedic with the Northern Ireland Ambulance Service, who, with great enthusiasm, told us about her work in the world of 'blue lights and bandages'. And after all that, Yvonne looks after her teenage family and carries out her invaluable duties with Marie Curie Cancer Care.

In February our Guest Speaker was Alan 'Plum' Tyndall who kindly attended and spoke to one our largest audiences to date. Plum took us behind the scenes of motorsport production which reminded us just how much we miss the RPM coverage of local motorsport on UTV. A very interesting and well-received presentation from a true professional.

As we are about to embark on our Spring and Summer calendar of events, we are also taking our first trip as a Club to the Techno Classica Show in Essen, Germany. I have been putting the final arrangements and bookings in place and hopefully our first continental tour will be a success and if it remains the attraction it was the last time I was there, I am sure we will have a great time.

As in the past, we will again be assisting Lisburn and Castlereagh City Council by taking part in The Mayor's Parade and in helping to organise the Dundrod Run during UGP week. We are delighted to continue to be part of these popular community events.

In conclusion, may I welcome our new members and wish you all an enjoyable and safe motoring Spring.

Sammy



The

Christmas Dinner

2015



isburn Golf Club was again the venue for the second annual LCOVC Christmas Dinner on Saturday 12th December. There was a good attendance and everyone enjoyed an excellent meal and the opportunity to let their hair down (not applicable across the board).

Once again our thanks must go to our Chairman, Sammy, for giving the time and effort to organise the evening at this most convenient venue.



n Tuesday 19th January, Lisburn City Old Vehicle Club welcomed Yvonne Craig who gave a talk on her experiences as a paramedic with the Northern Ireland Ambulance Service.

Yvonne's career began with NIAS in 1998 and since then she has just about seen it all when it comes to answering calls for urgent assistance from members of the public.



It wasn't all blood and bandages and Yvonne told some very entertaining stories about some of the lighter moments which inevitably occur when providing service to the public. Unfortunately, Yvonne also confirmed that a lot of the pressure placed

on the service is as a result of alcohol addiction and abuse.



As well as providing a vital service as a paramedic and being Mum in a busy family setting, Yvonne still finds time for her charity work with Marie Curie Cancer Care.



elfast, 1960 and a certain Mr Patrick Peter Barron Hopkirk visited the BMC dealership of Thompson Reid at Donegall Square East and became the proud owner of a brand new Austin Healey Sprite which would be registered in his name as 2222 AZ. Fifty-six years later, on the outskirts of Lisburn, a certain Mr Conn Williamson hands the wee Healey's keys to yours truly and suggests we take her for a drive. I was there to get a few photos and facts about the ex-Paddy Hopkirk frogeye, but this was a real bonus.

Before Conn could change his mind, I assisted in the removal of the hood, which I must admit left a slightly bigger target for me and Mr Williamson to slide gracefully into the compact interior. First objective achieved; we'll worry about getting out later.

As we set off, I am mindful not to stress the motor before it is up to temperature and to be extra careful not to place the Sprite in harm's way. I could try and use some of the thrashed to death clichés you tend to see in the real magazines, but that would take me out of my depth. All I know is that the little Healey is a hoot to drive, pulls strongly in its current 1275cc guise and brakes straight and powerfully with the front disc brake set up it now wears. This is not for hairdressers; this is a real sports car in the true sense.

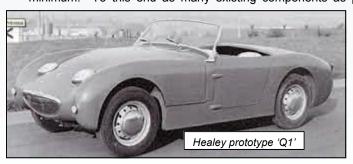


1960, Dunboyne Circuit, Co. Meath I to r (11) Kevin Diffley (MGA), (9) Don Hunter (MGA), (8) Alec Jameson (JP) are outdragged off the line by (7) Paddy Hopkirk in his Sprite 2222 AZ. At that time the Sprite wore a Sebring fibreglass front which Conn still has with the car.

Photo Des Bradley

There's no power steering, no Electronic Stability Programme, no ABS, no VVT, it doesn't even have TCS or SPE (whatever they are) and there's no ACV. It doesn't have external door handles and there's no boot lid to worry about and in this instance less definitely means more. The Sprite has a lovely patina and shows its heritage and evolution as a 'working' competition car. It is no 'trailer queen' and all the nicer for it in my humble opinion. Conn has owned the Frogeye for about fifteen years and purchased it from the estate of the late Jim McCullough, who also raced the car locally. It is also well documented in the competition results in the book The Paddy Hopkirk Story, A Dash of The Irish by Bill Price (ISBN 1 84425 1101 1) and comes with its own collection of silverware won over the years.

The history of the Mk1 Austin Healey Sprite began in 1956 when Leonard Lord, the executive chairman of BMC asked Donald Healey of the Healey Motor Co. to design a small, low-priced sports car "that a chap could keep in his bike shed." Healey had already come up with a winner in 1952 in the form of the Austin Healey 100 (which later evolved into the Healey 3000). This time, however, the task was to design and produce a car which would keep costs to a minimum. To this end as many existing components as possible were to be utilised and



ultimately this meant that the new Sprite used the rack and pinion steering from the Minor and the engine and drive train from the A35. BMC had previously built their own prototypes with a view to producing their low cost sports model; one was a 'sports' Minor and the other was a fibreglass bodied A35 sports on a tubular chassis. Both were 'stillborn' and did not

proceed beyond the prototype stage. On 31 January 1957, Geoffrey Healey delivered the prototype Sprite (above) designated Q1 to the Austin plant at Longbridge. The 'chassis' floorpan was designed by Barry Billbie and the body by Gerry Coker, both employed by Healey. Originally it was proposed (again to keep costs down) that the pressings for the front and back of the car would be identical, but in reality the front had to be modified to accommodate the underpinnings, suspension etc. Other casualties during pre-production were the pop-up headlights which were unreliable and in fact were found to not deploy at speeds over 60mph. Their removal from the design is said to have saved £1 per car and, by a twist of fate, led to the frogeye uniqueness of the car. The production cars also lost the exterior door hinges and the sill and lower bonnet line were revised to give a clean flow with the door bottom line.

The problem of providing a rigid structure to an open-topped sports car was resolved by Barry Bilbie, Healey's chassis designer, who adapted the idea provided by the Jaguar D-type, with rear suspension forces routed through the body shell's floor pan. The Sprite's chassis design was the world's first volume-production sports car to use unitary construction, where the sheet metal body panels (apart from the bonnet) take many of the structural stresses. The original metal gauge (thickness of steel) of the rear structure specified by Bilbie was reduced by the Austin Design Office during prototype build, however during testing at M.I.R.A. (Motor Industry Research Association) distortion and deformation of the rear structure occurred and the

original specification was reinstated. The two front chassis legs projecting forward from the passenger compartment mean the shell is not a full monocoque. The front sheet-metal assembly, including the bonnet and wings, was a one-piece unit, hinged from the back, that swung up to allow access to the engine compartment. The body was styled by Gerry Coker, with subsequent alterations by Les

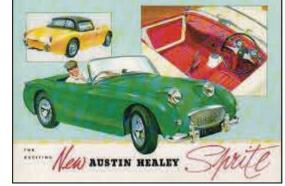


Ireland following Coker's emigration to the US in 1957. Originally production of the new car was to be at Austin's Birmingham Longbridge plant, but had to be moved to the MG factory at Abingdon, Oxfordshire because the line at Longbridge was set up to fit engines and transmissions from below the car and this was not possible with the dimensions of the underside of the Sprite. Apparently Abingdon already worked 'from above'. On 31.3.1958 Sprite production commenced and on the 20.5.1958 the new model was launched in front of the Hotel de Paris, Monte Carlo. By July 1958, Mk1 Sprites had taken 1st, 2nd and 3rd places in their class in the Alpine Rally, John Sprinzel who was instrumental in developing the very successful Sebring Sprites, winning the event. The BMC Competitions Department put a lot of time and effort into promoting the Sprite in just about every branch of motorsport.

On 21st December 1960, the very last Mk1 left the production line after a run of 48,987 cars. The swinging sixties had dawned and perhaps it was felt that the buying public demanded more up-to-the-minute styling and luxuries like a boot lid. As we all know, the resultant Mk2 was also badged as an MG, but on the downside, this development meant that the new 'baby' was 100lbs heavier than its older sibling. In 1971 British Leyland (as the company was then known) dropped the Healey part from the name to avoid continuing to pay royalties to the Healey Motor Co. Thereafter the final 1,000 or so cars which were not MG Midgets were simply Austin Sprites, but I think most of us still included the Healey name without even realising it was defunct.

Syd McCoy









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WANTED



Your Old Motoring Photos

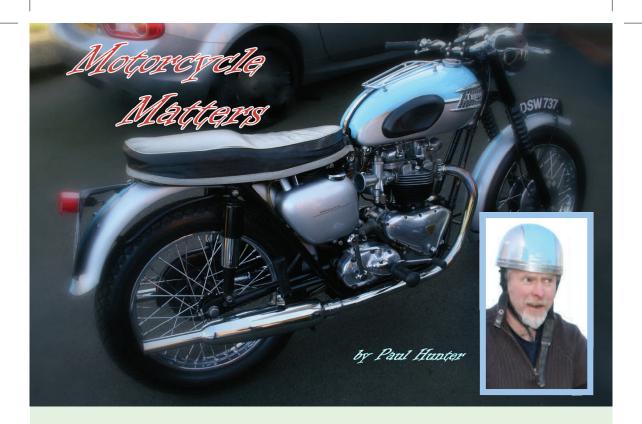
We are hoping you might share with us your Motoring and Motorcycling Photographs from the past for inclusion in your Oily Rag.

In each issue we plan to publish a photo or two from your family archives, depicting some form of motor transport, or with a motoring theme. Maybe you have some pictures of you at work or family picnics or maybe that long awaited first car or bike. This is your Club and your magazine and as a member mentioned recently, we have a mine of interesting people within our own numbers and we should celebrate and tap into your interesting history.

We promise to take care of and return your photos without delay.

We know you have them; they're in that old biscuit tin or even in those scrap books you've had in the roof space for years. We are just waiting to see them and to tell *your* story.

Here's a Club member with his first motorbike. But who is it?



BMW R90s restoration Part 2.

he strip down of the R90s has taken place and the rebuild has commenced. The frame and cycle parts were bead blasted and powder coated, forks rebuilt with new seals, steering bearings renewed, brakes serviced with new pads and Goodridge stainless hoses fitted and the front wheel rebuilt with stainless spokes.

On checking the engine it was found to be in excellent condition with main bearings,



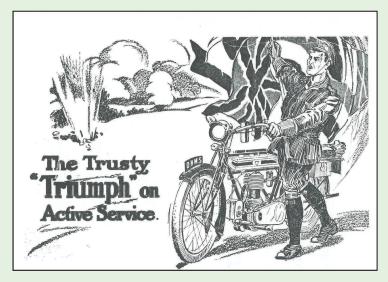
pistons and cylinders showing very little wear, new rings and gaskets will suffice. At the top end, the valves and guides are like new, just needing cleaned up and reground.

The only engine modification to be undertaken is the fitting of a deeper sump to allow the oil to circulate more freely, and electronic ignition; a fit and forget product made by Boyer Bransden that improves starting and eliminates the need to check and reset the points gap.





The next major job will be rewiring, fitting exhaust pipes and strobe timing the ignition. Then perhaps I can fire her up and hear the R90s running for the first time since it was ridden into the previous owner's shed in 2001.



Triumph motorcycles have recently launched their new range of Bonneville motorbikes amid much publicity and glossy advertising...here's how they did it **100 years ago!**













- Engine and gearbox, minus barrels and heads etc, mounted in frame.
- Swinging arm with drive shaft and bevel drive fitted.
 Frame ancillaries, horn, lifting handle,
- side stand, seat lock etc fitted.
 Original contact breaker points replaced with trigger unit for Boyer tran-4.
- sistorised ignition.
 'Fried' diode board needs replaced. A common failure with age.



A Lifetime in Motorsport

here was a magnificent turnout of members and guests at the Club Night Meeting on Tuesday 16th February to hear Alan 'Plum' Tyndall tell us about his involvement in motorsport, from his earlier days as a local competitor and event commentator, to establishing and running one of the most professional motorsport media companies anywhere.

Alan gave a very interesting talk and Powerpoint presentation which chronicled his lifetime interest in cars from his childhood and his becoming enthralled by the racing cars and drivers of the period during his visits to the English circuits whilst in the company of friends he met at Portora Royal School in Enniskillen. On graduation from university he pursued a career as an architect, but we got the impression that his heart and his goals lay in other areas, involving engines and wheels.

'Plum' cut his teeth on the local circuits, both racing saloon cars and commentating at venues such as Kirkistown and Mondello. Soon his 'amateur' media exploits became his main interest and in 1984 he set up RPM Motorsport and after initially working for RTE he later produced high quality television for UTV, the BBC and many of the European media and has also covered F1 for Eurosport. Indeed Alan Tyndall has rubbed shoulders with most of the top British, Irish and European drivers and has interviewed them for TV.

As well as the entertaining and often very funny, racing and rally stories, Plum also had fond memories of some of media personalities he has worked with. Apparently Pamela Ballantine was eager to assist even when the cameras were not rolling and more than pulled her weight. Murray Walker was confirmed to be the proper gentleman we had heard he was from many sources and alas the late, great James Hunt didn't always turn up with much time to spare when commentating with Murray.

In 2013, Alan Tyndall called it a 'wrap' for the RPM programme, but still takes on one-off public relations productions and continues to produce motorsport features. For the best part of thirty years, he has been instrumental in recording the motorsport history of Ireland, North and South and in the future this will surely be an invaluable legacy. Thanks from all at LCOVC for a great evening. Please come back sometime.

MCR Minis to Ireland September 2015



LCOVC Member Walter Simpson and his co-driver Mervyn Thompson took part in The Minis to Ireland Rally, organised by The Mini Cooper Register. Here, Mervyn and Walter report on what was a most enjoyable event.



n Thursday the 17th September 2015 we embarked on our second Minis To Ireland trip organised by the Mini Cooper Register in conjunction with former Irish Rally driver Hugh Wyllie his wife Jan and daughter Emma who were responsible for plotting the route.

There were only two cars from Northern Ireland, Walter and me in Walter's 1970 Mini Cooper S and Wesley Johnston and Graham Gilbert in a 1964 Works Replica Mini Cooper S. The main contingent would be coming via Fishguard/Rosslare and we would meet them at the Brandon House Hotel, New Ross, Wexford before starting the main event the following day.

There was a total entry of 37 minis ranging from a 1961 Mini Cooper through mid-sixties Works Replica rally cars to BMW Cooper, Cooper S and Roadsters, although the majority were classic minis more suited to the Irish roads.

The event was referred to as a touring assembly covering a distance of approximately 1225 miles with a daily distance covered of approximately 200 miles. A road book was provided for the route with tulip diagrams supplemented by maps for each day. There were also Route Master questions to ensure the correct route was followed.

Each day the cars departed at 30 second intervals after car zero, seeded in order of the cars age i.e. number 1 being the oldest mini leaving after car zero. We were also accompanied by a service van driven by Kevin Donovan and assisted by his son who gave many of the entrants valuable mechanical support

Friday 18th September

Travelled across the South West of Ireland from New Ross to Sneen near Kenmane, a distance of approximately 178 miles. The route to include a couple of Circuit of Ireland stages "Mullaghanish" and "Fuhiry" giving new participants to the event a flavour of what was to come. That evening we arrived at Sneem Hotel outside Kenmane. This was to be our base for three nights.

Saturday 19th September

Today we were to take a circular tour of the Dingle peninsula to include Circuit Stages "Glencar" and "Ballaghbeama" returning to the Sneem Hotel for dinner. A distance of approximately 213 miles.

Sunday 20th September

Again a circular tour of approximately 180 miles to include famous Circuit Stages of "Killmakillogg" and the "Healey Pass" to arrive at Mizen Head for lunch. We made it to Mizin Head but due to poor visibility, strong winds and torrential rain we did not see much of the scenery. To make matters worse due to blocked and flooded roads we had to abandon our route and make our way in convoy back to the Hotel at Sneem.

Monday 21st September

Today we left Sneem to travel via the Tarbut Ferry across the Shannon to our hotel in Connemara approximately 210 miles. The first Circuit of Ireland stage we were to encounter was "Lough Brin". Despite the trip being classed as a touring event, when it came to the classic circuit roads Walter as did others took the opportunity to put his driving skills to the test. However other entrants seemed to find the road particularly challenging as one mini mounted a large boulder, one hit a bridge parapet another ended up on its side in an Irish bog. Fortunately no one was badly hurt just a few red faces and damaged cars. One of the three was able to continue but the other two had to be transported home. It was times like this that it was a great benefit to have the expertise of the service crew to come to the rescue! After running late and covering another circuit stage "Desmonds Grave" we

arrived at the Ferry to cross the Shannon. We then made our way via Galway to the Renvyle House Hotel for dinner and our base for two nights.

Tuesday 22nd September

Today was again a circular route to Westport and Achill Island returning to the Renvyle Hotel covering approximately 178 miles. We were able to enjoy much of the beautiful scenery stopping for lunch at the Last Drop Coffee Shop before heading via Westport back to our hotel.

Wednesday 23rd September

This was the day we were to part company with the main contingent as they were to head south to Wexford to stay overnight near Rosslare before catching the early morning boat back to Fishguard. We completed the morning section of the route before heading home via Sligo.

It had been a thoroughly enjoyable trip with challenging roads, beautiful scenery, excellent hotels, especially our last hotel The Renvyle House Hotel. Again we would have to thank the Wyllies and Robert Young and his wife Lesley of the Mini Cooper Register. But for our journey the main thanks would have to go to Elgin Greer for his preparation which gave Walter's mini a trouble free run with no need to call on help from the service crew.

Having enjoyed the trip so much we would be happy to see the Mini Cooper Register return to Ireland – an event we would be delighted to participate in again.

Walter Simpson and Mervyn Thompson

Bits and PIECES

Congratulations to the winner of the Christmas Anagram Quiz, John Irvine, who got 10 out of 10 names correct and was presented with his prize at the January meeting—well done John!



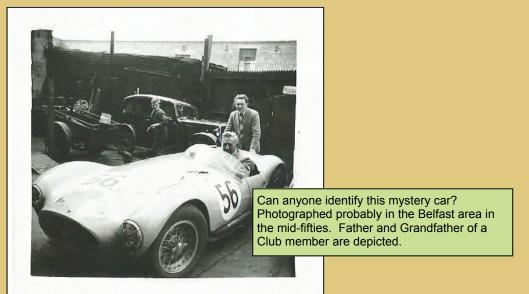


FOR SALE MG Midget hood cover, rear lights, suspension units, exhaust manifolds.. see Paul.

Bill Hoy has sent in an interesting article relating to reproduction tax discs. They can be produced in all styles from any era to suit your vehicle and can have your details printed on the to suit your own registration etc. This gives a nice authentic touch to your vehicle and is perfectly legal since the need for a current tax disc is no longer required.

The website is found at www.poplargreg.com



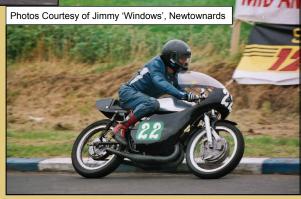




Just as we were about to 'go to press' we sadly learned of the death of one of the top motorcycle racers of the seventies and eighties, Courtney Junk. Courtney first came to the fore during 1974-75 riding one of the then innovative CR93 Hondas which would dominate the 200cc class during the mid seventies.

Left Courtney Junk (7) and Sam Dempster (21) both Honda CR93 mounted and locked in battle at a damp looking Maghaberry circuit.

Courtney Junk was a North West winner and multiple Ulster Grand Prix winner. He won the 1974 and '75 200cc class at the UGP and Norman Windrum summed up his prowess when writing about his '74 victory: "For the first time a seven lap 200cc event . . . was included in the meeting and this was won by Courtney Junk, easily the best of the regular Irish 200cc exponents. On his 182cc Honda he triumphed by over half a minute at an average speed of 89.53mph and in the process hoisted the Dundrod 200cc lap record to 90.84mph."



Courtney's first UGP win was 1974 and his last (after a come-back) was 1998 (Classic 250 Suzuki) and a record 'break' in itself.



LISBURN CITY OLD VEHICLE CLUB

We meet on the third Tuesday of the month, from September to March at:

Lower Maze Community Hall, Halftown, Lisburn

(opposite Coronation Gardens)

At 7.30pm

IF YOU HAVE AN INTEREST IN OLD VEHICLES
YOU ARE WELCOME TO COME ALONG
or see contact details at front of this issue or on

www.lisburncityoldvehicleclub.co.uk

WE ARE A NON-AFFILIATED, INDEPENDENT CLUB WORKING FOR ITS MEMBERS



Coming Events

Cars 'n' Coffee The first gathering for 2016 will be on Sunday 20th March at The Maze Racecourse (entrance alongside Gowdy's) and takes place from 10am to 1pm. Thereafter, the tyre kicking and caffeine continues on 1st May, 28th August and 2nd October.

Sunday Car Runs will take place (provisionally) on **3rd April**, **1st May**, **7th August and 4th September** (the first Sundays in the months). Assembly points and times will be circulated in advance. These runs replace the Sunday walks for the summer months.

The Easter Monday Run, 28th March. Assemble at Dobbies Car Park for 10.30am departure. The entry fee of £10 includes breakfast at Dobbies and admission to the Ulster Transport Museum at Cultra where we will be permitted to park near the Lower (Old) Gallery (providing you bring your classic) in order to let the public view the cars. In the evening you can attend the optional meal at Lisburn Golf Club, where we have always received excellent service in the past. Here's hoping you can join us to kick off the season at one of our major motoring (and other forms of transport) heritage venues.

Techno Classica Trip to Essen, Germany 6th-10th April.

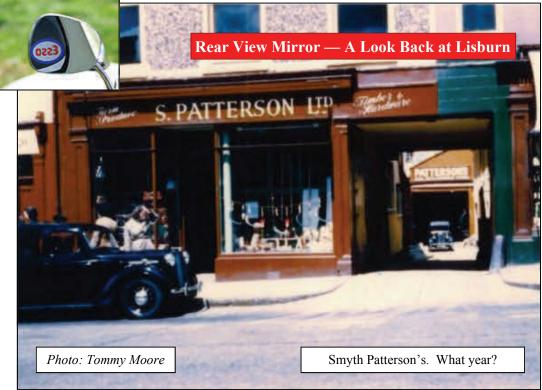
The Shakedown Run, Tuesday 19th April. Organised again by Paul Hunter, there will be a short evening run after which Sammy has arranged for us to attend a reception and Charity Cheque Presentation to The Mary Peters Trust at Lagan Valley Island.

Club Night Runs will take place on Tuesdays 17th May, 19th July and 16th August. Details will be circulated in due course.

Club Night BBQ Run, Tuesday 21st June. Organised by Paul Hunter and usually one of the most enjoyable evening meets. Meet at Lower Maze Community Hall from 6.30pm.

YOU WILL ALSO FIND CLUB DATES IN SAMMY'S YEAR PLANNER CALENDAR WHICH HAS BEEN CIRCULATED TO MEMBERS









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