

IWERNE MINSTER NEWSLETTER

December 2022– January 2023

IWERNE MINSTER COMMUNITY PROJECT DEDICATED TO HER MAJESTY QUEEN ELIZABETH II

Inspired by other rural communities, I decided I wanted to put together a project to capture some of our iconic buildings and landmarks in Iwerne Minster and immortalise them in needlepoint (“Tapestry”) for the Abingdon Hall. So I enlisted Judith Dutch and Sally Green to help me with my quest.

A plan has been hatched, and Judith is making progress with her beautiful artwork, which was influenced by the late David Hicks’ village landmark sketches.



So far, we know the position in which it will be located in the Abingdon Hall, the canvas to be used, the dimensions of it, what it will be mounted on, and the landmark village buildings to be included as well as the flowers and plants to reflect the different seasons.

It is becoming a reality with all necessary planning taking place before needle can be put to canvas.

If you would like to know more and sign up to be part of the team who makes this dream come true of turning Judith’s delightful artwork into needlepoint: **please join us in the Abingdon Hall on Saturday 10th December at 10.30 to find out more. Coffee and biscuits will be served!**

Maggie Hale

CONGRATULATIONS TO DIANNE AND RON BENFIELD

Dianne and Ron, who live on Tower Hill and spend a great deal of time tending to their flowers and vegetables, are to be congratulated on their latest successful venture.

On November 4th and 5th, Dianne and Ron took a selection of their prize chrysanthemums up to Stafford for the annual competition of the National Chrysanthemum Society. They have entered this competition before and won the Red Ken trophy twice in 2015 and 2019. To regain this trophy, they needed to present six vases with six distinct cultivars (varieties) of chrysanthemum. They managed to do this and to win back the Red Ken Trophy.

In addition, they set themselves the much more difficult challenge of competing for the Harry Johnson Perpetual Trophy. This involved presenting five vases of five flowers with a different type of chrysanthemum in each vase – size and quality are of the essence. They knew the competition would be stiff and their aim, as Ron put it, was ‘just to get flowers on the bench’. But they did much more than that - they were declared the winners, much to their delight and amazement. Their hard work and dedication had been amply rewarded.

Monique Goodliffe



NEWS FROM THE VILLAGE CLUB



The AGM took place on Thursday 3rd November and was very well attended. Business was brisk as it was followed by the Centenary Celebration Supper. The Chairman reported a happy and busy year for the Club, starting with a Coffee Morning in February followed by the usual hilarious pantomime. Thanks went to Adrian Delso and his crew for an excellent production. The late Queen's Platinum Jubilee was another very successful and happy event with many different celebrations including the unforgettable ceilidh on the parish field. There were some quizzes, a talk on New Zealand and the annual "Boules" Tournament. The Chairman then thanked her committee for their hard work and support.

The Treasurer gave a very favourable report on the Club's finance. Subscriptions are to remain at £5.00. He asked members if they would kindly let him have their email addresses enabling him to contact them more easily. Steve Harrison has spent many hours researching the Club's history and, having discovered that Mervyn Marsh has served as the Secretary for forty years, presented him with a tankard on behalf of the members.

The Officers were elected in the usual manner and the Committee en bloc with the addition of Monique Goodliffe who kindly volunteered to join the Committee.

The dates for next year's pantomime, Cinderella, were announced: February 16th and 17th. A copy of "The Iwerne Waltz" composed by Percy Spencer for the opening of the Club in 1921 has been found and was recorded and played via Steve's mobile 'phone, before the Chairman asked the members to raise their glasses in a toast to the Club on celebrating its centenary and also to the memories of Jebber Whitaker and Richard Hood two very valued past members.

The Chairman then invited everyone to enjoy the supper. This together with the "bubbly" was

provided by the club. A celebration cake was cut and passed around. The exhibition of the Club's history, researched and mounted by Steve and Marion Harrison provided much interest and has been left up so that anyone using the Club can enjoy looking at it.

A Christmas Coffee Morning will be held on December 17th with coffee, mince pies and mulled wine and, of course, our last raffle of the year.

Penny and Mervyn Marsh

IWERNE MINSTER 100 CLUB

September results:

£15 Jim Westwood (7)

£12 Paul le Prevost (52)

£10 Ron Benfield (55)

£5 Ann Naylor (21)

October results

£15 Wendy Trim (74)

£12 Dianne Benfield (41)

£10 Anne Thomas (49)

£5 Sasha Tatchell (88)

EMERGENCY FIRST AID TRAINING

Two sessions of emergency first aid training have been held in Iwerne Minster in November and the last one is scheduled to take place in early December. These training sessions concentrated on Cardio Pulmonary Resuscitation and were conducted by Dr Geoffrey Percival. The participants watched the British Heart Foundation video and were invited to practise on individual dummies, learning the techniques of both pressing on the chest and blowing into the mouth. Dr Percival explained clearly the difference between someone experiencing heart arrest and a heart attack and the circumstances in which CPR can be used, answered questions and demonstrated the use of the defibrillator.

The presentation was lively, informative, engaging and very worthwhile. Thanks go to Dr Percival for giving up his time pro bono for the good of the villagers in Iwerne and to Anne Thomas for organising and helping to run the sessions.

There are three defibrillators in Iwerne Minster: one behind The Talbot, one in the porch of St Mary's church and one at the Leopard Dairy on the way up to Home Farm.

Monique Goodliffe



Wellness Walk-In Clinics

JOIN US ON THE LAST TUESDAY OF EACH MONTH STARTING ON 26TH JULY 2022. FOR OUR "ONE STOP SHOP" . WHERE LOTS OF SERVICES WILL BE ON HAND. YOU WILL BE ABLE TO SPEAK TO OUR WELLBEING TEAM, NURSE, PHYSIO, MENTAL HEALTH NURSE, POLICE, TOWN COUNCILLORS, DORSET & WILTS FIRE AND RESCUE, LIVWELL DORSET, CAB AND LOTS MORE.

THE CORN EXCHANGE BLANDFORD
10.00AM - 12 NOON
NO APPOINTMENT NECESSARY



ELECTRICITY PRIORITY SERVICES

Scottish and Southern Network, SSEN, the organisation that actually delivers electricity to you, not the company who bills you, operates a **priority service** for those who might be vulnerable. Vulnerability includes, but is not limited to, deafness, blindness, having a disability, using medical equipment reliant on electricity, having a chronic illness, having a household with children under 5 years old, or being over 60 (over half the village maybe!). Knowing where help is most needed enables SSEN to better plan maintenance outages and prioritize its response to a power cut.

You can register for the service by:

- phoning 0800294 3259
- textphone 0800 316 5457
- going online at [Priority Services Registration Form - SSEN](#)
- filling in and FREEPOSTing the form available from the Village Shop
- or ringing Cllr John Goodliffe 01747 442970

THE GEOFF WILSON BENCH



Sadly someone has seriously damaged this bench on the Parish Field commemorating Geoff Wilson who lived at Home Far. The perpetrator must have known what happened and we ask that they make themselves known so that we can agree some form of settlement. **Paul Le Prevost 01747 812173**



Blandford Minor Injuries Unit Notice

Blandford MIU (Minor injuries unit) has now re-opened, we have been advised opening hours are between the hours of **9:15am - 4:15pm Mondays and Wednesdays only.**

Please note appointments are pre bookable only, to make an appointment call 111



Fly Agaric seen on October walk

Dr Richard Hood 1942-2022

When speaking of the recent death of Richard Hood, the words used by people so often are that we have lost a “gentleman and a gentle man” : how very appropriate.



Although born near Birmingham, Richard grew up in Worcester and then North Yorkshire. It was whilst he was at school in Harrogate that he found a Saturday job at RHS Harlow Carr Gardens, working with Geoff Smith (of Gardeners’ Question Time), and so began his lifelong passion for botany. Following his Doctorate in Agricultural Botany at Reading University, Richard’s first job was working on a coffee research station in Zambia, where he was provided with a house and staff. His wife, Jane, notes that it is no wonder that he never learned how to cook! He then spent some time working in Nairobi for Shell before joining DOW Agro Sciences Research and Development, where he was particularly proud of the discovery of a herbicide that enabled farmers to eradicate types of highly invasive weeds from their fields. Richard’s work entailed him travelling widely throughout Africa, and his love for the continent and its people was evident when recounting his many hair-raising encounters. Returning to the UK, and after a spell in Canada, Richard led the development of a “Responsible Care” Programme, designed to tackle accidents involving hazardous products throughout Europe, Africa and Russia, finally taking early retirement from a diverse and exciting working life.

Richard and Jane renewed a life-long friendship in the early 1990’s and after their marriage he became “Dad” to Jane’s James and Katie. Richard was heard to say that his biggest pay rise came when they, and his sons David and Ian, finally completed their university education! During his ‘retirement’ Richard was able to devote more time to projects closer to home. In between gardening, sailing, walking

and enjoying music, he and Jane restored and extended a cottage in Farnborough and then went on to convert a 15th century Cruck building in Shropshire into a wonderful home : a massive undertaking that they both loved.

We were fortunate that Richard and Jane chose Iwerne as their home in 2011. Richard now used all his botanical knowledge and practical skills to help other people. Whenever asked to repair a clock or a piece of machinery, to identify or revive an ailing plant, to move heavy items on his trailer, to play the accordion for carol-singing, or any other myriad favours, Richard’s response was always, “Yes, of course”, said with a warm smile and a twinkle. He will be remembered for his enormous generosity of spirit and his massive contribution to the Church. What an amazing legacy he leaves in the beautiful re-ordering of St Mary’s!

My goodness how we shall miss him! Thank you, Richard.

Fran Deeming

Jane Hood and family thank all those who have kindly sent their condolences. The cards and best wishes have been much appreciated.

RICHARD HOOD – EULOGY

Prepared by Mike Deeming, on behalf of the Parochial Church Council and delivered at Richard’s memorial service

How many people have been to the top of this church’s tower and down in to the cellar under the chancel. Richard had of course – it was one of the first things he did before he became church warden here. He organized everything from the testing of the lightning conductor right down to the valves on the boiler in the cellar. He got to see how everything worked and how to look after it – from the organ to the clock, from the monuments to the lighting.

But he increasingly wanted to see the church here as a central focus in the village. So, he made sure that the lights illuminating the spire and outside of the building came on in the evenings. He sorted out the 18th century carillon, which we can now hear every lunchtime and evening – indeed when getting it restored, he made sure that it didn’t ring every hour through the night as it had done at one time. He negotiated to get Vodafone to install a relay hub in the tower so that we can all get a decent mobile phone signal. He organised a team to improve and maintain the churchyard and their work is facilitating an expansion of the village’s fibre broadband network.

(continued next page)

He saw his mission as making this church a real hub of village life, to build on its strength as a place for religious services. But he saw two main problems – firstly that the church was too cold for at least six months every year and secondly that the mass of fixed Victorian pews inhibited more diverse use of the church. He persuaded the PCC to embark on a major re-ordering project to address these issues. He galvanised the fund-raising project which has raised over £300,000. He renovated and sold pews, old radiators and even floor boards. He led the work with planning authorities, architects and builders. Not since the 1870's has such a redevelopment taken place here, so inevitably numerous problems have arisen during the project. Richard relished the challenge. We are witnessing now the result of the first phase of this work - a fabulous warm space with the flexibility and potential for all sorts of larger-scale services and village events. We can already appreciate the relocated font, the new kitchen, the atrium, the repainted walls and roof timbers, the re-leaded and cleaned windows and the wonderful stone floor (with the underfloor heating).

Before he went into hospital, Richard did manage to come to the church when this re-ordering phase was nearly complete. Just a few of weeks ago, I helped him re-assemble the lectern which he and Jane had privately arranged to have repolished.



Richard was not just concerned with the building. Far from it – his real strength was at the personal level. He had a warm smile for everyone and would help anyone in the village who needed help – whether it was to mend their clock, sort out their plants or just to lend a tool (he had a garage full of them!). His warmth and kindness touched everyone he met. He would always stand in the breach – even if it was to play the accordion when the organist wasn't available – which incidentally prompted him to get a working sound system in place.

He will be much missed.

THE VIEW FROM ST MARY'S

The congregation of St Mary's has been devastated by the sudden death of Richard Hood, as have all in Iwerne Minster who knew him. Our love and prayers are with Jane and his family. It is hard to imagine St Mary's without Richard. Mike Deeming has written an appreciation of his great contribution to the church which appears elsewhere in this newsletter.

Richard's last contribution to the newsletter was a really positive report on the refurbishment of St Mary's. The baptism he referred to, the first service in the newly restored nave since May 2021, duly took place and was a happy family occasion. Many people commented on the beauty of the refurbished church. The newly restored font was the centrepiece of the service, enhanced by the sun streaming in through the stained glass window above. Since then, we have been able to hold regular services in the nave while the builders finish off their work in the chancel.

For the first time in three years, we were able to hold the Remembrance Sunday service in the church, followed by the Act of Remembrance at the War Memorial. Both the service and the Act of Remembrance were, as always, well attended and moving occasions. We are grateful to Bishop Tim Thornton, the former Bishop of Sherborne, now again living in the village, for leading the Remembrance. As ever the occasion was enhanced by the presence of cadets from Clayesmore CCF, and by Dominic Holden's wonderful rendering of the Last Post and the Reveille on the trumpet.

By the time you read this, the service of Thanksgiving for Richard's life will have taken place. Fittingly, it is to be held in St Mary's, and we shall have the opportunity to remember a very special man in the church to which he contributed so much.

David Parkhouse



View from the tower of St Mary's Church

JEBBER WHITAKER 1929-2022



Jennifer Howson was born in Hampshire, the younger daughter of John and Betty Howson. Her older brother, Dickie, was unable to say Jennifer and she became Jebber for the rest of her life. She had a happy childhood and when her father retired from the Royal Navy, they bought a farm and throughout her life ponies, horses and dogs were always a feature. She was educated at Sherborne School for Girls and studied Domestic Science at Harcombe House near Lyme Regis before working as a governess/companion with a family in Scotland. Back in Hampshire, she married Trevor Whitaker in April 1951 at St Cross, Winchester and they lived in Hertfordshire until moving to the small village of Butcombe, North Somerset in 1954 where they remained for 50 years. Jebber and Trevor, who was working in Bristol, settled into married life creating a family home and beautiful garden. Jebber was a full-time wife and mother to Anthony and Joanna, managing the house, entertaining and recreating the happy home of her own childhood with ponies, horses and dogs, seaside holidays, parties, games and dressing up and going for long rides and walks as well as skiing in the winter. She and Trevor were well-travelled from long distance walking to overseas cruises.

Jebber was a 'people person' with a strong sense of service to the community whether in the village itself or farther afield. Having joined the Women's Institute shortly after moving to Butcombe, she was always the first to visit a new arrival to the

village and encourage them to join too. For many years, she was President of the WI and served on both the Parish Council and the Parochial Church Council. A regular church-goer, she stitched the kneelers, arranged the flowers and she and Trevor became church bell ringers. She volunteered with the Riding for the Disabled (with Joanna's pony) and at a residential care home in Chigwell, Essex. For 26 years, she was a Magistrate at Long Ashton, Bristol and later in Woodspring, Weston-super-Mare and in the 1980s she Chaired the Bath and Wells Diocesan Housing Committee and was Vice-Chairman of the Diocesan Board of Finance. Back in Butcombe, having attended a WI residential course on Pantomimes, she wrote 16 pantomimes (in rhyming couplets) which became an annual event performed and enjoyed by the whole village.

Jebber and Trevor were pivotal to village life in Butcombe but, as old age approached, they down-sized and moved to Home Farm, Iwerne Minster in 2004. Naturally, Jebber set about joining in, making new friends, creating a garden and finding new interests. She learned to play bridge, volunteered to help children with their reading at St Andrew's, Fontmell, and she and Trevor entertained friends both old and new and took an active part in village life at Club quizzes and other events. She joined the WI, the church choir and arranged the flowers – and, of course, the pantomimes which she re-wrote and updated for Iwerne. Shortly after Trevor died in 2018, the world was swept by Covid in 2020 but she carried on gardening and caring for herself. During lockdown, Bernie at the shop delivered food and supplies as visits from the family were restricted. With three grandchildren and, by now, five great grandchildren whom she adored, it was a tough time but she soldiered on until she felt the time was right in September 2021 for her to move to Braemar Lodge in Salisbury. Here again, on a smaller scale, she joined in with activities, winning the quizzes and at Scrabble, knitting and taking walks around the garden on her rollator. The care home selected the poem she had written for The Queen's Platinum Jubilee to be the one sent to Buckingham Palace and the letter of thanks she received in response caused quite a stir amongst the residents. She became ill at the end of August and her children were with her when she died peacefully at Braemar, the place she had most latterly called 'home'.

Joanna Whittaker

S.W.I.M. W.I. OCTOBER MEETING

Members gathered in Abingdon Hall on a very gloomy afternoon with wind and rain battering the windows. After the business of the meeting was concluded, our speaker, Dr Francis Burroughs soon helped the audience to forget the intemperate conditions with a witty and well delivered talk.



As a professional speaker, who is booked up many months in advance, his chosen topic was the difficulties of being a speaker on the WI circuit. He travels widely over the South-West often having more than one talk in a day. His descriptions of WIs in remote corners of South Western England where even the sheep look miserable were full of characters whom one could easily visualise: the members who struggled to pitch their singing of 'Jerusalem' when the pianist failed to appear; the rather stern chairperson who turned out to have been the village school mistress for forty years and still treated the members like her pupils by calling the register at the start of every meeting; the ladies basking in the luxury of fancy lunches and trips paid for by a very generous bequest from a late fellow member. My personal favourites were the stout lady who gave the vote of thanks with the plastic chair still attached to her behind, the spider which listened attentively to all of Dr Burroughs' presentation before scuttling away under the stage and the Christmas party game of using one's teeth to make snowflakes and snowmen out of digestive biscuits. The creativity of the WI truly knows no bounds!

Thanks go to Dr Burroughs, and to the cheerful ladies who provided tea and delicious cakes, much appreciated before we made our way home in wind and rain.

Monique Goodliffe

IWERNE VALLEY WALKERS OCTOBER 22

Despite a not very promising start to the morning, the sun came out just as the group headed off from the car park of the Walled Garden Café in Moreton.

Fourteen walkers and two dogs enjoyed the varied walk around Moreton which covered a section of the Queen Elisabeth trail and part of the TE Lawrence walking trail. The route included woodland, open common land and points of historic interest. Along the route we saw a memorial marking the spot where TE Lawrence had come off his motorbike which led to his death. Also, a spectacular example of autumn flora was spotted in the form of Fly Agaric mushrooms. Famous for their hallucinogenic properties they are certainly not to be included in any walkers foraging collection!

On return to the Walled Garden, the walkers were joined by four additional members for the lunch. The Walled Garden and its café (the Dovecote Café) place a special focus on employing people with learning difficulties and it was good to be supporting such a worthy organization while enjoying a very nice lunch.

As a bonus addition for the walkers there was the opportunity to visit the nearby cemetery where TE Lawrence was buried and St Nicholas Church. The inside of the church is flooded with light due to the thirteen superb windows engraved by the artist Sir Laurence Whistler.

Richard and Anne Andrews

AGM NOVEMBER 2022

The Iwerne Valley Walkers held their AGM on November 19th at the Village Club in Iwerne Minster. Fifteen walkers, led very capably by Pam Jelley, walked to Shroton via Oyles Mill and then back to Iwerne via Park Farm. Though the ground was a little soggy at times, we were blessed with blue skies and sunshine. Back at the Village Club, five more members joined us for tea. Thanks go to the kind people who supplied delicious and very welcome cakes; no meeting in Iwerne is complete without cake - though it was noted that on this occasion there was no raffle!

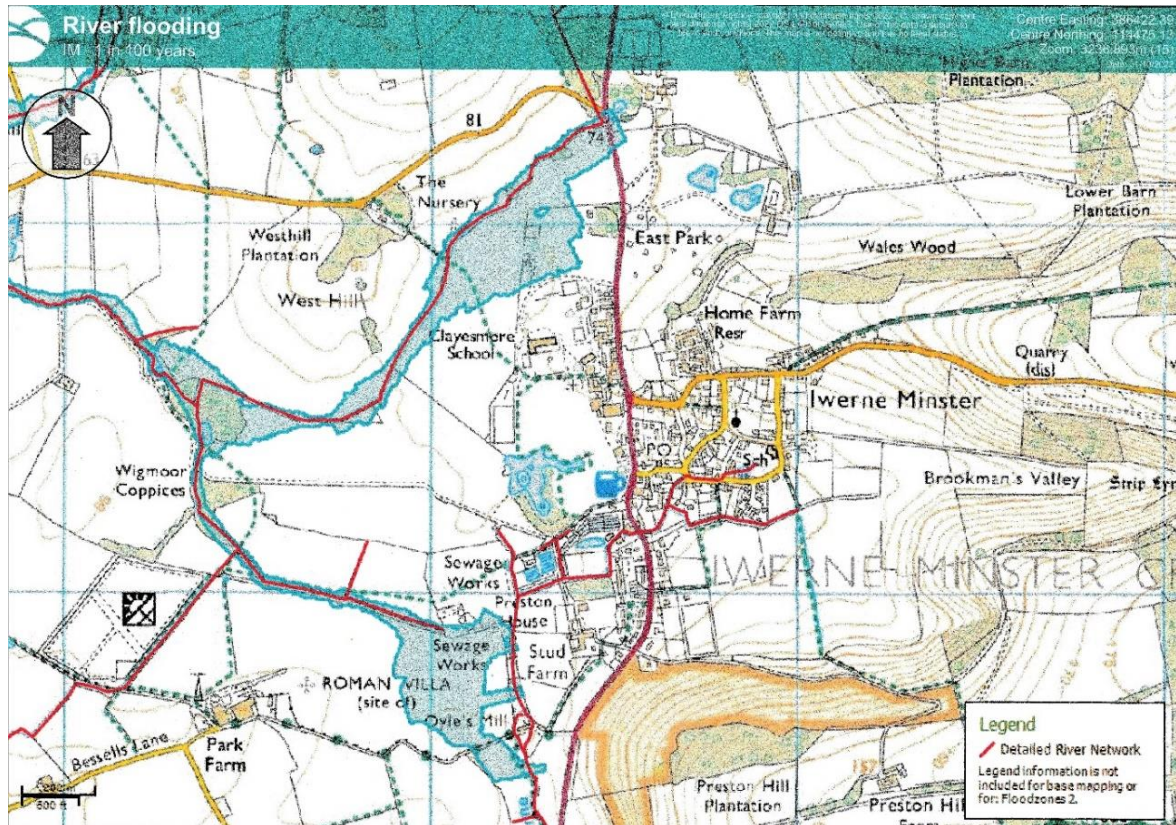
The business of the meeting consisted in the collection of £2 subs and people volunteering to lead walks next year. (It was decided not to organise a walk in August.) Claire Watson presented Helen with a large card signed by the members to thank her for all the work she puts into corralling members and dogs into some semblance of order every month. **MG**

FLOODING IN IWERNE MINSTER

Iwerne Minster is a village of numerous springs arising from where greensand meets clay. These springs may well be the reason for settlement here in the first place, possibly early Neolithic, a time when Britons venerated water. Water welling up out of the ground was thought to connect to the Underworld.

These springs are the source of the Iwerne River. Since the source of a river, does this mean that Iwerne Minster might flood? The simple answer is “Very unlikely”.

There are two sorts of flooding: river flooding and groundwater flooding. A third, sea water flooding, a significant issue in parts of Dorset, is not relevant here. Dorsetexplorer (DE), on the Dorset Council website, provides the following map of the 1 in 100 year probability of **river flooding** near the village:



© Ordnance Survey, courtesy of Dorsetexplorer: [DorsetExplorer \(geowessex.com\)](http://DorsetExplorer(geowessex.com))

The “detailed river network”, in red, includes ditches and culverts as well as the River Iwerne. (Don’t be confused by the A350 road, in purple, running N-S!) In DE’s once in a century prediction, flooding (blue shading) occurs only in the fields and ditch network to the west (draining into the Fontmell Brook), and southwest (draining into the Iwerne). No flooding comes near to our settlement’s boundary: the village should not be directly affected. However, note that the A350 north of the village at the Child Okeford turnoff, could potentially flood.

Regarding **groundwater flooding**, that is flooding due to the ground becoming so saturated that water table rises, resulting in water coming up to the surface of the land, Dorsetexplorer projects that there is a less than 25% chance of it happening in Iwerne Minster. However, a shortcoming of DE is that the projection is shown in kilometre squares, a rather coarse resolution, and our village square includes the low-lying land to the west.

Surface drainage in and immediately around the village is good, and water from prolonged or heavy rainfall should drain away rapidly. However, we must keep the roadside gullies and drains clear. **Please:** if you see a blockage, report it at: Report a problem on a road or pavement - Dorset Council

John Goodliffe

IWERNE MINSTER NEWSLETTER

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