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http://www.wythallradioclub.co.uk

Wythall Radio Club meets from 8pm every Tuesday evening at Wythall House, Wythall Park, Silver Street, Wythall, B47 6LZ, near Birmingham. Visitors are very welcome. Wythall Radio Club is affiliated to the Radio Society of Great Britain

Newsletter Nov - Dec 2011

AGM 6th October 2011 Your elected officers and committee



November 2011 1st - Club Merchandise Demonstration - Peter Hall Embroidery 29th - "Modelling your own HF Wire Antennas" - Callum **M0MCX**

December 2011 20th - Christmas Contest - this date has been reserved for a presentation of any rule changes arising from last year's wash-up event

January 2012 17th—Visit from Dave Wilson, **President of RSGB**

31st - "My World of VHF" -Tim Kirby G4VXE (Practical Wireless's VHF Column Writer)

February 2012 28th - "Garden Antennas for HF" - Callum M0MCX

March 2012 27th - "A Beginner's Guide to Valves" - Barry M0DGQ

April 2012 24th - "Field Day Disasters (and stuff that worked too!)" -**Callum M0MCX**

Other talks "in the pipeline" this year include a visit from Mark G4FPH to talk about VNA (Vector Network Analysis - I don't know what it means either!) and 2E0SDR giving a talk on Software Defined Radio. Dates to be finalised.

MAKE A NOTE IN YOUR **DIARIES FOR THESE EVENTS**

The club held its Annual General Meeting at Wythall House on 6th October 2011 and the following members were elected as officers and committee members by unanimous or majority votes.

Officers

Chairman: Chris G7DDN Secretary: Colin M0GJM Treasurer: Mel M0MAJ

Committee -Martin G8VXX, Chris G6KMQ Lee GOMTN, Peter M5DUO, David G0ICJ Stuart 2E0NYC Neil M0YMM Tom G3POP. Mark M0MSW, Vaughan M0VRR, Martin G7WBX Mike G4VPD

There were a couple of amendments to the constitution agreed at the meeting and the minutes of the AGM have been circulated via the list. Some fresh thinking about what the club does and how we can improve what we offer members is on the agenda for the new committee and we see that they are off to a good start with a number of interesting talks being offered (see right). For new members, here is the rogues gallery of officers and committee



Treasurer Mel MOMAJ

Lee G0MTN

Neil

MOYMM

David

G0ICJ

Martin

G7WBX

Chris

G6KMQ

Tom

G3PQP



Chris G7DDN OFFICERS

COMMITTEE



MOGJM



Martin G8VXX







Vaughan M0VRR





Stuart

2E0NYC



Markv

MOMSW

Peter

M5DUO

Bat detector Mk 2

This bat detector uses cheap off the shelf components, is easy to build and gives good performance. The heterodyne principle is used in this detector. Incoming ultrasonic bat calls are fed into a self oscillating mixer Q2 via the ultrasonic microphone and preamplifier Q1. Several preamps were tried (cascode fet, cascode bipolar and combinations thereof) but surprisingly this simple common emitter preamp gave the best results. The wanted IF signal (455 kHz is used here) is passed

through a ceramic filter FL1. This filter provides excellent selectivity and keeps any local oscillator signal out of the IF amplifier (the local oscillator signal is only 20 kHz away from the IF frequency at the low end of the band, IF transformers on their own struggle to keep the LO out of the IF amp at the



low frequency end of the band). The filter used here was taken from a scrap FM CB set and has a -6dB bandwidth of roughly +/- 3kHz, most CB and PMR type filters (AM or FM) will work here fine. A simple two stage IF amplifier follows the ceramic filter and provides the bulk of the gain in this circuit, Q3

MODGQ

employs a small amount of emitter degeneration to raise its input impedance giving a suitable match to FL1.

Another exciting pro

No special IF transistors are used, BC107c's are adequate but be sure to use the C gain group as the

very simple bias networks are calculated for this Hfe range. The IF transformers are 455kHz types, however you can use domestic broadcast set types (these usually operate at 468-475kHz) providing you put a 15pF

capacitor in parallel with the main winding, as was done here. A diode detector follows the IF amplifier and is also used for AGC of the first IF stage. The diode has a forward bias current of 10uA to reduce distortion at very low signal levels. Demodulated audio is fed to the LM386 power amplifier via a volume



Bat detector Mk 2 cont'd





control. A few notes: The oscillator coil used is a long wave osc. coil giving a local oscillator coverage of 475kHz -600kHz which provides a incoming ultrasonic frequency coverage of 20kHz to 145kHz. It may be possible to pull down a Medium wave oscillator coil by placing extra capacitance across the coil and screwing the core all the way into the can - room for experimentation. The circuit was designed specifically to run off four AA cells (6 Volts), battery life is very good.

Tuning capacitor VC1 was obtained from the GQRP club. If you find your circuit has too much gain then increase the resitor value across pins 1 and 2 of the LM386 accordingly. In use you should find this detector has a usable range of at least 10 - 15 metres depending on the ultrasonic mic used, a old TV remote type is used here, however Maplin and other suppliers stock suitable units (be sure it is a receiving transducer and NOT a transmitting type). Barry M0DGQ

Lord Pettitt's Shooting Party 2011

Yet again another enjoyable Sunday morning shooting at the Hereford and Worcester Shooting Ground, with 9 members, friends & family making up the party. The morning started out with rain that looked like it was in for the duration, but did clear until we came to the last stand. Shooting was over 8 different stands with a total of 40 clays each to hit, so the winning score of 37 is pretty creditable. Due to being a party of 9, we went out as one group, this year, such that we could see who was in the lead throughout the morning. Phil and Martin were level pegging, for a long time, with the result coming down to the last stand, where, with the rain starting again, Martin missed a couple more than Phil and finished as runner up. Following the presentation, of the Trophy, some of us adjourned to The Tardebigge for lunch or a pint.

I appreciate that this annual event has little to do with Amateur Radio, but it is one of the traditions of Wythall Radio Club. That's what makes us great, you know !!

I would advocate, that if you've never had a go at clay pigeon shooting, come along, next year and give it a try. Even if you're not the best shot, in the world, I'm sure you will have a fun morning.

There were no Radio Hams or Pigeons harmed during this event.

Colin M0GJM

left; "Lord Pettitt presents trophy to Phil" right Stewart



Below right Peter; above right; Chris







So who is Wythall Radio Club's new Chairman?

. Most readers of the newsletter will be aware that from September, the Club had a new Chairman and since Chris G7DDN has only been around and about the club for about 6 years, it is possible that not everyone knows very much about him. So I asked him to pen a little about himself and fill us in about exactly who our new Chairman is!

"I was born in Walsall in 1958 into a very ordinary working class family. We lived on a past war housing estate designed to cope with all the baby boomers of the 1950s and 1960s.

I was interested in radio from an early age – it was the age of bakelite radio sets and the beginnings of transistorisation! I loved hearing far-away stations coming in on Medium Wave, listening to the strange noises on Short Wave and wondering where they came from. One day I discovered Swiss Radio on the 31m band and I was hooked. Those signals were coming from a far away country (to me!) and I was receiving them in the living room! Fantastic!

I found I had a talent for music and had piano lessons from the age of 7. I ended up going to Grammar School and going through the system, leaving with, amongst many skills, the ability to speak French & German and to play piano to an advanced level.

I went to Birmingham University to read Classical Music for 3 years. After that I worked for a number of charities using pop music to communicate with disaffected youth. During this time, I got to play all over the world, at all the top venues (NEC, Royal Albert Hall etc.) even composing (and singing!) my own songs, which are still played and printed today! I made 4 CDs of my own material and enjoyed a little popularity in the circles in which I worked.

I also got interested in CB Radio, which was going through its boom in the early 1980s. Disillusioned eventually with some of the sad behavior on 27 MHz, I moved up to 934 MHz and had a whale of a time on UHF, until the interference from cellphones became too great and it was obvious that 934 MHz would go the way of all flesh!

I enrolled for my RAE in September 1988 passing with Distinction and Credit and started life as G7DDN. A few months later and I became G0MLY. With the advent of the new licensing system, I reapplied for G7DDN and prefer to use that now – it is much easier to say in contests and send in CW!

During the 1980s I also did my teacher



training and was a teacher for 11 years, 10 of those from 1989 onwards. I worked in both Primary and Secondary schools. I served as acting Deputy Head in Primary and a Head of Department while in Secondary. Although I was considered an excellent classroom teacher, I never felt it quite satisfied me on a personal level and in 1999 I decided to retrain to do something I had always wanted to do as a teenager, work in Broadcast Radio. Doing broadcast meant I had little time or inclination to do Amateur Radio as a hobby, so that took a back seat!

After a BTEC Advanced Diploma Course, I found freelance work in Wolverhampton with 107.7 The Wolf and Wyvern FM before landing a fulltime News Editor post with Fosseway Radio. By 2001 however, I had attained the heady heights of Breakfast Show Producer at the then newly-launching Saga 105.7 FM in Birmingham, working with such legends as David "Diddy" Hamilton, Les Ross, Dave Lee Travis and Roger "Twiggy" Day.

Those were great days and we had tons of fun, but whatever the perception of the Media, it is not the best paid industry in the world, and my marriage to Lynne in 2003 meant that a little more cash coming in would help us a lot. However, once one has worked in the media, one can move into any job (for some reason!)

So it was that I moved to work as a Commercial Manager for National Express in Birmingham. This was probably a role that suited my skills more than even I had thought and life was going well, with promotions coming along regularly, until my wife Lynne was diagnosed with Breast Cancer in 2007. I decided to give up that job to look after her, knowing I could teach piano from home and be on tap 24/7 while she was undergoing treatment.

Since our local area is teeming with demand for piano lessons and with not enough teachers to meet demand, it was a shrewd move, and has meant I have more time than many folk to give to a voluntary role such as Chairman of Wythall Radio Club.

Oh yes, radio... Once I was not working in Broadcast any more, the old urge to still be "on air" came back and I soon got kitted out with a Kenwood TS-2000 and got back into the hobby properly.

Since I live in the Wythall parish, it seemed logical to introduce myself to the local Radio Club and both Lee GOMTN and Callum M0MCX were partly responsible for me joining. Gradually over the years, I have got more and more involved – Lynne passed her Foundation Licence at the club - and things developed to the point where last year, I joined the Committee and became Contest Group Chairman. I felt I could do a useful job this year too, hence my decision to stand for Chairman of the Club.

I am more than well aware that this is not an easy task. The club is diverse, large and has many interests. However, I do count it a privilege to be "in the Chair" and hope that my time therein will be looked back on in the future as being a productive one in terms of driving the club forward further into the 21st Century.

The challenges that await the hobby and the club are great, but we need to face them, not shirk them, if the institution that is Wythall Radio Club is to continue for another 25 years."

Chris G7DDN

Ofcom define power level point

Its official. The power levels defined in the Licence Schedule have been confirmed by Ofcom that the measuring point for determining the power is the input to the antenna itself; that is the junction between the main feeder and the antenna. In the case of stacked arrays the point is the input into the splitter.

GB0SSR Stoke Prior Steam Rally Special Event Station

Over the weekend of September 17th and 18th, the club put on a special event station at the Stoke prior Steam Rally. The station used the call sign GB0SSR. As usual, the station was set up using my motorhome as the support vehicle. We decided to use a slightly different set up this time and we took the 10M mast off the motorhome and used it free standing in the clearing behind the van and close to Les. M0COK's tent. The mast held in the air a nested antenna with dipoles for 80 and 20 meters, and on the very top a half wave antenna for 2M and 70 cm. The radios were housed in a free standing awning. The position of which was nicely sited to be the first thing visitors saw as the entered the rally field.



Getting the antenna in the air was the usual fun. Once we got the antennas int he air, we found that the SWR was sky high on HF and neither the internal ATU of the external tuner could tune the antenna. This despite checking everything before erecting the mast and antennas. The fault was track down to a dodgy PL259. A quick twist of the coax and a short length of tape put this right. Once

rectified, the station was soon on air and

working well.

The radios being used were an FT-900AT for HF and an FT-7800 for V-UHF. Chris, G0EYO, also brought along an ageing FT-200, a lovely old valve driven rig from the 70's. Chris and I spent a while trying to get the FT-200 on the air. Being a valve driven rig, it's not the usual plug and play that we get with modern solid state rigs. a valve rig need to be driven, not just operated. Using a valve driven rig is a dark art, one that takes a while to learn but once you have the knack, valve rigs can be great fun and very rewarding. Luckily, I have owned a couple of valve driven rigs, and Chris had the user manual for the FT200. Chris was very happy to get a few very nice contacts on the FT200. Reports on signal strength and audio quality were very favourable. Valve rigs have a great sound, and you do get a sense of satisfaction for getting one set up and on the air. Running a valve rig sorts the men from the boys. Real radios should glow in the dark!

After a few contacts on the FT200, we put my trusty FT-900 AT in the operating position. The 900 is a cracking little rig, so good that I have bought two. The receiver is brilliant and gives more modern rigs a run for their money. A real gem from Yaesu. Due to a problem with the screen on my laptop, we decided to revert to paper logging. The Saturday went along quite nicely. The weather was mainly good, in fact it got very nice at times, but we suffered from a few short downpours. We received a lot of interest from the public and worked some nice contacts on 20m. The 2m rig was fairly quiet, but a few QSOs around the Midlands were to be had.

The Sunday was a day to remember. Les and myself, set the station up by about 10 am and we were making a few nice contacts on HF. The weather improved, and the sun shone. In fact it was a wonderful sunny day for the rally. We sat making contacts and talking to the public. We get quite a lot of interest from the public and quite a few took away the RSGB leaflet on how to become a ham. Many were surprised to hear that the hobby need not be an expensive one. Quite a few parents seemed keen to get their kids involved. One of the people we talked to, has now become a member of the club. He was taken by the friendliness of the people manning the station. I can only assume that I was not around at the time!

Sunday afternoon was special. In fact, I'd go as far to say that Sunday afternoon blew us over with just how special it was to become. After talking to a visitor we put a call out on 40m. This call was answered immediately. QSO logged and QRZ was called. Another reply. QSO logged and a quick chat. QRZ? Four or five people called us back. We called back the loudest station and exchanged reports etc. QRZ? This is when it went a bit mad! We found ourselves in the hot seat to what became a massive and sustained pile up. Every time we called QRZ we were bombarded by stations. Dozens of them all at once. Most of the stations were inter-G, but a few from Europe popped in too. This pile up lasted for two hours or more. We changed operators at least three times to get a break.

Earlier I mentioned that we were paper logging. Normally, we don't work that many stations over a weekend. During this pile up we worked more stations than we have worked in total for all the special event stations we have put on. Paper logging on bits of scrap paper is not ideal for this many contacts one after the other. For Les and Jon, this was the biggest pile up if not the first, that they have been part of. The number and rate of QSO was constant, but it was getting late, and it was time to close the station down. The pile up continued, with hundreds of people trying to

get in out log. In the end, we ended up dismantling the station around Jon M0JMM. he was working the pile up and we took the station down around him. Eventually, a good hour later than planned, we closed down. We were all buzzing. We have never experienced anything like this at a steam fair special event station.

So this rally was the best so far. WRC got a new member. A lot of people went away interested in becoming a ham. We had a large pile up, and we generally had a great time. These special event stations are very much club events. I might organise them. and use my motorhome, generator and radios, but without the club, these stations would not happen. They are a great day/weekend out. loads to see and do, and lots of public to talk to. I wish to thank all those who came along, without whom the station would not have been on the air. Les M0COK and his partner. They stayed the night and kept us company in the beer tent. Chris G0EYO. He has always supported these stations, even in the snow and hail! Peter M5DUO. The practical one who tends to get us out the do-da by keeping a level head. Jon M0JMM. Always keen, and seems to like the pressure of the pile up. Phil 2E0WTH a newer member but regular visitor to all our events. I must also thank Carol and Phillip, especially Carol, as I'm sure that some times she would rather stay at home!

Darren MW5HOC



HF SSB Field Day 2011

Martin G7WBX organised an HF SSB Field Day station n September on the playing fields at the back of the park. With the help of Stuart 2E0NYC, Mark M0MSW and Tom G3PQP they set up a station with the club's caravan and trailer mounted Versatower. Two antennas were installed; a doublet from the caravan mast and a 3 element tri-bander on top of the versatower. Attempts were made to use an old Yaesu linear but there was a loss of gain on receive due to the front end pre-selector so this was abandoned fairly early on in the contest.

Band conditions were good and before the Contest started, Martin and Lee had managed to work a number of VK and JA stations. One small complication was the fact that there was an Asia contest on at same time but most operators were happy to give us a contest exchange if we also gave them one of theirs (59 + age of operator, I think) A number of club members dropped in over the two days, to operate or just say hello and the weather during the daytime was not too bad although it did rain heavily overnight.

The SSB Field Day log has been submitted to RSGB, and also to the German DARC Society for their concurrent Field Day contest. We will appear in both results tables.

The logs submitted showed

301 QSO, 3 dupes, 250 different callsigns logged in all. 1 station logged on 4 bands (MW1LCR/P). 44 DXCC entities worked overall. Highest rate was 53 in one hour.

80	80 QSO / 10 mults
	72 QSO / 19 mults
20	103 QSO / 34 mults
15	42 QSO / 21 mults
10	4 QSO / 3 mults



Training Report

Our five intrepid students are about half way through their advanced course and things are going well. They will take the exam on the 5th of December. We wish them well. This examination will be the first which will use optical marking of the examination paper at RSGB. Candidates will be required to mark their paper in the usual way and then transfer their answer to an optical marking (OM) sheet using an HB pencil to shade the relevant box.

The next Foundation course we will run will also cover operator etiquette and there will be an extra question on the exam paper covering this subject.

The pass marks for examinations has now been published;

Foundation 19/26 73% (was 60%) Intermediate 27/45 60% Advanced 37/62 60%

I am currently planning the courses for 2012 and plan to start off with a Foundation Course on Monday the 9th of January with the intention of the having the exam on the 20th of February. Following the Foundation course will be the Intermediate course, which will start on Monday 17th March with the exam being held on 21st May. We will have breaks in that course for Easter (6/7/8/9th April) and early May Bank Holiday (7th May). Course schedules will be available in a few weeks time and we would ask that members let Chris G0EYO know if anyone is looking for either of these courses.



SP/G0MTN August 2011

Once again for a few days in August I operated from Sylwia's family countryside cottage around 30 miles outside the centre of Warsaw. I had left a 7 metre fishing pole there from a previous visit, and took along a 20m / 40m dipole joined to the same dipole centre. The top of the 7 metre pole was too flimsy to support this, so in reality the dipole centre heights were only 5 or 6 metres. The two dipoles were erected in inverted-V format at right angles to each other. They were fed

with coax, with a few turns of coax in a loop at the top to act as a choke / balun. This was plugged into my FT817, which saw a good SWR on 20m and 40m as expected, but also a reasonable SWR on 15m and a poorer one on 10m. I don't do much operating on 30m / 17m / 12m, but they were not a good match as expected, although some activity could still be heard.

The first operation sessions were during the International Lighthouse / Lightship weekend, which meant there were lots of stations making short '59 thanks' type contacts which meant it was easier for a low power station to get through. I worked several of these, including a few from the UK. After the weekend, the activity level dropped, but there were still some stations with special prefixes running a pileup, and others who were pleased for a CW or SSB ragchew.



5 watts to low dipoles was often frustrating some strong stations just didn't hear me at all, and at other times I was beaten time and time again when trying to call into a particular expedition station. Mike G4VPD has had some more QRP holiday success previously, but perhaps from locations with better propagation. But also it was pleasing that SSB chats back to the UK were possible. It was a pity that the proposed sked with the club didn't come off. I'd just had a CW QSO with EI just beforehand, and later an Italian station heard me CQ'ing on SSB and even spotted me on the DXCluster so I'm sure it should be possible. The Reverse Beacon Network also picked up my CW signals all over Europe, although not further afield, and also was picking up Barry too from Cyprus. When not actively trying to make some contacts, I spent some time listening to a ZL station on 20m SSB so maybe conditions are slowly improving. Japanese stations

> were slightly louder than I hear them at time, and USA stations slightly weaker, which all makes sense given the move a few hundred miles to the east.

I've left the fishing pole, the antennas and the coax there for future operations, cutting down what would need to be transported next time. I do wonder though if an old HF rig should be left there permanently as well. 100 watts would reduce a lot of the frustrations. Alternatively perhaps I should do more 'remote operating' via the Internet, and not worry about the radios and antennas. Or perhaps I should not worry about the radio at all and enjoy my holidays with a cold drink and good book!

Countries worked: E7, DL, EI, EA, EA8, EO, DJ, G, GM, GW, GI, GJ, I, OK, S5, SM, UA, UR, UK

Lee G0MTN

Xmas Social

The club will be holding its Xmas Social on Friday 9th December in the Britannia Room at 8pm.

Final details are being worked on based on member's suggestions but it is looking to be a mixture of live and background music, skittles, quizzes and raffles, something for the kids and perhaps even a Father Christmas. Food will be on the well tried American Supper format.

Stuart our Social Secretary is working on programme and will no doubt appreciate knowing who will be attending and also some help on the night to make it a success. He is currently looking to borrow some PA equipment, so if you can help him out then please let him know



New Xmas Contest in memory of Lew?

The club are thinking of running a new CW contest in memory of our late President Lew Williams who taught many of our past and present members morse for when we had to pass the 12 wpm morse test to get our A licences. This would be run in conjuncton with the Reg Brown G7OJO Xmas contest.

Details have yet to be finalised but one objective will be to encourage those who don't usually use CW as a means of communicating to have QSO's with other club members over the Xmas period. As details become finalised they will appear on the list and here in the newsletter. A trophy in the form of a shield has already been donated and this will be presented to the winner annually. Further details will be put on the list



Contest Corner

November

This month see's four of the UKAC contests.

Currently supported by M0COP,G4VPD,M0AEG Club position could be elevated somewhat if a few more members participated and submitted a score, even a few contacts would help.

Also November is the last of the 80m contests for this year. Please have a go in the topband AFS, as every contact made improves our overall club score.

December

144Mhz AFS this month, again as many club members as possible having even the smallest of entries will improve the club score for the year end results, so please have a go. Also UKAC contests again, along with the Christmas Cumulative's over 4 days of the Christmas holiday period.

Mike G4VPD Contest Committee Chairman

Been down the shack lately?

If you have been down the shack lately you will have notices that Wythall Community Association have painted the passage way and stairs to the shack. They are also intending to purchase a new Worcester Bosch boiler which will please some of our members.

Also how many members know that the club has quite an extensive library of technical books. These are in a bookcase in the corner of the radio room and are available for members to borrow. We probably ought to organise a some kind of record keeping with a committee member acting as librarian.

Start Date	Organisers	VHF Contests	Mode	Start (Local)	Length
1 Nov	RSGB	2m UK Activity Contest (UKAC)	Mixed	20:00	2.5 hrs
5/6 Nov	RSGB	144 CW Marconi	CW	15:00	24 hrs
8 Nov	RSGB	70cms UK Activity Contest (UKAC)	Mixed	20:00	2.5 hrs
22 Nov	RSGB	6m UK Activity Contest (UKAC)	Mixed	20:00	2.5 hrs
29 Nov	RSGB	4m UK Activity Contest (UKAC)	Mixed	20:00	2.5 hrs

Start Date	Organisers	HF Contests	Mode	Start (Local)	Length
09 Nov	RSGB	80 Club Sprint SSB	SSB	19:00	1.5 hrs
12 Nov	RSGB	Club Calls 1.8 AFS Frequencies: 1870-1990 kHz	SSB	20:00	3 hrs
19/20 Nov	RSGB	2 nd 1.8 MHz (topband) Contest Frequencies: 1810-1870kHz only	CW	21:00	4 hrs
24 Nov	RSGB	80 Club Sprint CW	SSB	19:00	1.5 hrs

Start Date	Organisers	VHF Contests	Mode	Start (Local)	Length
4 Dec	RSGB	2m AFS	Mixed	09:00	8 hrs
6 Dec	RSGB	2m UK Activity Contest (UKAC)	Mixed	20:00	2.5 hrs
13 Dec	RSGB	70cm (UKAC)	Mixed	20:00	2.5 hrs
27 Dec	RSGB	6m (UKAC)	Mixed	20:00	2.5 hrs
26 Dec	RSGB	50/70/144/432 XMAS Cumulative	Mixed	14:00	2 hrs
27 Dec	RSGB	50/70/144/432 XMAS Cumulative	Mixed	14:00	2 hrs
28 Dec	RSGB	50/70/144/432 XMAS Cumulative	Mixed	14:00	2 hrs
29 Dec	RSGB	50/70/144/432 XMAS Cumulative	Mixed	14:00	2 hrs



The next issue of the Wythall Radio Club Newsletter will be published at the beginning of Jan 2012

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