

Bus boy Bill hits 100

Saving his beloved buses from Second World War bombs earned Bill Maile (pictured) hero status.

The retired Bus Driver celebrated his 100th birthday in September, but can remember the bombing raid and his first day at work as if they were yesterday.

Bill was employed at the South Croydon bus garage in 1941 when the Luftwaffe air assault struck. The attack happened in the early hours of 11 May. Bill was in his shelter at home when he heard a huge explosion and knew it was the garage.

He ran the 400 yards from his house and battled through flames, smoke and bomb debris to rescue five buses, a van and a number of coaches. "It was like a battlefield; 74 buses were destroyed and I lost many colleagues that night," said Bill.

He was later highly commended by the London Passenger Transport Board's General Manager for his 'devotion to duty'



and rewarded with a £5 cheque.

Bill's career on the buses began in 1928, when he joined the London General Omnibus Company – the forerunner of London Transport.

His first role was at Streatham garage, and his first route the 49 Shepherd's Bush to Lewisham. "Nobody asked me if I knew the way – I was supposed to know all the routes!" he said.

As a new recruit, Bill was a 'spare man' with no fixed depot and was sent wherever he was needed. He worked at eight garages over the next 41 years, including Merton, before finishing at Croydon in 1969.

Bill continued to drive until the age of 82, when he retired from a small firm which fitted out exhibitions.

Stars of the small screen

Staff became stars this autumn when the second series of *The Tube* documentary hit TV screens.

The show, on ITV1 on Thursday evenings, charted the stories of many staff going about their everyday work at London Underground through six shows from mid-August.

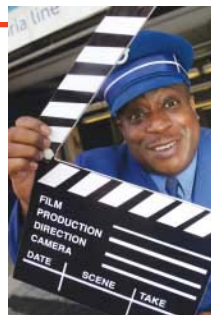
Among them was Aston Ffrench, Station Assistant at Brixton, who missed his 15 minutes of fame on the box as he was working at the time.

"My 12-year-old daughter Jordan thought it was amazing to see her dad on the telly and phoned me to tell me I was on. Luckily my family taped the show so I saw it when I got home.

"I thought the coverage was very well-balanced. It's good that we do a show like this – it shows the public what it's like in our world and they might learn to see things from our perspective.

"I couldn't believe the brilliant reaction from everyone. Minutes after it was screened, customers came up to me to say they'd seen me on TV. Loads of people have asked for my autograph. I'm really enjoying it!

"I think we're better than *The Bill*. They're just actors – we do it for real!"



Take two: Aston Ffrench relives his moment of fame.

Backing the bid

Britain went Olympics mad this summer as the country rallied behind our athletes like Kelly Holmes, Amir Khan and Matthew Pinsent.

The government is hoping to build on this fever to gain support for London's Olympic bid in 2012.

Transport for London has a major part to play.

The capital's transport agencies are more than used to dealing with big events, like the millennium celebrations, Golden Jubilee and the Queen Mother's funeral.

The Olympics would see millions of people converging on the city – but during the summer holiday period, there are already 20 per cent fewer commuters than usual.

Additional improvements would include:

- a choice of 10 rail routes for the Olympic Park at Stratford with a train every 15 seconds
 - £1 billion a year for London Underground, resulting in a 45 per cent increase in capacity on the Jubilee line, which will serve the main Olympic facilities.
- The tube is already playing a part in the bidding process. Posters encouraging people to 'Back the Bid' have been put in London Underground stations and trains.

An information leaflet detailing transport plans for the Games is also available at tube stations throughout the network.

The campaign asks travellers to back London's bid by registering their support at the 2012 website, www.london2012.com or by texting LONDON to 82012.



Sing a song for Christmas

This year's Transport for London Festival of Carols, organised by the Transport Benevolent Fund (TBF), will be on Wednesday 8 December at St Martin in the Fields Church, Trafalgar Square.

It is open to all present and retired staff and offers an opportunity to meet colleagues and former colleagues from across the range of businesses.

The event starts at 19.00 but doors open at 18.15 and demand may exceed the number of seats, so please arrive early. Admission is by programme costing £1. London's Transport Choir will once again lead the Festival.

For those who cannot attend the evening event, there's also a lunchtime service at St Mary's in Eversholt Street, Euston, on Tuesday 14 December at 12.15.

i For more information, please contact 0870 0000 172 or 173

Plea for plaque facts

Retiree Bob Cunningham is on the hunt for a plaque in memory of staff killed during a wartime bombing raid.

His uncle, John Cunningham, was on fire duty at the Elmers End bus garage when a flying bomb struck on 18 July 1944. John remained at his post, continuing to sound the alarm to alert his colleagues even though it meant he wouldn't have time to take cover himself.

John and nine others were killed, but many more managed to escape thanks to his selfless act.

A memorial plaque was unveiled to commemorate all the employees who died. A further memorial was installed over the bus entrance gate in 1954 specifically to honour John Cunningham, and it was renamed the Cunningham Gate.

When the bus garage closed, the main plaque was moved to the Langley Park LT Sports Ground in Beckenham. It was found here some years later lying on the ground in a dirty state.

The memorial stone for John Cunningham is kept at Norwood bus garage.

Bob contacted both LT and London's Transport Museum, which offered to restore the other memorial to its former glory at its Acton site.

Bob said: "That was in 1999. I've heard nothing since and my follow-up calls have not managed to shed any light.

"I now live in Devon so I don't get much chance to pursue the matter. I would be interested to hear where the memorial is and in what condition, as it should be preserved in memory of those 10 staff who died while on LT duty."

■ If you have any information, please write to the otm team at 24-26 Great Suffolk Street, London SE1 0UE, or email onthemove@abcomm.co.uk and we will forward your correspondence to Bob Cunningham.

The bus garage after the bomb devastation.



The Cunningham Gate memorial.



Your contacts at your magazine

Do you have something you'd like to include in the next pensioner edition of otm? Let us know! Please remember to include a telephone number with your letter.

Your contacts
At London Underground
 Dee Horsman
 tel 020 7918 3388
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Or you can contact the team at AB Publishing
 tel 020 7922 5678
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Q stock memories?

Did you work on a train like this?

London's Transport Museum has in its collection five cars of Underground Q stock – types which worked principally on the District and Hammersmith & City lines between the 1920s and early 1970s.

One of the cars is on display in the Covent Garden museum. The other four cars are in the museum store at Acton.

The Friends of London's Transport Museum organisation is currently developing plans to apply for a Heritage Lottery Fund grant to restore the other four cars, if possible to passenger-carrying operational condition.

To collect more information to support this project, the Friends are keen to hear from anyone who has memories of working with these trains, as a Motorman or Guard or in the depots.

■ If you can help, please contact Paul Hopper at the Friends' Office, London's Transport Museum, Covent Garden, London WC2E 7BB, or email pehopper@hotmail.com

PENSIONERS' FORUM

MAIN POINTS OF MEETING ON 23 AUGUST 2004

- It was reported that Gordon Dixon had replaced Mary Hunt on the Pensioners' Forum.
- The pensioners' representatives reviewed Issue 4 of the pensioners' edition of *otm* and expressed their appreciation of the good mix of articles. They indicated that Gordon Dixon would be the new liaison representative for *otm*. They continued to voice their concerns over the absence of any pan-TfL publication.
- The pensioners' representatives were given an update on the effect of the Actuarial Valuation on the LRT Pension Fund.
- The pensioners' representatives were given an update on annual payslips for pensioners. A suggestion was tabled by a pensioners' representative to make further savings on the cost of distributing payslips.
- It was noted that a new document was being produced showing the services on which Oyster cards could be used.

Have you made your will?

The Transport Benevolent Fund (TBF) has provided a free wills service for its members and their dependants, but this will end in March 2005.

TBF Director Chris Godbold told *otm*: "The money not spent providing this service will be used in future to provide more support to working members and their families when faced with illness. Less than 80 wills a year are prepared in this way in most years.

"Until March 2005, however, the wills service remains and – at the discretion of the TBF trustees – members can still use the service."

Members are invited to call TBF on 0870 0000 172 or 173 or on auto 1200 38571 in good time.

The TBF solicitors will still offer advantageous rates to members for wills after March 2005, and they will still be prepared free of charge for those at serious risk, as will Enduring Powers of Attorney.

Payslips reminder

Please remember you will now only receive a single annual payslip at the start of each tax year. This provides you with information on:

- Pension increases
- Four-weekly pension for the year
- Pension pay-dates
- P60 slip for the previous tax year.

The annual payslip is an important document, so please keep it in a safe place. If you need to apply for benefits from the Department for Work and Pensions, or indeed are receiving benefits from them, this payslip can be produced as proof of your pension income for the forthcoming year. However, we will issue an additional payslip if your net pension for any pay period changes by £ or more.

i For more information, please contact Susan Randall | 020 7918 3795

Have we got your number?

Have we got your correct National Insurance number?

The number is included on your annual payslip. Please check it to see whether we are holding your correct National Insurance number and not a temporary number. If your number starts with TN followed by six digits, it is a temporary one, so please let us know your correct one – you can find this by contacting your nearest Social Security office. To contact the Fund Office:

- Telephone on 020 7918 3733
- Post to 3rd Floor, Wing Over Station 55 Broadway London SW1H 0BD
- Email to helpdesk@lftpensionfund.co.uk

Thank you for your help.



Retired bliss for tube couple



More time for charity: Conrad and Julia will have time for their hobbies now they have left work.

With more than 63 years of service between them, husband-and-wife tube team Conrad and Julia Thomas are looking forward to a long and happy retirement together.

Julia left her job as Internal Auditor last November and Conrad hung up his hat as Eastcote Station Supervisor last month.

Conrad said: "We both thoroughly enjoyed our time with London Underground and were sad to leave."

"In the old days, I had a fantastic social life and was a keen member of the Metropolitan Railway Athletic Association where I won quite a few medals."

Conrad had some great times on London Underground but also some harrowing ones. He was part of the team that did an inspection of King's Cross station after the 1987 fire.

"That was one of the worst things I ever had to do – it was very emotional," he said.

Conrad and Julia are keen supporters of the Worldwide Fund for Nature as well as a monkey sanctuary in Cornwall. They are looking forward to pursuing their hobbies.

"Julia's a book fan and I'm a season ticket holder at Tottenham Hotspur. Now I'll be able to see all their matches without worrying about shifts," he added.

100 years down the line



The Uxbridge branch of the Metropolitan line celebrated its centenary in style on 4 July, exactly 100 years to the day since public services began on the branch.

Customers could enjoy a trip on a train dating from 1938. At Uxbridge, they could browse at an exhibition about the station and search for bargains at book and memorabilia stalls, all to the sound of the Viewstley and West Drayton Brass Band.

Managing Director Tim O'Toole blew the whistle to send the centenary train on its way. He said: "100 years is a significant milestone, especially when we are about to embark on the work which will help the line last another 100 years and hopefully bring as much growth to the area as the original line did."

Ron Beyer was one of two Train Operators driving the special train. He said: "This is nostalgic as I used to drive these trains 31 years ago. It makes you realise the impact of technology on driving modern rolling stock."

Des Dasani, the station's longest-serving employee, added: "Things like this don't happen every day and I think we should celebrate these events. I was very pleased to be asked to play a part."

All stations go for 125th birthdays



West Hampstead station in 1933.

How Finchley Road looked in 1910.



Both West Hampstead and Finchley Road are 125 years 'young' this year.

Finchley Road Station Assistant Mo Fareed said: "I think the station is the only thing here older than me!"

Station Supervisor KL Shah has worked there for 11 years. "But some days I feel like I've been here for 125 years," he joked.

"I think the only aspect that's really changed here over the years is the volume of customers we have. As the area around the station has grown, so has the number of people using it."

Each station still boasts many original heritage features which cannot be changed, even during the refurbishment work currently taking place at West Hampstead and due to start soon at Finchley Road.

These include the brass handrails on staircases and old platform signage.

West Hampstead Station Supervisor Andrew Skinner said: "It's these features that help give the stations character."

The long tube goodbye

Metropolitan line stalwart Keith Tibbles has finally waved the tube goodbye.

Train Operator Keith, who was featured in *otm* as one of the longest serving staff, completed 44 years with London Underground. Keith said: "Things have changed beyond recognition since I started – I remember the days of steam."

"I'm really going to miss all my friends on the Metropolitan line."

Keith spent his last days in the job being filmed for *The Tube* documentary.

"I'll have something to show the grandkids," he added.

A party was held in his honour at the British Legion in Rickmansworth, attended by colleagues past and present.

Train Operator Paul Johnson said: "We'll all miss Keith. He's certainly a character."

Farewell to second home

After three decades spent working on four lines, Jack Choolun is enjoying a spot of well-earned R&R in his retirement. But he won't be putting his feet up for long – Jack plans to resume his studies as a legal eagle.

Mauritian-born Jack moved to London in 1970. He trained as a Guard with London Underground in 1973, but with a young family to support, the lure of being a Railman with the opportunity to earn overtime pay led him to switch jobs even before he started.

He worked on the District, Circle, Victoria and Northern lines during his tube life and retired as a Station Supervisor at Clapham South in July. "I loved working for the company, especially in the early days. It was like my second home," said Jack.

"There was a fantastic team spirit everywhere I worked – we all helped each other out. I will miss it." Jack studied law in Mauritius before he moved to the UK.

"I really enjoyed my law studies and now I've got time I am looking forward to returning to it," said Jack. "I'll keep me busy and keep the brain ticking over."



Jack Choolun hangs up his uniform for the last time.

A job at every station

From Burnt Oak to Borough, Morden to Mornington Crescent, John Walsh has worked on every Northern line station in his 34-year career.

The Station Supervisor at Oakwood retired in the summer and will definitely miss life on the Underground.

John said: "I started as a Direct Recruit Foreman at Regent's Park and eventually became Relief Foreman on the Northern line, staying for nine years. "My favourite role was Station Inspector at Euston because it was always immaculately clean and the people were brilliant."

John puts his long career down to the variety of the job and he is hoping to take on a part-time position to keep him busy in retirement.

noticeboard

- An information sheet advising people how they can have some say in care home closures has been published by Age Concern. Called *Care Home Closures – Information Sheet 10*, the document provides statistics and a guide to the legal framework. Contact Age Concern on freephone 0800 00 99 66 to get a free copy.
- Want to complain about a product or service you have bought? Age Concern's *Consumer Advice: Where to Get It – Information Sheet 11* includes tips on how to avoid problems when making a purchase and how to complain when things go wrong. Call freephone 0800 00 99 66 to get a free copy.
- **Second World War veterans will soon be eligible to apply for a free 10-year passport thanks to a new Home Office scheme. The move, yet to be finalised, will mean anyone born on or before 2 September 1929 will be able to apply for a free passport in recognition of their wartime effort. The move is an extension of the government's free passport scheme for Second World War veterans in time for the D-Day 60th anniversary celebrations in June.**
- Older people wanting help and advice on where to live can now go to a new housing website. Produced by the Elderly Accommodation Council and the Housing Corporation, Housing Options Online offers advice on choosing a place to live, finding care or home help services and home improvements. For more information, go to www.housingcare.org/index_hc.html
- **Which is the better source of retirement income – property or pensions? A new Pensions Policy Institute (PPI) report has found that future pensioners may have to work longer, or have other sources of income, to avoid being less well-off than their predecessors. *Property or Pensions?* also found only 32 per cent of people said they were saving for retirement by investing in property. *Property or Pensions?* is available free from the Pensions Policy Institute on 020 7848 3744.**
- Age Concern has published a revised copy of *Your Taxes and Savings 2004-2005: A Guide for Older People*. The book was updated following the 2004 Budget. As well as highlighting hidden tax traps and featuring a financial planning guide, it offers tips on saving money. The book costs £6.99 plus £1.99 postage and packing from Age Concern Books on 0800 00 99 66.
- **New requirements regulating the sale of long-term care insurance come into force on 31 October. They include the need for all advisers to pass an exam demonstrating their knowledge. The Financial Services Authority has published the new requirements in *Regulation of Long-Term Care Insurance*, which costs £10 from FSA Customer Services. To request a copy call 0845 608 2372 or write to TSO Customer Services, St Crispins, Duke Street, Norwich NR3 1PD.**

Obituaries and in memoriam

If you have an obituary notice for inclusion, please send details to *otm* pensioner edition, 24-26 Great Suffolk Street, London SE1 0UE, or email onthemove@abcomm.co.uk. Please include a contact telephone number in case we need to clarify any information.

- **Eric Cannon** worked as a Conductor at Finchley garage from 1951 until he retired in 1992. He passed away on 1 April 2004.
- **Dennis Carr** died on 8 February 2002. He worked for many years as a Bus Driver at Chalk Farm garage.
- **Bill Cummins** worked on the Permanent Way at Lillie Bridge from 1957 until 1976. After a period of ill health, he returned as a Messenger at Ashfield House from 1980-86. Bill died on 16 February 2004.
- **Reg Dark** died on 12 October 2003. He worked as a Bus Driver at South Croydon garage for 20 years.
- **Simon Garbett** died on 27 June 2003 aged 29. He worked at Putney and Merton garages.
- **Norman Terrance Gumm** died on 7 October 2001. He worked for 20 years at Ealing Common depot as a Craftsman and Body Maker.
- **Bill Kleiser** died on 21 April 2004. Bill worked as a Bus Driver at Hammersmith and Harrow garages for 40 years.
- **Francis (Frank) Kelly** died on 6 April 2004. He spent nearly 25 years with LT and worked at Parsons Green garage as a Cabinet Maker and Senior Foreman.
- **Desmond Kershaw** passed away on 8 August 2003. He worked for London Transport for more than 30 years as a Driver.
- **John Knight** passed away on 18 September 2003. He was a District line Driver for almost 38 years.
- **Peter McDonald** died on 12 July 2004. He worked at Acton Works as a Draughtsman for more than 40 years until he retired at 60.
- **Christopher Miles** died on 17 April 2004. He was a Bus Driver for 21 years before being medically retired at 58.
- **Robert George Pamment** served 23 years with London Transport as an Engineering Foreman at Cricklewood garage. He passed away on 12 January 2004.
- **Arthur William Potter** passed away on 10 January 2001. He worked for 30 years as a Bus Inspector at Sutton, Merton and Stockwell and is sadly missed by all his family.
- **Don Preston** served for 39 years at Norwood garage. He passed away on 27 August 2003.
- **John Sargeant**, a Bus Driver for 30 years, passed away on 4 April 2004.
- **Don Stannand** passed away on 24 September 2004. Don's diaries of his war experiences are at The Imperial War Museum.
- Retired Bus Driver **George William Stock** passed away on 8 February 2004. He enjoyed 29 years of service.
- **Richard (Dick) Titford** joined London Transport in 1950 as a Conductor at Holloway garage. After 20 years he moved to Shepherds Bush and worked as an Inspector. Dick passed away on 6 May 2004.
- **Jean Wymer**, who worked as an economist at 55 Broadway, passed away on 20 November 2003.

A sad farewell to Lewis Pink

Lewis Pink was featured in our April issue of *otm*, an article which prompted many former colleagues to get back in touch.

Sadly Lewis passed away on 21 May before he had chance to answer your correspondence.

His wife Alice said: "He would wish me to thank those members of staff who wrote to him after publication of the April issue."

Lewis worked for London Transport from the age of 14 until retiring in 1977 at 65.



Thanks overdue

Dear Editor,

In the summer pensioner edition of *otm*, the reports on the 'People' pages will, no doubt, evoke memories for some groups of people, particularly those who had direct contact with those featured. Isn't it sad, therefore, that space could not be allotted to somebody who all pensioners will have known?

I refer, of course, to Judith Yapp who, it was reported on page 3, has been moved from her role as Manager of the Liaison Scheme under yet another company reorganisation.

In the article it is left to Judith to offer her thanks but, as a local Pensioner Liaison Representative for 10 years, I believe it is we, the representatives and the pensioners, who should be thanking Judith and her predecessor, Gordon Marsh, for establishing and developing a very worthwhile and appreciated scheme for thousands of former employees.

So, as none of her senior managers acknowledged publicly the very helpful guidance and support Judith and Gordon have provided to the representatives and retirees over the years, may I be allowed to do so here, confident of the support of my many PLR colleagues.

Thank you.

John Dean,

Folkestone and Hythe
1993-2003

If you have a letter to the Editor, send your contribution to *otm* pensioner letters, 24-26 Great Suffolk Street, London SE1 0UE, or email onthemove@abcomm.co.uk. Please remember to include your name and a contact telephone number – we won't publish your number but we may need to follow up information with you.

Master of the route?

Dear Editor,

Regarding the RouteMaster bus and your 50th anniversary article in July, I'm not as praiseworthy as some people, as a Driver of them for many years.

I often needed to get a sub for leaking fuel pumps and, being so draughty, I had to have a blanket over my knees in the cold weather.

Three good points though. No throwing about standing in the 'pass through' like now, due to sensitive brakes, it seems, or Drivers not easing the footbrake off just before a dead stop. And they did pull right up to the kerb – such a bother for the elderly – and were easy to board and alight.

Such a pity there are no uniformed Inspectors now for advice. How smart one used to look, gold braid on his peaked cap.

A Swaine,
London

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Celebrating degree success: Mike Griffiths at his graduation ceremony in September.

A studious hobby

From archaeology to psychology, perennial student Mike Griffiths has turned his hobby into a full-time occupation since he retired.

Mike worked for London Underground for 27 years, joining as a management trainee in 1974. He took early retirement aged 50 in 2001 when he was a Business Planner for JNP.

Mike already had a physics degree when he joined the business, but that wasn't enough.

He told *otm*: "While working for the company, I obtained several other qualifications in my own time, including diplomas in computer science and French and a certificate in archaeology. I also took classes for the Chartered Institute of Transport (now Logistics and Transport) supported by London Underground."

Mike has just gained a first class honours degree in psychology from Goldsmiths College. He has now embarked on a one-year MSc in research methods in psychology and hopes this will lead to a PhD course.

"When I was working, studying was my hobby," said Mike. "Even after a demanding day job, it is surprising how you get second wind when you get to a class and do something entirely different.

"When I retired, I chose to pursue that hobby full-time."



Recounting wartime tales

Find out how the capital's transport workers played their part in both World Wars at an exhibition run by London's Transport Museum in October.

The London's Transport at War exhibition will include photographs and artefacts from both conflicts. It will recall stories such as the crews who accompanied their buses overseas to transport troops to the frontline in the First World War and how the Underground was used to shelter people from air raids, with exhibits from medals to a one-man bomb shelter.

The event will also explore the role of women in the capital's transport industry.

Free to all current and retired staff, the exhibition takes place on 9 and 10 October at London's Transport Museum Depot at 118-120 Gunnersbury Lane, Acton, London W3, nearest tube Acton Town. Non-staff tickets cost £6.95 for adults and £4.95 for concessions, with all children under 16 free.

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Enjoy the great outdoors

Caravan and camping connoisseurs can get their hands on some free tickets to this year's Caravan and Outdoor Leisure Show, courtesy of *otm*.

We have 25 pairs of tickets on offer for the show at Earls Court from 2 to 7 November.

The event showcases caravans, motorhomes, caravan holiday homes and camping gear, and includes the World Tent Pitching Championships, in which contestants put their skills to the test amid simulated gales, rain and snow.

And why not stock up on all those outdoor essentials at the Accessory Superstore?

To be in with a chance of winning a pair of free tickets, all you have to do is send your name and address to Caravan competition, *otm*, 24-26 Great Suffolk Street, London SE1 0UE, or onthemove@abcomm.co.uk by 15 October 2004. The first 25 entries picked out of the hat each win a pair of tickets.

Tickets on the door cost £10 for adults and £9 for seniors.



Journey to Jersey

Enjoy a festive hotel break in Jersey with our special offer from Travelsmith Ltd (ABTA V1290/ATOL 1917), with prices from £269. You will stay at the 3-sun Ambassadeur Hotel, St Clement, a mile from St Helier.

The four-night Christmas break, which includes two nights on full-board and two nights on half-board, starts on either 23 December or Christmas Eve. It includes champagne receptions, traditional meals with all the trimmings and a full programme of festive entertainment.

Alternatively, a two-night New Year break includes a gala dinner/dance on New Year's Eve and a New Year lunch on 1 January.

The prices are based on two adults sharing and include return flight from Gatwick with British Airways, return transfers and accommodation in a twin/double room. Prices start at £269 per adult, depending on the date.

For more details and to book, just telephone the Travelsmith reservations line on 01621 784666 or 0870 748 1000 and quote reference C167/LT to qualify for the special rates, which are subject to availability.

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