

This Heart is displayed in the Children's Unit in recognition of everyone who supported the Refurbishment

# **Celebrating thirty years of BHA** ~ Anita's Reflections

Bansang Hospital was a place that I feared, a place that gave me nightmares, it consumed every waking hour with overwhelming grief and tears for those many patients that had suffered and died in the insufferable living conditions. I could not turn my back and walk away from the daily horrors of a hospital in a most inhospitable region, but what could I do? My only involvement with the medical profession was volunteering in a local mental institution every Sunday before leaving school at the age of 15 years!

I would like to pay a special tribute to Dr Peter McCormick who was my GP for 15 years. Dr Peter as he was affectionately known took early retirement and accepted the role as the resident paediatrician in Bansang Hospital over a two year period in 1996-97 he was the BHA Medical Advisor for many years thereafter. It was Dr Peter who encouraged me, inspired me and guided me through the darkest of days. Dr Peter passed away on 26 November 2021. I will be forever grateful to him for his driving force and invaluable guidance that gave me the strength to carry on and to never give up in the face of adversity.

After 30 years I still pinch myself as I now know that dreams do come true as I bear witness to the continuing transformation of Bansang Hospital. This would never have happened without YOU ...... LOYAL FRIENDS of BHA and the inspirational partnership that we have with the Management Team and staff. We are all part of a very special unique hospital that goes over and above the call of duty with happy staff and enterprising projects. Health Care does not stand still, health care is expensive and is heavily subsidised by the Government. With your continued support the hospital provides the love and care that we would all wish for their loved ones.

Some things haven't changed, 30 years on and the kitchen table is still my office. Dear friend and BHA's accountant Richard Harvey lives in the village, still accessible seven days a week, keeping the financial reins tightened ensuring that I don't spend more than we have in the bank.

Anita Smith MBE MRG, Founder of the Bansang Hospital Appeal

# Christmas Appeal 2022

# Fish farm at Bansang Hospital

Due to over fishing by foreign trawlers off the coast of West Africa the seas are almost devoid of fish. This is devastating for local fishermen and the knock on effect is grave shortages of fish throughout the Gambia. This is depriving the patients of the Bansang Hospital of fish protein which is one of the main building blocks in aiding a patient's recovery.



Three ponds under construction

Our present innovative and sustainable project is a FISH FARM that is being constructed within the grounds of the hospital, this will be a first, dare I say it maybe a first in the world, presently I know of no other such initiative for a hospital.

The Fish Farm is desperately needed as it will provide a sustainable source of protein for all the patients. I visited a project in January 2022 that was set in motion 3 years ago at a school 30kms from BH hospital. They harvest between 1200-1500 kilos of fish every 6-9 months. Mr Jammeh initiated, and project managed the installation of the fish farm at the school. He will monitor every stage of the development as he is an expert in this field.

Special farm bred Talapia fingerlings will be supplied ensuring that no predators are introduced into the 3 ponds. Two of the hospital's environmental team will be manufacturing fish food and monitoring the water quality.

The cost of the farm includes additional work to fence around the deep ponds to ensure the safety of the staff's children who live within the grounds of the hospital.

Thank you to Julia and Stuart Welch for kick starting the fund with a generous donation of £500. Total cost of the Fish Farm £19,500, you all have so far raised £14,500.

# <u>A gift of love and sustenance during such</u> <u>difficult times</u>



Every member of staff received a sack of rice last year

Africa has not contributed to climate change and yet they suffer the worst food and water shortages.

For the past two years your generosity has enabled us to provide a 25kg sack of rice for the entire work force to share with their families. We would dearly love to do this again with your support for the entire staff of 557.

Every member of staff is treated equally and with respect regardless of position.... Tunko Sama our amazing litter picker, voted man of the year in 2018 at the annual awards ceremony, to a man I have the greatest respect for, Baba Jeng CEO, my mentor.

Every member of staff has a vital role to play they are integral to the success of their unique hospital and are proud to serve and support their people in this honourable profession.

Please, help us to give thanks and recognition for their tireless efforts by providing a meaningful present this Christmas. A 25kg sack of rice presently costs £16 it will feed a family for 1-2 weeks. An average weekly wage for a Nurse Attendant is £12 a week. Every day essentials continue to increase due to the global financial issues.

Please help us to make the start of 2023 another year to be remembered for the 557 staff and their families.

## Total cost to finish the Fish Farm: £5,000

Total cost to supply 557 sacks of rice: £8,912

The ways you can donate to these Appeals to raise the sum of £13,912Donate Online;<a href="https://donorbox.org/bha-christmas-appeal-2022">https://donorbox.org/bha-christmas-appeal-2022</a>Or by cheque made payable to; Bansang Hospital AppealSend to; Anita Smith MBE, MRG. 4 The Leys, Orlingbury, Kettering. NorthamptonshireNN14 1JE

Patrons: Phil Sinkinson OBE, former British High Commissioner to The Gambia and Simon Scarrow, international bestselling author

Post Natal Ward Update



Nearing Completion

Last year 527 mothers were referred to Bansang Hospital from 51 rural health clinics as a matter of urgency. For many that journey is tortuous covering rough terrain on the back of a horse cart, this situation is magnified during the rainy season when roads become quagmires.

**Before**... In the old Post Natal Ward, Mothers had to endure the unbearable and unrelenting heat after giving birth, with high temperatures and humidity that reached dangerous levels, making it a potential breeding ground for infectious diseases. This was definitely not the environment for a new mother and her precious baby.

**Now...** A tranquil, safe, temperature controlled environment for mothers to bond with their precious newly born babies.



Some of our happy staff members

Accomplished tradesmen skilfully made plaster ceiling panels that trap the hot air in the roof void that is radiated by the Aluzinc roof. This method of controlling the temperature has been implemented in every ward that we have renovated, greatly reducing the insufferable temperatures. Air conditioning units have been installed, aluminium windows and mosquito screening.

This busy hospital delivered 2,252 babies to include 434 Caesarean section operations in 12 months

#### Jeannette, Chris and Grant return in January 2022

Jeannette is a Specialist Neo Natal Nurse and has been part of the Bansang Family for the past thirteen years. What I love about this indomitable woman is that she can adapt from using high tech all singing and dancing equipment that we have in the West and is happy to conform, using sustainable equipment that is more suited to challenging environments in The Gambia. Jeannette continues to promote good practice with new members of staff who care for the premature and sick babies.



Chris, Anita, Grant( Anita's son) and Jeannette

For equipment advice and training we look to <u>www.diamedica.co.uk</u> who are based in Devon, they are world leaders in sustainable and affordable equipment designed for developing countries.

Chris installed the important tension wires that support the privacy curtains around the beds in the new Maternity Ward, this allows mothers to have private time bonding with their precious babies.

More tension wires have been installed to hold the mosquito nets during the Malaria season in the Children's Unit. All the wards have now been wired, allowing the nursing staff to carry out procedures with the privacy that is essential for all patients.



Grant's unexpected visit to the minor operating theatre

First morning in Bansang and Grant, my son, is whisked off to the hospital after fighting with a tree branch. A makeshift treatment bed was speedily arranged as all the theatres were busy. Grant was soon back to work after skilful suturing by Sulyman Ceesay who tended his wound.

A few years ago, Grant was part of the team that erected the outdoor gymnasium for the benefit of staff fitness and morale. This time he turned his hand to re-directing a path that had been lifted by tree roots making it challenging to reach the volunteers' house.

With a little help from the maintenance team the volunteers house and terrace is fenced off making it difficult for the goats to destroy the window netting and leaving copious amounts of manure. I will miss their comical antics, I expect that these highly amusing athletes will be back though!

## **Exterior Corridors Tiled**

Can you imagine being rushed to the theatre on a trolley, negotiating different levels of concrete floor ways that were unavoidable and difficult to manoeuver along. Not a pleasant experience and one that patients should not endure!



Veranda Walkway Tiling Completed

Porcelain floor tiling has now made it a smooth run linking all the wards and major departments; Theatres, Pathology, A&E, X-ray, Pharmacy, Duty Room, Pathology, Mortuary, PNO office, and Dressings Room.

Another successful project completed on time and on budget. Grateful thanks to YOU all for enabling this essential upgrade to be accomplished.

## Form Feeding Fund (FFF)

Form Nutrition (<u>www.formnutrition.com</u>) is an Awardwinning company who produce multi source plant-based supplements and backed by science. The FFF was initiated in 2017 to support the most vulnerable patients and their accompanying family members. The directors from Form Nutrition Damian Soong and Natalia Bojanic first visited the hospital in 2018 where they witnessed the over-whelming need to support those in need.



FFF supports twin baby girls and their Mummy

Quarterly donations that are made from selling their products on-line bring relief and reassurance to those patients and escort that are most vulnerable during their stay at the hospital.



Recipient of the FFF support programme

The support from FFF can never be over-estimated. Climate change is impacting on the lives of these poor people at an alarming rate. The rural poor, subsistence farmers live from hand to mouth, working tirelessly to till the land to care for their community.



FFF support the most vulnerable patients.

FFF is the most valuable source of support for those patients in dire need, demand increases during the

'Hungry Season' as villagers wait for the results of their harvest. Over 95% of the people that the hospital serves are subsistence farmers.

An example of FFF's commitment in January 2022;
55 boxes of Lactogen (baby milk formula) purchased.
45 patients supported with food for escorts or family member during a patient's hospitalisation.

**18 patients given funds** to buy prescription drugs that were not available from the hospital pharmacy. Payment made in order to avoid interruption to the treatment, avoid drug resistance and enhance a speedy recovery.

7 patients referred to EFSTH in Banjul (Teaching Hospital...400 mile round trip) for treatment. FFF provided funds to help feed the patient and the escort and then fund their travel back to their homes. Bananas and Lollypops to distract children during treatment and whilst dressings are changed.

# I have witnessed the suffering before FFF and the difference since 2017 is truly heart-warming and lifesaving.

Wherever you are in the world healthcare is expensive. The staff and patients are so grateful to have this intervention by Form Nutrition.

## 80 Bed Children's Unit Refurbishment



Surgical Ward, far end burns unit and dressings bay.

The £60,000 refurbishment was finally completed in August 2021. The refurb was not straightforward, it presented so many problems for patients, staff, and contractors due to the many restrictions imposed because of Covid-19.



Neo Natal room

I am in awe of everyone who faced the herculean task of navigating the refurbishment, keeping the departments open when chaos reigned in the country and around the world. As always, the staff did it stoically, calmly and carried on with the task of caring for the little ones

The unit now has an additional Premature Baby Unit as well as the existing Neo-Natal Unit.

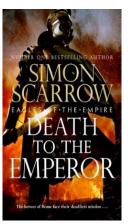
#### Simon Scarrow, Patron of the BHA

Simon has been a supporter of BHA since 2007, kindly accepting my invitation to become a Patron in 2012. Simon has supported many of the projects that have helped to elevate the hospital in terms of the infrastructure and staff retention.



Simon with his wife Louise

We now have a little of Simon's magic in Bansang Hospital. A dilapidated building that has now been renovated and fully furnished into a welcoming home for medical staff, voted by his readers and aptly named 'Cato's Cottage', Cato is one of the famous characters in his books. Special thanks to Simon for his dedication, his care and commitment to both staff and patients.



Simon's latest book, 'Death to the Emperor', is now available. Simon has once again auctioned hard back signed copies with all monies raised going to the Fish Farm project and sacks of rice for the staff to be shared with their families.

Thank you to Simon's fans for bidding in what has become an annual auction of a newly released book. <u>www.simonscarrow.co.uk/</u>

# **Rotary Clubs of Seaford and Brentwood a Becket**

Service Above Self, this epitomises the wonderful organisation of Rotary and what they do to support people at home and around the world. The hospital has benefitted by their commitment and dedication that has helped with the transformation of

Patrons: Phil Sinkinson OBE, former British High Commissioner to The Gambia and Simon Scarrow, international bestselling author

wards and departments throughout the hospital.

With their recent support we are ever closer to this unique sustainable Fish Farm project delivering vital protein for all the patients.

#### Mansour's Story

Mansour, a young boy of 7 years was admitted into the newly opened Children's Unit in 2006-7 suffering life changing injuries due to an horrific fire that claimed the lives of his friends.



Mansour aged 8 in the Playroom dedicated to Julie

Mansour, will be employed as part of the special team of Fish Keepers, he was delighted to be offered this post, he said "I will be very happy to give something back and help others, they saved my life. Every day when I walk through the gates of the hospital, I meet my family".



Mansour today

Please contact me if you would like to help support this young man's monthly wage, currently BHA pays him a retainer. A regular wage would enable him to help support his mother and younger brother who live a long distance away, close to the Senegalese border.

## Dr Theo and Mathilde Keller family and friends

The hospital Management Team acted promptly to secure urgent pharmaceuticals and medical supplies due to Dr Theo and Mathilde's continued generosity together with support from their family and friends in Switzerland.



The Pharmacy Dispensary Department

The \$10,000 US dollars donated was used to purchase a range of injectable and oral antibiotics, X-ray film, surgical, and examination gloves, various size syringes and needles amongst many other specified items.



**Pharmaceutical Stores** 

We are fortunate to have a supplier in The Gambia who sources quality pharmaceuticals and medical supplies from UK, Europe and India, every item was purchased and sent to the hospital without delay.

A BIG THANK YOU to dear friends Theo and Mathilde and Family and Friends.

#### **Correction Centre, Island of Janjangburgh**

BHA supports the Correction centre in Janjangburgh. In 2019 I was accompanied by the Governor of the Central River Region to witness the BHA sewage tanker in action as the soakaways needed to be emptied.

The tanker was a second-hand purchase that was shipped to the hospital from Holland and funded by the Livingstone family, who have supported the hospital for many years, they run Holland Hydroponics in Manchester <u>https://hollandhorticulture.co.uk/</u>

A warm welcome for Governor Sanyang and the team, without doubt he is a respected and a happy friend to all who reside in the Correction Centre. I was more than surprised at how happy everyone was given the conditions!



Anita with Hon Governor Sheriff Abass Sanyang

I asked Governor Sanyang why they were all happy to see him as well as giving myself and the tanker team such a friendly welcome. He said "everyone deserves a second chance in life especially as most crimes are born out of poverty and desperation". Governor Sanyang takes the time to sit and talk with the residents offering advice and even arranging regular barbeques. Most importantly they discuss the consequences of their actions and how it affects everyone, the re-offending rate as a result is close to zero!



The Cous milling machine, welcoming party

In 2022 BHA funded a Cous milling machine that was made in Bansang Town. This milling machine will ease the burden and provide the means to pound the Cous for the residents. Governor Sanyang arranged the funding for the electrical connection for the Cous machine. We also handed over boxes of books and a couple of board games that residents will enjoy playing.

#### Shambala Music Festival

Greenest music festival in the country was back for the August Bank Holiday weekend. Bansang Hospital Appeal has been a recipient of their generosity since 2017. Special thanks to Tors, my children and their partners and friends that make up the amazing merchandise team by stepping up to the mark and volunteering to sell merchandise at the event.



Magnificent Shambala Merchandise Team

According to Shambala the festival is 'a space to play, to reinvent, revitalise and to return to the world fuelled-up on the beauty of being alive' THANK YOU ALL

## Solar Lighting For The Safety Of Staff



Funds provided for 15 solar lamp posts, installed for the safety and well-being of the staff and their families that live within the perimeter walls of the hospital.

This has been a most welcome addition, providing a safe passage for staff as they go to work. The need is more critical when snakes are prevalent during the rainy season.

#### <u>Surprise, Surprise</u>

My cousin, Dave Cooper, manages the Rising Sun pub in Kettering with his wife Chris. In conversation with one of his regulars about my work in Bansang Hospital without hesitation this lovely lady offered to donate £500.



Anita, Christine Redden and Dave

I never cease to be amazed at the generosity of people that I have never met before. When I met Christine she said, "What is money for if you can't help others"

Christine's generosity gets us ever nearer completing the Fish Farm.

#### Orlingbury Village Hall Rocked in September



Elvis on stage in Orlingbury

Thank you to Karl Memphis who gave a brilliant performance that truly rocked the village hall in Orlingbury with Elvis's greatest hits. A grand total of £2,419 was raised for the Fish Farm project.

## This couple came along to the Elvis night



Janet and David Underwood

I met Janet and David 13 years ago in Bansang Hospital, they had travelled from the remote village of Kanubeh with a teacher who was critically ill. After 3 months of intensive treatment, he was able to return to his village, his family, and his teaching job.

This big-hearted couple had funded, built, and equipped a nursery school in the village. Such was the success of the school that it is now in the care of the Gambian Governments Education Department. The day arrived when they had to say goodbye to their Kanubeh family, they left on sound footing knowing that the cashew farm that they funded would help to sustain them in the future.

The generous balance of funds in their account was transferred to BHA as we met their strict criteria. Their gift allowed us to build 7 new bathrooms for staff accommodation within the grounds of the hospital.

#### **Duston URC Family Member**



Kay Lester, some of her beautifully knitted gifts for the Children

Knitted with love and care, by Kay during lockdown. They will all find loving homes where they will be cherished by our little patients when they return to their homes. These precious knitted toys will provide many years of enjoyment as they will remain a most precious gift of love.

#### **Olive Daniels, Wonder Woman**



Olive's Knitted Blankets in Bansang

At the ripe old age of 94 years young......Olive's day would not be complete if she wasn't knitting; a true perfectionist.

Olive has been knitting blankets for the hospital for over 16 years, she has provided so much joy and comfort during times of distress for the mothers and their babies.

# <u>CEO Baba Jeng sends his message of thanks for 30</u> years of BHA's support.



Anita with CEO Baba Jeng

"It has been a wonderful, truthful, and genuine 30 years partnership. BHA has been supporting Bansang Hospital in many areas, ranging from motivation of Staff, provision of medication and food to patients, renovations in various areas including staff quarters.

I can't imagine how Bansang Hospital would look like without BHA's continuous Support. Today many staff from other regions want to work in Bansang Hospital thanks to BHA. The Hospital has been awarded the best performing Public Hospital in The Gambia by all indicators, thanks to the continuous support of BHA.

I would like to thank all those who support the BHA by donating either cash or in kind implementing all those important projects undertaken by BHA in Bansang Hospital.

Be assured that all your donations reach the Hospital to fund the intended projects. Please continue to donate to BHA for you are really saving lives in The Gambia"



The Magnificent Management Team

From left to right; Procurement Officer Alhagie Nyang, CEO Baba Jeng, Principal Accountant Isatou Ndimballan, Administrator Burama Badjie and Principal Nursing Officer Sheriffo Kanyi

#### **Bansang Hospital Medical Football Team**

The morale of the hospital staff is so important and it was boosted even further by the team being promoted to the Second Division of the Gambia Football Federation.



Anita with the Medical Football Team Squad

This is the first time in history that a football team had qualified for the Second Division in the Central River Region, we are all so proud, good luck next season MFT.

## Staff Sponsorship

A huge thank you to everyone who has a Direct Debit and to everyone who is helping to support the wages of the 47 staff that are sponsored through the BHA.

Staff are at the forefront of everything we do, they are the beating heart of the hospital. Everyone is valued for their contribution to supporting the establishment and the people they serve. The staff use their initiative, they are inventive, hardworking and resourceful.

However, the past couple of years, we have seen a marked reduction in staff sponsors due to changed financial circumstances or retirement. I thank all retirees for your past support and wish you every happiness in the next chapter of your lives.

So we desperately need additional staff sponsors, would you be willing to donate £5, £10 or even £15 a month Direct Debit towards the wage of a BHA member of staff I would love to hear from you if you could. This will enable the BHA to free up funds to be spent on future projects and equipment.

I am happy for you to contact me directly, by calling Anita 0778 3551 945.

#### JOIN THE BHA MAIL LIST

If you currently receive this Newsletter through the post and would like to receive it via email together with periodic updates on my work in Bansang. Then please visit my website, click on Join Us and signup;

https://bansanghospitalappeal.org

# You can support the Bansang Hospital Appeal in so many ways

ONE OFF DONATION:	<u>https://donorbox.org/bha-christmas-appeal-2022</u> - please do Gift Aid your donation or send a cheque made payable to: Bansang Hospital Appeal (address below in Contact Us)		
DONATE MONTHLY:	Monthly donors are the lifeblood of this charity. The financial assurance they offer helps us make long-term strategic plans. If you are able to contribute in this way, please get in touch <u>anitasmith@bansanghospitalappeal.org</u>		
DIRECT DEBIT:	Download the Direct Debit form and Gift Aid form from the BHA website <a href="https://bansanghospitalappeal.org/contribute-donate/">https://bansanghospitalappeal.org/contribute-donate/</a>		
	Account Name; Bansang Hospital Appeal A Registered Charity 1064469 Account No: 50047910 Sort Code: 20-45-77		
FUNDRAISE:	Perhaps a coffee morning or a garage sale or a jumble sale, whatever the idea, we'd love to support you! <u>anitasmith@bansanghospitalappeal.org</u>		
<u>LIKE ON FACEBOOK:</u>	Liking us on Facebook helps spread the Bansang story to all your friends. It doesn't cost you anything, but it helps us no end! So please click the like button on our Facebook page. <a href="https://www.facebook.com/BansangHospitalAppeal">https://www.facebook.com/BansangHospitalAppeal</a>		
FOLLOW ON INSTA:	We've just opened an Instagram account, and will be posting pictures to it regularly. If you'd like to see our pictures, please follow us and possibly share with your friends and family. <u>https://www.instagram.com/bansanghospitalappeal</u>		
RAISE AWARENESS:	If you work or socialise in a place that would be happy to highlight this charity, please get in touch. I am always very happy to arrange a visit and give a Power Point presentation of my work at Bansang over the last 30 years. <u>anitasmith@bansanghospitalappeal.org</u>		
<u>CONTACT US:</u>	Anita Smith, MBE MRG. Bansang Hospital Appeal, 4 The Leys, Orlingbury, Kettering, Northamptonshire. NN14 1JE anitasmith@bansanghospitalappeal.org // 07783 551 945		
<u>GIFT AID:</u>	Please help us to maximise your gift by ticking the Gift Aid box whilst donating on-line or by completing a Gift Aid form at the end of this Newsletter.		

I'm sure many of you will have heard of Gift Aid. It's a UK government scheme that allows our appeal to claim an additional 25 pence for every £1 you donate. To collect Gift Aid on your behalf, we need to ensure the following;

- ✓ You are a UK taxpayer who has paid or will pay an amount of tax (income and/or capital gains tax) for each tax year that is at least equal to the Gift Aid claimed on your charitable donations in that year.
- ✓ You have completed, signed and returned an enduring Gift Aid declaration form allowing us to reclaim Gift Aid on your behalf (the Gift Aid form can be found on the last page of this newsletter).

If you are a regular donor who has not signed a Gift Aid Declaration, please consider doing so as this will maximise your donations. If you have already completed a Gift Aid form, then we also need your help to ensure your declaration is valid and our records are accurate. If any of the following applies to you, please get in touch;

- ✓ Your name or home address has changed.
- ✓ Your circumstances have changed, and you are no longer paying sufficient UK tax on your income and/or capital gains to cover all Gift Aid claims.



Thank you for your continued support and for helping us to maximise your donations with Gift Aid, it really does makes a considerable difference.

Patrons: Phil Sinkinson OBE, former British High Commissioner to The Gambia and Simon Scarrow, international bestselling author



# **Gift Aid Declaration - Bansang Hospital Appeal**

#### Boost your donation by 25p of Gift Aid for every £1 you donate

Donating through Gift Aid means charities and community amateur sports clubs (CASCs) can claim an extra 25p for every £1 you give. It will not cost you any extra. Gift Aid is reclaimed by the charity from the tax you pay for the current tax year. Your address is needed to identify you as a current UK taxpayer.

#### In order to Gift Aid your donations to Bansang Hospital Appeal you must tick the box below;

Please treat all donations I make or have made to Bansang Hospital Appeal for the past 4 years as Gift Aid donations until further notice.

I confirm that I am a UK taxpayer and I understand that if I pay less Income Tax and/or Capital Gains Tax than the amount of Gift Aid claimed on all my donations in that tax year then it is my responsibility to pay any difference.

#### My details: (please note we can only accept your home address)

Title	First name or initial(s)	Surname	
Home Address			
		Post Code	
Email (optional)			
Signature		Date	
Join us:			
Would you like	to be kept informed via email about our late	est news and campaign updates?	
Yes plea	ise		
No thar	k you		

#### Please notify Bansang Hospital Appeal if you:

- Want to cancel this declaration
- Change your name or home address
- No longer pay sufficient tax on your income and/or capital gains.

If you pay Income Tax at the higher or additional rate and want to receive the additional tax relief due to you, you must include all your Gift Aid donations on your Self-Assessment tax return or ask HM Revenue and Customs to adjust your tax code.

#### Please return the completed form to:

Anita Smith, 4 The Leys, Orlingbury, Kettering, Northamptonshire NN14 1JE

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