

Becket Keys Church of England School

13th December 2024

IN THIS ISSUE

Mrs Sharp writes.....

What are we waiting for? What are we longing for?

The more we walk around with these questions and let them penetrate through the layers of distraction at this time of year, the more powerfully we will experience Advent.

Last night's uplifting Christmas
Carol concert is one of my
favourite Becket Keys' traditions.
It encapsulates the essence of the
season: the joyful longing for the
coming of Christ, the
acknowledgement of His
presence amongst us, and the
need for reflection and prayer.

Written on the next page, the poem "Christmas" by John Betjeman (1954) comes to mind.

It conveys the busyness of traditional preparations for Christmas and the atmosphere of the season, but concludes with a powerful reflection on the true meaning of Christmas, emphasising the incarnation of God and the profound truths of Christ's birth:

Sometimes we need to slow down and see things anew. We need to give proper time and appreciation to Christ's story: His birth, His sacrifice, and how He changes us and the world.

I enjoy poetry and will be rereading Mark Greene's uplifting book of Christmas poems, 'ADVENTure' (2014), this Advent. The book's poems, illustrations, and Bible quotes encourage reflection.

.....contd. on page 2



Christmas Carol Concert

A wonderful evening with our talented students celebrating the festive season.

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Festive Reading

This week we have a few more festive reads to recommend to you.

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Church Services

Details of the many services available at the local churches in and around Brentwood.

Page 9-11

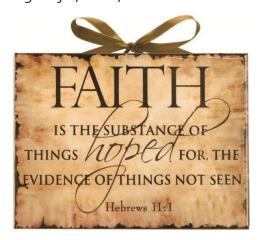
Sports News

This week we have a few more festive reads to recommend to you.

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.....contd. from Page 1 In his introduction to the book, he writes:

'Christmas, the Christmas that is not about the bubbly frenzy of all the preparation for the big day, still retains its shimmering mystery: ordinary people caught up in the divine drama that is the hinge of history. They are invited to take part, as we are: seeking, as we can; choosing, as we do; pressured, as we are: afraid, exhilarated, and, in the end, grateful, awed, content.'



Inspired by Hebrews 11:1, later Mark Greene writes:

`Often, when we imagine the future, it's like the present but more so. But history and our lives teach us that it is not always so . . . As for the Jews of Israel under Roman occupation in, say 10BC, well, they had for centuries hoped for the arrival of the Saviour, a Messiah. He has been long predicted but was not imminently expected but then, out of the blue. . . God had been working in an unfashionable northern town, far from the madding crowd, in the lives of an apparently ordinary young women and a village

carpenter... and their lives and of course all human history were about to change.'

Slow down and take time to be part of His story. Prepare your hearts and lives for the coming of Christ, with confidence in what we hope for and assurance about what we do not see. Through prayer, connect with God's grace and love, asking Him to ready our hearts as He prepared all of history to receive the gift of His Son.

Mrs Sharp Deputy Headteacher

Christmas By John Betjeman

The bells of waiting Advent ring,
The Tortoise stove is lit again
And lamp-oil light across the night
Has caught the streaks of winter rain
In many a stained-glass window
sheen

From Crimson Lake to Hookers Green.

The holly in the windy hedge And round the Manor House the yew Will soon be stripped to deck the ledge,

The altar, font and arch and pew, So that the villagers can say 'The church looks nice' on Christmas Day.

Provincial Public Houses blaze, Corporation tramcars clang, On lighted tenements I gaze, Where paper decorations hang, And bunting in the red Town Hall says 'Merry Christmas to you all'.

And London shops on Christmas Eve

Are strung with silver bells and flowers

As hurrying clerks the City leave To pigeon-haunted classic towers, And marbled clouds go scudding by The many-steepled London sky.

And girls in slacks remember Dad, And oafish louts remember Mum, And sleepless children's hearts are glad.

And Christmas-morning bells say 'Come!'

Even to shining ones who dwell Safe in the Dorchester Hotel.

And is it true, This most tremendous tale of all, Seen in a stained-glass window's

hue,

A Baby in an ox's stall? The Maker of the stars and sea Become a Child on earth for me?

And is it true? For if it is,
No loving fingers tying strings
Around those tissued fripperies,
The sweet and silly Christmas things,
Bath salts and inexpensive scent
And hideous tie so kindly meant,

No love that in a family dwells, No carolling in frosty air, Nor all the steeple-shaking bells Can with this single Truth compare -That God was man in Palestine And lives today in Bread and Wine.



Christmas Carol Concert

A delightful combination of music, carols and readings.













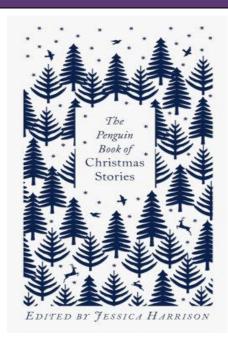








Festive Reading Recommendations



The Penguin Book of Christmas Stories Edited by Jessica Harrison

This is a collection of the most magical, moving, chilling and surprising Christmas stories from around the world, taking us from frozen Nordic woods to glittering Paris, to New York, an English country house, bustling Lagos to midnight mass in Rio, and even outer space!

Classic tales from writers including Truman Capote, Shirley Jackson, Dylan Thomas, Saki and Chekhov, as well as little-known treasures such as Italo Calvino's wry sideways look at Christmas consumerism.

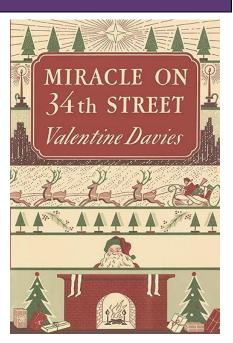
Featuring santas, ghosts, trolls, unexpected guests, curmudgeons and miracles, here is Christmas as imagined by some of the greatest short story writers of all time.

The Nutcracker Alexandre Dumas

The nutcracker doll that mysterious Godfather Drosselmeyer gives to little Marie for Christmas is no ordinary toy. On Christmas Eve, at the clocks strike midnight, Marie watches as the Nutcracker and her entire cabinet of playthings come to life and boldly do battle against the malevolent Mouse King and his armies. But this is only the start: read on for a tale of enchantment and transformation, enter a world by turns fantastical and sinister, a kindom of dolls and spun-sugar palaces, and learn the true history of the brave little Nutcracker.

Adapted from a dark fairy-tale by Eta Hoffmann, Alexandre Dumas' romance of childhood imagination inspired Tchaikovsky's world-famous ballet.

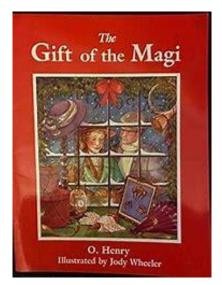




Miracle on 34th Street Valentine Davies

For a little girl named Susan Walker, Christmas could be any other day. She doesn't believe in Santa Claus or magic or miracles of any kind. But when she meets Kris Kringle and tells him what Christmas gifts she most wishes for, Susan finds herself hoping that maybe, just maybe, he is the real thing. Based on the original holiday classic, Miracle on 34th Street is a timeless, heartwarming children's book about generosity, imagination, and the spirit of Christmas... if you just believe.





The Gift of the Magi O. Henry

In a shabby New York flat, Della sobs as she counts the few coins she has saved to buy a Christmas present for her husband, Jim. One dollar and eighty-seven cents is all the money she has in the world. A gift worthy of her devotion will require a great sacrifice.

Jim, meanwhile, has made a sacrifice for Della that is no less difficult. As they exchange gifts on Christmas Eve, the discovery of what each has done fills them with despair, until they realize that the true gifts of Christmas can be found more readily in their humble apartment than in any fine store. Set in New York at the turn of the twentieth century, this classic piece of American literature tells the story of a young couple and the value of love.

Give the Gift of Reading this Christmas

You may have read Mr Scott-Evans' recent newsletter article, launching our highly successful 'Gift a Book for Christmas' initiative. Last year we received hundreds of donations from students and families who were having a clear out in preparation for the new books they would be receiving on Christmas Day. These books have since been enjoyed by our students who have been discovering the 'gifts' in their form room book swaps and the school library.

We all know that as avid readers, we can end up with too many books to store. Bookshelves become overflowing, and it becomes difficult to even see what is there. Then, for Christmas you may receive new books, and there is nowhere for them to go. Many books will only be read once, and then they sit gathering dust. Our hope is that in this festive period, when you are preparing your homes for Christmas, you may take the opportunity to see if you have any books that are ready for a new home and to be loved and enjoyed by others. These may be books that have been read, and will not be read again, or books that your children are now too old for, as they have moved onto more exciting reading challenges. If you have any books that are in good condition and are suitable for ages 10 and up, then please consider gifting them this Christmas to the school. We also have mini libraries in sixth form and the staff room, so adult fiction is also greatly appreciated.

If you really want to treat us, we would love to receive copies of top Young Adult fiction books from 2024, which can be found easily on bookshop websites. You could also look back through the newsletters of the last 12 months and choose from the many books we have featured and recommended, as these are popular amongst students.

If you are able to donate a book, we would be hugely appreciative. If you want to be really festive, you could wrap them so we can put them under the tree but we will take them unwrapped too.

After Christmas these will be shared between the classroom book swap areas and placed in our library, where students will be able to find all the new books they can enjoy in 2025. It means

that the Christmas spirit can continue into the new year.

To help spread this Christmas joy, we will have a box of chocolates in Main Reception, and we will happily swap a Cadbury's Hero for each book that is brought in. That goes for adults too, so feel free to drop a book in if you are in school over the next couple of weeks.









Music Department



During this term, I have had the amazing opportunity to play in the Essex Youth Orchestra, rehearsing and performing the Jazz Nutcracker by Duke Ellington and other well-known Christmas music.

I play clarinet and bass clarinet. Matthew in Year 9 (French horn,) and Zak in &ear 12 (violin) also play in this orchestra.

After many rehearsals, including a 3-day residential course in October, we had our first shows on Tuesday this week. Children from local schools accompanied us for the Christmas songs.

A highlight for me was hearing some of the younger children say to their friends that they wanted to learn an instrument after hearing us play.



It has been a great experience, and I feel proud of what I have achieved, and I look forward to future opportunities to play with with Essex Youth Orchestra.

We are performing again on 13th December at the Brentwood Centre at 6.3opm and there are a few tickets still available. We will be joined by the Becket Keys junior choir for the Christmas songs at this event.

Merry Christmas!

Emily Lorenc Year 10



Becket Keys Sixth Form Key Dates:

Thursday 16th **January 2025**Sixth Former for a Day

Monday 20th January 2025 Closing date for applications

Monday 24th & Tuesday 25th June 2025 Bridging Event

Any questions please email: sixthform@becketkeys.org

Local Church Christmas Services



Ingrave Christmas Services

All Saints East Horndon

Carol Service, 15th Dec, 6pm.

St Nicholas, Ingrave

Carol Service, 22nd Dec, 4pm Crib Service, Christmas Eve, 4pm Midnight Mass, Christmas Eve, 11:30pm Holy Communion, Christmas Day, 9:30am

St Stephen's Ingrave

Carol Service, 22nd Dec, 6pm Holy Communion, Christmas Day, 11am Holy Communion, Boxing/St Stephen's Day, 11am ST THOMAS OF CANTERBURY, BRENTWOOD

SERVICES & EVENTS

ADVENT & CHRISTMAS 2024

Sat 23rd Nov

Christmas Fair 11am - 3pm

Advent Sunday: 1st Dec

10am - Mass 6pm - Advent Procession & Carols

Sat 7th Dec

Christmas Youth Concert 7pm - 8:45pm

Sunday 8th Dec

10am - Mass 12pm - Family Mass 6pm - Evensong

Friday 13th Dec

Carols & Chilli 5:00pm

Sunday 15th Dec

10am - Mass 6pm - 'Blue Christmas' service

Sunday 22nd Dec

10am - Mass 6pm - Nine Lessons & Carols

Christmas Eve: Tues 24th Dec

4pm - Christingle for young children 6pm - Christingle for older children 11:30pm - Midnight Mass

Christmas Day: Wed 25th Dec

10am - Mass

Sunday 29th Dec

10am - Mass (no choir)





All Saints' Doddinghurst All Saints' Christmas Services Mon 16 Dec 7.00pm Traditional Carol Service (Festival of 9 Lessons & Carols) 10.00am Parish Eucharist on the Fourth Sunday of Advent Sun 22 Dec (with Saints Alive making Christmas Slime) Tue 24 Dec 4.00pm Christmas Eve Family Crib Service 10.00pm Midnight Mass Wed 25 Dec 10.00am Christmas Day Festival Eucharist with Carols Thu 26 Dec 10.00am Holy Communion: Feast of St. Stephen Fri 27 Dec 10.00am Holy Communion: Feast of St John Sat 28 Dec 10.00am Holy Communion: Feast of the Holy Innocents Sun 29 Dec 10.00am Parish Eucharist on the Feast of the Holy Family we wish you all a very Merry Christmas and a Peaceful & Safe New Yea

St Paul's, Bentley Common

Sunday 15th December 2024

9.30am Pop-Up Nativity

A fun filled morning for the whole family. An interactive service for children (and adults!) to participate in the Nativity. A great way to connect with the Christmas story.



Sunday 22nd December 2024

9.30am Service with Carols A festive service with plenty of carols to enjoy and connect with God through the traditional Christmas music and message.

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Tuesday 24th December 2024

5.30pm - Christmas Eve, Carols by Candlelight A beautiful service to reflect on the Christmas message.

Wednesday 25th December 2024

10.30am – Christmas Day Service A vibrant start to your Christmas morning and celebrating the true meaning of Christmas.



Christmas Services

Advent Sunday

1 December 10.00am Celebrate the beginning of Advent introducing our Christ Church Choir

Family Service led by our young people

8 December 10.00am
Service followed by refreshments and stalls

Candlelit Carol Service

22 December 6.00pm A service of Lessons and Carols

Family Nativity Service

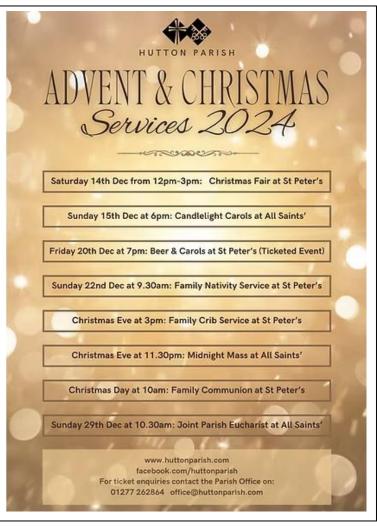
2.4 December 4.00pm
Children are invited to come dressed as a character from the Nativity story. Costumes will also be available.

Midnight Holy Communion

at St Mary the Virgin, Great Warley, CM13 3JP

Christmas Day Holy Communion 10.30 am





Shenfield St Mary's

Sunday 15th December – The Third Sunday of Advent 8.00am Holy Communion & 9.30am Parish Eucharist

Sunday 22nd December – The Fourth Sunday of Advent 8.00am Holy Communion & 9.30am Parish Eucharist 6.30pm Traditional Carol Service

Tuesday 24th December – Christmas Eve

3.00pm Family Nativity Carol Service 4.15pm & 5.30pm Family Nativity Carol Service 11.30pm Midnight Christmas Eucharist



Wednesday 25th December – Christmas Day 9.30am Christmas Family Communion (no creche)

Thursday 26th December – St Stephen's Day No 11am service

Essex Short Breaks





Essex Short breaks give parent carers and siblings of children and young people with special educational needs and/or disabilities a break from their additional caring responsibilities, whilst enabling children and young people to meet friends, take part in activities, develop independence and have fun. It is part of Essex County Council's early help approach.

Who can access Essex Short Breaks?

Children and young people can access Essex Short Break's provision if they are:

- aged between o-18, or 19-25 and have a personal budget
- have a diagnosis of special educational needs and/or a disability*
- living within the administrative borders of Essex County Council

How do I sign up?

To access this provision, a responsible adult such as a parent carer or family member can create a Short Breaks Digital Account for the child or young person. Access to the offer is then managed through that account. Families new to Essex SEND Short Breaks will need to <u>register</u> for an account.



SENDIASS are holding workshops for parents with a child waiting for ASD assessment.

These free workshops are designed to support parents with a child waiting for ASD assessment in Essex with content delivered by Essex Autism Central

Sessions available (more sessions will be available soon)

24th January with Proactive Training at Colchester Football Stadium 10am until 2pm (lunch provided) **Understanding and Managing Your Child's Responses**

28th January 25 with Autism Central at Manor Of Groves High Wycham 10am until 12 **Developing Communication and supporting Sensory needs**

31st January with Proactive Training at Holiday Inn Brentwood 10am until 2pm (lunch provided) **Understanding and Managing Your Child's Responses**

27th February with Proactive Training at The Pier Harwich 10am until 2pm (lunch provided) - **Understanding and Managing Your Child's Responses**

For more information and book a place contact sally.grainger@essex.gov.uk

Sports News

Girls' Netball Year 11

On Monday 9th December the students in the Year 11 Netball Team played a match against St Martin's School. The girls demonstrated great mental strength and determination by battling through the very dark and cold conditions to realise a 14-12 victory. It was a very close match with superb shooting, defending and court movement, particularly in the second half. A particular well done to Ruby and Alexandra who stepped in to help the team on the day. The team would not have won without their help! Player of the match went to Elle Holdcroft for her excellent shooting and defending.



Becket Keys Boys' Rugby Teams

The away day saw students from year 7, 8 and 9 all boarding a coach to Chelmer Valley High School for three fixtures. Since September our rugby players have developed into competent athletes and we look forward to seeing them return next season with the same passion and determination.





Year 7 – Henry Stevens started off the match with the ball in his hands ready to pass to Finley Moon, who tucked the ball under his arm and set off, driving through the heart of the Chelmer Valley High School front row. This set the tone for a barrage of powerful runs from Sam Hutton, Finley Moon and Luke Dennis, before Oscar Szast carried the ball and five Chelmer Valley defenders over the line to score. The game fizzled out as the half closed, but a notable mention was Gresham Woods whose positioning was key in breaking

down some fast-opposing attacks.

The second half saw more of the same lovely surging runs, but the opposition tightened up and we needed a plan B. That plan B was Teddy, whose deceptive power allowed him to score after a lovely swinging pass from Henry. Immediately we returned the ball and a collective "oh no" rang out from the home team as Oscar ploughed through. Quick thinking and another superb looping pass from Henry saw Teddy Stevens get a well deserved try. The last phase of the game ended with Teddy White offloading a quick pass to the on-running captain, Finley Moon to score another well worked try, ending this season's rugby success. This season has given me a headache, rotating players around and training roughly 30 players at practice each Monday! This emphasises the commitment levels of these

players and is the reason we have developed so quickly!

Mr Lane PE Teacher



Year 8 - Coming off the back of a convincing win against Anglo-European School earlier in the week, the Year 8 rugby team faced a tough challenge against Chelmer Valley. We started slowly and conceded two early tries, due to gaps in our defensive line. However, some excellent individual play saw James Duffill and Will Tasker score two tries to level the game before halftime. After a motivating team talk from Mr. Collins and Mr. Ison, the boys delivered a much-improved second-half performance. With fantastic tackles from Oskar Golba and Patrick Barden, the team began to find their rhythm and work together more effectively. This teamwork paid off as Luke Donovan and Ollie Everitt added their names to the score sheet.

Will Tasker had the opportunity to extend his tally but, in an unfortunate moment, put the ball down on the wrong white line. Despite this, Seb McNally made a brilliant impact off the bench in just his second rugby game. He made a great first tackle preventing a try, made some darting runs and gained a well-earned try to further solidify the team's dominance in the second half. A worthy man of the match performance.

The game ended with a victory for Becket Keys against a spirited Chelmer Valley side and the boys are looking forward to our game next week against West Hatch.



Year 9 - Becket Keys suffered a tough 24-14 defeat to Chelmer Valley, despite a strong secondhalf comeback. The boys found themselves 17-0 down at halftime after Chelmer Valley capitalised on early mistakes and dominated possession. However, the Becket Keys barrage regrouped after the break and showed great resilience. Harrison got them on the scoreboard with a well-taken try, followed by James Stevens and his amazing solo effort, added another to bring the score to 17-14, putting the game back in the balance. Unfortunately, Chelmer Valley responded with a late try to secure the victory, leaving the Becket Keys' boys to reflect on a hard-fought 24-14 loss. The boys have improved greatly since the

start of the year and are a well developed team.

They have heart, passion and resilience and they are a credit to the school. Hopefully they will showcase this effort in the Sports Clubs next term

A very proud Mr. Carter PE Teacher

PE Extra Curricular Clubs

Please note:

For the final week of term, the PE Department will be running the following clubs:

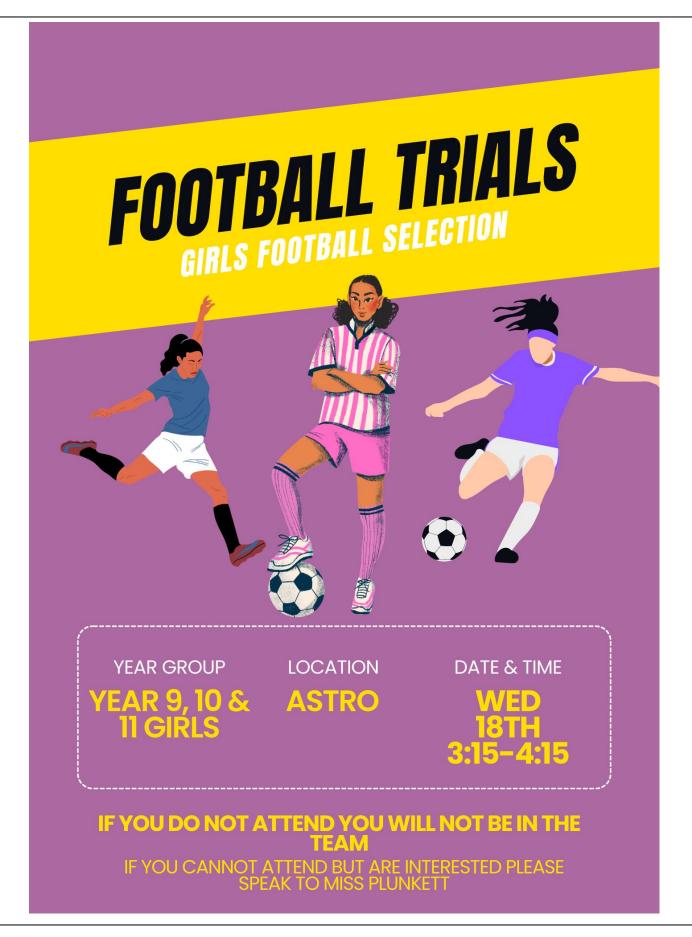
Thursday Afterschool – YR8 Basketball

Wednesday Afterschool – Girls' Football Trials (YR9,10,11)

Wednesday Afterschool – YR7 Basketball

Tuesday Afterschool – YR9,10,11 Basketball

There will not be any lunchtime or afterschool clubs in preparation for our new term. The new timetable will be available in the newsletter next week!



DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

LAST DAY OF TERM

STUDENT HALF DAY

FRIDAY 20TH DECEMBER 2024

*

CHRISTMAS HOLIDAY
MONDAY 23RD DECEMBER 2024 –
FRIDAY 3RD JANUARY 2025

*

INSET DAY
NO STUDENTS IN SCHOOL
MONDAY 6TH JANUARY 2025

*

YEAR 11 PARENTS' EVENING THURSDAY 9TH JANUARY 2025

*

SIXTH FORMER FOR A DAY
YEAR 11 COLLEGE TRIP
THURSDAY 16TH JANUARY 2025

*

YEAR 12 EXAMS BEGIN FRIDAY 17TH JANUARY -2025

*

DEADLINE FOR SIXTH FORM APPLICATIONS
MONDAY 20TH JANUARY 2025

*

YEAR 9 PARENTS' EVENING
THURSDAY 30TH JANUARY 2025

*

LENT HOLIDAY

MONDAY 17TH FEBRURY – FRIDAY 21
FEBRUARY 2025

Becket Keys Church of England School

Sawyers Hall Lane Brentwood, Essex CM15 9DA 01277 286600

www.becketkeys.org office@becketkeys.org finance@becketkeys.org

X:

- @BecketKeys
- @MrScottEvans
- @BecketKeys6th
- @BecketKeysMusic
- @BecketKeysPE
- @BecketKeysArt
- @BecketKeysSci
- @BecketKeysDT
- @BecketKeysExams
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