

THE
MONTPELIER
AND
CLIFTON HILL

ASSOCIATION

CONSERVING THIS HISTORIC AREA

NEWSLETTER NO 4,
SPRING 2007

Helpful Household Hints and Handy Tips

Brass - cleaning of brass, door brasses in particular - mix Bar Keepers Friend with LEMON JUICE (not water as recommended). This will easily remove deep tarnish and ingrained dirt

Silver - it is a mistake to think that metals are hard and infinitely durable. Metal surfaces are easily scratched and worn away. Metalwork should be kept in dry conditions because most metals are naturally unstable and easily corrode. Once it has been polished or lacquered NEVER touch it with bare hands because acidity in the skin will tarnish the metal. ALWAYS wear cotton gloves and wash them frequently. Remember that dust is abrasive so never rub when dusting, just flick the dust lightly off the surface with a soft brush. DO NOT OVER POLISH - this can blunt and eventually disfigure even the most solid objects. (Please note that I am referring to valuable and delicate pieces in particular). You can use Silver Dip but apply with cotton wool buds. Don't be tempted to immerse the object and always rinse under running water very thoroughly!



Arber/Tubbs

Antique furniture - it is a very good idea to 'wash' antique furniture about once a year with a very weak mixture of vinegar and warm water. Use a soft cloth, immerse it, squeeze it almost dry and then wipe the furniture. This will remove any residues of dirt and grease and the wood will feel like silk afterwards with a lovely gleam to it.

Marks on wood - to get rid of rings or minor scratches on wood, cover with Vaseline and leave for 24 hours. Rub into the wood, wipe off the excess and then polish as normal.

Pottery - valuable embossed or gilded china should be cleaned with a small soft brush.

Chandeliers - wear cotton gloves when cleaning your chandeliers and dry off with a hair dryer. This avoids greasy marks. **PM**

Planning Matters

22 Victoria Road - proposals for roof extension and terrace were modified. Passed after MCHA suggestions and recommendation.

66 Upper North Street - rear extension on first and second floors and sun terrace over shop and changes in fenestration were recommended for refusal by MCHA. Result - refusal as it was out of character.

16 Spring Street - first and second floor extension. MCHA recommended refusal as designs are totally out of character with street.

18 Hampton Place - retrospective planning application. MCHA alerted city council enforcement officers having received complaints from six members of unauthorised works. New plans have now been submitted, the majority met with MCHA approval.

Clifton Hill/Dyke Road, Orange Base Station - recommend refusal.

5, 6, 7 Powis Villas - recommend change of use to single occupancy but against the proposal for hard standings at numbers 5 and 7.

If any members need advice with planning and conservation issues before submitting plans, Roger Amerena is happy to help. Call 203599.

Black bins

The Council have agreed, under pressure from MCHA, to resite the 3 bins at: St. Michael's Church, the corner of Victoria Road and Denmark Terrace and outside number 45 Montelier Road.

Royal Alexander Hospital Site Update

Since the Coach House was purchased in April 2006 with the help of 54 individuals, it has been made watertight and the north and west elevations have been temporarily repaired and redecorated. In September, the premises were let under license to 'Take Me Home' until there are sufficient funds available for restoration and conservation of the building. A building preservation trust has been formed into which the building will be put. Marketing for further financial support will be initiated shortly. The three parking spaces have also been let.

The car park site of the hospital has been sold with the proposal for six residential units to be built upon it. Five, six and seven Powis Villas, which also belonged to the hospital, have been sold as one lot to a private buyer who intends to keep them as three homes. The Hospital was sold in late December to George Wimpey for £11.5 million, who have held a public viewing of their plans. They propose to completely demolish the hospital and build a complex containing 150 flats, a GP Surgery and low cost housing. MCHA have asked to comment on these proposals. These three sites form a major part of any new development in the conservation area. MCHA initiated the formation of the Royal Alexander Hospital Steering Group in order to form a unified approach in tackling any future development. The Steering Group is made up from representatives from all interested parties in the area, including the West Hill Association who also sit with MCHA on the Conservation Advisory Group. With such a large project in front of us it is important that planning, design and highway issues are dealt with with a unified voice. **RA**



Thoughts on Conservation and Preservation

We live in a city of great architectural interest with many old buildings, a lot of which are listed and often in need of tender loving care and I thought it could be useful to share some ideas on how we might help these buildings to survive for many years to come. They are our heritage and, sadly, in the 1960's, a lot of Brighton and Hove was pulled down in a mistaken effort to modernise and streamline the town. We lost many beautiful houses and for what reason? It was misguided town planning and I fear with the aim of clearing sites so that hideous apartment blocks could be built and money could be made by the then council. As a result of this 'vandalism', some of the conservation groups in the town were set up to keep a watchful eye on the planners and to curb the excessive greed of those in charge of our City. It is so easy to destroy thoughtlessly and we need to cherish the work of designers, artisans and craftsmen who lived many years before our time. I have no desire to halt progress and to stifle innovative ideas. I am very much in favour of some of the seafront planning - we too must leave our mark on the city but much more care must be taken to ensure that we do not destroy what is the character of Brighton and Hove.

Leading on from these generalisations, what can we do to preserve our own houses? Well, we have to be totally practical in our approach. We have to look at

the principal features first and then evaluate the condition of the walls, the stonework, the carvings on some houses, the canopies and the wrought ironwork and statuary in some gardens. Immense love, skill and care was taken to build the period properties - some of the skills are dying out - and if we are vigilant in maintaining these buildings, then we are exercising preventive conservation rather than allowing properties to deteriorate to a point when the repairs are almost impossibly costly and thereby almost unaffordable. I am referring in this instance to the tragic state of the West Pier, long before the two arson attacks. We have virtually lost a valuable asset of the city through our own neglect and failure to address the problem at the time. It is a sad example of negligence.

There are both large and small properties in this city in a shameful state of repair. The smallest houses are of equal importance historically. They deserve our attention just as much as the grander buildings. They all reflect a way of life in the past and are the record of the talents, skills and artistry of our forebears. **PM**

If you know of a listed building that has fallen into disrepair and is an eyesore, contact MCHA.

Blot on the landscape

More than 100 residents signed a petition protesting about the proliferation of new ugly parking signs in the Montpelier and Clifton Hill conservation area. In March, our own Carol Dyhouse led a deputation of members to the Council to present the petition. She told the council that the signs were not just ugly, they were unnecessary.

The view down Victoria Street over the redbrick church of St Mary Magdalen and on to the sea is one of the best in Brighton. But in February the council put up a large ugly sign at the top of Victoria Street. It's a bit like a schoolboy painting a moustache on the Mona-Lisa.



The Council's parking consultants put the boundary between the zone Y and Z along a series of residential streets through the middle of the city's premier conservation area. The council says every road crossing this boundary must have a large sign so that motorists know what zone they are in and have no grounds for appealing against a parking fine.

At the Conservation Advisory Group meeting on 21 February the association raised the issue. Other cities, such as Bath, had similar streets in conservation areas without large boundary signs. "If Bath can do it," we asked, "why can't Brighton?"

As a direct result of that meeting the council's officers agreed to meet members of our association and the Kemp Town Society to try and find a way out of this mess. One proposal was to change the zone boundary slightly, from the south side of the line through Victoria Road to the north side. The association has agreed to canvass the opinion of local residents, who would have to approve any change. The earliest practical date for any change is November.

But since that meeting the Department for Transport, having studied the full plans, has told that council that the signs on the boundary between zone Y and Z are not necessary. The simple solution, said the department, is to take down the sign. The council's position is now morally indefensible and legally doubtful. It will be even more difficult to maintain its position during the forthcoming elections.

The association has managed to reduce the number of smaller signs showing details of parking restrictions. Roger Amerena and council officers walked round zones Y and Z and agreed that about three dozen proposed signs were unnecessary - not only cutting clutter but also saving the council taxpayer £3,750. Also three pay and display machines have been removed saving £15,000 and two dozen new resident's bays created. It has also been agreed to reduce yellow lines to two inches in width and for their colour to be a canary yellow.

The council has also promised to site signs on buildings if the owners agree. So if you have an intrusive sign outside your window and think it would better placed on your house or railings, you only have to ask the council.

Great thanks to Carol Dyhouse, Nick von Tunzelmann and Roy Pennington. **MH**

St. Nicholas' Garden

Using part of the St. Nicholas' Garden of Rest in Dyke Road to recreate a 1940's allotment, growing fruit and vegetables has come up for debate.

Officially Brighton & Hove City council own and look after the garden, but lately there have been security and vandalism problems. The view is that turning one of the city's public parks into an ongoing project creating a typical wartime vegetable garden would help develop a sense of belonging within the neighbourhood. The Brighton & Hove Food Partnership would help develop the project as well as providing general assistance; The Brighton and Hove Organic Gardening Group will offer expertise and volunteer participation. It is intended as an educational resource, but will also serve as a place where people can enjoy themselves and reflect on our food growing heritage. It is to encourage residents of the area to try growing some of their own fruit and vegetables. The partnership envisages the project as something one can happen upon during a walk through the park, but also as a destination to visit. It will be open to anyone, park users and passers by and possibly tie in with schools and community groups. The Brighton & Hove Food Partnership has discussed this project with the Church and Brighton & Hove City Council and is asking Montpelier and Clifton Hill Association members and local residents for their views on the proposed new use for the garden.

We have already had a number of positive and negative comments. If you have missed our recent survey or haven't passed on your views, please do so - write to M.C.H.A Montpelier Hall, Montpelier Terrace, Brighton BN1 3DF. You can also contact www.bhfood.org.uk for further information about the project or email them at info@bhfood.org.uk **GT**





The Accidental Hero of Hampton Lodge

From the Lord Nelson in Trafalgar Street to the Iron Duke in Waterloo Street military exploits provided a handy fund of place names for 19th-century Brighton, which was growing fast. But why is there no memento of the Battle of Navarino? Its absence is all the more intriguing because there is a strong local connection. **Admiral Sir Edward Codrington**, who won the battle, lived in Hampton Lodge, what is now 140 Western Road.

In the 1820s the Greeks were in open revolt against their Turkish occupiers. In 1827 Britain signed a secret treaty with France and Russia to give covert - but deniable - help to the Greeks without disturbing the precarious balance of power. Codrington was charged with preventing the Turkish fleet from re-supplying its troops and thereby aiding the Greek insurgents.

By September, Codrington's coalition forces had the joint Turkish-Egyptian fleet bottled up in the almost land-locked bay of Navarino, in southwest Greece. On 20th October 1827 Codrington, a veteran of Trafalgar and whose actions there were decisive to the victory, decided to force the issue. He sailed into the bay and anchored in the middle of the Turkish fleet. It was a provocative move. That night a nervous Egyptian sailor fired a musket. The coalition's response was devastating and 34 Turkish ships were sunk, with more than 4000 persons being killed or wounded.

The defeat crippled Turkish naval power and in November 1828 Greece declared its independence. In spite of this overwhelming victory for the alliance the British government was deeply embarrassed. Sinking the Turkish fleet had not been part of the game plan as it destabilised the balance of power in the eastern Mediterranean. Codrington was recalled in disgrace and took up residence for several years at his Brighton home, Hampton Lodge.





The Codrington family not only owned Hampton lodge, but also a terrace of 9 houses named Codrington Place, built some time in the 1820's (see 1877 Ordnance Survey map). A number of these houses have disappeared under what is now Waitrose. A few do still remain and the end two, formerly numbers 8 and 9 Codrington Place, now form Codrington Mansion, 139 Western Road, adjacent to 140, which was Hampton Lodge, which in its turn abuts Codrington House in Hampton Place (top right). The entrances to Codrington Place were originally at the rear on the north of the terrace, which is now half-hidden behind the paling fence and wall that borders the exit of the Waitrose car park (above second right). The south-facing front gardens of these houses as can be seen on the 1877 Ordnance Survey map and the Lodge have long since disappeared. The borough council bought half the gardens when it widened Western road in 1903 and the remainder of the gardens were lost when the row of shops that now runs from Waitrose to Hampton Place was built. The street name also vanished at that time. Entrances built around 1903 to Codrington Mansion and Hampton Lodge can be seen between the shops (see photos below). And if you are tall enough one can also just see the top of a lead canopy running above the Codrington Mansion entrance to the house proper. We are not sure when Codrington left Hampton Lodge, but records show his wife died there in January 1837 and the property, including Codrington Place stayed in the family until 1899.

In Greece Codrington is a hero and there is a white marble statue to the three coalition admirals in the main square of Pylos, the town on Navarino Bay. In Brighton the only traces of him now are the house names, Codrington House in Hampton Place and Codrington Mansion on Western Road. He doesn't even have a bus named after him. **MH**

The Association is proposing the City Commemorative Plaque Panel erect a plaque to him in Western Road, at the entrance to 140.



MCHA Outings

Painshill and Titsey Park - 23rd April 06

Painshill is one of England's finest landscaped gardens, created by Charles Hamilton in the 18th C., intended as a perception of paradise. After a conducted tour with ever-changing vistas of temples, grottos and other follies of delight, we had lunch at the 15th C. Old Bell Inn, in Old Oxted. In the afternoon we were given a guided tour of Titsey Park, one of the largest surviving estates in Surrey dating from the 16th C. Nestling in the North Downs, the mansion house contains a collection of fine porcelain and paintings, including four views of Venice by Canaletto.



Hatfield House - 9th July 06

Following Lunch at the Plume of Feathers at Tewin, once one of Queen Elizabeth I's hunting lodges, we visited Hatfield House, which is surrounded by a superb series of gardens and parkland. Originally built by the Bishop of Ely, after the dissolution of the Church, by Henry VIII, it was used as a Royal Palace for Henry's children.

In the reign of James I it was exchanged for Theobalds House and came into the possession of Lord Robert Cecil who started to demolish it and rebuild the present structure. The staterooms contain many fine tapestries, paintings, furniture and a collection of armour. The house itself is surrounded by a superb series of series of gardens and parkland.

The Sir John Kederminster Library, Pew and Stonor - 3rd September 06

After lunch at the 16th C. Red Lion Inn we were given a conducted tour of the magnificent library and pew created by Sir John Kederminster in about 1600 at St Mary's Church Langney Marish. Attached to the church the magnificent library is housed in a uniquely ornate room with bookshelves enclosed by painted panelled doors, inside and out.



We then visited Stonor House near Henley on Thames, the home of Lord and Lady Camoys, which has been in the family for over 800 years. The 12th C. House with 14th and 18th C. additions contains rare furniture, artworks and family portraits in a beautiful countryside setting.

2007 Discover the Champagne Region - 10-13th April - A spectacular success!

In conjunction with Grape Escapes 26 of us visited the Champagne Region tasting fine wines and fabulous food. The trip included a tour and tasting at Champagne Veuve Clicquot; a guided tour of the city of Reims and the Basilica St Remy; a three course lunch with three different champagnes; a guided visit to the village of Hautvillers and the church where Dom Perignon is buried; a further visit with tastings of three Champagnes overlooking the vines in Hautvillers as well as lunch as guests of Roger Brun and a visit to the medieval centre of Laon. The climax was the black tie, five course gala banquet in candle light at Champagne Ruinart, seven Champagnes were tasted. **RA**



Twenty-six members of MCHA in Reims outside the Basilica St Remy.



Gala Banquet at Champagne Ruinart, Harry Gould with Lady Woodhead and Ed London.

A similar outing to the Loire region will take place in 2008 contact Martin Foster for details.

Local outings

In addition to the above there were several local outings. These included the Lewes Road Cemetery (with a conducted tour by Mike Robins), the Brighton Sewers, The Rottingdean Windmill and the Old Police Station in the Town Hall. All were well attended and of great interest.

Outings arranged for 2007 are:- July 15th, Danson House and Cobham Hall; August 25th, St Michael's Abbey and Frogmore House; October 14th, The Spinnaker Tower and the historic shipyard, Portsmouth.

Mitre House

THE view down Victoria Street over St Mary Magdalene's Church to the sea, one of the most beautiful in Brighton, is also one of the most threatened, and not just by parking signs. Plans to put two extra stories on top of Mitre House will obliterate the view.

Mitre House is the block of flats and shops, including Sainsburys and Jessops on Western Road, between Hampton Place, Spring Street and Hampton Street. It is already the tallest building in Western Road and the extra stories will cause a dramatic loss of light. Hampton Place will lose sun in the morning, Spring Street will lose sun in the evening and Hampton Street, which is already badly overshadowed by Mitre House, will lose light throughout the day. And instead of having a sea view residents of Victoria Street, Montpellier Street and Clifton Place will have a view of a block of flats.

Mitre House is run down and in desperate need of repair. The owners intend to sell the flats in the south block, with their sea views, to help finance the repair work. But the north block will be converted into bedsits for more than 120 students from the University of Brighton.

Hampton Street is already blighted by the squalid state of Mitre House. And since late night pub opening came in last year residents have increasingly found local streets being used as a short cut for the half cut. Another 120 students, with their boyfriends and girlfriends, returning home from pubbing and clubbing is likely to make this problem worse, causing a creeping blight on the edge of our conservation area.

Montague, the Beckenham-based firm of surveyors in charge of the development, held a public exhibition of the plans at the end of March. A local firm of architects, DRP of the Upper Lewes Road, drew up the plans. The developers were clearly taken aback by extent of the opposition, which may yet provoke a re-think. If not, they intend to apply for planning permission around the end of April. The association has already asked the council to consult the Conservation Advisory Group over the plans because of the impact they will have on the local conservation area. **MH**



Annual Conservation Awards



Last year we had a shortlist of seven entries, all of a very high standard. These were presented, photographically with detailed descriptions, to members at the association's autumn meeting by Gabi Tubbs, secretary of the MCHA. The overall winner was **8 Powis Villas** owned by John Bevan and Richard Patrick. It was chosen for the outstanding restoration of the exterior and garden. The off-white painted building and front garden wall is handsomely complemented with matt blue-grey painted woodwork and smart chrome door furniture. Newly planted espaliered Cotton Easter and Hawthorn hedging, set off the building superbly.



8 Powis Villas

A Commendation went to **16 Montpelier Villas**, owned by Matthew and Candida Molyneux. Apart from the palm planted drive and exterior renovation, the recommendation was for their superb lower ground floor kitchen where they have been relentless in their efforts to unearth the original Portland Stone under layers of concrete. They also restored the adjacent 1845's scullery. Both parties have moved to our area fairly recently and we would like to congratulate them on preserving and improving the features of their beautiful buildings which are of great historic and public interest, benefiting visitors and residents alike. Unfortunately, the proposed garden award had to be postponed because of last year's hosepipe ban. We are looking forward to your recommendations for this year's awards. **GT**



16 Montpelier Villas



Open Spaces Report

Report on open spaces meeting attended by Brian Brooks on behalf of MCHA - The first item to be discussed was the clean neighbourhoods and environment act - dog control measures. Ray Prichard told us that there were now four animal welfare officers concerned with these matters. He stressed the importance of keeping dogs on leads and said that the council were giving thought to the targeting of various areas. He mentioned that the council was very aware of the importance of the views of dog owners and was always anxious to listen to and take notice of them.

The second speaker dealt with the survey of open spaces, which had been carried out by the distribution of 5,000 questionnaires to 2% of the population. An excellent response (24%) had been received. This survey is now almost complete.

The third item discussed was the development of a green way on the development site next to Brighton station, which is to be a mixture of offices, hotels and housing. The speaker emphasised the importance of the green strip of land that is to be created on this site, as it will constitute a significant nature conservation area.

The fourth item was a talk on Dutch Elm Disease, which is spread by beetles, and has existed in Brighton and Hove, and on the south coast, for 100 years. The council is giving a great deal of attention to this problem which is difficult to control because the mother beetles die after producing their broods which grow and then fly off to other trees, infecting them as they do so. We have in Brighton the national Elm collection and much research is devoted to its protection, including the planting of elms that have some resistance to the beetles.

The last item on the agenda was a talk on the By-Laws. The speaker, Carl Hayman, reported that the By-Laws of the department of community and local government were being harmonised. **BB**



Sussex Heritage Trust Awards 2007

This year MCHA, a member of the trust, along with John Small, our past chairman and patron of the Sussex Heritage Trust, will be nominating Palmeira Yard, 75 Holland Road, Hove, for an award under the Large Scale Residential category for the restoration and conservation of the old Pickford's Depository. This year's awards lunch will be held on 12th July, at the East Sussex National Hotel, little Horstead. Each year MCHA is well represented. Tickets for the awards event, including the superb lunch, at £45.00, can be bought from Martin Foster.

Wilds Monument Proposed

Seven Dials Monument for 19th century architects of Montpelier Crescent, Villas, Western Terrace and Hanover Crescent.

The green light has been given by Council Officials for a monument commemorating two of Brighton's most famous architects, Amon and his son Amos Henry Wilds in the centre of Seven Dials, marking the entrance to Montpelier, subject to Highways specifications. The Association is in advanced talks with the Council concerning this proposal. A design competition will be announced for architects and designers to deliver the best scheme. Funding will hopefully be provided from the city art's fund, public subscriptions and local business sponsorship. Thanks go to MCHA member Mark Williams of Montpelier Crescent for this brilliant idea.

We welcome members views - to the Membership Secretary, Martin Foster.

Get Fit

Brighton and Hove High School are soon to open a members only Health and Fitness Suite on their premises. They are generously offering a 20% discount to MCHA members. More details to follow.

Commemorative Plaques

MCHA now have a place on the Commemorative Plaque Panel, the group that decides upon the placement of plaques to celebrate the residency of people of note in Brighton & Hove. You are invited to contact RA or BB with suggestions of people who lived in the MCHA area, or anywhere in the city. Please provide a brief description of persons, who need to have been deceased for more than five years.

It has been agreed that a plaque to commemorate Charles Augustin Busby be placed at 2 Lansdowne Place. A full list of current and proposed plaques can be seen at our website.

We think it appropriate that a Plaque to Admiral Codrington be placed at 140 Western Road - see centre page article. MCHA will be putting this suggestion forward to the next meeting of the Commemorative Plaque Panel.

Old Town Conservation

MCHA have been invited to sit on the committee of the newly formed Old Town Conservation group. They are to review how best to conserve the Old Town area of Brighton, that is the area bounded by East St., West St., North St. and the sea front.



MCHA Christmas Party 2006 at Montpellier Hall.



A glorious summer evening at the 2006 MCHA Summer Party in Clifton Terrace gardens.

Diary Dates

May. Conservation area historic walk by Mike Robins. See Festival Fringe programme for times/dates.

June 14th 2007. Annual General Meeting at the High School, Montpelier Road, with special guest speaker Lord Baker giving an illustrated talk about his latest book *George IV - A life in caricature*. Book signing 6:15, AGM 7:00, Speaker 7:15, by ticket only. Non members £5 contact membership secretary. Drinks generously provided by Waitrose.

July 21st 2007. Summer party at the High School Old Vicarage in Temple Gardens, 6 pm - 9pm. Weather permitting the party will be held on the lawns, but the occasion will also provide a rare opportunity to view the interior of the Old Vicarage, not normally open to the public. Food and wine sponsored by Waitrose. £7.50 by ticket only.

October 25th 2007. Autumn meeting at the High School. Kirsten McKnight and Paul Robertshaw of the Georgian Group will be discussing cases they have dealt with in the previous year throughout England.

December 6th 2007. Christmas Party, Montpellier Hall.

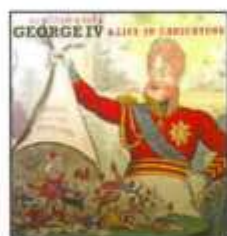
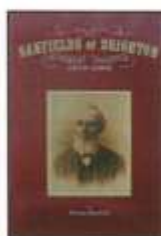
April 17th 2008. Spring Meeting, venue to be announced. A member of the of the Victorian Society will be talking about Brighton Churches.

Bedazzled

Are you aware that the highways department of the city council will install a rear deflector to street lamps to stop glare to the buildings behind? So, if you are being dazzled by a street light glaring through your bedroom window - Contact Mr. Westwood, Highways Department. Tel:- 01273 290 000

Books

Congratulations to Matthew Andrews, an association member, who with Max Crisfield photographed and wrote "Brighton and Hove". A beautiful coffee table book with a very good section on Montpelier and Clifton Hill. Published by Hatchards, £14.99.



Congratulations also go to Marcus Banfield of Banfields, Little Western Street on the businesses 150th anniversary and the publication of a book on their history, available from the shop at £10.

Another book of special interest is *George IV - A life in caricature*, by Kenneth Baker. A parliamentarian for almost 50 years and now sitting in The House of Lords, Lord Baker draws upon his vast experience in politics to scrutinize the changing images of the day of the Prince Regent, later King. George IV had an inestimable impact upon our town and Lord Baker will be signing his book and speaking at our AGM in June (see Diary Dates).

Over 200 colour illustrations, Thames and Hudson, £28 (£25 for members).

THE
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