

Te Manu Hou

Newsletter of New Zealand Kindergartens Inc
No 10

Obituary

A tribute to Patricia Mary Lockhart QSM

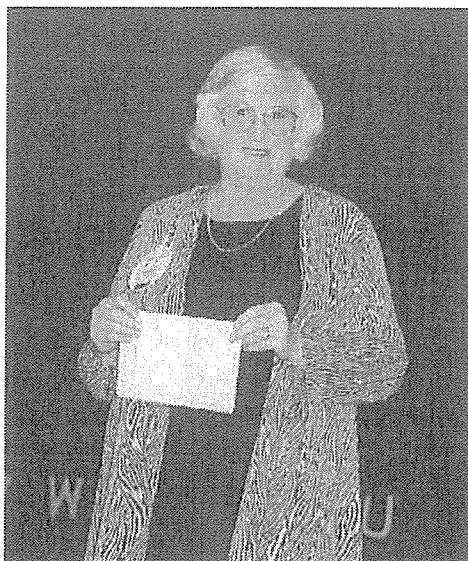
9 March 1933 - 7 February 2003

Contributor: Karen Boyes, NZKI Board Member

Patricia Mary Lockhart is widely acknowledged as one of those individuals who made a huge difference and impacted on all those who knew and worked with her. As well as her kindergarten involvement Pat had many other interests including her family, church, the Commonwealth Trust, Access Radio, and the Wellington Speaking Union.

Pat first became involved in kindergarten in 1957 when her eldest daughter started at kindergarten in Dunedin. Her interest began to grow, and Pat became involved in her local kindergarten committee and also in the Dunedin Association; she was president from 1973-1976. When Pat and her family moved to Wellington she still acted as a mentor for the Dunedin Kindergarten Association and always held an active interest in the association.

In 1972 Pat was elected onto the National Executive and for eight years was involved at national level including four years as president. She was an inspirational president with great passion, energy, knowledge and enthusiasm. Pat had the wonderful pleasure of opening kindergartens around the country and seeing the excitement of those who worked so hard to establish them (over one hundred kindergartens were built during her presidential term). She compiled the publication "Kindergartens in New Zealand



1889-1975", was editor of "Kindergarten Education" from 1975-1978 and was co-author of an article entitled "New Zealand Free Kindergarten Union 1926" published in Women Together in 1993.

Pat also represented kindergarten interests on numerous committees including the National Advisory Council on Preschool Education, the Four Term Year Committee in the mid seventies, National Council of Women National Executive and the International Year of the Child National Commission. In 1980 Pat was made an honorary life member of the New Zealand Free Kindergarten Union and was also that year, awarded a Queen's Service Medal - mainly for her services to the kindergarten movement.

In 1990 Pat established the Dunedin Kindergarten Association Lockhart Award in memory of Kevin, her late husband. It became known as the Pat

REMINDER

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Lockhart Award and was awarded for five years (one year for each of their children) and continued a sixth year when it was dedicated by the association to Pat herself. Many describe Pat as the most influential person in the history of the Dunedin Kindergarten Association and Pat was honored as a life member.

Socrates said "he who helps a child helps humanity". Thousands of children benefited from the voluntary work which Pat, along with many others, were responsible for. Her interest in kindergarten never waned and she took an active interest right up until her death. Pat always attended national conferences whenever she was able and I believe she holds the unofficial record for attending the most kindergarten conferences. Some of us have had the privilege of being spellbound while hearing the wonderful conference addresses

Pat always delivered, her last being at the 2001, 75th jubilee conference held in Blenheim. I recall her many recollections from those conferences of the parties, choir practices, lack of sleep, numbers on beds competitions, lost keys, good humor and sadness when excellent people were voted out of office and also the inspiration, friendship and good humour she demonstrated to all who met her.

On behalf of all of us I say thank you, Pat, for the part you played during your 45 years involvement in the kindergarten movement and for the wonderful contribution you made to the wellbeing of children and their families throughout New Zealand. You will be remembered by many, and especially by those of us who have been fortunate to have known and worked with you. May you rest in peace.

Reflections of an ageing kindergarten parent volunteer

Contributor: Jeremy Neild, NZKI Board Member

Recently I was late arriving at an NZKI Board meeting and when I later read the minutes I found that I had been volunteered to write a contribution for the next Te Manu Hou. (Thanks guys, remember revenge is best when eaten cold!!). Minutes from last night's teleconference call state that "Merren waiting on Board article from Jeremy".

Lacking inspiration for a truly challenging article, I ask myself why am I on the Board of NZKI (my family put it down to a combination of stupidity, insanity or masochism). I suppose that I've always had a strong belief that good people must be involved with their community and putting something into their community if we are to have strong vibrant communities in which we live and bring up our families.

When I first left university and went to work in Dargaville I became very active as a scout leader, Jaycee, young farmers' club member etc. I really enjoyed it and it felt that I was able to make a useful contribution. Where did that belief about the importance of making a contribution come from? I don't really know but guess that it came from my upbringing, my reading (eg books by Covey talk about the need for humans to be able to contribute to give meaning to life) and my personal beliefs and ethics.

Of course when children come along, one tends to get involved in organisations that they are involved with. Having four children, aged 16, 13, 8 and 5, I have found that I get involved in organisations such as kindergarten for 10 years. So I first became

involved in my local kindergarten in Palmerston North as a committee person about 9 years ago. I got involved because my child was going to kindergarten and I thought that kindergarten was a middle class organisation that didn't do too much harm, probably did quite good things for children but was hardly an essential experience for children, provided parenting was done reasonably well.

I found local kindergarten management was hideously bound by rules and regulations and something called an association that seemed to make idiotic rules. So eventually I trotted off to my first association council meeting as my local committee's council member. What fun it was! They were presenting the annual budget so I asked some awkward questions, generally made a nuisance of myself and within a couple of meetings was asked on to the Board to fill a vacancy – I suspect the Board thought it might be easier "to manage me in the tent rather than outside the tent chucking bricks in".

It was an exciting time – bulk funding had been in for only a few years. Many of the rules and regulations were being changed (albeit very slowly) – we debated issues like 360 sessions vs 320 sessions, fees vs donations, four-hour sessions on Wednesday/Friday. Teachers were in, out and back in the State Sector. There was competition from other ECE providers – society had changed significantly but kindergarten was essentially unchanged – ran five morning sessions 8.45 am – 11.45 am for older children and three afternoon sessions 1.15 pm – 2.45 pm for the younger children and was geared to provide education for children of a

non-working parent, and children numbers under five were declining. Kindergarten had a perceived image of middle class values, parents running cake stalls and raffles. The reality was that my association was a business with a turnover of \$3m +, assets of around \$3 million and employing 60- 70 professionally trained staff delivering early education services for over 1800 children and their families in the wide Manawatu. What's more it was a competitive market for early children's education. Children under five did not have to go to an EC service and their parents certainly didn't have to choose kindergarten. As Ansett airline cabin staff used to say – "thank you for choosing to fly with Ansett", so I felt kindergarten had to get to parents and say – "thank you for choosing kindergarten – we appreciate the trust you've place in us and we want kindergarten to be a centre of excellence for your child's development".

So eventually I took responsibility for overseeing the association finances, became vice president and eventually president and spent 5-6 years on the Board. Some of the principles I pushed for included:

- Every centre had to be financially viable with no cross subsidisation (cross subsidisation doesn't fix the current issue and weakens the strong). If you don't fix the kindergarten that is not viable, then eventually you end up with half the kindergartens as non-viable and that limits your opportunities.
- I strongly resisted dropping rolls as a solution but argued for marketing and funding children in the local community. Arguments that because children aren't at kindergarten therefore they don't exist, is not acceptable. We must ensure that we get to every child in the community and encourage them to come to kindergarten. (The government's ECE Strategic Plan identifies two groups of children that the whole sector has not attracted).
- Decentralise as much authority as possible to local committees, and give them as much empowerment as you can. Generally they will reward the trust given to them and make good decisions. The one or two decisions that don't turn out too well are a small cost relative to the gain made. Too often the NZ response to an isolated problem is to make rules binding everyone, which carries its own costs.
- Decisions over difficult issues need to meet all the following criteria:
 - firstly, they need to be good for children and their families
 - secondly, they need to offer good jobs to attract the best quality staff

- thirdly, they need to be financially sound, and
- any decision that only meets two out of three is unacceptable.
- Work harder and find a solution that meets all three.
- Set the good to be the "best in the business" – coming second is not acceptable.
- Push the whole organisation to strive for excellence. This requires the leadership of the organisation to have a long term commitment - a vision.
- I prefer to see change through evolution rather than revolution. It's easier for the volunteer leader given time constraints. Small successful pilot trials in one kindergarten are certainly easier to effect than trying to overcome the resistance to change if you must change every kindergarten at once.
- It is time to go when your successor is ready to take on the challenge – not when you are ready to go.

So having given 5-6 years to kindergarten, why have I returned to kindergarten by standing for the NZKI Board. I'm now 50 years old and surely must have other things to do. It's to do with a passion that I have about kindergarten and its importance for New Zealand – a passion that has developed over the last five years (that has crept up on me much to my surprise).

I have always had a passion for education – firstly it's good for our society – creates productivity in the economy and a higher standard of living for every New Zealander, and secondly it creates a relatively level opportunity for every child and supports the child from a disadvantaged family to succeed.

I am chairman of a Board of Trustees for a decile 4 intermediate school. We have many children who come with an academic level two years below their age. (One child on a disciplinary hearing recently was five years behind. Trying to do seven years of learning in a two year intermediate is a real challenge). Many of these problems could have been avoided or significantly reduced by parents accessing high quality kindergarten along with parent education.

Talking to a teacher at my local primary school (decile 10) identified that the development of two groups of children over their early years was quite different. One group was both confident and competent (had pre-literacy skills etc) and one group was confident but not competent (did not have the pre-literacy etc.). If the results were right – the early years are crucial to the lifetime development of the child and the contribution that child makes as an adult to our community.

If New Zealand as a society is to develop the

opportunities that enable our children to enjoy the quality of life relative to the rest of the world then we need to ensure that our economy grows at least as fast as the rest of the OECD countries – Europe, North America, Asia and Australia, or our best and brightest will vote with their feet. To get that sort of growth, New Zealand simply can't afford to forgo the potential of every child. The number of children that come through the education system without the basic skills to operate in the modern world is unacceptable. The cost of these children who grow up and end

up in prison, or in poor health due to poor lifestyle choices, on welfare, is too high – not only do they cost our society much, but we have forgone the positive contribution they could have made.

As the leading early childhood education service, we have much to celebrate but have even bigger challenges ahead of us. It is the potential of early childhood education to change our society for the better – to improve the opportunities for our own children – they deserve it and we owe it both to them and ourselves to achieve that success. "Here endeth the lesson".

Dunedin Kindergarten Association

Contributor: Andrew Campbell-Stokes, General Manager

I come to kindergarten from a health background and having worked for not-for-profit organisations in the areas of governance, finance, marketing and operations. I hold a degree in Pharmacy and undertook an Executive Masters in Business Administration from Otago University between 2000 and 2002. Consulting work as part of my Masters was not-for-profit organisations. Upon completion I worked with the Otago District Health Board as Clinical Service Manager in the Oncology and Haematology Clinical Practice Group. My role was operations manager for Medical Oncology, Radiation Oncology and Haematology Services. Included in this role was project management work and relationship management.

The Dunedin Kindergarten Association mission statement reads:

Our vision is to work together with parents, whanau, hapu and iwi to provide high quality learning for our tamariki, the future leaders of Aotearoa/New Zealand.

All tamariki and their families/whanau are encouraged to use our service and will be made to feel welcome by everyone involved in our Association.

Together in partnership we can learn much from each other thereby making kindergarten an exciting and wonderful place – a great place to learn.

Key issues for me revolve around:

- Partnership - with parents and children; staff, local iwi, external agencies and organisations.



- Long-term sustainability – forming partnerships or activities that will enable the kindergarten operations to continue into the future.
- Culture – promoting the values, beliefs that we as a community value. This includes valuing and continuing to work out our commitment to the Treaty of Waitangi.
- Effective functioning – ensuring kindergartens are functioning as effectively as they can. This ranges from healthy governance (ie constitution, Board sub-committees, policies and procedures), accurate planning (strategic, business, financial, marketing, staff), up to date infrastructure (eg buildings, ICT).

The association currently has 22 kindergartens spread across the city – from Port Chalmers to Mosgiel, Halfway Bush to Rotary Park, with numbers of children in attendance approximating 1,500. There are 79 teaching positions, an Acting Senior Teacher (Shirley

Brown), an Office Administrator (Sharon McCombe) and me, the General Manager.

Nineteen of our kindergartens offer standard sessions of Monday to Friday 8.30am to 12.30pm and 1.15pm to 3.15pm. One offers morning only sessions and two offer sessions of 8.30am – 12.30pm Monday, Wednesday and Friday plus 8.30am to 2.30pm

Tuesday and Thursday where the 20 oldest children stay beyond 12.30pm for extended learning.

I have enjoyed the warm welcome from staff, parents, and others in the kindergarten sector and Government and external organisations. I look forward to assisting the Dunedin Kindergarten Association through its next phase of its development.

Commitment and energy earn national award

Contributor: Kidsfirst Kindergartens

A passion for children and a willingness to go beyond expectations has earned Angie Dalley, Head Teacher at Kidsfirst Kindergartens Mount Pleasant, a national education award.

Parents and colleagues nominated Angie Dalley for the Multi Serve Education Award. The award is in recognition of the energy and commitment of teachers, support staff and volunteer helpers, which enhances the quality of education for New Zealand children. "I love this age group and it's really special, and overwhelming, that my contribution to education has been recognised by the community," said Angie.

Angie is a firm believer that children should have a place that belongs to them. One of her projects at Kidsfirst Kindergartens Mount Pleasant was the

creation of a whare, a calming quiet space for the children. The wall panels have an environmental theme designed by the children with their artwork.

Angie has been a kindergarten teacher for 12 years and has been at Kidsfirst Kindergartens Mount Pleasant for 10 years. "The children are so inspiring, they never cease to surprise me – it's magic coming to work each day," said Angie. "At times the job can be both physically and mentally demanding, but the interaction of children, parents and the colleagues I work alongside makes it extremely rewarding."

From the hundreds of nominations received, only up to 25 people throughout the country are selected for the Multi Serve Education Award. Angie was presented with a certificate and medallion at a ceremony in Auckland on 1 November, 2002.

Swim to save our sea life!

Contributor: Angela Heck, Communications Manager WEF New Zealand

Kindergarten children and their families have the chance to have fun and help WWF, the conservation organisation, during the annual Big Swim. This is a sponsored event that takes place throughout the whole of July to raise money for WWF to help protect our threatened sea life.

Children can take part at any pool and at any swimming level. For instance, parents can supervise children to paddle with floaties across the width of a pool, or real littlies can just blow bubbles in the toddler's pool. Any fun water activity is okay. Once children have chosen their activity, friends and family sponsor them. Children can then go down to the local pool anytime in July and complete their activity. Once the children have completed their water activity, they (with mum and dad!) revisit their sponsors to collect their sponsorship money and send it into WWF. It's that easy. Every child receives a special thank you certificate.



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Everyone will be fascinated to discover what's under our sea. WWF is currently producing a scientific assessment of our marine animals and plants. This

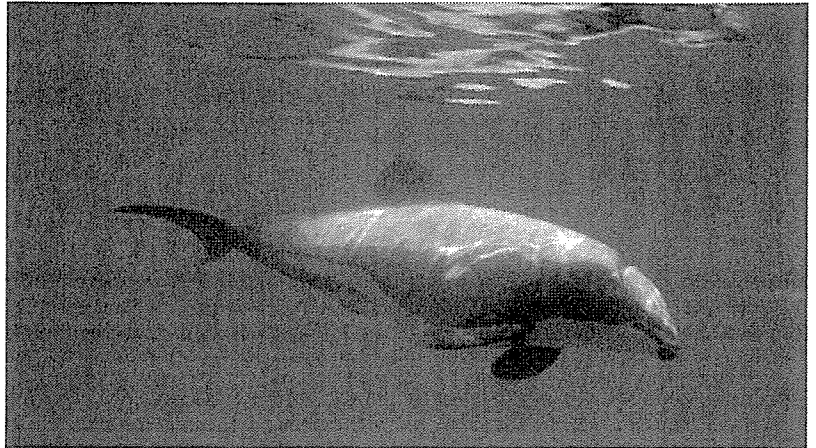
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will help identify conservation priorities. Already, the work has unearthed some remarkable facts. While these facts are well known within scientific communities in New Zealand, many people are not aware of our amazing sea life.

Here are some little known amazing facts:

- We have more than 100 specimens of fish awaiting identification in our museums.
- 62% of our rockpool fish occur only in New Zealand.
- 13 of the world's 18 penguin species breed in New Zealand or New Zealand's Antarctic territories.
- New Zealand is home to some of the world's rarest species, including the penguin (hoiho or yellow-eyed), sealion (New Zealand, formerly known as Hooker's), and dolphin (Maui's).
- 68% of octopus species occur only in New Zealand waters.
- One third of brown seaweeds in New Zealand occur nowhere else in the world.

Despite ongoing research efforts, we still know very little about our marine animals and plants. In fact, the total area of seabed surveyed in detail is about the size of a football field, whereas the total area



Hector's dolphin (*Cephalorhynchus hectori*) Banks Peninsula, New Zealand

© WWF / Stephen DAWSON

of sea is 1.3 million square nautical miles! Our New Zealand waters cover an area 15 times the size of the landmass, and supports an estimated 20,000 species of which about only 8,000 have been described.

Kindergarten children can help to save our sea life by joining the Big Swim. Encourage your class to participate - it's a fun and healthy way to raise vital funds to safeguard our seas. Whether you're a teacher wanting to distribute registration forms within your class, or a parent wanting your child to participate, call WWF to register on (04) 499 2930, email info@wwf.org.nz or visit www.wwf.org.nz.

Governance: some applications and tools

1. Monitoring the board

Contributor: Julie McGowan

President, New Zealand Federation of Voluntary Welfare Organisations

(The following three articles were first published in the New Zealand Federation of Voluntary Welfare Organisations magazine, New Dialogue, Issue 2, Sept. 2002 and are reproduced with the approval of the New Zealand Federation of Voluntary Welfare Organisations).

When we think of governance and monitoring we immediately think of monitoring staff, finances or strategic plans. Often overlooked is the need to monitor the performance of the board itself – an annual WOF.

We assume board members are volunteers who choose to be part of a governance board. This is very true, but the board also has a fiduciary [trustee– ed.] duty to perform and an obligation to protect the organisation. If the board never looks at its own performance – how can members monitor whether they are effective in their roles?

One tool, and it is only one suggested tool, is a checklist available from the Institute of Governance (IOG) website www.iog.ca. It is a questionnaire designed for self-analysis containing 15 statements on board performance. Participants are asked to rate on a five-point rating scale whether they strongly agree – to disagree strongly. The answers have a disclaimer that is 'derived from research that suggests a correlation between good governance practices and organisational effectiveness'.

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Examples of statements are:

- This organisation's orientation for board members adequately prepares them to fulfil their governance responsibilities
- This organisation is financially sound
- Board members demonstrate clear understanding of the respective roles of the board and Executive Director/Chief Executive Officer (ED/CEO).
- I am confident this board would effectively manage any organisational crisis that could be reasonably anticipated
- The board's capacity to govern effectively is not impaired by conflicts between members.

Each member of the board and the ED/CEO is asked to complete a confidential questionnaire. The scores are tabulated onto a grid for each of the 15 statements. The answers are averaged on total for each participant and each statement. These can then be compared to the ED/CEO ratings and each other's. The average score is taken to give meaning to where the board is placed in terms of how effective the board is suggested by IOG.

It is valuable to compare perceptions of how effective the board is. It indicates areas where discussion and intervention can occur. Interesting discussions can ensue from the differences between the ED/CEO perceptions and the board.

Finally, simple processes to monitor and measure performance are absolutely necessary for everyone involved in an organisation. This tool is simple and effective, providing clear indications of strengths and weaknesses.

2. Getting a grip: Dunedin's pilot project

Contributor: Jan Hudson, Project Worker, Community Training Group

A unique partnership and model of action research evolved when a project coordinator and a community

advisory group came together in Dunedin over the last 12 months to develop a strategy for considering governance in the voluntary sector.

Experience has taught the group many governance issues community groups face relate to models inappropriate for the sector. Often these models come from external sources like funders, government agencies and the corporate sector.

The group's interest was to create awareness amongst community organisations about what has influenced their environment and how to bring about change and develop systems grounded in real community needs.

The resource developed in Dunedin offers groups a framework to examine issues and needs in running groups and to encourage thinking around sector-based solutions – this may involve considering existing ideas or developing new ones.

A series of five workshops were designed. The workshops build on each other and can be delivered as a package. Individual workshop themes have also been modularised so they can be either delivered in one day or split into smaller sessions.

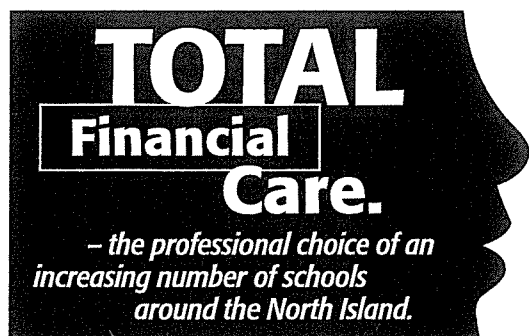
The training material builds on commitment to challenging the status quo, to be inclusive and non judgemental. It embraces a commitment to Te Tiriti O Waitangi.

To complement existing material and to provide new material, which addresses the gaps, the package includes:

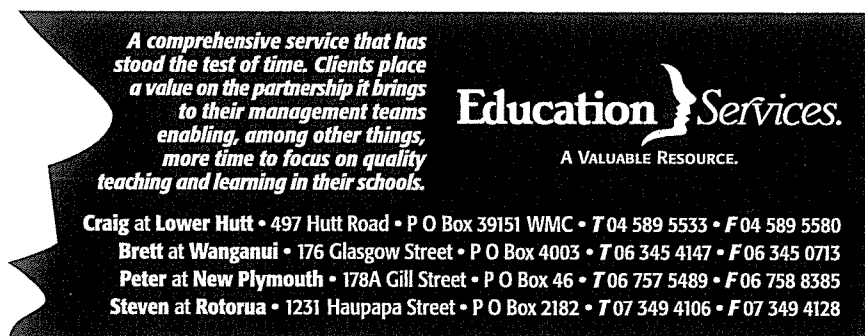
The big picture: about understanding the environment groups work in and how it impacts on them.

Governance and management roles: issues and strategies for working within this relationship. A range of possibilities has been explored for the roles needed in a group and various ways of organising them.

Structures: exploring the possibilities. A workshop introducing a range of group structures which includes a section on legal structures and how to fit a group's chosen structure with a legal entity.



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Accountability: this covers governance responsibilities legally; in relation to Te Tiriti O Waitangi and to the communities a group works in and with.

Where to from here?

The Get a Grip training package will be trialled in Dunedin. Then the material will be publicly available.

If you are interested in finding out more about the package contact Jan Hudson, Community Training Group Project Worker on 021 385 082 or email jan@eathlight.co.nz.

The Dunedin-based Community Training Group instigated and greatly supported this project. The group comprised: Dunedin Community Law Centre, Department of Internal Affairs, Dunedin City Council, Dunedin Volunteer Centre, Community Employment Group-Department of Labour.

3. Clarifying the grey areas

Contributor: Cathy Hall, Vice Chairperson, National Association for OSCAR

The major challenge for the National Association for OSCAR (out of school care and recreation) in adopting a governance structure four years ago was how to

fit an almost corporate management structure with a community organisation.

The question has been mainly about how the executive committee would maintain accountability and be "hands-off" yet get enough input to ensure the organisation retains its unique culture and a management structure which suits the operating style.

This challenge created a number of overlaps. A useful tool we have used to clarify the grey areas is preparing a set of cards, which describes roles and responsibilities. For example, talking to the media, hiring staff, preparing budgets, recruiting committee members, supervising the Executive Director.

The cards are then laid on the table and the executive committee and the executive director together allocated them into three piles:

- Things that are the executive committee's responsibility
- Things that are the executive director's responsibility
- Things that are the responsibility of both the committee and the director.

From this exercise responsibilities become clear: roles and job descriptions can be reviewed.



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