



**Auckland Classical Association**

President: Mr G J Thwaite  
P O Box 2062  
Shortland Street  
Auckland

Web: [www.classics.org.nz](http://www.classics.org.nz)

Secretary: Mrs Kylie Burling  
52 Kohekohe Street  
New Lynn  
Waitakere 0600  
T +64 9 827 0070  
Emails: [socrates@internet.co.nz](mailto:socrates@internet.co.nz)

## Newsletter 1: May 2009

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### 1. SUBSCRIPTION

Subscriptions for 2009 are now due. Please forward \$20 subscription or inform the Secretary if you wish mail-outs to continue. Please make cheques in favour of the Auckland Classical Association.

Please remember to notify the Secretary of any change in residential or email address.

### 2. PROGRAMME

Our regular venue is The Federation of Graduate Women's Room on the first floor of Old Government House. The time is usually 7.30pm. Where the time and place are otherwise, this will be specified.

There are more events planned but the dates and topics are still to be arranged at this time, and announcements will be made by email and on the website [www.classics.org.nz](http://www.classics.org.nz).

#### Important ACA dates for 2009:

**Wednesday, 27 May 2009**, 7.30 pm, Old Government House, Federation of Graduate Women's rooms.

Dr Bill Barnes: "*Aristippus in Tasmania*." Dr Barnes is from the Department of Classics at the University of Auckland.

**Saturday, 30 May 2009**. For those members interested in the re-enactment of ancient warfare, the movie made of the Legio II Augusta, "A Passion for History", will be played on the big screen at the 30th National Science Fiction Convention of New Zealand, ConScriptio 2009, at the [Hotel Grand Chancellor](#), Auckland Airport. The convention runs from Friday 29 May to Monday 1 June (Queen's Birthday weekend), but the movie will be played some time on Saturday morning (time unknown). <http://conscriptio.co.nz/ConScriptio/>

**Tuesday, 23 June 2009**, 7.30 pm Clocktower room 029 (Old Arts Building).

*Junior Latin Reading Competition*. Entry is open to students of Years 9 and 10 Latin, and application forms are available from the Secretary or Latin teachers. There is a limit of three students per school for this competition due to time constraints.

**Tuesday, 30 June 2009**, 7.30 pm Clocktower room 029 (Old Arts Building).

*Senior Latin Reading Competition*. Entry is open to students of Years 11-13 Latin, and application forms are available from the Secretary or Latin teachers. There is no limit to the number of students entered in the senior competition.

**Tuesday 28 July 2009**, 7.30 pm, Old Government House, Federation of Graduate Women's rooms.

Mr Gregory Thwaite: "*Roman Law in Juvenal*."

**Tuesday, 25 August 2009**, 7.30 pm, Old Government House, Federation of Graduate Women's rooms.

Professor Vivienne Gray: "*Xenophon and the Spartan Laws of Lycurgus*."

**Monday, 5 October** 2009, 7.30 pm, Old Government House, Federation of Graduate Women's rooms.  
Barbara Gold will be visiting New Zealand. Further details are unknown at this stage.

**Thursday, 10 September** 2009, 7.30 pm (room to be advised).

ACA Classical Studies Quiz for Schools. Entry is open to students of Years 9-13 Classical Studies, and application forms are available from the Secretary or Classics teachers. Schools may enter any number of teams, but team membership is limited to a maximum of three students. Any teams of four students will be split into two teams of two students. **Members are invited to participate by contributing a question (and its answer) to our database of questions. Any such contributions must be emailed to the Secretary by the end of August.**

### 3. STUDENT NEWS

#### Prize-winners 2008

W. K. Lacey Prize in Ancient History Stage 1:	Ellen White
Classical Studies Prize Stage 2:	Christopher Northcott
Greek language Prize Stage 1:	Geoffrey Thompson
Latin Language Prize Stage 1:	Jessica Pearce

### 4. CLASSICAL CLASSIFIEDS

#### BIRTH NOTICE

The Secretary is pleased to announce the safe and early arrival of the Association's newest members, Lennard and David Burling, and promises that she will not turn the newsletters into a forum for baby updates but also knows that a large number of

members have expressed an interest in the twins so provides the details herewith: Walter Lennard, 5lb 1oz, and Caspian David, 4lb 9oz, born on 12 March, seven weeks early, by natural delivery after only a six-hour labour. Both boys were in intensive care for three weeks, initially for assistance with breathing and for temperature control, but mostly while waiting for them to become a bit bigger and stronger and closer to 'normal' newborn size. They are now nine weeks old and over 8lb each, and doing very well indeed. (Photo taken at one month.) They missed being born on the Ides of March, but are making up for their apparent lack of classical awareness by demonstrating strong oratory skills already (note the hands). Thank you to all who have sent emails.



#### OBITUARY

*Tribute by Mr Gregory Thwaite for Mr Bill Bryan*

The Association lost recently one of its stalwart members. Mr. Bill Bryan died in late April after a heart attack, at age 59.

Bill was a frequent attender at evening meetings of the Association. He invariably attended the AGM, where his contributions to any debate were always precise and thoughtful.

I never inquired about his academic background, but I understand that he was one of Prof. Lacey's students. Bill displayed a broad knowledge of both the Latin and the Greek worlds, and had an interest in them both. He was a chairman's delight, in that he would often ask a question, either to start a discussion, or to keep it moving. His questions revealed a wide learning, and often an individual perspective on a topic. The German world was also within his intellectual realm, and I would see him from time to time at meetings of the Goethe Society.

A particular and much-appreciated service to the Association was the supply of wine from his extensive cellar for the pre-AGM drinks. Yet another area in which he had a wide and developed interest.

Quite a number of people in the large congregation at his funeral spoke of the diversity of his interests, from his collection of roosters through to his deep religious belief and on to airline timetables. In all his various interests and hobbies, most apparent were Bill's qualities of warmth and courtesy.

Requiescat in pace.

Gregory J. Thwaite  
President

*Tribute by Mr Michael Farrell*

I encountered Bill many times at the University Classics Department and at meetings of the Classical Association when it was convenient to attend. Bill was an extremely loyal supporter of the cause of Classics.

Bill was an Old Boy of Auckland Grammar School, which I have served for my entire working life. I have spoken to many of his teachers and contemporaries over the years and they have confirmed what a courageous and a remarkable person he was.

Grammar would like to acknowledge Bill in the next (October edition) of its magazine "Ad Augusta". Can you suggest anyone that I could contact for a brief biography/tribute?

Thank you for the news, albeit very sad.

Best wishes.

Michael Farrell  
Heritage Officer  
AGS Master 1970-2003  
Head of Languages 1977-2003

## 5. NEWS FROM THE WORLD OF CLASSICS

All news articles were sourced by Kylie Burling unless otherwise cited, and have been abridged. Please send news articles of possible interest to the Association to the Secretary. These will be collated and edited for inclusion in future newsletters. Thank you again to the editing team for the time and effort expended on our behalf, especially Professor Gray and Miss Debenham.

### **Egyptian tomb discovery sheds light on super cemetery**

24 December 2008, NZ Herald

[http://www.nzherald.co.nz/world/news/article.cfm?c\\_id=2&objectid=10549633&ref=emailfriend](http://www.nzherald.co.nz/world/news/article.cfm?c_id=2&objectid=10549633&ref=emailfriend)

SAQQARA - A pair of 4300-year-old pharaonic tombs discovered at Saqqara indicate the necropolis south of Cairo is larger than previously thought, say Egypt's top archaeologist.

The tombs were built for high officials - one responsible for the quarries used to build the pyramids and the other for a woman in charge of procuring entertainers for the pharaohs.



"We announce today a major, important discovery at Saqqara, the discovery of two new tombs, dating back to 4300 years ago," said Dr Zahi Hawass. "The discovery ... is the beginning of a big, large cemetery."

The discovery indicates that there is even more to the vast necropolis of Saqqara, located 19km south of Cairo.

In the past, excavations have focused on just one side of the two nearby pyramids - the Step Pyramid of King Djoser and that of Unas, the last king of the Fifth Dynasty. The area where the two tombs were found, to the southwest, has been largely untouched.

"This means the royal cemetery is bigger than we thought," said Saleh Suleiman, the archaeologist responsible for the excavation.



According to Hawass, only 30 per cent of Egypt's monuments have been uncovered.

*Sent in by Robert Bowden*

### **Light thrown on Pantheon**

4 February 2009, NZ Herald

[http://www.nzherald.co.nz/science/news/article.cfm?c\\_id=82&objectid=10554985](http://www.nzherald.co.nz/science/news/article.cfm?c_id=82&objectid=10554985)

A New Zealand researcher has found - 2000 years after it was built - that the ancient Roman temple known as the Pantheon may play the role of a colossal sundial.

The temple in Rome, completed in AD128, is a cylindrical chamber topped by a domed roof with a skylight in the top which lets through a dramatic shaft of sunlight.

But New Scientist reported Otago University's Professor Robert Hannah - an expert in Roman art, "archaeo-astronomy" and ancient calendar systems - has discovered the Pantheon may have been more than just a temple.

Professor Hannah has just published a book, *Time in Antiquity*, with a case study of the Pantheon.

He shows that for the six months of winter, the light of the noon sun entering through the skylight, or oculus, traces a path across the inside of the domed roof.

In summer, with the sun higher in the sky, the shaft shines on to the lower walls and floor.

At the two equinoxes, in March and September, the sunlight coming in through the hole strikes the junction between the roof and wall, above the Pantheon's grand northern doorway.

A grille above the door allows a sliver of light through to the front courtyard - the only moment in the year that it sees sunlight if its main doors are closed.

Professor Hannah has shown this was no coincidence, because smaller hollowed-out domes were made in Roman times to act as a type of sundial to show the time of year.

He said that by marking the equinoxes, the Pantheon was intended to elevate emperors who worshipped there into the realm of the gods.



*Sent in by Robert Bowden*

### **Divers a Threat to Undersea Relics**

25 February 2009, NZ Herald

A corroded mechanism recovered by sponge divers from a sunken wreck near the Greek island of Antikythera in 1902 changed the study of the ancient world forever.

The Antikythera Mechanism, a system of bronze gears from the 2<sup>nd</sup> century BC, was used to calculate the date of the Olympic Games based on the summer solstice. Its mechanical complexity was unequalled for 1000 years, until the cathedral clocks of the Middle Ages.

Archaeologists believe hundreds more wrecks beneath the eastern Mediterranean may contain treasures, but a new law opening Greece's coastline to scuba diving has experts worried that priceless artefacts could disappear into the hands of treasure hunters.

"The future of archaeology in this part of the world is in the sea," said marine archaeologist Harry Tzalas. "This law ... opens the way to the looting of antiquities from the seabed which we don't even know exist."

Greece's 1932 antiquities law says all artefacts on land and in the sea belong to the state, but it does not regulate scuba diving. A new law implemented in 2007 and designed to promote tourism opens most of Greece's 15,000km coastline to scuba divers, except for about 100 known archaeological sites.

Greece's archaeologists' union and two ecological societies have appealed for the law to be rescinded. Katerina Dallaporta, director of antiquities at the Culture Ministry, says metal detectors and bathyspheres allow treasure hunters to find artefacts with ease in the Adriatic and Aegean.

"Not every diver is an illegal trafficker ... but we need to ensure these treasures remain for future generations." Most of the world-famous bronzes in Greece's National Archaeological Museum, such as the 5<sup>th</sup> century BC statue of Poseidon hurling his trident found off Cape Artemision, were salvaged from the sea. Statues on land were destroyed or melted down for coins or weapons.

Some were found in shallow-water shipwrecks like the one off Antikythera, believed to be a 1<sup>st</sup> century BC Roman ship carrying a haul of ancient Greek art back to Italy. Other precious statues were dredged from the deep ocean in fishermen's nets.

Greece offers rewards to prevent relics falling into private hands. It paid €440,000 to a fisherman for a female torso off the island of Kalymnos in 2005.

### **[Getty Museum announces venture with Italian museum](#)**

23 March 2009, The LA Times

<http://latimesblogs.latimes.com/culturemonster/2009/03/gettys-brand-se.html>

The [J. Paul Getty Museum](#) and the [National Archaeological Museum of Florence, Italy](#), have entered into a long-term cultural collaboration that will bring one of the latter's most important masterpieces and other significant works to Southern California, officials of both institutions announced today.

As the first element of the partnership, the Getty Villa in Malibu will present an exhibition centered on the Etruscan bronze, "The Chimaera of Arezzo," from July 16 through Feb. 8. The Getty also plans an exhibition of ancient bronzes, including Greek, Roman and Etruscan works, and a show devoted solely to Etruscan art.

In an interview today, J. Paul Getty Museum director Michael Brand hailed the collaboration as the "silver lining" of the Getty's involvement in a highly publicized controversy over looted antiquities that have been discovered in recent years in the collections of major museums worldwide.

That embarrassment resulted in the [Getty returning 39 objects](#), including sculpture, vases and urns, to Italy; the museum also returned objects to Greece.

One of the signature works in the Getty's antiquities collection, the marble and limestone Aphrodite, will remain on display at the Getty Villa until December 2010, after which it also will be returned to Italy. Italian officials said that sculpture had been looted from Sicily before being acquired by the Getty.

As yet, the Getty is not sending any of its own objects to the Florence museum as part of the exchange. Brand said the Getty is also in discussions with other Italian museums, so future exchanges with Italy may not be limited to antiquities.

Ruth Weisberg, dean of the USC Roski School of Fine Arts, said the new collaboration "represents a healing" between Italy and the Getty. Weisberg called "The Chimaera of Arezzo" "fabulous ... a unique survival of a large-scale piece. It will be a wonderful thing for all of us to experience."

The large-scale sculpture of a three-headed monster consisting of a lion, a fire-breathing goat and a serpent is from 400 to 375 BC. It will be displayed along with related works from other museums and the Getty's collection.

The news of the venture comes on the heels of revelations of [major financial problems](#) at the Getty, with the world's wealthiest arts institution planning to slash its budget nearly 25% in the upcoming fiscal year.

*Sent in by Bill Bryan*

### **Gas Warfare in Ancient times**

26 March 2009, NZ Herald



Archaeologists believe asphyxiated platoon died around 256AD from chemical attack.

The earliest example of chemical warfare has been unearthed at an archaeological site in the Syrian desert, where soldiers of a Persian empire gassed a platoon of Roman troops in about 256AD by asphyxiating them with the smoke from burning bitumen and sulphur.

A makeshift grave of 20 Roman soldiers in full battle armour was discovered at the site of the ancient city of Dura-Europos in the 1930s but it is only now that scientists have been able to figure out exactly how they died.

It was known that they were killed while defending the city against a Persian siege by digging tunnels to counter those being dug by the Sasanian Persian Army under the walls of the city.

New evidence suggested the Roman troops were gassed, said Simon James, an archaeologist at Leicester University.

Dr James said the Persian siege involved digging mines under the city walls to undermine the fortifications, which would have led to mines being dug by the Roman defenders who would have tried to intercept the Sasanian soldiers.

"It is evident that when mine and counter-mine met, the Romans lost the ensuing struggle," said Dr James. "Careful analysis of the disposition of the corpses shows they had been stacked at the mouth of the counter-mine by the Persians, using their victims to create a wall of bodies and shields. This would have kept the Roman counter-attack at bay while they set fire to the counter-mine, collapsing it, allowing the Persians to resume sapping the walls. This explains why the bodies were where they were found."

But the question remained: how did the 20 Roman troops die?

Archaeologists found bitumen and sulphur crystals in the tunnels, which would have been used to get the tunnels burning. But it is also known that these materials give off a highly toxic cocktail of gases when burned together.

“The Persians would have heard the Romans tunnelling and prepared a nasty surprise for them,” said Dr James. “I think the Sasanians placed braziers and bellows in their gallery and when the Romans broke through added the chemicals and pumped choking clouds into the Roman tunnel.

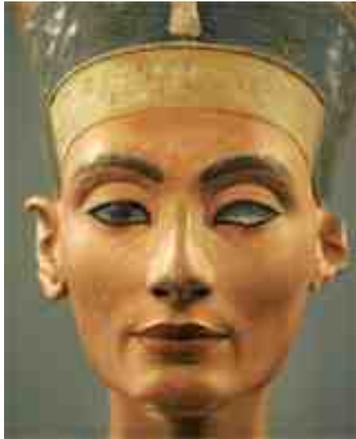
“The Roman assault party were unconscious in seconds, dead in minutes. It is clear from the archaeological evidence at Dura that the Sasanian Persians were as knowledgeable in siege warfare as the Romans. They surely knew of this grim tactic.”

*Sent in by Robert Bowden*

### **'Beauty of the Nile' unmasked - wrinkles and all [The real Nefertiti]**

1 April 2009, NZ Herald

[http://www.nzherald.co.nz/lifestyle/news/article.cfm?c\\_id=6&objectid=10564616&pnum=0](http://www.nzherald.co.nz/lifestyle/news/article.cfm?c_id=6&objectid=10564616&pnum=0)



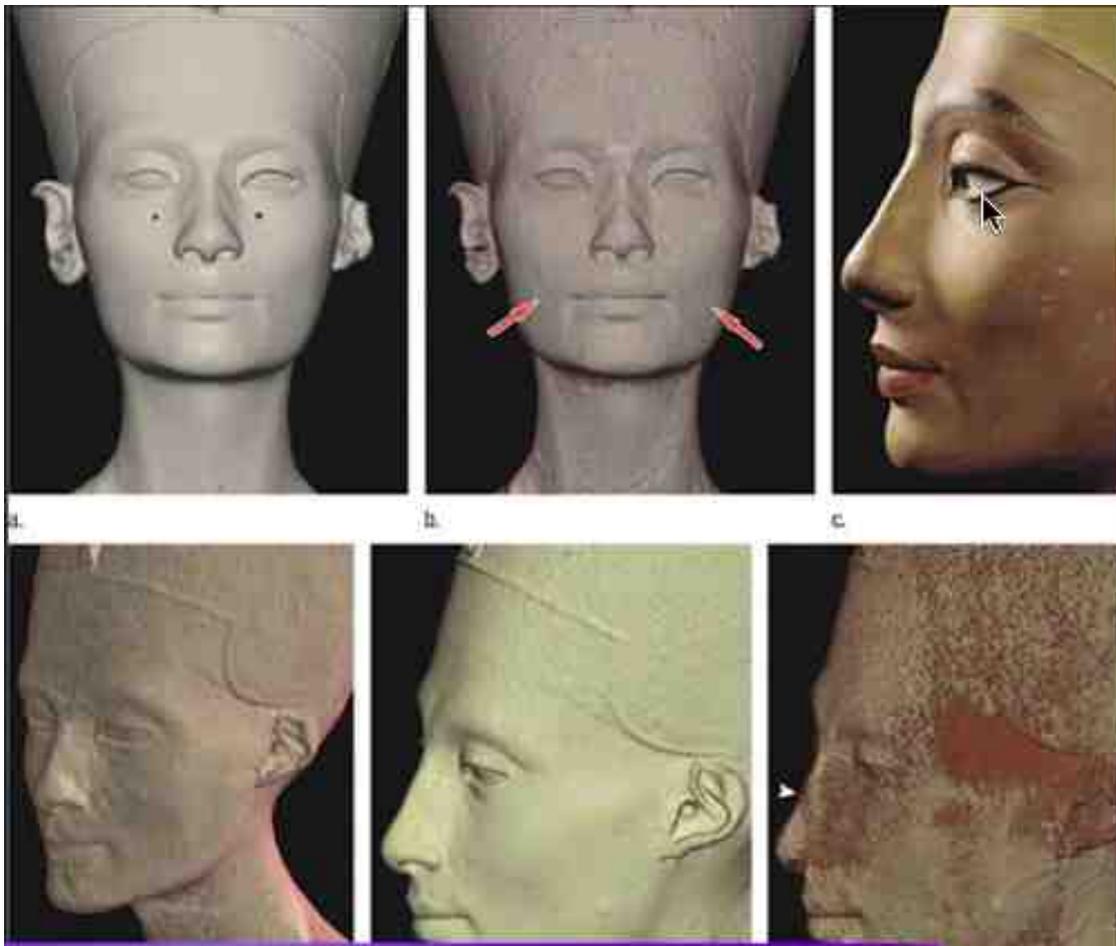
The famous bust of Egyptian Queen Nefertiti is not a true likeness, researchers have discovered.

Her name means "a beautiful woman has arrived" and for almost a century the 3,400-year-old bust of the Egyptian Queen Nefertiti has been regarded as a true likeness.

Now it seems that in the flesh, she wasn't that good looking after all.

The delicately featured bust of the wife of the King Akhenaten has been one of the highlights of Berlin's museum collection ever since it was excavated by German archaeologists and first put on display in 1923

But scientific researchers say they have established that her limestone bust appears to have been given a facelift. Call it ancient world Botox.



Using the latest computer tomography techniques developed for medicine, the researchers from Berlin's Imaging Science Institute took a series of scans of the bust and discovered that the sculpture was made up of a limestone core covered in layers of stucco of varying thickness.

Advances in CT technology meant that they were able to probe deeper than a previous scan carried out in 1992.

They found that the inner facial cast, which would have been taken directly from the queen's face, differed significantly from the outside of the bust.

It had less prominent cheekbones; a slight bump on the ridge of the nose; marked wrinkles around the corner of the mouth and cheeks; and less depth at the corners of the eyelids.

The cosmetic alterations appeared to have been made by the Egyptian royal sculptor Thutmose, whose studio was dug up by archaeologists at the ancient settlement of Amarna south of Cairo in 1912.

The scientists assume that the sculptor would have taken the original plaster mask of the queen's face and used it as a model for the "improved" bust.

## NEW CLASSICAL TITLES

What caused Rome's Collapse: Immigration or Centralisation?

Two recent books on the collapse of the Roman Empire in the West at the end of the Fifth Century, Peter Heather's *Fall of the Roman Empire: a New History of Rome and the Barbarians* (2007) and James O'Donnell's *Ruin of the Roman Empire: A New History* (2008) offer different explanations of the legendary decline and fall. Heather argues that immigration and barbarization drove imperial coherence to the breaking point, bringing an end to ancient civilization. O'Donnell argues that historians have exaggerated the effect of immigration while ignoring other, more direct, causes, in particular the vainglorious campaigns of the Eastern Emperor Justinian (reigned 527-565). Both authors go far in persuading us that the late Fifth and early Sixth Centuries were important for the West, formative of the Middle Ages, and not to be written off as a mere sordid epilogue to greatness.

## 6. ACA WEBSITE

[www.classics.org.nz](http://www.classics.org.nz)

If you have photos of classical sites which you would like to offer for the website, please send these to the Secretary for consideration. It will not be possible to use all photographs for the website as there are certain criteria which must be met (including rights to publication), and there is a size limit to the site, however all donations will be gratefully received and contributions not used for the website may well be utilised in other ways.

Also, if you have Greek or Latin phrases (and their translations), classical cartoons, or other things which could be of interest to our members and/or stimulate interest in non-members, please feel free to send these to the Secretary.

## 7. SUBSCRIPTION FOR 2009

The subscription for 2009 is \$20. This may be paid at a meeting or by mailing a cheque with this form to the Secretary at 52 Kohekohe Street, New Lynn, Waitakere 0600.

Membership is free for students and for graduates of less than one year's standing, however the return of the form would be appreciated in order to maintain the database of members.

Please make cheques payable to 'Auckland Classical Association'.

Name

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Home address

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Home phone/fax

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School/Educational Institution

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School address

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School phone/fax

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School email

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Is Latin taught at the School?  
Which Form(s)?

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Is Classical Studies taught at  
the School? Which topics, at  
which level?

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Please remove name from  
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Subscription (\$20.00 per year)	\$
Voluntary donation toward the purchase of prize(s) for the Latin Reading Competitions	\$
Voluntary donation toward funding of Auckland Classical Association University prizes for students	\$
<b>Total enclosed</b>	<b>\$</b>

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