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Newsletter 224 – September 2026

... this month ...

Wednesday 16th September

2pm Cherith Hall

Altevette Project in Nepal

Linda Ambrose



Linda founded the Altevette Project that provides a home and education for disadvantaged girls in high altitude regions such as the Upper Mustang.

The talk is about the region and the experience of building and supporting the operations of a school in Nepal.

... next month...

Wednesday 21st October

2pm Cherith Hall

Inn and Out at the Top

Neil Hanson – Author

Neil owned Britain's highest Inn in a wild and remote corner of the Yorkshire Dales. A laugh a minute tour of the quirks, highs and lows of running Britain's Highest Inn.

News from the Committee

Please find below information for you from the 2nd September 2026 meeting of Exe Valley u3a Committee – written by Mike Turner, Chair.

At our meeting on 2nd September we were pleased to note the positive response to our request for more volunteers to act as meeters/greeters and help on the tea rota at our monthly meetings. These are important contributions to the success and enjoyment of the occasion and we are grateful to everyone who has come forward to help in this way.

However, at the risk of sounding like "Oliver Twist" we could do with more folks to take a turn in helping in this way so if you are able to do so we would be pleased to hear from you.

We also spoke about the u3a Friends newsletter which is available on the national website u3a.org.uk. I am a little embarrassed to admit that in the past I may not have paid too much attention to it myself. This has been my loss as it contains a great deal of information about activities going on in the u3a community nationwide, which apart from the newsletter being an interesting read in its own right, may inspire us to try new things which previously we hadn't thought of.

You should recently have received an email from Anne Bush which contains more information about the newsletter, if you haven't checked it out yet may I suggest you do so as I think you will find it interesting.

Our meeting was attended by one of our members who had accepted our invitation to observe how the business of our committee meetings is conducted and generally learn more about the way we work. She was kind enough to say that she found the meeting to be interesting and informative. In turn, we were happy to receive feedback from her and accept some most helpful suggestions which we intend to put to good use.

We would welcome more of you to come along to observe our meetings. If you would like to do so please speak to any of the committee members about it or feel free to ring me on 07885 515630 so that a suitable date can be arranged.

New members

There is one new member this month - **Faye Stacey**. We hope you enjoy your time with us.

Welfare Officer

Marilyn Dawson

Marilyn prefers to be contacted by email at keithandmarilyn@hotmail.com . If you know of anyone who is ill or has been admitted to hospital, or anyone who has a special anniversary to celebrate, please email Marilyn with details and she will send a card on our behalf. We will also add an item to the monthly committee agenda so that Marilyn can let the committee know via the secretary if she has sent anyone a card. It would also be helpful if group leaders could keep Marilyn informed of anyone in their group who they think should receive such a card.

Newsletter

October's Newsletter will be compiled by Lynne Lyddon. Please send your reports to Lynne by **9am Friday 16th October**. Thank you.

News from the Interest Groups

Art Appreciation – Gina Brown, Keith Bush, John Massey



In August we spent a delightful afternoon as guests of Tara and Nigel at Ashley Court, their Regency Grade II country house on the edge of Tiverton.

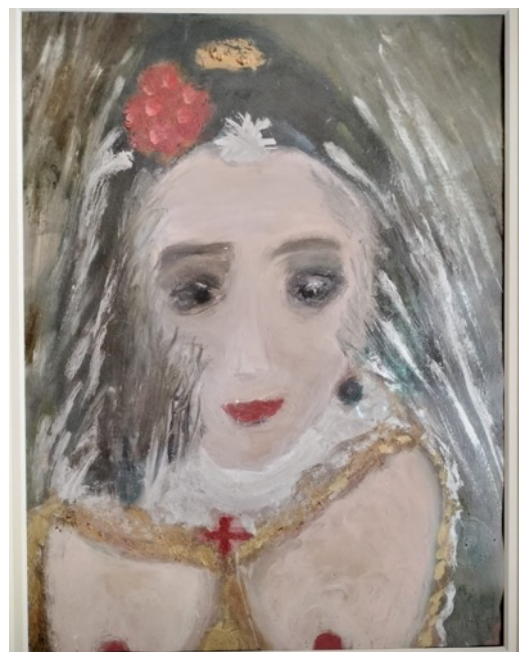
We enjoyed a fascinating talk on the history of the 18-acre property, a tour of the artworks in the house, and a cream tea.

The first artwork we saw, of course, was the huge pair of cavorting unicorns by Andy Lenzion in front of the house. (If you thought they were horses, by the way, you've not been there for a while – the artist has been back and added horns!).

Tara and Nigel's philosophy as art collectors is simply to collect what they like, with an emphasis on supporting local artists. They have works by Mark Entwisle, David Firmstone, Zoe Jones, Jo Mortimer, Nicola Sibert-Patel and Mary Sumner, on whom one of our members gave us a talk last year.

They also have several works by Tara's grandmother - the actress, writer and painter Selma Vaz Dias. You might think you've never heard of her, but you've probably seen her in old films such as *The Lady Vanishes* and *One of Our Aircraft is Missing*. Her paintings, though compelling, are slightly disturbing, and seem to betray a troubled psyche. One of them, *Woman Suspended*, is shown here.

Ashley Court is participating in Devon Open Studios from 12-20 September. It is hosting five artists who live or work locally or are making work in direct response to the house. Nigel, Zoe Jones and Mark Entwisle are among them, the others being Sam Photic and Stephanie Buttle. Do go along and have a look (open 10.30am-5pm).



Our next meeting will be at the **OHSCC on Thursday 17 September at 2pm** at which we will be sharing images on the theme 'Myths and Legends'.

New group members are always welcome.

Boules

Tuesday Boules – Janet Phythian

Tuesday boules are still playing in the lovely garden at The Walronds in Cullompton and to date we haven't been rained off. We are hoping to keep playing into October or November if the weather plays ball. At the moment this group is full.

Thursday Boules – Jill Riddiford

We are reaching the end of this season now with our last game on 24th September. As ever, it has been most enjoyable whatever the weather has thrown at us. We have had some close matches and some amazing scores and the tape measure has been out on more than one occasion. We will look forward to starting again next April.

Bridge

Tuesday/Wednesday Bridge – Doreen Burton

Due to the sad loss of 2 of our players we no longer have enough player's to play on line on Tuesdays - plus the site we used is now making a monthly charge.

In view of this we are now renamed Wednesday Bridge and will continue to meet at members' houses where we enjoy a friendly game of bridge from 2 - 4.30 pm with a break half way through for tea, biscuits and chat. It is always a very enjoyable afternoon.

Thursday Social Bridge – Tricia Summers

The group continues to play on Thursday afternoons. We play bridge in a friendly social setting while trying to improve our skills. Each week the cards provide varying challenges both in bidding and play.

Canasta – Sue Dark

This Group meets on the **2nd and 4th Wednesdays of the month** in each other's homes.

Craft – Elaine Wright

At this month's meeting, on **Monday September 14th**, we will be making ceramic Christmas ornaments.

Next month, on the **12th October**, we will be meeting at Steph's to make key rings.

Cribbage – Keith Dawson

Our normal routine is to play on the **2nd and 4th Monday afternoon each month**.

Discussion – Marilyn Dawson

A very depleted group met and decided we would keep our planned topics for a future meeting. As always we found plenty to talk about that was currently relevant.

Our next get together is on **Friday 2 October at 10:15am** at the usual place.

Folk Dancing – John & Hazel Ridd (Tiverton u3a)

This group meets on the **2nd and 4th Wednesdays of each month, 2pm – 4pm in Halberton Village Hall**. All are welcome. The dances are walked through and explained well, and everyone is very friendly and helpful to ensure we all have a lovely time.

French Conversation – Deborah Lal

Gardening – Joan Kelly, Jo Jeffrey, Carol Powney

Next month our planned outing is with Upton Coaches for carvery lunch at The Hare & Hounds, Putts Corner, Sidbury near Sidmouth followed by a visit to Otter Nurseries. Time of departure will be known nearer the day. **Wednesday 14th October.**

Local History – David Meredith

Our September meeting on growing up in the 1950's and 1960's was postponed with many members on holiday or meeting family commitments. It will now be our topic on **Thursday December 10th 2026** and will be open to all u3a members or anyone interested in joining and sharing memories of their early lives.

In October we have a very special event. Rosemary Griggs, popular Devon author and enthusiast on Devon in Tudor times, will be our speaker on **Thursday October 8th at 2pm at the Cherith Hall**.



In full Tudor costume, she will present -

"An Audience with the Lady Katherine."

Travel back in time with the Lady Katherine and learn about her life in Tudor Devon. Born into the prestigious and well-connected Champernowne family, Katherine witnessed the reigns of Tudor monarchs from Henry VIII to Elizabeth I. Her father, Sir Philip Champernowne played an important part in the funeral of his relative, Katherine, Countess of Devon, daughter of King Edward IV, who lived for many years at Tiverton Castle. Lady Katherine may also be persuaded to reveal some of the secrets of her wardrobe.

Rosemary writes, "I love bringing history to life through a unique blend of theatre, history and re-enactment, which draws on my extensive research into Devon's sixteenth century past, and into Tudor life and Tudor/Elizabethan dress."

Admission will be £3 to include refreshments. All welcome.

Lunch Club – Wendy Cook

For our August lunch meeting we went to the Breamore Inn. There were 9 of us and as usual there was a lot of laughing and chatter. Once again, we had preordered, so the food came quickly. There were a couple of disappointments with the food, but on whole the meals were well received. The Breamore are having trouble with their suppliers, so again there was a bit of disappointment for the desserts.

Out meeting for September has been cancelled as very few members could actually make the day. We will meet again on **Thursday the 15th of October**, the venue is yet to be confirmed.

Mah Jong – Heather Edwards

We meet on the **first Friday of the month**, playing simple Mah Jong i.e. clean and dirty hands. Currently our list is full but you're welcome to join our waiting list.

MOTO (Members On Their Own) – Wendy Cook

If you are on your own and would like to meet up with other in the same situation, then come along to our coffee morning. We meet once a month on the fourth Saturday at the Flying Pickle in Tiverton, where the chat is lively and the coffee hot. We also arrange lunches and other outings to the cinema or walks in our lovely countryside. If you are interested in coming along, please contact Wendy Cook. Our next coffee morning will be on **Saturday 26th September at 10.30 at the Flying Pickle, Tiverton.**

Poetry – Tim Dyke

We reconvene on **Thursday September 24th** when our theme will be The Law. 2pm at Tim's. Sorry, no vacancies.

Rambling – Pat McGee

Reading

Reading Group 1 – Alison Rice

We had a non-fiction book to read during August - *Wilding* by Isabella Tree. Isabella's husband Charlie Burrell inherited the Knepp estate from his grandparents in 1987. The farm was already losing money and despite renewed efforts to improve growing conditions and to diversify into ice cream and yogurt making, the couple eventually decided to abandon the most unproductive areas of land and let it return to the wild.

The gradual introduction of Long Horn cattle, Tamworth pigs, Exmoor ponies and fallow deer followed. Isabella describes in scientific detail the processes that led to these events and the regrowth and return of native species of all types of plants, insects, mammals and birds.

The author's detailed research into all aspects, botanical, zoological and geological, that had bearing on the wilding project, as well as descriptions of applications for funding and advice from various sources, were too much for some of our group. Others found the text fascinating and a positive reinforcement of the rewilding movement.

Controversies between the use of land for growing food whatever chemical interventions were needed; and false claims for government funding by some farmers deliberately letting good land 'rewild', were among topics aired in our discussion.

Summing up, the feeling of the group was that this is an academic book for readers studying rewilding but probably not a book for the assorted readers in a Book Group.

We meet next on **Monday September 28th at 2.30 at Alison's house.**

Reading Group 2 – Heather Peters

Our August meeting at Vicki's house saw us all united in our enjoyment of Val McDermid's *Out of Bounds*. We range from being lovers of crime fiction to never having read crime fiction OR Val McDermid! Each of us had a contribution to make and we noted many different aspects to admire. We liked the way each new character, however transient or minor, gets an equally full introduction leaving us keen to know more, and we enjoyed the comedy in the descriptions of some of the personae, whether significant (Murray) or less so (Macaroon). Principal character Karen Pirie is believable, warm and generous with everyday foibles but a razor-sharp mind and an uncanny gift for making connections. She's kind and thoughtful to her colleagues but very sharp and clever with her distinctly inadequate superiors. A very satisfying book on every level.

In **September** we'll be discussing Niall Williams' *The Year Of The Child*, hosted by Marilyn. RG2 is currently at capacity with 10 members.

Reading Group 3 – Vicki Bristow

The Romantic by William Boyd was a book enjoyed by everyone in the group.

This novel was based on the content of some notebooks and letters which came into the possession of the author - apparently an unfinished attempt at an autobiography.

The book is an account of the very full and varied life of Cashel Greville Ross who was born in Ireland at the end of the 18th century and died in Venice at the age of 82.

During his long life Cashel visits many places and is involved in many adventures and experiences including the Battle of Waterloo and a period of time spent with the Shelley/Byron ménage.

This book is very well researched and thoroughly enjoyable - would recommend.

Our next meeting is on **September 24th at Vicki's**.

Tuesday Skittles – Kathy Senior

Thursday Skittles – Jill Riddiford

We start our winter season on **Thursday 1st October at 10am at the Half Moon**. As usual we will be playing every Thursday, and the fee is the same as last year.

Our group is full at present but I am happy to start a waiting list if anyone is interested.

What We Have Noticed – Chris & Gina Brown

We met on a rare rainy morning to hear about some lovely local places among other topics.

A cruise up the river Exe from Exmouth to Topsham with sightings of Powderham castle, kittiwakes diving for sand eels and the Double Locks.

Ashley Court a local Georgian house with a walled garden, and

Avebury stones, an ancient construction in Wiltshire 20 miles from Stonehenge.

We also heard about the trials of jury service and the commitment it is even if you don't get called for a case.

Finally, about the Vasa a Swedish ship from 1626. A magnificent, beautifully decorated ship which sank on its maiden voyage.

Our next meeting is **10.30 on Tuesday October 13th**.

Wine Appreciation Group – [Helen White, Deborah Lal](#)

We met this month at David's home and are grateful to him for making us feel so welcome.

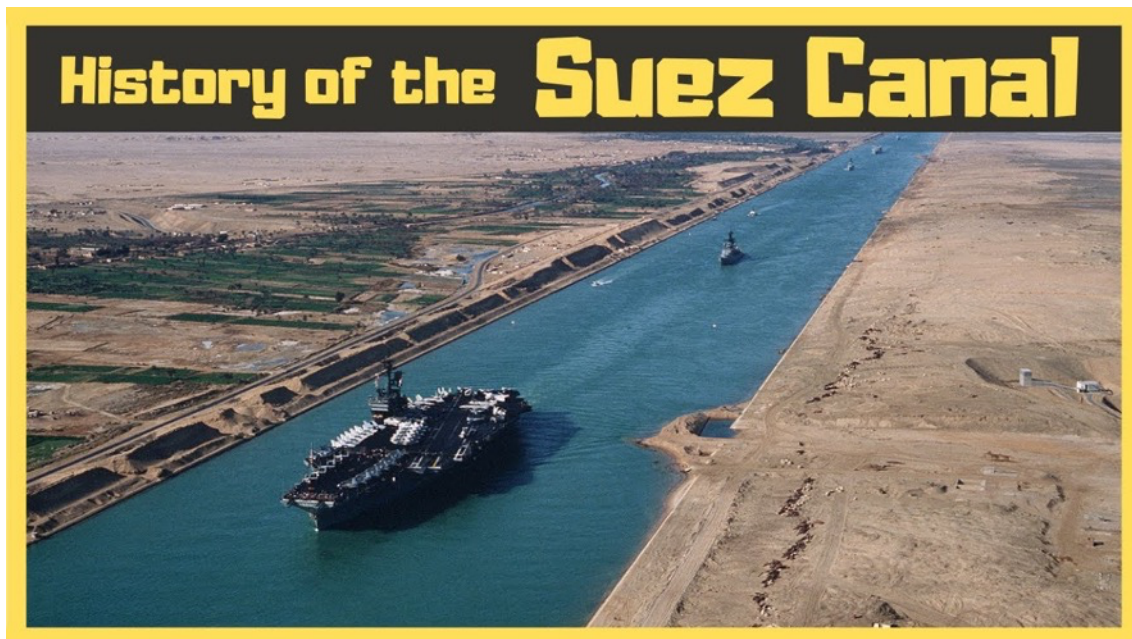
The three wines we sampled were introduced by Deborah, and all came from Tesco's. The first was a white wine, Gavi, from the region of Piedmont in the north of Italy and produced by Casa Girelli. It is made from 100% Cortese grapes, a hardy variety producing wine that should be drunk young, within a year. It features bright citrus and green apple notes, with a hint of minerals and a subtle marzipan finish.

Our second choice was from the Errazuriz estates in the Aconcagua Valley in Chile - between the High Andes and the Pacific. This is a smooth medium -bodied red made entirely from Merlot grapes. It boasts deep, ripe fruit flavours of cherry, plum and red berries with a touch of vanilla and a soft velvety finish. The family has been producing high-quality wines since 1870.

Lastly we tasted an Italian red from Abruzzo in southeast Italy, made from 100% Montepulciano grapes, produced by the Citra Co-operative. This was formed in 1973 to preserve and enhance the native vines, which are famed for their high yield and excellent quality, creating wine of exceptional value. All three were well received and the first two benefited from a Clubcard reduction this month.

The group would be happy to hear from you if you feel you might be interested in joining us. For more information please contact Helen or Deborah.

World History – [Helen Booth](#)



At our August meeting we heard about the History of the Suez Canal and that the idea of such a canal goes back to the Ancient Egyptians. Over the years, Darius the Great, the Emperor Trajan, the Ottoman Grand Vizier Sokollu Mehmed Pasha and Napoleon among many others

would have liked to have built one, though our erstwhile MP, Lord Palmerston, was at first very much against the idea. Ferdinand de Lesseps finally succeeded and the canal was built between 1859 and 1869 with its opening having an immediate effect on world trade. Britain was in effective control of the canal from 1882 to 1956 when it was nationalised by Egyptian president Gamal Abdel Nasser precipitating the Suez Crisis.

Although it had been built as a neutral zone giving all ships a right of passage, the canal has in more recent times been affected by, and at times closed, due to Middle Eastern wars. Today, beware those toxic puffer fish using the canal to swim from the Red Sea and invade Mediterranean beaches.

On **September 21st, as usual 2pm, Room 2, OHSCC**, Dave Harvey will tell us about The Falklands War. Although it's within our lifetime, I'm sure the talk will provide important information we didn't know or may well have forgotten. All are welcome.

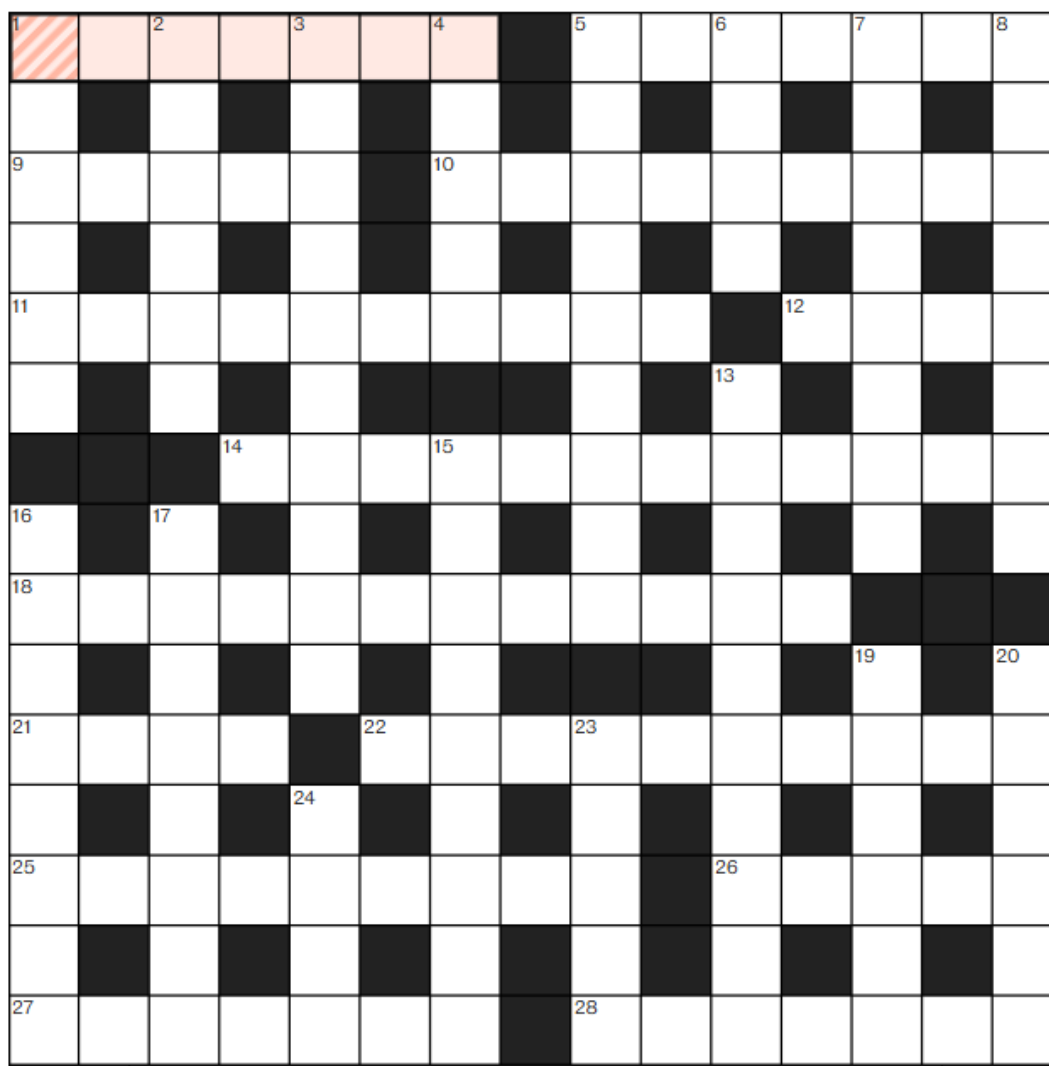
COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Chair	Mike Turner	01884 861053
Vice-Chair	Karyl Huntley-Sadler	
Secretary	Carol Langley	
Treasurer	Paul Sadler	
Programme Coordinator	John Langley	
Beacon Administrator	Jo Jeffrey	
Membership Secretary	Jill Riddiford	01884 258091
Group Co-ordinator	Joan Kelly	
Minutes Secretary	Jo Jeffrey	
Social Organiser	Anne Bush	
Monthly Meeting Organiser	Anne Bush	
Website Manager	Paul Sadler	
Deputy Treasurer	Karyl Huntley-Sadler	
Committee member	Deborah Lal	

NON-COMMITTEE

Printer / IT	Carol Boote and Ray McIntosh
Newsletter Editor	Lynne Lyddon
Welfare Officer	Marilyn Dawson
PA / Technician	Tim Dyke

Cryptic Crossword



Across

- 1 Dodgy geezer is a broad lad (7)
- 5 Resounding military players (7)
- 9 A crowd scene needs this addition (5)
- 10 The female head fits into a tramchair (9)
- 11 Calvin Klein cooked one chip with X and got a disease (7,3)
- 12 Initially her aura lodged overhead (4)
- 14 The main thing is it's unexpected (3,2,3,4)
- 18 Tense molecule creates a fault (12)
- 21 I hear a style of walking is a way in (4)
- 22 A top 10 record can be inconsistent when adding a young lady (3-3-4)
- 25 Yep, nee Roe, crazy, but becomes a real surprise! (3-6)
- 26 Council man leaves and finds tree (5)
- 27 Reverse reverse for safekeeping (7)
- 28 Bereft man sees nothing from his window but his queen (7)

Down

- 1 Old fashioned young woman gains privilege so can break away suddenly (6)
- 2 Initially Dog enters tent and is naughty, which will lead to arrest (6)
- 3 Sentry dressed in the darkest colour is a rogue (10)
- 4 Country for you old boys (5)
- 5 A fair exchange to get your own back (3,3,3)
- 6 Leave IT out and end up with an honour (4)
- 7 If you need a bare plot to build on everything must be this (8)
- 8 Granny's vessel her sherry arrived in (8)
- 13 This appendage has already been used (10)
- 15 Dog- (and child?) training irrelevant for cat (and child?) (9)
- 16 He was like Gran, but got betrayed (4,4)
- 17 Very clean but you might not see much (8)
- 19 Fungus infects Emil Dewson (6)
- 20 Pretender loses 1p to loan shark (6)
- 23 It could show you the way, or kill a king (5)
- 24 Practice fighting with a spear but had no energy (4)

27	R	E	S	E	R	V	E		W	I	D	O	W	E	R
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