

## Australian International Airshow 2007—Special

Australia's premier airshow and aerospace exhibition is just weeks away, and the Seaplane Pilots Assn of Australia will be there to represent all that flys on water.

As in the past, the Australian International Airshow at Avalon Airport, near Geelong, will play host to a major trade exhibition during the week and public flying days over the final three days.

This year's show is themed "Breaking the Barriers" with famed US test pilot Chuck Yeager confirmed as the airshow's guest of honour, a replica of Yeager's record breaking Bell X-1 will be shown.

The aircraft provide the glamour for the show, but its real business is done in the trade halls. Airshow organisers have booked a record number of exhibitors, with almost 600 companies and organisations booking space.

The Seaplane Pilots Assn will be located in the Club Air Sport area, backing onto the hospitality area, our display will have a seaplane on show, just so you don't miss us.

Our focus at Avalon will be new members. Membership which we can proudly say is on the increase. The more voices we have the more this will lead to the power and political punch we need to give our members the level of representation they need and deserve, especially when threats like Marine Parks loom and the ignorance about Seaplane operations sometimes mean a restriction on operations which is totally unwarranted and unjustified.

Avalon will also be a great opportunity for SPAA to continually build on relationships with other associations with a view to sharing common problems and solutions. One of the areas we have been working in very closely with other associations is self administration where recognised associations will become responsible their own industries. All issues, problems, etc will need to be channelled through these associations directly to CASA.

The committee of the SPAA has had many meetings with regulator's, other associations and supporters of seaplanes in Australia already this year and this will continue throughout 2007, with the sole objective of continued safe seaplane operations without unnecessary restrictions.

If your attending Avalon this year please call by our stand and say hello, we certainly value meeting and hearing what our members have to say, and if you happen to be non-financial we can take care of that on the day, and you'll be helping us gain the political voice we need to promote what we already know—"its Fun Flyin Seaplanes"

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#### SPAA AGM at "Gauntswood" Held.

The weather was perfect and so was the venue "Gauntswood" at Summerland Point on Lake Macquarie NSW where SPAA held its AGM on Sunday the 24th February.

A big hearty thank you to Ken Gaunt for allowing us the use of his property to hold the event, and to Col Evans and Kyle Probert "Minister of Seaplane Meetings" from Float Trikes Australia for all the organization that went into making the day not only a formality but a great social gathering.

Members old and new attended, coming by air, road, and sea. The longest distance traveled goes to John Daley from St Georges Basin, with John Raymond close behind from Port Macquarie. It was also great to see new member Philip Dartnell and his wife take time out from their trip to the Gold Coast to drop in and meet the team.

"It was a great opportunity for the SPAA committee to get together and hear the feedback and suggestions that members could come up" said reelected Chairman Philip Dulhunty.



The current committee was elected unopposed, with one addition of Brian Dehlsen joining as assistant treasurer.

"Gauntswood" is a fantastic seaplaning location and many suggested this should be made the annual AGM meeting spot.

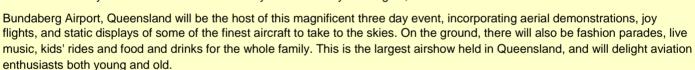
Wide Bay Australia

#### Do You Have the: Best Presented Seaplane?

The Wide Bay International Airshow has some great Awards up for grabs, for Fly-In pilots including "Best Presented Seaplane."



2007 - is three days of aviation action from Friday 3rd to Sunday 5th August, 2007.



All fly-in arrivals and departures for the Wide Bay Australia International Airshow need to be pre-registered; this is the only way you can obtain 2 FREE AIRSHOW PASSES, and this can be done via the official website.

The Award ceremony is to take place in the Bundaberg Aero Club, Saturday 4th August from 1900. A Bar and BBQ will be operating.

For more information and to register to Fly-In check out <a href="http://www.widebayairshow.com.au">http://www.widebayairshow.com.au</a>

#### Visual Flight Guide Updated.

The very popular Visual Flight Guide has been updated and downloadable from the CASA website. The Visual Flight Guide helps VFR pilots to fly safely and meet the requirements of the regulations and orders. It covers everything from pilot responsibilities to emergency procedures. There are sections on pre-flight planning, weather, flight information services, airspace designations, and night VFR.

To download the VFR Guide go to the following link <a href="http://www.casa.gov.au/pilots/download/vfr/vfr.pdf">http://www.casa.gov.au/pilots/download/vfr/vfr.pdf</a>



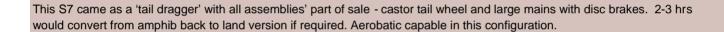




#### Classifieds

#### Rans S7 VH-JIB

- Registered VH experimental
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Email—floatplane@vic.chariot.net.au

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## Here We Grow Again!!

#### SPAA Welcomes Members New and Rejoining for January/February

Membership of the Australian Seaplane Pilots Assn offers you many great Member Benefits check them out at this link http://www.seaplanes.org.au/BenefitsofMembership.htm

Membership also supports the tireless efforts by many volunteers to tackle the many issues that could adversely affect seaplane operations. A few of the projects that are happening at the moment include industry self administration, Establishment of Marine Park s, education of public authorities relating to seaplane operations, Harbour plans of management, demise of Australian airports.

Stuart Beveridge—Port Augusta SA. George Kable—Akuna Seaplanes Marcoola QLD.

Chris Meulengraaf—Cavan SA. Peter Kane—Sydney NSW.

Barry Smith—Bellerive TAS. Paul Craig—Cairns QLD.

Air Whitsunday Seaplanes—Airlie Beach QLD Robert Bowering—Cowes VIC.

Ron Mitchell—Cooloola Cove QLD. Chris Holden—Albany WA.

Frank Moes— Brisbane QLD. Kevin Bowe—Tewantin QLD.

Philip Dartnell—Pearl Beach NSW. Tjasa Boh—Hong Kong

Thomas Wedderburn-Bishop—Denistone NSW Kellie O'Hare—Mount Lawley WA

Ken Elliot—West Pennant Hills NSW John Raymond—Port Macquarie NSW

Dr Brett Thompson—Milton NSW Greg Doyle—Avalon NSW





## **Great Aussie Searey Adventure - GASA MK#2**



The *Great Aussie Searey Adventure* number 2 kicks off in Temora on the 18th May 2007, with already 14 confirmed Seareys to be in attendance, and concludes at Wallis Lake on the NSW mid-north coast, with a Splash-In planned for all seaplanes.

The GASA is a chance for all Searey owners to get together and enjoy the best of both worlds with some land and water flying, with enough time at each stopover to check out the local sights and have a beer or three and reflect on the days flying.

The proposed route has been selected because it is "In the Middle". In other words the northerners and southerners have roughly the same distance to travel to rendezvous at Lake Cargelligo, except for Kyle Gardner who is traveling all the way from Tasmania. This route also offers a mixture of Country and Coastal flying, inter-dispersed with some great cross country tracks and stop-overs at interesting and beautiful locations. The stop overs have been balanced so everyone can also rest up and enjoy the surroundings.

The proposed itinerary is as follows:

#### DAY 1. Friday 18th May 2007

Arrival at Lake Cargelligo - Temora cancelled due to no available accommodation.

#### DAY 2. Saturday 19th May

Local flying - Lake Cargelligo

#### DAY 3. Sunday 20th May

Morning Departure for Mudgee

#### DAY 4. Monday 21st May

Morning Departure for Hunter Valley - Cessnock Airport

#### DAY 5. Tuesday 22nd May

Morning Departure for Camden Haven

#### DAY 6. Wednesday 23rd May

Late Morning Departure for Tiona Park at Wallis Lake

#### DAY 7. Thursday 24th May

Local flying Wallis Lake, Smiths Lake, Myall Lakes etc

#### DAY 8. Friday 25th May

Local flying Wallis Lake, Smiths Lake, Myall Lakes etc

#### DAY 9. Saturday 26th May or Sunday 27th May

Depart Wallis Lake - Official end of GASA







Wallis Lake Looking south towards Tiona Park



The Splash-In location—Tiona Park

All Members are welcome to attend the GASA if you have a Searey and an open invitation to all to attend the Wallis Lake Splash-In. For accommodation you will need to get in quick!

For further details contact:

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## **Mermaid Australia News**

#### By Perry Taylor airnoosa@tpg.com.au

Hi gang, I flew the Mermaid here in Florida and have copied you exactly what I wrote Chip, Danny and Milan. To refresh your memory and for new players, Chip is President CZAW, Milan is head designer, both CZECH based, Danny is the test pilot, "triage" engineer, basically it was up to Danny to select engine, improve everything and get it into production, no mean feat, Danny is based Naked Lady ranch airpark in Florida, USA.

Flying handling was "natural" i.e. no noticeable adverse yaw, no major pitch changes nor excessive rudder requirements in all phases of flite, in fact EXCELLENT, Water work, absolutely FANTASTIC, this aircraft loves the water, nearly as much as I enjoyed flying it on and off water. Conditions were cool, wind 6 kts at 30° to left of Canal, chop on canal 6" max, but occasional boat wakes, aircraft 630kg with test equipment.



Power off landings, to me were "natural" and she handled them perfectly, 60 kts stabilised at say 2 -300', flap 20°, bleeding speed at normal glideslope (3°), slight check into flare as "ground" effect reached and slightest little bit of wing/elevator buffet announced "Perfect speed", the keel sliced the water and SMOOTHLY relaxed into water, slightest pitch down which is very desirable and aircraft had NO tendency to ride up or nose over, in fact it was perfect. I tried a variety of landings, power on, flare High, positive "push" onto water, all gave me smooth touchdown, no hint of bounce, more a feeling of aircraft being "Gently" attracted or nearly sucked onto water. I tried to induce a bounce by dropping from say 3', she STILL landed softly and in perfect attitude, either I was not aggressive enough or this aircraft is so far "idiot proof".

Take off from standing water start was effortless, short take off roll, in fact I feel it is still "under propped", great elevator control from low speed, even aileron is effective at low speed and rudder is effective as soon as power is applied, once on the step, which was effortless, directional control and attitude were pretty much "Intuitive", aircraft "told me" what she needed, I had to induce a porpoise to see what it was like, so positive nose down while on step, porpoising was un spectacular, VERY easily recognised and easily recovered by small nose up pitch change back to a "normal" nose attitude, Flap was selected to 20° on step and we were airborne before flap ran all the way. At flap retract, speed 75kts, 1100 'pm climb rate we actually had to throttle back before pattern height on downwind.

The aircraft "told me" that she wanted to turn base clean with power off, such a beautiful wing, 100kts IAS and 500'pm descent from 800', she glides effortlessly, silently and sink rate maintained at 500'pm lets speed bleed comfortably to flap speed by 300' or so, so nothing to do except enjoy the landing, controls light, not over nor under sensitive, eyeball height, forward and SIDE visibility just perfect, raising focal point to end of Canal and letting your peripheral vision confirm that you are in ground effect 2' above water, you pretty much do nothing except the slightest hint of back pressure to kiss a mermaid home. Deceleration is slow enough to retract flaps before they hit water and quick enough to use probably only 150 meters to full stop, a hockey stop turn or dropping gear would substantially reduce water runway if required, but only needed for check out or showing off. On the step, aircraft was VERY easy to maintain step speed, turn, X-wind, thru wind, down wind in fact



I could not find any regime of flight or water work where there was something negative??? The "buffet" announcing the stall is the PERFECT stall warning, probably 2 -4 knots warning, but DO NOTHING that means perfection and this aerodynamic annunciation is icing on the cake. Splash and go is very easy transition, just slide power up, u already have Flap and have the trim required, just look for boats and their wake, slightest relaxation back and you are airborne. In fact we were looking for ruff water to test machine, nothing was ruff enough to unruffle the Mermaid??



Water taxiing with water rudder down was VERY good, albeit we only had 6 kts of wind to turn thru, i need more wind velocity to check out handling and step taxi with higher winds and of course more chop. Docking, I had excellent water rudder control rite to beach, even "pedaling" gave a forward motion. Very easy to swing out of seat and catch shore, all barefoot pilots should know how to do it and this machine is so good you can cancel your Yoga and Pilates classes for flexibility required for other amphibs. In fact introduce your Yoga/Pilates instructresses to the Mermaid, they will make VERY good flite instructors, as that is the mental attitude the Mermaid will put you in, Calm, relaxed and effortless, Hommmm.

Aircraft was sitting in water (app 12" deep, floating) for app 15 mins and bilge pump came on automatically just once and spat out between a thimble and medicine glass of water in a mili sec-



ond. Launching is effortless, put passenger in, foot on step and "scooter kick" once and you can seat and start instantly, which is SO good about the Jabiru motor, instant start, no priming, grinding, swearing, one flick, she starts and water rudder down you are away. Take off check is very easy, leave trims as they were for landing, buckle seat belt just before power up, clear of boats, hatches closed, GO, back stick not necessary, little forward relaxation helps it over induced bow wave onto step, not too much, on step, flick flap switch twice (each flick gives 10°), now you are flying, no need to retract flap in ground effect, she accelerates and climbs effortlessly.

So, what are downsides?? Biggest down side was that Danny wanted to go home and he wanted me to land on his grass strip at least once before dark, so back to Naked Lady ranch (Danny's home), all of 4 minutes for a boring land landing, which made me work a bit harder than a water landing, so a quick touch and go for another go onto rougher cross strip, the gear is TUFF, this strip was wet, long grass and uneven, Mermaid did not complain, in fact effortless, very slow touchdown with 40° Flap, lite easy control all the way, give me water any time.

My impression: This is an amazing, well designed, comfortable, safe, robust and thoroughly flexible, what I will name "The Perfect Sport Aircraft"....



## In The Next Issue.....

On The Step will be at Sun 'n Fun to bring you all the latest seaplane news. The City of Lakeland and the



Lakeland Linder Regional Airport in Florida USA have hosted the Sun 'n Fun fly-in for over 33 years. This is the first major aviation event of the year. The annual spring celebration of flight brings together those from all over the world, and from all segments of the aviation community to enjoy the best fly-in experience.

Sun 'n Fun has a huge static aircraft display, over 500 commercial exhibits, 450 educational forums and hands on workshops, in addition to a daily airshow.

The Sun 'n Fun Seabirds hold a two a two day Splash-In on Lake Parker, production seaplane events are on April 19th, Ultralights will follow on April 20th. Throughout each of the days there are many competitions, a fly-by and a banquet diner.

Make sure you don't miss the next issue of *On The Step*, for all the action. To Subscribe Click the join button on the homepage of the SPAA website <a href="https://www.seaplanes.org.au">www.seaplanes.org.au</a>



## 33rd International Seaplane Fly-In Greenville



#### **By George Beattie SPAA Member**

From my first "Boys' Own" Adventure Books, I have always been fascinated by pictures of floatplanes resting by a dock on some remote Alaskan lake with canoes or deer antlers strapped to their sides. At that early age I knew I had to fly a floatplane one day. That dream came true many years ago in 1973 when I was endorsed by Australian float guru, Bill Lane, soon after he established Southport Floatplanes. But even after 3500 hrs of float flying and 8000 water landings, the romance of those boyhood stories eluded me until this August/September, when I was finally able to experience the reality of North American float flying, visiting Victoria, the Capital of British Columbia, on Vancouver Island; the Lake Hood complex in Anchorage, Alaska; then ,finally, the 33<sup>rd</sup> International Seaplane Fly-In at Greenville, a delightful little town on the southern tip of Moosehead Lake, in Maine. The Moosehead



experience was all the richer as I went in company with Ed Peck whose simple ad. in the US "Trade-a-Plane" Magazine intrigued me when it first caught my eye over 20 years ago. It read -" Float parts for everything from Cubs to Beavers. Ed Peck, Bear River, Nova Scotia". After many business dealings and innumerable phone calls over the last 20 years, I simply had to meet him in the flesh. As it turned out, he, too, was planning to go to Greenville himself. He booked us in to a wonderful lake-front motel and I swear he knew every second person at the Splash-In! Being in company with a chap who'd been there for the last 25 years had distinct advantages, as you can imagine!

The visit to Victoria was really intended to allow my wife to see the magnificent Butchart Gardens, but we were equally fascinated by the coming and going of a constant stream of Twin Otters and Single Turbine Otters plus the usual Beavers bringing visitors from Vancouver to the harbour which, along with Parliament House and the major hotels is in the main downtown area – sort of a mini- Rocks and Circular Quay, but with floatplanes galore! Harbour Air operate 14 Turbine Otters, which they are converting themselves, 15 Beavers and 2 C185's. Viking Air have about 8 Twin Otters. This company has plans to return the Twin Otter to production having purchased the manufacturing rights to most older classic De Havilland aircraft. It was sobering to reflect on the fact that this one small harbour had about as many floatplanes as there are in the whole of Australia. The Turbine Otters were very impressive. Harbour Air have favoured them over the Cessna Caravan when load-carrying, performance and price are taken into account. I saw one held off for hundreds of metres at one stage at a ridiculously slow speed, plopped down in the water adjacent to the dock and props reversed to give an amazingly short trip from touch-down to dock. It was quite a buzz to see such a big aircraft come low over the lifting- bridge then thrown into a steep 90 degree turn onto final for the dedicated seaplane landing area. Only large cruise ships are permitted in the seaplane channel which, according to one Twin Otter pilot, can be a lot of fun! Predictably, the Johnny-come-latelies in the new apartment buildings alongside the landing area are agitating to close down this well-established and essential link to Vancouver. Sound familiar?

But if its floatplane numbers you want, Anchorage is the place! The Lake Hood complex across the highway from the International Airport once consisted of two lakes - Lake Hood and Lake Spenard. Years ago the two lakes were joined by two artificial canals separated by a narrow island, one a taxiway and the other a runway, and "fingers", each accommodating about 25 floatplanes dug out on the northern [ taxi-way] side.

With many commercial hangars, large parking areas and a unique taxi-way system, it is home to nearly 500 floatplanes and about an equal number of amphibs and landplanes, which can access a light aircraft strip or the International Airport by taxiways crossing quite busy roads. Oh, yes, and aircraft have the right-of-way!

If you have not done so already, you must download "Google Earth" [Free, but you need Broadband] and look at this area. The satellite imagery is very good. It is clear enough to see the entire perimeter of the two joined lakes, except for the take-off canal, lined with planes, with only a few metres between wing-tips. I was told it can take up to 7 years to secure a spot here. Owners have cut recesses in their sections of the lakefront and some have quite elaborate docks and jetties for easy access to their aircraft. We stayed in the Downtown area of Anchorage which was marvellous but there are several motels very close to the lakes, some with views over the whole scene.



#### 33rd International Seaplane Fly-In Greenville



Fascinating to us was the array of little storage sheds adjacent to most planes in which pilots keep fuel drums and other junk, plus wheel undercarriages and/or skis when the aircraft are on floats.

I asked if they were for human habitation and was told "no", with the qualification that a couple of wayward husbands had been known to sleep there after a cool reception at home after nightly indiscretions. They ranged in architectural beauty from upturned packing cases and close imitations of the good old Aussie "Thunderbox", to

exotic little log cabins complete with window boxes full of flowers.

By far the majority of floatplanes were Piper Cubs and SuperCubs, with many C180/185's, a fair number of C206's, and a few C172 and C182's, with commercial operators preferring Beavers and the Turbine Otter.

At one stage, my wife thought she was seeing things when she spotted half a pick-up truck manouvring a C185 into a hangar. Heavy lifting forks attached to the front of the front-wheel-drive cabin meant that the back could be chopped off, giving great turning ability in confined spaces. But you wouldn't want to see it for the first time after a late-night binge!

After 4 days in Anchorage [ we wished it had been 14] we were off to the "Coral Princess" for a cruise back to Vancouver. The highlight for us, apart from the glaciers and the obscene amount of food available 24 hrs a day,

was a flight in a Beaver floatplane from Ketchikan. Our 2 fellow-flyers were a USAF helicopter pilot and his wife. He and I had both decided we were not inclined to pay US\$350 to US\$650 for the joyflights advertised on the boat and struck a deal for a 30 minute spin for \$100–a-head. Perhaps we may not have been so lucky had we not been the only cruise-boat in port!

The cloud base was well below the snow-covered mountain tops and we spent an amazing half-hour picking our way through ravines and skimming low over lakes and forests, dodging cloud patches and needing some very steep turns to avoid "stratogranite" in places! It certainly gave us a feel for the legendary Alaskan bush pilots' working conditions.

Back to Vancouver, a flight to Calgary and three days driving through the Rockies. Incredibly beautiful! Another flight from Calgary to Toronto [Bad idea!] and three days at Niagara Falls and it was off to Nova Scotia to meet Eddie and head for Moosehead Lake.

It was wonderful to finally meet him and his large circle of family and friends. He surprised me one afternoon by taking me for a spin in his Aeronca Champ, waiting for us on the beach below his family holiday cabin by a picturesque lake in the woods. More boyhood dreams coming true!

Moosehead was all I had expected with over 100 visiting seaplanes - this time mainly amphibs, as Greenville has a first class 4000 ft main

bitumen runway and 3000 ft cross-strip, only a short drive out of town, with a frequent shuttle service to the lake provided during the Fly-In. Some interesting visitors included a Grumman Goose, a Grumman Widgeon, a Cessna Caravan amphib. and about 8 Seabees. Four of these "Flying Tadpoles" did an impressive fly-past during the weekend. A sad sight, however, was the DC3, until last year the world's only flying DC3 floatplane, but now sitting rudder-less on wheels, with grass growing up around it. Lots of RV's and tents were spread along the runway edges, housing many of the visiting enthusiasts.

The long weekend was a feast of constant floatplane activity, impromptu flypasts by anyone who felt like getting up there by themselves or with their mates, and competitions, some of which I have not seen in Australia. A canoe race involved one partner paddling a canoe to a pontoon out in the lake with the other taxiing the plane out. They had to lash the canoe to the plane, return to the dock via a course of marker buoys and unload the canoe. Winners in a borrowed aircraft rammed the dock head-on thus avoiding a further 90 degree turn. I'm sure the owner [father of one of the competitor's] must have been really impressed! Word was there will be a rule-change for next year!









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#### 33rd International Seaplane Fly-In Greenville

We were all impressed at the great result by the only lady competitor paddling in the competition for the first time.

"Fastest take-off" drag races were great. An unofficial best time into a fresh headwind was about 5 seconds shared between a Supercub and a beefed-up C185. Small pilots and smaller fuel quantities are obviously the secret. I was fully expecting to hear an engine spluttering through fuel exhaustion but if there was, it must have been down the lake a way! The step-taxi slalom race was interesting, especially with a very fresh headwind.



"Star of the Show" was undoubtedly the S39 Sikorsky, "Spirit of Igor", built in the 30's. It was recovered from an Alaskan lake after being submerged for many years and after 40,000 hrs restoration is in pristine condition, with a Beaver engine and prop.

Of note were the exquisite timberwork in the roomy interior and the upward-opening hatches allowing entry from the top of the cabin. The "giraffe" paintwork is in recognition of its years of service in Africa.



Another "Show- Stopper" was the little yellow "Mini Monk" of John Knapp, a real "character" and co-ordinator for of the Carolinas area of the SPA. It is about half the size of a Pitts Special with a 19 ft wingspan and a snowmobile engine, on home-made floats. It is a half-scale replica of an old racer, he told me. My wife eagerly accepted a ride which he offered her until he reminded her that it was a single-seater and she would have to ride on the wing. Like I said – quite a character!

Did I mention "feasts" earlier? The social scene was not forgotten either with a Lobster and Steak Cook-out [= BBQ] on Friday night and Salmon and Steak on the Saturday Awards Night.

And for those who were still upright after such full, long days [daylight till 9.30 pm] there was dancing afterwards. Guess who won the "Farthest-Travelled Award"? And to think I spoke to a Californian who thought he was in with a chance!



Since the first gathering of six seaplanes in 1938 till the modern gathering that attracts 400 pilots and their guests and 3000 visitors for the Saturday events, the Greenville Fly-In has clearly achieved its mission "to promote fellowshiop, personal contact and co-mingling among seaplane pilots".

I doubt I will ever see so much seaplane activity and so much enjoyment and goodwill among pilots in such a delightful setting ever again.

The autumn leaves seemed to grow more colourful by the hour as we drove through the forests of Maine on our return to Nova Scotia, hardly speaking but just silently content with our thoughts of this experience of a lifetime.

One more last spin around Bear River in Eddie's faithful little Taylorcraft and it was back to Halifax for our Flying Marathon home .





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