

THE SPEEN & NORTH DEAN *News*



Summer 2018
Issue 72





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Welcome! to the Summer edition of the Speen & North Dean News, and what a great season of celebration it has been, packed full of all the fun and frivolity that occurs in our wonderful villages at this time of year thanks to the hard work and dedication of some amazing groups of people who give up their free time and work tirelessly to put on these great events for the rest of us. We have enjoyed the Midnight in Marrakech Speen Ball, Speen Fun Day and the Fetes, and not forgetting when they well and truly rocked that hill at the hopefully to be repeated night in North Dean. Huge thanks to all involved in creating the magic!

We said a sad farewell to Mrs Nayna after an amazing 29 years as Headteacher at Speen C of E School - it's hard to imagine the school without her, but I'm sure we will all unite in giving Mrs Coles, the new headteacher, a warm welcome when she joins the school in September.

As we look forward to the mellow delights of autumn, please do continue to send in your articles and photos.

Jacqui Laing

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Next Edition

Copy for the next edition is **due by 21st October** with a planned publication date of late November. Please send photos separately from text, together with captions and a consent form (downloaded from the SNDN website www.speenbucks.org.uk) if any photos are of children. Please send to **editor.sndn@speenbucks.org.uk**.

With grateful thanks

To Wycombe District Council, Hughenden Valley Parish Council, Speen Stores Charity Committee and all our advertisers for their support of this magazine.



Welcome Packs

The Good Neighbours scheme was set up many years ago and is now run by Pat Richardson in Speen and Judith Broadley in North Dean. One service is to provide new residents with a Welcome Pack of village information, so if you know of anyone new to the area please call: Pat Richardson (Speen) 01494 488627 or Judith Broadley (North Dean) 01494 563178 cooljude@btopenworld.com

Village News

If you are not already signed up to The Village Messenger and The Village Diary, do email Village@SpeenBucks.org or jh@jwhh.co.uk to be put on the mailing lists, with the word 'include' in the subject line - they will keep you up to date via email on a monthly basis with all the latest village news and dates for your diary.

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WHAT'S ON

in Speen & North Dean

SEPTEMBER

6th September	WI Secrets of a Store Detective	Speen Village Hall 7.45pm	Jenny Pearce 562333
9th September	SHH Charity Car Boot Sale	Speen Playing Field 10am	Grainne Suter 488540
22nd September	Speen Playing Field Work Party	Speen Playing Field 9.30am	Clare Morris 488553
28th September	Speen Community Bar	Speen Village Hall 7pm	Amanda Dobbs 488887
30th September	Rachel W-Robinson Concert	Pigotts 7.48pm	Jeremy Hamilton 562167

OCTOBER

4th October	WI Growing up in post-war E. End	Speen Village Hall 7.45pm	Jenny Pearce 562333
10th October	SHH Charity Bridge Afternoon	Upper North Dean Farm 1pm	Sally Codling 488506
12th October	Gin Tasting	North Dean Village Hall 7.30pm	www.northdean.org
14th October	Home Grown Concert	Pigotts 7.48pm	Jeremy Hamilton 562167
26th October	Speen Community Bar	Speen Village Hall 7pm	Amanda Dobbs 488887
27th October	SHH Chilli Night + Dirty Mavis	Lacey Green Village Hall 7.30pm	Grainne Suter 488540
31st October	Speen v North Dean Golf	Winter Hill Golf Club	

NOVEMBER

1st November	WI Annual Meeting	Speen Village Hall 7.45pm	Jenny Pearce 562333
3rd November	Speen Bonfire Night	Speen Playing Field	Clare Morris 488553
17th November	SHH Christmas Market	Speen Chapel	Grainne Suter 488540
30th November	Speen Community Bar	Speen Village Hall 7pm	Amanda Dobbs 488887

DECEMBER

1st December	Christmas Fayre	Speen Village Hall	Margaret Groves 488180
7th December	Christmas Tree Lighting & Carols	Speen Playing Field/Village Hall	Clare Morris 488553
19th December	Christmas Carols + wine & cheese	North Dean Village Hall	www.northdean.org
21st December	Speen Community Bar	Speen Village Hall 7pm	Amanda Dobbs 488887

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SPEEN CoE INFANT SCHOOL & PTA

Becky Khaira & Mei Price, PTA Co-Chairs

How this year has flown by so quickly. The teachers were busy completing statutory assessments and the school is really pleased with the children's efforts and the results, with 100% (national 2017 64%) of Year Two children achieving the expected standard in all subjects combined at the end of Key Stage One and 100% (national 2017 81%) of Year One children achieving the expected standard in the Phonic check. The percentage of children reaching a Good level of Development at the end of the Foundation stage was increased this year to our highest ever at 86% (national 2017 71%).

Summer Term was very busy. In June the PTA hosted in conjunction with Speen Pre-School and Speen Playing Fields its first Community Ball, 'Midnight in Marrakesh'. This was well attended and raised over £6,000 to be shared between the charities. This event was quickly followed by the Speen Fete where the parents manned the Tombola stall and the children performed a programme of country dances. The school hosted two charity events of its own, a pre-loved toy sale in aid of AGAPE which raised £145 and a Teddy Bear's Picnic in aid of Action Medical Research raising £86.

The children enjoyed a Worship Trail in High Wycombe. This began at the Jubilee Mosque where they were greeted by the Imam and shown around the mosque. The children then went to All Saints Parish Church. Here the children's worker explained fascinating facts about the building and what is important to their community. Their fourth school trip of the year funded by the PTA was a trip to Buckinghamshire Railway Centre in Quainton. This was to launch Transport theme week for the children. The whole school enjoyed two train rides and learning about the steam trains and the Royal mail sorting carriages.

The children were invited to watch Speen Pre-School's sports day, an annual event enjoyed by all. Their own sports day consisted of games devised by Year 2 pupils and ended with ice creams kindly donated by Beechdean. Thank you.

A number of children from the cheerleading after-school-club were invited to take part in the Gym and Dance festival at Risborough school. They performed a fast and furious routine which was delightfully received by their parents, teachers and spectators.

Parents had the opportunity to attend Forest School sessions with their children and a lot of fun was had helping 'Mole' find natural materials to build a magic wand and children enjoyed thinking about why each element was chosen.

The children got a chance to say thank you to all the parents and community volunteers who help in the school throughout the year. A tea party was held where Year 2 children served tea, coffee and cakes. Speen CoE School and its PTA are very grateful for all the help from parents, grandparents and community members received throughout the year. It really does make a difference.

Finally, the school bid an emotional farewell to its Headteacher of 29 years, Mrs Nayn, the Year 2 pupils, and Teaching Assistant Mrs Rogers. An afternoon tea party with a live band was held on the school grounds on the last day of term which was attended by over 100 people consisting of past and present pupils, their families and community members and volunteers.

We now very much look forward to welcoming Mrs Coles as new Headteacher of Speen CoE Infant school in September.



FAREWELL TO MRS NAYNA

The End of an Era

Mei Price/Katherine Matthews

On the sunny afternoon of 24th July, Speen students past and present, teachers and villagers gathered at Speen CoE Infant school to say a fond farewell to Mrs Denise Nayna, Headteacher for an incredible 29 years. A tea party, organised by the staff, governors and the PTA, was held to celebrate the retirement of both Mrs Nayna and Mrs Sandy Rogers (Teaching Assistant), who together have given 43 years of devotion and hard work to Speen School. An orchestra led by Kate Laughton helped provide the entertainment to this farewell party, and there was much reminiscing amongst returning pupils and lots of laughter over shared memories.



Denise Nayna joined the school in 1989. During her time she has not only dedicated her time teaching and managing the school, but has played an intrinsic role in securing sports grants, leading the children at sports and dance events and attended village charity events such as the annual Ball and Safari Supper. She is the first person in and last person to leave the school. The children will miss her piano playing and her presence at the main door to greet them and their parents in the mornings. It will be hard to imagine the School without her, and we all wish Denise all the very best as she begins a new chapter of her life in her well deserved retirement.



SPEENBALL

Mei Price

On the evening of 30th June, 129 people attended Speen's 'Midnight In Marrakesh' Ball - a Community Ball to raise funds for Speen's next generation. It was a fun-filled evening of Prosecco, Moroccan themed food, auction and raffle and dancing into the early hours of the evening. The weather was perfect, dry and warm. The smell of incense filled the air, leading to a lantern lit marquee, a plethora of colour and landmarks from Morocco. Eleven tables centred around a dance floor. Each table was named after a landmark, aptly and beautifully decorated and menus hand painted with information about each landmark by talented Naomi Rogers. Outside a fire pit burned into the early hours of the morning. It was the perfect evening.

Speen Ball Committee (Backy Khaira, Jess Walsh and Mei Price) would like to thank everyone who helped make the evening a success. From all the prize donors and the parents who helped set up and decorate, to the Speen Teens who served food and danced the night away with their parents after, and all the attendees from our local community.

Over £6,000 was raised and will be shared between the Speen Playing Fields to fund new play equipment, Speen Pre-school and Speen CoE Infant School.



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Interview with Mrs Nayna

Mei Price

What was Speen School like when you first started?

When I started we had a headteacher, a classteacher, a school secretary and a Welfare Assistant two days a week. Not too dissimilar to what we have in place today. I was really pleased to be a Teaching Head as working with children is the best part of the day. Who wants to be shuffling paper? The best part of the job is the creativity, how you teach them, how you engage with them to make their learning more effective. Pressures of the National Curriculum nowadays means we have to be very efficient and if we are not efficient we can't provide the extras which make the school what it is.

How has teaching changed over the years?

The first children I ever taught are now 54 years old! Teaching has changed a lot. I remember when during lunch hours the staff had time to knit in the staff room. We had classes of 42, there was no limit on class sizes. Now the job takes more time, staff don't leave until 17:30/18:00. The job is more tiring and taxing for everyone but it is all for the benefit of the children.

What do you feel are your greatest achievements?

As far as the children are concerned, I am proud that we have driven them to achieve highly against standards nationally in general. In terms of staff development I've empowered my staff to develop themselves by giving them lots of opportunities. They work as a close team, they're not just colleagues but dear friends. They love doing their best for the children and their role. I hope they continue to be creative and make a difference.

What will you do when you retire?

Before the job got intense, I did gardening, sewing and cooking. I'm looking forward to picking those things up. I may take up walking, well... strolling. And of course seeing my four grandchildren, especially the two in Florida.

How does your husband feel about you retiring?

My husband has been retired for 10 years and has been asking me when I'll retire. He has been doing the childcare and seeing the grandchildren. He'll probably hate me getting under his feet.

What words of wisdom can you share with us?

Children should always say 'yes' and not 'no' to current opportunities. They should have a go at everything otherwise they may regret it later. The children have had the opportunity to go to places like the Royal Albert Hall and the Worship Trail. Opportunities are there not just for the children residing in Speen but also those who live outside the Village.

What will you miss most?

I will miss spending time with the children - they are my delight. I will miss the staff. We have spent a lot of time together and I know of their families. I am also always so grateful to the parents, who put so much time and effort into the school.

How would you like to be remembered?

I'd like to think that I'll be remembered as a person who had a go at most things and someone who provided the opportunities for the children.

100TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE RAF

Mei Price

On July 10th the RAF celebrated its 100 year anniversary. The celebrations commenced with a royal attendance at Westminster Abbey, where Speen Resident Squadron Leader Lee Turner had the privilege of bearing the Royal Air Force Ensign and walking it down the aisle. Lee had spent five days on campus at RAF Halton rehearsing for this special moment.

Lee Turner and his family moved to Speen three years ago after a tour at RAF Valley on Anglesey where he was a RAF Sea King Pilot. In 2009 Lee Turner received an Air Force Cross for his 'courage, leadership and outstanding flying skills' from the Queen



for helping to rescue the crew and passengers of a ferry hit by a freak wave. He and his crew helped winch 23 people to safety from a ferry in 60mph winds and treacherous seas ten miles off the coast of Blackpool.

In 2010 he was Prince William's Search and Rescue Pilot Instructor, teaching him to fly Sea King helicopters. He also led the flyover at Prince William's wedding.

Lee and his family will be moving out of Speen in August as his current tour comes to an end. His wife and children will be returning to Wales whilst he attends Staff College at Shrivenham before beginning his next tour.

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SPEEN CHURCH

Heather McIntyre, Minister



Life at Speen Chapel has been busy. Many events have been held over the last term, and the chapel and chapel hall continue to be a lovely venue for a whole variety of activities. The Chapel Hill Kitchen is thriving and many of you will have sampled the culinary delights on offer, as well as experiencing the welcoming and relaxed ambience of the chapel hall. We were delighted recently to be able to give donations of £1,000 from the café revenue to each of the following charities – Agape Alive, LIFT, One Can and Wycombe Homeless Connection (for more information on these charities do look at our website) and we will continue our support of them from our profits.

Our Tiddlers and Toddlers group is coming to the end of a very successful first year in its new venue. We welcome all parents, grandparents and carers with their babies and toddlers and will open again on Tuesday mornings in term time after the summer break.

In the autumn we will be holding a new Alpha course in the chapel hall. All are invited to come and explore the Christian faith over a delicious meal and informal conversation.

With very best wishes,
Heather McIntyre

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What
Why
When**



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SPEEN VILLAGE HALL

Bill Groves, Chairman Speen Village Hall Management Committee

Thanks to grants from the Shop Charity and the District Council, along with our own fundraising, we are now in a position to proceed with the new heating system for the Village Hall. The work will be carried out during August whilst the Pre-School are on their summer break.

On June 2nd we held a reception for Don White and unveiled a plaque to thank him for his 63 years involvement with the Village Hall, including 45 years as Treasurer. Without Don's commitment the Hall would not have existed to the present day.

We are planning to hold another Film & Food night in the Autumn.

Our Christmas Fayre will be held on Saturday 1st December

The Hall is available to villagers at reduced rate for parties and other social occasions. Please contact our booking secretary Sue Taylor on 488500





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SPEENHELPING HOSPICES

Grainne Suter

Halfway through the year and another two very successful fundraising events under our belt.

The Book Quiz was a roaring success and, despite the at times very challenging questions set by our star quizmaster Tom Dent, Speen rose to the occasion and put on a great show. The ladies' team, put together by Di Rainbow, got off to a running start and won hands down. Congratulations to them all. We will put this on the calendar for 2019.

The Spring Lunch was held at the Speen Home of Rest for Horses. The venue was stunning, the weather perfect, the rosé chilled and the lunch, if all the comments are to be believed, was delicious. A big thanks to the many people who supported us, including Leigh Lewis Optometrists, Hildreths, Ladies Who Lunch and Jane at Alchemille.

Next up is the Car Boot Sale on the playing field on the morning of Sunday 9th September. So, book your pitch, gather your junk (or someone else's treasures) and put this date in your diary. Bacon and sausage sarnies will be on sale amongst other goodies to eat.

Wednesday 10th October is the Bridge Afternoon. Bring your table, your cards and your friends and enjoy some

hands of bridge and to keep the brain sharp tea and scones/cream will be served.

Do you remember Dirty Mavis? This band played in Speen some years ago and are now returning due to popular demand on Saturday 27th October at our Chilli Night in Lacey Green Village Hall.

To round off the year we have the Christmas Market on Saturday 17th November. We are so pleased that that the market is now back in Speen and will be held at the Chapel Hall. If you or someone you know would like to take a stall please contact me on 488540.

On your behalf we will be making further donations shortly to the four hospices the village supports: Ian Rennie, South Bucks, Florence Nightingale and Helen House. There is nothing quite like raising lots of money and having fun at the same time.

We always need your support and your money! Please, please come along to the next round of events.

Details of all events will be on our Facebook page www.facebook.com/speenhelpinghospices/ and the Village Diary.

BEECHDEAN DOWN ON THE FARM

Gill Kent

The year 2018 continues to be problematical for farmers. After a hard winter and very wet and late spring, we have now enduring the driest, hottest summer since 1976.

As in 1976 all our animals are on full, expensive, winter rations when they should be grazing fresh grass. One has to admit they all look very fit, (wet grass goes straight through cattle so they do not benefit from its nutrients). The milking cows are free to choose whether they sit in the shade of the barn or go out to graze the dried grass. Needless to say, they choose the barn, which rather nullifies the argument that cows shouldn't be kept in barns!



We have been fortunate to have a lot of silage left over from last winter, but the majority of farmers are not so lucky. Particularly in the west country, milk yields are down and farmers are feeding next winter's silage. Nature has a way

of compensating over the seasons, so we are hoping for a mild autumn with an average rainfall. The price of milk has risen, partly in response to weather induced yield reduction and partly due to the vagaries of the world market. At

last milk production is giving a positive return to farming businesses.

The worries about the spread of TB and the control of badgers continues. We recently visited the Isle of Sheppy, of which 3200 acres is now a privately owned nature reserve. The 800 cattle which graze the marshes have no risk of catching TB as badgers do not like the wet conditions and shun the area. The lapwings, redshank

and hedgehogs are thriving, as raptors and predators, mammalian and feathered, are strictly controlled. If only we were allowed to exercise the same control on our own land.

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NORTH DEAN ROCK THE HILL

Craig Watson

We totally Rocked the Hill!

Organised by the North Dean Village Hall Committee, over 200 North Dean and Speen residents, plus some of their friends and relatives, turned out and partied very hard indeed at the inaugural 'Rock the Hill' event.

Alix Anthony and his band 'JamUp' played some epic covers by the likes of Jimi Hendrix, James Brown and Prince, laced with some cool 'freestyle' improvisations. One of Charlie Kent's trailers provided an impressive stage, which was perched on the hill between Speen and North Dean, against a stunning backdrop with far-reaching views across the beautiful green pastures that stretch out to Hughenden Valley.

As the natural light faded, the stage lights shone and the consumption of 4 x 72 pint firkins of real ale, along with a vat of wine, dramatically lowered the inhibitions of the crowd. Alix and the band got funky and the crowd responded, cutting some amazing shapes with their dancing – with some very notable individual performances!

As well as being great fun and an event that brought a lot of people together, it raised valuable funds for the North Dean Village Hall. Thanks to all who attended.



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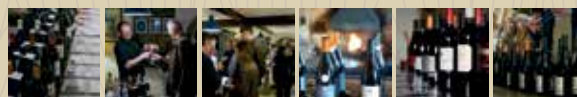
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SPEEN COMMUNITY BAR

Amanda Dobbs

The next Speen Community Bar will be on 28th September. It will continue run every month up until Christmas with me, and then from January to September 2019 it will become part of the Festival again.

I am very proud to say that in the past ten months local organisations have benefited by over £3,000.00 from proceeds of the Speen Community Bar, thanks to your support! Each month we have chosen a different theme and tried to make it fun, and each month has brought new faces as we built up momentum, so I would like to thank all those who have attended for their generosity.

We still have a couple of slots available for the charities, so if you are interested please contact me on amandad.speen@btinternet.com. Also if any organisations need to raise funds for a specific cause next year I am happy to look at doing a 'one off' pub night in addition to the Festival monthly nights.

*Dates for
your diary:*

28th September

26th October

30th November

21st December

SPEEN WI

Jean Morris



The members of Speen WI have had a busy and eventful Summer. In May, accompanied by friends and family there was a very enjoyable ride on the Chinnor Railway accompanied by a delicious cream tea and a talk about this voluntary project.

Members also visited the Daws Hill Vineyard for a tour and talk about the winemaking process, which of course finished with a tasting session. All this on a glorious July day, after a picnic lunch in their lovely gardens. Also in July a group went to the John Lewis store in High Wycombe for a YSL beauty evening where they were not only treated to a make-up demonstration and a glass of prosecco, but were able to buy their cosmetics at a discounted price. As if this were not enough, there was also a bowls taster session at Chess Vale Bowls Club, where the finer points and techniques involved were explained. These were then put into practice with varying degrees of success, but everyone was enthusiastic to try again.

As usual members baked and donated cakes and served teas all afternoon at the fete, on what we all know was a very hot day, adding to the profits of the event.

We will report in the next issue on our summer Garden Party in August as well as a fun treasure hunt around the village at our August meeting.

Our speakers in the Autumn will be covering the intricacies of being a Store Detective, what it was like to grow up in the post war East End of London and with local history in mind, the story of the Windsor Chair.

Our National Annual Meeting, held in Cardiff in June, passed a resolution on Mental Health with an overwhelming majority, and all WI members, and others, are encouraged to talk openly about this very important issue which affects so many people and their families. We need to see this as just another illness that can openly be admitted to and discussed without any stigma being associated with it. Most of us are aware of this, but so much more can be done.

If you want to be involved or just want a bit of fun and friendship once a month, come along to the Village Hall and see for yourself.

Our programme is always in the What's On page of this magazine and also on the Village Messenger, or look out for our posters around the village. If you want more information before taking the plunge, please e-mail or phone our secretary.

spewnwi@gmail.com

SPEENFUN DAY

Matt Davies

Against the odds and despite collective better judgement, June 2018 welcomed another Speen Funday. This year the boffins at Funday HQ opted for an even higher browed day and so devised the theme of DUNG - the Dictators Universal Nuclear Games.

In the lead up to the day, intra-team hostilities began to escalate, with tensions building in part due to the uncertainty over the actual date (tweaked this year to complement the subsequent flurry of Playing Fields & Marquee based events) and more due to the aggressive ribbon tying locations around the Hampden/Chapel parallel.

The main contest saw the resurgent GREEN team triumph, claims of chicanery and of the use of unapproved fluids in the DMZ game were assessed though rapidly dismissed by Speen's own Sec-Gen of the UN, Mr Geoff-Geoff Smith. Well done Greens, commendable leadership from young Jack Downing.

The perennially popular post-script pastime of the Kiddie Kurling Kup Kontest was won by Master Hugo Khaira. His innovative 'fish-out-of-water' technique really had to be seen to be fully appreciated for its daring, verve and piscatorial prowess. Only the annals of history will show how much of a KKKK game changer Hugo's innovation will prove to be.

Thanks as ever to the squadron of worker bees (or dung) bee-tles) who come together to make the day happen. A comforting blend of stalwarts and new blood hopefully boding well for future fundays.

Signing off from another fatality free Funday, Matthew.



SPEENFUN DAY

Matt Davies





Lesley Thorn-Davis, Chair Speen Fete

I hope that you were able to come along and support Speen Village Fete this year. Once again, we had the hottest of days! The afternoon was kicked off by the Speen Village Cowboy, who rode around the main arena and gave out sheriff badges to the children. We were treated to a display of line dancing courtesy of Sarah Sewell Line Dancers of Naphill, and our Fete wouldn't be the same without Martin Hart and the Speen New Orleans Feetwarmers, who played jazz during the afternoon, or indeed, Speen School Country Dancing.

The rodeo bull was a big hit and many tried to stay on and beat the clock – it proved harder than it looked! Thanks to Speen Church for providing an excellent Ranch BBQ and to the Playing Field Committee for running the Saloon Bar. I think the beer helped to calm the nerves for the England game taking place in a separate marquee. The WI ladies did a fantastic job in the marquee, providing us all with tea and cake in extremely hot and challenging conditions. A very lucky lady made a bid on the Wild West themed cake, her daughter wanted it so badly that she agreed to make a contribution with her pocket money!

Our main charity this year was the Village Hall, who are raising money to replace the heaters. As the money is still coming in I don't have a final figure, but early indications are good and I am confident that we can present many healthy cheques to village causes.

Of course, the Fete would not be able to run without the support of the Committee, village organisations, friends, neighbours and volunteers who helped to set up, take down and run the sideshows. We are extremely grateful to everyone who gave up their time over the weekend to make the Fete such a success - there really are too many people to mention, but you all know who you are, so a very big thank you indeed to you all.

Also, I would like to thank all of the businesses who support us by placing an advertisement in the Fete Programme. This contributes greatly to the funds made and I know that many people keep the programme for easy reference of local services. If you do use a service as advertised please do mention where you found the advert.

Finally, a big thank you to all of the children who came, dressed up and enjoyed the Fete. Somebody said to me "why don't we all put in some money and not have a Fete, surely it is so much work it would be much easier". To respond - Speen Fete has been going for over 50 years and whilst it is great that we make money to plough back into the village, the real reason that we run the Fete each year is simply for fun. It is a great afternoon of entertainment that brings all ages from the Village together, memories are made, and you can't put a price on that!

Congratulations to the Competition Winners:

Best Dressed Wild West House*

1st prize: The Davies Family

2nd prize: The Price Family

3rd prize: The Downing Family

Sponsors choice: Holly Bowen

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Colouring Competition 4-7: Henry Duffy

Colouring Competition 8-11: Emma J

Decorated Fairy Cakes: Sophie Winson

Totem Pole: Jacob, Hugo & Seb Khaira

Wanted Poster: Olivia Davies

Rodeo Bull Winner - Adult: Simon Bradley

Rodeo Bull Winner - Child: Ella Price





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SPEEN VILLAGE POND

Catherine Butler

In October 2016 the Parish Council, the Chiltern Society and volunteers from the village cleared our overgrown pond in Studridge Lane and it looked wonderful. Once again the wildlife was back and we had frogspawn and frogs again, something we had not had for a long time. However I am sad to say it was replanted with far too many of the yellow iris, which although pretty is a real thug. This, after almost two years, has taken over the pond again and together with the long grass verge is almost back to square one.

It would be wonderful if perhaps some of the previous willing volunteers, or enthusiastic new ones, could return and get rid of some these iris which are once again clogging the pond, and bring it back to its former glory once again?

I would love to be able to do this but unfortunately age rather limits me now!



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SPEENPLAYING FIELDS

Matt Davies

New Play Equipment Update

The visible work is nearing completion, installing the new play equipment upon the playing fields.

Thanks in no small part to the expertise and contacts of Duncan Wilson, the destructive powers of Andy Thompson and the indefatigable shovelling prowess of Christopher Boyce, the ground was readied for the eagerly anticipated professional installation. I say 'visible' because the securing of funding, the consultation process and meticulous planning have been forging ahead below most radar for over two years!

It was gratifying, bordering on cathartic to welcome the installation team from Kompan, the vendor company, on the sunny morning of July 24th. This phase means the community will see tangible results though, even once the new kit is in place, there will remain a tantalising wait for some pieces of the new equipment to be usable, while the crucial purchase and implementation of safety flooring is completed – patience truly a virtue!

Acquiring funds to maintain and improve our shared space is an ongoing challenge, one regularly faced with vigour by the committee and across the community. For this material expenditure the SPF committee wish to express gratitude to all supporters, most notably the pivotal grant provided by the LGPC and the material

contribution provided by this year's Speen Village Ball – the latter enabling the purchase of a new basket swing. Who'd have thought there was such an appetite for swinging in Speen!

Without such significant one-off contributions, your continuing generosity through community events and the ongoing lifeline of the prize draw, the facilities would undoubtedly fall into disrepair. None of the truly excellent events that make this village such a special place to live happen by accident. Enormous effort is always required, be it the legendary John Holmes with his drive & enviable energy or the various volunteers & committees who's alchemy continually manages to conjure Balls, Bars, Fetes, Fundays and Fires from nothing but gumption, gaffer tape and grit. The new kit on the playing fields is a 24 carat nugget, quite a large one, crafted from all those ingredients. Maximum respect all round!

As the blazing sun sears the corners of my notepad, I can't but help to peek ahead towards cooler times: an Autumn work party or even a bonfire build mobbed by legions of volunteers, their grubby pockets bulging with SPF Prize Draw tickets.

On behalf of the SPF Committee, keep digging deep, climbing high and swinging freely!



VISITORS_{IN} COLEHEATH BOTTOM

Margaret Hancox

I was woken at 6.50am one morning in June by a very unusual sound from outside. On drawing back my bedroom curtains I was amazed to see the drive and front garden FULL of jersey cows! As pretty as they looked with their yellow tag earrings it was a very disconcerting sight. To shut my gate, to keep them contained, would have meant pushing my way through the middle of them to the bottom of the drive. Not a good idea, particularly as I was in a nightie (the negligee is saved for the week-end!!) so reasoning they wouldn't be able to climb steps, I bravely opened the porch door, just a little, and encouraged them to leave by shoo, shooing them accompanied by clapping of hands. They left sedately, BUT not before they had left their calling card.

My kind neighbours came round after they had left and picked up the debris left by their trampling hooves (thank you Kathy and Julian). My grandchildren who are excited when they see Muntjac strolling and grazing their way across the garden would have had eyes out on organ stops if they had witnessed my uninvited visitors. Alas, as I was so shocked and suffering from the rude awakening I didn't think to use my camera.

All part of the joys of living in the country - and a new twist on how many elephants can you get in a Mini!!!



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Trudi Scrivener, Speen Resident and founder of Ashridge Home Care gives some useful advice about dementia.

WHAT IS DEMENTIA?

Rather than being a disease in its own right, 'dementia' is the name given to a group of symptoms associated with a decline in mental function.

Dementia sufferers might experience problems with:

- memory,
- communication,
- concentration,
- perception, and
- decision-making.



When we say that memory loss might be a symptom of dementia, we're not just talking about forgetting where you put your keys or what you had for lunch – this is a decline serious enough to have an impact on how you live your life.

The most common form of dementia, accounting for around three quarters of cases, is Alzheimer's disease. The next most common is vascular dementia, which occurs when blood flow to the brain is reduced, possibly following a stroke.

Six warning signs to watch out for
This is by no means a definitive list, but – especially if a person is over the age of sixty-five – the following points form a useful checklist of things to watch out for.

1. **Becoming forgetful**

- Forgetting the names or birth days of family members or close friends.
- Repeatedly asking the same questions.
- Keeping reminder notes for everyday tasks.
- Forgetting to wash yourself or clean your teeth.

2. **Becoming confused**

- Not knowing what day – or even year – it is.
- Not knowing where you are.
- Being unable to differentiate between past, present and

future events.

- Misplacing things and accusing others of stealing them.
- Being unable to tell the difference between banknotes with different values.

3. **Struggling to do everyday things**

- Not being able to set a TV programme to record.
- Setting out to travel to a familiar destination and getting lost.
- Not knowing how to use (for example) the washing machine.

4. **Making poor decisions**

- Being duped by and handing money over to people who knock at the door and say (for example) there's a problem with the roof that they can fix.
- Letting strangers into the home without first checking their credentials.

5. **Struggling to communicate**

- Getting confused over words when speaking or writing.
- Losing track of a conversation and stopping suddenly in the middle of a sentence.

6. **Losing a sense of self**

- Withdrawing from the wider world because of the issues above.
- Acting in ways that are out of

character.

- Feeling 'fearful and tearful' – overly anxious and overly emotional.

Some of these indicators are present ... what next?

If you, or someone close to you, are demonstrating any of the above symptoms, the best thing to do is to arrange a doctor's appointment. It might be something unconnected, such as undiagnosed illness or the side-effects of medication, or it might genuinely be the early signs of dementia. Either way, proper diagnosis and treatment are essential as, whatever the cause, it is best treated sooner rather than later.

Help is at hand

While the initial symptoms might be worrying and a confirmed diagnosis life-changing for all concerned, the good news is that you don't have to face any of this on your own – help is available. The first step is to get a firm diagnosis, which will be followed by the appropriate treatment and support. This gives those affected the chance to plan for the future and – with the appropriate assistance – to continue to live an active and fulfilled life for as long as possible.

If you have any questions and wish to get in touch with Trudi, then you can get in touch on: 01494 917344
or you can email her at:
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WILDLIFEWATCH

Peter Symonds

Summer 2018

The summer of 2018 has featured some very long dry spells which can be challenging for some wildlife but good for others.

Ponds have either dried out or have suffered with very poor water quality making it difficult for some species to find drink. I have tried to maintain bird baths both in our garden and woodland area to ensure drinking water remains available. A tawny owl bathing in the late afternoon in the woodland bath was a new sighting. Dry summers are often good for butterflies. Our woodlands have featured good numbers of large orange Silver-washed Fritillary butterflies, whilst in early July I had a brief sighting of a Purple Emperor butterfly off Spring Coppice Lane. This was my first for some 7 or 8 years in a location which used to be a hot-spot for this rare canopy living species.



Dry conditions have also probably encouraged animals into gardens. Garden rabbits seem to be an increasing feature of village wildlife. Whilst Woodview Drive have had a number of very tame rabbits for several years they are also now occurring off Chapel Hill, Studridge Lane, Hampden Road and Abbotswood. Another species that continues to thrive is the Glis glis or Edible Dormouse. Large numbers thrive in village houses where they can cause serious damage to wiring. Damage to lead flashing in Studridge Lane that had been gnawed may be attributable to the rodents. Whilst they are hardly ever seen there are also large numbers breeding in our woodland with many currently having families in old woodpecker holes and nest boxes.

There have also been some more bizarre sightings. Two Vietnamese Pot-bellied Pigs loose in Spring Coppice Lane

one night was an unusual record that gave rise to questions as to whether we have Wild Boar (which look somewhat similar) in our woods. There are no Wild Boar in this area to my knowledge but I never managed to establish whether the two pigs were ever returned to their owners.

Whilst for most birds the breeding season is over, some will still be looking after second broods, particularly where they were unsuccessful first time round. In our own garden 13 Mallard flew from one brood early in the season with two further broods totaling 16 ducklings still present. Less common birds that have bred successfully include Marsh Tits, Treecreepers, Great Spotted Woodpeckers, Green Woodpeckers, Bullfinches and Jays. House Martins returned to the O'Briens in Woodview Drive and also to a previous breeding site at the Symondson's in Hampden Road. Stock Doves used two woodland nest boxes but it is not known if they were successful. Siskins have been recorded by George Butler during the middle of the summer suggesting they may be nesting locally. A sighting of a Spotted Flycatcher by Margaret Chitty in her garden, where they have bred in the past, was an interesting record in May.

Almost my only reptile sighting this year was a three foot long Grass Snake in the pond a few feet from our kitchen window on 8th July. The local Roe deer continue to thrive with several young present in local woodlands whilst Lesley Thompson reported hares in two locations to the west of the village.



Please let me have any interesting local wildlife records.
Tel: 01494 488016 • psymonds590@gmail.com

SPEEN HERITAGE GROUP

*Part Three of our essay on Corporal John Rixon, one of the last men of Speen to be killed in WW1
with apologies from the Editor as this should have appeared in the previous issue*

Why did the Allies transfer eleven sorely-needed Divisions to Italy? In a word: Caporetto.



Caporetto

When WW1 broke out, Italy remained neutral - even though it had signed a mutual defence agreement with Germany and Austria-Hungary. When challenged by Berlin and Vienna, Rome agreed that it was duty bound to come to their defence, but this time Germany and Austria were the Aggressors. However, in March 1915, Italy ended secret negotiations with Britain and France (she was promised parts of Austria; a section of Turkey and some of the German colonies in Africa) and attacked Austria. The Italians suffered very heavy losses. Their army was poorly-led; Austria had correctly predicted the most likely areas for an Italian assault - and had made extensive preparations. Crucially, the mountainous terrain favoured the Austrians, because they held the higher ground. Within months, the Italian Army lost 25% of its strength, but fighting ground on, inconclusively, throughout 1916.

By 1917, the German High Command was concerned that the Austrians were losing heart; a great triumph was needed to keep them in the war. German regiments could now be transferred from the Russian front where – following the abdication of the Tsar – fighting had ceased and peace was being negotiated with the Bolsheviks. Wehrmacht experts recommended an attack at Caporetto using huge amounts of poison gas, followed by a creeping

barrage – as developed by the Allies – and the deployment of Germany's brilliant innovation: Stormtroopers. On 24 Oct 17 (relying on intercepted Italian weather forecasts) the German commander released unprecedented volumes of chlorine and phosgene gas.

Italy had placed all her troops in the front line; there was no Mobile Reserve, positioned at the rear, to check an enemy breakthrough¹. Nine Austrian Divisions, stiffened by 6 German Divisions, burst through the centre of the Italian front line. The Italian troops on the flanks found themselves unsupported, and, threatened from the rear, they fled. Italian resistance crumbled; 11,000 were killed; 265,000 were taken prisoner²; desertion was widespread. Caporetto became an Italian by-word for total disaster. By 10 Nov, the Italians had been driven back over 60 miles to the only natural barrier, the river Piave. On the rear side of that, the Italians made a stand. By 19 Nov 17, the Austrians and the Germans had advanced so far and so swiftly that their supply system could not keep up; troops on both sides were utterly exhausted; all fighting fizzled out. Six French and five British Divisions – including John Rixon's Battalion – were rushed by special trains to the Italian front.

The Allies' prompt intervention worked. The French and British took post as the Reserve – obliging the Italians to stay in the front line. The Italian Commander (detested for his severity) was forced to resign and a wave of patriotic fervour restored the morale of the Italian troops. After Christmas, the Allies felt it was safe to replace the Italians in some areas. On 24 Jan 18, with great regret, the Bucks and the Berkshires left S. Croce and marched to the famous Montello Hill. There, they sometimes occupied positions on the Piave (these periods in the front line were uneventful; one historian says the Austrians seemed reluctant to provoke the British) and sometimes they drew back to be the Reserve. On 15 Mar 18, both Battalions set off to new locations below the Asiago Plateau. John Rixon, however, left the march on 24 Mar and climbed on a train, probably at nearby Vicenza. He had been granted 15 days' Leave, in England.

¹ Incredibly, twenty-three years later, France made exactly the same mistake. On 16 May 40, Prime Minister Churchill flew to Paris for a crisis meeting with the French. All their troops – and, unforgivably, all their tanks - were in the front line. The Germans broke through into open country. Churchill, in *Their Finest Hour*, says he asked, in English and in French: Where is the Strategic Reserve? Gen Gamelin "with a shake of the head and a shrug" replied: *Aucune*. (There is none.) Churchill says he was Dumbfounded. To emphasize his astonishment, his book simply says, in stark capital letters: NO STRATEGIC RESERVE.

² A 26 year old Alpenkorps Lieutenant (who had already won the Iron Cross) had trained his Company of 150 men to pretend to have called off the attack. Whilst the enemy rested, he would out-flank them and attack from the rear. In two-and-a-half days his tiny unit, for the loss of only 6 men, took more than 9,000 prisoners. Two weeks later, he tricked the Italian 1st Infantry Division into thinking that they were entirely surrounded. Over 10,000 surrendered. He was promoted to Captain and awarded the *Pour le Mérite*, the German state's highest decoration. His name was Erwin Rommel.

SPEEN HERITAGE GROUP

Continued

He was rested, healthy and happy - and had so much to tell the family. Had he ever eaten grapes, figs, oranges or lemons before – or in such profusion? Had he enjoyed the Veneto cuisine: its celebrated wines, including Prosecco; Asiago cheese; grilled polenta with barbecued meats; risotto; gnocchi or the traditional Christmas pandoro? The boat train reached London, probably on Wednesday 27 Mar, and he heard astonishing news. In overwhelming numbers, the Germans had stormed across the hard-won battlefields of the Somme. They were driving a wedge between the British and the French, and everywhere the Allies were falling back.

This was Operation Michael; phase 1 of Ludendorff's Spring Offensive, sometimes called the Kaiserschlacht. Initially hugely successful, the campaign ended, months later, in total disaster. The German troops believed their opponents were as close to starving as they were. They advanced into French towns and found every variety of food and drink. Refusing to obey their officers, whole Regiments just stopped and feasted. Whereas the Allies were rushing supplies from huge depots over untouched railways, the Wehrmacht, faced with wrecked roads and devastated fields, found it impossible to deliver all the artillery, ammunition and manpower that was needed. Finally, the British adopted the meticulous planning and the innovative "all arms" tactics of the Australian General, Monash³, and also exploited many new technologies - notably gun-location (by detailed aerial reconnaissance and by audio and flash analysis) that made it possible to destroy German batteries without sending any ranging shots to warn them. In August 1918, the tide turned. The Allies, now reinforced by the Americans, drove the exhausted Germans back. There were food riots throughout the Fatherland; the High Seas Fleet mutinied; the Kaiser abdicated; Germany sued for peace. An Armistice was declared on the eleventh hour of the eleventh day of the eleventh month.

All that lay in the future. When John returned to Speen, the news was all about German successes. By then, the dreaded War Office telegrams would have arrived telling the respective families that Frank Randall and Harry Saunders were missing, believed dead. We now know that they died together on 23 Mar - the day before John boarded his train in Italy. They were defending a pile of rubble that had once been a village called Pozières; their bodies were never found. He also learned that two of the Gibbons boys were

dead: William, his classmate, and Sidney, an elder brother. John might also have known Norman Simmonds; he lived at Lacey Green but used to run the youth activities at the Speen Chapel – they were the same age. Those three were all killed in 1917. John's Leave ended on Sunday 7th April. On that day, Edward Lester Janes was killed at Aveluy Wood; Edward's body was never found. Lucy, his widow, was to re-name their home, Aveluy Cottage.

France was in turmoil as John's train trekked back to Italy. The news was very bad when he eventually reported for duty on 11 Apr. The Battalion was then spending every day practicing hill-climbing, supported by pack ponies. Novel schemes for attack and defence had to be learned. Where they were going, it was not possible to dig a trench. The front line consisted of isolated defensive positions using outcrops of rocks provided by Nature. Where the gaps in between were too large, a pit was dynamited and rocks were piled up on the side facing the enemy. On 23 Apr the Bucks and the Berkshires left the warmth of the Plains and, in full fighting order, wound their way up mountain paths to the Asiago Plateau. It took them four and a half hours, climbing for 20 minutes then halting for 10. When they reached Granezza camp, some 4,500 feet above sea-level, a blizzard was raging.

For most of May, both Battalions held the front line. The Berkshires' historian says: *An impressive, indeed, magnificent panorama extended itself in front. No Man's Land, nearly a mile in width, led to pine-clad, gently-rising hills which ... merged into the great snow-covered, cloud-capped bastions of the Alps.* The British freely reconnoitred the area in front of Asiago; there was hardly any action. The Bucks historian even ventures a flash of humour: *... on the few occasions that they met our patrols, the Austrians showed an almost precipitate courtesy in making way.* As May turned into June, both Battalions returned to the Plains to form the Reserve. Let the Berkshires' historian set the scene: *... summer had by now fully set in; the vines, the maize, the mulberry and the orange, with many other diverse forms of luxuriant foliage had completely changed the aspect of the country. The men were glad to wear the suits of drill and the sun-helmets which had now been issued.* On the first of June, John Rixon was detached, for an entire month, to the 145th Infantry Brigade school. Long courses were also Selection Boards. John was now in line for promotion to Sergeant.

³ His masterpiece was Hamel (4 Jul 18) but the Battle of Amiens (8 Aug) was his greatest triumph. On that day, the Germans realised that the war was lost; Ludendorff called it "The blackest day of the German Army." On 12 Aug, King George V knighted Monash, on the battlefield.



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ALLIED HEALTHCARE

As a population we are getting older and many of us will be faced with finding nursing or personal care for an elderly relative or planning our own future care if we become incapacitated. Bucks, residents are increasingly making a choice, where possible, of living in their own homes for as long as possible and the local branch of Allied Healthcare is aiming to make this option easier.

The local branch of Allied Healthcare has been operating for over 27 years, based just outside of High Wycombe, has a proven track record of providing domiciliary care in the community.

Increasingly there are fewer hospital beds and long term care homes that are accessible to those needing help, support and care, and most people, if given the choice, would prefer to be treated at home with their own possessions around them. We can offer a wide variety of Care calls from 15 minute pop-in call, once a day to multiple calls or indeed a full time Live In Care.

The offices of Allied Healthcare at High Wycombe are able to help with assessing your needs and advising on all aspects of your care. Before care starts you would be visited by our assessor to ensure that a comprehensive care plan was written and tailor made to suit the needs of the client. This can be for a basic care package to a more specialized and complex packages in the case of a serious illness. We will help you to consider whether you need a fulltime carer, perhaps a special bed or other equipment, or maybe additional carers at certain times of the day to help with lifting or turning. If needed you would have the advice of the 'In House' Trainer to advise on specialist Moving and Handling issues. Allied is willing to go the extra mile to provide the highest standards of care. They try to ensure clients build a relationship with a small team of carers rather than having a constantly changing set of faces. They recommend the use of a Keysafe which ensures a carer, can always gain access to a client's house to provide the care and raise the alarm if needed.

All of the Care workers are trained to the highest standard as required by our regulators, CQC and our stringent internal audit team. Many of our workers have training and expertise in specialist areas but if we needed to we would provide training to meet a specific need of a client.

If you would like more information about Allied and the services we offer then call 01494 488040, and we can meet with you for a no obligation visit or provide you with details and costings of our services.

Work for Allied Healthcare

We always have a need for additional employees to support the services we offer. If you are interested or know of a friend who is interested in joining us as an employee we offer an attractive package. We provide care across the High Wycombe and surrounding areas.

Care & support in the comfort of your own home

Do you or a relative require care or support to live your life the way you choose? If so, Allied Healthcare can help. We have been offering an excellent dependable service in the Buckinghamshire area for over 27 years.

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For more information or assistance please call
01494 488040 / 01494 488141
Email: highwycombe@alliedhealthcare.com

All about you

If you are interested in becoming a Carer or working with Allied Healthcare then please call the numbers above for more information and an application pack. Allied Healthcare is an equal opportunities employer and is regulated by the CQC. Allied Healthcare is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children, adults and young people and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment.





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Hughenden Parish Council - Chairman	Roger Beavil	01494 715296
Lacey Green Parish Council - Chairman	Cathryn Davies	01844 342800
Lacey Green Parish Council - Councillor for Speen Ward	Roger Craft	01494 488343
North Dean Good Neighbours	Judith Broadley	01494 563178
North Dean Village Hall - Bookings Secretary/Fete	Jez Wicks	01494 563517
North Dean Village Hall - Chair	Alison Kent	ath@bfarms.co.uk
Pigotts 7 '48' Musical Evenings	Nick Wheeler-Robinson	01494 562167
Riding for the Disabled	Gloria Holmes	01494 488420
Speen Good Neighbours	Pat Richardson	01494 488627
Speen & North Dean Guides	Pauline Hall	01494 488372
Speen & North Dean News - Advertising	Tom Dent	01494 488943
Speen & North Dean News - Chair	Gloria Holmes	01494 488420
Speen & North Dean Toddler Group	Laura Chapman	
Speen Baptist Church	Rev. Heather McIntyre	07517 663792
Speen Fete - Chair	Lesley Thorn-Davis	01494 488851
Speen Helping Hospices - Secretary	Maureen Laing	01494 488397
Speen Heritage Group - Chairman	Peter Symonds	01494 488016
Speen Marquee	Greg Cook	01494 488939
Speen Playing Fields - Chair	Clare Morris	01494 488688
Speen Pre-School Chair	Jess Walsh	07801 145223
Speen School - Head	Denise Nayna	01494 488321
Speen School PTA - Co-Chair	Becky Khaira	01494 489886
Speen Stores	Alison Templeman	01494 488258
Speen Tennis Court - Secretary	Philippa Lane	01494 488453
Speen Village Hall - Bookings	Sue Taylor	01494 488500
Speen Village Hall - Chairman	Bill Groves	01494 488180
Speen WI - Secretary	Jenny Pearce	01494 562333
St John's Parish Church	Revd Tony Bundock	01844 347741
Wycombe District Council - Member for Lacey Green& Hampdens	Cllr. Graham Peart	01494 488327

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A photograph of a garden path leading through a rose archway. The path is made of light-colored gravel and is bordered by a low, neatly trimmed green hedge on the left. The archway is covered in dense foliage and numerous red and white roses. In the background, a white building with a glass door is visible through the trees.

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