

# Newsletter

Spring 2020

Yorkshire Ladies' Council of Education

# **Committee Meetings**

**Executive Committee Meetings** (5 per annum)

**Awards Committee Meetings** (3 per annum) Friday, 10 days prior to Executive meetings in March, June and September

Projects Committee Meetings (2-3 per annum)

Social Committee Meetings (2-3 per annum)

Don't forget: You can visit these pages on the website:

HOME AWARDS ABOUT US NEWS AND EVENTS

OUR TEAM MEMBERSHIP CONTACT DONATE

If any member has comments or ideas for the new website, please get in touch with Nicola Lewis

Email: <u>nicolalewis@ylce.org</u>

Tel.: 07973 796040

# Letter from our Chairman To all our members:

Good to be in touch - I note that a year ago, when we weren't aware of Covid-19, I closed my letter with 'be happy, healthy and enjoy the summer' and I wish you the same for this year but, most of all, just please stay safe. Writing this letter is comforting, probably because it's a group letter and I have in mind faces and friends as I write. I also



have in mind - mmm ..... just as well we're not Facetiming here, as I'm still in a furry dressing gown - albeit with appropriate earrings. It's a changed world of course. We are all now judges of crisis management, we applaud where we can and then we work out how to live with this on a daily basis, within our own locality, how to cope and how to help. So maybe at the moment and in the great scheme of things our Newsletter may seem a small thing but it belongs to a worthy organisation which has responded to a few crises in its time.

And the YLCE is still responding and adapting. Elsewhere in the Newsletter, Awards Chairman Gillie Andrews reports on how the Awards Committee must work differently in a world of social isolation to ensure the YLCE can continue its vital financial support for women, and we thank her, her deputy, Carol Gleisner and her committee.

Reading applicants' letters in the Awards Report brings us close to the women who depend on charitable support and it certainly hits home just how vital the YLCE's work is. Women we are helping now, at a time when funding opportunities become evermore scarce, will, in their turn, help shape a different future.

The YLCE donations of money and food for Inside Outside Childcare organised by our Chairman of Projects, Peggy Pullan, and her Committee, were collected at the AGM in February and proved a godsend to organisers coming to terms with food shortages just as the reality was beginning The Projects Committee's decision, after much to bite. debate, not to hold a coffee morning this year was a difficult one but we can look forward to future projects. Then in November 1919, we enjoyed the Social Committee's Christmas Food Fayre and Sandwich Lunch, supporting the Lighthouse School in Cookridge: an excellent cause and a fine social event. It serves to highlight what everyone is missing now. We say goodbye, offering her huge thanks, to Gill Milner as Chairman of the Social Committee and we welcome Janet Juřica in her place: excellent news that Gill remains on the Committee. And thanks here to the unknown member of the Social Committee who provided the small jar labelled PICKLED PEARS (FOR CHEESE) which I bought maybe 2 years ago(?) at St Chad's - turned up behind bigger jars in my kitchen cupboard a couple of days ago - pears in perfect condition - all now gone highlight of lockdown!

There is plenty of admin to occupy the time - more than usual I would say; we are still engaged in fine tuning on our Mem and Arts and there is much to check with the Charity Commission, especially to do with good management during the pandemic; so I have had lengthy phone conversations with Charity Commissioners who are working from home and who emphasise that common sense must prevail when strict adherence to protocol may not be Our Independent Advisor, David Hartley, has been, as always, most helpful with advice and keeps very much in contact. We have in Tricia Hollis a most knowledgeable and helpful Hon. Secretary and in Anne Taylor a most diligent Treasurer so I feel all bases are covered. The Executive Committee is always willing to offer whatever help where needed; we are in touch online or by phone - no online conferencing as yet so no need to edit the bookshelves! We intend to try between us, to ring round all our members just to say hello and keep in touch, or if you want to make contact with me about anything, please see my contact details below (try mobile first)

Obviously, we cannot send out the Newsletter in the usual way, professionally printed and bound, collected from the printer etc, so we're sending this edition out as an email to most members and as a printout by post to those not on email - and many thanks to our Secretary, Nicola Lewis, who is working from home, for doing the emailing, printing out and posting. Nicola will respond to members' emails as usual but if you need to contact her directly, please use her mobile number - 07973 796040 - to text or ring (Monday-Friday between 9am and 5pm). I offer a special vote of thanks to our Editor, Lorraine Harding, for the chivvying of all contributors and her detailed checking, collating and formatting of material and, last but not least, for her successful 'nobbling' of possible contributors.

We very much miss going into Forest Hill at the moment and we send our thanks to the Manager, the Warden and the team who are working so hard to support the residents in their flats. We are thinking of you all - good thoughts and stay safe and well. Time now to stop reading if enough poems have already come your way - though I'm offering a fine Victorian poet, Arthur Hugh Clough - and I'm hoping he had it right for then and, fingers crossed, that he has it about right for now.

#### SAY NOT THE STRUGGLE NOUGHT AVAILETH

Say not the struggle nought availeth, The labour and the wounds are vain, The enemy faints not, nor faileth, And as things have been they remain.

If hopes were dupes, fears may be liars; It may be, in yon smoke concealed, Your comrades chase e'en now the fliers, And, but for you, possess the field.

For while the tired waves, vainly breaking Seem here no painful inch to gain, Far back through creeks and inlets making, Comes, silent, flooding in, the main.

And not by eastern windows only, When daylight comes, comes in the light, In front the sun climbs slow, how slowly, But westward, look, the land is bright.

My best regards and stay safe
Gill
Gill Lydon
Chairman of Executive Committee
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#### Social Committee

In November 2019 the Social Committee held their Christmas Food Fayre and Sandwich Lunch Fund Raising Event at St. Chad's Church Parish Centre, Headingley. We were raising money to donate to The Lighthouse School, Cookridge Leeds, which supports Students from 11-18 years with an Autism spectrum condition and related communication Disorder and learning Disability. All Students must have a statement of special needs from their Local Authority.

The School employs, with the backing of the Dept of Education, Specialist Teachers and Tutors with a high level of expertise in the field of Autism.

Emma Sullivan a Representative from the School gave a very informative presentation about the work of the School to Members of the Yorkshire Ladies Council Of Education and their Friends.

We Donated £500 to the School From money raised after a successful and enjoyable Event.

The Committee is hoping to have a visit to the School in the Spring.

Gill Milner

Please note Janet Juřica will be taking over from Gill Milner as Chairman of the social Committee. See Janet's profile later in this newsletter.

# Projects' Committee

The Projects' Committee did not hold its usual fundraising coffee morning this year as it has proved to be expensive in both time and effort with steadily diminishing attendance and returns. Instead, we asked members of the YLCE attending the AGM to donate cash and non-perishable food for Inside Outside Childcare at St Gregory's, Seacroft, Leeds, a project we have supported for many years.

Members were more than generous, and I am pleased to say that a cheque for £175.00 was sent to Mrs Carole O'Connor to support the extra needs teacher. Inside Outside Childcare is in one of the most deprived areas of Leeds and offers valuable educational and practical support for children of school age as well as their parents.

The food was delivered just as the effects of the Coronavirus pandemic started to become apparent and the members of staff were delighted to see the sheer numbers of items that had been donated. They explained they could not have arrived at a more opportune time as due to panic buying they had been unable to purchase the volume of cereals and tinned goods they require on a regular basis. The stringent volume control measures subsequently put in place by the supermarkets to ensure staple goods would be available for all caused further problems in that the staff had to make multiple visits to the shops to buy enough provisions to see the children through the week.

Just to see how welcome the food delivery was at a desperately difficult time brought home to me how much the continued support of the Projects' Committee means to the staff of Inside Outside Childcare. Not only is it important practical support but it also provides a great and much-needed boost to morale.

The centre is facing a period of uncertainty over the next few weeks, but the staff hope to work with Leeds City Council to remain open. Not only do many of the children have special needs but a number of their parents are key workers in the NHS or health care system and will be encouraged to work during the current crisis.

May I thank once again, all members of the YLCE who so generously donated both food and money to help the Inside Outside Childcare group carry on its invaluable work.

Margaret Pullan



#### Awards Committee

What sort of courses have our Awards applicants been applying for since the last Newsletter? We've had requests for support from women wishing to pursue Masters courses in: Applied Forensic Psychology, Real Estate Management, Public Policy, Crime Intelligence & Data Analysis, Psychotherapeutic Counselling, Understanding Domestic & Sexual Violence, Painting, Conservation of Paintings - I could obviously go on, but that gives you a flavour. The title of some courses make us reach for the mouse and search our browsers for enlightenment. What does 'International Management' involve, we wonder: standing up in front of the UN and giving the assembled delegates a telling-off? And what about 'Art Writing'? Is that about calligraphy or a study of pop art typography paintings? A favourite this time has been from a woman keen to work towards a Diploma in Artisan Bakery. (You can imagine why that appealed.)

Your Awards Committee members were all set to discuss some of the above applications for our round-the-table session to be held on Friday 20 March. We had considered carefully at home the applications we'd read on our computer screens and had written out notes in readiness for the meeting. We would be reviewing just 56 applications and were looking forward to a few hours of pleasant, sometimes earnest, sometimes light-hearted debate. We had just 56 from the original 80; Carol Gleisner (Deputy Chair) and I had weeded out the no-hopers: women with a flimsy hold on reality, with extravagant hopes and schemes, wanting to apply for courses costing the earth, and all women with very 'slender means'.

Yes, we were all set. I had even bought the biscuits. But then came the ever increasingly dire warnings of the risks to the elderly from the spread of the devilish corona virus. We were certainly on the elderly side of seventy, the majority of us, so we forced ourselves to make the decision to cancel the 'live' meeting. I ate all the biscuits myself. We could have organised a videoconference, but we were not all technologically up to doing that sort of thing at short notice.

What did we do instead? Well, on a spreadsheet we each entered a score of 1 to 5 for each applicant, a 1 being a definite 'yes' and a 5 a definite 'no'. That left 2, 3 and 4 to express levels of uncertainty. Now, in 'live' meetings committee members can be persuaded to change their initial opinions. Not having any discussion was not ideal. But for the sake of the applicants waiting to hear from us, we had to make the best of it. Carol and I were the final arbiters. We tallied the scores and drew up a list in rank order. Then we had great fun, you might say, in a somewhat prolonged telephone conversation, settling on who would be our award recipients this time.

How did we decide where to draw the line between 'accepted' and 'rejected'? We chose to follow the pattern of previous rounds and offer an award to roughly half the candidates on the short list. So out of the 56 listed we were looking at accepting around 28 applicants. In the present financial climate it seemed very prudent not to offer up to the £15,000 our Treasurer had told us was available. Awards funds come mainly from investment income and stock markets are crashing. We have to think of future funding rounds. In the end we were relatively satisfied that we had made some justifiable decisions. We accepted 26 applications, offering each £300, a total of £7,800.

\* (If you'd really like to know the exact ins and outs of how we came to our final decisions, do get in touch; we have details of the step by step process!)

We dealt with the present round of applications as if this were an ordinary March. Which, of course, it was not. There seemed to be no other sensible or indeed possible way of approaching the task.

As is now usual, all the applications were from students wanting to follow postgraduate courses – diplomas, MAs, MScs or PhDs (see above).

There are so many unknowns at present:

- What will happen to students on the varying courses in this academic year as universities move to online classes and close their doors to all students except those undertaking scientific research which cannot be left unmonitored? And what about those whose degrees involve placements in institutions now similarly closed?
- What will happen to those students who rely on small part-time jobs in hospitality or retail outlets to get enough money to live on? They've explained it all to us in their applications.
- Most of those seeking support for the next academic year, 2020/21 will be rethinking their plans, unable to save enough before October to finance their next year's study as they have carefully planned

In view of such questions it was decided that we should extend for an extra year the availability of the loan.

### Who are we supporting?

The career of Physician Associate is becoming more and more popular. In the present climate we were more than happy to support Michelle, a graduate in Biomedical Sciences. She is in her first year of a two-year course in the School of Medicine here at Leeds University. She will then be qualified as a health care professional dealing directly with patients to diagnose and illnesses under the supervision of doctors. She told us:

I previously undertook a year at NHS England as an analytical support worker which highlighted the issues our health service is currently combatting, including overworked underpaid staff. As a physician associate I will be able to take up some of the work that doctors and nurses face and provide high quality care working as part of a team. While I have not yet decided whether I would like to work in a primary care setting in a GP surgery or a secondary care setting in a hospital ward, I know I have a keen interest in obstetrics and gynaecology and would like to specialise in this area once qualified.

In her reply to my email giving her the good news she wrote:

First of all I would like to thank you very much for your generosity, it has been greatly appreciated.

I thought I would update you on the goings on with the physician associates, the first years (myself included) have currently been pulled out of their patient contact placements due to the ongoing situation, however the second year students are still on the front line in their secondary care placements where they can!

We are also supporting Rachel. She achieved a distinction in her BTEC National Diploma in Performing Arts 18 years ago, but has been a carer for her mentally and physically disabled mother for most of the time since then. She decided that it was about time she got a social work qualification and is doing an MSc in Social Work She told us:

As I have grown up being a carer and understanding firsthand the impact of mental ill health, I would like to work within this field, with a view to working as an advocate where I can speak up for the most marginalised in society, as well as be an agent for change. I have previously worked as a support worker, supporting people to live independently in the community and as a personal carer for somebody with a physical disability. These experiences influenced me to want to work holistically with vulnerable people in a more structured and professional capacity and have been a catalyst for me in applying to complete a masters degree to achieve my qualification.

# In her reply to my email giving her the good news she wrote:

Thank you very much for notifying me of the award - I am very grateful, especially at this difficult time, to be able to pay off some of my fees. I am still registered as a student, but unfortunately only being able to carry out home study as I'm sure you can imagine is a bit tough!

I am looking after my mum as normal and hoping that there is some light at the end of all this, so that we can get back to having our freedom and that I may progress to qualifying as a social worker - a much needed profession at this time. I am very happy to grant you permission to store my details, as well as being involved in any future talks and gatherings you will have, as I feel this is a very worthy cause which other young women could benefit from and which I can support.

So do keep your donations flowing. There are women out there who need our help.

## Gillie Andrews



In the coming months the Deputy Chair of the Awards Committee, Carole Gleisner will be taking over completely from Gillie Andrews as Chair. The handover has already taken place in part and has been carefully planned. Carole has been responsible for a lot of the work involved in the past few months. Gillie will continue as a member of the committee – for a time.

# The Awards Committee – Vacancy

There is a vacancy on the Awards Committee.

The Trustees of YLCE invite members of the Council to apply to fill this vacancy. If there are more than 2 candidates the final choice will lie with the Awards Committee.

Are you interested?

Do you *know* a YLCE member whom you think might be interested? Give her a nudge.

The Committee consists of 9 members and meets 3 times a year: in mid-March, mid-June and mid-September. Members make themselves available for all 3 meetings if possible, and the meetings usually take place in the Chairman's home. They begin at 10am and are over by 3 or 3:30pm, at the latest.

Applications for awards are now made on line so a potential new member needs to be used to reading material on screen. At least 10 days before the meeting, members receive a list of suitable applications which they then access via the website so that they can consider the merits of each application at leisure before the meeting. As you know YLCE offers grants to well-motivated, talented women who are keen to pursue their studies but cannot do so without financial support towards their course fees. There are usually between 70 and 80 applications to be considered at each meeting, and we discuss, round the table, which of the applicants should receive an award. The meetings are enjoyable, satisfying and rewarding.

Current members of the Awards Committee have career experience in many fields, for example, education, business, academic administration and music. It would be helpful for a new member to have some knowledge of the British education and qualification structure – but by no means essential; such knowledge can be acquired. All members have an interest in supporting women to qualify for a worthwhile career and fulfil their personal goals.

#### Interested?

If you have any questions or indeed would like complete details of what's involved, contact Gillie Andrews at gandrews@ylce.org. or chat on 0113 2267564. Or contact Carol Gleisner, soon to take over as Chair, at cgleisnerylce@gmail.com or chat on 0113 2265752

We will ask you to complete a pro forma available as an email attachment, where you can tell us in a short personal statement how you can contribute to the work of the Committee.

Your completed pro forma should be sent to <a href="mailto:info@ylce.org">info@ylce.org</a> by 22 May 2020.

It will then be forwarded to YLCE Executive Chairman, Gill Lydon for review before being passed to the Awards Committee Chairman.

# Reports on events

# 7th November 2019 Christmas Food Fayre and Sandwich Lunch



## Fayre, Fair or Fare?

Having been asked by the editor to report on this event I thought I ought to know the significance of its name. My 1991 OED does not contain the word 'fayre' which presumably came into

use after that date as a pseudo-archaic (to quote Oxford's on-line Lexico) term to conflate 'fair' and 'fare'. If it is our tradition to call it a fayre, so be it!

Winter was certainly upon us as we came dripping from the pouring cold rain into St Chad's Parish Centre for the annual sandwich lunch and fayre. The room was warm and made cheery by the fair: a range of stalls with handbags and scarves, jewellery and greetings cards from our familiar stall-holders, and books and home made fare from our own members. The table was rapidly emptying of Christmas fare, but, to be fair, I was able to buy lasagne and parkin for current consumption, and delicious they have proved to be. The raffle display included lovely prizes donated by stallholders and members.

As usual, there was a spread of sandwiches including coronation chicken, mock crab, and other varied fillings, and Christmas cake and cheese, all prepared by the Social Committee. Seated at tables for four, the forty or so Yorkshire Ladies settled down to enjoy the lunch and interesting conversations that always ensue at these events.

The proceeds of the event were designated to support the Lighthouse School in Cookridge, a secondary special school for pupils aged 11-19 with autism spectrum condition and related communication disorder. The hubbub of our conversation was quelled as Emma Sullivan, the Principal of the school was introduced. Emma gave a very informative talk about the history and organisation of the school, bringing to life the ways in which the Lighthouse educates and supports its 81 students according to each one's particular needs, talents and aspirations and potential destinations. It was the first Special Free School, following the vision of parents who decided that the existing local provision was insufficient. It is located in the renovated Cookridge Hospital building which has been developed into a school premises to suit the needs of the pupils with reduced stimuli and absence of classroom displays. The school motto is 'Inspiring Bright Futures'. They achieve this aim by finding the talent and passion in individual children, and working through "four cornerstones" of Curriculum, Wellbeing, Speech and Language, and Experience and Skills. Individualised learning is offered to every student but teaching is in small groups, as this is beneficial to accustom children to the group demands of social and working life.

The Curriculum is like that of any secondary school. Practical subjects like horticulture and food technology are linked to work experience at "Reaching Out" and "Keeper's Café" as well as challenging placements in other businesses. Some children are able to return to mainstream secondary school. Each student is supported in achieving their potential, whether in national qualifications, further education, employment and/or independent living.

We agreed that Lighthouse School is a charity we are pleased to support and look forward to hearing how much the event raised for our donation.

(YLCE Newsletter Autumn 2019 has an article on The Lighthouse School and further information can be found at lighthouseschool.co.uk)





# Monday 10th February 2020 Annual General Meeting and Lunch

The event at St Chad's Centre on 10<sup>th</sup> February 2020 started with a brisk Extraordinary General Meeting (EGM) to vote on a Special Resolution to adopt certain amendments to the Memorandum and Articles.





The draft document had been circulated to members and the motion was carried nem. con. The process of the revision has involved a small working group from the executive deliberating

tirelessly over the past two years. This was explained in the AGM (the 115th) which followed straight on.

After introductions and apologies, Gill Lydon, chairing the meeting in the absence of Lady Halifax, gave her Remarks as Chair of YLCE. She commended the work of the committees and thanked their Chairs and members. Awards Committee has two co-Chairs to enable the heavy workload, Janet Juřica is taking over the Social Committee chair from Gill Milner, and the Projects' Committee, under Peggy Pullen, is in the process of reviewing what they do. Two planned Events had to be cancelled due to members not responding in time. The position of events organiser is vacant, and a volunteer is sought from the membership.

The main preoccupation of the Executive Committee has been the revision of 'Mem and Arts' to make it relevant to the present day. Mary Herbert complimented the Chair and Exec Committee for their work in creating a modern version and for keeping what was good of the original traditional version. Anne Taylor described it as 'an enabling, not restrictive document'. The Chair thanked Anne for all her work and Forest Hill for the meeting room.

The AGM proceeded according to the agenda, with favourable financial reports and formal resolutions. The officers and committee members were confirmed. Applications for the vacant position of Fundraising Chair were invited.

The AGM closed precisely on time for us to move to the lunch tables. We enjoyed the excellent and varied buffet lunch provided by the Social Committee. Discussions flowed around a range of fascinating topics, typical at gatherings of Yorkshire Ladies. The buzz of conversation was called to a halt for the commencement of the afternoon talks by our two Award holders about their very different research projects.

Aisha Purcell, a graduate of St Andrews University and now a MPhil student in Classical Archaeology at Oxford, gave a fascinating talk about her research on a religious shrine on Hadrian's Wall. Dedicated to the littleknown goddess Coventina, it is a very important site, built around a massive well and with an altar stone



with the only known image of the deity. An enormous horde of Roman coins (votive tokens in the holy well), a brass eagle, jewellery and half a human skull filled with coins have been found there, and some carelessly removed in the past. The shrine was probably in use for over 400 years. Aisha's approach is to ask questions relevant to modern day life: what was the experience of going into the temple and how did it relate to the life of soldiers and others living in a mixed community remote from their various native lands

Charis Warnock is doing a Master's degree in Chemistry by research at York. She is working in a team investigating a viable substitute for organ donation. Her research is a bout optimising biomaterials for tissue growth, focusing on biomarkers and signalling proteins.



The outcomes will aid the development of stem cell technologies to create a patient's own organs for transplant into the body, avoiding the need for immunosuppressants. Charis' slide show of diagrams made accessible the complex concepts and processes involved.

Both speakers expressed their gratitude for their YLCE award and their pleasure at being able to meet us. Mrs Gleisner ably summed up the two presentations and thanked both our Award holders.

### Valerie Wood-Robinson

(Editor's note: I'd like to thank Valerie Wood Robinson for writing two excellent articles for this Spring's newsletter.)



#### New members

#### Janet Juřica



Janet Juřica (at far left) with members of the Social Committee
At last November's Christmas Fayre

Some 50 years ago I arrived in Leeds to study Colour Chemistry and Dyeing in the then Faculty of Applied Science and Engineering at the University. Although family roots on the distaff side are predominately Welsh I was born and educated in Yeovil on the border of Somerset and Dorset. My Hall roommate, an American, got me involved in the Student Union's provision for 'overseas' students leading to me serving on the Union's Council for 3 years whilst also being able to indulge in my love of singing in small choirs and bell-ringing.

After four years as a Dye Application Research Chemist at Yorkshire Chemicals testing research and competitors' products I joined the Registry at the University. As a 'generalist' administrator my role and duties were 'as directed by the Registrar'. I somehow survived on that basis without a detailed job description until I retired some 36 years later (but with part-time re-engagement with a job description!).

I was lucky in that my roles always seemed to coincide with developments which meant I was never bored. They combined both operational and strategic developments across the broad spectrum of work in the then centralised Registrarial and Secretarial offices. Starting with 'absorbing' the former Institute of Education's Examination Section's staff, manual records and systems into Registry arrangements when computerisation was being introduced, I moved successively to: Postgraduate students; Validation (Collegiate Affairs) at a time when the University was the largest validating university in the UK and affiliating a significant number of smaller institutions; quality and standards management, before ending up in Legal Affairs.

Responsibility came my way for the curricular Ordinances and Regulations, Academic Dress, Copyright, External Degree Ceremonies, Criminal Record checks, assessment of non-standard entry qualifications and forgeries, Freedom of Information and the University's response to the European wide Bologna Process. I enjoyed the privilege of attending national and international conferences. The University also enhanced my love of wine with the SCR Wine Club giving me the honour as serving as its Chair on the understanding I would arrange a champagne tasting.

Externally I served for many years as a Governor for the Northern School of Contemporary Dance and Honorary Secretary of the Leeds Philharmonic Society. I deputised for the NSCD Chair on the Governing body of the national Conservatoire of Dance and Drama bringing me into close contact with the London Contemporary Dance School, RADA, LAMDA, Rambert School, Bristol Old Vic Theatre School, the Central School of Ballet and Circus Arts.

Penning this profile is, I anticipate, the biggest challenge facing me as Chairman of the Social Committee. Since joining the team I have been incredibly impressed at the skill, care, talent and humour its members have brought to their role under the expert and caring chairing of Gill Milner. She is a very hard act to follow.

Janet Juřica

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Awards Committee Mrs Carol Gleisner
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Social Committee Miss Janet Juřica

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