



NEWS 'n NOTES

CHINESE HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA

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May 2008

May Program

CHINESE AMERICAN LIBRARIANS ASSOCIATION

Guest Speaker

2007-2008 President Dora Ho

&

**Awarding of David and Pearl Louie Foundation—
Chinese Historical Society of Southern California
2008 Graduate Student Scholarship**

Wednesday, May 7, 2008, 7:00 p.m.

Castelar Elementary School Multipurpose Room,

840 Yale Street, Los Angeles Chinatown.

Open to the public: free admission and parking.

Enter: College Street between Yale & Hill Streets.

At our May General Meeting, we will award our 2008 post-graduate scholarship to a distinguished scholar of Chinese American studies. Additionally, program speaker Dora Ho, President of the Chinese American Librarians Association (CALA), will describe that organization's mission, recent activities, and history—supplemented by a PowerPoint presentation. Ms. Ho is a Young Adult Librarian at Los Angeles Central Library.

CALA originated as the Midwest Chinese American Librarians Association, a regional organization in the state of Illinois. Currently, it boasts seven chapters; and members throughout the United States, Canada, China, Hong Kong, Singapore, Taiwan, and several other countries.

CALA's *21st Century Librarian Seminar Series* is now in its third year and has enjoyed great success in numerous Chinese cities. This year, CALA will expand its seminars to Taiwan and other cities in China, and, in June, will host its annual membership meeting and awards dinner in Anaheim, California.

SPRING DINNER REGISTRATION DEADLINE!!!

The mail-in deadline for our May 3, 2008 Spring Dinner at beautiful Almansor Court is April 28th. Join us for gourmet cuisine in elegant surroundings as we honor 10 prominent Chinese American community organizations. Please include your table purchase and payment information on the attached dinner registration form and mail it in today.

2008 BOARD OF DIRECTORS NOMINATIONS

The CHSSC Nominations Committee requests nominations from our membership for the Board of Directors. A nominee must be a current member of the CHSSC. Officers may serve a 1-year term for two consecutive years. Directorship is from July 1 to June 30. The following positions are open:

President

Vice President

Vice President of Programs

Treasurer

Secretary

Financial Secretary

Membership Secretary

Member-at-Large (2-year terms, 8 positions open)

Please send your nominations by May 7, 2008, to Will Gow at wgow@ucla.edu, or call CHSSC at 323-222-0856, or fax to 323-221-4162. Nominations may also be made at the May 7th General Meeting. The nominations slate will be published in the June 2008 News 'n Notes, and elections will take place at the June monthly meeting.



Chinese Historical Society of Southern California

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Around CHSSC

PORTRAIT OF A CHINESE DIPLOMAT: SIR CHENTUNG LIANG CHENG



(April speaker Lorena Tong, President Kenneth L. Chan, and VP-Programs Eugene Moy— Tom Eng Photo)

By Randy Bloch

Our April program speaker, Lorena Tong, is an ESL (English as a Second Language) teacher and was a TV producer at KCBS and International Channel/KSCI TV in Los Angeles. She is the recipient of local Emmy awards for the children's game show, KIDQUIZ, and for an instructional video on becoming a U.S. citizen: *U.S. Citizenship: a dream come true*.

In recent years, Ms. Tong embarked on a project far more personal, but which she hopes to share with the world: documenting the history of her great grandfather, Sir Chentung Liang Cheng, a famous early 20th century Chinese diplomat who was twice knighted by England's Queen Victoria. Sir Chentung Liang Cheng was one of the last great diplomats of the Qing Dynasty. Supplemented by rare archival slides, Ms. Tong's great grandfather was the subject of her CHSSC talk.

Sir Chentung Liang Cheng was born Liang P'i Hsu (Pixu) (Pe Yuk-Cantonese) in 1864 in the Guangdong Panyu Whampoa Village near Canton, China. He was among 120 boys selected to study in the U.S. through the Chinese Educational Mission, based in Hartford, Connecticut. As a student at Phillips Academy Andover, in addition to exemplary academics, he was known for his love of baseball and permanently distinguished himself as a long ball hitter in a game Andover won by double digits over Exeter.

On October 14, 1875, at age 10, Liang Pixu sailed from Shanghai to America. With 30 other highly qualified and promising ten to 16 year-olds, the group arrived in California on November 18, 1875 and traveled east by train from San Francisco to Hartford. Upon arriving, Liang Pixu and another boy were home schooled by 68-year-old Mrs. Julia Harrington of Amherst, Massachusetts. Over the next 3 years, the dedicated widow prepared the boys for formal schooling.

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BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Officers

Kenneth L. Chan, President
Gilbert Hom, Vice President
Eugene Moy, V.P. for Programs
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Susan Dickson
Irvin Lai
Jeannie Liu
Donald Loo, Ph.D.
George Yin

*Interim News 'n Notes Editor,
Randy Bloch*

MISSION STATEMENT

The Chinese Historical Society of Southern California was organized in November, 1975. The purposes of the Society are: 1) to bring together people with a mutual interest in the important history and historical role of Chinese and Chinese Americans in Southern California; 2) to pursue, preserve and communicate knowledge of this history; and; 3) to promote the heritage of the Chinese and Chinese American community in support of a better appreciation of the rich, multi-cultural society of the United States.



2008 CH'ING MING FESTIVAL HELD AT EVERGREEN CEMETERY



(Photo by Gordon Hom)

CHSSC sponsored Ch'ing Ming Festival at the Chinese Memorial Shrine in Evergreen Cemetery from noon to 2:00 p.m. on April 5th.

Our VP of Programs, Eugene Moy, emceed the event. 49th District Assemblymember Mike Eng attended, and presented certificates of appreciation to South Pasadena City Councilmember Mike Ten, CHSSC past president Irvin Lai, and former CHSSC Board member Randy Bloch. The three were recognized for their efforts to achieve thorough study and proper and respectful reburial of the remains and grave artifacts disturbed two years ago during MTA Gold Line excavations next to Evergreen Cemetery.

Assemblymember Eng also spoke on his recently introduced bill which mandates a process whereby discoveries of human remains and grave artifacts that are not Native American or part of a crime scene are reported to a local organization charged with receiving that information.

CHSSC Vice-President Gilbert Hom decried the fact that no Chinese organizations were initially contacted after the MTA burial disturbances, and that the Society learned of the situation six months later, through a newspaper article.

The assembled guests then all participated in a quiet ceremony to pay respect to our ancestors by filing into the Shrine enclosure and depositing lighted incense sticks in front of the Shrine's centerpiece stele.

A sumptuous feast consisting of a whole roast pig and many varieties of dim sum was served.

The Ch'ing Ming Festival commemoration was well-attended by Society members, and several reporters from Chinese language media and the *Los Angeles Times* were present. The Times and the Chinese press ran stories the following day.

The Society thanks the following individuals for their great support of this year's Ch'ing Ming Festival: Kenneth L. Chan, Kelly Chan, and Phoenix Bakery; Henry Leong; Mr. & Mrs. Kwock Choy Chong; Gordon Hom; the management and staff of Evergreen Cemetery; and all others who helped make this a successful event.

CHSSC MEMBERS TESTIFY ON BEHALF OF CALIFORNIA ASSEMBLY BILL 2514

CHSSC Board member Irvin Lai, and Randy Bloch flew to Sacramento on Tuesday, April 8th, to testify on behalf of 49th District Assemblymember Mike Eng's bill, AB 2514. The Bill mandates reporting of discovered human remains or grave goods that are found during construction work or similar activity when the objects are determined not to be Native American or part of a crime scene. The Bill cleared its first hurdle on April 8th by passing the Assembly Committee on Arts, Entertainment, Sports, Tourism and Internet Media by a vote of 6 to 3. Since the successful April 8th vote, the Bill has passed the Assembly Local Government Committee and must now pass the Appropriations Committee, whereupon it will repeat the process at the Senate level.

DAVID & PEARL LOUIE FOUNDATION & CHINESE HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA GRADUATE-LEVEL SCHOLARSHIP WINNER ANNOUNCED

Our graduate-level 2008 Scholarship winner is Andrea Marie Milly, a student of anthropology at Cal State Los Angeles. Andrea is a new member of CHSSC and has focused her academic studies on the 128 burial remains disturbed at Evergreen Cemetery during MTA construction. Our judges were Dr. Wellington Chan of Occidental College, Professor Florante Ibanez of Loyola Marymount University, and Professor Eric Wat who teaches at the Cal State universities. All three judges praised Andrea's commitment and enthusiasm.



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CASTELAR ELEMENTARY FIFTH GRADERS TOUR CHINATOWN CHUNG KING ROAD AND CHSSC HERITAGE CENTER



(Castelar Elementary School fifth graders and teacher Diane Manke)

By Dr. William Chun-Hoon

To teach their students the history of Los Angeles Chinatown, and to educate them on children's author and illustrator Leo Politi, Castelar Elementary teachers Susan Dickson and Diane Manke brought about sixty of their fifth graders on April 11th to tour Chung King Road (Chinatown West) and the Chinese Historical Society of Southern California's Heritage Center. Chung King Road, the first stop on the tour, is where the true-life family of the fictionalized character "Moy Moy," (from Leo Politi's 1960 book), owned a shop. The arcade-like pedestrian space of Chung King Road is a peaceful haven from the hustle and bustle of North Hill Street and is where Leo Politi sat on a bench and sketched and wrote some of his enchanting books. The tour group next walked to the Chinese Historical Society where they were divided into two groups. Mary Yan Joe, the real-life "Moy Moy," read to each group from the Leo Politi book, while the alternate group toured the exhibit rooms across the driveway at our Heritage House, and the groups then changed places. Next stop was Chinatown Central Plaza and the Sun Yat-sen statue, where time ran short and the group returned to Castelar Elementary at 2:30 p.m., promptly.

FAMILY HISTORY – KICKING IT UP A NOTCH!

By Anna Gee

If recording family history means taking the time and effort to tape your uncle telling the same stories he's told for the gazillionth time, do you really want to bother? Yes. Handing down these stories can contribute to the fabric of your family, providing a source of identity, strength, understanding between generations, and possibly inspiration.

But what happens when you follow that with a more thorough interview, with questions informed by knowledge of historical conditions on both sides of the Pacific? This is what the April family history workshop was about. We listed important milestones in a life, using this as a basis for making an individual timeline. Then we looked at two sets of interview questions. One, from Teresa Barnett of the UCLA Oral History Research Center, was organized chronologically by major stages in a life, with many thoughtful open-ended questions. The other was a set from the Smithsonian, which emphasizes cultural information. Together, they provide anyone with a running start for an interview. But in addition, we wanted to develop questions particular to Chinese American experiences. We discussed additional questions and themes using two timelines synthesized by Gilbert Hom from local, regional and national American history, Asian American history, and Chinese history, with a particular eye to impact on Chinese Americans.

For example, because of our immigration history, most of us would have to spend some time asking about names, paper names, various spellings, etc. Exclusion, which created sojourners who might have made multiple trips and sent home remittances, had a major impact on those left behind in the home villages. Did family members who migrated bring back modernizing ideas? Did the women left behind become more independent? Were there family members who took to gambling and opium with remittance money? How was the remittance used by the family and village? Was there more than one family because of the separations? We may want to ask about the hardships of the 30's, 40's, and 50's on both sides of the Pacific, which sent immigration in both directions at various times. The Great

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(Family History, from page 4)

Depression, WWII, McCarthyism and surveillance, the crumbling of a newly formed republic with nascent forays into modernization, foreign invasion, civil war, famines, immigration raids, and efforts by returning overseas Chinese to reshape their homeland were part of our families' stories. The difficulties of these circumstances may mean that unless we ask about them, we may never find out.

Perhaps our most thorough discussion was about the entire issue of generations. Many around the table had ancestors who came early, but without bringing their families.

For handouts, please contact us. The handout information is also available online at a Yahoo group we have created. This workshop will have a follow up in June with handouts and discussion of forms used to organize the interview information.

In May, the topic will be videography. On May 17, at 1:30 p.m., Will Gow, project director of the Chinatown Remembered Community History Project, will lead a workshop on using digital video to tape your oral history interview. It will include examples of oral histories taken from CHSSC's current oral history project and we will practice using video cameras. Workshop participants are encouraged to bring their own video cameras and tripods, however, those who don't have one can still come and learn on the Society's cameras.

Please email or call to reserve a seat. Space is extremely limited. Let us know if you plan to bring your own camera or not, as this will determine how many people we can accommodate. You will be contacted to confirm your reservation.

Announcements

CONDOLENCES

CHSSC's President, Board of Directors and staff extend their deepest condolences to Administrator Yvonne Chang whose mother passed away in March at 98-years-old. For some 40 years, she worked for the Chinese Information Services in Shanghai, Taipei and New York City. Most recently a New Jersey resident, she lived to watch her favorite commentators discuss current events on

CNN and other news sources, seven days a week, and fifty two weeks a year.

APRIL GENERAL MEETING SUPPORT

We extend our warm thanks to Winifred Lee, Winnie Lew and Johnny & Esther Yee for the goodies they contributed to the April General Meeting, and their help at the snack table.

CONVERSATIONAL MANDARIN CLASSES

Chinese American Citizens Alliance (CACA) is currently offering conversational Mandarin classes. The open enrollment classes are held Saturdays from 9:30 a.m. to noon and tuition is \$40 a month. CACA is located at 415 Bamboo Lane in Chinatown, and can be reached at 213-628-8015.

WIN A CLASSIC 1965 CORVETTE CONVERTIBLE AND BENEFIT CHSSC!

The Society has a limited number of *L.A. County Fair Rotary Raffle* tickets for purchase at \$20 each. CHSSC receives \$5 for each ticket sold. Increase your chances by buying a book of ten! Grand prize is the classic Corvette convertible and there will be "second chance" drawings for other great prizes. The drawing will be on September 28, 2008; winner need not be present. Tickets are available at our monthly meetings or by phoning the CHSSC office at 323-222-0856.

CHINATOWN REMEMBERED EXHIBIT OPENING

Chinatown Remembered Community History Project, an exhibit exploring the history of Los Angeles' various Chinese communities in the 1930s and 1940s, will open the first week of June 2008 at the CHSSC Visitor Center in Chinatown. The exhibit will explore the history of the Chinese American community through the memories of those who lived in the area during the period. Told through community photos and artifacts, the exhibit will explore Chinese American youth culture during the period, service in World War Two, the

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(Sir Chentung Liang Cheng, from page 2)

In 1878, P'i Hsu was assigned to Phillips Academy Andover. The Chinese students faced being stared at and were the object of racial epithets, but they adapted, won friends, and affirmatively changed cultural stereotypes.

In the summer of 1881, the Chinese government called the student group home, fearing they were becoming too Americanized. Liang Pixu was heartbroken he could not graduate with his classmates and attend college in the United States.

After returning home, he was quickly appointed a junior official in the Ministry of State. Five years later, he would return to the United States as an attaché to Chang Yin-huan, Minister to the U.S., Peru and Spain. In 1897, Pe Yuk Liang became Sir Chentung Liang Cheng when he was knighted by Queen Victoria of England at her Diamond Jubilee. At various times, he served as the Chinese diplomat to Austria, Belgium, Cuba, England, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, Peru, Russia, Spain and the United States.

During the Boxer Rebellion, as First Secretary to Prince Chuan's delegation, Sir Chentung Liang Cheng visited the German Emperor, Kaiser Wilhelm II, in Berlin. Their mission was to offer the Chinese government's apology for the murders of the German minister and German subjects. The Kaiser insisted the Chinese delegation kowtow as a gesture of humiliation and obedience which Sir Chentung Liang Cheng rejected. But, without kowtowing, the delegation still extended the highest possible respect to the Kaiser, according to the protocol of the Imperial German Court. Thus, Sir Chentung Liang Cheng saved his country from humiliation, and also made a name for himself as a capable international diplomat.

Sadly, his wife with whom he had ten children, died on the day he returned from Berlin. He would later remarry twice and have another child.

In 1902, at age 38, he was commissioned as Chinese Minister to the United States. After settling in the diplomatic minister's official residence, one of his first assignments was to visit his alma mater, Phillips Academy. Twenty-two years after being summoned as a student to return to China, he appeared as an honored guest speaker at Andover's 125th anniversary celebration in 1903. In his revered speech, he recalled:

"I shall never forget the [baseball] game with Exeter in 1881. We were straining our every nerve to recover our lost laurels. When the train arrived with the victorious 9, the whole school turned out to welcome them with torch lights, a brass band, and an omnibus drawn by enthusiastic students. Even Rome could not have received Caesar with greater enthusiasm and pride when he returned from his famous campaigns in triumph."

As ambassador to the United States, Sir Chentung Liang Cheng promoted the welfare of the Chinese people wherever he traveled. After the 1906 San Francisco earthquake, he spoke with city officials on where best to rebuild the Chinese community, while tactfully encouraging them to select a favorable part of town: "Wherever the Chinese residents rebuild, I am in favor of the new village being free from the squalor which characterized the former locality."

Perhaps his most everlasting achievement was negotiating a \$27 million indemnity for damages to American citizens during the Boxer Rebellion. This was conditioned on the money being spent for a school (Tsinghua University), and opportunities for Chinese students to be educated in the U.S.

Sir Chentung Liang Cheng's role as minister to the U.S. ended on July 3, 1907. While he was on the Naval Commission in England, he was knighted for a second time by Queen Victoria. His last official duty was representing China in 1912 at the International Convention on the Prohibition of Opium at The Hague. He retired from political life the same year, and died in 1917, at age 52.

Today, in the Oliver Wendell Holmes Library at Phillips Academy, there is a mural showing the faces and names of all its famous alumni, including many U.S. Presidents and Sir Chentung Liang Cheng who was given an honorary graduate degree. There is also a display case with a photo of the popular Chinese diplomat in his baseball uniform and an article about the famous baseball game that he helped Andover win against Exeter in 1881.

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(Announcements, from Page 5)

destruction of Old Chinatown and the creation of New Chinatown and China City. An accompanying project website and video documentary screening are scheduled to debut at the end of summer. This project is made possible, in part, by a grant from the California Council for the Humanities as part of the Council's statewide California Stories Initiative. The Council is an independent non-profit organization and a state affiliate of the National Endowment for the Humanities. For more information on the Council and the California Stories Initiative, visit www.californiastories.org.



COMMUNITY MEETING RE: COMMEMORATIVE SITE FOR HISTORIC CHINESE GRAVE MARKERS

Two years ago, while CHSSC was investigating the site where MTA unearthed artifacts and remains next to Evergreen Cemetery during Gold Line construction, Irvin Lai was informed of certain Chinese grave markers seen lining the driveway next to the adjacent County Crematorium. Supervisor Gloria Molina's office was informed and arranged for archaeologist Peggy Beedle to recover, clean, and photograph the markers. CHSSC member Ann Lau helped translate the markers. Since these Chinese grave markers were found on land owned by L.A. County, the County Health Department is in charge of them. To solicit community input, a meeting was held at Castelar Elementary School in L.A. Chinatown last fall. The consensus at the meeting was that replicas of the markers should be placed outside the Crematorium.

The County Health Department has scheduled an additional meeting to discuss more concrete options for how and where to place the markers. The Chinese community has authority to make all decisions regarding these grave markers. Therefore, many representatives of the community need to attend this very important meeting. The meeting will be on April 26, 2008, between 9:00 a.m. and 11:00 a.m. at Ann Street Elementary School, 126 Bloom Street, Los Angeles, CA 90012.

PORTRAITS OF PRIDE AT PALOS VERDES LIBRARY

By Marian Chew

On March 17, 2008, the Portraits of Pride (PoP) book team made a presentation to Southwest Manuscriptors, a writers group based at the Palos Verdes Library. Of the 50-60 persons attending, about one-third were Asian, and a few of the attendees were old friends. Project Manager Marian Chew sold several copies of the book.

Dr. Wing Mar, PoP's founder, explained the importance of telling the stories of distinguished Chinese Americans of the Depression era and World War II generation before the opportunity is lost forever. He talked about how Committee of 100 focus groups have established there is a lingering suspicion of Chinese Americans in high-tech fields, and how the Wen Ho Lee case was a catalyst to creating PoP.

Dr. Mar anticipated the audience's question of why the Chinese Historical Society took on such a large project. He explained our goal of distributing 10,000 *Portraits of Pride* books to public and educational libraries, and stated that we have already donated 7,000 copies. He thanked LP and Bobbi Leung for making the PoP project's successes possible.

Joyce Mar spoke next and said strongly that volunteerism has been the lifeblood of Portraits of Pride. She told how some twenty persons helped with interviews, writing, fact checking and the appendix—and that few of them had experience with ISBN, copyrights, bar codes and the details of release forms.

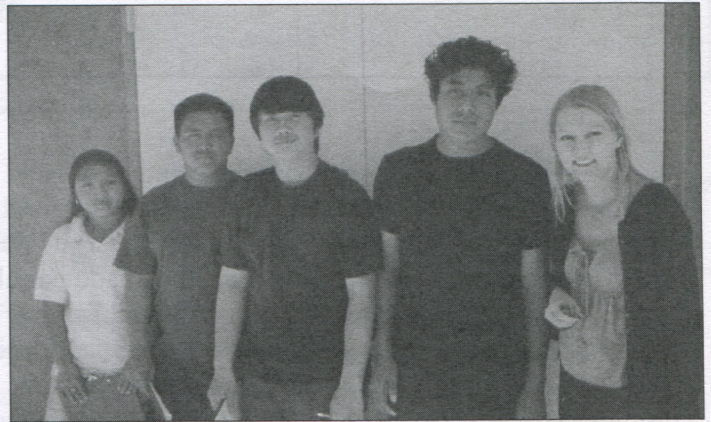
Joyce talked about the criteria for selecting profiles in book one. The choices were narrowed to the science and technology fields with a few exceptions, and age was also a factor. She said the crux of the stories is family, tradition and perseverance, and that PoP emphasizes listing the accomplishments of yet unrecognized individuals in their respective fields. She mentioned the poignancy of many personal reflections in the book's portraits, and said that some tell of growing up in orphanages, losing businesses during the Depression, or losing a parent as a young child.

Portraits of Pride can be purchased by contacting CHSSC, 415 Bernard Street, Los Angeles, CA 90012, and at http://www.chssc.org/PoP_Order.html. For more information, visit our website: www.chssc.org.

**CHINESE TEMPLE IN CAMBRIA, CALIFORNIA
DEDICATED AND REOPENED ON APRIL 5, 2008**

In 1999, "Greenspace"—the Cambria Land Trust—purchased the 1.6-acre Cambria Historic Center Park to preserve the natural character of the area. This property was Cambria's historical Chinese Center and was the social focus for workers who harvested seaweed and abalone or worked in local quicksilver (mercury) mines. Local Chinese celebrated holidays, socialized and worshiped here. Buildings included a bunkhouse, laundries, cabins and the "Chinese Temple." The Chinese Temple served the Chee Kong Tong and is the sole surviving building of the structures that served the Chinese Center. In 1925, the Temple was moved and joined to a composite structure that was occupied as a house until 1970. In 2001, the dilapidated portions of the house were demolished, leaving only the original temple building which was relocated to its original setting. Local volunteers have carefully restored it to its original appearance and a National Register of Historic Places nomination is being prepared. This year, in a well-attended event held on Ch'ing Ming, the Temple was formally dedicated and reopened.

**CIVITAS SCHOOL OF LEADERSHIP
STUDENTS VISIT CHSSC HERITAGE CENTER**



Ninth-grade students Hector Alvarez, Maria Francisco, Michael Matias and David Mony, from the Civitas School of Leadership pilot school, visited CHSSC the afternoon of April 10th after a Chinatown walking tour, led by teacher Cynthia Thompson. The students are collaborating on a documentary on the immigration history of Chinatown and are currently doing primary source interviews. Civitas pilot school opened this year, and is on the Belmont High School site near downtown Los Angeles.



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of Southern California**

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