



MIHS

Marco Island Historical Society

Rediscovering Yesterday

Celebrating Today

Preserving It For Tomorrow

Summer 2016

Plans Revealed for Pioneer Exhibit

Austin Bell, Curator of Collections

In what is becoming a springtime tradition here at the Marco Island Historical Museum (MIHM), we are excited to offer our members a preview of the latest permanent exhibit under development:

Pioneer Marco: A Tale of Two

Villages. After months of consultation and collaboration with Collier County Museums and the Marco Island Historical Society, Creative Arts Unlimited, Inc. has produced its first renderings of the new exhibit. The design and fabrication team at Creative Arts is the same one that produced the popular *Modern Marco Island* and award-winning *Paradise Found: 6,000 Years of People on Marco Island* exhibits at the MIHM in 2014 and 2015.

The exhibit will chronicle the evolution of the pioneer villages at Marco and Caxambas, offering visitors an in-depth look at the people, industries, and lifestyles on Marco Island during the late 1800's and early 1900's. Rare photographs and objects will be brought to life by dynamic and engaging displays. The most prominent feature will be an immersive Florida "cracker cabin," inside which visitors will be able to sit and watch films about Marco's history. Other exciting elements will include digital projections, original animations and artwork, a replica Collier City archway, built-in video displays, and a touch-screen display for browsing materials from the MIHS archives. The museum is going "high-tech" to engage visitors with a decidedly "low-tech" period in Marco's history.

When completed, *Pioneer Marco* will bridge the gap between the *Paradise Found* and *Modern Marco* exhibits, marking an important milestone for the museum. The "phase one" completion of the three permanent exhibits, all opening within a roughly two-year span, will catapult the museum into "phase two," which will see the enhancement of these exhibits through the installation of new displays, interactives, and loan artifacts. We are excited about



the future of our museum exhibits and can't wait to share them with you soon. *Pioneer Marco* will open to the public in late 2016. Announcements will be distributed when the opening date is finalized. Stay tuned and visit www.themihs.org for updates.



Entry to
Pioneer
Exhibit



Rachel Doxsee
Cracker Cabin

President's Letter – Summer 2016 Newsletter



Normally at this time of the year I would be describing how quiet things had become around the museum campus now that our seasonal members and many visitors have departed our island paradise but that is certainly not the case this year. As you read the Summer edition of the MIHS Newsletter you will learn about all of the exciting projects and plans that your Historical Society will be working on over the next few months beginning with the closeout of the State of Florida Cultural Endowment Challenge.

On March 11, the MIHS announced that it had received a very important designation from the State of Florida as a Cultural Sponsoring Organization. This honor recognizes your Historical Society as an organization that brings high quality programs of cultural significance to Marco Island. This designation also made us eligible for a grant of \$240,000 from the State of Florida if the MIHS was able to raise \$360,000 in matching local funds by May 23, 2016. I am very pleased and proud to report that with the deadline fast approaching, we are at goal. We reached this important milestone through the generosity of so many of MIHS friends who gave gifts of all sizes to meet the Endowment Challenge. I am enormously grateful and very humbled by all the support that we received. Thank you!

We are also very hard at work on the third and final permanent exhibit hall of the Historical Museum, the Pioneer Room – “A Tale of Two Villages”. Austin Bell’s article and the beautiful exhibit renderings by Creative Arts will tell the story of this exciting exhibit much better than I. We look forward to opening the doors of this breathtaking room in the late fall 2016/ early winter 2017. Be certain to catch up on all the latest accomplishments in our Collections area with an article and great photos by Katie Manly along with Susan Pernini’s update on how our Social Media footprint has grown. Jennifer Perry will tell you about the exciting exhibits coming to the Sandlin Traveling Gallery as well as the new staff who have recently joined us. There is always something happening around the museum.

Last, but definitely not least, is Lori Wagor’s preview of the fabulous MIHS Celebration Gala that is planned to coincide with the installation of our stunning Windows and Doors to History. Mark your calendars for February 12, 2017 for an event that is not to be missed.

In closing, I want to thank everyone who worked so hard to make the 2015-2016 season our most successful ever. In the first three months of 2016, over 13,000 people visited our campus. These numbers are unprecedented and speak to the world class quality of the museum exhibits, programs, lectures, plays, re-enactors and talent performances that called the Marco Island Historical Museum campus home.

Have a wonderful summer!

Pat Rutledge
President and Executive Director
MIHS

View from the CATapult Campaign – Summer 2016

As we head into summer and the home stretch for the CATapult Campaign, we have great news to share with you.

First, our sincere thanks to all who responded to our Cultural Endowment Challenge. We were absolutely humbled by the outpouring of contributions to meet the \$360,000 goal. This is a great opportunity for the MIHS to add \$600,000 to the Endowment Fund, and it is proving to be a true photo finish right to the very end!

So what about the CATapult Campaign you ask, well there is more wonderful news. The MIHS is down to the last \$186,000 left to raise to meet our goal. If you have dreamed of owning one of the windows there is only **ONE LEFT - A Pioneer Window – on the coveted south side of the museum's exterior**. Stop by the MIHS to see artist JJ Stinchomb's sketches for the Pioneer Windows, you will immediately want to "own" that last window!

WHAT HAPPENED TO THE PIPES?!

Additionally, we are proud to offer a new piece which will be next to the Signature Piece by artist John Agnew. John is creating a spectacular mural to complement the Pioneer Period on the museum's south side. Right next door to where his mural will be located there were a group of pipes that needed to be covered, but also accessible to the Fire Department. Thanks to the creativity of our friends at AP Builders and the magic of John Agnew's art work, those pipes are encased in a three sided column (see photo) that John is illustrating (see his "rough" sketch below). We will be offering this rare piece as the final naming opportunity for our Windows & Doors to History.

If you would like more information please contact Pat Rutledge or Lori Wagor at 239-389-6447.

Would you like to part of the Windows & Doors to History project without owning a Window or Door? Your opportunity is coming up fast. This fall, once the original art for the Windows & Doors is completed, we will be able to offer a limited number of giclées in return for your donation to the CATapult Campaign. Stay tuned and we will have more details on not only these giclées, but also on our events planned for this fall and next winter to celebrate the opening of the Windows & Doors to History.



A Heartfelt Thank You for your continued friendship & support!

Tom Wagor & Paul Tateo ~ CATapult Campaign Chairmen

Board Report

By Lori Wagor

"Celebration"

As 2017 approaches it is time to reflect and commemorate all the accomplishments the MIHS has made during its short history. And what better way than to host a major "CELEBRATION" for all the friends and members of the MIHS?

Our accomplishments are many as we come to a successful completion of the Catapult Campaign which will result in bringing home some of our cherished artifacts; the completion of the Calusa and Modern Marco galleries; the upcoming opening of the Pioneer Room which is the final piece of Marco Island's History; displaying the original artwork of our seven esteemed Windows and Doors artists in the Sandlin Gallery, then bringing the history alive from the inside of the Museum to its outside walls. But all these wonderful achievements don't mean that we are finished preserving and sharing the rich history of our Island. We will constantly be updating and enlarging our collections and bringing new exhibits to our traveling gallery, so one visit will never be enough.



Indeed, there is much to celebrate and we intend to do it in style with fine dining and dancing under a beautiful tent erected especially for this special evening. Please join us on February 12, 2017-and don't delay in making your reservation as we expect a sell-out crowd!

Christmas in July!

The Museum Store will also be "celebrating" the holiday season's tradition of "gift giving" with lots of unique items, special pricing, and...we won't have to deal with the crowds running around at the last minute! So come on in and support the MIHS and check off your gift list with us!



Upcoming Tuesday Night Activities

By B.J. Henning

June 7th Bob Mcconville "Across the planet, on land and in the sea, great migrations take place throughout the year."

July 5th Betsy Perdichizzi "A Girl Named Tommy"

August 2nd Bill Hughes Vintage Movies "Windows into an earlier time in American History and the characters of the era." The movie "Wind Across the Everglades"

September 8th Cynthia Barnett Blue Revolution "A Water Ethic for Florida"

I am very pleased that have had a wonderful year of programs and 2017 is already booked with top notch speakers.

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Congressman Curt Clawson Visits the Marco Island Historical Society and Museum



On April 25th prior to a presentation at the Rose History Auditorium, Congressman Curt Clawson took a slight detour and visited the Marco Island Historical Museum. On hand to greet the Congressman were Pat Rutledge, President and Executive Director of the Marco Island Historical Society, Jennifer Perry, Collier County Museum Manager, Amanda Thompson, Collier County Director Public Services Division and Austin Bell, Marco Island Historical Society Curator of Collections.

The Congressman received a personal guided tour of the museum's traveling exhibit gallery featuring an art exhibit by Donald Sunshine. He also toured the Calusa gallery and the Modern Marco Exhibit with commentary provided by both Austin Bell and Jennifer Perry. Congressman Clawson certainly appeared to know his history, particularly the history of Florida's native inhabitants. Both Jennifer and Austin were quick to answer his many questions about the people and places of Marco Island's rich history.

Though disappointed that his time in the museum was short, the Congressman promised to visit again and spend more time exploring "6,000 years of Paradise" in Marco Island's award winning museum. "It was a wonderful opportunity for our museum" said Jennifer Perry. "We so appreciate Congressman Clawson's time and his interest in Marco Island."

Marco Island Historical Society and Museum Celebrate Volunteer Appreciation Week



It takes a village, or in this case Island Historical Society and Recently the volunteers who were recognized and thanked

at the museum. The reception was the culmination of a weeklong celebration of the people who give so generously of themselves to preserve the history and heritage of our island.

Pat Rutledge, President and Executive Director of the Marco Island Historical Society and Jennifer Perry, Collier County Museum Manager expressed their appreciation for all that the volunteers do every day. "Our volunteers bring the rich history of our island community to life for our museum visitors" said Pat Rutledge. Pat also thanked the MIHS Board of Directors who attended the reception for all that they contribute. "Our Directors are volunteers too and they give of their time, energy and talent to ensure the continued success of the Society."

"The Marco Island Historical Museum could not do half of what it does if it weren't for the support of our volunteers." Said Jennifer Perry. "It is because of them that we are a world class destination. I am so grateful for our talented team!"

an island, to keep the Marco Museum running smoothly. dedicate their time and talent at a reception held in their honor

Mt. Rushmore Comes to Life

The idea for *The Men of Rushmore and Their Wives*, which was presented at the Rose History Auditorium last month, began as a brainstorming session over lunch with Gayle Thawley, Education Committee Chair for the Marco Island Historical Society, and Gina Sisbarro, a well-known writer, producer and director on the Island.

Thawley explained the Society's mission to bring history into the classroom usually using the talents of various Re-enactors and told her she was looking for a new project. Sisbarro's response was, "Let's do one better. Let's do a play. I will write it...cast it with my young actors...direct it. We'll put it on for the community and make it free for school kids...it will be entertaining enough so that little kids will giggle as well as get some information about the Presidents and their lives." Plus, we'll give the adults "some facts about the Presidents that they probably never knew before."



Clockwise: Tad Lincoln (Ben Anderson) sings and dances a rebel song "Oh, Susanna" while Abe watches. George Washington (Eddy Ludwigson) has a book of rules for his slaves. Mary Todd (Ellie Polling) is unhappy with Abe Lincoln (Cooper Userry) for allowing their son to sing and dance. Teddy Roosevelt (Ryan Harris) shows his wife Edith (Clare Hassell) how he felled a lion. His son, Kermit, (Johnny Hurtley) who also went with him on safari, plays the lion.

The order of Sisbarro's 4-part play follows the carvings of Mt. Rushmore, from left to right, and explores each President's tenure at different times in their lives. George Washington has retired to Mt. Vernon, Jefferson is about to be President, Lincoln is already in office and Roosevelt is considering There were laughs a plenty for both kids and adults interspersed with the more serious aspects of politics and customs of the times, especially considering today's political scene. But don't be fooled into thinking this was a kids' production. Yes, the cast was young—the average age 15—but many of these young adults started in theater when they were five or six years old.



Martha-Washington (Lia Okenkova) was not pleased by her husband's, (Eddy-Ludwigsen) affection for his slave, Will Lee (Teaker Harris)



Thomas Jefferson (John Hurtley) promises the ghost of his dead wife Martha Patsy (Alexandria Anderson) that he will never marry again just before she disappears.

"This is not baby time. These are all veteran actors, some of them with over ten years of experience and several productions behind their belt. They've been with me for a long time," says Sisbarro. "I basically wrote the play to fit their personalities." In costume and makeup, "they are so good, you really see who they portray—not teens performing."

The actors came from several area schools including the Marco Island Academy, Lely, Marco Island Middle School and Tommie Barfield; another is home-schooled. All of these young people volunteered their services for this production as did their director Sisbarro. "We all have been with each other since we've been little kids," said Hurtley. "We're like a big family."

The play was an unmitigated success, with a full audience for three performances. Perhaps long-time Historical Society member and Re-enactor Marion Nicolay, who is blind and could only hear the actors, said it best. "I thought you told me these were kids. They were wonderful... sounded so professional and their lines were so complicated...not easy to memorize. This was the first collaboration of the Historical Society, Sisbarro and area-wide students but not the last. "We were thrilled by the reaction to our efforts to bring history to life," said Pat Rutledge, MIHS Executive Director and President of the Board. "Expect more high-quality performances in the future."



all

The Olds Family Collection

Katie Manley, Curatorial Assistant

As we're gearing up for the opening of the Pioneer Exhibit later this year, Austin and I have spent some time going through pioneer-era materials in the MIHS collection. The people who lived on Marco during this time were nothing less than remarkable. It's sometimes hard to image Marco apart from the Deltona promotions and development, but many people lived here when natural vegetation flourished, bugs were almost unbearable, and picnics on the beach included wearing proper dress. We are lucky at the MIHS to have firsthand accounts of life on Marco in the early 20th century from the diaries, photographs, and letters of the Olds family. Charles and Mary Olds served as holistic doctors and farmers, while their three daughters, Orida, Saloma, and Rosalie, offer a unique and young point-of-view of living on Marco through their first-person accounts and photography.

The Olds Family Collection, which consists of 341 photographs, 182 documents, 43 objects, and 2 diaries, was generously donated to the MIHS in 2011 by Martha Olds Adams, the great niece of Charles and Mary Olds. Former MIHS President and award-winning author Elizabeth Perdichizzi is largely to thank for the donation, corresponding with Mrs. Adams over the course of eight years as she carefully transcribed the diaries and letters for publication in her popular book "Into the Florida Wilderness: Pioneer Life and Medicine in Southwest Florida, A Journey with Drs. Mary and Louis Olds."

One of the ongoing efforts in the collections department is continuing to bring storage conditions of objects up to museum standards. The Olds Family Collection is a relatively fragile collection in terms of physical quality and, due to its enormous historical importance, was deemed "priority one" in our long-term overhaul. Each item from the collection was carefully scanned, cataloged, and housed appropriately. Not only are the Olds family materials now housed in museum-quality archival boxes, but the diaries, letters, and photographs are safely accessible for research and browsing without threatening the physical condition of the fragile objects. I find digitization to be an extremely important preservation mechanism for museum collections today and one that we will continue to employ in the MIHS collections as a preservation tool and for reaching broader audiences moving forward.

"It was perfectly beautiful all along the road [to Marco]. There were little ponds with tiny mangrove islands in them and palms and pines beyond; then there was a long vista where trees came up close on each side of the road, then more ponds, next a cluster of palms, and so on till we reached Marco."
-Saloma Olds (January 1, 1914)



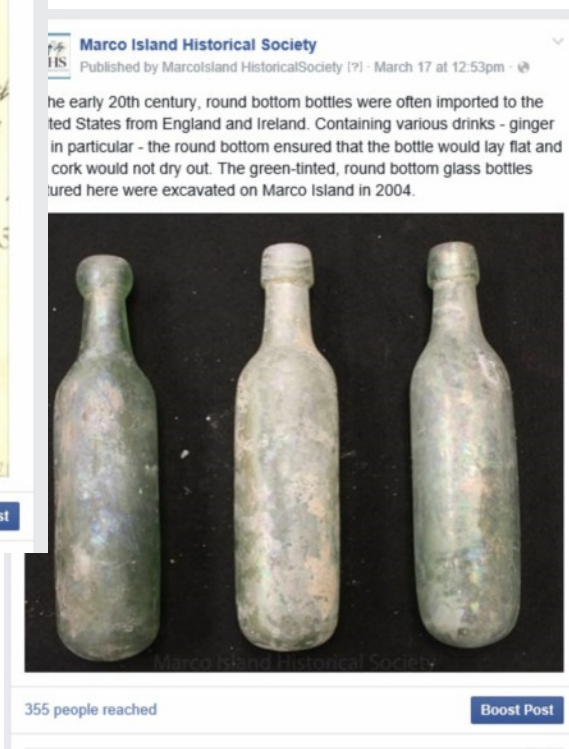
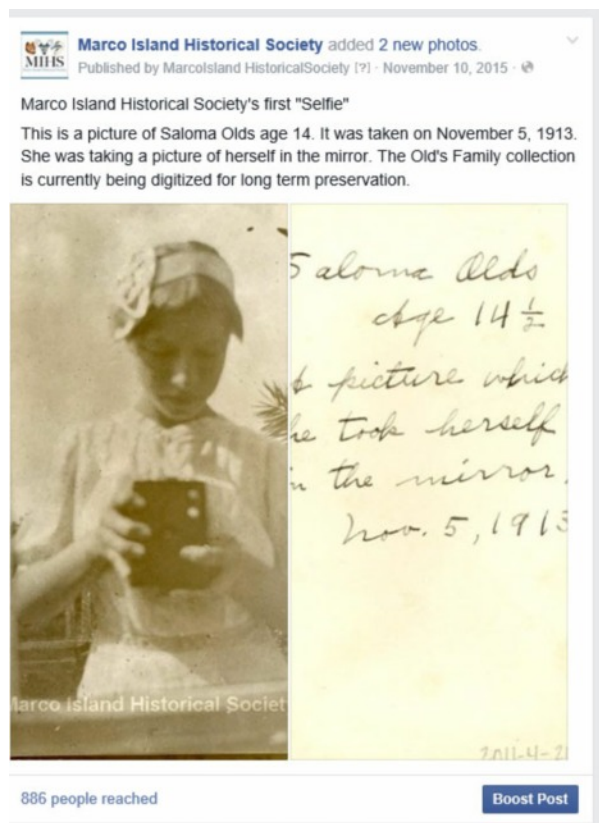
For more on the remarkable Olds Family Collection, see Elizabeth Perdichizzi's book "Into the Florida Wilderness," which is available in the MIHS gift shop.



MIHS Social Media is a success!

By: Susan Pernini

Approximately a year ago, the Marco Island Historical Society's (MIHS) social media presence was virtually nonexistent. Today, we are boasting nearly 800 friends and have created a following on Twitter as well as Instagram. A large part of our new found social media success is the addition of Katie Manley, our Curatorial Assistant, to the MIHS team. One of Katie's many jobs is to organize and catalog pictures and items that the MIHS has acquired and place them into our Past Perfect database. Thanks to Katie, I now have access to images that represent our multi-faceted history and can easily share them and their associated stories with our social media family. Through Facebook, we are able to attract interest from a wide audience while also providing a platform for interactions. "As social media is becoming a more integral part of society, it is increasingly important for museums to interact with audiences beyond exhibits. Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram allows us to share more Marco Island history in an informal, and more rapid way. It also provides a platform for garnering additional interest in the museum and our events, as well as offering a glimpse into our extensive collections that may never be displayed in the public otherwise. It's been really fun working with Susan and coming up with unique posts for our friends on social media...look back often for more updates!" said Katie Manley. Having the ability to share a part of our island's history through social media gives the MIHS yet another way to preserve and to share the history and heritage of Marco Island and the surrounding community.



News from the Museum Manager

Wild and Remote: Photographing South Florida By Canoe **Photography Exhibition by Connie Mier** **May 3 – July 26, 2016**



The Marco Island Historical Museum is honored to feature '***Wild and Remote: Photographing South Florida by Canoe***', a collection of photographs by artist Connie Mier May 3 – July 26, 2016 in our Traveling Exhibit Gallery.

Connie Mier is a wildlife and nature photographer who derives inspiration from her canoe explorations of the Everglades and Biscayne Bay. She often spends days at a time canoeing and camping in the Everglades to photograph some of the most remote wilderness areas in Florida. As a result, her photographs offer a rare glimpse of these beautiful places, as seen from a canoe.

"I have chosen to go deep into the Everglades to seek out birds and other wildlife, and to explore the dense mangrove forests and remote storm-swept beaches," shares Mier. "I want people to look at my image and feel as if they are there with me. I want the viewer to see a part of the Everglades they have never thought existed."

In addition to winning photo contests, including the 2015 National Audubon Society's fine art category, Connie's work has been published in several magazines, including *Wildlife Photographic*, *Canoe Roots*, *Outdoor Photographer* and *Extraordinary Vision*.

2016 City of Marco Island Amateur **Wildlife Photo Contest**

May 13th- June 30th, 2016

The Marco Island Historical Museum has partnered with the City of Marco Island and the Coastal Breeze News to present the Ninth Annual Amateur Photo contest highlighting our area's unique flora and fauna. The selection of winners will be exhibited in the museum lobby through June 30th, 2016. They say a picture is worth a thousand words, and what began as a celebration of Earth Day has grown into a photographic tribute to the beautiful Southwest Florida area in which we live.



The categories are: land animal, marine animal, birds, insects, trees and landscapes (one category) and black and white.

Winners:

Land Animal: "Where Is My Treat" by artist Doreen Hertel

Marine Animal: "Octopus & Fighting Conch" by artist Amy Tripp

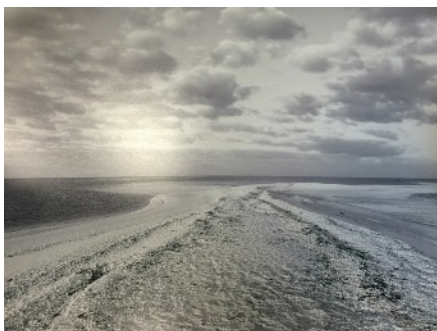
Birds (1st): "Woodpecker on a Banana Blossom" by artist Doreen Hertel

Birds (2nd): "Me and My Shadow" by artist James Hobbs

Insects: "Golden" by artist Charlotte Roman

Trees and Landscapes: "Untitled #1" by artist Jasmine Parcels

Black and White: "Formations" by artist Charlotte Roman



Dear Historic Society Members,

This summer brings a number of staffing changes to the Collier County Museum System. Some of you may know, Collier County Museums Director, Ron Jamro decided to retire last month after 35 years of service. I have had the privilege of working with Ron over the past 15 plus years- and he will be missed. Steve Carnell, Public Services Division Administrator has appointed Amanda Townsend to serve as the Interim Museum Division Director. Amanda has worked for Collier County for more than 15 years in various capacities within our Department, including serving as the Director of the Domestic Animal Services Division and currently as the Director of the Operations and Veterans Services Division. We welcome her aboard and are excited for all the wonderful things to come. We also have a new addition to the Collier County Museum staff on Marco Island...



Jessica Patel joined us here at MIHM as a Museum Assistant and has blended seamlessly into our family here. One of our current projects is to continue to building our volunteer base. If you or someone you know is interested in volunteer opportunities at the MIHM please stop in a introduce yourself.

I sincerely hope all of you have a safe, enjoyable, and productive summer. Thank you for supporting the Marco Island Historical Museum.

Jennifer Perry Manager- Marco Island Historical Museum

Exhibit focuses on Isles of Capri

From February through April, the museum featured the exhibit *The Isles of Capri...A Place in Time*, a collection of colorful and whimsical watercolors by local artist Donald Sunshine. His work celebrates the rich cultural history of the Isles of Capri, an old Florida fishing village. Sunshine, an award-winning architect and author as well, collaborated with local historian Betsy Perdichizzi to provide the information for the placarding. An opening reception sponsored by the Historical Society was held on February 23rd with both Sunshine and Perdichizzi, along with many of their admirers, attended to event. Later, in April, both the artist and the historian got together again to lead a *Gallery Talk* in the museum, which focused on some of the charming stories of the fishing village and its development.

Last year the museum featured Sunshine's watercolors of Goodland and other nearby historical sites. When asked what he would do when he finally ran out of places to document, Sunshine, prodded by his wife Joanna, said, "Perhaps then I'll really start thinking about retirement." Both events were open to the public and free of charge



Donald Sunshine and Betsy Perdichizzi,



Clockwise L. To R. Susie Walsh and Donna Reiley, Joanna and Donald Sunshine, Jeff and Andrea Merboth, Betty Newman, Russ Simmons and Karen Swanker, Susan Pernini

**A special thank you to these people who have helped us
as we strive to be the best that we can possibly be!**

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