Local History News

IN THIS ISSUE:

In this edition, we feature stories from Mount Hawthorn.

A while back, I did a talkback radio segment on 6PR about Mount Hawthorn. We had so many callers phone in to share their stories of the area. They all talked about the strong sense of community and what a great place it was to grow up as a kid.

Today, over 8,000 people are lucky enough to call post-code 6016 home. While a lot has changed about the suburb, what has remained the same is its family focus. Compared with other inner-city suburbs in Vincent, Mount Hawthorn has a greater share of single houses and families with children. With so many resident families and children, it makes sense that it also has the most dogs: 1,107 registered dogs to be exact. That is a lot of dogs!

Mount Hawthorn also has a strong tradition of community activism. This was evident in 1915 when the Mount Hawthorn Progress Association rallied together to build ANZAC Cottage. It was apparent in 1930 when over half of residents petitioned to get their own local pub (now the Paddington). In recent times, this spirit is on display in precinct groups like Mount Hawthorn Hub.

We hope you enjoy reading about what makes Mount Hawthorn such a special suburb.

Dr Susanna Iuliano
Senior Librarian,
Local History Centre

Cover Image: Mount Hawthorn Hotel, 1980s. Photograph by Terence Mathews. COV PH04314

WHAT'S IN THIS ISSUE?

Anzac Cottage, 38 Kalgoorlie Street Mount Hawthorn, 2006 | COVPH01977

MOUNT HAWTHORN:
A BRIEF HISTORY
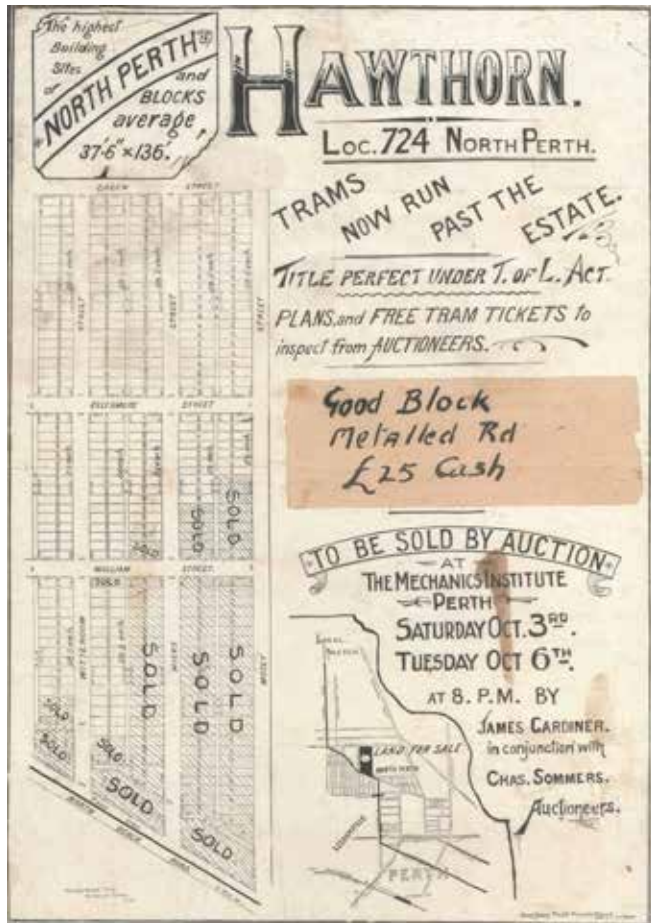
Mount Hawthorn got its name from 'Hawthorn Estate', one of the early land sales in the area dating from 1903. The developers named the estate after the Melbourne suburb of Hawthorn. Early advertisements emphasised the area's elevation, views to the city and proximity to transport.
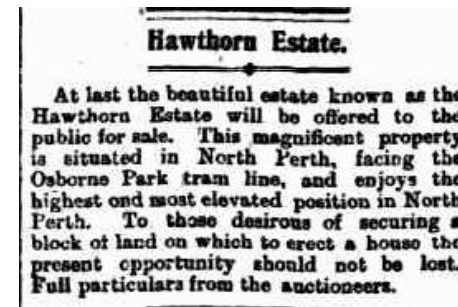
Advertisement in the Sunday Times, 7 June 1903.

Access to the tram network was especially important for growth of the suburb. From 1903, the Number 15 tram ran up Oxford Street to the newly built Oxford Hotel. To this day, the bus service in the area is still the 'Number 15'.

The suburb was first part of the Municipality of North Perth. In 1904, local residents formed the Mount Hawthorn Progress Association. They petitioned for extension of the tramline and delivery of scheme water. They also fought the North Perth Council rule that homes in the area had to be made of brick, which disadvantaged working families who wanted to build cheaper timber homes. In 1916, the Association famously organised for the construction of ANZAC Cottage in Kalgoorlie Street.

The Number 15 tram on the corner of Coogee Street, Mount Hawthorn 1925. COV PH00239.

Digging the foundations for ANZAC Cottage, 1916. COV PH01006.

Around 1907, the first business appeared along Scarborough Beach Road (then called North Beach Road). By 1920, the street had a variety of shops, including bakers, newsagents, butcher and grocers.

In 1906, Hawthorn State School opened in the Congregational Mission Hall on the corner of Flinders Street (today the Mezz). In 1908, the school moved to the present-day site of Mount Hawthorn Primary School.

1920s – 1940s

In the 1920s, Mount Hawthorn residents petitioned for a police station. The 'Stirling Police Station' opened at 82 Ellesmere Street in 1928 (see article in this edition). Two years later, over a thousand local residents signed a petition in support of a new hotel. Despite opposition from nearby publicans and temperance advocates, the government granted the licence and the Mount Hawthorn Hotel was built in 1932.

Ritz Theatre on Oxford Street Mount Hawthorn, 1960. PH02989.

In the same era, other social amenities sprang up. In 1924, the Mount Hawthorn Picture Gardens began screening outdoor movies at the end of Oxford Street near the tram terminus. In 1938, the Art Deco style 'Ritz Theatre' was built on the corner of Oxford Street and Scarborough Beach Road (on the present-day site of the Bodhi Tree Café).

Between the wars, many veterans settled in Mount Hawthorn. WWI veteran and Victoria Cross recipient Thomas Axford (after whom Axford Park is named) was one of the many returned servicemen who settled in the suburb, many of them in war service homes built by The Plunkett Building Company (now Plunkett Homes).

Diverse businesses sprang up along the main transport routes to service the growing number of residents in this era. These businesses included grocers, butchers, bakers, fruiterers, hairdressers, chemists and drapers. Other employers in the area included Cartwright's Dairy on Coogee Street, the North Perth Brick Works and the State Timber Yard near Shakespeare Street.

1950s – 1990s

Peake family outside makeshift accommodation on East Street, 1949. PH00928a.
The Peake family lived in this tent while their home was built next door.

After WWII, demand for housing increased. Public housing was built around Lynton Street along with more war service homes for returned servicemen. Many post-war migrants from Italy and Greece also built homes or businesses in the area.

New civic facilities were built to cater for the growing population. From 1948-1955, a post office opened on the corner of Scarborough Beach Road and Egina Street. In 1955, a new post office opened further east along Scarborough Beach Road. In 1958, the Mount Hawthorn Boy Scouts Headquarters opened on the corner of East and Berryman streets.

Laying the foundation stone for the Mount Hawthorn Scout Hall, 1958. COV PH05842.

In 1959, the Lake Monger Velodrome opened on Britannia Road on the site of the former Perth City Council depot. The Velodrome was the main cycling venue for the 1962 Commonwealth Games. Also in 1962, the Mount Hawthorn Community Centre opened in Braithwaite Park.

Retail and shopping culture also changed in the 1960s. John Allans 'Hawthorn Shopping Centre' opened on the corner of Flinders Street and Scarborough Beach Road in 1959. The centre featured upper deck parking, an air-conditioned department store and a modern supermarket called 'Tom the Cheap'.

Later in the 1980s, the Murdoch Group bought the Mount Hawthorn shopping complex and renamed it the Mount Hawthorn Plaza. In 1987, the Mount Hawthorn Hotel also underwent renovations and was renamed The Paddington Ale House. For decades, the 'Paddo' was a popular local pub and live music venue with a regular line up of local and interstate bands.

In 1994, Mount Hawthorn became part of the Town of Vincent. In the late 1990s, the

Advertisement for John Allans store in The Sunday Times, Nov 22 1959.

precinct group 'Mount Hawthorn on the Rise' formed to help revitalize the suburb.

2000s and beyond

The 2000s saw further changes in Mount Hawthorn, including redevelopment of the Mezz shopping complex in 2010.

Today, Mount Hawthorn is home to around 8,000 residents, a population increase of more than a third since 2001. Compared to other suburbs in Vincent, it has a higher proportion of babies, children and young people. No doubt related to the great share of single houses and families, it also has, the largest number of dogs of all Vincent's suburbs: 1017 registered dogs to be exact! It also has the highest median house price of all Vincent's suburbs: $1.1 million (REIWA 2022).

Young skateboarder on Oxford Street, Mount Hawthorn 2019. COV PH05863.

AXFORD PARK
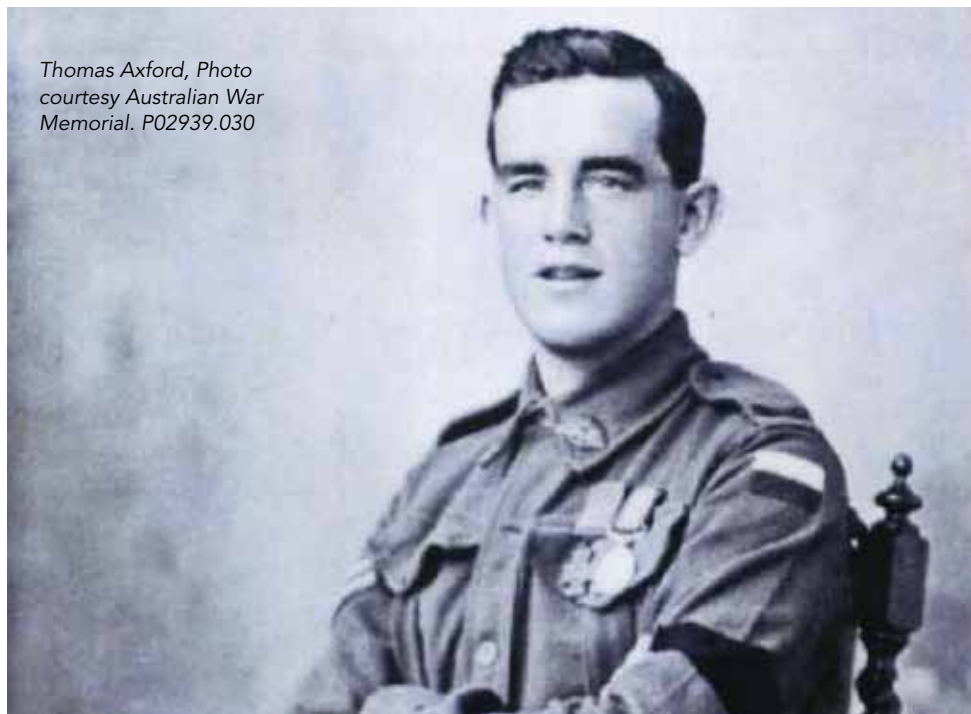
Thomas Axford, Photo courtesy Australian War Memorial. P02939.030

Axford Park was named after Thomas Leslie Axford (1894–1983), a decorated soldier and Mount Hawthorn resident who fought in two world wars. Axford was born in South Australia but grew up and lived in Coolgardie prior to his enlistment. He fought with the Australian Imperial Forces in the 16th Infantry Battalion serving in France during WWI. In 1916, he was awarded the Victoria Cross, the most prestigious British war honour, for his actions and bravery during the Battle of Hamel.

War Memorial at Axford Park, 2010. COV PH05892. Photo by Terence Mathews.

After the war, Tom returned to his pre-war job at the Boulder Brewery. In the 1920s, he left the goldfields and worked as a labourer in and around Perth. Later in the 1920s, he married Lily Foster and they had five children. The family lived in a war service home at 12 Harrow Street, Mount Hawthorn from the 1920s until the 1980s.

In 1981, two years prior to his death, the City of Perth re-named Sadlier Park on the corner of Oxford and Scarborough Beach Road in his honour. In 2000, a plaque commemorating Thomas Axford was unveiled in the park. In 2001, the Vincent council installed a war memorial (made from Albany granite) dedicated to service men and women. The black obelisk also includes a memorial plaque with the names of 185 local soldiers who fought in WWI. In 2010, a gazebo was built in the park along with other public amenities that are used by local groups for community events.

Each year, the Mt Hawthorn RSL holds its Anzac Day memorial service at Axford Park. The annual service and year-round activities in the park serve as a reminder to local residents of the impacts of war on the local residents and community in years past.

LOST VINCENT: STIRLING POLICE STATION

Research and story by Local History volunteer Michelle Vercoe

In the early 20th Century, the establishment of a permanent police presence was vital to growing communities. There were several such police stations in the Vincent area from the early 1900s. The Highgate police station was built in 1897, followed by the Leederville Police Station on Oxford Street in 1898. In 1908, the North Perth Police Station was built on Angove Street to service the residents of North Perth and the developing Mount Hawthorn area. However, it was not until the late 1920's that Mount Hawthorn residents got their own neighbourhood police station.

Builder Mr. A Woolhouse, started construction of the brick and iron police station at 50–52 Ellesmere Street in 1927. The site included police stables that extended back to Blackford Street. Later the address changed to 80 and 82 Ellesmere Street.

The station opened in November 1928 and was called the Stirling (or Stirling West) Police Station.

The first police officer in charge was Constable A. Moore who remained at the Mount Hawthorn Police station until 1931.

Early police officers were poorly paid and community policing was often a difficult job. Old newspapers are full of graphic details of crimes and accidents that occurred in the Mount Hawthorn area in the 1920s-1950s. In an era when there were few limits on crime reporting, journalists spared no sensational detail in covering local stories. Among the more gruesome murders and robberies, there are also more light-hearted stories such as the case of market gardener Gerardo Prandi whom Constable Moore, charged with drunk driving a horse in 1930.

HORSE TAKES CHARGE

Driver Was Drunk

Seeing a horse pulling a cart apparently at will along Main-street, Osborne Park, last night, Constable Moore decided to investigate. As he approached the vehicle, he noticed Jerardo Prandi (51), an Italian gardener, sitting in the back, and once glance was enough to assure him that the driver was drunk.

He arrested Prandi, who pleaded guilty before Mr. A. B. Kidson, P.M., in the City Court this morning, to a charge of having, whilst under the influence of liquor, driven a horse and cart. He was fined £6 with costs.

Daily News, 22 February 1930.

In 1962, a new police station was built on the Ellesmere Street site. It continued to operate until 2017. The police buildings were demolished in 2020 and the land was sold privately. Currently, number 80 is vacant and a single home is being built at 82 Ellesmere Street.

If you have any stories about the former Police Station in Mount Hawthorn, please get in touch.

LANE NAME UPDATE

The old dunny lanes in Vincent are a relic of the city's past. In the days before underground sewerage pipes, the lanes provided access for the 'night soil' collector, whose job it was to pick up the human waste from each outhouse and deliver it to the local sanitary dump.

Today, the lanes provide access to new homes on subdivided blocks. Most of these lanes are un-named, which can make access difficult for essential services or deliveries.

Since 2019, the City of Vincent has looked to its residents for inspiration to name the laneways. Residents submit a name proposal, which the City then checks against Landgate and Vincent criteria. The City then shares the names that pass muster for public comment. If the name receives community consent, the City forwards the name to Landgate who make the final approval. This rigorous process avoids road name duplication and is helps encourage only serious applicants.

This month, two lanes in Leederville received shiny new lane signs: Holt and Purdue. Holt Lane, which runs parallel to Oxford Street between Anzac Road and Salisbury Street is named for Hubert John ('Jack') Holt, a local Leederville man who lived with his family at 45 Salisbury Street in the 1930s and 40s. After serving in the RAAF during WWII, Holt saved a man from drowning at Scarborough Beach in a dramatic rescue that won him a bravery medal in 1947.

Purdue Lane, which runs parallel to Anzac and Salisbury Streets in Leederville, is named for Grenville Vaughan Purdue, former WA Chief Inspector of Police. Purdue was a celebrated detective who helped solve the infamous Pitman Walsh goldfields murders of the 1920s. Purdue and his family lived at 37 Salisbury Street from 1915 until his death in 1950. His grandson, Terry Stokesbury still lives in the original family home on Salisbury Street. Terry (pictured above) nominated the lane name in honour of his grandfather who contributed to the local and wider WA community through his policing and community work.

In 2021, a total of 9 Vincent lanes were named: **Pembroke Lane**, Mount Hawthorn; **Castellorizo Lane**, Leederville; Urban Lane, Mount Lawley; **Pearl Lane**, Highgate; Chenonetta Lane, North Perth; **Electric Lane**, Leederville; **Whittingham Lane**, North Perth; **Masterson Lane**, Mount Hawthorn; and **Melaleuca Lane**, Leederville.

To learn more about these lane names, or the lane naming process, drop in for a chat at the Local History Centre. You can read more about the process online at: **www.imagine.vincent.wa.gov.au/naming-places**

VINCENT HERITAGE HERO
ANNE CHAPPLE

Three generations of the Porter family at ANZAC cottage for the wedding of Simone Barnes, 2010. Anne Chapple (left) daughter Simone (bride) and mother Marjorie Williams (nee Porter). COV PH06015

Anne Chapple has a special connection with Mount Hawthorn that goes back several generations.

Anne is the granddaughter of Private John Porter, the wounded Gallipoli veteran who was gifted the home of ANZAC Cottage in Kalgoorlie Street in 1916. ANZAC Cottage was built in a day by the Mount Hawthorn Progress Association as a memorial to the soldiers who fought at Gallipoli and as a home for a returned soldier and his family. Anne's mother Marjorie Williams (nee Porter) was Private Porter's youngest daughter. Private Porter and his family lived in ANZAC Cottage until the 1960's.

In 1995, the Vietnam Veterans Association began restoration of ANZAC Cottage, in conjunction with the Mount Hawthorn Community Heritage Group. The cottage was State Heritage listed in 2000 and classified by the National Trust.

In 2006, the City of Vincent took ownership and leased the cottage to the Vietnam Veterans Association of WA. The 'Friends of ANZAC Cottage' sub-committee was set up to keep connection with the Mount Hawthorn and wider community. In 2021, the City of Vincent transferred ownership of ANZAC Cottage to the National Trust of Western Australia. The Vietnam Veterans Association and Friends of Anzac Cottage continue to be involved in the care promotion of the cottage in collaboration with the National Trust.

Anne has been a driving force in the Friends of ANZAC Cottage and is its current Secretary. She has been instrumental in running ANZAC Cottage open days, special services, and school visits.

Anne has been especially active in engaging local schools with the history of ANZAC Cottage. As a student of history at university level, and a teacher by profession, Anne has been well skilled to pass on the history of this important local landmark to local schools and students.

Over the years, Anne has also been a tireless supporter of the Local History Centre. She has contributed many photographs, documents and research pieces relating to ANZAC Cottage and the Mount Hawthorn area including:
- Anzac Cottage: the building of a community (2003)
- The Mount Hawthorn Progress Association (2004)
- Was John Beer Interested? (2006)
- The Life 'and Legacy' of Riley (2018)
- Waiting, Watching, Weeping and Working: The Mount Hawwthorn Ladies Patriotic Guild Story. (2021)

Anne is passionate about promoting the history of Anzac Cottage and works tirelessly to keep the stories alive for the community to share. Sadly, Anne's mother Marjorie Williams passed away last year at the age of 100. She was however able to enjoy her birthday wish, to be back in the home where she was born and is pictured below in the back garden of Anzac Cottage with her daughter Anne on her 100th birthday January 3, 2021.

Photo courtesy Renee Chapple, Anne Chapple, and Marjorie Porter in the garden at the back of Anzac Cottage on January 3, 2021; the day Marjorie turned 100.

WHAT'S NEW IN FAMILY HISTORY?

LOST COUSINS

**BY LOCAL HISTORY VOLUNTEER LIZ MILLWARD**

LostCousins uses various census returns, from Britain, Canada or the US to match your ancestors to other 'cousins' who are researching the same person. It is only when there is a match that you are given the option to contact that person through the site. You can choose to wait for them to contact you (no charge) or pay an annual fee of £10 to make the first contact yourself.

Some readers may have already had successes with LostCousins. It has been available for a number of years, but I only recently joined. I heard it mentioned at family history talks and in conversations, but it was a recent Facebook post on my Wiltshire research page that piqued my interest.

Each census has a slightly different form to complete and the most essential tool you have is accuracy! Make sure that you enter all people at the address on the day of the Census, not just your own relatives, and use the spellings in the transcriptions. There is an option to enter maiden surnames and/or corrected names by clicking on MORE.

Most of my connections, so far, have been through the England and Wales 1881 or Canada 1881 Census. One of my successes has been finding my
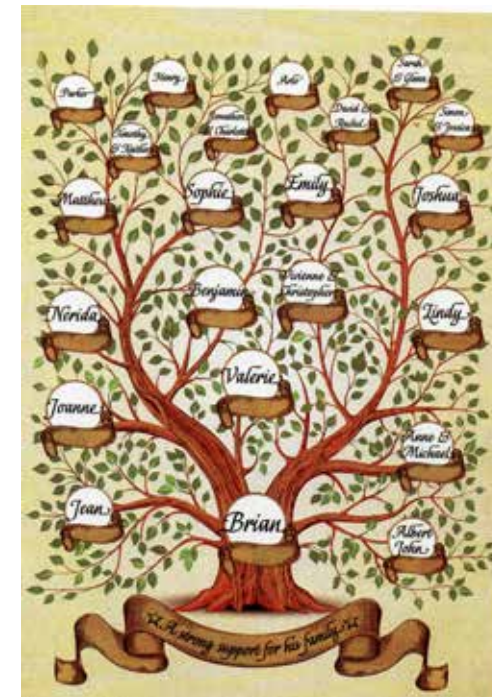
half fourth cousin with whom I share a great grandmother, Sarah Payne. As I have found no other descendants of Sarah Payne, it was wonderful to find this connection and add another link to our tree.

LostCousins also publishes an informative newsletter two or three times a month. There is a great article in the recent 14 March edition by Peter Calver ('How to make the most of your DNA test') that is informative and easy to understand which is refreshing in the usually complex area of DNA.

Happy searching!

IN-HOUSE EVENTS

EVENTS & WORKSHOPS

APRIL

TALK: "I WILL WELL AND TRULY SERVE"

DEFENCE SERVICE RECORDS FROM THE BOER WAR TO VIETNAM WITH DR KELLIE ABBOTT

WEDNESDAY 27TH APRIL 2022 | 10:00 –11:30AM
Library Lounge, City of Vincent Library

The National Archives of Australia holds millions of war service-related records for Australians who have served their nation across the 20th century.

In this talk, Dr Kellie Abbott will provide an overview of these records, demonstrate how to search for them and highlight some of the extraordinary stories they can tell.

Dr Kellie Abbott is the Assistant Manager National Archives WA Office.

Cost: Free
Presenter: Dr Kellie Abbott
Bookings Essential as places are limited: Online or call 9273 6534

MAY

TALK: EARLY HISTORY OF HYDE PARK WITH JOHN VISKA

WEDNESDAY 18TH MAY 2022
10.00 – 11:30 AM
Local History Centre,
City of Vincent Library

Hyde Park celebrates its 125th year as an official reserve this year.

In this talk, garden historian John Viska will explore Hyde Park's early history and horticultural management.

John is the current chair of the WA branch of the Australian Garden History Society and a garden historian.

Cost: Free
Presenter: John Viska
Bookings Essential as places are limited: Online or call 9273 6534

JUNE

TALK: HOW TO HEAR HISTORY WITH BILL BUNBURY

WEDNESDAY 1ST JUNE2022
10.00 -11:30 AM
Local History Centre,
City of Vincent Library

In this workshop, Bill will show you how to record an oral history with a member of your family or community so that you can capture their histories.

Bill Bunbury is a broadcaster, documentary maker and adjunct Professor of Communication and History at Murdoch University.

He is a regular speaker at history associations on the topics of the oral, environmental, and social history of Western Australia.

Join us to hear Bill Bunbury explore the art of the interview.

Cost: Free
Presenter: Bill Bunbury
Bookings Essential as places are limited: Online or call 9273 6534

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IMAGE LIBRARY

Did you know the City of Vincent Local History Collection Image Library contains over 6000 photos of people, places and events in the suburbs of Vincent?

You can browse by suburb, subject or keyword at:
www.cityofvincent.imagegallery.me/site/welcome.me

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