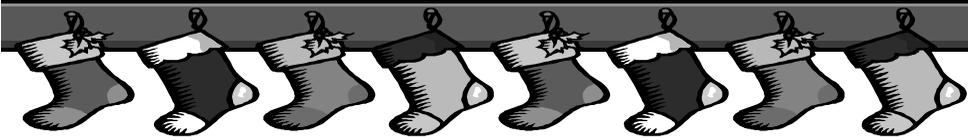

THE LINK

Methodist Link Churches Magazine

December 2006 – January 2007 Volume 41. No. 10.

Wishing you
a Happy Christmas and
a Peaceful New Year





To Everyone,

The Christmas Season is here. Over the next weeks we will all be busy making those final touches and don't forget to hang up your stocking.

We, in the Link begin with an Advent Sunday Carol Service in the evening at Burnham which looks at the lead up to Christmas itself. With everything we expect will happen can we get over prepared? Disaster might strike. We could run out of bread or milk and Tesco's might not open the day after Boxing Day? The trouble is, we worry all over again when New Year arrives. My grandma would always say if someone unexpected turns up "you can always put a few extra potatoes in the pan."

Finding time to go to Church either to Midnight Communion or Christmas morning shouldn't be a big problem. The problem or the answer is "make time." Build it into your family plans well in advance. If Christmas is about family why not go as a family.

As ever there are various activities around the Link. Various Carol services which will happen around a Christmas Tree, in a Barn, at Church and various Carol singing events at Brea and Burnham.

At the moment I'm putting the final touches to the Link Christmas Card. Throughout the Link over 250 cards are distributed each year. Do give them away to family friends etc which will mean that all our Christmas events are well supported.

As the Christian Church we celebrate the birth of our Saviour and once again we will hear again the journey of Joseph and Mary to Bethlehem.

Every Blessing during Christmas and the New Year.

Stephen

Jesus the Reason for the Season

CALENDER

NOVEMBER

Sat. 25 th	10.00 - 12.30	Coffee Morning in aid of General Church Funds Burnham.
Sun 26 th		Gift Sunday – Burnham.
Tues. 28 th	2.30pm.	The LINK Villages Fellowship - Elizabeth Anne Flower arranging
	7.00pm.	Induction of Father Tieor Szende at The Church of Our Lady. The new RC Priest All Welcome
Wed. 29 th	10.00-3.00	ADVENT QUIET DAY at Milton
Wed. 29 th	10.30 - 12.00	Coffee Morning at Abbeyfield 15 Berrow Road

DECEMBER

Sat 2 nd	10.00 - 12.00.	Coffee Morning in aid of the Sunday Club Funds
Sat 2 nd	2.30 - 5.00	Pre Advent Retreat at West Huntspill Led by Rev. Terry Young.
Sun 3 rd	10.30am.	Toy & Gift Service - Burnham
Thur. 7 th	2.30pm.	THURSDAY FELLOWSHIP - Bell Ringers – Christmas Carols (East Brent)
Thur. 7 th	2.30pm.	Brent Knoll Ecumenical Group will consider an Advent Theme in preparation for Christmas.
Sat 9 th	10.00 - 12.00.	SCF Coffee Morning and stalls - Burnham
Sat 9 th	2.00 - 4.00pm.	Christmas Fair at St Bridget's Brean
Sat 9 th	6.00 for 7.00	St Michael's Brent Knoll. "Carol Praise" with Harmony Plus Band and the Youth Choir
Sun. 10 th	am.	Traidcraft Stall Burnham
Mon. 11th	8.00pm.	Monday Group - An Evening with Rev. Margaret Trapp.
Tues. 12 th	12.30pm.	The LINK Villages Fellowship - Christmas Buffet.
	3.00pm.	Carol Singing at Beaufort House, Rectory Rd.
Wed. 13 th	10.00am.	LINK Communion at Burnham
Thur. 14 th	7.30pm.	Charity Carol Concert B. & H. Choral Soc at St. John's Highbridge
Fri. 15 th	7.00pm.	Carol Service at West Huntspill Methodist - Hot Drinks & Mince Pies after.
Sat. 16 th	10.00 - 12.30	Coffee Morning in aid of General Church Funds
Tues. 19 th	7.30pm.	Carols in the Barn" Ash Lawn Farm, Rooksbridge A38.
Wed. 20 th	3.00pm.	Carol Singing at Abbeyfield, 15 Berrow Road.
	6.30pm.	and 6.30pm at Tesco.
	6.30pm.	"Village Carols" at Brent Knoll Parish Hall.
Thur. 21 st	2.30pm.	THURSDAY FELLOWSHIP - Christmas Party

Fri. 22 nd	7.00pm.	"Carols by Candlelight" at East Brent Methodist Church
Sat. 23 rd	10.00 - 12.30.	Coffee Morning in aid of General Church Funds
Sun 24 th	11.15pm.	Christmas Eve Communion – Burnham.
Sat. 30 th	10.00 - 12.30.	Coffee Morning in aid of General Church Funds
JANUARY		
Thur. 4 th	2.30pm.	THURSDAY FELLOWSHIP - Cedric May – Slide Show
Sat. 6 th	10.00 - 12.00.	Coffee Morning in aid of the RD Fund.
Mon. 8 th	8.00pm.	Monday Group - Party venue TBA.
Tues. 9 th	2.30pm.	The LINK Villages Fellowship - John Paige
Wed. 10 th	10.00am.	LINK Communion at Brent Knoll
Mon. 11 th	7.30pm.	Circuit Men's Supper Club - Christmas Meal at The Seaward Hotel, Knightstone Rd.
Thur. 18 th	2.30pm.	THURSDAY FELLOWSHIP - Mr. Andy Dickson Walking experiences. (SALES TABLE)
Sat. 20 th	10.00 - 5.00	Day of Prayer for Christian Unity at West Huntspill Methodist Church
Tues. 23 rd	2.30pm.	The LINK Villages Fellowship - Living Paintings Trust - Art Work for the Blind.
Thur. 1 st	2.30pm.	THURSDAY FELLOWSHIP - Mrs. Jill Udall – Responsibilities of Community Police Support Officers.
Sat. 3 rd	10.00 - 12.00.	Coffee Morning in aid of the RD Fund. Thursday Fellowship.
Mon. 12 th	8.00pm.	Monday Group - Life as a Prison Guard by Brian Ducker.
Tues. 13 th	2.30pm.	The LINK Villages Fellowship - Rev. Margaret Trapp.
Wed. 14 th	10.00am.	LINK Communion at East Brent
Wed. 14 th		Stephen's Sabbatical Starts.



Funerals

Mrs Catherine Stevens,	13 th October at Burnham.
Mr. David Brown,	20 th October at Burnham.
Mrs Dorothy Player,	6 th November at Burnham.
Mr. Jack Lowe,	22 nd November at Burnham.



Rev. Stephen Hill

As from 14th February 2007 the Rev Stephen will be taking his 3 months Sabbatical break. During this period Stephen will be released from all Church, Circuit, and Community responsibilities.

The sabbatical is a gift from the Church to it's Ministers and is available after a certain number of years have been served in ministry. The purpose is to provide time for renewal, reflection and recreation. It should be a rich and satisfying experience, enabling people to return to work feeling refreshed, stimulated by new ideas and eager to share their experiences. In this way their ministry can be enhanced, thereby equipping them better for future service.

We trust and hope that Stephen will find this a valuable time for physical strengthening and spiritual growth.

A Sabbatical Support Group has been formed to oversee Stephens's plans, and to arrange practical matters of Church management and Ministry for this period. All churches within the "Link" will be given details as soon as they are finalised.

If there are any queries regarding this, please contact me- I may not know all the answers, but I will be able to point you to someone who will know!

Even at this early stage, we offer our sincere appreciation to all in our "Link" and Circuit Churches, who have offered/agreed to take on certain responsibilities to enable this Sabbatical break to proceed.

We wish Rev Stephen every blessing for this time.

Many Thanks, June Nethercot

Convenor- Sabbatical Support Group)



The Annual Subscriptions to the LINK for 2007

are now due. Please see your distributor or fill in the slip at the back of the magazine and hand to a Steward. or send to the Editor.

Price £3.00 per annum. Inland Post £3.00 per annum.

WOMEN'S NETWORK

The Circuit Committee met on 6th November and welcomed three new members – Joyce Pipet from Burnham, Heather Gale from St Marks and June Redwood from Milton.

The Committee would like to express its very grateful thanks to those who donated typewriters, tape recorders and a clock for last year's District project – Blind Aid Africa. Over 250 typewriters were collected and delivered. Thank you very much – this equipment will make such a difference for many blind people, including children.

This year's project is the Babe Big Appeal for the Children's Hospice at Charlton Farm. I expect individual churches will be "doing" things to raise money and there will be a Circuit event later in the year – details to follow.

2007 is the 20th Birthday of Women's Network and to celebrate this occasion, and the work done by Women's Network over the years, we are having a Circuit Service at Victoria on Sunday, 2nd September.

The plan is to start with tea, with an opportunity to look at a display of the various projects that we have been involved with locally and nationally and Internationally, followed by the Service at 6.00pm. Sandra Lewer, Connexional President for 2006/7 has agreed to be the speaker. **Please** make a note in your "forward planners".

Other events during the year are, the Residential Experience at Glenfall from 20th to 22nd March, which will be led by Margaret Sawyer, the District Day at Longwell Methodist Church on 16th June and the Residential Conference at the Hayes, Swanwick from 19th – 21st September. The Easter Offering Service is at Milton Methodist Church on Tuesday, 8th May, when Joyce Pipet will be the speaker and EVERYONE – men, women and children are welcome.

Di Smart

Circuit Secretary

REMINDER – ADVENT QUIET DAY WEDNESDAY 29TH NOVEMBER

There are a few places left for this Quiet Day – if you would like to come and have not already let me know, please do so by Monday, 27th. Refreshments, including a light lunch, are being provided and the caterers need to know numbers – and it would help me too!!

Di Smart
01934 645202



ORGANIST NEEDED.

Our Burnham Church is seeking an Organist for Sunday Evening Services.
2 Keyboard Pipe Organ.

Any interested person please contact Eric Nethercot - Senior Steward. 01278 795119 for further details.



The Church of Our Lady Burnham on Sea

You are cordially invited to join us at the Induction Mass of Father Tior Szende on Tuesday November 28th at 7.00pm. All Welcome



Thanks

I wish to thank all the kind friends of the LINK and Brent Knoll Church for their loving concern for Bill and me expressed in beautiful cards and calls but most of all for your prayers. We are wonderfully surrounded by loving care and give thanks to God for all his Blessing

Kathleen Burrige



Gwen Oldham and Family thank everyone for their kind thoughts and support during this past year and send you all every blessing for Christmas and the New Year

LINK VILLAGES' FELLOWSHIP

We were pleased to welcome Mrs Pat Comer to our meeting on Tuesday, October 24th. to tell us of her visit to Buckingham Palace to receive her M.B.E. for services to St John Ambulance over many years. She showed photographs of the day when she was wearing her uniform.

Paul Temple made a very welcome visit on November 14th. when he told us of further developements in recent months in Luhimba. He had a lovely presentation using computer generated slides. The latest project has been to build a hospital for £5,500 - it is the same size as the children's unit at Weston-super-Mare! Recently, a lorry went out taking 17 tonnes of goods donated by local people - Beds, generators for the Hospital, garden tools, chairs, spectacles, children's clothes and books. The next project is to build a dormitory block for the boys' Secondary School.

On Tuesday, November 28th., we shall have a Flower Arranging Demonstration by Elizabeth Anne.

Our Christmas Buffet Lunch will be on December 12th.

At our first meeting for 2007, on January 9th., John Page will make a return visit.

Living Paintings Trust, Art Work for the Blind is our subject on January 23rd. Revd Margaret Trapp will be our speaker on February 13th.

Do come along and join us on the second and fourth Tuesday afternoons of each month.

Eileen Goundry



**East Brent Methodist Church
Christmas Carol Service
"Carols by Candlelight"**

at

East Brent Methodist Church

on

Friday 22nd December

at 7.00 p.m.

Followed by Coffee and Mince Pies

Come and join us



Charity Carol Concert

Some readers will have experienced the wonderful performance of "The Armed Man" by the Burnham and Highbridge Choral Society. Another chance to hear the Society sing is on Thursday 14th December, in St. John's Church Highbridge, beginning at 7-30 pm.

Admission is by programme, priced £1.50, available at the door. A collection, in aid of a local charity, will be taken at the end of the performance.

In addition to enjoying very interesting arrangements of well known carols sung by the Society, the audience will also have the opportunity to sing traditional carols.

(You may wish to make a note of the Society's Annual Concert on Saturday 24th March 2007 in St Andrew's Church, Burnham-on-Sea)



Have you visited our Burnham Church website?

www.methodistchurchburnhamonsea.org.uk

Well, if you haven't, you're unlike 538 other people who have visited the site in the past 6 months and have viewed a total of nearly 5500 pages between them. The table below shows the countries where people accessing the site were from.

US	Russian Federation
EU	Norway
GB	Spain
Australia	Taiwan
Canada	Chile
Brazil	Japan
Switzerland	Israel

The US, EU and GB providing the highest number of visitors. We will never know who viewed the website or their reason for visiting it, but hopefully it will have made a small impact on their lives.

The site contains information on a range of topics including the history of the church, our services, weekly meetings, the Roads and Streets that we are praying for, the Weekly Notices (so if you have internet access and are not able to be at church on a Sunday, you can download the notices, so that you know what's happening). A Guest Book has just been added, so if you visit the website, please sign the Guest Book.

Whilst you're on-line you can also take a look at Brean Church's website at:

www.brean-methodist-church.home.dhs.org

If you don't have internet access and would like to see the website, please let me know.

Nigel May
Webmaster



BURNHAM.

We send our warmest greetings to all who read our "Link" magazine, both locally and world-wide. It's an amazing thought that due to technology and skill all that we write each month in this magazine is read by family and friends throughout the world, through the Internet. We thank Nigel for linking our tiny bit of Somerset to the whole world.

As we write this we have just held our Christmas Fair and we give thanks for the commitment of so many who organised, contributed and supported this fine effort in aid of our Re-Development Project.

We have been delighted to see several new members join us recently for worship and fellowship, and we welcome them in friendship as we seek together to be Gods people in this place.

We continue to remember in our prayers anyone who is troubled, sick or worried about their health, and we give thanks that Rev Joyce is improving following her recent operation.

Our Church Hall is open each Saturday morning for coffee and teas and we welcome any members who wish to 'drop in' for a drink and rest, especially in this run-up to Christmas.

As we approach this most busy and Holy season, we remember the lovely words of Christina Rossetti;

Love came down at Christmas,
Love all lovely. Love divine,
Love was born at Christmas,
Star and angels gave the sign.

We hope and pray that all of our homes will be filled with the love and peace of the Christ child this Christmastide.

Eric. - for the Stewards.



RESPONDING TO THE CRISIS IN LEBANON

As half the Burnham harvest proceeds went to MRDF I thought you might like to know how it is being used.

MRDF is helping to provide humanitarian aid in Lebanon through Action by Churches Together (ACT).

Donations are helping provide food, mattresses and blankets, kitchen utensils and hygiene and sanitation supplies for people who have fled their homes during the bombing.

Hundreds of houses, apartments, shops and other buildings have been severely damaged or destroyed. According to many experts, economy damages and losses go beyond several billion dollars, even without taking into account the consequences of widespread displacement.

Farmers have lost their harvests due to the bombing, which means a loss of their total annual income.

Your support is helping very needy people.

Many thanks.

Chris Wray.



NCH

On behalf of NCH I would like to thank everyone who supported the Coffee Morning on Saturday November 4th. The amount raised was £350.00 and £99.60 from the sale of Christmas cards. I still have a few packs of cards for sale.

Dorothy May.



Carol Singing

We have arranged the following dates for Singing:-

Tuesday 12th December at Beaufort House Rectory Road at 3.00pm

Wednesday 20th December at Abbeyfield Berrow Road, at 3.00pm and then to Tesco at 6.30pm

At Tesco we collect on behalf of NCH. Do come along and join us at any or all of these dates.

Dorothy May.



Christmas Fair

As Joyce is still in hospital as the magazine is being printed, I am expressing her thanks to everyone who worked so hard and to all those who supported the fair. It was certainly very busy and the result shows this. The amount raised was £810.00 and from this there is just the advert to be paid. A very worthwhile effort.

Redevelopment Fund

Money raised by members inc. loans & loans on request in October

£14,627.90

Total to date raised by members inc. loans & loans on request

£81,773.09

(Joyce was able to come home from hospital on Tuesday 21st.)



Thanks

Funeral of Mrs Dorothy player

Alan and Arthur would like to thank all those who attended their Mothers Thanksgiving service. Even non Methodists who attended were moved by the service conducted by Rev. Margaret Trapp. The sum of £210.00 was donated to the Burnham Methodist Church in her memory.

WEST HUNTSPELL

West Huntspill Ecumenical Prayer Group

Let me tell you about one of the Prayer Groups in our village. We meet once a fortnight, just seven of us, (one for each day of the week), not just for prayer, although that is an important part of the evening's activity. The main task is to prepare & update a prayer list to be used by others and ourselves. It includes prayer for the people who live in both East & West Huntspill, street by street; the different churches in both Huntspills & Highbridge and the activities which take place in them week by week; the work of our CMS Missionary link in Pakistan, where she teaches groups of Christian adults. In particular the prayer list includes those whom we know are in special need at that time. On every day of the week at least two people are praying using the list.

In addition to the above we organise two events both of which happen at this time of year. The first is a **Pre-Advent Retreat**. This will take place in the Methodist Chapel on Saturday 2nd December from 2-30pm. to 5.00pm. This will be led by our Superintendent Minister, Revd Terry Young, and will end with the lighting of the Christmas Tree lights.

The other activity is our **Day of Prayer for Christian Unity**. This will also be in the Methodist Church on Saturday 20th January from 10am. to 5.00pm. Half hour sessions throughout the day will be led by members of different denominations and people are welcome to attend one or more sessions as they wish. A light lunch is provided and the day ends with the Communion Service.

Members of the circuit are invited to join us for either of these events. Further details are available from Margaret Waterhouse 01278 784473

We also invite everyone to our

Carol Service

on

Friday December 15th

Hot Drinks & Mince Pies after

at 7.00pm onwards

EAST BRENT

We live in a multi-cultural society but are we in danger of forgetting our Christian Heritage? We read of a check-in clerk at British Airways being suspended because she wanted to wear a cross, local supermarkets advertising "Have a blessed Ramadan", Midlanders wishing to call it Winterfest and Church Schools being told to take in a proportion of non-believers. Where has the Christmas message gone?

Christmas can be a difficult time for some. Those far from home and those who have been bereaved in the past year find it particularly so. But amid all the present buying and tinsel of Christmas, it is a time for us to proclaim the Christian Gospel. We have a full Christmas programme at East Brent. Our Christmas day service at 10.00 am. is always well attended, and we shall be having our usual 10.30 am. services on Christmas Eve and again on 31st December. We feel at East Brent we should continue to have these Sunday morning services. This is what we are here for.

The highlight will undoubtedly be "Candles by Candlelight" which we shall celebrate at 7.00 pm. on Friday 22nd December. We invite readers from all the Link Churches to take part and we normally have a full Church so come early to join our Congregation. One special item this year is that we shall be dedicating a Bible in memory of Revd Rex Oldham. This Bible will lie on the Lectern for use of Readers and Preachers as they so wish. Rex was a good friend to East Brent and the Church Council agreed that his memory should be marked in this way. After the service all are invited to share in coffee and mince pies. We look forward to seeing you.

"Carols in the Barn" is always a highlight at this time of year and if you can manage along to Ash Lawn Farm on Tuesday 19th. December at 7.30 pm., you will be most welcome.

It was good to see Diana Bratt back in Church after her gall bladder operation and our thoughts and best wishes go to Julia Flynn as she recovers from surgery at Musgrove Park hospital.

A very blessed Christmas to you all,

David Craig.

BRENT KNOLL

Letter from Brent Knoll

It seems terribly early to send greetings for Christmas and the New Year but we do hope that it will be a peaceful time for all of you. We are very aware of the many difficulties, occasioned by illness, anxiety or bereavement, experienced by some of our own members and by others throughout the Link and they will be especially in our thoughts and prayers at this time. We have been glad to see Geoff Tullett back amongst us after his prolonged stay in hospital - Kathleen Burrige is recovering at home after her hip replacement and Bill is at present being cared for in Stratton House - We send special greetings to them and to Iain and Jenny Craig. Ever since their retirement to Somerset Iain has made his own unique contribution to the churches of our Circuit and of West Mendip. He has now had to give up preaching and leading worship but we hope that we shall still be able to benefit from his presence among us for many years to come. It has been good to welcome Peter and Pam Pembro into our congregation while they have taken a "self denying ordinance" from West Mendip for six months following Pam's "retirement". [A very active retirement as you will see from the Plan! and especially welcome during Joyce Plumb's enforced inactivity. We do hope you will be on your feet again soon Joyce.]

In preparation for Christmas the Ecumenical Group will consider an Advent theme on Thursday December 7th at 2.30 pm. We shall not be holding an early December Carol Service this year but it would be good to go to St. Michael's for "Carol Praise" with Harmony Plus Band and the Youth Choir on Saturday December 9th at 7.00pm. [Refreshments from 6.00pm.] We also hope to join in singing "Village Carols" outside/inside the Parish Hall on Wednesday December 20th at 6.30, followed by light refreshments. We shall hold our "Nativity Service" on December 24th at 10.30. am. and a Carol Service on December 31st. On January 7th we take part in the very special service when, according to Methodist tradition, we renew our Covenant with God, who "enfolds us in generous love". It's a very challenging service, but a good start for the new year.

The "Churches Together " Committee met on November 15th and

reminds us of the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity from January 18th - 25th. The main event will be the Prayer Day organised by the West Huntspill Churches on Saturday January 20th. from 10.00am- 4.00pm. They have been hosting this for several years and offer us a special opportunity to join others for the day or just for half an hour. Groups for Lent are being planned and details will be published in the New Year.

This weekend [Nov. 17th – 19th] I have been to Sidholme for the Conference organised by M.W.M. [Methodists for World Mission] which met to explore how we can catch the vision and fire of the World Church. The main speaker was Revd. Tom Stuckey, last year's President and the prayers were led by Revd. Ed Standhaft. We also had an excellent presentation from Elizabeth Perry, the Christian Aid Co-ordinator for Dorset and Somerset, who told us about the work with partners in Zambia and spoke passionately of the injustice still endured by the poor peoples of the world – We hope to have a fuller report on the Conference in the next edition of The Link but I just want to put a question which Tom Stuckey posed at the beginning. He said that we should all be asking not "What is the Mission of the Church?" but "What is the Mission of God?" - for us in this place - at this time - We need to be alert for the movement of the Spirit challenging us to be vulnerable and to move on - out of the comfortable place. Let me leave you with two prayers which we used each day:

Morning Prayer. As we rejoice in the gift of this new day, so may the light of your presence, O God, set our hearts on fire with love for you; now and forever. Amen .

Evening Prayer . Give to us and to all your Church, O God a bold vision and a burning charity, a deeper wisdom and a living understanding, that the eternal message of your Son may be acclaimed as the good news of the age; through him who makes all things new, even Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen

Love to all,
Margaret.



BREAN

I really think that Christmas must be coming. If we only go by the amount of mail which comes through our letterbox each day containing appeals for Gifts of money for folk worse off than ourselves. Then our churches have had their Christmas sales of cards and other items - what a pity when we get two sales on the same day - then we have the dates of our Carol Services and lunches etc. And of course the shops are making sure we know it is coming.

For some it will be a case of plenty and to spare but for others it will be just another day. But for Christians it should be a time of rejoicing at the birth of the one who would change the world. So we look forward in hope always remembering the true meaning.

Friends will be glad to know that Daphne Price is home from hospital but is taking things quietly at the moment and we remember her in our prayers.

Marjorie and Walter Godwin have had quite a spell of illness too but we hope they are getting over it now - we wish them well

We send our best wishes to all our Link friends both young and old and we would welcome you all to our Christmas Eve Carol Service at 4.00pm.

God bless you all from Brean.

Lilian Stone.

Minister

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Web Sites

www.methodistchurchburnhamonseas.org.uk
www.brean-methodist-church.home.dhs.org

**Deadline for the
February 2007 “LINK”
Sunday 21st January 2007**

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Please contact the Editor if you would like one.**

If you do not have the ‘LINK’ regularly and would like to do so, please fill in the slip and hand to a Steward. or send to the Editor.
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