

The World of Personal Number Plates

# Regtransfers

Autumn 2008

.co.uk



**Sir Ian Botham** OBE



# Headline **NEWS**

**B**edfordshire-based News Transport Ltd., was established in 1973 by husband and wife, Dennis and Barbara Footitt. The company has come a long way since the early days, when it provided just a courier service to the motor industry. Through sheer hard work, the company grew and created the need for more vehicles and staff.

When business was adversely affected by a down-turn in the motor industry, Dennis and Barbara decided to change direction and offer their services to the food packaging industry. This proved to be the right move and the company began to flourish once again.

***“Regtransfers are definitely the first port of call.”***

In 1983 their son, David, joined the company with the intention of staying briefly just to learn the business. He was still there a year later when younger brother, Ken, also joined the firm. They both became more and more involved in the day-to-day running of the business and quickly identified the need to increase the size of their vehicle fleet in order to gain new business. Their success eventually allowed their parents to hand over the reins and retire early to live in Cyprus.

As the company continued to expand, David (now Managing Director) and Ken decided to re-locate to freehold premises in Ampthill, South Bedfordshire. They recently finished a complete refurbishment of the site, which now comprises brand new offices with training facilities, a warehouse four times the size of its predecessor, and a huge loading bay to accommodate the new double-decker and rigid lorries that have become part of the fleet.



The most recent, and biggest, change in the company's fortunes occurred when a French distribution network called Fortec approached them. They were establishing a network of distribution depots to provide overnight delivery of palletised freight throughout the UK and needed a company like theirs to cover the South Bedfordshire and North Hertfordshire area. David decided to give it a three month trial, but it was such an instant success that he called them after just three weeks and asked for a contract.

The company hasn't looked back since and has gone from just five customers to over 300, none of whom represent more than 9% of the business, thus avoiding having all their eggs in one basket. Fortec, along with their computerised transport system, has been a revelation, allowing them to offer guaranteed delivery anywhere in the UK at very competitive rates with full 'track and trace' barcode technology.

Shortly after they joined the Fortec network, Pat Moore joined the company as a sales person and spent the next four years developing and building a customer base. He eventually moved into the office to run the traffic side of the business and was responsible for the company attaining ISO 9001:2000 in January 2004. This in turn led to numerous prestigious awards such

as: Motor Transport Safety in Operation, Britain's Safest Fleet and the Fleet News Safety Award.

David's interest in private number plates dates back to the late 1970s, when dad, Dennis, purchased **222 YL, D 123** and **DEN 80**. He introduced them onto the company lorries, realising that they would attract attention and become a great means of advertising. In the mid-1990s he bought **YDH 1**, which was to represent a proposed company called You Drive Hire.

***“Good service is something I really appreciate.”***

This was put on hold when the Fortec contract came along and David decided to look for number plates which reflected the newly found business, initially purchasing **N11 EWS** to go on a new Escort van. This immediately created a lot of interest, so he decided to add **N22 EWS** through to **N99 EWS** to enhance his collection of distribution lorries.

David's enthusiasm for personal number plates impacted on his private life when he treated his wife Jeanette to **72 JF** as a birthday present and himself to **72 DF** for his pride and joy, a Honda Fireblade motorbike.

More recently, David had been looking for more dateless 'news' registrations and came across **NEW 51** in a Regtransfers' advert in *The Sunday Times*. He just missed out on the purchase but top sales advisor, Chris Dixon, called shortly before Christmas 2007 to tell him the number was up for sale once again. David snapped it up without hesitation and, while the transfer was in progress, Chris also found **NEW 593**, **NEW 5N** and **N3 WST**.

David is absolutely delighted with them and the service he received. "Regtransfers are definitely the first port of call whenever I or my colleagues are looking for a special number plate," he said. "And your sales advisor, Chris, has been especially helpful.

"I really appreciate good service, as it's something we as a company also try very hard to promote through all aspects of our business."

Len Stout





# This **sporting** life:

Sir Ian Botham OBE

**W**e may still have English cricketers who display the stuff of which heroes are made - all-rounder Andrew Flintoff and spin-bowler Monty Panesar, for example, have both attracted huge personal followings amongst England fans - but somehow we struggle to produce players who achieve the legendary stature of a Geoff Boycott or an Ian Botham. It isn't a question of talent or ability: our current players have both. Perhaps there is a certain individuality or spark of rebelliousness that has yet to show itself, for those qualities were certainly manifest in both Botham and Boycott: Botham with his attacking, sometimes reckless, approach and Boycott with his stubborn, defensive style, doing his own thing, sometimes to the frustration of his captain and team mates.

For a wonderful moment during the early 1980s, English cricket hit a wild, unpredictable peak. People of limited attention span, who usually considered the game less entertaining than football, found themselves mesmerised by their TV screens as Ian Botham, a recently resigned former England captain with an inconsistent record and a controversial public profile, proved himself to be the world's most outstanding all-rounder, and the all but single-handed saviour of England's 1981 Ashes series against Australia - a series still known as 'Botham's Ashes'.

Even if he had never played another stroke or bowled another over, Botham's place in sporting history would have been secure. While captaincy was clearly not his natural role, when free to concentrate on playing the game, his achievements could be spectacular. The '81 Ashes saw Botham produce 399 runs and take 34 wickets. At the beginning of the series an Australian win seemed to be clearly on the cards, but in the end, largely thanks to Botham's determination and power, England retained the Ashes with a 3-1 victory.

Ian Botham retired from professional sport in 1993, taking a bit of a rest before launching a new career as a commentator. The decision to retire from playing was made during a family holiday.

"We had a holiday home in the Channel Islands and Kath [*Sir Ian's wife*] was there with the children. I told her I would be back in a couple of days and she asked what I meant, because I was supposed to be away for the whole of August. I said 'No I've had enough, I'm retiring. We're playing Australia for the next couple of days, but after that I'm retiring'. And that's exactly what happened. I was back on the island three days later. Retired, finished, done and dusted."

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His cricketing years are well remembered and well documented. There is really not much we could write that hasn't been covered elsewhere (for example, in Botham's autobiography, *Head On - Botham: The Autobiography*), so when Regtransfers dropped in to deliver his new personal registration, B33 FYS ('Beefy's'), Sir Ian spoke to us about his current career and his interests outside the commentary box.

"A lot of people when they finish professional sport, they have this big, low drop, because they haven't got that dressing room comradeship any more: the humour, the banter. I've been very lucky. I've gone straight into the commentary box with a player I've played with and the people I've played against. So we still have that same humour and banter. I am very lucky in that sense. Not many people can say they get up in the morning and enjoy it, but my job is great. I go and see all the best cricket. I attempt to do the internationals."

Including the England matches, presumably...

"I pull my hair out watching England at the moment. That's why I cut it short!"

The comment is partly tongue in cheek. Botham has gone on record with praise for Kevin Pietersen, Andrew Flintoff, Monty Panesar and others.

"For the second half of the summer, it was a pleasure to commentate on the cricket, with the arrival of Kevin Pietersen as the new captain," he says.

His passion for the game has clearly survived beyond his retirement from the field. Botham cares about English cricket and he is supportive of the team itself, even

if that support sometimes involves pointing out any shortcomings he might perceive; but it is well known that he is less supportive of decisions made by the selectors and others in charge. Botham, like many, lays blame at the selectors' door for many of England's lean periods. His outspoken opinions on what he believes to be the best interests of the England team do not always make for cordial relationships. Former coach Duncan Fletcher, who Botham described as being "past his sell by date" when calling for his replacement in 2007, indulged in some bitter, retaliatory sniping in his autobiography later that year.

The commentating is now Botham's main work, although he does have additional business interests and, of course, his work for Leukaemia Research, the charity of which he is now President.

"Sky is my main living and I have my own company, Mission Sports Management. Then, of course, there are Shredded Wheat and the beef and lamb ads. I drive a Volkswagen and I do a bit of PR for VW. I do a bit of PR work for a few people and companies. There are lots of little contracts around, but most of my time now is taken up with Sky. Shredded Wheat has been a long-term association, since 1981, and one that I enjoy doing. Good fun, good company. We have fun doing the filming. I think kids now probably know me best as the Shredded Wheat man, or the beef and lamb man. Yeah, Mr Shredded Wheat!"

Sir Ian is busier than ever, and estimates that he spends more time away from home now than he did when he was still playing.

"If anyone tells you retirement is winding down... Well, I don't know, I haven't got to that point yet. The only thing I actually retired from is the cricket field.

"The summertime is at home, predominantly. The wintertime, October to April, I'm usually overseas. I might get home for Christmas - I will do this Christmas. It's India and the West Indies this winter, with Christmas at home. Then I'm away again until April. There's South Africa next winter, so that'll be Christmas away. 2010/2011 is Australia, so the whole winter and Christmas away again. It is a lot of travelling, but I love it. I love going around the world. In fact, Kath would not have it any other way. If I'm home for more than about four days, she'll have my bag ready at the back door."

The mention, earlier, of VW prompts us to ask about his cars.

"I've always liked cars. I think that any bloke that says he doesn't is either lying or he needs help! Every bloke loves cars. They are fantastic, great machines. From Mini Coopers to something like the Bentley, the Mercedes and the VW, they're all great. Kath has a Mercedes, my son's got a Discovery and his wife has an Audi something or other. Very fast thing."

And what is Sir Ian's favourite - his ideal car?

"My dream car? I think I'd actually like one that can fly. If there's one thing I hate it's sitting in traffic jams. So my ideal car would be able to fly. *[Laughs]* Maybe a helicopter, or something from *Thunderbirds*."

While a levitating car might be the solution to Sir Ian's traffic problems, he is not a fan of heights. He reportedly declined to work from one Sky commentary box upon discovering that the box in question was actually a Portakabin perched 100 feet up a scaffolding tower. He selected an alternative position, located in the main pavilion, and later said, "I'll go in helicopters and planes, they're meant to fly - commentary boxes aren't." His colleagues, Nasser Hussain and





Mike Atherton, admitted that the wind blown, elevated commentary box had not been the most comfortable of environments.

Of earthbound vehicles, Botham finds it difficult to choose a favourite.

"I can't really pick one ideal car - I can go from a Mini Cooper to a Ferrari to a Bentley. I think the car I'm really looking forward to, which is coming on Monday, is the Volkswagen Tourareg R50. I just think it's taking it to a new dimension. I'm really looking forward to it. I've not driven in that one yet. I've sat in it and gone through the spec, but I haven't actually driven it, so I'm looking forward to Monday.

"The Bentley gets used quite a bit; but living up here and still needing to go to London, I never know if the drive is going to take me four hours or seven hours, because of the total chaos on the road. I can't work like that, so I tend to fly down or go on the train. I drive when I am up here in the north and in and down to the Midlands and even occasionally down to the south west, but London I avoid like the plague. It's just a nightmare to drive there. Congestion charges, parking - there's nowhere to park."

Sir Ian's Bentley is the vehicle he has chosen to display his new **B33 FYS** personalised registration, although there were a few second thoughts involved.

"I think it's nice to personalise something. Of course, sadly, you do get some people who think a nice plate is an invitation to scratch your car. Mine's just come back from the garage now after being scratched. The Bentley, that is - and that one didn't even have a personal plate on it. So, I've decided it's not made a difference. I might as well put **B33 FYS** on there."

The Bothams have collected quite a few private number plates between them.

"The KB plate is Kath's. My son, Liam, has got a great one: **H1 LJB** for "Hi, Liam James Botham". His wife, Sarah Jane, has one... and Sarah B [*Sir Ian's daughter*]. I have a couple. It's something we all do. I saw one the other day for my grandson, Regan. We could get it now and put it on retention. It makes a nice present when they pass their driving tests."

At the time of writing, Sir Ian is preparing himself for one of his famous charity walks in aid of the Leukaemia Research Fund. His efforts in the cause are largely responsible for the honours that have been bestowed upon him. Now President of the charity, he has been supporting Leukaemia Research since 1977, and began his famous charity walks in 1985 after a visit to a children's ward at Musgrove Park Hospital in Taunton. The plight of young people with the illness moved him to promise his support.

Botham's first Land's End to John O'Groats walk was the first of many. The forthcoming walk will be his twelfth.

"I think people appreciate the time we give up for it. We have golf days and fund raising dinners. I have another walk in October, so it doesn't really stop. And as president of Leukaemia Research, I'm always active. So many charities now have to rely on people like us to raise money - they won't get it from any other source. But we are winning, and the thing that drives us and keeps us going is the knowledge that we're making serious headway into Leukaemia. There's now an 85% chance of survival in children's Leukaemia. Twenty years ago that would have been 20%. The stats are there."

Obviously, famous people receive endless requests from charities that are desperate



In a twist to his previous walks, this year, Ian is inviting people to walk with him in exchange for sponsorship.

To sign up, or to make a donation to Leukaemia Research please visit:

[www.bothamwalk.com](http://www.bothamwalk.com)  
or call: **020 7685 5133**



for assistance with fundraising. As Kath explains, since it is impossible to help everyone, it seems to make sense to focus on one.







> > >

"Eric Morecambe gave good advice about the many people asking for help. He said 'Put all your efforts into one charity and the rest will understand'. That's how Leukaemia Research benefited."

During the October walk, Botham expects to cover about 20 miles a day.

"I'll be doing nine cities or towns, but the thing that makes this one unique is that the last five miles of each day will be done off road. For instance, the first one is in Taunton on the 10th, and the last four or five miles will be done along the Taunton to Bridgewater canal, so we can have up to 500 people. Windsor's the second day and we'll finish the last four or five miles in Windsor Great Park so the people can come and join in. We'll be able to raise even more awareness and, we hope, a lot more money. We're always looking for new angles."

Has Sir Ian started training yet?

"No..."

Does he train?

"Er... no."

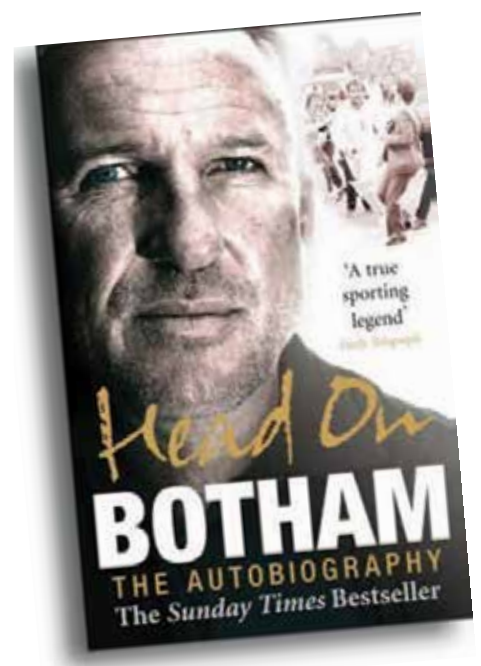
Time to change the subject with one last question. Where does Ian Botham go when he is looking for his number plates?

"Well, what I'm going to do from now on is phone Regtransfers and see what you can come up with."

The perfect answer, and we didn't even have to prompt him!

Story: Rick Cadger  
Interview: Angela Banh

Photography: Stan Thompson



**Head On - Botham: The Autobiography**  
is published by Ebury Press



# mail

email YOUR story and photos to:  
editorial@regtransfers.co.uk

Contributions may be edited for style and length



## Double delight

Not long after my wife Bernie got a promotion at work, we decided to buy her a new Audi A4 Cabriolet S-Line. This is a lovely-looking car, and we both felt it deserved its own plate.

To our amazement, whilst searching the Regtransfers website, we found not only one for my wife's new car, but also one for my Land Rover Discovery 3. I have been looking for a personal plate for some years now and this seemed like the perfect opportunity.

The two cars now look great on our drive, and we do get quite a few comments, including one from a friend who asked how we can put the same registration on two cars!

Thanks for giving us the opportunity to personalise our cars and make them something just that bit special.

**Dave and Bernie Rix**

By email



## On the right track

I chose **S222 HST** because, since 1982, I have been an Inter-City High Speed Train (HST) driver. The two main types of trains I drive (between Sheffield, Nottingham, Leeds, Derby and London St Pancras) are Class 222s and Intercity 125 HSTs. The 'S', of course, stands for Sean.

My family, friends and fellow drivers think the registration is very good and it causes a lot of positive comment whilst my Skoda Octavia VRS TDI 2.0 is parked in the works car park.

Apart from train driving, I am a partner in a small business selling German wines,

mainly red and rose, from the north-west of Germany.

Since I was about seven years old I have taken an interest in the words and meanings that can be found in registrations and identifying their place and date of origin.

We are now hoping to find a suitable registration, from Regtransfers of course, for my wife's Nissan Micra Ally when she passes her test.

**Sean Austin**

by email



## The one for me

I had always dreamed of a new car and had looked at the Honda FRV for a long time. My wife and family suggested that I should have a personal number plate.

I found the process a lot easier than I thought. I scoured the Regtransfers site and finally found the one for me. The initials were spot on and the '17' stands for the age my wife and I were when we met.

I purchased the plate with such ease and I was amazed at how quickly the plate and documents arrived. I gave the paperwork to the car dealer and the plates were on the car when I collected it.

I have been so impressed with your service that I would recommend you to anyone.

**Grant Lovell**

by email





## On yer bike!

I am a 50-year-old builder, born and bred in beautiful Somerset and my hobby and passion is motocross racing. Although this is a young man's game, I am still very competitive and ride all over Britain, Europe and the USA.

I race a 450cc Kawasaki motocross bike, which puts me in the MX1 class, and my race number is 13, so I couldn't believe my luck when Regtransfers offered me **MX1 13**.

**Dave Charrett**  
Somerset



## Chuffed

Saw it, wanted it, bought it. And very reasonably priced it was too. Fortunately my name was not too difficult to match to a standard plate but, nevertheless, this is the first time I have had a cherished plate and I am very chuffed with it.

**Al Perry**  
by email

## What's the story?

Send **YOUR** stories  
and photos to:  
[editorial@regtransfers.co.uk](mailto:editorial@regtransfers.co.uk)



## On the buses

Our hobby, for over 30 years, has been keeping a record of every Public Service Vehicle (PSV) i.e. bus, coach and minibus, throughout the UK. We record the movement of every vehicle from new, when it changes hands and until it is disposed of.

We spend a lot of time recording registrations as more and more operators are using cherished plates. In fact, Scotland has the most private plates on coaches than anywhere else in the UK.

With the introduction of *Carweb*, the vehicle identification website, it has become far easier to trace the previous identities of vehicles when they gain cherished plates.

We have had the registration **H1 BUS** for 17 years and it has always previously been on Rover cars. Also in the family is **M2 BUS**

**Richard and Ernest Barnett**  
by email

[www.carwebuk.com](http://www.carwebuk.com)



## "Easier than ordering flowers!"

I had never bought a private number plate before, because I thought it would be too complicated. How wrong I was.

The plate was a last-minute birthday gift for my daughter, Georgina Sara Marton (pictured above), so I was not holding my breath! As it turned out, it was easier than ordering flowers.

More to the point, the certificate arrived a

day earlier than expected - and in a plain envelope, a point I had not even thought about.

So, thank you very much, I would recommend your service any time.

**Tina Marton**  
by email



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and photos to:  
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# Life with the Lions



The family name Lacey is well known throughout the circus world. Martin Lacey was a zoo keeper, but now he runs The Great British Circus, which gives him an even better chance to display his beautiful animals to the public.

Martin's two sons, Alex and Martin Jnr., also work with lions and tigers in European circuses, and his wife, Susan, has worked in the USA with a group of white tigers.

Martin makes no secret of his favourite animal. **L10 NML** is now proudly displayed on the front of his Land Rover Discovery for all to see. Martin's most recent number

plate acquisition is one representing his family name, **LAC 33Y**.

So, how does someone not born into the circus business become so closely involved with such dangerous creatures?

"When I was very young I lived in India. One day, I was amazed to see an animal keeper in Lucknow Zoo talking to the tigers in his charge. He was using tiger-language and from that day on I have dedicated my life to communicating with animals."

Martin adores his animals. "We look after their every need. These are really the princes and the princesses of the animal kingdom," he says. "Animals in our circus are stimulated by the training process and get much more exercise than similar animals in zoos. As a result, our animals live much longer than those in the wild."

Behind the scenes, he manages controlled breeding programmes for his animals.

"Some species are endangered or threatened in their natural habitats and our breeding programme means we never have to take animals from the wild," Martin explains. "Our lions are now in their tenth generation of home-bred animals, and our tigers in their ninth."

Rick Cadger



### Spotlight on The Great British Circus

A new 55-minute DVD follows the circus for a year. Meet the new faces who joined the show during 2007, including the multi-talented Marquez-Howes family - Barbara, Jerry, Gordon and Jordan - plus Nicolino the Clown. Witness the training of the new

lioness group, the four Black Friesian Stallions in the ring for the first time and the BIG TOP build-up in 2 minutes flat! Featuring fantastic close-up shots of our beautiful animals - tigers, lions, camels, llamas, reindeer and horses.

Produced by an independent production company, the DVD is an absolute delight for all circus enthusiasts and animal lovers. The production team were given total access to all areas - behind the scenes, training, rehearsals and animal inspections - nothing was out of bounds. Shot in widescreen digital.

To order please email:  
[ringmaster@greatbritishcircus.co.uk](mailto:ringmaster@greatbritishcircus.co.uk)

Also available:

*A Day at the Circus, Under the Big Top and Ringside.*

£10.99 or two for £19.99 including postage.



Photo Jeff Link



# PR06 EED with enthusiasm

**M**artin Camplin has been in the motor trade since the age of 20, so he has obviously learnt a thing or two about how to run a dealership. For most of this period he worked for a dealer group operating throughout Herts, Beds and Bucks. However it wasn't until the year that England won the Rugby World Cup in Australia, that he finally took the plunge and started his own business.

He had seen a vacant lot, in his home town of Leighton Buzzard in Bedfordshire, that was once owned by a fork lift truck company. Martin felt it was the ideal location for a new dealership.

His boss at the time wasn't interested in looking into the possibility, so Martin discussed it with his wife and they both decided that it was time to go it alone. They took on a KIA car franchise and set up Grovebury Cars Limited. In a short space of time he has built a thriving and successful business, achieved through hard work and enduring a few 'growing pains'. Martin also acknowledges the support given by his wife, who continues to work for the dealership on a part-time basis.

Martin's first number plate was given to him by a very grateful couple whom he assisted

after they had been tricked into buying a worthless car. Martin found them a replacement at cost price and, in return, they gave him the registration **111 JHA**, which he had admired.

The next registration Martin acquired was at an auction. The last but one lot was **TCL 61**. He decided to bid and went to £1650 but an alternative offer of £1700 appeared to have won. Some confusion ensued and his revised bid of just £1200 was finally accepted.

Although he didn't realise at the time, the first two letters matched his 6-year-old son, Toby's, initials. Martin has since set up a company called Toby Camplin Ltd, which his son will eventually take over, along with the perfect **TCL 61** plate.

His latest acquisition **PR06 EED** also has an unusual story behind it. When asked about suitable plates for a company called Procoin, Martin went immediately to the Regtransfers website and entered PR06 in the search box. He couldn't believe his eyes when **PR06 EED** appeared at the top of the results. KIA had just announced its new Proceed model and Martin was soon to attend a dealers' convention for the launch in Birmingham.

Martin phoned Regtransfers immediately and snapped it up. He put it on his Proceed demonstration car and parked in front of the other 120 dealers' cars. He was delighted with his good fortune and received both complimentary and envious comments from colleagues. KIA wanted to purchase the plate themselves, but Martin considered it too valuable an advertising tool for his own operation and has already received many sales enquiries as a result.

Martin makes a point of praising Regtransfers for the quality of service he received and sends a big "Thank You" to sales advisor Debra, who dealt with the sale.

As well as collecting the odd number plate, Martin is also an avid collector of model Ferraris manufactured by an Italian company called Brumm. Many of these are quite rare and Martin still has a few to find in order to complete the set. So please contact him if you have any to sell.

Len Stout

[www.groveburycars.co.uk](http://www.groveburycars.co.uk)





## What's the story?

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and photos to:  
[editorial@regtransfers.co.uk](mailto:editorial@regtransfers.co.uk)

## Mark 1

**M**ark Gilbert's father has always been interested in cars and has owned some interesting and unusual ones. Before he married, he had a Messerschmitt KR 200 three-wheeler and, in the 1970s, bought a classic 1951 Bentley Mk VI. This had the registration **279 HRH**, which has raised a few eyebrows over the years.

He also had a passing interest in registration numbers and would often point out interesting ones to his son. During the 1970s, while working in the exhibition industry, he saw a car with the number **1 EXH** parked near one of the London exhibition halls. One day he approached the owner and asked if he would sell the number. A deal was agreed and the registration is still on another of Mark's vehicles.

The boyhood interests have continued and, apart from his road cars, Mark has had some other interesting vehicles. His father sold the Bentley in the early 1980s and then

purchased a 1961 Daimler SP 250 Dart for a bit of fun. Later on, Mark took it over and still has it to this day.

In 1992 he constructed a Caterham Super 7 from a kit. The Super 7 is an adaptation of the Lotus 7 design - a small, sporty model that provides the perfect context for a personal number plate. Mark still owns the Caterham and it currently bears the registration **K17 MJG**. He also has a TVR Griffith, a two-seater sports model produced by TVR between 1991 and 2002. The Griffith displays the registration **PW52 TVR**, which was already assigned to it when Mark bought the car.

Mark's private number plates over the years have been chosen for a number of reasons. **1 EXH** was simply a great looking plate, while others have been relevant to his name or to the cars to which they have been assigned. With Mark's ultimate personal registration, however, the focus returned to his initials.

"Many years ago I remember seeing a car with a low single-digit MJG number on it,



something like MJG 3 or MJG 7," says Mark. "I thought it would be nice to have a number like that, but I didn't actively seek one out.

"Earlier this year, I was talking to a colleague at work about registration numbers and, out of curiosity, thought I would look at the Regtransfers website to see what MJG numbers were for sale. You can imagine my surprise when I saw that **MJG 1** was for sale. I thought about it for a few days before telephoning your salesman, Martin Wightwick, and I managed to secure the registration. Now that the plates have been fitted to my car, I consider myself very fortunate."

Rick Cadger





The Registration Numbers Club is the only traditional UK based club catering for enthusiasts of personalised vehicle registration numbers.



Joining us costs very little and the benefits could be substantial. We were originally founded in 1977 and currently produce a quarterly newsletter, RNC News, which is the original

independent club publication and is available free to subscribing members.

The club is run by Honorary Secretary, Steve Waldenberg from the RNC office in Leeds. Rod Lomax from Bury in Lancashire is the club Publicity Officer and John Harrison, who has an expert knowledge of the whole system of vehicle registration in this country, is club Archivist & Advisor.

For information about the RNC, please contact:

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## A word from the RNC

were placed into various classes such as Number Ones, Owners' Initials, Amusing or Unusual Names, Classic Vehicles with Original Number, Collections etc.

Members operate a self voting system to ensure no preferential treatment is given and vote for the registration they think is best in each class. The highest score wins the class with second and third prizes in each class also being awarded. Trophies are presented to these winners and are also awarded to several others including the owner of the oldest registration present and the owner of the vehicle travelling the longest distance to the rally.



Jack Collins displays his registration on an immaculate Mercedes

Sadly the rain persisted for most of the morning, but by early afternoon the sun came out and the rally site, adjacent to Shakespeare's river Avon, dried up fairly quickly allowing members to picnic and just generally meet up with old acquaintances and chat with other like minded people about our shared interest. The prize giving commenced around 3.30pm followed by a prize draw with some great items which had all been donated from a variety of sources. Prior to this, a special charity auction was held for a strictly one-off copy of Noel Woodall & Brian Heaton's latest 2008 publication, *Car Numbers - Then and Now*, which had been beautifully leather bound and gold foil edged. Brian auctioned this with great vigour and bidding was fast and furious, the book being eventually sold to a long standing club member for £125. The proceeds from this will be donated to the Parkinson's Disease Society. Sadly Noel, who many will have met at earlier rallies, is now suffering from this debilitating illness. Lloyds TSB will match the amount raised for the charity.



New member Harby Bains and a fabulous plate

On the previous evening, many club members attended an excellent pre-rally dinner at the Greyhound Coaching Inn & Hotel in the nearby market town of Lutterworth. "Altogether an excellent weekend", commented many members after the event.

As in previous years, the RNC is indebted to several cherished registration dealers who provided sponsorship in many areas such as the marquee, the rally site costs, the trophies, printing and the special prize draw. Many thanks indeed to you all.

#### Barn find

Earlier this year a 'barn find' Lister Bristol sports racing car came up for sale by H & H Classic Auctions. This car had originally been owned by a mill owning family from my home town of Bury in Lancashire and had actually been initially road registered with the 1955 Bury plate **DEN 275**. It achieved much racing success in the hands of owner John Horridge before a bad crash put him out of action. The car, which requires a complete renovation, was expected to achieve between £50,000 and £70,000 but eventually sold against fierce bidding for £126,500.

#### Could you live without your car?

Despite this Government appearing to hate motorists - the high cost of fuel and fuel tax, retrospective increases in road tax, road pricing, congestion charging, etc. - it appears from a recent survey by the AA that most motorists still love driving. 82% of respondents said they still enjoyed being behind the wheel and almost the same amount, 79%, said they could not live without their car. Interestingly just 3% of men and 2% of women stated they would dump their spouse rather than their car. Wow!

Rod Lomax



Members enjoyed an excellent dinner the previous evening in Lutterworth

#### Summer rally 2008

The Registration Numbers Club held its annual summer rally on Sunday 6 July 2008 at the popular Stanford Hall in Leicestershire. A great display of cherished number plates was achieved despite the appalling weather and the prohibitive cost of fuel. Around 65 vehicles arrived on site to take part in a light-hearted competition where members' registrations



Adrian Hayward-Wills created a great display



The rally field at Stanford Hall was full despite the wet weather



# Marketing on a Plate



***"Private plates for business are a great idea. They are assets of the company and should appreciate in time."***

For many of us, car rental is about trying to secure the best price we can get on the least expensive 3-door, mini-hatchback that we can find. At the other end of the market, however, companies like City Inter-Rent cater for drivers who seek quality, performance and comfort in their rented vehicles.

City Inter-Rent, founded in 1999, is a market leader in this sector, with a fleet that includes many of the most coveted production cars on the road today. Range Rover, BMW, Mercedes, Jaguar, Bentley, Aston Martin, Porsche, Lotus and Chrysler are all represented in the range of rental vehicles available. The company is based in

London, but serves most of the UK from cities including Glasgow, Leeds, Liverpool, Manchester, Birmingham, Brighton, Bristol and Cardiff. The company continues to grow year on year at a rate of 15% per annum.

City Inter-Rent's Managing Director, Prakash Patel, told us a little more about his business.

"I founded City Group Inter-Rent Plc in July 1999. Previously I was a licensee for Budget Rent a Car from 1988 to July 1999. Whilst with Budget we expanded from one to seven locations in six years and became one of the largest and most successful licensees.

I have twenty years of experience in the car rental industry, and extensive knowledge in all areas of the business. My main responsibilities are overseeing the day to day running of the business with particular involvement in acquisition and disposal of fleet, insurance claims and business development."

Patel has collected an enviable client list that includes Europcar UK Ltd, the Dubai, American and Saudi Embassies, the BBC, Mercedes Benz UK Ltd, Royal Sun Alliance Insurance... the list goes on and on.

"Our fleet increases and decreases throughout the year, however at any time we are running no less than 120 vehicles.

> > >





**M**arketing and advertising are evolving arts. Despite the explosive growth of the internet, there is still room for offline innovation in marketing and brand promotion. In recent years, Regtransfers.co.uk has noticed, and encouraged, the increasing use of private vehicle registrations in this context. Whether it is the raising of personal profile, as achieved by Sir Alan Sugar's famous **AMS 1** registration, or the novel promotion of a brand like Theo Paphitis's stationery chain, Ryman, with the number RYM 4N, personal - or corporate - registrations are big business.

An increasing number of companies and entrepreneurs have seen the value of private and corporate vehicle number plates. Some have invested in single, outstanding examples that are guaranteed to make an impact. Others have equipped entire fleets of vehicles with themed or branded registrations.

Distinctive number plates:

- provide excellent promotional, marketing opportunities
- look great in press releases, newspaper articles, TV, etc.
- raise public awareness of your company
- help to create corporate identity
- are great fun items
- set your company apart from the rest
- are tax deductible
- provide proven investment potential

A visit to our website at [www.regtransfers.co.uk](http://www.regtransfers.co.uk) is certain to provide you with inspiration and ideas for the perfect registration to promote YOUR business.

With stories and video clips you can see how companies just like yours have gained considerable prestige from their distinctive number plates.

If you would like to discover how this exciting and entertaining medium could work for you, please visit:

[www.regtransfers.co.uk](http://www.regtransfers.co.uk)



Go online to read our special **Marketing on a Plate** supplement

> > >

The **alternative** INVESTMENT



***“Great service, always keeping us up to date with related plates, transfers done very easily and value for money.”***

We operate one of the largest prestige, luxury and sports fleets in the UK. We are entirely independent of any other organisation; we aren't answerable to any

vehicle manufacturer, rental supplier or insurance company. Our independence means we have access to more vehicles than anyone else, and therefore we can



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supply a vehicle when no-one else can. In addition to our own fleet we can locate speciality vehicles through our nationwide approved partners.”

City Inter-Rent recognises the value that private number plates can contribute to a business, and the company owns several.

“We own **0003 CTY, 0005 CTY, 0006 CTY, 0007 CTY, 0008 CTY and 2 CTY**. Our customers recognise our vehicles. They look great, with the CTY short for CITY. They are great for our company image.

“I think private plates for business are a great idea. They are assets of the company and should appreciate in time. We are always expanding our ‘super car fleet’ and so we are always looking for related plates.”

What was Prakash Patel's experience with Regtransfers?

“Great service, always keeping us up to date with related plates, transfers done very easily and value for money.”

Rick Cadger  
Photography: Stan Thompson

[www.cityinterrent.com](http://www.cityinterrent.com)



## a **growing** collection

**W**hilst reading a Sunday newspaper, sometime during 1984, Vince Russo of Valley Grown Salads in Roydon, Essex, came across the number plate **VR 5**. Its obvious depiction of his initials prompted him to buy it, and this was the beginning of what Vince now calls 'The Collection'.

In 1988, he acquired **VRU 550**. "After that one, the personalised registration drug had kicked in" says Vince, "and then it was almost one a year."

Vince's next purchases were **L1 GVR** and **A7 GAR**. By 1998 Vince had equipped all of his company vehicles with personalised



**VGS VALLEY GROWN SALADS**

registrations such as **S1 VGS** and **S2 VGS**.

Vince's children soon developed an interest as well, purchasing **15 GR** and **RUS 507** among others.

"Then I spotted a registration which really caught my eye," says Vince. "**R111 SSO**. Smart and to the point. It was mine!"

The latest addition to the family is, however, the one that is closest to Vince's heart and one which he coveted for many years. **ENZ 5** is now displayed on his Range Rover Vogue.

"It really stands out and looks the part."

The Collection has now reached a staggering 19 registrations:

**9 ER, 5 GR, 15 AR, 15 GR, A1 JOE, A7 GAR, ENZ 5, JR 7, L1 GVR, R1 VGS, R111 SSO, RUS 50, RUS 50J, RUS 507, S1 VGS, S2 VGS, S3 VGS, VRU 550 and VR 5.**

[www.v-g-s.co.uk](http://www.v-g-s.co.uk)



**S**tuarts Wine Bar Ltd. took on the lease for a stunning country inn called The Fairfax Arms in Gilling East, North Yorkshire.

"It is our third premises," says director Matt Jones. "We pride ourselves on serving excellent meals using British produce."

Because the Fairfax is an hour away from their main restaurant in Leeds (Bar 166 and Bistro, Horsforth) a van was acquired for the staff, with the intention that the vehicle would also advertise the business as they drove back and forth.

"A lot of the locals shorten the name of the inn to 'The Fax'," says Matt. "People would say 'We're off to The Fax', which is why my co-director, Robert Fawcett, thought the number plate **2 FAX** would be perfect for the van when he spotted it. Along with our distinctive livery, the registration promotes the name of premises we want to publicise."

Whether you're looking for quality food, a comfortable room in which to escape the hustle and bustle of the big city, or just a great pint of real ale, The Fairfax Arms is definitely worth a visit.

[www.thefairfax.co.uk](http://www.thefairfax.co.uk)

## We're off **2** the **FAX**







*"I am convinced we get extra business from people knowing the plate and car."*

## Extra business

**T**ony Williamson of Ince Williamson Estate Agents in Chorley, Lancashire considers his personal number plate, **G2UMP**, to be the best advertisement he has.

"I think I got a bargain as it's the ultimate plate for an estate agent," says Tony. "Clients and buyers love it. It always raises a smile and breaks the ice. Some people even call me Mr. Gazump," he adds.

Everyone recognises Tony with his BMW 328i convertible - which, he acknowledges, makes him extra-courteous on the road.

"I am convinced we get extra business from people knowing the plate and car."

[www.incewilliamson.com](http://www.incewilliamson.com)

**INCE WILLIAMSON**

## Making history

Seventeen year-old Ben Colby has been interested in number plates since his father purchased one about eight years ago.

Ben, who is currently on a mechanical engineering course at Corus Construction and Industrial, delivers papers in his local area in his spare time. A while ago, Ben began saving money for his own private number plate. The obvious place to begin searching for something suitable was the Internet.

"I found **BC 21** on the Regtransfers website and made an offer. I was delighted when it was accepted. I would like to say a big 'thank you' to Regtransfers (and sales manager, Donna, in particular), for all the help in selling me this great registration. I would now like to find out about the history of the number, as all I know so far is that it is about 100 years old."



*Well, here you are, Ben:*

**BC** registrations were first issued by **Leicester County Borough Council** in **January 1904**.

At one point, your registration was owned by a Brian Christie of Aberdeen.





# Even Stephens

Chatting to the Stephens family from Nottingham, it becomes clear that they share a passion for personal number plates.

The story begins 24 years ago when Peter Stephens bought his first plate, **PS 3898**. Not to be left out, his wife, Alyce (pictured below), soon had **AS 1515**.

Youngest son, Andrew, received **AS 4144** for his 21st birthday in 1993 and this was updated to **3 APS** by mum for his 30th birthday. By this time, Andrew was married to Izzy, who now sports **APS 11** on her car.

Alyce has recently purchased **JAS 529** for grandson, James, [pictured right] although just six years old!

Eldest son, Simon, had received **STS 16** for his 21st birthday and gave his wife, Sharon, **5 SLS** to mark the birth of their youngest child, Sophie, now five years old. Alyce had already stepped in once again with **X23 TJS** for their ten-year-old son, Thomas

Peter and his father, John, started the family business, John A. Stephens Ltd. (Builders' Merchants), 40 years ago. Since John's death in 1985, Peter has headed the company with his two sons now also on board.



Operational Manager, Andrew, has equipped all 25 lorries with JAS plates. He believes personalised plates have definitely helped with the company's corporate image, making it easy to identify the fleet. He also praised Regtransfers for the great service and invaluable help they have provided over the years.

Len Stout

[www.johnastephens.co.uk](http://www.johnastephens.co.uk)

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## Life is serious enough

**N**eil Loughlin was born, raised and educated in Bristol. In 1985, he joined the Royal Navy and served in the supply department for 12 years. After the birth of his daughter, Casey (now aged ten), he moved to Basingstoke to take his first civilian job as an Inventory Control Manager. He progressed to different roles over the years and is now the director of

Supply Chain and Vendor Management for a global telecommunications company.

"I have always had a fascination with gadgets and personal number plates," says Neil. "I purchased **V1 CEX** in 2003, which has been on a number of Porsches over the years. I like to inject a little humour as life is serious enough."

After searching [www.regtransfers.co.uk](http://www.regtransfers.co.uk), Neil found **PA55 OO** and decided it was quite appropriate to his style of driving.

"I will be changing the Porsche at some point this year," he said, "and will be looking for another plate with an amusing twist."

## "One, two, testing!"

For Mercedes SLK owner Robin Dunseath, it was an unusual charity challenge:

Was he prepared to sit in the passenger seat of his car and, using only the words Left, Right, Faster, Slower and Brake, let a totally blind friend, Miles Hilton-Barber, drive it over a measured 100 metres up a hotel drive at an average speed of over 100 kph?

At stake was £4000 to go towards buying a community bus for the Scottish market town of Huntly in Aberdeenshire.

In front of a disbelieving crowd, the daring duo undertook the challenge on the half mile long driveway of the local Castle Hotel. With Robin dressed in a glittering gold jacket and top hat, Miles slowly pushed down the accelerator. On the command, "Faster," the car roared forward and, with Robin frantically waving a white stick over the windscreen, thundered over the measured 100 metres at an average speed of 114 kph. More than fast enough to win the bet.



"It was terrifying," said Robin, "Miles thought it was very funny, but he could not see how close we were to disaster."

Robin's car bears the registration **TST 10**, which echoes the days when he was a

broadcaster and checked the mic with the word "testing".





*"F17 ONE was bought through the Regtransfers auction. It was easy to use, efficient and the customer service was incredible."*



UK based sports supplement company LA Muscle reckon they have one of the world's hottest models. This contender doesn't wear a swimsuit but is, nevertheless, very fetchingly attired. The company's Lamborghini Gallardo Spider has been snapped modelling the latest sports-themed number plate from Regtransfers.co.uk, **F17 ONE**.

After ten successful years, LA Muscle felt it appropriate that the car at their London headquarters should display this designer registration. The car/number plate ensemble turns heads everywhere.

"Customers and pedestrians are constantly stopping by to take photos and talk about the vehicle. We get more questions asked

and therefore more meaningful conversations regarding the company."

"**F17 ONE** was bought through the fantastic auction system on Regtransfers.co.uk. It was easy to use, efficient and the customer service was incredible."

Initially the idea had been to wrap the vehicle with logos and other advertising gimmicks, but eventually it was decided that the slightly subtler, more tasteful message conveyed by **F17 ONE** was more appropriate to a business that takes quality very seriously.

Another of the company's cars sports a great double-whammy with **LAM I**, for both *L*amborghini and *L*A Muscle.

LA Muscle has grown enormously since the company was founded. One might be forgiven for wondering if it had been taking one of its own muscle-boosting supplements...

Now with branches in the UK, USA, Australasia, Italy, Spain and Cyprus, LA Muscle supplies its wide range of products to 91 countries. Sportspeople and bodybuilders can choose what they require from a selection of market-leading protein supplements, weight loss and weight gain products and muscle-building formulas.

[www.lamuscle.com](http://www.lamuscle.com)  
[www.femmeslender.com](http://www.femmeslender.com)





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A day later another picture arrived. Arthur had worked his magic on the Chapmans' work van using the number **C3 LRR**.

"Arthur and I had quite a laugh about it, and I told him that he was going to get me in trouble at this rate, and cost Peter a lot of money."

**T**he name London Rail Recruitment tells you pretty much all you need to know about the company that bears it.

Jean Chapman, who had previously worked in her husband's signal installation business, formed LRR in 2005.

Peter and his two partners formed Signalling Installation & Maintenance Services back in 1997. The company was, and still is, a success, with a multimillion pound turnover. Peter resigned in 2005, but he is still the largest single shareholder.

"Peter and I met in 1999 and I became SIMS's office manager in 2001, learning a lot about the London Underground rail industry. I had our daughter in 2003 but continued to do the accounts for the company. When Peter resigned, I left too and so found myself without a job."



In 2006 I also launched a web site for the company. The site now gets over 40,000 hits per month."

The desire to own a private car registration was seeded in Jean's mind by a conversation with a friend and neighbour named Arthur.

"While I was in the office the following week I found some time and went onto the Regtransfers website. Before long I found C1 to C4 LRR. Peter was in the office that day, so I asked him if I could have all four of them. Peter replied that if I did have them

# London Rail Recruitment



"When I spoke to Peter in October 2005 about forming a recruitment company, he wasn't really interested in becoming involved - although he later became my resource consultant. I went ahead and started working from the office in the house. I got my first recruit on board that November, and the second in January 2006."

"I was cleaning my car one day, and chatting with Arthur. He has a personal number plate on his car and he asked me when I was going to get one. I just said, 'One day, Arthur'."

Arthur clearly considered finding a plate for Jean to be something of a mission, and he went off to do a little research about what might be available.

Jean explains: "Later that afternoon Arthur put a note through our door saying that he couldn't find a registration with J for Jean, but he had seen **C1 LRR** - C for Chapman, my surname, and LRR for London Rail Recruitment, my company. He had mocked up a picture of the plate on a Peugeot 207 the same colour as mine. When I showed Peter what Arthur had done he laughed, but he said that I didn't need a new number plate."

Jean and Arthur were not so easily deterred, and their crusade continued. The next step was for Arthur to create another of his composite photos, this time featuring Peter's 5 Series BMW bearing the registration **C2 LRR**. As before, this was posted through the Chapmans' letterbox.

then that would be my birthday and Christmas presents rolled into one. After a bit of negotiation, he compromised and agreed to it just being my birthday present.

"As I explained it to him at the time, **C4 LRR** would be a spare for in case we got another car - but in my heart I knew it was going to be for the BMW Z4 that I had always wanted!"

Sure enough, three weeks later, Jean took a Z4 for a test drive. Shortly afterwards she phoned Peter to tell him that she had bought one.

Thanks to Jean's determination and Arthur's ingenuity, Jean and Peter now own four very good, themed plates, which look terrific on their vehicles, while promoting Jean's business at the same time.

Rick Cadger







## the **Kenyan** Schools' Project

**B**ill and Lynn Morris from Ellesmere in Shropshire became involved in supporting schools in Kenya after a safari trip in October 2004. After the safari, they visited the Mkwakwani Primary School and promised the headmaster, Mr. Pofu, that they would raise funds for desks so that pupils would no longer have to sit on the floor.

Four years later, through the Kenyan Schools Project, over a thousand desks have been sponsored and many boxes of stationery have been delivered.

Support has also been given to the Huruma Children's Home, an orphanage in Nairobi where over 150 children are being cared for. Some of the children there have HIV or AIDS, while others have been abused or abandoned by their parents.

Back home, regulars at the Morris's local pub have donated a full kit to the orphanage's football team. The lads now proudly wear the kit each game they play.

The project also provides supplies for the New Life Home baby orphanage in Nairobi where, back in April, Bill and Lynn met an

Italian couple who were making arrangements to adopt two Kenyan babies to take back to Italy with them.

The centre has 54 cots but they have to keep four free in case the police bring in babies that have been abandoned because the parents are too young or cannot afford to care for them.

**“We have had no end of people commenting on it.”**

Bill and Lynn go to Kenya twice a year to keep up with all these projects and also to organise various fundraising events and activities. By the time the couple next go back, in November this year, The Ushirika School in Nairobi will have windows, so the dust will not be blowing in the children's faces as they attend their lessons. Also, the Yeje School near Mombasa will have 160 new desks and an electricity supply - all paid for by the charity.

“The smiles on the children's faces give us all the satisfaction that we need,” says Bill.

“Because we use the Smart car to publicise the charity, we thought it would be a good idea to change the number plate to match the initials, so we found **T555 KSP**. We have had no end of people commenting on it.”

Rick Cadger

## Sponsor a desk



The Kenyan Schools' Project currently helps eight schools in the Mombasa area and three orphanages in Nairobi, supplying stationery and sports equipment. They also have desks made in Kenya by teenagers learning

carpentry at a polytechnic near Mombasa. The project delivers the desks by lorry to needy schools where the pupils are presently sitting on concrete floors.

You can sponsor a desk for a donation of just £15. When your desk is delivered, they will take a photo of the children sitting at it and email it to you.

If you wish to help, please visit

[www.kenyanschoolsproject.co.uk](http://www.kenyanschoolsproject.co.uk)







# online auctions

The RT Auction site allows you to bid on registrations with the reassurance of having the Number One vendor of personalised number plates oversee the whole transaction for you. We will ensure that your purchase or sale is completed as quickly and as smoothly as possible.

Provided that you have set up an account and previously submitted the registration for valuation, you can sell it through this site. Go online to register or to request a valuation.

Regtransfers.co.uk receives almost a *million* hits a week. However, we have millions of registrations for sale and so it can be difficult to sell quickly.

The RT Auction site allows far more prospective buyers than would be possible selling in the conventional way, and may even return more money once auction fever starts pushing the price up near the end of a sale!



[www.regtransfers.co.uk/auction](http://www.regtransfers.co.uk/auction)

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*"Having always been averse to disclosing my mobile and home telephone numbers, for fear of being inundated with unsolicited sales calls, your discreet text advising service has not only proved me wrong, but very quickly led me to an acquisition that most people can only dream of!"*

Mr C P of Ipswich

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