



The Grannytown Gazette

The Newsletter of the Alden Historical Society

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Let's turn back the clock and set the scene from 100 years ago:

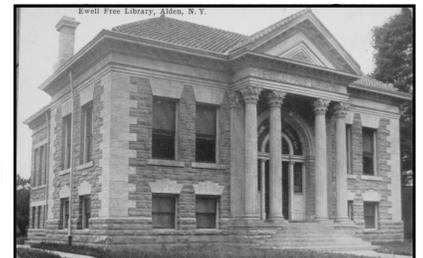
What was then known as The Great War raged on in Europe and heated discussions were taking place on whether the United States should join the Allies in the fight against Germany. President Woodrow Wilson sent 12,000 troops to the Mexican border to drive back Pancho Villa. The Chicago Cubs played their first game in what is now known as Wrigley Field. Norman Rockwell's first cover for the Saturday Evening Post was published. President Wilson signed legislation creating the National Parks Service. The first 40-hour work week officially begins in the Endicott-Johnson factories in Central New York.

Meanwhile, the community of Alden was enjoying a boom time that can be traced back to the discovery of mineral-rich black water by Frank Westcott in 1891 while drilling in Alden for natural gas. During a time when spas were popular across



the country and in Europe, Alden was able to capitalize on the public interest in mineral-rich "curative" waters. Within the next 20 years, several bath houses were opened in Alden, with customers arriving by train from Buffalo and cities in the east. By 1915, the baths had

become so popular that the three hotels in Alden could not accommodate everyone so Alden Village residents opened their homes to bathers. Many prominent buildings that are still important today were built during this boom period - the Presbyterian Church in 1908; the Pharmacy building in 1911; the Ewell Free Library and the Alden High School in 1914.



Ewell Free Library

continued

It was also during this time that several local businessmen promoted the idea of starting a bank in Alden to satisfy the financial needs of the growing community. A few months later, 250 shares of stock were issued at \$100 par value. The first shareholder meeting was in April 1916. Soon after, a committee began negotiating with



1916 location

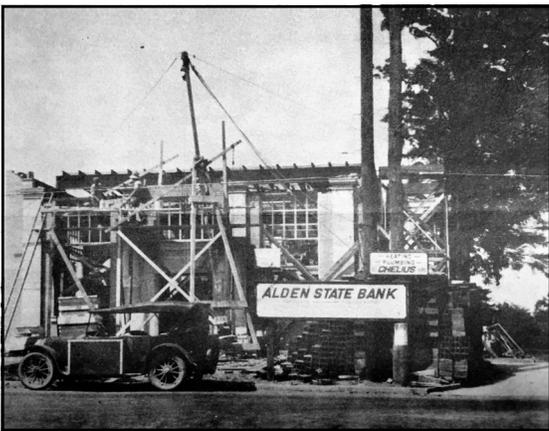
Howard Wright for leasing quarters in his drug store building, which is now the gift shop portion of Alden Pharmacy. They rented these quarters for \$40.00 per month. In June, word was received that a banking charter would be granted. The first officers were elected, with Charles H. Dold as President and Bernis L. Bensley as cashier.

At a directors meeting in September 1916, several motions were passed, including: 4% to be paid on passbook accounts, a telephone was to be installed and the floor braced to hold the safe. The charter was officially granted on September 30th and the doors opened for business on October 5th with the cashier and one teller. Deposits for the first day were \$12,600.00 in checking accounts and \$10,400.00 in interest accounts. Checks paid the first day were a total of \$13.30. This was a big day in Alden and the start of a long and successful business.



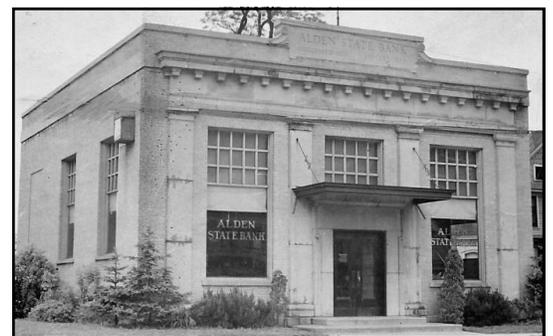
Bernis L. Bensley

Fast forward and as the Alden community continued to grow, the bank grew as well. Soon



1925 location

the need for a new building became apparent. In 1924, land was purchased for \$5,000 and construction began on a new brick structure across the street from the bank's original location. The project was completed the following year. That building, now the office of the Alden Advertiser at 13200 Broadway, provided customers with every modern convenience and device to facilitate prompt and efficient service. There were three teller stations, offices, a posting room and a convenient coupon room. At the Grand Opening, Directors and wives were present and passed out carnations, cigars, lemonade and Nabisco cookies.



Sound management practices enabled Alden State Bank to weather the Great Depression and continue to serve the community. The bank continued to grow during the 1940s and '50s, with total assets reaching over \$10 million as the Bank celebrated its 50th anniversary. Bernis L. Bensley served as Bank President from 1925 to 1950 and upon Mr. Bensley's retirement, Albert L. Simme was named President.

October 2016

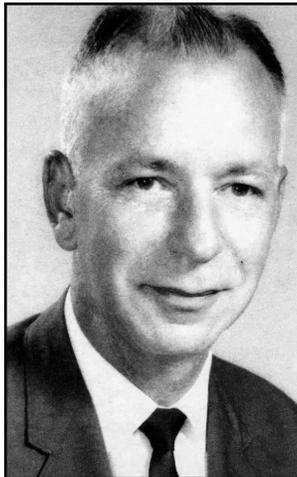
Eventually, along with continued community growth, came the need for still more space. It was not uncommon during the late 1950s and early '60s for customers to wait on the sidewalk during Friday nights until there was room to get into the building. In 1960, plans were made for a new building and in June 1961, the Gipple property was purchased. In November 1963, all of the bank's operations were moved to the completed building at 13216 Broadway. A drive-thru teller, seven teller stations and ample office and working space were provided. However, by the



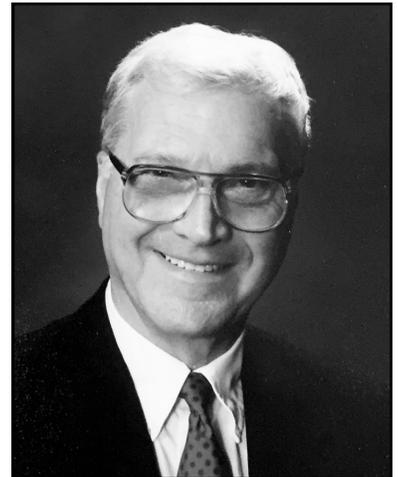
early 1970's, even this building had become so crowded that the basement was finished to eventually house the bookkeeping and computer operations departments. Charles A. Marks was named President at the end of 1961 upon Mr. Simme's retirement. He served as President until his retirement in 1979, when Christian G. Koelbl Jr. was named President. Mr. Koelbl served as President until his retirement from day-to-day operations in 1990.



Lobby, 1963



Charles A. Marks



Christian G. Koelbl, Jr.



Office Staff, 1966

*John S. (Jack) and
Richard D. Koelbl*



By the late 1980s, the bank once again felt the need for additional space in order to continue to give the quality of personal service desired. Ground was broken in May 1992 on a 6,500 square foot addition and remodeling. A grand opening was held in March 1993. The lobby was remodeled and an additional drive-thru window was added. The remodeled bank established nine offices for customer service, instead of the two which were previously available. The lobby was again remodeled and additional office space was added in 2013. Richard D. Koelbl, who began at the Bank in 1973, was named President at the end of 1990 and continues to serve as President and CEO today. Altogether, there have been only six presidents in the one hundred year history of the bank.



To better serve its customers in a rapidly growing Lancaster community, Alden State Bank built its second location at 5802 Broadway. The 3,000 square foot office opened its doors in March 1995 and held a grand opening in May. In 2015, the lobby was remodeled, bringing customers a modern and comfortable community banking experience. This summer, the Bank announced plans to open its third location at 6545 Transit Road in East Amherst.

The bank was founded to meet the needs of the community.

With that philosophy in mind, Alden State Bank has invested in Alden schools, the fire departments and purchased issues of local municipalities. Assets have grown from \$78 thousand in 1916 to 280 million at the end of 2015. This success can be attributed to sound management and financial practices and to the loyalty of our customers.

As we celebrate our 100 year anniversary, we hope that Alden is proud of its home-town bank and we thank the community for its support over the past century.



Photos and article submitted by Alden Historical Society President and Alden State Bank Assistant Vice-President Christopher Gust

Congratulations!

The Alden Historical Society is proud to acknowledge the Alden State Bank as a valued member of our organization and a generous contributor to our community.

The Dold Brothers

Half-brothers Charles H. Dold (1869-1941) and Philip B. Dold (1885-1972) were instrumental in the founding of the Alden State Bank. They were among the nine businessmen who served on the first Board of Directors. Charles Dold was the first President of the Bank, from 1916-1925.

Charles and Philip were sons of Jacob Dold of Buffalo. Jacob owned large meat packing plants in Buffalo, and in Wichita and Kansas City, Kansas. He would eventually become a leading authority among his contemporaries on the meat packing industry of Buffalo.

The Dold brothers purchased the old Farnsworth farm on Broadway, now the site of the Alden Village Plaza. The Alden Crest Farms, as it was known, was a leading dairy farm featuring pure bred Holsteins and championship bulls.

*Photo courtesy President Christopher Gust
Submitted by Archivist Karen Muchow*



President's Message



Your Alden Historical Society hopes that all our members had an enjoyable summer season. After taking the months of July and August off, our monthly programs at the Community Center resumed in September with a look at the Century Homes that give the Village of Alden such character. Conrad and Carol Borucki have an interesting schedule of programs planned for the coming months, and we hope that you will have the opportunity to attend some of them.

During July, Trustees and guests of the Historical Society had a unique opportunity to participate in a private tour of the Hull Family Home and Farmstead on Genesee Street in Lancaster. The circa 1810 building, grounds and Hull Family Cemetery were all very interesting. We thank their Education Director, Susan Jacobs, for the very informative tour. As Aldenites, we are fortunate to have this Western New York historical treasure right next door to our community. I would encourage everyone to pay them a visit, if you haven't recently. Their restoration efforts have taken great strides over the past few years.

Speaking of Western New York historical treasures, my wife (and fellow Historical Society Trustee), Jennifer Strong, and I visited other historical buildings over the summer, including the Lancaster Historical Society, Buffalo History Museum, the Octagon House in Akron, and the Roycroft Campus and Millard Fillmore House in East Aurora. Each offered unique learning experiences. There are many great historical places to visit in Western New York. Keep that in mind when looking to plan some "day trips". Of course, don't forget that our very own building is open for viewing and docent-led tours the first and third Sundays of each month, through January. We were very pleased to welcome several new visitors during the recent Alden Art Show.

As always, we appreciate all who are members of the Alden Historical Society and we welcome those who have joined us recently with a new paid membership. If you are reading this issue of the Gazette and are not a current member, please consider joining the Society. We also always appreciate current lifetime members who make donations in lieu of dues. We thank you for your interest and support.

Erie County Fair



We're Still On The Pedestal

We are pleased to report that our “Landmarks --The Fabric of our Community” Erie County Fair 2016 Exhibit earned a third place in the Historical Exhibits category this year. First place in a tie went to Holland and Orchard Park, second place to Marilla and we took third place. The Theme Award winner was Orchard Park. All entries were outstanding. As I told our trustees after learning the results.....It is almost like the Rio Olympics and receiving a Bronze Medal. That is not bad---we

are still standing on the pedestal!! . Our first place double win last year served to raise the bar this year for everyone and we saw a rise in the competitive and creative spirit for many participants. That is healthy and we welcome the effect of our success last year.

Our five paneled painted diorama of Firemen's (Bandstand) Park with beautiful trees and foliage, a raised bandstand, park bench, banner and flag along with a snow fence covered in authentic landmark paintings by local artists turned a lot of heads. There was a huge commitment of talent and hours to produce the beautiful display. We had interesting historical information about each landmark and there were many positive comments. Alden was certainly the highlight of the display and we should be very proud of what we were able to share with the public about our community.

If a viewer stood in front of the display they could almost feel as if they were there at the Alden Fall Art Show in September. The only things missing were the sounds of birds, traffic noise on Broadway and the wonderful smell of chicken grilling in the park by our firemen.

The committee was pleased to learn that the Village of Alden would take the display, sans the paintings, of course, to use somewhere in their space at the village offices.

Those in the Historical Society who helped put it all together were Conrad & Carol Borucki, Gil & Sandy Dussault, Michelle Dussault, Larry Kocher, Kyle Kavanagh and Carl Matthies. They look forward to next year !!!!!



*Submitted by Trustee Gil Dussault
Photos submitted by Trustee Carl Matthies*

October 2016

Hull House Visit

Trustees and guests of the Alden Historical Society enjoyed a private tour of the Hull Family Home & Homestead August 9. Education Director Susan Jacobs led the group through the circa 1810 Hull Family Home, Hull family cemetery, Victorian Tea House and gardens. We thank Susan for this interesting and enjoyable learning opportunity.



*Photos and article submitted by
President Christopher Gust*



 **Join Us!** **November 8**
6 PM
Please bring a dish to pass, place settings and your appetite!
POTLUCK DINNER

 Find us on:
facebook®

“Back To School”

On August 30th sixteen children, ages 5-11, from Imagination Station went “back-to-school” a week early when they visited the Hen-skee Road Schoolhouse. Karen Muchow, Town & Village Historian, gave them a brief history of the school and what school was like 150 or so years ago. They used the slates to practice some spelling and to play games like Tic-Tac-Toe, Hangman, and Make a Box. The children asked many questions such as “Did they have water bottles then?” and grimaced when the answer was “No, they all used a common dipper in a pail of water.” They decided they would not have liked having their brothers and sisters in the same classroom nor would they have liked using an outhouse in the winter time. All agreed they would rather go to school in 2016 than in 1866.



Before walking back to their facility, the children paused at the Veterans Memorial and looked at the many names engraved upon the wall and on the brick walkway. They especially looked for the name of Moses Fenno, Alden’s first settler.

If you would like to arrange a tour of the schoolhouse for your group in the early fall or late spring, leave a message at the Historical Society (937-3700).

Photos courtesy of Trustee Carl Matthies

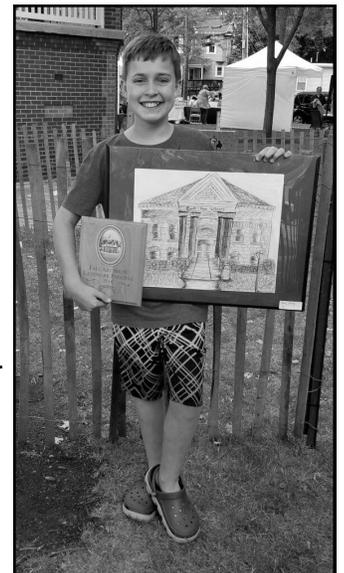
Article submitted by Archivist Karen Muchow

Landmark Painting Contest

The Alden Fall Art Show was held on Sept. 11, 2016, in Firemen’s Bandstand Memorial Park under a beautiful blue sky. Trustee Conrad Borucki won first place in acrylics, and Trustee Sue Galbraith won third place in oil painting.

This year’s landmark contest winner, sponsored by the Alden Chamber of Commerce, was 11 year old Mason Brody. Mason, a 6th grader at Alden Central School, is the son of Kara & John Brody. When asked why he chose the Ewell Free Library as his landmark, he said “I love to read, that’s why I picked that”.

The Ewell Free Library, built in 1913 in the Beaux Arts Classical style, was given to the town of Alden by Joseph and Carrie Ewell in memory of their daughter, Florence Josephine Ewell. Its fluted columns, grey stone walls, and stained glass window enhance the beauty of this architecturally significant building. It is located in the Village of Alden between Emerson and Crittenden Roads, on the north side of Broadway.



Mason Brody

Century House Program

On Thursday, September 8 the monthly program centered around Century Homes in the village. There are 140 century homes in the village and 322 more in the town. It was an inter-active presentation with owners and residents reminiscing about their neighborhoods.

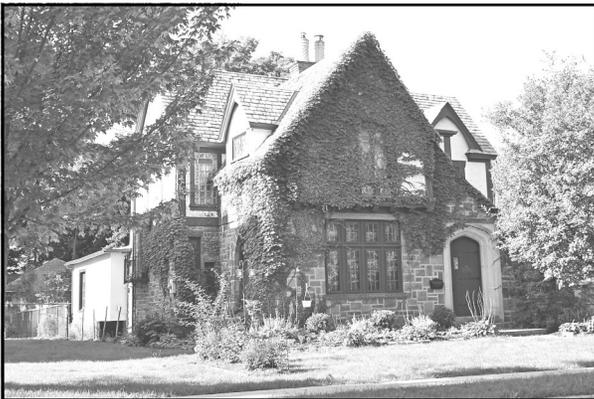
13051 Broadway – Eastwood estate. The Spring Creek Cheese Factory was located in the basement of this house and the current owner is the 6th generation to own the house.



13051 Broadway

13228 Broadway –the Augustus Kendall mansion, said to have been the most costly residence ever erected in the village at the time, was built at this location but was severely damaged by fire. In a 1953 ad, Franz and Meyer offered; furniture, funeral directors, funeral home and ambulance service here.

1319 Exchange St. - The Alden Union was published here, in a building that stood on the site of the Alden Pharmacy. That building was moved south on Exchange Street, across the railroad tracks. The building had to be moved down Kellogg St., as the trees on Exchange St. would interfere with moving the building.



13277 Irving St/

13277 Irving St. – built in 1890, this 3,200 sq. ft. home with a slate roof was not originally designed in the Tudor style. Originally a small Victorian, it was transformed into a Tudor style in 1930.

13140 Main St. – Dr. Tyler made house calls all hours of the day and night and he treated patients for a few hours a day at this location. This century home was utilized to entertain the Liberal Club at their meetings. After Dr. Tyler's death in February, 1924 it was sold to Alden Grange for \$14,000.

If you have a Century House and don't want to be missed, send in your information to be included in the Century House book. Century House signs available for \$40.

Photos and article submitted by Trustee. Sue Galbraith

Reflections of Alden



The informative '**Reflections of Alden**' features many of these Century Homes and businesses of Alden. These reproductions of paintings by local artists are a wonderful way to remember our hometown. They are available at the Alden Historical Building and the Alden Pharmacy for just \$25.00. Pictured is the Tyler Home/Grange at 13140 Main Street, painted in acrylics by award winning Conrad Borucki, Trustee. A short history accompanies each photograph.

Historical Society Building

The **Alden Historical Society's** many exhibits are located in the village at the Alden Historical Society Building, 13213 Broadway, across from Alden State Bank. The mission of the historical society is to preserve, promote and present the history of Alden and its people.

HOURS:

The **Alden Historical Society Building** is open to the public from 1 PM to 3 PM the first and third Sunday of each month, except during January and February. Tours for individuals and groups may be arranged by calling 937-3700 or 937-6400.

MEETINGS:

Program meetings are generally held at the Alden Community Center on the second Thursday of the month at 7 PM. Notices will be published in the **Alden Advertiser** in advance of the program. Open to the public, these programs are both informative and interesting, often featuring a guest speaker. You are very welcome to come and share your memories and experiences about the evening's program, followed by an informal social complete with homemade refreshments. In the event of inclement weather, we will postpone when Alden school activities are closed.

Trustee meetings are held at the **Alden Historical Society Building** at 7 PM. Meetings are held the first Thursday of the month in February, April, June, August, October and December. Trustee meetings are open to the membership.

Membership—Lynda Tucker, Clarke Burke, Susanne Galbraith,
Jennifer Strong

Collections—Larry Kocher, Diane Casell

Publicity/Newsletter—Elouise DeFilippo, Carl Matthies,
Clarke Burke, Susanne Galbraith, Christopher Gust, Lynda Tucker

Program/Refreshments—Conrad and Carol Borucki, Sandy Dussault

Building and Grounds—Larry Kocher, Conrad Borucki
Christopher Gust

Fundraising—Gilbert Dussault

Nominating—Elouise DeFilippo, Jane Burke

Audit—Lynda Tucker, Clarke Burke

Budget—Clarke Burke, Christopher Gust, Larry Kocher,

Historical Marker/Signs—Christopher Gust, Clarke Burke,
Gilbert Dussault, Larry Kocher, Jennifer Strong

Erie County Fair—Conrad Borucki, Larry Kocher

October 13 7PM.....ALDEN STATE BANK'S 100th ANNIVERSARY

P In October of this year, 2016, the Alden State Bank will be celebrating its 100th year anniversary. Join us as we commemorate this achievement and recognize the important part the Alden State Bank has played and continues to play in the existence and thriving of our community and its citizens. It promises to be an informative and fun-filled evening. Help us thank our local bank for its 100 years of community service.

O **November 10 6PM.....POTLUCK SUPPER & ANNUAL MEETING *Please note the 6 PM starting time.***

G It's time once again for our annual potluck supper and business meeting. Please bring a dish to pass in the form of a hot casserole, salad, or dessert and your place setting. Rolls, butter, and beverages will be provided. The annual meeting will follow dinner. Officers and committees will submit and read their annual reports. Three trustee nominees will be presented.

R In keeping with our traditional Veterans' Day theme, there will be a brief look at some of the crude and crass presidential campaigns of the past (and you thought the current election campaign was uniquely bad). We encourage all members to attend.

A **December 8 7PM,.....ALDEN MENNONITE CHURCH **MEETING AT THE CHURCH****

M It's the holiday season once again. We delight in the decorations, the music, and even the search for the perfect gift for each person on our list. Take a much needed break from the often overwhelming holiday demands, and join us for a special program to be held in a special place.

We will be highlighting the Alden Mennonite Church – its rich history, its ties to the Amish, and its integral part in our Alden community. Note that the program will take place at the church located at 923 Two Rod Road in Alden.

Welcome Members

Individual Renewal

Jean Weisbeck

New Couple Members

Adam & Kristen Stoltman

Donations

Laura Airey in Memory of Robert Airey
Barb Horan & Margo Dillon

MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

New members are always welcome. Your support will assure that the Alden Historical Society will continue to grow and prosper for years to come.

Please note: The membership year is April 1 through March 31, with the annual renewal due by April 1.

WE APPRECIATE YOUR SUPPORT!

ANNUAL DUES

Single \$12.00

Couple \$20.00

Family \$25.00

Business \$50.00
Please include your
Business card

Name.....

Address.....

Phone.....Email.....

Please make checks payable to Alden Historical Society

Mail to:

Lynda Tucker, Membership Secretary
Alden Historical Society
13213 Broadway
Alden, NY 14004

DONATIONS AND MEMORIALS ARE GRATEFULLY ACCEPTED

Please remember the Alden Historical society in your estate plans. A bequest in your memory or in memory of someone you love can help preserve the heritage of our community.

Please be advised that donations to the Alden Historical Society are not tax deductible as we are not a 501©(3) organization.



Alden Historical Society

7th Annual Bake Sale

Celebrating "Christmas in the Park"

Saturday December 3, 2016 11 AM - 4 PM

Sandy Dussault, Chairwoman 716 937-6246

Baked Goods drop off at building on Sat. 12/3 at 10:00 AM

13213 Broadway Alden, NY (Across from the Alden State Bank)

Once again, we will sponsor our popular Bake Sale in conjunction with "Christmas in the Park" in the Village of Alden. Baked goods donated by members and friends of the Society will be available for sale that day. Some of our members have found it to be a good opportunity to make cash donations in the event they are not in the area or unable to provide goodies for the sale.

The museum will be open for public visitation with docents available for guided tours.

Gil Dussault

BUSINESS MEMBERS OF THE ALDEN HISTORICAL SOCIETY

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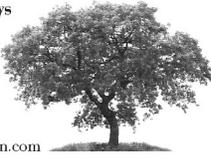
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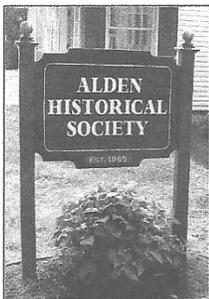
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MISSION STATEMENT

The Alden Historical Society, founded in 1965, is a volunteer supported organization whose mission is to preserve, promote, and present the history of the Town of Alden and its people.



Alden Historical Society
 13213 Broadway
 Alden, NY 14004

Find us on Facebook.com/AldenHistoricalSociety

*Chartered by the Board of Regents
 New York State Education Department*

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