



# Smoke Signals

Issue 227

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

June 2020

## LEES ORCHARDS (AND FARM SHOP)

Lees orchard was originally planted by the Archer family of Landfall. At its peak, the orchard extended well down the East bank of the Tamar through Dilston, and had its own jetty for the shipment of fruit. Most of the houses in Dilston are built on this old orchard land.

In 1939 a young couple from the Huon, Tom and Mons Lees, bought the orchard and in time their son John took over the business and became Mayor of Launceston in 1996. Tragically John died suddenly in 2002 and the orchard was bought by Brendon Morrison in 2003.

John was much loved on the East Tamar and locals were delighted when Brendon chose to keep the Lees name on the business. Since then of course, its actual address has changed to John Lees Drive.

Over the past 17 years Brendon has completely reshaped the seven hectare apple and pear orchard to espalier trellising, which greatly increases the yield per hectare and requires less labour to pick. Apple varieties have changed to the more popular Gala, Fuji, Jazz and Pink Lady.

Like John Lees before him, Brendon sells exclusively to the local market, and has now diversified successfully into cherries, with three hectares planted and the trees ordered for a further two hectares next year. Brendon's son Daniel has purchased an adjoining property and planted half a hectare of apricots, producing his first small crop this year. A further four hectare orchard planting is planned, with the fruit still to be decided.

On the river side of the property Trent and Ange Van Winden are growing raspberries and blueberries, which are sold through the Lees Orchard farm shop.

The farm shop has been a great success and well supported by locals – it is open from 9am to 5pm Thursday and Friday, selling apples, pears and cherries from the orchard with a range of other Tasmanian products such as Mount Roland eggs and Landfall meat.

Brendon became a well known figure at the Harvest Market in recent years, but has decided to limit that to cherry season, saying that he was "getting a bit old for the 5am starts, particularly in the winter!"

The business has survived the COVID 19 restrictions well as nearly all of his retail outlets have stayed open.

"The only problem was a French couple who were picking for us and couldn't get home. Fortunately, we were able to find enough work for them to tide them over."

## This Issue

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**Hillwood News**

If you're passing on a Thursday or Friday, call in to say hello and support a local business.

The coming months will be particularly difficult for small business, so let's support our local businesses so they will still be there for us when better times return:



## Life in Lockdown



### Easter

### Anzac Day



Launceston City Council recently completed a new, small section of pathway where the edge of Windermere Road is extremely steep. Judy East cut the ribbon while neighbours enjoyed a safe walk/ride -- social distancing of course.



#### FREE FLAX PLANTS!

Would you like some well-advanced Flax plants for your garden?

There are four ready for the taking - and FREE! All you need to do is dig them out and they're yours!

Please contact June Burnet on 0411 567 029.



### WINDERMERE CAFE NEWS

Fleur would like to say a big thank you to all who've supported the cafe during the COVID restrictions.... we would all like to say a big thank you to Fleur for the quality of her takeaway meals!

From this week, the opening hours are 9am to 3pm Thursday to Sunday with takeaway and dine in with no restriction on numbers, subject to the usual social distancing rules. There will now be a \$13.50 Thursday roast to join the usual Sunday roast.

DIARY DATE – CHRISTMAS IN JULY, FRIDAY, JULY 24 - follow the Windermere Cafe Facebook page for details

SUPPORT YOUR LOCAL BUSINESSES



## BIRDS OF THE TAMAR By Jon Hosford

### Consider the birds .....

The birds in our gardens during the autumn months are a great source of pleasure to many. Jenni & George Chandler have taken the trouble to photograph the visitors to one of their many apple trees.

An opportunistic Green Rosella feeds on ripening fruit in their backyard orchard. It breaks the skin and savours the sugars in the ripe fruit then moves on its feeding path to other succulent sources.

An immature Grey Shrike thrush eyes off the broken fruit hanging from the tree which is shedding leaves in the fall of Autumn. Its beak is developed for foraging but it will also feed from this source of sugar although its usual diet comprises insects foraged from branches and ground logs.

Next to arrive are a pair of Yellow wattle birds. Their guttural calls can be heard throughout the summer as they feed on the rich nectar source available from flowers such as Kangaroo paws and other plants when blossoms are abundant. They too take advantage of the broken fruit and enjoy the rich source of sugar as the apple ripens.

A female Yellow throated honeyeater hangs acrobatically from the branch and takes its turn on the sugar bag. One apple has fallen to the ground and is now available to the blackbirds that prefer worms when it is wet, but what creature can resist an overripe apple.

Such are the joys of living in a rural environment.



Green Rosella



Yellow-throated Honeyeater



Grey Shrike-thrush



Blackbird



Silver Eye



Yellow Wattlebirds

### Smoke Signals Community Project Grants -Now Extended

Smoke Signals is produced and distributed entirely by volunteers and printed at no cost by Michael Ferguson MP, so all money raised from advertising in the Smoke Signals newsletter is available to fund worthy community projects. Applications are invited from community groups in the 2nd round of grants of up to \$1000 for local projects that will benefit a section of the community over a reasonable period of time. Criteria for eligibility and application forms can be found on our website:

<http://coolclimateclassroom.com/smokesignalscn.com/smokesignals.htm>

## GARDEN CLUB NEWS

Garden Club members have been busy in their gardens since we last met in March. We were due to visit Wanderer Mead in Dilston this month, which of course is not possible at present, so Jess Panday has provided some background to her garden ready for when we ARE able to visit. Let's hope it's not too far off before we can have lunch together again in this beautiful garden.

### WANDERER MEAD - A Bit of History...

We bought the property in 2010, but with a young child at the time did not really get too much gardening done in the first few years. The property is just under two acres; it is a sloping block, quite well drained and the soil is actually pretty good. The garden had an established orchard which I have under-planted with bulbs, a fenced area which had at one time been a vegetable patch and the usual selection of shrubs and trees, and a couple of nice camellias. But that was pretty much it! The previous owner said to me in her lovely Irish brogue "ogh, I am not much of a gardener, all I know is you will have a lot of work".

The first few years were spent digging out large quantities of black plastic, re-fencing and laying out a formal vegetable garden which over the years has turned into a wonderful rose and flower garden. I also planted hydrangeas, salvias, olives, strappy leaved plants, hellebores and I hate to admit it, agapanthus. A neighbour was thinning out his agapanthus at the time, which allowed me to plant up the whole of my very long driveway. I love the purple/ blue flowers and pay my son every year to cut off the flower heads before they seed. And most of us gardeners know that the offer of free plants is almost irresistible!

After a few years we decided it would be good to create separate garden areas and we cut into the slope to create a flat area which has been divided into 4 beds surrounded by gravel and rock; each has a lovely Huonville crab-apple, and various iris, salvias, hellebores and strappy leaved plants. A friend built rock retaining walls and some lovely steps. Last year in April we began work on a sloping area of land at the back of the house facing the

river. Originally it had three large eucalypts which we loved, but each tree got some kind of disease and were declared dangerous by our arbourist and had to be removed.

The excavator was brought in to create terraces, and I was initially a bit shocked at the 'moonscape' we had created. But very quickly (with large numbers) of plants including mass planting of *Luma apiculata*, *Westringia*, *dianella* and so forth, the area is transforming into what will be a very pleasant garden. It has a different feel to the gardens on the other side of the house. It is more Mediterranean in feel, and will rely on more clipped sculpted plants and formal elements.

A couple of months ago someone offered me a large number of bearded iris, so I have planted them throughout the new garden. I am excited to see what colours they turn out to be. My main approach to gardening has been to try and keep it sustainable in terms of the amount of work, as well as creating an underlying framework of 'strong bones' made up of evergreen plants such as clipped bay trees, *buxus* balls and evergreen hardy plants such as *dianella* and *flax*. Perennials are particular favourites - they add lots of colour over long time and only need cutting back once a year.

We look forward to the time when you can all visit.  
Regards,  
Jess (and Steve)



**Yes - a honey bee hive!** And whilst we are thrilled that they have chosen our garden to live in, their actual choice of a site for their hive is a bit questionable! They are residing inside our water meter box! They are very busy coming and going through the nice neat little hole in the top of the box and must be doing a wonderful job of pollination in our garden. However, if we should ever need to turn off the water, I'm not sure what will happen! As it is the wrong time of year to have them moved (because they are in a weaker state) we are hopeful that a kind apiarist will be looking for a new hive of bees and will come along and arrange to give them a new home in spring.





## “TELLING THE BEES” by Kaushic Patowary

There was a time when almost every rural British family who kept bees followed a strange tradition. Whenever there was a death in the family, someone had to go out to the hives and tell the bees of the terrible loss that had befallen the family. Failing to do so often resulted in further losses such as the bees leaving the hive, or not producing enough honey or even dying.

Traditionally, the bees were kept abreast of not only deaths but all important family matters including births, marriages, and long absence due to journeys. If the bees were not told, all sorts of calamities were thought to happen. This peculiar custom is known as “telling the bees”.

Humans have always had a special connection with bees. In medieval Europe, bees were highly prized for their honey and wax. Honey was used as food, to make mead—possibly the world’s oldest fermented beverage—and as medicine to treat burns, cough, indigestion and other ailments. Candles made from beeswax burned brighter, longer and cleaner than other wax candles. Bees were often kept at monasteries and manor houses, where they were tended with the greatest respect and considered part of the family or community. It was considered rude, for example, to quarrel in front of bees.

The practice of telling the bees may have its origins in Celtic mythology that held that bees were the link between our world and the spirit world. So if you had any message that you wished to pass to someone who was dead, all you had to do was tell the bees and they would pass along the message. Telling the bees was widely reported from all around England, and also from many places across Europe. Eventually, the tradition made its way across the Atlantic and into North America.

The typical way to tell the bees was for the head of the household, or “goodwife of the house” to go out to the hives, knock gently to get the attention of the bees, and then softly murmur in a doleful tune the solemn news. Little rhymes developed over the centuries specific to a particular region. In Nottinghamshire, the wife of the dead was heard singing quietly in front of the hive —“The master’s dead, but don’t you go; Your mistress will be a good mistress to you.” In Germany, a similar couplet was heard—“Little bee, our lord is dead; Leave me not in my distress”.

Before them, under the garden wall,  
Forward and back,  
Went drearily singing the chore-girl small,  
Draping each hive with a shred of black.  
Trembling, I listened: the summer sun  
Had the chill of snow;  
For I knew she was telling the bees of one  
Gone on the journey we all must go!  
And the song she was singing ever since  
In my ear sounds on:—  
“Stay at home, pretty bees, fly not hence!  
Mistress Mary is dead and gone!”



In case of deaths, the beekeeper also wrapped the top of the hive with a piece of black fabric or crepe. If there was a wedding in the family, the hives were decorated and pieces of cake left outside so that the bees too could participate in the festivities. Newly-wed couples introduced themselves to the bees of the house, otherwise their married life was bound to be miserable.

If the bees were not “put into mourning”, terrible misfortunes befell the family and to the person who bought the hive. Victorian biologist, Margaret Warner Morley, in her book *The Honey-Makers* (1899), cites a case in Norfolk where a man purchased a hive of bees that had belonged to a man who had died. The previous owner had failed to put the bees into mourning when their master died, causing the bees to fall sick. When the new owner draped the hive with a black cloth, the bees regained their health. In another tale, an Oxfordshire family had seventeen hives when their keeper died. Because nobody told them about the death, every bee died. There are plenty of such tales in Morley’s book.

The intimate relationship between bees and their keepers have led to all sorts of folklore. According to one it was bad luck to buy or sell hives, because when you sell one, you sell your luck with your bees. Instead, bees were bartered for or given as gifts. If bees flew into a house, a stranger would soon call. If they rested on a roof, good luck was on its way.

But the relationship between bees and humans goes beyond superstition. It’s a fact, that bees help humans survive. 70 of the top 100 crop species that feed 90% of the human population rely on bees for pollination. Without them, these plants would cease to exist and with it all animals that eat those plants. This can have a cascading effect that would ripple catastrophically up the food chain. Losing a beehive is much worse than losing a supply of honey. The consequences are life threatening. The act of telling the bees emphasizes this deep connection humans share with the insect.

If you would like to participate in Garden Club, please call or email me. New members are very welcome.

Kerri Curtis Telephone: 0407 447 344 Email: [kerridwen51@gmail.com](mailto:kerridwen51@gmail.com)

## CHURCH NEWS St Matthias' Anglican Church

Two days before writing this, the news from St Matthias' was all positive, despite the obvious restrictions of the Corona virus. The on-line services were being well patronised, and the members of the congregation were supporting each other with care and thoughtfulness.

That was until the night of the 26th May, when our beloved heritage church was again forceably broken into. Considerable damage was done to the door, which heritage builder Andrew Madden was quick to repair and reinforce. Fortunately, the only item stolen was a communion set which was of very little financial value. In an endeavour to prevent future break-ins or vandalism, it has been decided that all the 3 satellite churches of Holy Trinity will soon be fitted with motion-sensitive alarm systems. Thanks to neighbour Jan Miller for alerting us so quickly to this, and to the Church Warden Grahame Foster for the time and input required to deal with this.



On a more positive note, it was wonderful to see a true Christian message resulting from the Windermere Rd Community Easter Initiative to decorate post boxes with an Easter message. There were many Bunnies and Eggs along the road, but also a beautiful "empty tomb" in one letter box, complete with a folded grave cloth and a "rolled away stone". Another road verge featured a highly visible "He is Risen" message. Congratulations to the organisers and those who participated. On Easter Sunday, we celebrated the Eucharist on-line as well!



A successful working bee was held to clean up the graveyard area for anticipated visits over the Mothers' Day Weekend. Fresh flowers were placed in the columbarium wall, and on the graves. Thanks to those involved for their thoughtfulness and efforts.



We have all appreciated the considerable extra time and effort Dane has put into making the on-line church services into very professional productions. New videoing equipment will be installed at Holy Trinity so that this can be offered on a regular basis in future for those unable to attend in person. In this very uncertain time, it has been very reassuring to still join in worship and hear the interpretation of The Word. On Sunday May 24th, we even had a virtual St Matthias' morning tea, with 21 meeting up on Zoom, including some currently in South Australia and Brisbane!

Unfortunately, it is most unlikely that this August we will be able to celebrate the 175 years since the first St Matthias' wedding. However we are keen to contact as many people as possible who have a connection to StM through a wedding. Should you know someone who has, or if you have old family photos of a wedding there, please contact Margaret on [hosfordm@bigpond.net.au](mailto:hosfordm@bigpond.net.au), ASAP, so we can organise something at some stage!

Services are available weekly on-line through YouTube: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=U3rzFv5rdVA>

For pastoral concerns or details regarding Weddings or Funerals, contact

The Ven. Dane Courtney on: 6331 4460 or [rector@htl.org.au](mailto:rector@htl.org.au)

## PLAY GROUP

A very quiet couple of months for Dilston Playgroup. However, as the restrictions are set to ease over the coming months we are hoping to resume playgroup gatherings soon. There will be a few changes, so please keep up to date with these changes on the Dilston Playgroup Facebook page. There are also a lot of fun suggestions on the page to keep your little ones entertained whilst staying at home.

When Dilston Playgroup does resume, Playgroup Tasmania has suggested a few changes to keep our families safe during this time. These include:

- Bring your Childs morning tea, there will be no food sharing.
- Washing of adults' and children's hands on arrival, before and after morning tea.
- If you or your child is unwell or you have been tested for Covid19, please stay home.
- Keep up to date with any new information on the Dilston Playgroup Facebook page.

I hope to see you all again very soon.

If you have any other questions of queries please text or call Amy on 0413394523 or send a message on the Dilston Playgroup Facebook page.



## EAST TAMAR MENS SHED



Plant Bench Construction



ETMS members participate in a coffee chat over the Zoom platform.

Despite the forced recession we have had to endure over April and May, members have kept in touch using the Zoom internet platform. Weekly coffee chats have been well attended and recently we introduced sessions of sharing life stories amongst members. These have been well received. On May 20th Ian Farquhar presented a summary of his most active life in agriculture as well as his adventurous cropping trials into essential oils, Tasmanian pepper and his learning overseas.

John Baily followed on May 27th with his story of adventurous travel as a youth, his yachting background with the Royal Hobart Yacht Club and his various business ventures.

The Committee is working on a plan to safely reopen our SHED by June 20th and has approved a plan of Health and Safety to guide this for members.

A plant bench has been completed for the Australian Plant Society Tasmania's nursery.

A community noticeboard has been purchased by Smoke Signals and this has been erected behind the Dilston Post Box to keep community members informed on local happenings.

President : John Moody : 0431 151 766

Secretary: Jon Hosford : 0419 317 808

Email: [secretary@easttamarmensshed.org.au](mailto:secretary@easttamarmensshed.org.au)







# Dilston Fire Brigade



## Tasmania Fire Service

**Register the fire by calling freecall 1800 000 699**

By telling the Tasmania Fire Service about your fire you may help prevent false alarms.

### COVID19

It is with some relief that the brigade shares the general feeling of the community as the COVID19 situation appears to be attenuating.

Whilst the brigades operational response has been mostly unaffected, the brigade has been unable to conduct any training or activities beyond essential operational preparedness.

Whilst we will be ultimately guided by the directions of the Department of Health, we are cautiously looking forward to return to brigade gatherings, albeit in a somewhat different manner, keeping social distancing requirements in place.

This will most notably allow us to get on with the delayed task of providing training for our new recruits, and whilst it has been a challenging period, we would like to publicly extend our gratitude to them for their patience.

### Home Fire Safety

Whilst the overall number of incidents attended by the Fire Service has been down during the pandemic, there has unfortunately been a spike across the state in fires involving

residential structures. Of these, clothing that has been left to dry in front of a heater has been found to be a contributor.

The TFS advised that drying clothing be no closer than 2M to heat source, and preferably greater. If hanging clothing out overnight to dry, then is it best placed well clear of any heating device, and of course, we recommend that smoke alarms be fitted in the house..

### Home Fire Safety Audits

...and whilst talking about smoke alarms, did you know we are able to visit your place of residence to undertake a home fire safety audit?

This is a FREE service offered by the brigade, and one where we can aid in the installation of smoke alarms also.

Please feel free to contact one of the officers listed below, and we can make a time to visit. Quite a few members of our community have taken advantage of this service.



Prior to the COVID19 pandemic that has curtailed our community engagement opportunities, the brigade assisted with the provision of fire protection at the final Party in the Paddock. Never one to miss an opportunity to engage with party goers, Fire fighter Chris is seen here educating some of the happy crowd on the intricacies of our truck's entertainment systems!



Fire Fighter Bill assisting at a recent structure fire.



[www.facebook.com/DilstonFireBrigade](https://www.facebook.com/DilstonFireBrigade)  
[www.facebook.com/TasmaniaFireService](https://www.facebook.com/TasmaniaFireService)

#### Dilston Fire Brigade Contacts

Raoul Stow	0417 351 423
Paul Blakie	0417 592 424
Ben Jones	0417 877 001
Ken Nolan	0448 320 996



## HOUSE FIRES ARE FAST!



**30  
secs**

By now, smoke alarms should have detected the fire and alerted your



**60  
secs**

With no warning, the fire goes unchecked. It will quickly take hold.



**3  
mins**

The fire has reached in excess of 800 degrees. All of the contents in



## HAPPY NEWS:

The Donnelly family increased by one in March when grand-daughter Amy (and husband Simon) presented us with our sixteenth great-grandchild, Jimmy Tony Dewhurst. Amy is the daughter of Phil and Wendy, who are very proud grand-parents and were able to be in contact with Jimmy's brother Harry to help out with baby-sitting.

## 90th BIRTHDAY:

Jeff turned 90 without the fanfare that was planned. He still celebrated in style with friends popping in to present him with a bottle of red. (How did they know he likes a red?) Keeping their distance of course. And family managed to catch up at intervals, also keeping their distance. And quite a few phone calls as well. And Facetime! So well-celebrated.

## MARIGOLDS COFFE SHOP:

What a wonderful thing Peter and Jan of Marigolds have done for our community. Very kind of them to provide take-aways when it was only locals who could take advantage of their kindness. Plenty of options and delicious as always.

Although their shop was broken into and damage done, they worked hard to ensure they were open the next week.

Under the new rules, as of writing, the shop is open for dining-in for up to ten people.

## ANZAC DAY:

Quite a few members of our community rose early and celebrated in various ways on their front porches or at the end of their driveways. Sorry to confess that yours truly missed out – we had good intentions but slept in. Some wreaths were left at the Memorial at the Fire Station. The lowering of the Flag still occurred courtesy of our local Fire Brigade members. There were various displays outside homes and some thoughtful and clever person left a display on our Notice Board near the Pontoon – Lest We Forget.

Peter Gutwein asked us to put our lights on one night during this time to recognise the health workers. Jeff went around and put the footie lights on for a while. There were things such as lanterns on porches, hearts on letter-boxes. I am sure there were many more that I didn't see or hear of. Some clever person (the same as the Anzac one, perhaps) also put a lot of effort into a lovely display on the Notice Board near the Pontoon recognising volunteers.



The **FOOTBALL CLUB** held its first meeting via Zoom.

The **GARDEN CLUB** were in touch via Email, still holding their competition for best flower by attaching photos.

**KIND GESTURE:** We were contacted by phone by a former member of our community who used to drop off catalogues in our letterboxes. He also contacted other friends in the area and he wrote us a nice letter.

**WORK GOES ON:** Good to see some roadworks in our area which means that Council workers still have jobs.

**CHANGES** that have occurred in our district due to the coronavirus epidemic. We already had a green-grocer calling but also now have a super-market and a butcher making weekly deliveries.

**KIDS CLUB:** If you have children between the ages of 5 years and 12 years and would like them to attend Kids Club when it resumes, the contact is Susan Gillman on 0439 065914.

It is pleasing to see Hillwood Area Happenings on Facebook keeping us up to date with any "happenings" in the area.

## Hillwood Progress Association

Most activities of the Hillwood Progress Association have been postponed and we are all looking forward to getting back to the "new normal" when the time is right. Projects now on hold include; improvements to the acoustics in the Hillwood Memorial Hall, the development of various community facilities at the Hillwood Recreation Reserve (subject to George Town Council funding approval), the resurrection of the Hillwood Avenue of Honour in conjunction with the George Town RSL Sub Branch, a review of traffic speed limits and the ongoing development of the Hillwood History Room with the support of Arts Tasmania to name a few. On a positive note, our Landcare Tasmania Application was approved giving us valuable support and resources for our environmental activities. At this stage, our next general meeting will be held in conjunction with the AGM. New members are always welcome at any time with membership costing \$5.00 per year. Membership or general enquiries about the Hillwood Progress Association can be made to [hillwoodprogressassociation@outlook.com](mailto:hillwoodprogressassociation@outlook.com) or via the Hillwood Area Happenings Facebook page.



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issues.*

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Mobile: 0417 364 375

Email: [ivan.dean@parliament.tas.gov.au](mailto:ivan.dean@parliament.tas.gov.au)

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## LJ Hooker

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Dilston Fire Brigade.

In order for LJ Hooker to do this we need your help. List your  
property through us and we will do the rest.

Not only will LJ Hooker be getting the job done for you, we  
will be helping the local community stay safe and  
protected this season.

**Justin Goebel**

LJ HOOKER LAUNCESTON PHONE - 03 6388 9266

CONTACT US TODAY

[LAUNCESTON@LJHOOKER.COM.AU](mailto:LAUNCESTON@LJHOOKER.COM.AU)





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## Community Contacts

FIRE:000

### Dilston Fire Brigade

Raoul Stow 0417 351 423

### Hillwood Fire Brigade

Elaine Burns 0417 540 665

### Windermere Cafe

6328 1303

### Dilston Hall

Lizzie Benstead: 0409 974 508

### St Matthias Church

June: 0411 567 029

Jenny:0419 544 266

### Playgroup

Amy: 0413 394 523

### Dilston/Swan Bay/Windermere Garden Club

Kerri: 0407 447 344

### East Tamar Mens Shed

John: 0431 151 766

Jon 0419 317 808

### Book Discussion Group

Jess: 0428 658 988

[Jess.Panday@education.tas.gov.au](mailto:Jess.Panday@education.tas.gov.au)

### Justice of The Peace

Darren Pullen: 0439 912 862

## Copy For NEXT ISSUE Due

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