NEWSLETTER

Autumn 2020

University Hospitals Dorset NHS Foundation Trust



IN MEMORY: 1953-2015

After months in lockdown, we hope you and your family are keeping safe during this difficult time, and that you are starting to look forward to the festive season.

On the 5th anniversary of Robert White's passing on 24th November 2015, we would like to celebrate his life and the world class treatments and services that his legacy fund has, and will continue to provide for the residents of Dorset.

Robert was immensely proud of the fact that he had achieved so much from relatively humble beginnings. Yet he was first and foremost and adventurer — a motorcyclist, a boats man and occasional pilot: every bike, car or engine was to be admired for its engineering excellence and driven for pure joy.

We asked some of his close friends and acquaintances to share with us some of their fondest memories of him.

One thing that comes through in all the stories shared is how generous a person Robert was and his sharp humour. It is therefore no surprise that Robert left such a generous legacy which will benefit cancer patients in Dorset for years to come. We hope you will enjoy reading their articles.

Finally, thank you to everyone who shared their memories of Robert for us all to enjoy.

Jenni Leighton, Editor

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Who was Robert White?

Robert White is most likely unknown to you, although in his niche he was greatly respected as a connoisseur-collector.

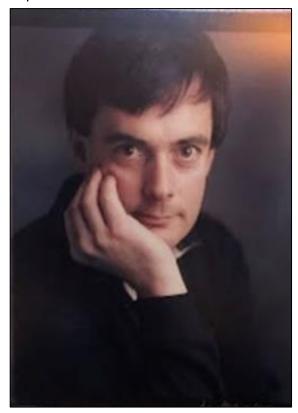


Photo above: Robert White 1953-2015

The photo above was chosen by Robert himself as this was the way that he wished his friends and family to remember him.

It was Robert's wish that at the end of his life he should leave a lasting legacy and that the money to be used in the way in which it was created, focusing on quality and value. He wanted to ensure that we invested in gold standard equipment and services, ensuring that the best possible deals are obtained with a focus on the early diagnosis of cancer.

These services will continue benefiting the Dorset community for many years to come. Robert's stipulation was "all expenditure should be over and above that which would be normally funded by

the NHS and conventional paths for NHS funding should be sought before considering the legacy as a source of funding."

Whilst reading through this commemorative issue you will see that his wishes and dream was accomplished and we feel that Robert would approve of the work that has been funded in this name.

Robert White was born in Sandbanks, Poole. The son of a hotel worker who lived in the workers accommodation, he was an extraordinary man who sadly lost his life to neuroendocrine tumours (NETS) on 24th November 2015 at the age of 62.

From a very early age, Robert became motorcycles; their interested in engineering and design grew into an appreciation of all things beautifully manufactured, be it motorcycles, motorcars, engines, steam engines, watches and cameras.

Robert was an entrepreneur, a self-made successful businessman, and founder of Robert White Photographic. The company was established in 1982 and became internationally recognised, attracting a world-wide customer base with an enviable reputation for quality products and excellent service.

Robert also wanted to acknowledge the exemplary care given to him by the Dorset Cancer Centre, at Poole Hospital, under the supervision of his clinical oncologist, Dr. Mike Bayne. He appreciated the need for additional funding so that the best level of care could be available to others confronted by cancer in Dorset.





Robert White Centre



The Robert White Centre, Dorchester pictured above is the jewel in the legacy fund's crown

For years, patients in the north, south and west of the county had to travel to the Dorset Cancer Centre at Poole Hospital for radiotherapy treatment. This meant a daily journey for up to six and a half weeks - a source of tremendous physical, emotional and financial hardship on people at a time when they feel sick, vulnerable and probably quite scared which was far from ideal. In the initial stages of planning the centre, patient and family feedback strongly supported Dorchester as the ideal location as it would benefit them in terms of reducing their travelling time and costs. Historically, a number of patients had previously refused treatment for this very reason.

The Robert White Centre has significantly reduced journey times for patients and their families. This in turn has reduced fuel consumption and time spent in traffic for patients, thereby reducing the stress and anxiety and improving the patient experience.

The Robert White Centre was opened on 12th December 2018 by Martin Clunes OBE, and was universally well received, a rare good news story for the NHS in straitened times.

The Centre's location has been instrumental in significantly reducing carbon emissions and saving patients in excess of 477,650 miles (768703 km's), equating to a savings of CO_{2e} footprint of 129.48t (figures based on a medium size, diesel motor vehicle).

Since the first radiotherapy patient was treated on 14th January 2019, we have now administered 9,553 patient treatments, equating to us having treated 692 patients as of the end of September 2020.

The £9.15 million Centre is an extension of the Poole Hospital-based Dorset Cancer Centre is equipped with the latest linear accelerator (LINAC), which enables patients to receive the best-possible radiotherapy treatment.

The facility also includes a £1.75 million Cancer and an Outpatients Department funded by The Cancer Appeal run by Dorset County Hospital Charity. This was supported by hundreds of donations from individuals, community groups as well as Trusts and Foundations.

Radiotherapy staff based at Poole Hospital staff work across both sites in a collaborative effort. The building is named after the late Robert White, whose Legacy Fund part funded the Centre.





Layla Stephen remembers ...

PLANETS Cancer Charity Co-founder & CEO



Photo above: Layla Stephen, Neil Pearce (surgeon and cofounder of PLANETS) and the IORT team

I met Robert a few times and I even met Roland the dog, but I will never forget the day that I met Robert for the first time! It was the early days of PLANETS Cancer Charity and 1 was running Neuroendocrine support group in Southampton. He showed up (his first group), he was very nice and sat quietly at the front listening and taking part in the Neil Pearce (Surgeon and cofounder of planets) and I were speaking about an IORT machine during the morning session (intra operative radiotherapy machine) talking about how it was one of our charity goals and we were fundraising for £50k to start the project off to get the first one in the United Kingdom.

During the coffee break when all the patients went out of the meeting room,

Robert walked over to Neil and I who were prepping for the next session and started asking us a few detailed questions about the IORT machine.

Then straight out of the blue Robert said "Yes, I think it sounds like a wonderful machine I would like to give you fifty thousand to get your project going" Neil and I sat there and were frankly dumb struck, the one and only time either of us were speechless at a support group!

It's truly a day I will never forget, it was a sunny Friday and true to his word Robert placed fifty thousand pounds in our charity fund, first thing the next Monday - needless to say I cried with joy!

The IORT machine was shipped to University Hospital, Southampton three years ago with an up-front payment and a lease purchase for the balance of the IORT machine. The service was officially opened on 13 June 2016. Our IORT machine is making a brilliant difference to so many cancer patients lives. Thank you Robert White.

Sadly due to the Covid-19 pandemic all fundraising events have been halted putting the future of the IORT service in jeopardy.





What is Intra Operative Radiotherapy (IORT)



Electron beam intra-operative radiation therapy is a highly specialised type of

radiotherapy that is administered during an operation while the patient is asleep under anaesthetic, usually immediately after a cancer has been removed. Radiotherapy is a very common method of cancer treatment with almost half of all people with cancer having it as part of their treatment. Radiotherapy uses high energy rays to destroy cancer in the area being treated, and is usually given in a specialist radiotherapy department. IORT allows a concentrated and precise dose of radiation to be administered to the area of concern after the cancer has been removed, helping "mop up" any left-over cancer and deliver treatment where previously University not possible. Hospital Southampton is the only UK centre currently delivering this form of treatment.

Jay Leno shares his memories of Robert



Photo above: Jay Leno and Robert White

In order to raise the money to kick start his legacy and the building of the centre in his memory he sold his haul of Brough

Superior bikes to his friend Mr Jay Leno, one of US television's biggest stars, for £3 million.

None of us ever like to think what it's going to happen to our possessions once we're gone. I always remember reading Charles Dickens a Christmas Carol and Scrooge looking back over his life and seeing people pulling down the curtains and the appraiser coming through and saying this is worth this much and being very circumspect about it.

You may have read about the <u>Bonham's</u> <u>auction of the Robert White collection</u>. Robert was a great friend of mine and a rather eccentric collector. He collected



fine watches, cameras and Brough-Superior motorcycles as well as Vincent and Bentley motorcars. He loved transport, especially anything made in England.

I remember he had a working steam train model. He waited seven years for the guy to finish building it by hand and he just shrieked with delight when it came. He would sit and look at it that way most of us would watch a television program. I never met a man who enjoyed his possessions as much as Robert did, never in a selfish way he was always keen to share them with others.

We became friends because of our mutual love of Brough-Superior motorcycles. There's a place in Los Angeles called the Rock Store where motorcyclists congregate and I was up there one day with Robert as he had been traveling around America as he often did. He had heard that I liked Brough-Superior's, and after approaching me with great suspicion said, "are you Jay Leeeeeno"?

He introduced himself and we start talking bikes and motors and when he realized I didn't just collect them to have them, and that I actually enjoyed riding them we became keen friends.

We couldn't have been more opposite. He was a typical Englishman, well educated, clever, and somewhat eccentric. A bit standoffish at first and I was the typical American whatever you think that would be. We made each other laugh. My favourite thing was to take Robert to American fast food joints. I would say would you like a large drink? And he would say OK. However in in England a large drink is 10 ounces and of course here in America you get this 44 ounce thing you could actually bath in. Robert

always found the portions in America hysterical.

He loved to hang out in my garage. When he saw my steam engines he had to have a White steam car. It became his goal in life- he was in his mid-50s then. I helped him find one and he had it sent back to England and had it restored and really enjoyed it.



Photo above: Robert enjoying his restored steam car

Not long after that he was struck with this terrible disease. The neuroendocrine (NET) cancer he had was very aggressive but he wasn't a whiner or complainer. He always said as soon as this bloody thing is over he's going to move on and get back to his life. He had his retirement all worked out, he was going to enjoy his motorcycles and his automobiles. He deserved to. He worked hard his whole life; he opened up a camera shop and became a world-class dealer of high end cameras and equipment. He was a self-made man and extremely successful.

When he realized he was really sick and not getting any better he called me. I went to England to see him and he said I'd like to sell all my things. He said he wanted to build a cancer wing at the DORSET County Hospital where they had been so kind to him. I tried to get him help here in America but what he had was



pretty inoperable. As soon as he realized that there was nothing that could be done, rather than feel sorry for himself he decided to use what time had left to help people.

He got extremely frustrated because when he said he wanted to sell his collection of Brough-Superior motorcycles he wanted the collection to stay together. He got tired of people constantly trying to lowball him and saying I'll take this one but not that one, he had no patience for that.

He said to me I'd like you to buy the whole collection and give the money to the hospital. I said OK, name your price and that's what we did. It seemed to give him a great deal of peace and certainly peace of mind to know that his beloved Brough-Superior's would not be broken up and sent to collections across the world.

I have built a special room in my garage for the Robert White collection which includes all of Robert's bikes and made a video which can be viewed here on YouTube.

When Robert was deathly ill we went down into his garage and I sat him down at my iPad. I would have him stop at each bike and tell the story. As sick as he was he remembered the smallest detail, he would stop and rattle off the serial numbers of each one and tell me the story. I have listened to that audio recording dozens of times since his passing.

The last days spent with him were great fun. I would take him to Burger King and tease him that American fast food can cure anything. And he always thought that was funny. Even though he was in a wheelchair and could only take the tiniest sip of anything I would still order him the giant 44 ounce burger kings drink and he would laugh hysterically. We became great friends even though we didn't have a lot in common other than how we felt about cars and motorcycles. That is what we bonded on.

He was a wonderful collector. And to see it all being sold made me terribly sad. However, it was nice to see that the money raised would be going for a good cause and that is something that I think all of us can aspire to. We don't really own any of these things we are just caretakers, we have them maybe twenty or thirty years then they go to the next person.

He was quite happy to know that all of his beloved Brough Superiors were all together, being maintained, serviced and most importantly ridden. It's just cruel that Robert didn't have longer to enjoy them himself.



Photo above: Robert and Flops handing over cheque to Dr. Mike Bayne for £3 million



Des Connor remembers



Photo above: Des Connor riding Robert's MV Augusta

I first met Robert early in April 2002, when he came over to introduce himself whilst I was working in my front garden. He said "hello I'm your new neighbour from across the road, my name is Robert White, and I'm from Poole in Dorset".

During our brief conversation he said to me, "I hope that you like motorbikes", to which I replied "no I don't, I think that they shouldn't be banned from the Islands roads as they are a menace", the expression on Robert's face changed quite a bit and off he went.

Later that afternoon I was riding down the hill on my Honda 600 RR Sports bike and I saw Robert on his driveway removing shopping from his car, I beeped my horn and waved to him as I rode past, the look of puzzlement on his face made me laugh, he came over shaking his head and said that I'd totally fooled him. I told him that I used to race, and I'd had competed in the Manx Grand Prix and other road races here and in the UK, the start of our friendship had just begun.

In July 2005 as an ex rider I had been invited to take part in the Southern 100 Road Races 50th Anniversary parade laps which is held down the south of the Island, I asked Robert if he had an old bike that he could kindly lend me to take part in it, he said "I have a Magni MV Agusta that you can use", when I saw it I was very surprised, as I could see that it was worth a lot of money. I said "are you sure, I don't want to break it?", he just said "it's fine enjoy yourself". I did enjoy myself, in fact, I rode it in different parades over the next ten years.

2015 was a very sad time for me, in August my wife passed away from MND (Motor Neurone Disease) and Robert from Neuroendocrine cancer in November, but I'm very happy that his wonderful legacy will go on to help so many others which is a true testament of how very generous and caring he was, I'll always have fond memories of Robert.



When the Earl of Bedlam and the Le Bon's came to tea...



Photo above: Simon and Yasmin testing out Robert's 1930 Bentley 4½ litre Tourer

In the theme of remembrance we pay our small tribute to someone who made a huge, positive impact on our lives in a short space of time. Robert White is most likely unknown to you, although in his niche he was greatly respected as a connoisseur-collector and his name was over the door of a world renowned camera business that he founded in Poole, Dorset.

All is a question of scale in life, as well as tailoring. We may not hope to inspire impromptu shrines and murals when we go, but to have standing room only at the crematorium is testament to having done something right.

Robert first got in touch with us because we had "helped his friend in a jam" - by which he meant, providing Gregory Porter with a dinner jacket the day of his Royal Albert Hall performance for the BBC Proms. Gregory's manager was an old friend of Robert's from Poole. He said he was considering a "Mr Toad" suit for wearing when driving his open topped vintage Bentley. Then he said, more practically, having been diagnosed with NET cancer, we should just probably just make him a shroud. I said we didn't do those.

We began to get the measure of each other via lengthy telephone conversations. Unsurprisingly he was variously scared and angry at what was befalling him, having worked hard all his life, building a fortune and a world

class collection of boys' toys - vintage and high performance cars and motorbikes - only to be stricken with cancer just as he was about to properly enjoy them. He was curious about the Bedlam MC, the motif on our t-shirts, and sent us beautiful prints of some of his favourite bikes.

Eventually he scheduled to visit us, with his companion Liz Curd. Despite his considerable means and frail health, he chose to travel to London on the National Express coach - one of the more Howard Hughes-style acts at which we puzzled as he complained about the awful people coughing and sneezing their germs about him during the journey.





Photo above: Flops, Little Brown Ted and the gang

Robert was most attached to his cuddly toys, and, in particular, his little mascot, Roland the Wonder Dog (nicknamed, Flops). It was Flops that he asked us to print onto silk for the jacket lining and the waistcoat back. We then made a miniature waistcoat for Little Brown Ted to match his Dads suit plus the other bears got silk kerchiefs, sporting the blue or red Flops logo.



Photo above: Little Brown Ted

We call every job a "collaboration" rather than a commission because people have to come to us with their ideas and wishes, and then we have the honour of trying to realise them.

We printed more "Flops" lining in a different colour way, to line a cosy robe for Robert, as he was spending time in

hospital and not going out so much when at home.

But Robert being Robert, wanted the very best and so we had the opportunity to use the rarest, most costly, natural (i.e. not scattered with diamond dust) fabric on earth - Guanaco. This is combed from the belly of but two qualifying beasts up one particular mountain in Peru but only on a night of the full moon when there's an R in the month. I exaggerate only slightly for effect. From a lovely Irish lady with an attic crammed with dusty boxes of a haberdasher's dreams (she married into an esteemed trimmings family in France) we sourced a 16 ct. gold fringe, made in Lyons in the 1900s, to trim the belt.



Photos above and below: Jacket made of Guanaco fabric with the 16 ct. gold fringe, made in Lyons in the 1900s, to trim the belt

When we were ready to do a fitting for the suit we offered to go this time to Robert. To our astonishment, he invited us to stay at his house. When we called the day before to check he was still up to our visit, he confirmed he was looking forward to it, albeit a little puffed out



from having been cleaning to make it ready for us. "Does he not, "I asked Liz, incredulous, "have a 'lady who does'?!" "Oh no," she replied, "Robert doesn't like letting people in the house." So it was not lost on us, the trust he extended, not least when he took us to see his magnificent collection of chrome and canvas, pumps and pedals.

There was a fiery red Ferrari next to an any-colour-as-long-as-its-black Model T-Ford in-between a steam powered 1913 White; a 1930s Bentley in British Racing Green parked a coté un French blue Bugatti side by side with a couple of burnished ACEs. And more. And more. And more. We visited Robert on Valentine's Day, 2015, but at the time were wracked with nerves at accidentally disclosing the location of his garage, and wanting to respect Robert's privacy, so limited ourselves to sharing one photo of Mr. Wesley, like a child in Santa's Grotto, atop his own favourite bike - an Indian. Now all the Brough bikes are gone to Robert's friend, Jay Leno, in the rust resistant climate of California.

The bikes - in two further garages represented the greatest collection of Brough Superiors (the "Lawrence of Arabia" bike) and a host of other "only remaining examples in the world". Robert had already committed to selling them to fund a new cancer unit at Poole Hospital. He was realising, too, that a collection hoarded for a few eyes is a collection largely unappreciated, and was open to us bringing some more people to see them. The obvious candidate was Dr. Eccles, another of our clients with a penchant for a vintage Bentley - he had recently acquired the late Ron Moody's, complete with 8-track cartridge player in the glove compartment!

Robert chose the tweed for his driving suit largely because he saw Dr. Eccles at the wheel wearing it in a photograph. When the Good Doctor offered to drive us there and back in the Bentley in exchange for seeing Robert's collection of motor cars, he was a shoe-in. But who else could properly appreciate these mechanical wonders?

Someone else had taken Mark Knopfler to see Robert and his treasures. Robert congratulated him on his album "Tubular Bells", told him he had enjoyed that one. So when I tentatively suggested inviting Simon Le Bon I was primed for nonplussedness. Robert's face lit up. "He had a most beautiful boat, (reels off the technical spec of said boat), called Drum!' "Indeed, he did." "And he has a MOST beautiful wife!" "Indeed he does, Robert, a beautiful wife who knows almost as much about cars as you do!" For Yasmin Le Bon is so knowledgeable about automobiles that she was the motoring correspondent on GQ for a while.

I cannot tell you that Robert broke into the chorus of "Rio", for he did not, but he was absolutely delighted to welcome this trio to share his passion.



Photo above: Yasmin snaps Simon on a Brough Superior while Dr. Eccles looks on



That evening, when we had been safely driven home in stately style by Dr. Eccles, Robert texted: "We enjoyed the day immensely. The guests were great. I am happy & smiling. Thank you so much for brightening my day. Life can be hard and days like today really help xx"

Just a few weeks later he wrote, "Tired just so tired... I sleep and sleep." By August he was outliving his prognosis and would boast, "Not dead yet. A scan yesterday showed the tumours are progressing, time ticks away. Dreams of my smart suit fade away also..."

He rang in tears to say he had realised he would never get to wear the suit again so Liz had modelled it so he might inspect the details. "It is a work of art," he said, and we both cried down the phone, but not for the suit.

He wondered why we weren't awash with money - he was a much better business man than us, I think we can state with confidence. "How do you promote yourselves?" he wanted to know. Word of recommendation, I replied, mouth, happenstance, as had brought him to us. Trying to sound like someone with a marketing strategy, I mentioned that should we ever have two spare shillings, I would like to do a poster campaign on the tube as that had been something of a coup when I did that at my old indie record label. But no money in the world could make him better. He had tried two rounds of progressive pellet treatment, developed in California. Cruelly, his second set of "No improvement" results arrived the day an article ran exposing the process as unproven and unreliable.

In September he wrote: "My skeletal form is weak now. Life has not quite gone as it should. I hope you are doing OK and love

to you all. Wuf." The text made my heart lurch, it sounded like a farewell. But then the phone rang and Robert's frail voice asked me to find out how much the posters on the Underground would be, for he should like to bring more business to our door and keep the wolf from it.

That is how, before Christmas, we amazed those who know us by appearing to have an organised and efficient campaign budget sufficient to adorn the walls of Waterloo, London Bridge, Lambeth North (our nearest station), Kennington, Vauxhall and Stockwell - the jewels of the South London network in other words - with the poster, pictured below.



You can see Flops is on there too, and the logos of our great allies Huddersfield Fine Worsted. They gave us the cloth to make the cashmere camel coat and the black flannel suit that Mr. Wesley his very selfmodels in the poster. The subtext of the story is #madegood - a geezer with a beautiful motor, in some pukka threads,



comes to visit his old mum on a Sunday. Bedlam's in-house photographer (when he's not wearing that hat at Ronnie Scott's jazz club) Benjamin Amure took the picture on the China Walk estate across from our studio, and the redoubtable Dr. Eccles lent us one of his other Bentley's - a 1968 T1- and held the flash gun. My daddy lent us his 1963 Lock & Co. trilby and spectacles.

"Robert, don't you dare die before they go up!" I told him. We texted him the photos you see above. Liz showed them to him and they made him proud she told us. A week into the campaign the spare posters arrived, one for us, one for Huddersfield Fine Worsteds and one for Robert. As we were addressing the postal tube, the phone rang. I saw it was Liz, and knew. Robert had passed away, at home, the afternoon before.

A few weeks before Christmas we took the train this time, down to the coast, and a taxi to the crematorium. As I wrote at the top here, it was standing room only. The eulogy had people laughing and crying, as Robert had had time to "coach" the gentleman conducting the service -

they were essentially his words delivered in absentia. His first choice of music was Louis Armstrong singing "We Have All the Time in the World" - because we don't.

For our part, we are grateful to have had the short, intense, emotional blast of knowing him - a 150 mph dash down the track. For all his exalted tastes, the memory I hold dear will be his trying to resist the craving for a McFlurry, saying it was not good for him, he mustn't. He was not going to get better at this point. "Robert," I said, "what is the worst thing that could happen? If you want a McFlurry, let's go get one," and we sat in the McDonald's car park, Robert, Liz, Mr Wesley and I eating things that are very bad for you but taste really good. Fast cars and motorbikes can also do you in life is short.

We made Robert a promise that we would do our bit to ensure that neither he nor Flops would be forgotten.

So we rev our engines in salute to Robert, The Honorary Chief in Perpetuity of the Bedlam Motorcycle Club.

Robert White was a great man and an enthusiast of all things mechanical. The sale is a showcase of his life's passion -Malcolm Barber, Co-Chairman of Bonhams In my life, in my involvement with business and people,
I've had a couple of mentors, including Robert White.
Robert was a very wealthy guy from the south of
England and he was a collector of motorbikes and cars –
Chris Wedgwood

Robert was a 'lovely, generous, interesting and humorous, individual' – Ricky Cuss Robert White will forever be associated with advances in cancer care in Dorset -Dr. Mike Bayne

One of the greatest joys for Robert was handling a new Leica camera. When he had oil on his fingers and exhaust fumes in his nostrils, he was happiest. Robert was a very intelligent man with never-ending curiosity, a great character, eccentric some might call him, and we will miss him.- Hardy Haase



Contact

To subscribe to our free, quarterly newsletter or keep up to date and help us to continue with the amazing, innovative work being undertaken in Robert's name please contact us. Alternatively you can complete the tear-off slip below and hand it back to the Receptionist or pop in the mail.

03000192969 EMAIL: RobertWhite.Legacy@uhd.nhs.uk		
JustGiving JustGiving		
ADDRESS: Robert White Legacy Fund, Linac Offices 5&6 Poole Hospital Foundation Trust, Longfleet Road, POOLE, BH15 2JB		
In light of the new Data Protection regulations that came into force in May 2018, the Robert White Legacy Fund based at Poole Hospital NHS Foundation Trust (registered Charity Fund No. 1058808), would like to keep you informed of our news, activities, events and appeals. If you would like to receive these, please tick below to OPT IN . Once completed, either hand back to the Receptionist or pop into the mail.		
Receive via email I do not want to receive anything	Receive via post Get involved as a volunteer or host an event in Robert's name	
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Email:	Telephone:	
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THANK YOU FOR YOUR CONTINUED SUPPORT

