



pentland hills
regional park

PentlandBeacon

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Old Pentlands

An illustrated history of the
old Pentlands



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Old Pentlands



READERS may be familiar with the series of books published by Stenlake, featuring illustrated local histories. Places that have been the subject of books around the Hills include Old Roslin, Old Currie, Balerno and Juniper Green and Old Penicuik.

Over the past six months, Ken Bogle, the archivist from Midlothian's Local Studies Centre and I have been researching the content for an illustrated history of the old Pentlands to be published by Stenlake this winter. We have unearthed over 50 photographs that we think show some interesting recent events and familiar places. Finding landscapes was easy, the Pentlands are attractive and accessible and there were many photographs available.

More scarce were pictures of people, but we unearthed a good range of folk doing anything from studying the geology to walking to school.

What really struck me was the long-established use of the Pentlands for recreation, many of the images showed people walking, cycling and enjoying a picnic.

Naturally farming and land management features too and there are numerous pictures of ploughing and harvesting as well as the everyday lives of people living and working here.

Photographs give a fascinating insight into how our ancestors lived, what they wore, what they ate and how they went about their daily business. For me, the ordinariness is what makes the connection.

Although formal and official photographs and paintings have their place, it is the moment where a fleeting expression or moment is captured, often unawares, that is special and memorable. The ease of use and image quality that can be produced from a digital camera is truly amazing, especially to one who started out with a Kodak Instamatic and a heavy 35mm SLR.

The images we take today will be reflected upon by people in years to come and I'm sure they will look at what we wore and how we spent our time with equal fascination.

Susan Falconer
Senior Countryside Ranger

THE PENTLAND SKYLINE WALK

The skyline walk was not to be missed, by the sun we were certainly kissed.

With seventeen miles and thirteen peaks, we went up and down in tweaks.

By Victor led and Rangers escorted, we were taught while nature cavorted.

With excellent views and scenery too, maybe next year we'll see You.

Kenny Gunn-Russell
Participant of the Skyline Walk 2010

Pentland Hills Regional Park Donation Scheme

The Pentland Hills Regional Park covers an area of 10,000 hectares with over 100km (62 miles) of paths. Approximately 500,000 people enjoy recreating in the park every year; walking, cycling, horse riding and fishing to name but a few of the recreational activities.

The Donations Scheme is a simple way for people to put something back into the Regional Park. The scheme allows people to donate to either a specific project or to make a general donation for environmental improvements.

All funds raised are used only for new 'added value' projects on the ground and not for the day to day running of the Service. Donations made for specific projects will not be used for any other project, and work will start once the target cost has been raised.

For more information and to donate please visit the Regional Park's website at www.pentlandhills.org



Heritage Lottery Fund

Protecting Threipmuir Farm Steading

THE Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) has awarded a grant of £37,500 to Youth Vision to start the restoration and maintenance of Threipmuir Farm Steading.

The Steading, within the boundaries of the Pentland Hills Regional Park, dates from 1774 and the award of £37,500 will enable the roof to be fixed and allow urgent repairs to begin immediately.

The farm, at the base of Black Hill, lies beside the 'Black Springs' track, one of the popular walking routes around Harlaw and Threipmuir Reservoirs. It was one of the first in Scotland to experiment with the use of lime and crop rotation as a way of improving yields.

The work will include stabilising and repairing the pan-tiles and roof joists at both gable ends and

the flat roof. The original well supplying the property will be restored and the outer perimeter will be secured by rebuilding dry stane dykes and erecting sheep proof fencing. This in turn will enable the youth groups to begin planting the garden with fruit, vegetables and herbs.

Youth Vision uses the building as a base for their work supporting young people

through their transitional years. Through this, the young people gain experience of the outdoors, and better understand the history of the Steading through learning archaeological techniques and traditional skills such as dry stane dyking.

Fiona Murdoch
Youth Vision



Regional Park wins a Green Flag for 2010/11



FOR the third year in a row, the Pentland Hills Regional Park has been awarded the Green Flag Accolade.

This year the flag raising ceremony was held at Flotterstone Information Centre with Councillor Keir (City of Edinburgh Council), Councillor John (West Lothian Council) Councillor Thompson (Midlothian Council) attending the event along with members of the Ranger Service, Volunteer Ranger Service, farmers and landowners, colleagues from The City of Edinburgh Council, members of Friends of the Pentlands and individuals from the local community who work very closely with the Regional Park.

The flag was raised by Councillor Keir; who has taken over as Chair of the Regional Park from Councillor Thompson.

Regional Park Chair

IN May 2010, Cllr. Owen Thompson stood down from the position as Chair of the Regional Park but will continue as a member of the Joint Committee. Many thanks are due to Cllr. Thompson for his support over the previous three years.

Cllr. Colin Keir has taken over as Chair for the Regional Park, and is a member of the City of Edinburgh Council, representing the Drumbrae / Gyle ward. Since becoming the Chair, Cllr. Keir has been meeting a range of people and organisations that have an interest in the Pentland Hills, including Pentland Hills Producers, the Friends of the Pentlands, and individual farmers and landowners.

Proximity to the City of Edinburgh and populations in Midlothian and West Lothian means that the Regional Park can be enjoyed within a short journey. Businesses such as pubs and restaurants, livery, fisheries, holiday lets, and farm shops all benefit from visitors to the Regional Park.

It is recognised that these are difficult economic times for

those earning a living in the hills. Cllr Keir, in his capacity as Chair has indicated that he would like to look at ways in which the Regional Park can support sustainable economic development. In particular, opportunities from tourism and from improving the Regional Park' profile as a regionally important destination for day visits or longer stays.

The key word however is 'sustainable' and it will be important that future promotion is proportional to the quality of visitor facilities and capacity of the land, to accommodate recreational use without conflict. The 'essential character' of the hills is one of a peaceful, yet living and working landscape. Successful and sustainable economic development within the Regional Park will depend on maintaining this essential character while developing new opportunities.

Cllr Keir is keen to hear from anybody with an interest in the future direction of the Regional Park and can be contacted on: 0131 529 3260 or colin.keir@edinburgh.gov.uk



A Partnership Approach

FOLLOWING a particularly bad year in 2009, the Regional Park identified a need for a new approach to tackle anti-social behaviour. The problems tend to be related to camping and occur mainly in the North Pentlands area, particularly in and around Bonaly Country Park.

For spring and summer 2010, a partnership was formed between the South West Community Safety Team, Environmental Wardens, the Police and the Pentland Hills Ranger Service to reduce the problems experienced in 2009. The Bonaly Scout Centre and Scottish Water were also involved.

Wild camping is an access right under Part 1 Land Reform (Scotland) Act 2003 and provided it is done responsibly, presents few problems or disturbance to others. What this means in practice is covered in the Scottish Outdoor Access Code and includes responsibilities such as removing litter, not lighting fires in woodland, and leaving no trace. Sadly, camping is often associated with irresponsible or unlawful behaviour such as vandalism, littering, damage to trees, dog fouling and disturbing the peace. The partnership has focussed on trying to reduce these types of behaviour.

Regular evening / night time patrols were carried out by Police both in plain clothes and uniform. These were supplemented by patrols by Community Safety Officers and Environmental Wardens. The purpose of these patrols was to act as a deterrent, to carry out enforcement activities if required, and to provide general advice.

The Ranger Service made a significant new commitment to Bonaly this summer by ensuring that the Country Park was patrolled every morning during the School Holidays. This allowed the Ranger Service to advise campers of their responsibilities and if necessary to remove litter and repair damage from abandoned sites. Thanks are also due to the Friends of the Pentlands who have provided support over the summer with clearing litter from known 'hot spots'.

With the combination of advice, deterrent, enforcement and site management, a difference has been made this year. Towards the year end, data will be gathered from the partners and will be used to better target resources for 2011.

Lastly, a key message for all visitors to the Regional Park is to call the Police directly on 0131 311 3131, if they come across antisocial or other behaviour that they are concerned about. This will both increase the chance of those responsible being held to account, and by logging the call, support future deployment of Police resource.

Water of Leith Flood Prevention Scheme

Threipmuir and Harlaw Reservoirs

The notches give the reservoirs a self-regulating control so that the required flood water storage is effectively maintained.



WORKS have been carried out on Threipmuir and Harlaw Reservoirs to create vital flood water storage. As well as the low level notch weirs in the spillways, new weirs at Easter Bavelaw Causeway and Black Springs have been built.

The notch weirs will keep the reservoir waters at the lower level - something the City of Edinburgh Council did with the outlet valves. At Threipmuir, the water levels in the reservoir, along with Bavelaw Marsh and Black Springs, will be 600 mm higher at the old spillway level. Fish passes have been provided at the new weirs.

At Harlaw, a new footbridge has been built over the spillway, allowing wheelchair access. The water levels are now controlled by the notches that are lower than the existing dam spillways. In normal conditions, the water will flow through the notches. When there is a storm, the water in the reservoirs will rise, but the discharge is restricted so that it does not add to floodwater in the river downstream. The notches give the reservoirs a self-regulating control so that the required flood water storage is effectively maintained. This together with other control measures should avoid unnecessary water loss from the reservoirs in future.

However, the City of Edinburgh Council is committed to maintaining a minimum compensation flow in the Water of Leith which could see water levels reducing below the notches in prolonged periods of dry weather.

The flood storage created at Harperrig, Threipmuir and Harlaw Reservoirs helps protect all the properties at risk of flooding downstream. Without this critical storage, defences in the city would need to be higher.

John Wharrie
Bridges and Flood Prevention City Development



Biodiversity Surveys



THIS year has been quite a successful year for our surveys; managing to squeeze them in during the typical Scottish weather! We have managed to see a lot of species including; Green Hairstreak Butterflies, Large Red Damselflies and over 30 different wildflower species in our wildflower meadow at Hillend Country Park

A new survey that I have taken part in this year is for bumblebees, as part of the Bumblebee Conservation Trust 'Bee Walk'. This is a monthly survey that involves walking a set 1½ km route and identifying and counting all bumblebees seen. Not only is this providing a useful record for Bumblebee Conservation Trust, but

also helps me to improve my Bumblebee ID skills! Further information about the work of the Bumblebee Conservation Trust and how you can help can be found at www.bumblebeeconservation.org.uk

Nigel Franklin
Countryside Ranger

Pentland Inspiration Exhibits

SEE the beauty and wonder of the Pentland Hills through the eyes of those who have entered the fourth Pentland Inspirations Art and Photographic Competition. The entries have formed an inspiring exhibition which is going on tour for five months from November 2010. The exhibition is being shown at a variety of venues across Edinburgh, the Lothians, South Lanarkshire and the Borders.

Viewing of the Pentland Inspiration exhibition is free of charge at all venues.

Enjoy the inspirational viewing!



2010 Exhibitions

Tuesday 23 November – Friday 26 November
Edinburgh City Chambers, High Street, Edinburgh
Open daily from 9am - 5pm.

Monday 29 November – Friday 10 December
Central Library George IV Bridge, Edinburgh
Tel: 0131 242 8020
Open Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday 10am - 8pm, Friday 10am - 5pm, Saturday 9am - 1pm.

Monday 13 December – Friday 31 December
Harlaw House Visitor Centre, near Balerno
Tel: 0131 445 3383
Open Monday to Friday 11am - 3.30pm, Saturday and Sunday 11am - 3pm.



2011 Exhibitions

Tuesday 4 January – Friday 14 January
Water of Leith Visitor Centre, 24 Lanark Road, Edinburgh
Tel: 0131 455 7367
Open daily from 10am - 4pm.

Monday 17 January – Friday 21 January
Colinton Parish Church, Dell Road, Colinton
Tel: 0131 441 2232
Open Monday to Friday 10am - 2pm.

Monday 24 January – Sunday 30 January
Carlops Village Hall, Carlops
Opening times to be confirmed.

Monday 31 January – Friday 4 February
Dalkeith Arts Centre, White Hart Street, Dalkeith
Open Monday, Thursday and Friday 9.30am - 5pm, Tuesday 1 - 5pm, and Wednesday 9.30am - 1pm.

Monday 7 February – Friday 11 February
Silverburn Village Hall, Silverburn, Midlothian
Opening times to be confirmed.

Monday 14 February – Friday 25 February
Prestonpans Library West Loan, Prestonpans East Lothian
Tel: 01875 810 788
Open Monday and Thursday 10am - 7pm (closed 1 - 2pm), Tuesday and Friday 10am - 5.30pm (closed 1 - 2pm), Saturday 10am - 1pm. Closed on Wednesdays.

Monday 28 February – Friday 11 March
Forth Library, Forth Primary School, Main Street, Forth
Tel: 01555 811 594
Open Monday & Friday 1.30pm - 7.30pm (closed 5 - 5.30pm), Tuesday and Thursday 9.15am - 5pm (closed 1pm - 1.45pm), Wednesday 9.15am - 1pm.

Monday 14 March – Friday 1 April
Linlithgow Library, The Vennel, Linlithgow
Tel: 01506 775 490
Open Monday and Friday 9.30am - 5.30pm, Wednesday 10am - 5.30pm, Tuesday and Thursday 9.30am - 8pm, Saturday 9.30am - 1pm.

Conserving, Protecting & Enhancing

“Putting something back into our local environment for the benefit of all gives us pleasure.”

FOLLOWING the successful replacement of the Gala Ford Bridge we held a joint walk with ScotWays in June to cross the bridge en route to West Linton via the Cauldstane Slap. For some time we have been in possession of three old Victorian ScotWays signs which we have had refurbished.

One of those signs is now in place at the Cauldstane Slap thanks to the co-operation of the landowner, advice from ScotWays and some hard work by a few of our intrepid members. To mark that achievement the walkers followed the old drove road, now a heritage path, from Kirknewton to West Linton, pausing at the top of the path to ‘christen’ the renovated sign.

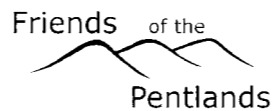
We lead two walks as part of the Midlothian Walking Festival. One was a strenuous, 12 mile, circular route from Flotterstone while the other, which included wheelchair users, was a five mile route from Threipmuir to Harlaw and back.

Our project work continues. We have been litter picking regularly, including, along the Lang Whan; small grants from CSV Action Earth 2010, supported by Morrison Supermarket, allowed the installation of bat boxes at various locations in the Pentlands; three cross drains were installed in the Phantom’s Cleugh and work has continued in Harlaw Wildlife Garden. In addition to grass cutting, we have replaced two planter containers and purchased two new ones for the front of the building, and have been trying

to establish a nectar border while keeping a check on some of the more invasive species.

Putting something back into our local environment for the benefit of all gives us pleasure.

If you would like to know more about the work of the Friends of the Pentlands, please contact Bob Paterson on 01383 417771 or email: pentlandfriends@tiscali.co.uk or visit our website: pentlandfriends.plus.com



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© Dr Mike Clark

Have you remembered to ...

When you are planning a visit to the Pentland Hills Regional Park there is always so much to remember; check weather forecast, take suitable footwear, waterproofs, map, mobile phone, lunch!

Depending upon the time of year this list can be even longer; sun cream, midge repellent, hat, scarf and gloves. On a typical Scottish day, you could need all these items!

This year’s summer has seen what the experts believe to be the wettest on record in 60 years! I think that many visitors to the Regional Park will agree with that statement; one look at many of the reservoirs and it’s clear to see the amount of rainfall we’ve had in what should have been a dry spell.

With this in mind, we can only wonder what the weather will have in store for us in autumn and winter.

If the Park sees a similar winter to that of 2009/2010, I suspect we will have a long snowy season and with snow, it means one more thing to remember before visiting the Regional Park – check for an Ice Alert!

The reservoirs within the Park are at high risk of freezing, with certain reservoirs freezing quicker than others. To reduce the risk of incidents, the Ranger Service follows an ice safety plan. With the formation of ice, the emergency services, local schools and Bonaly Scout Camp are all notified with Radio Forth contacted and warnings put on our website: www.pentlandhills.org.uk.

For more information on ice safety, visit The Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents website: www.rospa.com.

With so much to remember, it can sometimes feel like a lot of stress just for a visit to the hills. Don’t let it get in your way, as once you are out in the Pentland Hills, you will agree that all the stress was worth it!

Paula Bell
Countryside Ranger

Midlothian Walking Festival



AUGUST saw the Pentland Hills Ranger Service take part in the 3rd Midlothian Walking Festival. Organised by Midlothian Ranger Service, we have been a key participant for the past three years.

This year there were 15 walks, a disabled ramble, a horse ride and cycle. In total, 18 events were held with 286 participants enjoying the festival. Our guided walk this year was quite strenuous, but enjoyable, with some good weather and as always some great views. A total of 14 miles (23 km) including six summits was covered, with a well deserved lunch break taken at The Howe waterfall in the Green Cleugh.

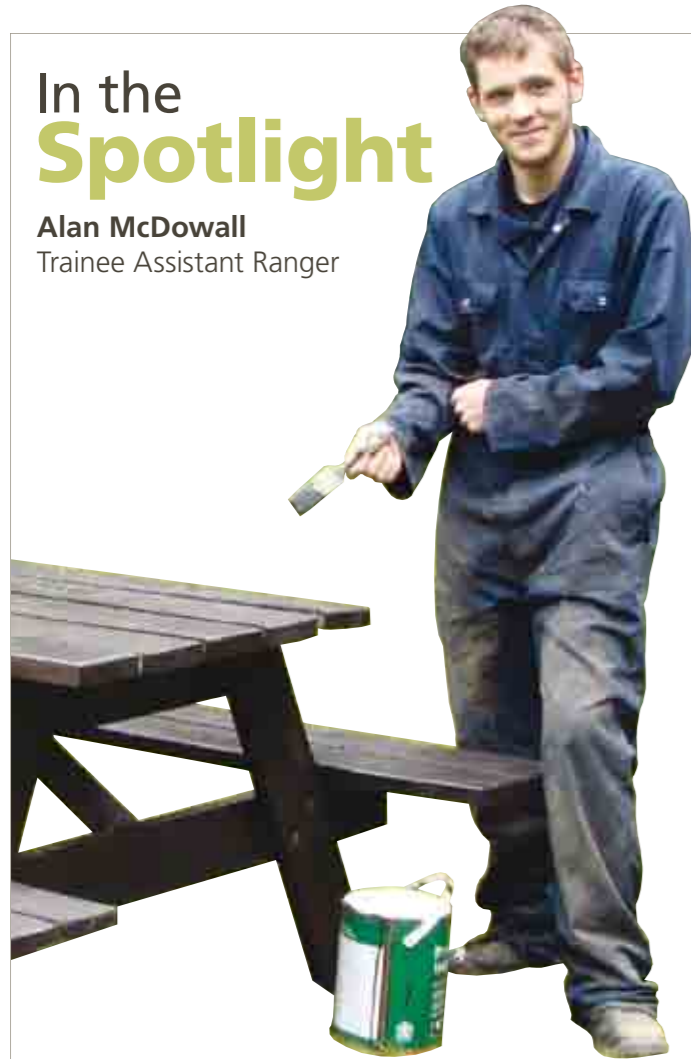
Please make a note in your diary for next years Midlothian Walking Festival – Friday 12th to Monday 15th August.

Nigel Franklin
Countryside Ranger



In the Spotlight

Alan McDowall
Trainee Assistant Ranger



Future jobs fund

I started as a Trainee Assistant Ranger with the Pentland Hills Ranger Service in June 2010, through the 'Future Jobs Fund', for young people trying to find work.

So far, I have done a variety of tasks and activities, including patrolling, vegetation clearance and events.

Meeting the public when patrolling or at an event is a large part of this job, and is the part I enjoy most. On only my second patrol, I came across a mountain biker whose breaks weren't working properly. Luckily, I happened to have a set of Allen keys which sorted the problem and the biker was able to finish their ride. This is what the Ranger Service is here for; to help people enjoy the Pentland Hills in what ever way they can.

While working in the Regional Park, I look forward to obtaining my pesticide and bush cutting licences, which will help improve my chances of finding permanent work and will help the Ranger Service for the duration of my time here.

The Pentland Hills Ranger Service has a wealth of knowledge, not only about the Regional Park, but also in many other aspects of countryside management. I thank them for imparting that knowledge onto me and look forward to the duration of my placement.

East Lothian Countryside Ranger Service



The Pentland Hill Ranger Service is one of a number of Ranger services that work in the Lothians. Over the forth-coming issues of the Pentland Beacon, we will have articles from some of our neighbouring Ranger Services explaining what being a 'Ranger' means to them.

THERE have long been ties between East Lothian and the Pentland Hills. Since the Regional Park was established, it has helped visitors to some of East Lothians pressurised coastal sites discover the pleasure of a visit to the hills as an alternative.

The growing number of visitors to the countryside and the number of recreational activities now available has meant that managing the visitor pressure is still a challenge in East Lothian and the Pentland Hills alike.

Here in East Lothian, much of our work is still linked to the coastline, but today we have a county wide remit. As well as managing 17 separate sites, we promote responsible access across the whole of the county,

monitoring path networks and liaising with landowners and community groups. We have a strong environmental education remit and last year took over 280 classes and other visiting groups. Wildlife monitoring is also a valuable part of our work, particularly as a lot of land is nationally or internationally important, including the majority of the coastline which has RAMSAR (The Convention on Wetlands of International Importance) status for its wintering wildfowl and wader species.

This brings us back to the coast again, and with nearly three million visitors per year, is likely to be a focus for the Ranger Service for many years to come.

Rodger Powell
Senior Ranger



Next events

Northern Pentland Hills **Saturday 16 October 2010** **10am – 3pm**
A 9 mile (14 km) guided walk over the four northern Pentland Hills with fantastic views of Edinburgh and Midlothian. Meet at Hillend Country Park lower car park, by the number 4 bus terminus. Wear boots, bring lunch and waterproofs.

Calorie Burn **Saturday 8 January 2011** **2pm – 4pm**
Burn off some of those extra Christmas calories with a short, steep walk at Hillend Country Park. Great views of Edinburgh, 3 miles (5 km). Meet at lower car park, by number 4 bus terminus. Wear boots and bring waterproofs.

To find out more details please contact us on 0131 445 3383 or email pentlandhills@edinburgh.gov.uk. Check out our website to find details of news and other events: www.pentlandhills.org.

Drop in sessions

Join us at the following drop in session where we will have displays, specimens and activities. Children must be accompanied by an adult.

Big bird feed Activity Session **Thursday 21 October 2010** **1.30pm – 3.30pm**
Help our feathered friends prepare for winter. Come along to Harlaw House Visitor Centre and make bird feeders and bird cake. Become an explorer and discover the birds that live in the wildlife garden.

Ranger remits

Access, Estate Management and Forestry
Communities and Access
Education and Volunteers
Interpretation and Communication
Landscape and Biodiversity
Senior Ranger

Martin Duncan
Jo Dawson
Victor Partridge
Paula Bell
Nigel Franklin
Susan Falconer

For any specific enquiries please contact the appropriate named Ranger on 0131 445 3383 or email: pentlandhills@edinburgh.gov.uk.

Pentland publications



Do you know your mallard, from your moorhen?

On your next visit to the Robin Aitken Bird Hide at Bavelaw Marsh have a look at the brand new interpretation developed by the Pentland Hills Ranger Service to help you distinguish your mallard from your moorhen.

During the forth coming winter, as part of the ongoing project, the Ranger Service will produce identification cards for other birds and wildlife that visit Bavelaw Marsh. We also aim to install other larger than life birds for the children's interactive display.

We hope you enjoy learning about the wildlife at Bavelaw Marsh!



We hope that you enjoyed the articles in this publication. If you encounter any difficulties or disappointment, please do not hesitate to contact a member of the Park staff, or ask them for a copy of the City of Edinburgh Council's 'Make Contact' form (for complaints and suggestions). After you have gone through the Council's complaints process, if you are still not happy, you have the right to take your complaint to the Scottish Public Services Ombudsman, 23 Walker Street, Edinburgh, EH3 7HX. Phone 0870 011 5378. Generally, if you want to do this, you must contact the Ombudsman within one year.

The Pentland Beacon is produced by the Pentland Hills Ranger Service, which operates within the Pentland Hills Regional Park. Letters or articles for inclusion can be sent to Paula Bell at the address below.

The Ranger Service is supported by the City of Edinburgh Council, Midlothian Council, West Lothian Council and Scottish Water.

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HAPPY TO TRANSLATE

ترجمہ کے لئے حاضر ہر شخص سے دعا ہے کہ ترجمہ
MOŻEMY PRZETŁUMACZYĆ আনন্দের সঙ্গে অনুবাদ করব

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