

July 2021

LORIEN ELKRIDGE



Celebrating July

Women's Motorcycle Month

**World Watercolor
Month**

Exploring watercolor
painting this month in
Activities

3rd week of July
Capture the Sunset
week

**Independence Day
(U.S.)**
July 4th

**Day of the
Cowboy & Cowgirl**
July 24th
*Lorien Elkridge
Country Western
Themed Day*



Flying cars—the vision of transportation from science-fiction writers—may finally be landing in the modern world.

In a test flight, a Slovakian pilot drove what appeared to be an exotic sports car up a runway in the city of Nitra.

It then took flight with the aid of a fixed propeller, and landed 35 minutes later at Bratislava, before folding up the wings and driving straight out onto the highway.

The aptly-named *AirCar* (prototype 1) was developed by a company called KleinVision, founded by Stefan Klein, who spent 20 years turning his dream into a reality. Once the flying portion of its journey is over, a push of the button causes a Transformer-like sequence that in under three minutes leaves the vehicle as a slightly-oversized, perfectly road-legal sports car with a 160 horsepower gas-powered BMW engine, a seat for another passenger, and a convertible roof. Get your name on the waiting list!

Found in Translation

In July of 1798, Napoleon Bonaparte led 35,000 French soldiers into Egypt with visions of a conquest that would make him the next Alexander the Great. Napoleon's military campaign in Egypt may have ended in failure, but the French emperor had a second, nonmilitary objective. Napoleon had brought an army of scholars, scientists, and artists to Egypt to rediscover the region's great ancient culture.



When French forces took over a run-down fort near the port city of Rosetta on July 19, 1799, officer and engineer Pierre Bouchard was put in charge of its reconstruction.

While overseeing the repair of the fort's defenses, Bouchard discovered a massive basalt slab built into a wall. It was four feet long, two-and-a-half feet wide, and covered in writing. Over the centuries, much of the fort had been reconstructed with stone looted from nearby sites, and many of these stones were covered in hieroglyphics, but Bouchard immediately recognized that this particular slab was unique. He had discovered the Rosetta Stone.

The message written into the stone was less important than the fact that the message was translated into three different languages: Egyptian hieroglyphs, Egyptian demotic, and ancient Greek. Scientists immediately realized that this single slab was the key to deciphering hieroglyphics, Egypt's ancient language that had been dead for 2,000 years.

Napoleon may have suffered defeat in Egypt, but his Egyptian campaign had stirred a French fascination with Egypt. Soon, an international race was on to decipher Egyptian hieroglyphs. The British intellectual Thomas Young and the French child prodigy-turned-Egyptologist Jean-Francois Champollion would spend many years as rivals making sense of the ancient markings. In 1823, Young finally offered public congratulations to Champollion for his deciphering of hieroglyphics. At last, the language, culture, and history of ancient Egypt were open to scientists as they had never been before.

The Science of Sunsets



The third week in July is Capture the Sunset Week, a week to appreciate the gorgeous hues of the setting sun. The colors of a sunset

are the result of a process called scattering. Particles in the atmosphere alter the direction of sunlight. When the sun is low on the horizon, such as at sunset, light has farther to travel and more opportunities to scatter. Sometimes, short-wavelength light that produces blue or violet colors is so scattered that it is lost altogether, leaving only warmer light colors such as brilliant reds and oranges. These are the dramatic colors we love in a sunset. Dust, pollution, moisture, wind, and clouds often scatter the entire spectrum of light, causing colors to dull. Clean air is the best ingredient for beautiful sunsets.

July 4th Fun Facts

*** Only two people actually signed the Declaration of Independence on July 4: John Hancock and Charles Thomson, secretary of Congress. Most of the others signed on August 2**

*** Three US presidents have died on July 4 — John Adams, Thomas Jefferson, and James Monroe. In a bizarre twist of fate, Adams and Jefferson both died on July 4, 1826, the fiftieth anniversary of the country they helped found.**

*** July 4 wasn't deemed a federal holiday until 1870, nearly 100 years after the nation was founded.**

Other countries — including Denmark, England, Norway, Portugal, and Sweden — celebrate the Fourth of July because many of their citizens moved to the US or simply to attract American tourists.

Americans consume around 150 million hot dogs on the Fourth of July each year.

For Whom the Bar Tolls

For 40 years, Sloppy Joe's bar in Key West, Florida, has been holding its annual Ernest Hemingway look-alike contest in July. Dozens of white-bearded "Papa" Hemingway look-alikes gather in fisherman sweaters and khaki shirts to compete for the honor.



Sloppy Joe's may have officially opened as a bar on December 5, 1933 (the very day Prohibition was repealed), but Hemingway was a customer long before this date, frequently buying illicit alcohol from owner Joe Russell, who operated the place as a speakeasy. Despite subsequent changes of address, Hemingway would remain a longtime customer of Sloppy Joe's and a good friend of Joe Russell. Today, admirers of Hemingway make the trek down to Key West to walk in Hemingway's footsteps. Not only do visitors stop in for a drink (or several) at Sloppy Joe's, but they make the pilgrimage to the Hemingway House and Museum in Old Town, where the author wrote many of his most influential novels.

The Spanish colonial house was gifted to Hemingway and his wife Pauline from Pauline's uncle. When the Hemingways arrived in Key West, they underwent a massive restoration and remodeling of the home, including the construction of the property's famous (and massively expensive) in-ground pool, the first ever built in Key West. Visitors can see the very desk where Hemingway worked and stroll the grounds, which are famously inhabited by 40–50 cats, many of which are polydactyl, meaning they have extra toes.

These cats are believed to be the descendants of one polydactyl ancestor named Snow White. Local legend states that one night, while drinking at Sloppy Joe's, Hemingway met a sea captain who gifted Hemingway a multi-toed cat off his ship. Eventually, Hemingway would have nearly 70 cats living on the property. Some of Hemingway's look-alikes have even shown up at Sloppy Joe's with cats in their hands.

Big Day for Mini Golf

It's a big deal that World Miniature Golf Day is on July 11. Mini golf, like full-sized golf, was invented in Scotland at the famous St. Andrew's golf course. The first miniature course was a putting green set up for the wives of golfers to amuse themselves while their husbands played 18 holes. But this course, called the Ladies' Putting Club, with its lush, rolling greens, bears no resemblance to the tacky miniature courses we have come to love with their rotating windmills, waterfalls, and all manner of gimmicks and obstacles.

The rightful inventor of these beloved mini-golf courses was Garnet Carter, owner of the Fairyland Inn hotel outside of Chattanooga, Tennessee. In the late 1920s, Carter created a tiny course that matched his whimsical hotel theme. He called it *Tom Thumb Golf* and littered the course with fairyland statues, hollow logs, sewer pipes, and other fanciful obstacles. By 1930, 25,000 mini-golf courses had appeared across America, each one just as fanciful as Carter's.

Carving Out a Place in History



On July 14, 1943, George Washington Carver National Monument was dedicated in Missouri, near the birthplace and childhood home of the famed scientist, educator, and humanitarian. This was the first time in American history that a birthplace site was designated as a national monument for someone other than a president and the first national monument to commemorate an African American. Carver's contributions to agricultural science revolutionized farming in America. He innovated crop rotation and learned to replenish soil nutrients by planting nitrogen fixers such as peanuts, which led him to develop countless peanut-based products, work for which he earned renown as "The Peanut Man."

A Common Tongue

It was on July 26, 1887, that Polish linguist and ophthalmologist L.L. Zamenhof introduced his newly invented language to the world. He called it Esperanto, which in his new language meant “one who hopes,” reflecting his earnest desires for both his language to catch on and his hopes for a more peaceful world.



Zamenhof was born in Belostock, a multi-ethnic and multi-lingual city that was part of the Russian Empire at the time. Languages came naturally to young Zamenhof. As a Jew living in Russia, he spoke both Yiddish

and Russian. His father was a teacher of French. On city streets, he heard Polish, German, and Belarusian. But he also saw clashes between these disparate groups, clashes that he believed were due to the lack of a common language.

While in secondary school, Zamenhof attempted to create a neutral language that was simple in grammar but could convey complex ideas. Zamenhof was not the first person to attempt to invent a new language. A German Catholic priest named Johann Martin Schleyer, after having a dream in which God directed him to invent a language, created Volapük in 1880. Zamenhof himself learned the language, and by 1889 it was popular enough to have one million speakers around the world. But the number of Volapük speakers did not grow, largely due to the rising popularity of Zamenhof’s Esperanto.

Zamenhof felt an urgency when it came to creating Esperanto. The world that he knew was dramatically changing. Like the internet today, the invention of the telegraph had sped up communication all over the globe. More disconcerting were the pogroms against Jews that were spreading throughout Russia and into Poland. A common language, Zamenhof felt, could heal divisions of religion and ethnicity. While Esperanto never became the everyday language that Zamenhof hoped it would, it is spoken by millions today. More importantly, Zamenhof’s message of world harmony endures.

July Birthdays

In astrology, those born July 1–22 are Cancer’s Crabs. Crabs like to retreat into their “shells” and enjoy being surrounded by loved ones at home. They nurture deep relationships and become loyal friends. Those born July 23–31 are Leo’s Lions. These “kings of the savanna” are natural-born leaders, full of creativity, confidence, and charisma. Leos use their generosity and sense of humor to unite different groups into a common cause.

Thurgood Marshall (justice) – July 2, 1908
 Frida Kahlo (artist) – July 6, 1907
 Satchel Paige (ballplayer) – July 7, 1906
 Tom Hanks (actor) – July 9, 1956
 Henry David Thoreau (writer) – July 12, 1817
 Harrison Ford (actor) – July 13, 1942
 Regina Belle (singer) – July 17, 1963
 Carlos Santana (guitarist) – July 20, 1947
 Ernest Hemingway (writer) – July 21, 1899
 Amelia Earhart (pilot) – July 24, 1897
 Vivica A. Fox (actress) – July 30, 1964

Rock-Hard Artwork



July 3 is International Drop a Rock Day, a day when people all around the world will participate in the simple act of painting rocks and leaving their small pieces of artwork in places for others to find and enjoy. These small acts of public art are like small, warm hugs for passersby. While it is easy to find rocks to paint while strolling your neighborhood, landscaping and gardening stores often sell rocks for minimal cost. First, make sure to wash your rock of any dirt and debris. Some choose to apply a basecoat of paint to create a blank canvas, while others love the look of bare rock as a background. Acrylic paint is perfect for painting rocks, but some people choose paint pens for their ease of use. Lastly, applying a spray sealer will ensure that your artwork lasts, but some enjoy the notion that rock art is temporary. When the paint rubs off over time, someone else will get to paint a fresh message or picture.