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From today's featured article



The **Manned Orbiting Laboratory** (MOL) was part of the [human spaceflight](#) program of the [United States Air Force](#). The MOL evolved into a [space station](#), for which crews would be launched on 30-day missions, and then return to Earth using a Gemini B spacecraft derived from [NASA's Gemini spacecraft](#). The MOL program was officially announced in December 1963 as a platform to prove the utility of putting people in space for military missions; its use for [satellite reconnaissance](#) was a secret [black project](#). Seventeen astronauts were selected for the program, including Major [Robert H. Lawrence Jr.](#), the first African American to be chosen as an astronaut. Budget cuts repeatedly caused postponement of the first operational flight, and improvements in technology reduced the benefits of a crewed space platform over an automated one. A single [uncrewed test flight](#) of the Gemini B spacecraft was conducted on 3 November 1966, but the MOL was canceled in June 1969 without any crewed missions being flown. ([Full article...](#))

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Did you know ...

- ... that the common depiction of the **Borromean rings** as three linked but pairwise-unlinked circles (*pictured*) is an [impossible object](#), because they cannot actually be circular?
- ... that **MLS Cup 1999** was played with new rule changes that were approved days before the game?
- ... that both grandfathers of **Donough MacCarty**, who fought for the [Irish Catholic Confederation](#), were Protestants?
- ... that [Aaron Copland](#) considered the ***Short Symphony*** to be "one of the best things I ever wrote"?
- ... that **Carl Craig** became the **state auditor of Mississippi** in 1936 after defeating a **former state auditor also named Carl**?
- ... that a [syzygy](#) of celestial bodies caused **Van Sickle Island** to flood in 2017?



Three-circle depiction of the Borromean rings

In the news

- The cargo ship *[Ever Given](#)* **runs aground and blocks** the [Suez Canal](#) (*satellite image shown*), [Ever Given](#) blocking the Suez Canal resulting in a traffic jam of more than 300 vessels.
- A fire** at the [Rohingya](#) refugee camp near [Cox's Bazar](#), Bangladesh, kills at least 15 people and injures hundreds of others.
- In Australia, **floods in New South Wales** force the evacuation of more than 18,000 people.
- Samia Suluhu Hassan** becomes the first female [president of Tanzania](#), following the death of [John Magufuli](#) at the age of 61.

Ongoing: [COVID-19 pandemic](#) · [Myanmar protests](#)

Recent deaths: [Stan Albeck](#) · [Finian's Rainbow](#) · [José Baselga](#) · [Peng Shilu](#) · [Beverly Cleary](#) · [David McCabe](#)

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On this day

March 28: First day of [Passover](#) (Judaism, 2021)

- 193 – The [Praetorian Guard](#) assassinated Roman emperor [Pertinax](#) and sold the imperial office in an auction to [Didius Julianus](#).
- 1918 – **World War I**: British and Australian troops soundly defeated a German force at the **First Battle of Dernancourt**.
- 1942 – **Second World War**: The port of [Saint-Nazaire](#) in [occupied France](#) **was disabled** by British naval forces (*ship pictured*).
- 1946 – The [US Department of State](#) released the **Acheson–Lilienthal Report**, a proposal for international control of nuclear



Ever Given blocking the Suez Canal



HMS Campbelltown during the St Nazaire Raid

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- ... that 19th-century Guyanese poet **Egbert Martin**, who died at the age of 29, is considered to be the country's first major poet?
- ... that ***Pseudolarix wehrii*** fossils can be mummies?

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weapons.

- 1999** – Serbian police and special forces **killed** about 93 **Kosovo Albanians** in the village of Izbica in the **Drenica** region of central Kosovo.

Yekaterina Vorontsova-Dashkova (b. 1743) · **Ernst Lindemann** (b. 1894) · **Harold Agnew** (b. 1921)

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[March 29](#)

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Today's featured picture



The **Birds' Head Haggadah** is the oldest surviving **illuminated manuscript** of the **Haggadah**, a ritual text recounting the story of **Passover**, the liberation of the **Israelites** from slavery in **ancient Egypt**, recited by participants at a **Seder**. The **Ashkenazi Jewish** manuscript was produced in the **Upper Rhine** region of Southern Germany in the early 14th century, with the text copied by a scribe named Menahem. All Jewish men, women, and children depicted in the manuscript have human bodies with the faces and beaks of birds, while non-Jewish and non-human faces are blank or blurred. Numerous theories have been advanced to explain the unusual iconography, usually tied to **Jewish aniconism**. The manuscript was owned by the German politician **Ludwig Marum** in the 20th century, and is now in the possession of the **Israel Museum** in Jerusalem, where it is on permanent exhibition.

Manuscript credit: Menahem; photographed by the **Israel Museum**

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- **Village pump** – For discussions about Wikipedia itself, including areas for technical issues and policies.

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