

Recreational mathematics presenter Michael Linton's fascination with numbers

Esther Ashby-Coventry · 12:18, Jul 30 2021

0



VALENTINA BELLOMO/STUFF

Geraldine number theorist Michael Linton has been invited by the Oceania MathsJam Gathering organisers to make a presentation on Recreational Mathematics on Saturday.

Geraldine number theorist Michael Linton failed School Certificate mathematics on his first attempt, but that hasn't stopped him solving a magic cube problem with combinations 36 digits long.

Linton has been invited by the organisers of this weekend's Oceania MathsJam in Geraldine, to make a presentation on Recreational Mathematics on Saturday.

An annual weekend, Oceania MathsJam Gathering is for like-minded maths enthusiasts to discuss interests, share maths puzzles, games, insights, ideas and network, in a relaxed atmosphere.

news

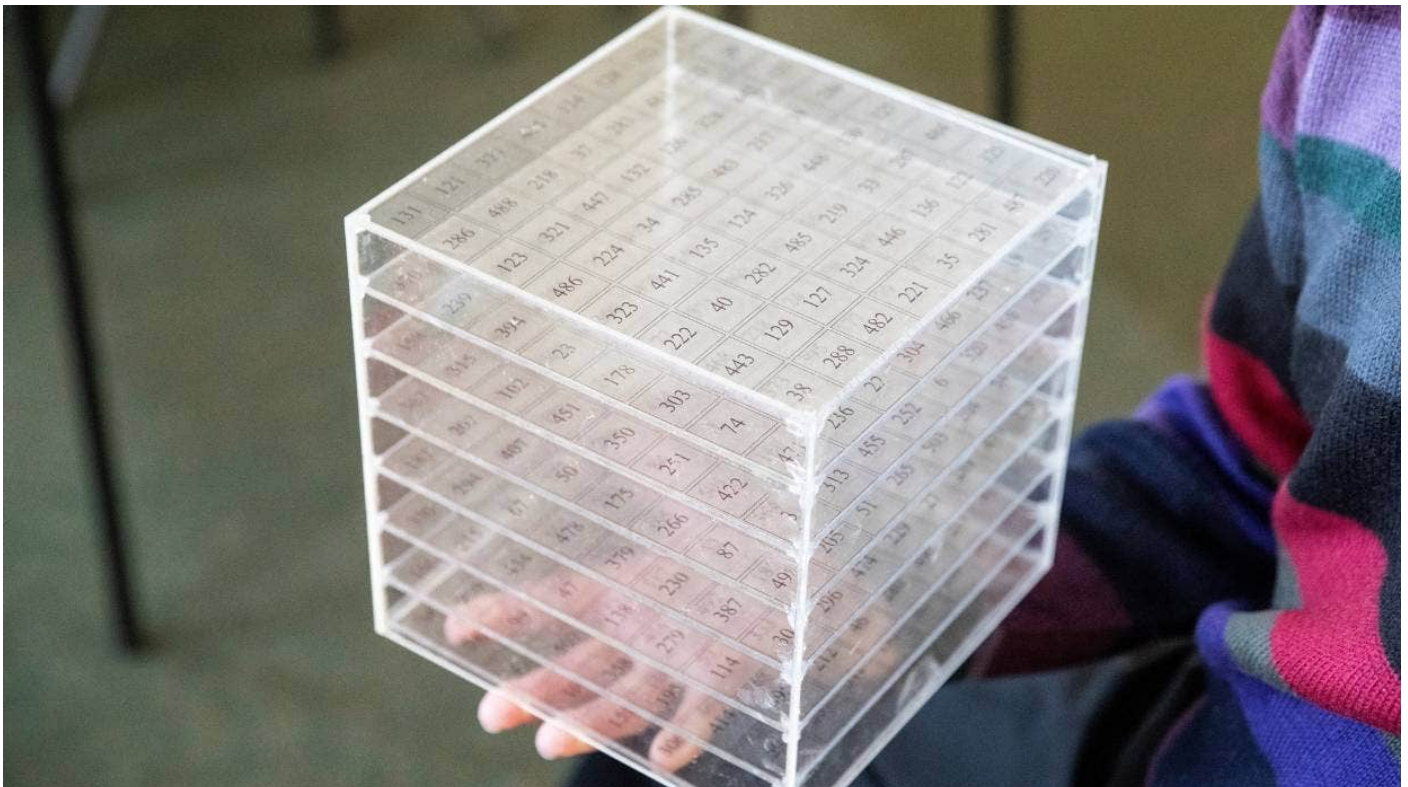
*** NCEA Level 1 Maths exam not too hard - mathematicians**

The 8 x 8 x 8 cube consists of an array of numbers from 1 to 512, with no number missing or repeated.

These numbers are specially arranged so that the addition of the eight numbers in any line, column or file totals 2052.

“Similarly, the addition of any diagonal across any plane, including the four corner to corner diagonals, also total 2052. This is the conventional definition of a magic cube,” Linton said.

This cube remains magic even when one of the faces is moved parallel to itself, top to bottom, side to side or back to front. A cube that does this is known as pan-diagonal. The eight corners of any cube within the cube sum to 2052, he said.



VALENTINA BELLOMO/STUFF

Geraldine number theorist Michael Linton worked out the perfect magic cube with the sum of 2052.

“I figured it out. It’s the perfect magic cube.”

news

Born in England, Linton emigrated to Timaru with his family at the age of 11 and after finishing secondary school started his career as a knitting machine mechanic at Tekau Knitwear until his eye for detail and patterns was recognised and he quickly moved into design.

He spent most of his working life designing for various companies here and overseas.

Eventually he, and wife Gillian, [set up their own knitwear shop, Giant Jersey, in Geraldine and sold direct to the public.](#)

Over a 23-year period while in Geraldine, Linton created a [world record 64 metre medieval spring steel mosaic based on the Bayeux tapestry of the Battle of Hastings.](#)

He and Gillian exhibited the mosaic in England for three years and returned in 2019. It now hangs back in Geraldine in their Wilson St premises.



VALENTINA BELLOMO/STUFF

Geraldine number theorist Michael Linton stands in front of his medieval spring steel mosaic which took him 23 years to complete.

While maths seems to be an unfathomable language to some people, Linton

news

“I did very well, second time, I stopped looking out the window.”



VALENTINA BELLOMO/STUFF

Geraldine number theorist Michael Linton is quick to work out number patterns.

Linton's Recreational Mathematics talk will cover:

- Alphametics: an ancient Chinese number-letter substitution puzzle dating back over 2000 years
- Magic Cube: a magic square on steroids
- Factor One: a methodology for factoring numbers using binary
- Pseudo-primes: they look like a prime number, they act like a prime number, but they're not prime
- Mersenne primes: pointing the way to perfect numbers
- Ulam spiral: look out primes, you're going the wrong way

The talk starts at 7.30pm on Saturday at Medieval Mosaic, 10 Wilson St, Geraldine. Admission by gold coin.