

**Right** Sid Gregson, owner of the Welcome Cafe, in Derby Road, Melbourne, England, with grandson Alex Slater and daughter Josephine Slater.

# The **other** Melbournes

Ours is not the only town to bear the name Melbourne – there are (at least) 10 others around the world, including one in Derbyshire, England, pictured here. We take a quick tour ...

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# WELCOME CAFE

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### Melbourne, Derbyshire, England

Lord Ralph Kerr was sworn in as Melbourne's High Sheriff in April and lives at the 13th-century Melbourne Hall with his wife, Marie-Claire, and their six children. The Hall was once home to Lord Melbourne, Queen Victoria's first prime minister (and the man our city is named after). Today, the village of Melbourne is known locally for its market gardens and a small shoe industry.

The town is the birthplace of travel agent Thomas Cook and the "Newton Wonder" apple, a variety discovered here by a publican in 1970. Nestled in the South Derbyshire countryside, it is surrounded by slightly larger villages with commanding names such as Ashby-de-la-Zouch and Burton upon Trent. Curiously, it is still lit by gas lamps, and its water is drawn from private wells. Its population of 5000 includes many workers from Rolls-Royce and Toyota in Derby.

**Where to eat** Sid Gregson (pictured on the previous page) has been running the Welcome Cafe and Bakery for 55 years, now with his daughter Josephine Slater and grandson Alex Slater, who describes Melbourne as a "proper little community village". Breakfast for £3.50 (\$7.50) includes eggs, bacon, sausages, beans, tomatoes,

fried bread, tea and toast. For dinner, try the Bay Tree restaurant for smoked haddock and vodka risotto.

**What to do** Ignore residents' warnings not to visit unless you want your car stolen, and go in April for the 12-kilometre Funny Bunny Run. Entrants are expected to wear rabbit costumes, at least for the warm-up. You could also visit Melbourne Hall and the Melbourne parish church, a miniature cathedral dating back to 1120.

**Cup of coffee** \$3.40

**Three-bedroom house** \$425,500

### Melbourne, Florida, USA

The largest of the "other" Melbournes, this city on Florida's Space Coast has a population of 76,000, attractive beaches, Victorian-era architecture, an international airport and high-tech industry. It's an hour's drive from the Kennedy Space Center, three hours north to Miami and an hour-and-a-half from Disney World. The Melbourne Man, a human skull dating back to 10,000 BC, was found here, and Doors singer Jim Morrison was born here in 1943.

**Where to eat** Try Cantina Dos Amigos for its fresh tortilla chips, or Fiesta Azteca for its tableside preparation of guacamole.

**What to do** Visit the Melbourne Bone Bed, a site of 20,000-year-old giant armadillo fossils. Go surfing, especially between June and November in the hurricane season. The Melbourne Arts Festival is in April, and in June you might see giant loggerhead sea turtles lay their eggs.

**Cup of coffee** \$2.40

**Three-bedroom house** \$480,000; \$1.06-million-plus for sea views

### Melbourne, Iowa, USA

Destroyed twice (by fire in 1903, tornado in 1981), Melbourne, in Marshall County, now has a population of just 794. Just over 50 per cent of Melburnians claim German ancestry.

**Where to eat** Clark's Bar, Melbourne's only tavern, serves pizza and microwave meals.

**What to do** When the locals aren't restoring their hot-rods, they play cross-country poker. Travelling by motorbike in summer or snowmobile in winter, they stop at several taverns, playing a hand of poker at each. The combination of alcohol and high-speed travel adds an extra frisson to the game's climax. The town also hosts Mousehole Day in August, when fireworks light up the horseshoe-shaped entry to the town and the park plays host to softball games and pig-wrestling competitions.

**Cup of coffee** 80 cents for a bottomless cup at the highway gas station.

**Three-bedroom house** \$122,000

### Melbourne, Yorkshire, England

Set in farmland, this parish (population 755) in the East Riding of Yorkshire has one grocery store and a pub. It is ringed by historic market towns, ancient woodlands and seaside resorts.

**Where to eat** The Melbourne Arms; empty most nights. On the menu: homemade steak pie, chicken Kiev and curry.

**What to do** Once you've tried the steak pie, [www.ukvillages.co.uk](http://www.ukvillages.co.uk) recommends a "pleasant" circular walk around the edge of the village. A better option might be to pack a picnic hamper and leave Melbourne to scout the Yorkshire countryside in a rented MGB roadster (from \$250 per day).

**Cup of coffee** \$2.60

**Three-bedroom house** \$425,000

### Melbourne, Quebec, Canada

A bilingual agricultural community, Canton de Melbourne, as it is called by the French speakers, is on the banks of the Saint-Francois River and has a population of 1150. It can get very cold here: the temperature sits below zero 190 days of the year and in





January can drop to minus 17. It's considered a heatwave if it reaches 25 degrees in July. The town has two claims to fame: its church featured on the Canadian two-dollar bill from 1954 to 1975; and it is the birthplace of Frederick Simpson Coburn (1871-1960), one of Canada's most celebrated artists.

**Where to eat** Your best bet is the Pizzeria Sous-Marins.

**What to do** Try canoeing on the river, cross-country skiing in the hills, or cycling the Route Verte, the largest bike trail network in North America with more than 3600 kilometres of paths. In summer, there's a country and western music festival; in winter, Melburnians travel to nearby Valcourt to watch the ice motorcycle racing at the Ski-Doo Grand Prix.

**Cup of coffee** \$1.30

**Three-bedroom house** \$184,000

### Melbourne, Washington, USA

Blink and you'll miss it: this logging settlement on the Chehalis River comprises a few old, timber homes scattered in the woods. It is, however, close to Aberdeen, Washington, the birthplace of Kurt Cobain.

**Where to eat** Unless you hunt, you'll have to drive to nearby Montesano for dinner.

**What to do** Hiking and fishing. On Logger's Play Day, in September, burly types chop

stumps, roll logs, climb trees and hurl axes to beat the previous year's records.

**Cup of coffee** \$1.07

**Three-bedroom house** \$96,000

### Melbourne, Ontario, Canada

This tiny town (population 400) has no industry to speak of: most working residents commute to the nearby General Motors or Ford car plants. Besides two baseball fields, a racetrack, two churches and a liquor store, its only feature is being in a region that claims to be the Turkey Egg Capital of the World.

**Where to eat** The Porthole, Melbourne's only restaurant.

**What to do** Come in June for the county's annual turkey festival; in August, there's the agricultural fair and the nearby Muncee and Chippewa Indian Reserve has its annual pow-wow. Visit an early native American village nearby, reflecting the native settlements found along the river 1000 years ago.

**Cup of coffee** \$1.30

**Three-bedroom house** \$157,000

### Melbourne, Arkansas, USA

Not far from Sydney, Arkansas, this Melbourne is in Izard County in the Ozark Mountains, a rugged region: earlier this year it endured

a tornado, an ice storm, a fire, floods and a snowstorm, all in the space of five weeks.

Some 16 per cent of Melbourne's 1600 population lives below the poverty line.

**Where to eat** The Possum Trot gas station for soda and fried chicken. You won't get a drink, though: this is a dry county; the nearest bottleshop is 45 kilometres away.

**What to do** Scour the local woods and creekbeds for native American arrowheads. There is a rodeo in April and a county fair in September, and you can learn the art of turkey-wing broom-making at the Ozark Folk Center.

**Cup of coffee** \$1.15

**Three-bedroom house** \$69,500

### Melbourne, Kentucky, USA

Locals laughingly refer to their town's post office, gas station and convenience store as "Melbourne Mall". The town has some 500 residents, including 150 nuns at the St Anne Convent, which featured in the 1988 film Rain Man as the fictitious Wallbrook mental institution.

**Where to eat** The local store for fried chicken in a bucket.

**What to do** There are two choices – watch two firetrucks and a high-school band parade on July 4, or head to the convent's

**Opposite page** Derbyshire's High Sheriff, Lord Ralph Kerr, at his home, Melbourne Hall, with his dog, Brocky.

**This page** Melbourne, Iowa: razed by fire, flattened by a tornado, rebuilt twice.

Spiritual Life Center for massage therapy, spiritual counselling and reiki.

**Cup of coffee** \$1.30

**Three-bedroom house** \$214,000

### Melbourne, California, USA

All that is left of this former logging camp, once home to 100 families, is one building and a sign that reads "Melburne". John Skiffington, an early settler, had the name on the town's post office spelt that way to distinguish it from Melbourne, Australia. Thirteen kilometres from the Pacific and three-and-a-half hours drive north of San Francisco, the town was settled to supply lumber to San Francisco following the great fire of 1901. Population: three.

**Where to eat** Nowhere; you have to travel to nearby Little River.

**What to do** Kayaking and abalone fishing on the nearby rivers. Mendocino wine country (with its famous pinots) abuts the town.

**Cup of coffee** \$2.15 in Little River.

**Three-bedroom house** \$503,000 (m)