Wiki Software and Facilities for Museums

Prof. Jonathan P. Bowen
Museophile Limited
United Kingdom
www.jpbowen.com

MW2008, Montréal,
Québec, Canada,
April 9–12, 2008

Museophile websites

Museums and the Web 2008
the international conference for
culture and heritage on-line

Background

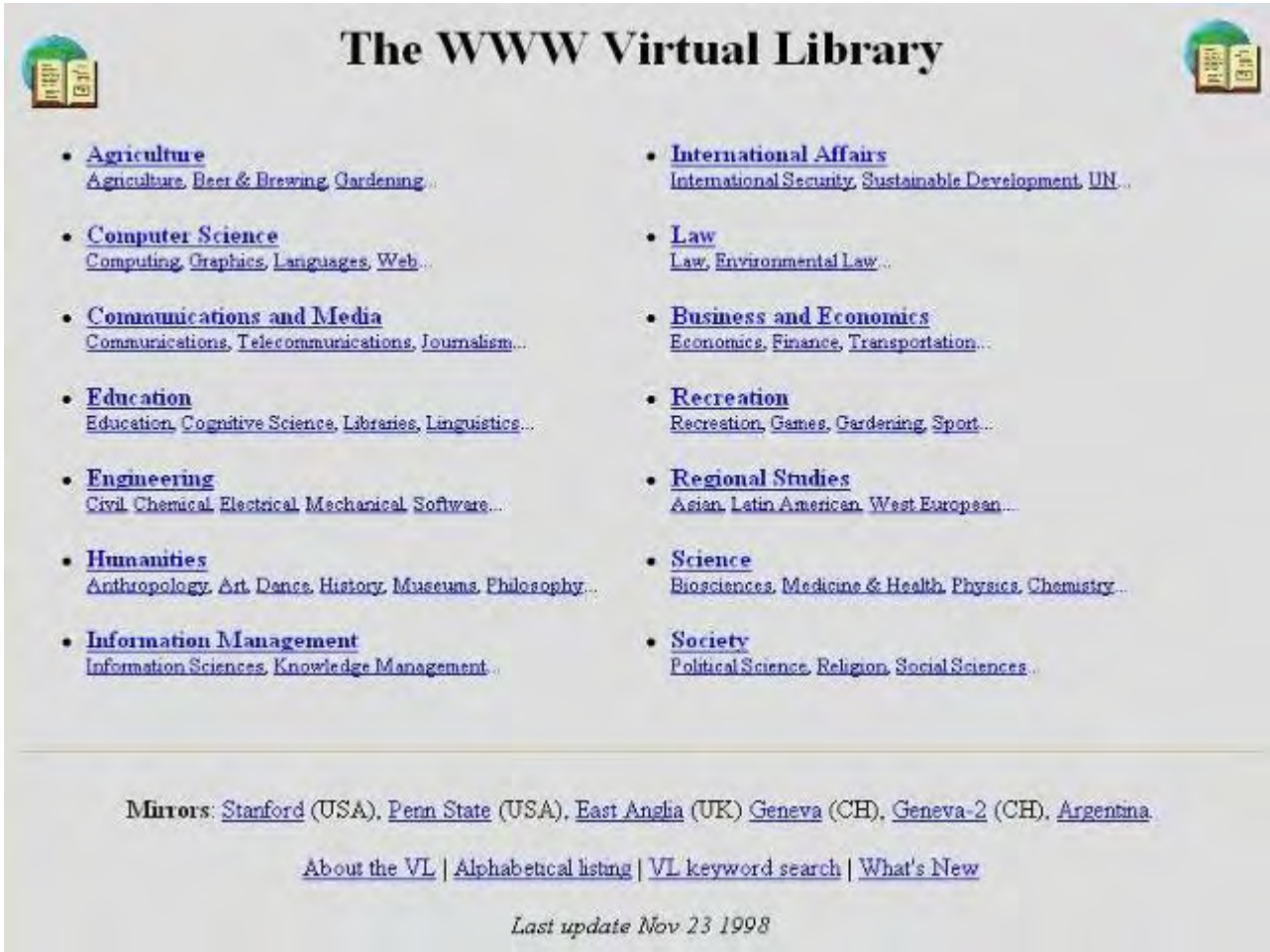
- Collaboration – natural for humans for survival
- Marshall McLuhan – "*the medium is the message*" and "*global village*" in the 1960s
- WELL (Whole Earth 'Lectronic Link) – started in 1985
- Virtual communities – social networking
- Web 2.0 – blogs, discussion forums, wikis, etc. – enabling technology
- Technology support improving; community building still needs expertise and effort

Virtual Library

Case study: early web collaboration – set up by Tim Berners-Lee, Arthur Secret, from early 1990s

- Purpose: indexing web
- Communica-tion via email
- Direct editing of static HTML pages

www.vl.org



New WWW Virtual Library entry for “Museums”
Traditional communication via email (vs. web now)

To: WWW Virtual Library <www-vlib@www0.cern.ch>

Subject: **Possible new WWW Virtual Library entry for "Museums"**

From: Jonathan.Bowen@comlab.oxford.ac.uk

Date: Thu, **16 Jun 94** 10:59:54 BST

Arthur,

I would like to volunteer to maintain a WWW Virtual Library entry for "Museums":

<A HREF="http://www.comlab.ox.ac.uk/archive/other/museums.html">
Museums</A>

Separate list for inclusion under
http://info.cern.ch/hypertext/DataSources/bySubject/Overview.html

Let me know if everything looks OK.

--

Jonathan Bowen, Oxford University Computing Laboratory

Virtual Library museums pages

- Virtual community of around 20 people from different countries maintaining distributed site
- Up to 3,000 “visitors” per day (cf. large museum)
- Usage doubled every 3 months initially
- Adopted by the International Council of Museums (ICOM, 1996)
- vlmp.icom.museum

(1999)

Virtual Library | Humanities | World museums | Search

Museums

Welcome to the World Wide Web (WWW)
Virtual Library museums pages (VLmp)

A comprehensive directory of on-line museums and museum-related resources

You may relocate to a more local VLmp site if response is slow. Please email Jonathan Bowen on *J.P.Bowen@reading.ac.uk* if you would like to maintain information on a particular topic, or support / sponsor the pages in some way. **For additions to a particular page, please contact the maintainer concerned.** Currently this main page receives around 3,000 "visitors" each day.

You are virtual "visitor" number: [redacted] **(since August 1994)**

Museums and the Web: An International Conference

! MW99, New Orleans, USA, 11-14 March 1999.

VLmp is supported by the International Council of Museums (ICOM) at:

http://www.icom.org/vlmp/

This is the recommended URL for VLmp. Please update your links accordingly.

Dedicated to the memory of my grandfather, John Arthur Williams, born 25th February 1895, died 12th May 1996, aged 101.

Virtual museums: *Virtual Museum of Computing*

- VMoC founded 1994
- Community of many personal websites by enthusiasts (mainly hand-edited)
- “Galleries” include *Alan Turing Home Page* by Andrew Hodges (Turing biography)
- 100 “visitors” per day after one week
- Also links to history of computing resources
- Virtual Museum of Computing Web Site. *IEEE Annals of the History of Computing*, **18**(4):67, 1996.
- vmoc.museophile.org

Wikis

- Wiki – a facility that makes updating a website very easy for a group of users
- Form of Content Management System (CMS)
- Part of original vision for the web by its inventor, Tim Berners-Lee
- 1st wiki by Ward Cunningham in 1995
- Common objective needed for success
- “Champion” needed before critical mass

Wiki facilities

Sites offer wiki facilities free of charge (typically with advertising) or at modest rates. E.g.:

- Wikia (www.wikia.com) – *raison d'être* needed; MediaWiki, cf. Wikipedia
- PBwiki (www.pbwiki.com) – WSIWYG
- Wikispaces (www.wikispaces.com)
- Wetpaint (www.wetpaint.com)

Wiki uses

- Community and educational uses
- Production of collaboratively edited material
- Develop work plans
- Facilitate meetings (e.g., agenda, minutes)
- Intranet use (companies, etc.)
- Public vs. private use
- Educational use (e.g., classrooms)
- Cf. museums (e.g., school visits, projects)

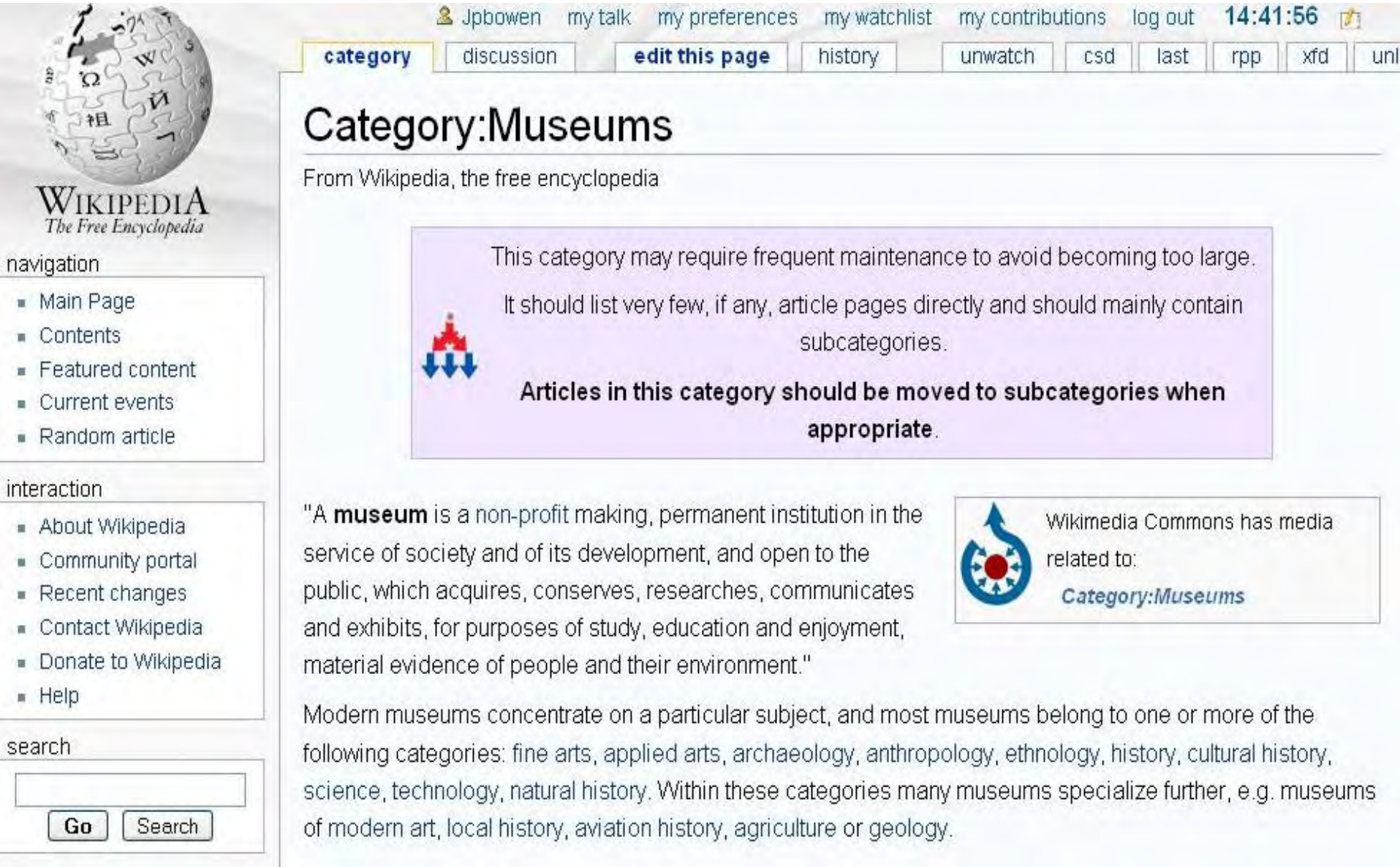
Wikipedia

- Collaborative community – encyclopedia – writing by anyone
- Massive scale (millions of pages, multiple languages)
- Many users; far fewer but significant number of contributors
- Communication via “talk”/discussion pages
- User-generated rules developed organically
- Different skills: novice/expert, content/technical/administrative

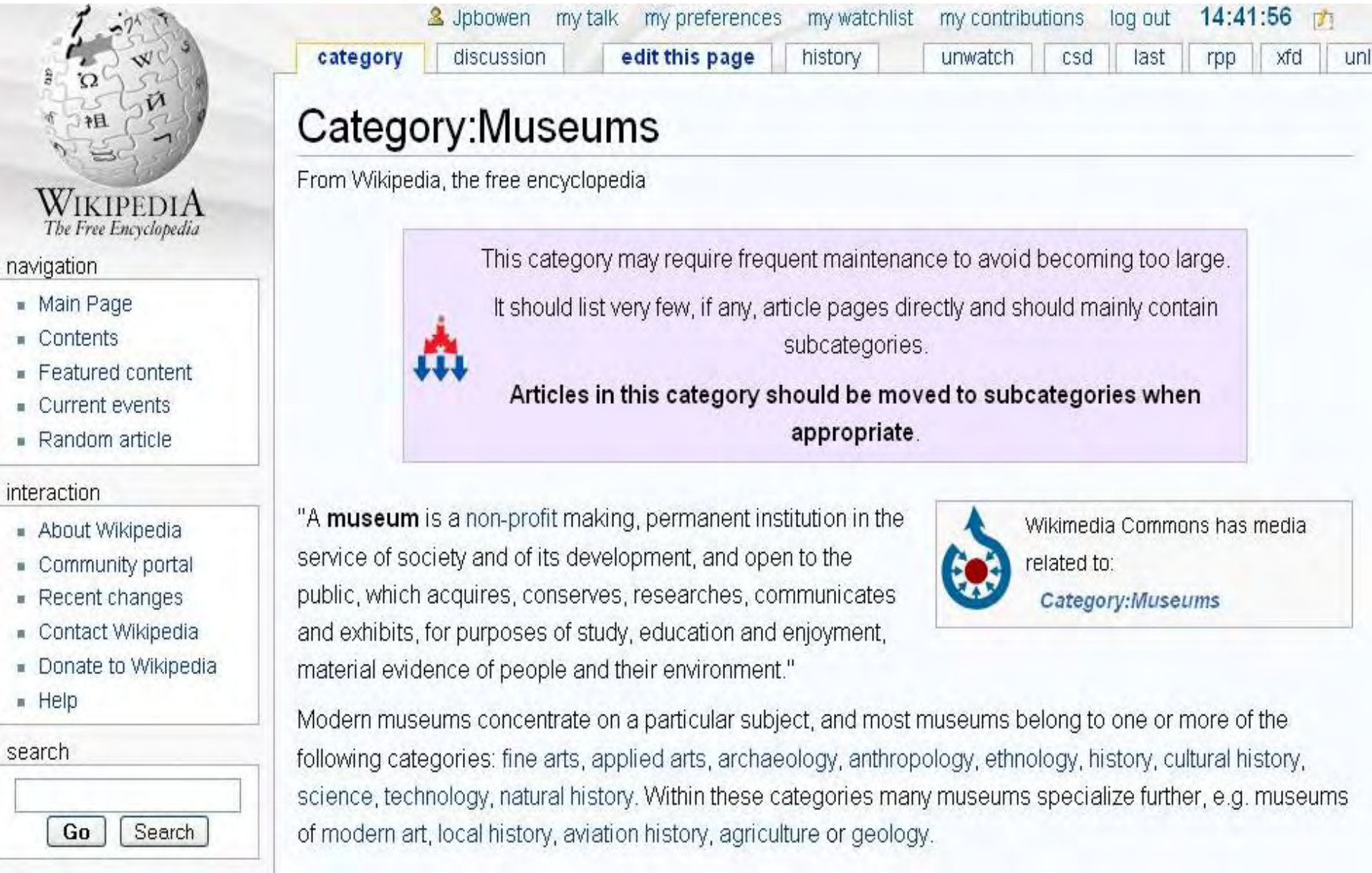
Museums on Wikipedia

- Individual museums under en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Category:Museums
- Worthwhile for all serious museums to have an entry
- Must be “notable” and “verifiable”
- See Bowen & Angus (MW2006) for more information

Wikipedia – www.wikipedia.org



Wikipedia – Category:Museums



Wikipedia – Museums subcategories

toolbox

- What links here
- Related changes
- Upload file
- Special pages
- Printable version
- Permanent link

languages

- Afrikaans
- العربية
- Aragonés
- Azərbaycan
- Basa Banyumasan
- Bosanski
- Български
- Català
- Česky
- Dansk
- Deutsch
- Eesti
- Ελληνικά
- Español
- Esperanto
- Français
- Frysk

Subcategories

This category has the following 22 subcategories, out of 22 total.

- [+] Museums by city
- [+] Museums by country
- [+] Museums by type
- [+] Museums by year of establishment

*****

- [+] Lists of museums
- [+] Types of museum

A

- [+] Art museums and galleries

A cont.

- [+] Museum awards

C

- [+] Museum collections
- [+] Museum companies
- [+] Curators

D

- [+] Defunct museums

E

- [+] Museum events

H

- [+] History of museums

I

- [+] Images of museums

O

- [+] Museum occupations
- [+] Museum organizations

P

- [+] Museum people
- [+] Museum places
- [+] Planned museums

W

- [+] WikiProject Museums articles

µ

- [+] Museum stubs

53 languages
(28 in 2006)

Wikipedia – Museums by country

Subcategories

This category has the following 122 subcategories, out of 122 total.

Wikimedia Commons has media related to:
Museums by country

*****

- [+] Archives by country
- [+] Art museums and galleries by country
- [+] National museums by country
- [+] Biographical museums

A

- [+] Museums in Afghanistan
- [+] Museums in Argentina
- [+] Museums in Armenia
- [+] Museums in Australia
- [+] Museums in Austria
- [+] Museums in Azerbaijan

B

- [+] Museums in the Bahamas

F

- [+] Museums in the Faroe Islands
- [+] Museums in Fiji
- [+] Museums in Finland
- [+] Museums in France
- [+] Museums in French Polynesia

G

- [+] Museums in Georgia (country)
- [+] Museums in Germany
- [+] Museums in Ghana
- [+] Museums in Greece
- [+] Museums in Guatemala
- [+] Museums in Guyana

N cont.

- [+] Museums in Nicaragua
- [+] Museums in North Korea
- [+] Museums in Northern Cyprus
- [+] Museums in Norway

P

- [+] Museums in Pakistan
- [+] Museums in Peru
- [+] Museums in the Philippines
- [+] Museums in Poland
- [+] Museums in Portugal

Q

- [+] Museums in Qatar

R

118 countries

Wikipedia – Museums by type

This category has the following 65 subcategories, out of 65 total.

A

- [+] Aerospace museums
- [+] African American museums
- [+] Agriculture museums
- [+] Anthropology museums
- [+] Archaeology museums
- [+] Architecture museums
- [+] Archives
- [+] Art museums and galleries
- [+] Automobile museums

B

- [+] Biographical museums

C

- [+] Children's museums
- [+] City museums
- [+] Civilization museums

F cont.

- [+] Food museums

G

- [+] Geology museums
- [+] Glass museums and galleries

H

- [+] Halls of fame
- [+] Historic house museums
- [+] History museums
- [+] Horological museums

I

- [+] Industry museums

J

- [+] Jewish museums

L

- [+] Law enforcement museums and

N cont.

- [+] Native American museums
- [+] Natural history museums
- [+] Nursing museums

O

- [+] Open air museums

P

- [+] Photography museums and galleries
- [+] Planetaria
- [+] Planned museums
- [+] Prison museums

R

- [+] Religious museums
- [+] Rural history museums

S **65 subcategories**

- [+] Science museums

Wiki software

- Installation of wiki software on a museum website relatively easy with technical support
- Free & commercial wiki software is available. See: en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Category:Wiki_software
  - MediaWiki (www.mediawiki.org) – used by Wikipedia, so familiar to many
  - TWiki (http://twiki.org) – good for embedding applications
  - Wikka Wiki (http://wikkawiki.org) – a lightweight wiki
  - Zwiki – based on Zope 2 application server
  - Etc.

Examples of museum wikis

- Still not many examples, but growing
- MuseumsWiki on Wikia (museums.wikia.com) – see Bowen et al. (MW2007)
  - Part of Wikia, set up by Jimmy Wales (cofounder of Wikipedia), funded by Google adverts
  - General resource for museums
  - Includes information on other museum wikis
  - Used as notes for this workshop!
  - See museums.wikia.com/wiki/Category:Wikis

Participants of the **MW2008 conference** are invited to add museum-related material during the conference. Thus you can review your contributions at the mini-workshop on ***Wiki Software and Facilities for Museums***.

[dismiss]

navigation

- Main Page
- Community portal
- Current events
- Recent changes
- Random page
- Help

search

Go Search

toolbox

- What links here
- Related changes
- Upload image/file
- Special pages
- Printable version
- Permanent link

Main Page

You have new messages (last change).

MuseumsWiki

Welcome!

This is a Wiki for museums, set up by Jonathan Bowen in 2007. It intended for museum personnel to participate in populating this wiki with museum-related material, typically in a form that is more detailed than suitable for inclusion in Wikipedia.

— Jonathan Bowen

Ads by Google

Museum of Natural History
Purchase Advance Admission Tickets Avoid the Long Ticket Buying Lines
www.nyctrip.com

Historic Marion County
Make Vacation History in Charming Ocala, Florida, Along I-75!
OcalaMarion.com

San Francisco Museum
Find Out What to

Participants of the **MW2008 conference** are invited to add museum-related material during the conference. Thus you can review your contributions at the **mini-workshop on *Wiki Software and Facilities for Museums***. You might consider creating an account so that your contributions will be attributed to your name.

Wiki Software and Facilities for Museums

This Museums Wiki will be demonstrated 12.30-1.30pm on Friday 11 April at the MW2008 *Museums and the Web* conference (Montreal, Canada, 9–12 April 2008) by Jonathan Bowen as part of a mini-workshop on ***Wiki Software and Facilities for Museums***.

Zoo Registration Tools
Online registration, membership sales, and database management.
www.GeckoTrack.com

Museum of Natural History
Save Time & Money in NYC Purchase Admission Tickets Online
www.nyctrip.com

Ads by Google

top content

Chicago Postcard Museum
MN150 Wiki
Stanley Kubrick Archive
Museum Documentation and Wikipedia.de
Web 2.0 an Museen, Bibliotheken und Archiven
Markham Museum
Museum studies

Welcome to the Museum Virtual Worlds Wiki, a place for sharing information and resources for museum and other educational web developers about online virtual worlds.

- **Featured Projects** See some virtual world projects
- **Theory and Practice** Publications documenting practices of museums and research learning environments experimenting with and using virtual worlds.
- **Virtual World Platforms** Information and resources about current virtual worlds platforms including **Second Life** and several **Open Source** platforms.
- **Virtual World Portals & Blogs**

Second Life

You need to **login** and then double-click on any page or click on the "Edit page" link at the bottom to get started.

Useful pages: **FormattingRules**, **WikkaDocumentation**, **OrphanedPages**, **WantedPages**, **TextSearch**, **ListUsers**.

Museum Virtual Worlds Wiki
apps.exploratorium.edu/worlds/wiki

- Exploratorium, San Francisco, USA
- Virtual space for museum/educational developers
- Information about online virtual worlds
- Specialist professional wiki
- Not designed for the general public
- Must register to edit pages
- Wikka wiki engine

THE NEWARK MUSEUM

navigation

- Main Page
- India-Wiki
- Community portal
- Current events
- Recent changes
- Random page

search

Go | Search

toolbox

- What links here
- Related changes
- Upload file
- Special pages
- Printable version
- Permanent link

Main Page

80 GALLERIES OF INSPIRATION & EXPLORATION
THE NEWARK MUSEUM

The Newark Museum, New Jersey's largest museum, invites you to enjoy unforgettable experiences in the arts and natural sciences. Take an inspirational journey through 80 galleries of world-class collections including American, Asian, African and Classical.

Not your ordinary museum.

From Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia:

A wiki is a medium which can be edited by anyone with access to it, and provides an easy method for linking from one page to another. Wikis are typically collaborative websites, though there are now also single-user offline implementations.

A wiki enables documents to be written collaboratively. A defining characteristic of wiki technology is the ease with which pages can be created and updated, allowing participants to share and exchange information.

The Newark Museum Wiki:

Pages can be viewed by any visitor. However, The Newark Museum Wiki requires participants to register and login to a user account in order to edit or create pages, or upload images. In addition, modifications are reviewed before they are accepted and released.

Log in or create an account by by clicking on the link in the upper right corner of the page.

Adding a page:

The easiest way to create a page is to go to the Discussion Tab of the page you are viewing. Click the plus sign (+) next to the Edit Tab. You will be asked to provide a Name and Subject for the new page.

The Newark Museum
www.newarkmuseumpr.org/mwiki

- Largest museum in New Jersey, USA
- Unrestricted reading
- Must register to create/edit pages
- Contemporary photography and video art exhibition (Sep. 19, 2007 – Jan. 6, 2008)
- MediaWiki technology
- Some pages not relevant to museum (e.g., “link farms”)
- Need a guardian of the wiki

Brooklyn Museum

Elizabeth A. Sackler Center for Feminist Art
The Dinner Party: About the Wiki

About the Center
Exhibitions
Events
Feminist Timeline
Feminist Art Base
* The Dinner Party
Components of The Dinner Party
Curator's Overview
Conservation
Judy Chicago
For Teachers
Comment
Links
Blog

The objective of this project is to provide the most up-to-date academic findings about the 1,038 women represented in *The Dinner Party* by Judy Chicago. To this end, we have developed this database as a wiki to allow scholars to add and/or edit content. This wiki is an effective, easy-to-use tool for collaborative authoring, and a means of facilitating accessible and continuous online dialogue about these women's contributions to history.

If you are a scholar who would like to contribute to the entries that constitute *The Dinner Party* Wiki, please send an email to tdp.wiki@brooklynmuseum.org.

General Disclaimer

WIKI LOGIN

The Brooklyn Museum

www.brooklynmuseum.org/eascfa/dinner_party

- 2nd largest art museum in New York City
- Associated with the Elizabeth A. Sackler Center for Feminist Art
- Up-to-date academic info on women in *The Dinner Party* by Judy Chicago
- Contributors vetted by the museum
- Inappropriate material minimized
- Close monitoring not needed

Amersham Museum Wiki

QuickStart Recent Activity SideBar

Amersham Museum

Wiki home page
Museum website
Wikipedia entry
Wikia museums
24 Hour Museum

Welcome to the Amersham Museum Wiki. We would like people with a knowledge of the history of Amersham and historic photographs to contribute to this site. If you would like to be able to create and edit pages, please contact us for the password. Meanwhile, please view the following pages of historic buildings in Amersham:

- Amersham Museum
- Elmodesham House
- The Gables
- School House
- Shardeloes

See also the museum website.

Page Information

- 2 months ago [history]
- View page source
- You're not logged in
- Recent comments:

Jonathan Bowen: I have set up a wiki for Amersham Museum with initial material on several history Amersham buildings from Jane Bowen. This is a website that lets multiple people contribute to it. You can add further information,

Wiki Information

- Show all pages
- Notification settings
- Contact wiki owner

Make your own wiki!

This page is part of a public wiki.

You can make your own free private or public wiki in just a few seconds. Click here, it's as easy as making a peanut butter sandwich!

Amersham Museum Wiki
amershammuseum.pbwiki.com

- Small local museum in southern England
- History of the town of Amersham in Buckinghamshire, especially buildings
- For local community (museum friends)
- Uses PBwiki (“Peanut Butter” wiki – free)
- Password-protected
  - perhaps not needed but saves monitoring
- Needs an enthusiast for starting wiki
- Needs training/encouragement for effective use

MN150 Wiki

The People, Places, and Things that Shape Our State

- Editing Help
- Editing Cheatsheet
- What is a Wiki?
- Ask a Question
- Registered Users
- Topic Discussions
- Leave a Comment

- Home
- Featured MN150 Topics
- All MN150 Topics
- Create your MN150 list
- Register and login
- Editing Cheatsheet
- Editing Help

related

- MN150 Exhibit
- MN150 Book
- Get involved
- Recent changes
- Random page

search

Search Go

toolbox

- What links here
- Related changes
- Upload file
- Special pages
- Printable version
- Permanent link

What is MN150?

The MN150 wiki contains all the topics nominated for the MN150 exhibit at the Minnesota History Center. Look around, then add your comments.

The MN150 exhibit documents responses to the following question: What person, place, thing, or event originating in Minnesota do you think has transformed our state, our country, or the world? Learn more about the exhibit--and the book Minnesota 150: The People, Places, and Things that Shape Our State.

Exhibit Now Open!

Featured Topic

Captain Billy's Whiz-Bang, Wilford

Browse topics by...

Featured

- **150 Minnesota topics** in the book and the exhibit

Alphabetically

Alphabetical Index of all Topics - View All

0–9 A B C D E F G H I J K L M N O P Q R S T U V W X Y Z

Categories

People | Places| Business | Events | All

Geographic Area

Northwest · North · Northeast · Central · West · Southwest · South · Southeast · Minneapolis · Saint Paul · Twin Cities Metro · Statewide

MN150 Wiki
discovery.mnhs.org/MN150

- Exhibit at the Minnesota History Center, Minnesota, USA
- “What … originating in Minnesota … has transformed our state, our country, or the world?”
- 150 topics in exhibit
- All 2,700+ topics listed on the wiki
- Original nominations not editable
- Rest of the page for comments
- Editing feature required some modification to MediaWiki software

Search the Wiki Go

Navigation
» Thomas Jefferson Wiki
» Recent changes
» Random page
» Help
» Contact Us

Toolbox
» What links here
» Related changes
» Upload file
» Special pages
» Printable version

Article Discussion View source History

Thomas Jefferson Wiki

Trustworthy information on Thomas Jefferson and his world by Monticello researchers and respected Jefferson scholars.

Only Jefferson Wiki community scholars can write and edit articles; however, public users are encouraged to submit comments on the discussion pages. For more information, see Help.

Browse the Thomas Jefferson Wiki

- Agriculture and Gardening
- Architecture
- Art
- Books
- Education
- Food & Drink
- Frequently Asked Questions
- Monticello (House)
- Monticello (Plantation)
- Music
- People
- Personal Life
- Places
- Politics
- Quotations
- Religion
- Sally Hemings and Thomas Jefferson
- Science and Exploration
- Slavery
- Writings

Tag Cloud

Agriculture_and_Gardening Architecture Art Books Contributor_Help
Education Famous_Quotations Food_and_Drink Frequently_Asked_Questions
Help Monticello_(House) Monticello_(Plantation) Music People
Personal_Life Places Politics Public_Help Quotations Religion
Sally_Hemings_and_Thomas_Jefferson Science_and_Exploration Slavery
Spurious_Quotations Writings

Thomas Jefferson Wiki
wiki.monticello.org

- Thomas Jefferson Foundation – operates Monticello, Charlottesville, Virginia, USA (home of Thomas Jefferson)
- Main pages by experts
- Discussion pages can be updated by any user who registers free
- User comments are clearly differentiated
- MediaWiki software, started 2007

Placeography

A website about any place anywhere that anyone can edit

- Editing Help
- Editing Guidelines
- Wiki Etiquette
- Questions
- Registered Users
- Article Discussions

- Main Page
- Main categories
- Buildings
- Architects
- Sites
- Structures
- Portals
- Projects
- Tours

contribute

- Add a Building
- Add an Architect
- Add a Structure
- Add a Site
- How to add content

other

- Right on Lake Street
- Register and login
- Get involved
- Current events
- Recent changes
- Random page
- Editing Help
- Editing Cheatsheet

search

Go | Search

toolbox

Categories

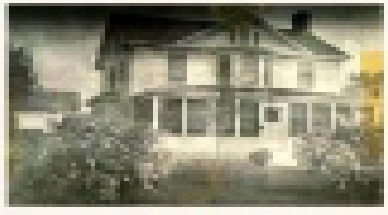
Buildings | Architects | Structures | Sites

About Placeography

Placeography is a wiki where you can share the history of and stories about a house, building, farmstead, public land, neighborhood or any place to which you have a personal connection. If you don't have a place to contribute, please enjoy learning about others.

To get started learn how to add pages then add a building.

Featured Property



Reinhold Zeglin House, 3621 Park Avenue

Featured Tour: Saint Paul Labor History Tour

Labor Unions have played an important role in St. Paul's history and development. The Saint Paul Labor History Tour is a tour of historical places associated with the labor movement in St. Paul. This tour is based on the research and text created by Workday Minnesota, a

Resources

- House and Building History Resources
- Researching the history of your house or building
- Minnesota house/building history books

National Register of Historic Places

Learn about National Register of Historic Places, the nation's official list of properties deemed worthy of preservation.

- National Register of

Placeography – placeography.org

- History/stories about buildings, farmsteads, houses, neighborhoods, public land, etc.
- Buildings/locations not “notable” enough for Wikipedia – but still of interest locally
- Embedded Google map showing location
- MediaWiki with semantic wiki/forms extensions
- Categories used – but some missing

Elluminate Live! - Met Museum

File Session View Tools Window Help

Participants

Participants
Lynn Zinder
maggiechow
marijanehamren
Nate Morgan
peggy woolsey
Rosemary Etherton
Sunny (Me)
Susan Bennett
Susan Root
TheHopeGray@gmai...
tmmorin72@comcast...

31 Participants

Chat

Show All

Moderator (Herminia): See you later Leslie!
joan aracich: at the typing or the whiteboard!!
Deborah Gilbert: there's ours
Gabriela Leal: i like this!
Moderator (Herminia): yes!
Lisa Langway: This is mine, yay.
Gabriela Leal: thanks!!!!
Rosemary Etherton: mine too lisa
Carol O: Nice rose colors

Send to This Room

Audio - William Crow

Microphone Speaker

Ctrl+F2

Whiteboard - Main Room

Slide #47 Follow Moderator

What words come to mind when you look at this work of art?

bored
hidden
mysterious
stoic
confession
stiff
secret
flat!
love

is it a confessional?

secret love

Serif 20 B i U

In session for 2 hours, 7 minutes.

Met Museum workshop

- Online collaborative experiment for art teachers (early 2008)
- Included simple use of wiki – adding separate material, not collaborative content generation
- Used *Elluminate Live!* software

Object Wiki

navigation

- Home
- Help
- About

search

Search

useful links

- What links here
- Related changes
- Upload image
- Special pages
- Printable version
- Permanent link

Home

Science Museum Object Wiki

This website has been produced by the **Science Museum** as a trial. The website contains information about objects held in the museum's collections, selected from the Dan Dare exhibition.

The website is a 'wiki', which means that anyone - including you - can contribute by adding information or your memories of the objects.

Find out more about how to contribute

Explore

Browse the *106 objects*

Featured objects

The **Goblin 'Teasmade'**, combines an alarm clock and electric kettle which automatically boils water and adds it to a teapot at a specified time. The 'Teasmade', made in Leatherhead, has been called 'a fascinating bit of English eccentricity. You have to set it all up before hand and put in your own milk and sugar, but nevertheless these were very popular machines.

- Help us **edit** this entry.
- *Do you remember this object? Add your memories.*

The **Four Valve AC Mains Radio Set** (model A104) was made by Murphy Radio Ltd and shown in 'Britain Can Make It' exhibition.

Science Museum Object Wiki
objectwiki.sciencemuseum.org.uk

- Science Museum, London, UK
- Museum objects from Dan Dare exhibition
- User contributions solicited
- Based on MediaWiki
- Set up by Frankie Roberto (at MW2008)

Wiki

This part of The British Postal Museum & Archive website is a wiki. Wikis are *interactive* websites: that means YOU can add pages, change text or add images, as YOU want. See what other people have been "Wiki-ing" about using the Recently Edited Pages link on the right.

Hear this page read aloud

Download - Help with audio

By working together, we can make these pages a really valuable resource relating to the history of the post. It's a collective effort, and we need your help to make it work! If you're interested in becoming part of our community of Wiki users, keeping up to date with new pages on the Wiki, and discussing the topics on here, why not join our BPMA Wiki group email.

Wiki ideas

We'd like to suggest you start off with one of our nine themes. Click on one of the images to get started:

Got something to add? This part of the site is in a wiki, which means you can edit pages and add new ones.

You don't even need to log-in. To get started click 'Edit this page' OR 'Create a new page'.

Edit this page

Page history

Create new page

Recently Edited Pages

- wiki_page.2008-04-10.2210

British Postal Museum & Archive Wiki

www.postalheritage.org.uk/wiki

- The British Postal Museum & Archive
- History of post (but no museum space at the moment)
- Wiki launched in January 2008, still early stages
- People sharing knowledge / experiences about working for the postal service, family history, wartime letters, postal history, etc.
- Uses Zwiki technology (free – GPL; based on Zope 2 application server)

Lessons for wiki use

- Setting up easy
- Maintaining momentum difficult
- A wiki will stagnate without support
- Initially a wiki “champion” is required
  - technical and social expertise needed
  - send encouraging messages to new users
- Real reason for the wiki’s existence needed to reach critical mass
- Suitable community must already exists

Lessons for wiki use – museums

- Variety of reasons and different users
- Outward-facing and accessible on the web for the public (e.g., for educational purposes)
- Inward-facing and only available on an intranet (or extranet) for museum personnel (e.g., for exhibition development)
- Readable and writable for different sets of users as needed

Lessons for wiki use

- Not expensive to install
- If a failure, not much risk involved
- In any case, lessons can be learned
- Risk of misuse of if generally writable
- Tools for handling vandalism (history kept)
- Correct quickly if it does occur
- Locking of individual pages possible
- Advertising links, especially on main page (including “talk” page)
- Facilities to “watch” wiki pages

Lessons for wiki use

- Type of users – avid accessibility problems
- Stick to the standard wiki format
  - users recognise it and know what to do
- Benefits normally outweigh problems
- Sense of ownership needed
- Keep content as up-to-date and correct as possible through monitoring
- Monitor wiki technology changes (e.g., semantic facilities)

Conclusion

- Web 2.0 developments (“blikis” – combination of blogs and wikis)
- Online social/professional networking facilities
- Ning (www.ning.com) – support for creating specialized social networks, including blogging, discussion forum and media (photograph) sharing facilities.
- Global Museum **Webzine** – Ning networking website for people interested in museums (globalmuseum.ning.com)
- Scope for more Wiki-based content development in networking websites

Future

- “Web 3.0”? Semantic developments?
- Handling of knowledge in a wiki
- Increasing use in museum websites likely
- Avoid common pitfalls (see earlier – learn from past of others and self!)
- Remember:
  - Building wiki technology fairly easy
  - Building a wiki community much more difficult
- Good luck!

Thank you!

Jonathan Bowen

www.jpbowen.com

MuseumsWiki

museums.wikia.com