Brick by Brick: Wikipedia and Libraries building on each other

JACINTA SUTTON, STATE LIBRARY OF QUEENSLAND
Jacinta Sutton
Project Officer, State Library of Queensland
Australia

- 2nd largest state in Australia
- 6th largest state in the world
- 2423 km long (1505 miles)
- 1457 km wide (905 miles)
- Area: 1,852,642 km²
- Tropical / sub-tropical (9°S to 30°S)
- Population: 4.8M with 3.4M crammed into the SE corner
- Distance is a challenge, but challenges lead to innovation
- QANTAS was a solution to the transport challenge of outback Queensland
State Library of Queensland

- Traditional beginning
- Traditional services did not address the distance issue
- Mid 1970s Country Lending Service (by post)
State Library of Queensland (reboot)

- Modern design, the new State Library opened in 2006
- Difference in thinking about library services
- We bring knowledge to the people
- Digitisation & digital delivery
- Use external platforms to put content where audiences are i.e. social media and Wikipedia
Wikipedia + SLQ Library Programming

• Donation of 50K images to Wikimedia Commons
• Wikipedia Edit training
• Wikipedian-in-Residence program
• #1Lib1Ref
• #QWiki Club
Wikipedia edit training: De-risking

- Short sessions (2 hours now vs 1 day initially)
- We want people to have a “real editing” experience
- Teach the minimum policies
- Practice on user page, then expand “real” stubs
#1Lib1Ref: The Grand Plan

- #1Lib1Ref asked every librarian to add one citation to Wikipedia over 3 weeks
- SLQ had small engagement in #1Lib1Ref in 2016
- State Librarian encouraged a “big effort” for 2017
  - Target of 1000 new citations for Qld content
  - Timing - school holidays and Christmas
  - Not much lead in time from Wikipedia
  - 1000 citations is a lot!
#1Lib1Ref: Preparing

- Awareness session for staff with citation “refresher” (both editors - source and visual)
- Full edit training session for new/lapsed editors (Visual Editor)
- Advertised to local GLAM community beyond SLQ
- Shared via internal staff networks
#1Lib1Ref: Getting it done

• 5 edit-a-thon sessions over 3 weeks
• Focus on using SLQ collection content as citation material
• Finding uncited content requires some experience with what articles are likely to have unsourced content
• Use categories and List Articles to create ‘lucky dips’
#1Lib1Ref: We did it!

• 35 SLQ staff added at least 1028 citations (¼ world total)
  – Numbers based on internal tracking, no #1Lib1Ref statistical support available at the time
  – Challenge to find the articles, SLQ would not have made as much progress with Citation Hunt
#QWiki Club: Why?

- Feedback from #1Lib1Ref edit-a-thons "enjoyable" and "empowering" for SLQ staff
- Established monthly sessions for Wikipedia contributions by SLQ and other local GLAM staff
- Supported by Wikimedia Australia
- Supported by CEO and State Librarian
#QWiki Club: Preparation

- Theme each month and share the results
- Create a Wikipedia Project Page with all the details and content for your sessions
- Communicate the session details via email list and internal networks
- Sign up via a Google Spreadsheet
#QWiki: Task Planning

- Prepare scaled tasks of varying complexity: Easy, medium and advanced tasks
- Avoid controversial article topics, popular articles, and breaking news articles
- Remember a higher standard of citation exists for articles on living people, also harder to get useable photos
#QWiki: In session

- Ideally have a second person in the room with some experience
- Make sure new users declare their paid editor status AND any conflicts of interest on their user page
- Remind editors to save their work regularly
- Encourage people to share their questions and successes
- Thank people for their edits in Wikipedia
- Send welcome messages to new users
#QWiki: Achievements

- Average around 10 participants with some beginners at each session, others maturing as contributors
- Participants from QUT, Gold Coast Libraries, Queensland Museum, QPAC
- Tracking progress
  - Use Wiki Outreach campaign dashboard
  - Look at suggested topics pages, edit tasks post session to include achievements
  - Keep the list of usernames updated
• Library programming needs to develop over time
• Start small and grow
• Under-promise and over-deliver
• Experiment with different types of activity
• Needs to be an intersection of interest with your participants
• Libraries can reach out to diverse communities
We asked university libraries: Do you engage with Wikipedia?

• University libraries and state libraries have a lot of the same customers
• Evaluating information and accuracy
• Embedded approach to coursework as a ‘digital doorway’
What’s happened in university libraries

• Edit training at UQ, QUT and Notre Dame in WA
• Edit-a-thons about female academics
• Information literacy modules
Suggestions for university libraries

• Your university’s Wikipedia page
• Adding images to Commons
• Student literature reviews
• Wikiversity
• Specialist collections
• OA material
Look out for..

- Issues around notability
- Some Wikipedians you encounter on wiki are ‘difficult’
- Different timeframes
- Paid editor status and WP:CURATOR policy
Transition to Business as Usual

- Wikimedia as part of regular work flows or project planning
- Branch plans
- Workflow of new photos into collection flowing straight to Commons
- Reference librarians
- Staff performance plan
- Selection criteria
Libraries + Wikipedia: Together we are more
Thank you

Jacinta Sutton
STATE LIBRARY OF QUEENSLAND
jacinta.sutton@slq.qld.gov.au
@jjsttn