

How to gather new contributors from local

Introducing “Wikipedia TOWN” event
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Available at:

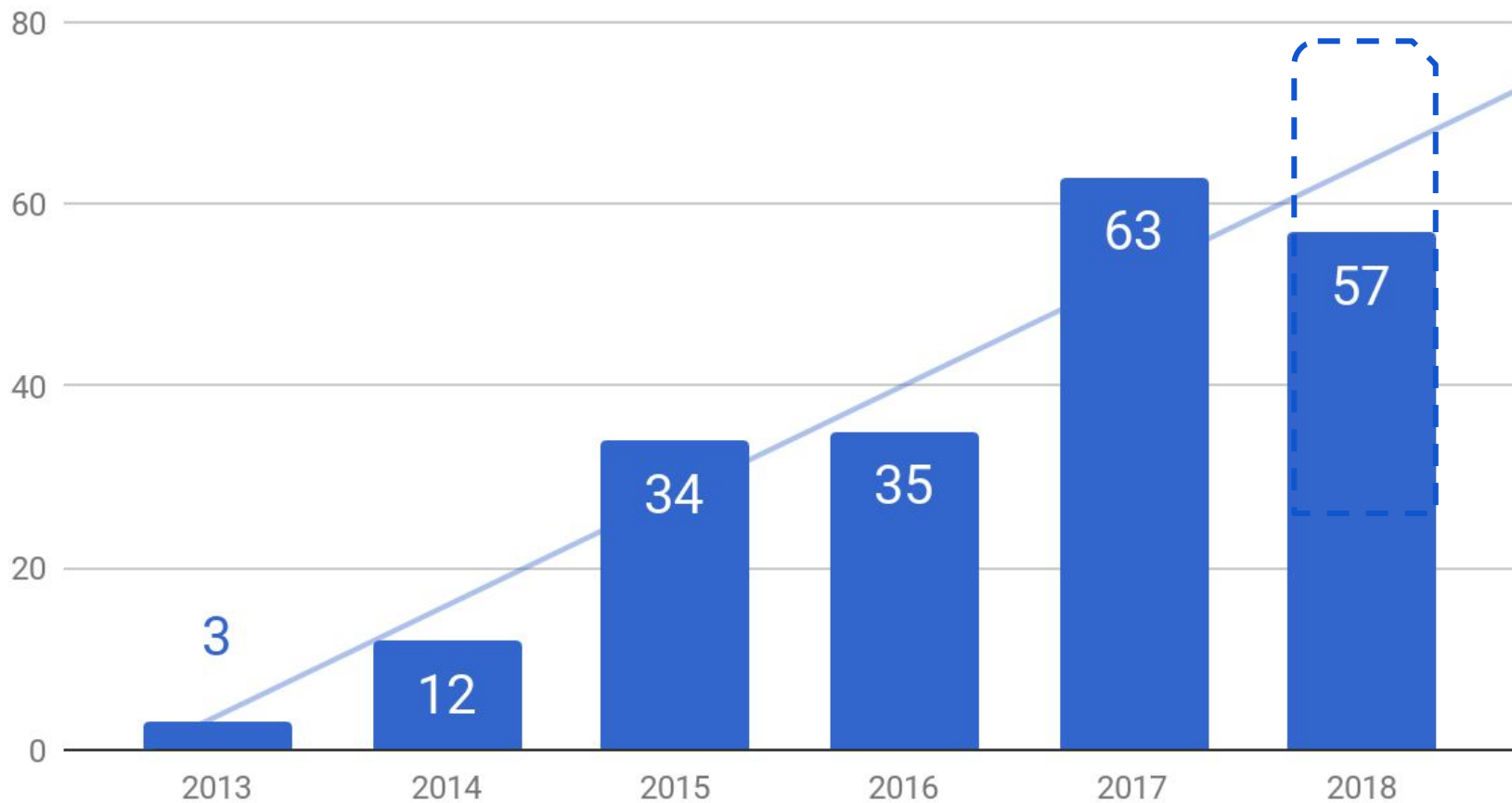
https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:WikipediaTownIntroduction_April2018.pdf

What is Wikipedia Town?

- Wikipedia Town is a grass-roots one-day photo walk and edit-a-thon event
- Started on the Open Data Day (Mar. 3) in 2013, it has been getting spread across Japan.
- 170+ events have been held so far
 - And counting, every month!



of Wikipedia TOWN Events



What's special?

- Aims to attract **new** contributors
- Collaboration with **local guide(s)** and **librarians**
- Collaboration with **locals**
- **Harnessing** between veterans and new contributors
- Usually topics would be **local historic sites or events**
 - Of course you can set your own topic, such as literature, sake, or whatever you want as long as librarians/organizers say “yes”.



https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:2008-Korean_librarians_visit_Yongsan_Library-01.jpg

Public Domain. Author: Pfc. Lee Min-hwi (USAG-Yongsan)

Typical Wikipedia Town

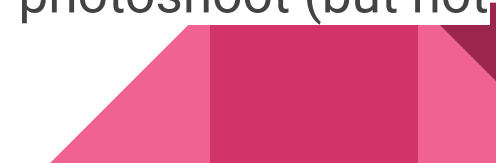
- Takes place in libraries
- Announced in libraries and on/off-line
- Enrollment limit: 10-20 (varies on events)
- A veteran Wikimedian is invited as an edit teacher
 - Usually some more veteran Wikimedians join as volunteer teaching assistants
- Morning: Photo Walk and Field Survey
- Afternoon: Instructions on editing by veteran(s) and then actual edits take place
- Evening: Result presentation
- Night: After-party!



https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Discussion_of_5th_Wikipedia_town_Yokohama.JPG

Author: Araisyohei, Licensed under CC-BY-SA 4.0

Photo walk and field survey

- Participants walk with local guide(s).
 - They can learn the subjects (and potential articles) deeper with local guide(s) who explains sites of interests
 - Participants review the facts from books and newspapers after coming back to the venue library.
 - Even if you cannot write well, you still can contribute by shooting photos and upload them onto commons.
 - Currently Android commons app is available for photoshoot (but not well-known)
 - Wish if iOS app available...
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Instructions on edits and editing

- A teacher Wikimedian do a lecture how to edit Wikipedia
 - No original research, do not copy-n-paste, blah blah blah
 - Most people here should already know them :-)
- Participants contribute articles in 2-3 groups



Kyoto's Wikipedia Town program promotes editing Wikipedia articles on the local community.

[https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Wikipedia_Town_Kyoto\(International_Open_Data_Day_2015_in_KYOTO\).jpg](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Wikipedia_Town_Kyoto(International_Open_Data_Day_2015_in_KYOTO).jpg)

Photo by Kumiko Korezumi, freely licensed under [CC BY-SA 4.0](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-sa/4.0/).


Librarians

- Librarians are (often) eager to share knowledge using local history book or past newspapers (often less-used materials), than famous entertainment books like Harry Potter.
 - Exploiting local materials has been a long-time issue



Librarians Tasks

- Plans an event
- Picks topics
- Earns budget for travel expense to invite a veteran (as a teacher) and to rent wifi-cellular routers
- Makes an appointment for a teacher Wikimedian and a local guide
- Prepares an editing room
- Prepares materials for potential articles
 - History books
 - Newspapers
 - Sometimes reduced reprints of newspapers
- Publicize the event

A photograph of a woman with dark hair tied back, wearing a red and white plaid shirt over a black top, standing in a library. She is looking down at a book she is holding. The library has wooden bookshelves filled with books, and a sign for 'GOLEM' is visible on a shelf. The lighting is bright, coming from overhead fluorescent lights.

These plannings usually take about 6 months for a first-timer organizer if doing this besides your current daily tasks.


<http://www.andersen.af.mil/News/Features/Article/415797/andersen-library-delivers-study-aides-and-recreational-opportunities/>
Public Domain. (U.S. Air Force photo by Airman Carissa Wolff)

Why do we need such event?

- People just don't know
Wikipedia is editable (than
you estimate!)
- Or thinks Wikipedia can be
edited only by someone who
knows knowledge excellently
- We have to break this barrier!



Why has it made successful (at least so far)?

- Held “Wikipedia Town Facilitator Workshop” to librarians.
 - Such kind of workshop have not held since 2015, but have kept spreading
 - The know-how got spread by mouth, via in-person, via email magazine, and/or on web.
 - Librarians are spreading words
 - Embracing and igniting librarians
 - Compared to local (municipal) librarians, I have not heard school (and university) librarians are so eager with some exceptions.
 - Maybe we have not reached them enough...
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Notable Results from Wikipedia Town (1/2)

- 柳窪 (Yanagikubo)
[https://ja.wikipedia.org/wiki/柳窪_\(東久留米市\)](https://ja.wikipedia.org/wiki/柳窪_(東久留米市))
 - An article about a local town name
 - Contributed after the event by a new user Harwell1212 who joined Wikipedia Town event (not written on-site)
 - Even the first edit features enough quality and quantity
 - Selected as a “good article”

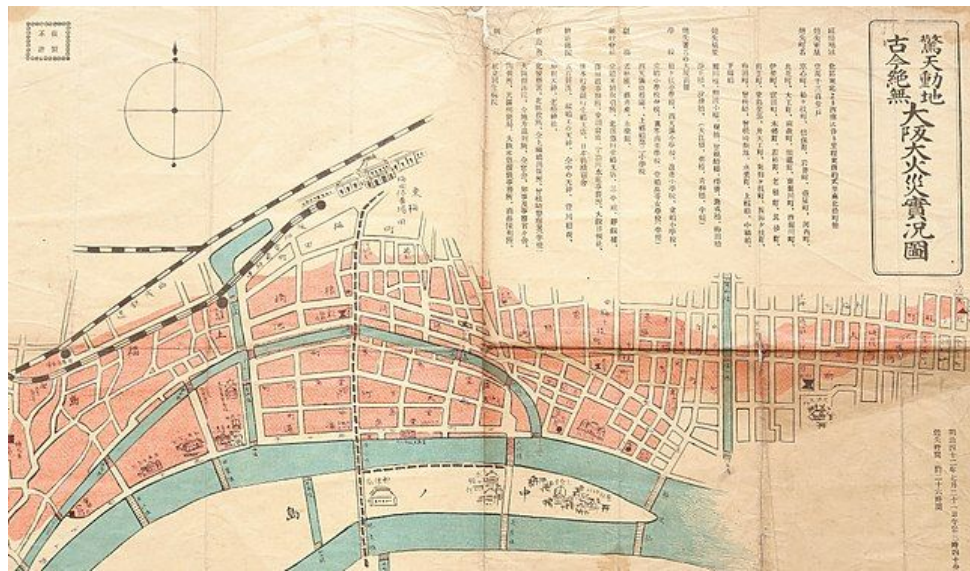


https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Grove_of_Zelkova_Trees_and_Hedges_Yanagikubo.jpg

Author: Harwel1212, Licensed under CC-BY-SA 4.0 International

Notable Results from Wikipedia Town (2/2)

- 北の大火
 - <https://ja.wikipedia.org/wiki/北の大火>
 - A great fire in 1909 in Osaka
 - Not by a newly-joined contributor, but by veteran Wikipedians (U:のりまき, U:Swanee, U:さかおり, U:アリオト and more) who renowned contributing several good/featured articles
 - Selected as a “good article”



https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Area_map_of_large_fire_in_Kita,_Osaka_in_1909_b.jpg

Author: 高橋五之助, Licensed under CC-BY 4.0

Issues

- Retention: a lot of people joined, few continues editing.
 - This is not a problem only of this kind offline edit-a-thons. All the new contributors have the same.
- Sometimes participants copy-n-paste
 - Lecturers do teach not to do so during instruction, but some (who didn't listen or just forgot) do so.
 - This is not a problem only of this kind (snip)
- Free wifis in public libraries are often already BLOCKED for edit and creating new accounts on ja.wp due to past trolls
 - Participants are advised to create their own account in advance
 - We usually rent one-day wifi-cellular routers to avoid this
 - Maybe one-day unblocking would be a solution
 - But have not established that protocol on ja.wp yet.

Conclusions

- Contact libraries
- Embrace librarians
- Embrace locals
- Tell them “You can edit!”
- Further readings:

<https://blog.wikimedia.org/2015/11/11/wikipedia-town-in-kyoto/>



Disclaimer

- It is usually spelled “Wikipedia TOWN”, but I used “Wikipedia Town” in this slides
 - Not sure why it’s all capital with TOWN ;-)

