

An Auckland Museum Wikimedia Strategy

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The Value of Wikipedia

Wikipedia is a window to the world, and every place's public face. Wikipedia is the 8th-most-visited website in the world, and the only non-profit in the top 10. Wikipedia articles are in the first few search results of any topic, if not the first result. English Wikipedia has 6 million articles, and is one of 300 different language Wikipedias, some of also with millions of articles. Combined with other Wikimedia Foundation projects, like the free image library WikiCommons and the open database Wikidata, Wikipedia is part of the information infrastructure of the world.

Anyone can edit Wikipedia, and the articles are written by volunteers; currently, about 250,000 dedicated editors (Wikipedians) around the world. Despite the lack of an editorial board, the coverage is usually very accurate, sometimes amazingly so, and there are teams of volunteers and software “bots” that check the articles for accuracy and swiftly remove vandalism. Since it was launched in 2001, Wikipedia has been a great example of the power of collaboration and crowdsourcing.

Wikimedia is the name of the non-profit; Wikipedia is the encyclopedia it hosts. A Wikimedian is anyone (usually a volunteer) who chooses to edit Wikimedia projects.

Wikipedia can shape public perception and counter stereotypes. It is viewed as a trusted, neutral source, often preferred to “official” websites which are perceived, fairly or unfairly, as having an agenda. So any institution with a mission involving sharing knowledge with a wider audience should be interested in Wikimedia projects.

The Auckland War Memorial Museum (AWMM or Auckland Museum) is one of the most progressive GLAM (galleries, libraries, archives, museums) institutions in New Zealand in exploring the possibilities of Wikipedia and similar open-knowledge initiatives. This report was commissioned by Auckland Museum's Adam Moriarty and James Taylor, to both:

1. assess the current state of the Museum's engagement with Wikimedia projects (Wikipedia, Wikidata, WikiCommons, and others)
2. recommend further steps; in effect, drafting a Wikimedia strategy for the institution. These are indicated as follows: • *Recommendation*

Background

Of all the GLAM institutions in New Zealand, Auckland Museum could legitimately claim to have engaged with Wikimedia projects first and most seriously. Its [Wikipedia project page](#), for example, is the only institutional page in NZ which gives clear copyright instructions as well as guidelines and policy for staff editing Wikipedia. Its policy of “open by default, closed by exception” is well-known in GLAM circles.

Auckland Museum was unsurprisingly the [first New Zealand institution](#) to host a Wikimedian in



Residence, Susan Tolich (User:Susan Tol). As part of her Masters in Museum and Heritage Studies, she had a five-week unpaid placement at the Museum, June–July 2017. She ran a workshop for staff, created and improved several articles about NZ fashion designers, fabric artists, and weavers, and uploaded several hundred collection images to Wikimedia Commons. Almost all these images are of archaeological collections, and the metadata conventions were at an early stage; [this image](#) of an uwhi (tattoo chisel), for example, has a broken link to the [image reuse guidelines](#), the photographer is credited as the object's author, and there's no indication that cultural permissions might apply to its reuse.

Because Auckland Museum uses a CC BY licence as a default, collection images have always been available for upload to Wikimedia Commons by anyone interested. The open API allows this process to be automated, and in November 2017 User:Fæ began a [well-documented](#) upload: 101,000 photos of 70,789 objects. After testing the workflow and categories, Fæ completed the upload in January 2018. This wasn't an Auckland Museum initiative, or a partnership: the Museum images had been made available under an open licence, and Fæ is one of several volunteers who release huge numbers of these kinds of GLAM images to Commons. After an announcement by Auckland Museum rights specialist Sarah Powell that [300,000 of the Museum's images were now openly-licensed](#), Fæ repeated the run in October 2019, adding thousands more. Volunteers handled most of the process of categorising and sorting images.



In July 2018, I [spent a month based at Auckland Museum](#) as New Zealand Wikipedian at Large, funded by the Wikimedia Foundation. At the time the Museum was undertaking a gallery photography project, so I was able to upload 291 images of natural history specimens to Commons. I also added photos and Wikipedia coverage of the Ray Shannon *Secret World of Butterflies* exhibit, ran some staff training, and organised several meetups and edit-a-thons in the Museum library.

In a [provocative talk](#) at the November 2018 National Digital Forum, Adam Moriarty expressed the Museum's support for Wikimedia projects by reiterating the importance of museum collections featuring, not just in Collections Online, but in non-Museum platforms like DigitalNZ, GBIF, Pinterest, Commons, and Wikipedia.

Around this time Siobhan Leachman (User:Ambrosia10), a Wikimedia volunteer from Wellington, was making heavy use of the Museum's openly-licensed photos. She had been creating numerous articles on New Zealand moth species that used photographs from both Auckland Museum and Landcare Research, and was vocal in her praise of the Museum's openness policy. Since then she has gone on to champion the Auckland Museum in numerous talks and workshops, here and overseas. For her services to the collection and to open science, Siobhan was made a [Companion of the AWMM](#) in March 2019.

Auckland Museum has been involved now with Wikipedia projects now for several years: what are the results, and what would an active engagement strategy look like?

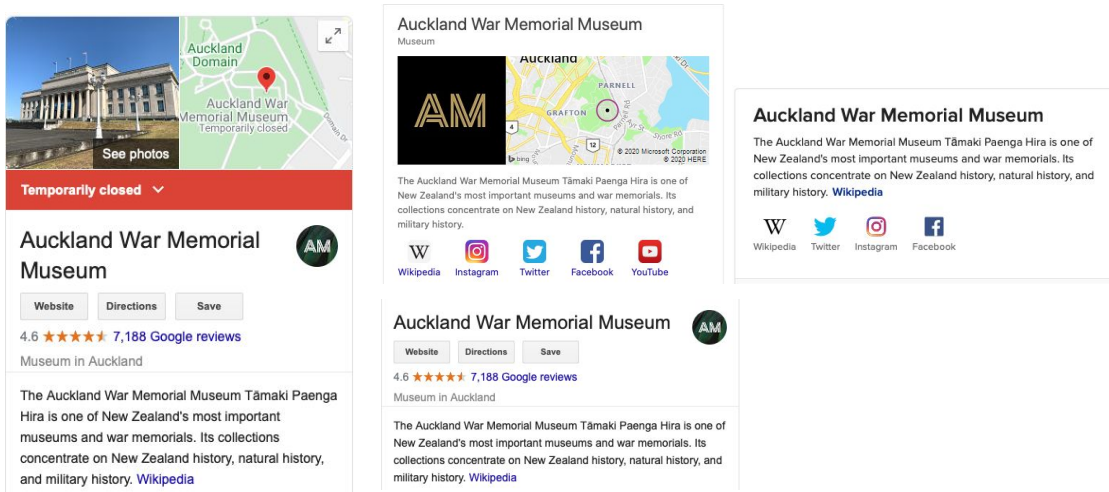
Search queries

One measure of the impact of Wikipedia is how highly it ranks in a Google search. Searches in Bing and the untracked search engine DuckDuckGo, all logged out but with New Zealand content prioritised, give similar results:

Query	Wikipedia	www.aucklandmuseum.com
“Auckland Museum”	4th	1st
“Moa skeleton”	2nd	7th, preceded by Canterbury Museum and Te Papa
“Thomas Cheeseman”	1st	8th
“Sir Edmund Hillary”	1st	27th (third page)
“A Korao no New Zealand”	3rd	1st and 2nd
“Te Waaka Perohuka”	2nd	13th (second page)
“The Battle of Rafah”	1st and 4th	5th and 6th
“ANZAC”	3rd and 4th	13th (second page)

Auckland Museum content is usually ranked lower by Google than Wikipedia content, even when the Wikipedia article is quite poor: the carver of Te Toki-a-Tapiri, [Te Waaka Perohuka](#), has an article only two sentences long. The Auckland Museum content on *A Korao no New Zealand* manages to outrank a [five-sentence stub](#), but any improvement to the Wikipedia article would very likely make it the first Google result.

Even when the Auckland Museum content is highly ranked, Google, Bing, DuckDuckGo and other search engines all display a link to the Wikipedia article in a prominently-placed sidebar:



This raises questions about the relative impact of the Museum creating its own website resources, rather than putting information and images into Wikipedia.

- Consider shifting some writing and blogging staff time into the improvement of Wikipedia articles, or at least cite Auckland Museum information in the corresponding Wikipedia article.
- Topics on the Auckland Museum website should be consistently dated, referenced, and have a clear author so they can easily be used as references in Wikipedia.

Traffic from Wikipedia

Based on data supplied by James Taylor, in 2019 the Auckland Museum website received 2,321 visits from 1,580 people via Wikimedia projects. The majority came from English Wikipedia, and a few from Wikimedia Commons and German, Russian, and Chinese Wikipedia. Most visited for several minutes and looked at an average of 3–4 pages per session. A few users were obviously using the website to work on Wikidata and spent an average of 15 minutes per visit; two users visited 189 times from Wikispecies.

These numbers are quite low compared to other sources, such as Facebook (35,000 referrals, including paid advertising). Unfortunately the Museum's analytics don't break these numbers down by URL, so don't indicate exactly what Wikimedia content is sending people to the Museum's website.

- Investigate more detailed analytics that track referral path, to determine the top-referring articles
- Set up KPIs for improving Wikipedia referrals by targeting high-value topics (see suggestions on pp 8–9)

In lieu of that detailed analysis, we can use the [Linksearch](#) tool, which records links to the Museum's website from Wikipedia articles. These might be museum publications, profiles of staff, people in a database, or collection items.

There are currently 574 links back to the Museum's website in Wikipedia, excluding links in Talk pages, project pages, and user sandboxes.

1. 251 are links to the Cenotaph database, usually biographies of individuals who served in the military.
 - a. 136 of these are direct links to Online Cenotaph records:
<https://www.aucklandmuseum.com/war-memorial/online-cenotaph/record/C58281>
 - b. 115 are reaching the record through a Cenotaph database pathway:
<http://muse.aucklandmuseum.com/databases/Cenotaph/18458.detail>
2. 148 are collection object links, some a direct link to the object's URL, but 56 the results of a query (<http://www.aucklandmuseum.com/collections-research/collections/search/?k=Declana+atronivea>) rather than a permalink.
3. Only a dozen or so are from the museum blog or news; another dozen link to Topics pages.

There is a surprising lack of linking to the general information, blog posts, and the “authoritative curated knowledge” one might expect. For example, the Wikipedia article on the [Battle of Rafah](#) doesn't cite the [Auckland Museum topic](#) or use the photos in the Museum's collections, preferring instead scans from an out-of-copyright book.

- Determine which form of collections or cenotaph link works best for the Museum's purposes and correct those links in Wikipedia; examine how the links

were discovered, and if there's any way to nudge users to use clean links, perhaps by supplying a "permalink" button.

- Work through general topics and blog posts currently on the site to see if they can be better-used by Wikipedia.

Coverage in Wikimedia projects

Museum

There are numerous entities in Wikimedia projects pertaining to Auckland Museum:

Name	Wikidata	Wikipedia(s): Quality	WikiCommons
Auckland War Memorial Museum	Q758657	7: C *	Auckland War Memorial Museum
Auckland Institute and Museum	Q16949336	1: Start	—
Bulletin of the Auckland Museum	Q21386064	—	—
Records of the Auckland Museum	Q15756170	—	—
Records of the Auckland Institute and Museum	Q15214730	2: Stub **	—
Auckland Shell Club	Q58826543	—	—
Auckland War Memorial Museum Herbarium	Q50807595	—	—
Associate Emeritus of Auckland War Memorial Museum	Q57919186	—	—
Fellow of Auckland War Memorial Museum	Q57913109	—	—
Companion of Auckland War Memorial Museum	Q57919186	—	—
Directors of the Auckland Museum	Q55958133	Category	—

* (in rough order of quality, English, [Chinese](#), [Russian](#), [Hungarian](#), [German](#), [French](#), [Korean](#), [Aragonese](#), [Portuguese](#), and [Simple English](#). There would be some good candidates to improve in this list.)

** (in Spanish and Asturian!)

Discussions of a museum's Wikimedia strategy invariably start with the Museum's own Wikipedia article – the one item that employees cannot edit, because of Wikipedia's conflict of interest rules. But the Museum's mission is not in fact to improve its Wikipedia article, and ham-fisted attempts to do this in the past have [made the newspapers](#).

Auckland Museum's Hugh Lilly (User:HL) attempted several times in 2018 to make changes to the article "by the book": first proposing general improvements, then drafting suggested text. Unfortunately, while Hugh's draft suggestions were generally excellent, he encountered a single unhelpful editor who seems to have stymied progress; some of the suggested text seems to have been drawn too directly from the Museum's own publications for that editor's liking. In the last two years only two major improvements have been made: an anonymous edit which added most of

Hugh's suggested *Governance* section, and the Collections information, added by User:Gareth3146, who seems to have made [almost no other edits](#).

The article is still very much in need of improvement: it is what Wikipedia would call “un-encyclopedic” in tone, and is almost exclusively sourced from the Museum’s own website and publications. There are numerous missed opportunities to talk about the history of the Museum’s collections and people, illustrated with usefully-captioned collection photos: there are numerous [Good-quality articles in WikiProject Museums](#) to use as a model. Because of the difficulty of staff editing the article, this should be used as an opportunity to build a relationship with the Wikimedia community (see p 20).

- *Ask staff for suggestions for improvements, fact-check the current article, and supply references in independent reliable sources, especially books and journal articles.*
- *Reach out to experienced Auckland Wikipedians and offer to host an Auckland Museum edit-a-thon in the library, with lunch supplied, where they work with those compiled sources to rewrite the entire article.*

But the Auckland Museum article is not the only subject worth covering in Wikipedia. The museum’s journals easily deserve articles, and images of covers and interior pages. The Associate Emeritus, Fellow, and Companion lists deserve coverage, at least a section of the Museum’s Wikipedia article, or an individual page or pages if there’s been enough external coverage (simply maintaining a list of the recipients is better done on the Museum’s website). The Directors list is incomplete, and the Shell Club has a long enough history to be worth an article as well.

- *Compile images of all the peripheral topics listed above and create Commons categories.*
- *Create articles at least for the shell club, publications, and awards.*
- *Work with Wikipedians to upload photos and create full articles about each past director, and link from the main Auckland Museum article.*

Staff

One group that should be present in Wikimedia projects is Museum staff: all past directors and curators to begin with, and anyone with their name on an Auckland Museum publication or who may have significantly contributed to collections. As you can see from the following table, many of the current curatorial staff do not exist in Wikidata, which makes it impossible to link them to their publications there. Only one has a Wikipedia article, and only two a Commons category. (John Early’s Commons photos are of him in the 1970s at Lincoln University.) An ORCID id, required by many publishers, is a self-maintained profile listing institution and publications which disambiguates a researcher from someone with a similar name. ORCIDs are extremely useful for populating Wikidata and connecting staff with biological collections they’ve made; all staff who publish should have one.



- *Increase the visibility of Museum staff by ensuring ORCID and maybe even Wikidata IDs are displayed on their staff page.*

- Create, where possible, Wikipedia articles for any staff who have been written about in reliable independent sources.
- Upload a selection of good staff photos under an open licence to Commons, both for media/publicity purposes and to illustrate Wikipedia and Wikidata.

Name	ORCID	Wikidata	Wikipedia	WikiCommons
Bethany Matai Edmunds	—	—	—	—
Chanel Clarke	Yes	—	—	—
Elizabeth Cotton	—	—	—	—
Fuli Pereira	—	—	—	—
Gail Romano	—	—	—	—
Grace Lai	Yes	—	—	—
Jane Groufsky	—	—	—	—
John Early	Yes	Q22113628	—	John W Early
Louise Furey	—	Q58711063	—	—
Lucy Mackintosh	Yes	Q82647356	—	—
Matt Rayner	Yes	Q64886124	—	—
Nina Finigan	Yes	Q82648344	—	—
Shaun Higgins	—	Q58712668	—	—
Tom Trnski	Yes	Q56236009	—	—
Wilma Blom	Yes	Q58637383	Wilma M. Blom	Wilma Blom

Collections

The only Museum collection item with its own Wikipedia article is [A korao no New Zealand \(Q23307989\)](#), which is only a stub.

- Select one or two dozen “hero objects” from the collection that have had good coverage in numerous independent sources, and create Wikidata, Commons categories, and Wikipedia articles for them.

Wikimedia Commons presence

Uploads

As noted previously, the four main uploads of Auckland Museum photographs to Wikimedia Commons were:

1. Jun–Jul 2017 (User:Susan Tol): several hundred, mostly archaeological collections
2. Nov 2017 – Jan 2018 (User:Fæ): 101,000 photos of 70,789 objects
3. Oct 2019 (User:Fæ): 69,000 more photos
4. Jul 2018 (User:Giantflightlessbirds): 291, mostly mounted bird skeletons

Immediately after the first bulk upload by Fae there were several problems. Source links resolved to the API, not the object record in Collections Online. The uploads were generally lumped into the single category [Images from Auckland Museum](#).

Subsequent categorisation work by volunteers like [User:Salicyna](#) has created 220 subcategories (and many more sub-sub-categories), but there are still 60,000 unsorted images. A [2019 discussion](#) points out “Images from Auckland Museum” is problematic: Images From (source) and Collections Of (depicted) are two quite different categories that both need to exist, and some of the subcategories are rather haphazard. Fae offered to solve some top-category issues once the October 2019 upload was complete.

(A symptom of the disconnect between the Museum and the volunteer uploading its collections is the Talk page discussion of the names Auckland Museum, Auckland War Memorial Museum, and Auckland War Memorial Museum Tamaki Paenga Hira, and whether they refer to one museum or two...)

- *Cultivate a relationship with Fae and other uploaders/categorisers, so the Museum has some input into categorisation and templates (see below)*
- *Fix broken object links or work with Fae to convert for example `/api.aucklandmuseum.com/id/humanhistory/object/x` to `/www.aucklandmuseum.com/collection/object/am_humanhistory-object-x`*

Templates

The uploads differed quite a bit in the Commons templates used, and how metadata was represented. Uploads #1 and #4 used a simple **Information** template (the default), with *Description*, *Date*, *Source*, and *Author*. Fae in uploads #2 and #3 chose an **Artwork** template, which has additional fields for accession number and institution, but does peculiar things, such as saying the Title of [a crocodile skull image](#) is “*Crocodylus porosus*”, and its *Place of Creation* is “world (general)”.

Description	tattoo chisel blade. E Complete. Haft leng
Date	16 May 2017
Source	http://www.aucklandmuseum.com/collection/object/am_war-memorial-museum-object-1234
Author	Marie Helliwell
Permission (Reusing this file)	Image Reuse Guide

The Artwork template is really intended for fine art, and is seen at its best in the metadata for images like this [1676 painting of Karl XI](#). Auckland Museum could certainly use this template for any paintings or sketches in the collection, and there are separate templates for [Photographs](#) (used mostly for historical photos), and a combined template [Art photo](#), which distinguishes between the artwork and the photograph taken of it.



But in the Auckland Museum context most photos are of collection objects that may not have a creator, where the information of interest is the object metadata, not usually the date and photographer of the image. In the case of biological material, the [Specimen](#) template makes more sense. The [Biohist](#) template, developed by Naturalis, allows both biological specimens and publications or artworks depicting them.

It’s also possible to use two or more templates, and some templates allow custom fields: for example, [this photograph of a Falkland Island wolf](#) in Otago Museum’s collection uses an Information template for the photo with a *Credit Line* field inserted to supply the attribution, and a Biohist template for the specimen.



- *Subsequent uploads from Auckland Museum should be done in batches of a single collection type, and should use a template or combination of templates that best display collection metadata.*
- *Volunteers and Wikipedians could go through each subcategory of Images from Auckland Museum and switch templates as needed; some of this can be automated within a subcategory using tools like VisualFileChange.*

One significant positive of Fae's upload was the linking of multiple photos in the *Other version* field, linking all other photos of the same object. There's currently no tool that automatically creates these galleries during a bulk upload: Fae is using their own automated workflow. This is something Auckland Museum will need to tackle in future uploads, as it is increasingly creating multiple images of the same object (46 photos of [one adzebill specimen](#), for example).

Usage


There's no simple way to track the usage of images the Museum has uploaded to Commons, short of a Google Image search, because downloading isn't tracked and Creative Commons licences don't require notifying the copyright holder. One tool, [GLAMorgan](#), can estimate the usage of images within Wikimedia projects: it tracks the monthly pageviews of articles or Wikidata items that contain each AWMM Commons image, and assumes that anyone who reads the article notices the image. This is an approximate measure, but is a useful tool for gauging general impact and planning how to improve it.

Of the 175,091 files in the category "Images from Auckland Museum", just over 2000 are being used in Wikimedia projects. Of those, 1,561 were viewed in February 2020, a total of 3,097,672 times (unique views by device, not person – so if somebody connected with both their computer and phone it would count as two views). Three important take-aways:

1. Those 1,561 images appeared on 4,338 pages – an average of 2.7 pages per image. Even some the top 10 images appear on only one to three pages, so this does not seem to be a tremendously skewed distribution.
 - *This surprisingly long tail suggests there's scope for systematically adding popular images to more projects; Auckland Museum images are not being used in as many venues as they could be.*
2. The images were spread over 155 "wikis": most of these are from the 301 different language Wikipedias. Images also appeared in Wikidata, and a few languages of Wikibooks and Wikivoyage. The top language was overwhelmingly English, but others were Spanish, Russian, Portuguese, Thai, French, Japanese, Chinese, German, and Italian – corresponding quite well to those major language Wikipedias with over 1 million articles each (see [Wikipedia.org](#)).
 - *Any staff who can speak one of these other major non-English languages and can learn some basic Wikipedia editing could contribute to multi-lingual usage of images.*
 - *WikiVoyage should not be ignored, nor its commercial spinoff project WikiTravel (the latter not affiliated with Wikimedia). The AWMM has a*


standard one-paragraph listing in the section on Central Auckland, but there's scope for images to be used throughout the New Zealand section: culture, history, and geography.

3. Three million views in a month is a substantial impact, but what's most interesting is how skewed the attention is: just ten images accounted for 1,300,000 of those views.
 - These image views are largely accidental: they reflect AWMM making images open, and some of those images finding their way to extremely popular pages. It would be relatively easy to double those views.

	Treaty of Versailles, English version.jpg	409,355	enwiki	Treaty of Versailles	121,408
			eswiki	Tratado de Versailles (1919)	88,563
			ruwiki	Брестский мир	27,762
			ruwiki	Версальский договор	18,937
			itwiki	Trattato di Versailles (1919)	15,887
			ptwiki	Tratado de Versailles (1919)	13,342

For example, the most-viewed is the cover of the Treaty of Versailles, a low-resolution image which happened to be freely available on the Museum's website in 2008 when User:Ssolbergi found it and [added it to the Treaty of Versailles article](#). And there it has stayed for 12 years, racking up over 100,000 views each month. But the [actual file in Commons](#) has rudimentary metadata: nothing on the object and how it came to be in the collection, no field for accession number or website link. Some percentage of viewers must realise the Aucklandmuseum.com link is actually the collection record, but [the object there](#) has no additional gallery images and no context.

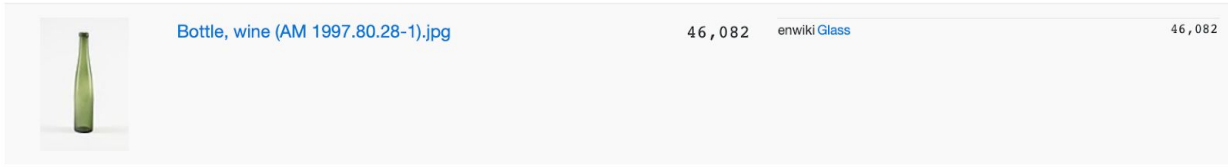
- “Hero” images should have excellent Commons metadata, even collection objects that have become hero images by accident.
- What other military history articles could be illustrated by Auckland Museum objects? [Victoria Cross](#) (43,000 views/month), [Gallipoli campaign](#) (55,000), [New Zealand Wars](#) (11,400), or [Anzac Day](#) (275,000 views each April) contain no images from the collection.

	Little spotted kiwi, Apteryx owenii, Auckland War Memorial Museum white background.jpg	163,094	enwiki	Bird	100,788
			eswiki	Aves	38,726
			ptwiki	Aves	9,067
			thwiki	สัตว์ปีก	5,922
			enwiki	Palaeognathae	2,877

Several photos of kiwi get numerous views, because they illustrate articles about birds, ratites, paleognaths, and each kiwi species in multiple languages. The recent natural history specimen photographs are so good they could be used as the main images on numerous pages, but volunteers haven't yet noticed they're available. The [moa](#) article (43,000 views/month) has several terrible photos from other museums which look like they're taken through case glass by tourists.

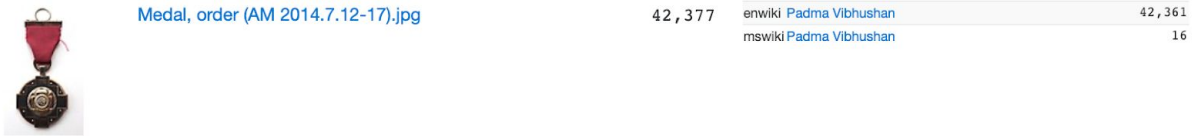
- Where excellent collection photos exist, systematically work through articles and replace terrible images with objectively-better Auckland Museum ones (the photos must be significantly better to avoid accusations of spamming Wikipedia, but this usually isn't hard).

- Try to supply the touchstone infobox image for high-importance articles. For example, Wikiproject New Zealand's [top-importance articles](#) include Bernard Freyberg, Auckland, and Military History of New Zealand.



This wine bottle illustrates the article on glass (in English only; it could be rolled out across dozens of other languages), solely because it was photographed on a white background and could be used without having to be cropped first.

- Collection photography should always include a shot without the ruler and colour marker, as this makes images far more likely to be shared and used. They can be associated in the Other Images field in Commons with the version containing the trappings of collection documentation.



Why is the image of the [Padma Vibhushan](#), India's second-highest honour, from a New Zealand museum collection? Because it's the only photo of the [actual medal in Commons](#). Nobody else has thought to upload a photo yet, and it would be hard to beat the comprehensive photo shoot Auckland Museum has done.

- The museum's collections are international, and can fill surprising gaps. Not everything has to be about Auckland or New Zealand.
- There is a significant first-mover advantage in Commons

Commons licensing

There is extensive use of AWMM photography in Wikipedia and Commons because the institution committed early on to an "open by default" CC BY licence. Volunteers like Siobhan Leachman have reused many the images in Wikipedia, Wikidata, and iNaturalist, and this has generated some excellent publicity for the Museum and its open-access mission. But we are now past the early days of open GLAM projects, and institutions need to be looking more closely at the type of licensing they use.

Copyright

Fæ's two bulk uploads labelled all Auckland Museum images as CCBY [sic], but in many cases the photos were faithful scans or photographs of an out-of-copyright two-dimensional artwork in the public domain: for example, [this c. 1800 Chinese scroll](#). The scroll image was released as CC BY, but this is simply incorrect, as the Museum is not the copyright holder: there's no existing copyright in the image that Auckland Museum could license. Despite that, the Museum's [Rights](#)



[and Permissions](#) page is very clear that CC BY 4.0 will be “used on images of works in which copyright has expired”.

Claiming copyright over public domain images, usually with a Creative Commons licence, is a common problem in New Zealand GLAM institutions; Auckland Museum should be modelling best practice in this area.

- *Copyright status, including No Known Copyright, needs to be clearly displayed in object records and in metadata. When that's done, the corresponding WikiCommons licence can be updated.*

Cultural Permissions

Many images of Auckland Museum taonga have conditions on reuse independent of copyright considerations. These images are flagged as “cultural permissions” in the database, and there are currently 1,567 in [Category:Images from Auckland Museum marked with cultural permissions](#). Apart from the category, there is nothing else to indicate any other restrictions on use of the images, and they're all currently freely available for use under a CC BY 4.0 licence.

The Museum's Rights and Permissions page explains that images of taonga are “for research, study, personal and educational use only”, a restriction incompatible with an open license; in theory none of these photos should have been uploaded to Commons. But in practice, some object photos would be seen as unproblematic.

Rather than see this as a mistake to fix, it could be an opportunity for the Museum to pioneer cultural permissions labelling on WikiCommons. From my experience at international Wikimedia meetups, no institution in the world knows quite how to deal with cultural permissions, and are frequently looking to New Zealand to lead the way. There would be significant interest, and possibly financial support, from the Wikimedia Foundation.

- *Identify representative unproblematic images that have high educational value (adze, basket, taiaha...) and let them remain in Commons, with a custom cultural permissions banner that has additional guidelines on their reuse.*
- *Draft usage guidelines with Māori/Pasifika curators that address specific cultural concerns (use on a teatowel, for example).*
- *Present these solutions as a working document to the Wikimedia Foundation and at a future Wikimania.*

Unlike copyright, there's no legal framework for controlling how people reuse photos of taonga, especially if photos are already available on the internet from multiple sources such as public-domain books. Auckland Museum could however provide the best-quality, highest-resolution versions of taonga, along with clear guidelines on where and how they can be used.

Wikidata engagement

Properties

There are currently two Auckland Museum properties defined in Wikidata: Auckland Museum ID ([P7298](#)) and Online Cenotaph ID ([P7474](#)). Both were proposed by Hugh Lily (User:HL) in September and October 2019 respectively. Wikidata properties like this let the Museum's own database use Wikidata as an intermediary to connect with multiple other databases, potentially importing, collating, and displaying information that can enrich both the Museum's own database and its web pages.

The trick is of course adding the Auckland Museum identifier to all the corresponding Wikidata items that exist, and creating new ones where needed. One tool for doing this is [Mix'n'Match](#), developed by Magnus Manske to allow an uploaded database to be automatically matched against Wikidata and have each match checked and confirmed by a human being.

The Online Cenotaph ID dataset was uploaded to Mix'n'Match by User:Noideawhatiamdoing in November 2019, and half a dozen volunteers confirmed most of the automatic matched items fairly quickly. Most of the IDs remain unmatched because there's no corresponding person in Wikidata – and there may never be; just serving in the NZ military isn't enough to meet Wikidata's notability threshold.

Online Cenotaph

Action ▾

Online Cenotaph is a database of New Zealand military serviceperson created by the Auckland War Memorial Museum

Imported by user Noideawhatiamdoing | [Refresh](#)

Entries		
Fully matched	360	3.4%
Prelimarily matched	56	0%
No Wikidata	0	0%
Not applicable to Wikidata	1	0%
Unmatched	10065	96%
Total	10482	

There is potential to go through the same process with the much larger (47,000) Auckland Museum ID database.

- To increase the chance of finding matches, do a new Mix'n'Match upload with a presorted subset, perhaps 2000 IDs that are referred to by large numbers of collection items, or have numerous related items (for example, [Sir Edmund Hillary](#)). Continue with subsets of decreasing notability.

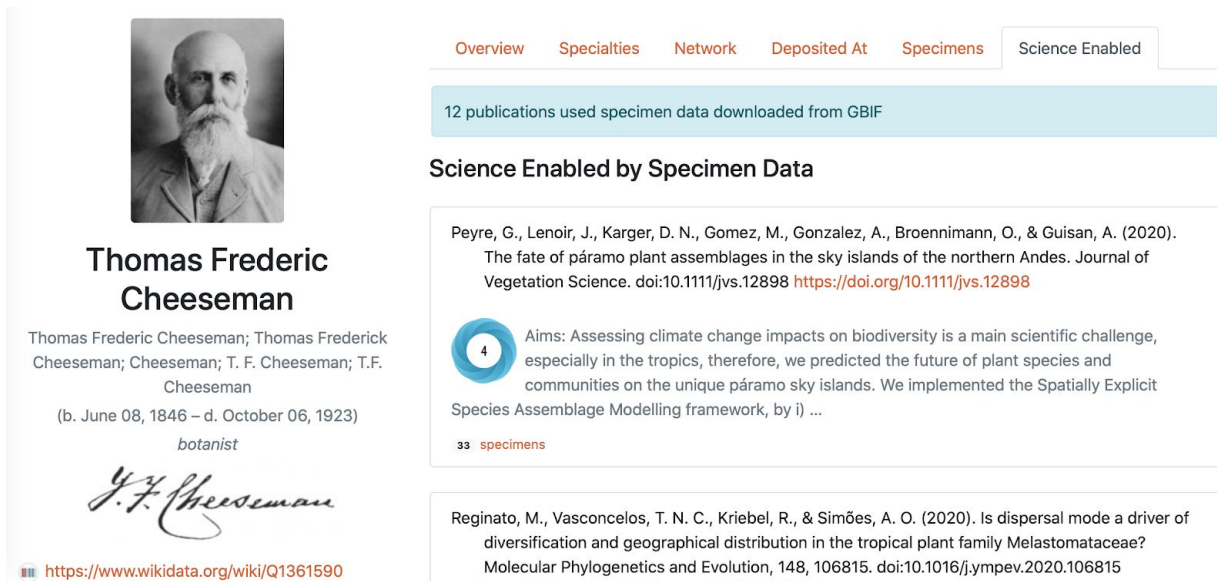
Collections

Recently, volunteers have been using the site [Bloodhound Tracker](#) to connect the Wikidata items of researchers to the specimens they've collected or identified in the Global Biodiversity Information Facility. This attempt to highlight the value of museum collections is a very nice illustration of the value of linked open data, and Siobhan Leachman has unsurprisingly been a leader in this effort.

The [Auckland Museum Botany Collection project](#) in Bloodhound has currently linked 134 people, and volunteers are 28% of the way through the collection. [Twenty-two volunteers](#) (called “trainers”), from nine countries, have been working together to create the links. Auckland Museum collectors that have been linked include [Thomas Cheeseman](#), [J.K. Bartlett](#), [Wilma Blom](#), and [John Early](#). Note that Wilma and John's profiles are private; because they're still living, they need to be the ones to make their profiles public.

To link collectors to their collections, volunteers need to know the collector's ORCID ID (a good reason to display it and add it to Wikidata). For deceased collectors without an ORCID the volunteers need a Wikidata ID with a date of death. For example, Ewan Cameron ([Q21506888](#)) has collected 16,523 specimens, but has no ORCID ID, and is (thankfully) not deceased, so can't be identified by his Wikidata item. Hence his specimens can't be linked.

Not only does Bloodhound display the places, collections, and institutions the researcher contributed to, it also has a section for Science Enabled. This lists papers that use those specimens, linked via GBIF. Taxonomic collections are often overlooked when contributions to science are being tallied, and Bloodhound explicitly makes the connection between museum collections and science.



Thomas Frederic Cheeseman
Thomas Frederic Cheeseman; Thomas Frederick Cheeseman; Cheeseman; T. F. Cheeseman; T.F. Cheeseman
(b. June 08, 1846 – d. October 06, 1923)
botanist
<https://www.wikidata.org/wiki/Q1361590>

Overview Specialties Network Deposited At Specimens Science Enabled

12 publications used specimen data downloaded from GBIF

Science Enabled by Specimen Data

Peyre, G., Lenoir, J., Karger, D. N., Gomez, M., Gonzalez, A., Broennimann, O., & Guisan, A. (2020). The fate of páramo plant assemblages in the sky islands of the northern Andes. *Journal of Vegetation Science*. doi:10.1111/jvs.12898 <https://doi.org/10.1111/jvs.12898>

4 Aims: Assessing climate change impacts on biodiversity is a main scientific challenge, especially in the tropics, therefore, we predicted the future of plant species and communities on the unique páramo sky islands. We implemented the Spatially Explicit Species Assemblage Modelling framework, by i) ...
33 specimens

Reginato, M., Vasconcelos, T. N. C., Kriebel, R., & Simões, A. O. (2020). Is dispersal mode a driver of diversification and geographical distribution in the tropical plant family Melastomataceae? *Molecular Phylogenetics and Evolution*, 148, 106815. doi:10.1016/j.ympev.2020.106815

While volunteers are doing well with the Auckland Museum collections, with 28% linked, it's worth noting that the New Zealand Arthropod Collection (NZAC) dataset is at 93%, and aiming to reach 100%...

- *Ensure all living staff have an ORCID, and supply birth and death dates for those deceased.*

- Encourage collecting staff to work with Bloodhound volunteers to open their collection data.
- Actively partner with Bloodhound and become the first museum to make a donation to support this project.

Museum research and publication

author

John W. Early (Q22113628)
<https://orcid.org/0000-0003-1229-0677>

List of publications

Show entries Search:

Date	Work	Type	Pages	Venue	Authors
2016-01-01	Provenance of the type specimen of William Colenso's giant weta <i>Hemideina gigantea</i>	scholarly article		Records of the Auckland Museum	John W. Early
2014-01-01	Establishment of two <i>Neurogalesus</i> Kieffer, 1907 species (Hymenoptera: Diapriidae: Diapriinae) in New Zealand	scholarly article		Records of the Auckland Museum	John W. Early
2012-01-01	[OBITUARY]: KEITH ARTHUR JOHN WISE F.R.E.S. 1926-2012	scholarly article		Records of the Auckland Museum	John W. Early
2009-01-01	The invertebrate fauna of epiphyte mats in the canopy of northern rata (<i>Myrtaceae</i>:<i>Metrosideros robusta</i> A.Cunn.) on the West Coast of the South Island, New Zealand	scholarly article		New Zealand Journal of Zoology	John W. Early, Rowan M. Emberson
2000-12-01	Fig wasps (Hymenoptera: Agaonidae and Torymidae) in New Zealand	scholarly article		New Zealand Entomologist	John W. Early
1996-03-01	The naturalisation of banyan figs (<i>Ficus</i> spp., <i>Moraceae</i>) and their pollinating wasps (Hymenoptera: Agaonidae) in New Zealand	scholarly article		New Zealand Journal of Botany	John W. Early
1995-01-01	AN INVASION OF AUSTRALIAN BLUE MOON AND BLUE TIGER BUTTERFLIES (LEPIDOPTERA: NYMPHALIDAE) IN NEW ZEALAND	scholarly article		Records of the Auckland Institute and Museum	Paddy A Ryan, Glen Richard Parrish, John W. Early

It would be good for all publications by university staff, especially in *Records of the Auckland Museum*, ([Q15756170](#)) and *Bulletin of the Auckland Museum* ([Q21386064](#)) to be cited, where appropriate, in Wikipedia articles. Each publication should also be created in Wikidata, and linked to the author Wikidata items using [Author Disambiguator](#) if necessary. One advantage of this will be the ability to automatically generate complete publication lists for each staff member using the tool [Scholia](#), and embed them in staff profiles on the website. As we can see for the [Scholia listing for John Early](#), the coverage of Auckland Museum publications in Wikidata is patchy: nothing more recent than 2016, including papers published in *Records of the Auckland Museum*. Currently the journals and their articles are being updated in Wikidata by volunteers like Rod Page (User:Rdmpage) and David Nind (User:David Nind).

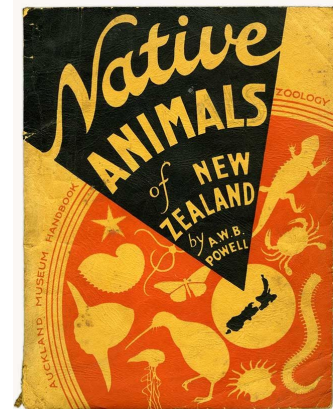
- *Systematic entry of all Museum publications in Wikidata – an excellent AWMM Library project.*

As well as scientific publications, the Museum has a long history of general-audience publishing. Some of its works, like Powell's *Native Animals of New Zealand*, are iconic and deserve Wikipedia articles in their own right. Unfortunately the Museum's shop does not list the publisher of its books, nor does the Museum website list books it's published, or books by its staff.

- Assuming such a list exists, this would be a good project for Wikidata item creation.
- Make a concerted effort to cite Auckland Museum or Museum-associated books in Wikipedia. *Seaweeds of Auckland* by Mike Wilcox, for example, could be referenced on dozens of pages.

There are extra opportunities if the Museum owns the copyright of the publication, or it's in the public domain. For example, *Native Animals of New Zealand* is now scanned and [available in the Biodiversity Heritage Library](#), released under a CC BY 4.0 licence. Other Museum publications should follow. But because there is strong public interest in *Native Animals of New Zealand*, it could be a flagship example of a museum releasing a copyrighted publication.

- Create a Wikipedia article and multiple Wikidata items for the editions of *Native Animals of New Zealand*.
- Create a *Native Animals of New Zealand* page on the Museum website, linking to the BHL scans, with background on the scanning project, copyright release information, and a link to purchase the current edition of the book in the museum shop.
- Make high-resolution scans of each illustration (at least 2400 ppi line art) and upload to a Commons gallery, linking back to the AWMM topic as the source.
- Use as many as possible on the corresponding Wikipedia articles, wikilinking in the caption to the Powell article and the article about the book.



Not only will this increase visibility and links by hundreds of items, it will drive some traffic back to the Museum website, and even increase the book's sales. The process could then be followed for other publications, especially those out of print and being scanned for BHL.

Museum photography and documentation

As well as giving access to its public-domain photo collections, and releasing its collection images under an open licence, Auckland Museum should also be thinking about how it represents itself.

Building

In the category Auckland War Memorial Museum, there are currently 37 exterior photos of the main building and 7 of the cenotaph, almost all taken by individual visitors or tourists (one seems to have come from the Museum's own Flickr stream, but the link is broken). Only one is an historic image, from the NLNZ collection. Most are good quality.

- Check the exterior photos in Commons against the Museum's own publicity images and see if anything else useful could be added.

- *Create an Auckland Museum page in Commons – this is a hand-curated gallery of the best photos, an alternative to the rather overwhelming categories. Feature the best building, exhibit, object, and staff photos.*

The building's interior is not as well represented. The 31 general interior photos are an unsorted mishmash of events, spaces, and architectural details. Almost all the [exhibit photos](#) are taken by visitors of items on display; one of the mummy, 9 of Hotonui, and 15 of the Spitfire. Another 207 are random exhibits, or collection images from upload #1 incorrectly categorised as exhibits. The photos are usually poor, given gallery lighting conditions.

Documentation of a museum's exhibit history is quite important, both for the public and for the Museum's own institutional memory. We should not be relying on tourists to do this for us. Regardless of the photo policy of a gallery, visitors are obviously photographing and sharing objects on display, so the Museum should at least endeavour to make sure the photos available are high quality.

- *Release any archive images of exhibitions into Commons and set up categories and Wikidata items for each, with dates open and closed and a brief explanation.*
- *Document current galleries, and the installation process of new exhibitions, particularly the design and installation staff who are often invisible in a museum's official history.*
- *Document each gallery – ideally a walkthrough outside visitor hours – and release good publicity photos into Commons and Flickr. This should be a routine part of an exhibition's opening.*

He tāngata

As well as documenting the building, the Museum should be documenting what it does. This is simply not happening in Commons or Wikipedia at the moment; you'd be forgiven for thinking no human beings worked at the Museum at all. In addition to making mugshots of staff available under an open licence, as mentioned previously, there needs to be a conscious effort to release photos of activities and events into Commons, beyond the usual "lined up for the firing squad" formal event photo.

- *Make sure each curator and collection manager is documented working in their collection, and that they have an appropriate Commons category, under an Auckland Museum staff category (currently non-existent)*
- *Remind museum staff to document "for posterity" what they do, and upload those photos to Commons.*
- *Make "open photography" a standard part of the documentation of community events, field trips, object conservation, prize-givings, and so on: taking photos intended for public and media sharing and reuse, as opposed to documentation for museum purposes. This may require noting down names and getting permission from everyone depicted.*

Staff education

If we want Museum staff to document themselves and their research, they will need to have a clear understanding of how copyright works and who owns it. Most, for

example, probably don't realise that the copyright of photos taken in the course of their employment is owned by the Museum. Most probably have a murky understanding of who, if anyone, owns the copyright of a photo in the collection. Curators who would never acquire an object of unknown provenance or a specimen without collection metadata will happily share and use photos without worrying about credit or copyright status.

For example, during the installation of the Ray Shannon exhibition, I was creating Shannon's Wikipedia article and wanted to use a photograph of him on display. The curator assumed the museum now owned the copyright, because they owned Shannon's collection and papers. In fact, the photographer was unknown, and the Museum technically violated copyright when they put the image on display without seeking permission. Because nobody sorted out copyrights when the image was acquired, it is now an orphaned work.

- *All Museum staff are now generating and reusing images, so awareness of copyright needs to be pervasive, from front-of-house to the Director.*

Relationship with Wikimedia community

Wikipedia is an encyclopaedia created and maintained by hundreds of thousands of volunteers, so an institution's relationship with those volunteers is critical for large-scale projects.

1. Volunteers can be crowdsourced to accomplish things museum staff simply don't have time for, such as using Mix'n'Match to assign institutional identifiers to thousands of Wikidata items.
2. The standards and practices of Wikimedia projects have been developed by the volunteer community, and no one staff member at a museum, even a professional Wikipediaian, can know everything. Working with multiple knowledge-holders is essential when starting a Wikimedia project or making data available.
3. Once a museum's data is made open, volunteers will start using it whether the museum is involved or not. By engaging with the community early, a museum can avoid being blindsided and can have some influence on the way this is done, benefiting both them and the volunteers.

There are good examples of GLAM institutions building their relationship with the editing community: for example, after their first edit-a-thon in 2013, the Pritzker Military Museum and Library in Chicago started a [Wikiproject](#), and at any one time has 3–5 volunteers and interns (paid and unpaid) working on Wikipedia articles and Commons uploads.

Auckland Museum has already hosted several Wikipedia meetups and edit-a-thons to date:

- 23 March 2018: Staff Wikipedia training
- [20 July 2018](#) (7 attendees): Auckland Wikipedians meetup
- [18 August 2018](#) (14 attendees): using land vertebrates photos
- [6 October 2018](#) (5 attendees): Art Week event
- [2 March 2019](#) (9 attendees): *Critter of the Week* species edit-a-thon



Until the 2018 meetup in the Museum library, there had been no meetup of Auckland Wikipedians since 2011.

- *Designate one staff member as Wikipedia liaison, and offer to host at least one community meetup (with coffee/lunch supplied) and one public Wikipedia event each year.*
- *Identify the main community contributors using Auckland Museum resources, and make contact on their Talk page, thanking them for their contribution.*
- *Offer a volunteer reward, such as a behind-the-scenes collection tour, to Auckland Wikimedians.*
- *Establish Wikimedia volunteering as another branch of Auckland Museum's volunteer activities, and reach out to local universities to recruit interns.*

The previously-mentioned [Pritzker WikiProject](#) is a good example of how a GLAM institution can proactively suggest articles that need work and act as a focus for volunteer efforts. But their needs to be a staff commitment to driving these projects forward. In August 2018, I created the [Wiki-PCAP](#) project specifically to address the lack of coverage of Pacific cultures in English Wikipedia, hoping to leverage the Museum's Pacific Collections Access Project and the skills of staff. But nothing has happened: despite concrete suggestions for improving Wikipedia's coverage of Pacific basket-weaving, for example, it's still only [one paragraph long](#). It's not enough to "set-and-forget" Wikimedia projects; they need community buy-in and institutional support.

- *Decide on one or more priority Auckland Museum Wikimedia projects, and allocate staff time and resources to recruiting and supporting contributors, using the Museum's project page as an organising tool.*

Conclusions

Auckland Museum has been at the forefront of engaging with Wikimedia projects in New Zealand. Despite extensive use of its images, it has a relatively low profile in Wikipedia, both in the citation of its publications and information, and in coverage of its history and people. There are many possibilities for expanding its role, not just by increasing quantitative measures like website referrals and image views, but by making itself and its collections an integral part of how Wikipedia portrays New Zealand subjects. To achieve this, it will have to build a relationship with the Wikimedia community. In all these areas, it will be demonstrating to other New Zealand GLAMs a way forward; and there is potential to be an international leader in the field.

—Mike Dickison

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@adzebill

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[User:Giantflightlessbirds](#)

Acknowledgements

Many thanks to Siobhan Leachman for her assistance with Bloodhound Tracker data, and to Adam and James for being patient during an unexpected lockdown.











Image Credits

1. Uwhi: maker unknown, photographer Auckland Museum ([Wikimedia Commons](#), CC BY 4.0)
2. Meetup at Auckland Museum Library: Mike Dickison ([Wikimedia Commons](#), CC BY-SA 4.0)
3. John Early in 1980: Lincoln University ([Wikimedia Commons](#), CC BY 4.0)
4. Karl XI by David Klöcker Ehrenshrahl ([Wikimedia Commons](#), public domain)
5. Falkland Island wolf: Kane Fleury / © Otago Museum ([Wikimedia Commons](#), CC BY 4.0)
6. *Native Animals of New Zealand*: Auckland Museum ([Biodiversity Heritage Library](#), CC BY 4.0)
7. Auckland Museum Wikiblitz 3: Mike Dickison ([Wikimedia Commons](#), CC BY-SA 4.0)

Screenshots of Wikimedia tools and search engine results available under Fair Dealing.

Embedded images from Auckland Museum collections are from Wikimedia Commons (CC BY 4.0)

Appendix

Image	Image title	Views	Used on pages																		
	Treaty of Versailles, English version.jpg	409,355	<table border="1"> <tr><td>enwiki</td><td>Treaty of Versailles</td><td>121,408</td></tr> <tr><td>eswiki</td><td>Tratado de Versailles (1919)</td><td>88,563</td></tr> <tr><td>ruwiki</td><td>Брестский мир</td><td>27,762</td></tr> <tr><td>ruwiki</td><td>Версальский договор</td><td>18,937</td></tr> <tr><td>itwiki</td><td>Trattato di Versailles (1919)</td><td>15,887</td></tr> <tr><td>ptwiki</td><td>Tratado de Versalhes (1919)</td><td>13,342</td></tr> </table>	enwiki	Treaty of Versailles	121,408	eswiki	Tratado de Versailles (1919)	88,563	ruwiki	Брестский мир	27,762	ruwiki	Версальский договор	18,937	itwiki	Trattato di Versailles (1919)	15,887	ptwiki	Tratado de Versalhes (1919)	13,342
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	Little spotted kiwi, Apteryx owenii, Auckland War Memorial Museum white background.jpg	163,094	<table border="1"> <tr><td>enwiki</td><td>Bird</td><td>100,788</td></tr> <tr><td>eswiki</td><td>Aves</td><td>38,726</td></tr> <tr><td>ptwiki</td><td>Aves</td><td>9,067</td></tr> <tr><td>thwiki</td><td>สัตว์ปีก</td><td>5,922</td></tr> <tr><td>enwiki</td><td>Palaeognathae</td><td>2,877</td></tr> </table>	enwiki	Bird	100,788	eswiki	Aves	38,726	ptwiki	Aves	9,067	thwiki	สัตว์ปีก	5,922	enwiki	Palaeognathae	2,877			
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	Model Of Maori Pa On Headland.jpg	152,461	<table border="1"> <tr><td>enwiki</td><td>Māori people</td><td>130,754</td></tr> <tr><td>ruwiki</td><td>Маори</td><td>12,729</td></tr> <tr><td>frwiki</td><td>Maoris</td><td>2,686</td></tr> <tr><td>enwiki</td><td>Māori history</td><td>2,253</td></tr> <tr><td>enwiki</td><td>Pā</td><td>2,208</td></tr> </table>	enwiki	Māori people	130,754	ruwiki	Маори	12,729	frwiki	Maoris	2,686	enwiki	Māori history	2,253	enwiki	Pā	2,208			
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	AucklandMuseum edit gobeirne.jpg	127,538	<table border="1"> <tr><td>enwiki</td><td>Auckland</td><td>65,552</td></tr> <tr><td>ruwiki</td><td>Новая Зеландия</td><td>57,893</td></tr> <tr><td>enwiki</td><td>War memorial</td><td>2,445</td></tr> <tr><td>zhwiki</td><td>和平紀念碑 (香港)</td><td>600</td></tr> <tr><td>hywiki</td><td>Լոր Զելանդիա</td><td>522</td></tr> </table>	enwiki	Auckland	65,552	ruwiki	Новая Зеландия	57,893	enwiki	War memorial	2,445	zhwiki	和平紀念碑 (香港)	600	hywiki	Լոր Զելանդիա	522			
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jawiki	国獣	5,270																			
	Rifle, bolt action (AM 1930.61-17).jpg	112,880	<table border="1"> <tr><td>enwiki</td><td>Second Boer War</td><td>106,963</td></tr> <tr><td>enwiki</td><td>Mauser Model 1895</td><td>3,606</td></tr> </table>	enwiki	Second Boer War	106,963	enwiki	Mauser Model 1895	3,606												
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	Auckland War Memorial Museum, 2016-01-21.jpg	65,583	<table border="1"> <tr><td>enwiki</td><td>Auckland</td><td>65,552</td></tr> <tr><td>enwiki</td><td>NZIA Gold Medal</td><td>26</td></tr> <tr><td>anwiki</td><td>Museu Memorial d'a Guerra d'Auckland</td><td>5</td></tr> </table>	enwiki	Auckland	65,552	enwiki	NZIA Gold Medal	26	anwiki	Museu Memorial d'a Guerra d'Auckland	5									
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	Medal, order (AM 2014.7.12-17).jpg	42,377	<table border="1"> <tr><td>enwiki</td><td>Padma Vibhushan</td><td>42,361</td></tr> <tr><td>mswiki</td><td>Padma Vibhushan</td><td>16</td></tr> </table>	enwiki	Padma Vibhushan	42,361	mswiki	Padma Vibhushan	16												
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The ten most-popular Commons images from Auckland Museum's collection, based on Wikimedia project views, February 2020 (condensed from GLAMorgan search)