Calling all Librarians for Wiki Loves Monuments!
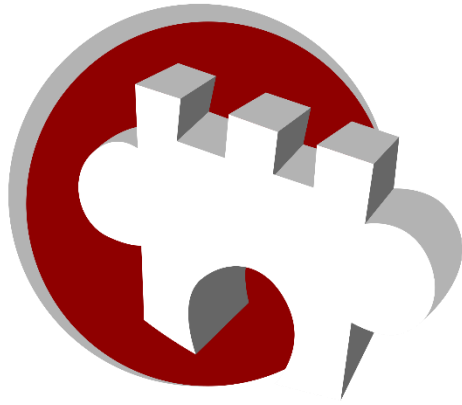

Next month is September and for all you Wiki enthusiasts, that means time for Wiki Loves Monuments! If you haven't heard of Wiki Loves Monuments, now's your chance to get involved!

Wiki Loves Monuments is an international photo competition run by the various chapters of the Wikimedia Foundation, including the UK. The aim of the competition is to crowdsource as many open license high quality photos as possible of the beautiful monuments, archaeological sites and listed building throughout the world. There will be prizes for best photos from England, Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales as well prizes for best UK photos. The best UK photos will then be put forward for international prizes. (Glenfinnan Viaduct at Loch Shiel won 2nd place in the 2017 UK prizes, let's see which beautiful Scottish monuments can win first place this year…)

Why take part in Wiki Loves Monuments?

Scotland has a wealth of historically significant heritage sites and it is our collective responsibility to record and preserve them for generations to come. This is a responsibility that the Wikimedia Foundation and Wikipedia take very much to heart in order to collect and disseminate this cultural knowledge. Wikipedia is a community curated project, and this is your opportunity to contribute!

One of the reasons that SLIC decided to host a Wikimedian in Residence was to help to increase the quality and quantity of content about Scotland on the Wikimedia projects, such as Wikipedia and Wikimedia Commons. With the help of our network of librarians around Scotland and the communities they work with, Wiki Loves Monuments can be a great tool for filling the gaps in Wikipedia when it comes to Scotland's rich heritage.

Glenfinnan Viaduct at Loch Shiel, by Paul Stümke, CC-BY-SA

How to take part?

The first step in taking part in Wiki Loves Monuments is to register for an account on Wikimedia Commons. Wikimedia Commons is Wikipedia's repository for photographs and media that can be freely used under an open license (generally CC-BY-SA). Creating an account is easy to do and you can use any username, as long as it's available, and it's not the name of an organisation.
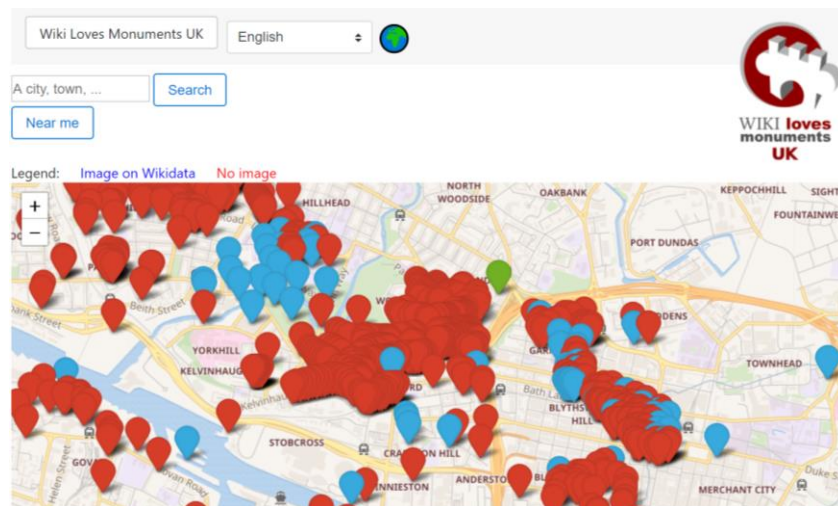
If you already have a Wikipedia account, no need to register for a new account on Wikimedia Commons, you can use the same account for Wikimedia Commons. To enter the competition you **must** make sure that your account has a valid email address and that your email is activated. To check that, once you have logged in, look for "My preferences" tab at the top right of the page. Click on it, and then select "enable email from other users." This will allow the competition organisers and other registered users on Wikipedia/Wikimedia Commons to contact you but will not make your email address publicly available.

What to photograph and how to upload it?

In Scotland, the subjects eligible to be entered in Wiki Loves Monuments will be mapped against the Historic Environment Scotland references for Listed Buildings and Scheduled Monuments. So, if you know that your library is a listed building (Class A, B or C), please get your camera out and get a photo! Of the 480+ libraries in Scotland, we currently only have photos for less than 30 of them.

You can take more than one photo of a building or monument. Preferably one should be a photo of the building or monument as a whole, but also use your photographic flair to add photos of key features, inside views or behind the scenes features that the public doesn't normally get to see. Doors Open Day runs throughout September and is a great opportunity to organise a photography tour of a building or a tour of the local listed monuments in your town.

If you're not sure what buildings or monuments are classed as listed, don't worry! We've got a great tool for you to use to upload your photos which includes an interactive map.

Screengrab from Wiki Loves Monuments UK interactive map tool

Blue pins on the map indicate monuments which already have a photo on Wikimedia Commons, whereas red pins indicate where they are missing. Select your town or city then wander around your local area and look for buildings or monuments with red pins. You can take photos on smartphones, tablets or cameras and then upload them by selecting the appropriate pin on the map and clicking upload. Make sure that you are logged into your Wikimedia Commons account and follow the basic instructions. Every photo uploaded via the interactive map will be entered into the Wiki Loves Monuments.

Other tips:

- Not sure that your photo skills are up to the competition? Don't worry about it, the important thing is to take part. The more photos we can crowdsource, the more we can improve the coverage of listed buildings and monuments in Scotland, which is our ultimate goal. You can also check the Wiki Loves Monuments blog for tips on how to best take architectural photos.

- Who is Wiki Loves Monuments aimed at? Everyone! The great thing about a photo contest is that everyone has a phone or camera these days to take photos with. This could be a great activity to run with a school group or with a local group of volunteers. Why not advertise it to your local history group or photography club?

- When should you take part? Wiki Loves Monuments runs through the whole of September from the 1st till the 30th and any entries uploaded during that time will be part of the competition. Photos don't have to be taken during September though, so if you can start practising now and upload them in September. You can even upload photos you've previously taken during holidays in the UK. Doors Open Day is a great opportunity to tie in with Wiki Loves Monuments, so if you know local DOD venues or if you work with a local heritage officer, please advertise it with them too.

How can my library take part?

- **Upload a picture of our listed library building**
- **Organise a heritage tour of our area - see here for inspiration!**
- **Put up posters in your library (You could use this one)**
- **Encourage a local history or photography group to take part**
- **If you take part, please tweet about it! @WikiLovesUK #ScotWiki**
- **If you've got any questions, just email d.dallison@scottishlibraries.org / sara.thomas@wikimedia.org.uk**