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PROJECT AWARD NOMINATION SUMMARY

Project Title: Oakland Wiki

Award Category: EDUCATION

Project Address: <http://oaklandwiki.org>

Because of Oakland Wiki's nature, there is no physical address for it. It exists online, where it can be accessed and edited by anyone with an Internet connection. And as long as there are people to write about, record, and photograph Oakland's past, present, and future, Oakland Wiki can keep growing and evolving.

Biography of individual or organization

Oakland Wiki is a free website about Oakland that anyone can edit. It's like Wikipedia in that it is an online encyclopedia built by volunteer contributors and holds a Creative Commons license, but differs in that it's exclusively about Oakland and includes many things that are considered "too small" or "not significant enough" for Wikipedia.

Oakland Wiki launched in July 2012, starting with weekly volunteer meetings focused on gathering new contributors. Oakland Wiki experienced its first major jump in contributions and new user sign-ups after volunteers launched a Local History Editathon series, held out of the Oakland History Room. During these editing parties, new and experienced users made use of the History Room's primary neighborhood and map archives to build out much of the local history content you see today.

Oakland Wiki includes information about historic people and places, as well as current ones. From well-known names like [Francis Marion "Borax" Smith](#), to less well-remembered places like [Peralta Playland](#), to current projects like the efforts to restore and preserve the [16th Street train station](#), there's a place in Oakland Wiki for them all.

Oakland is home to many people interested in its history, and over the years there have been various efforts to document it. Most notable is Beth Bagwell's seminal *Oakland: The Story of a City*, along with numerous books about different topics within Oakland history. Some local historians have even attempted to digitally document other pieces of Oakland's history, such as Daniel Levy's [OB&E : Rail and Wire](#) website documenting the railroads and streetcars of Oakland and the Bay Area and Michael Colbruno's [Lives of the Dead](#) website documenting people interred in Mountain View Cemetery. This all said, very few people, places and events in Oakland's history are considered significant enough to be documented on one of the most significant and connected knowledge preservation tools, Wikipedia.

Oakland Wiki is an example of crowd-sourced digital preservation; it is a powerful platform upon which multiple historians, expert and amateur alike, can come together to create a comprehensive historical memory that would otherwise be scattered amongst multiple publications and mediums, and lost as individual memories fade away. Stories as small as "I remember [my grandparents' business...](#)" can be preserved. Ultimately, Oakland Wiki is timeless: given its digital nature and its use of Creative Commons licensing, stories such as these will continue to be preserved and shared even as computer technology advances and new platforms for sharing and preserving are introduced.