

## Creating Exhibits in Omeka

Omeka is a free, flexible, and open source web-publishing platform for the display of library, museum, archives, and scholarly collections and exhibitions. Its “five-minute setup” makes launching an online exhibition as easy as launching a blog.

In this tutorial, we build on the Introduction to Omeka using the Omeka.net service. The steps in this tutorial will take you through creating an engaging and compelling curated exhibit in Omeka.

All the files (bundled as a zip file) to carry out this exercise are available as a zip file OmekaTutorialFiles. You can download them, unzip them and save them to your desktop to work with them.

**You will need to have created a new account at <http://omeka.net>; and downloaded the archive of files at <http://digitalnomad.ie/introtoomeka.zip> as discussed in the Introductory exercise. If you have not done so please do now.**

An initial version of this tutorial was created in November 2011 and has been most recently updated in October 2017.

### Tutorial Exercise

#### Step 1 - Log into Omeka.net

If you aren't logged into your Omeka instance from an [Intro to Omeka](#), log back in by visiting your site and accessing the admin interface. The Dashboard is always accessible by appending '/admin' to your site URL. e.g.: <http://mysitename.omeka.net/admin>.

omeka.net PRICING SHOWCASE HELP NEWS MY ACCOUNT

## Log In

Username \*

Password \* 

Remember Me? ☐

[Log In](#)

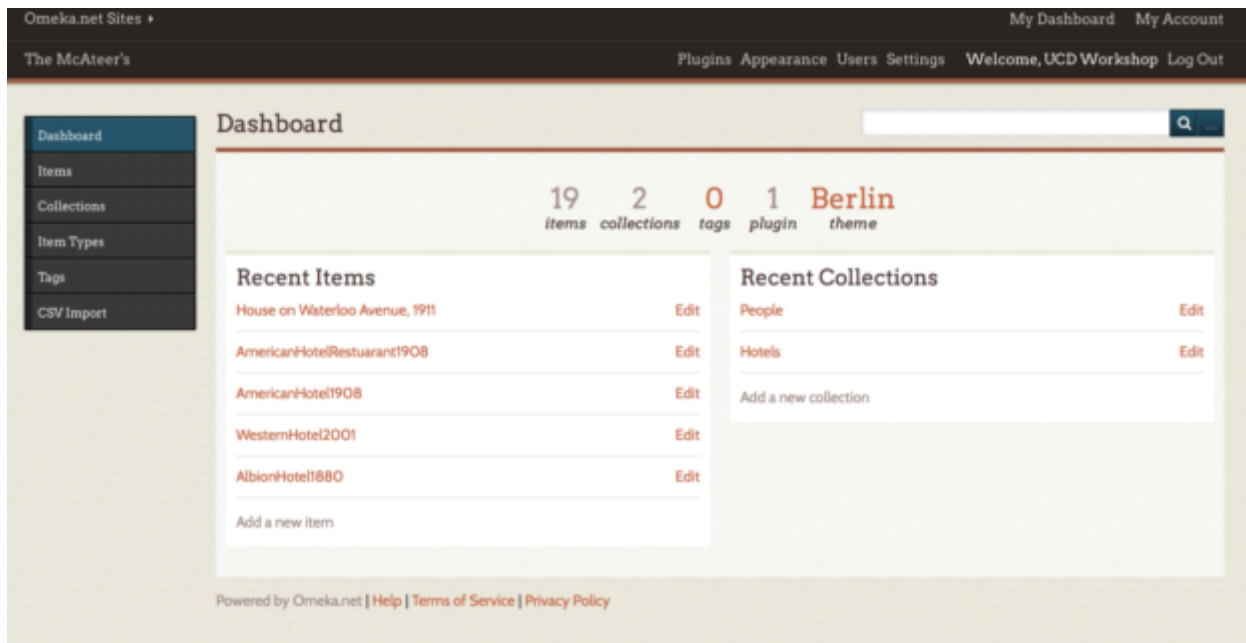
[Lost Your Password?](#)

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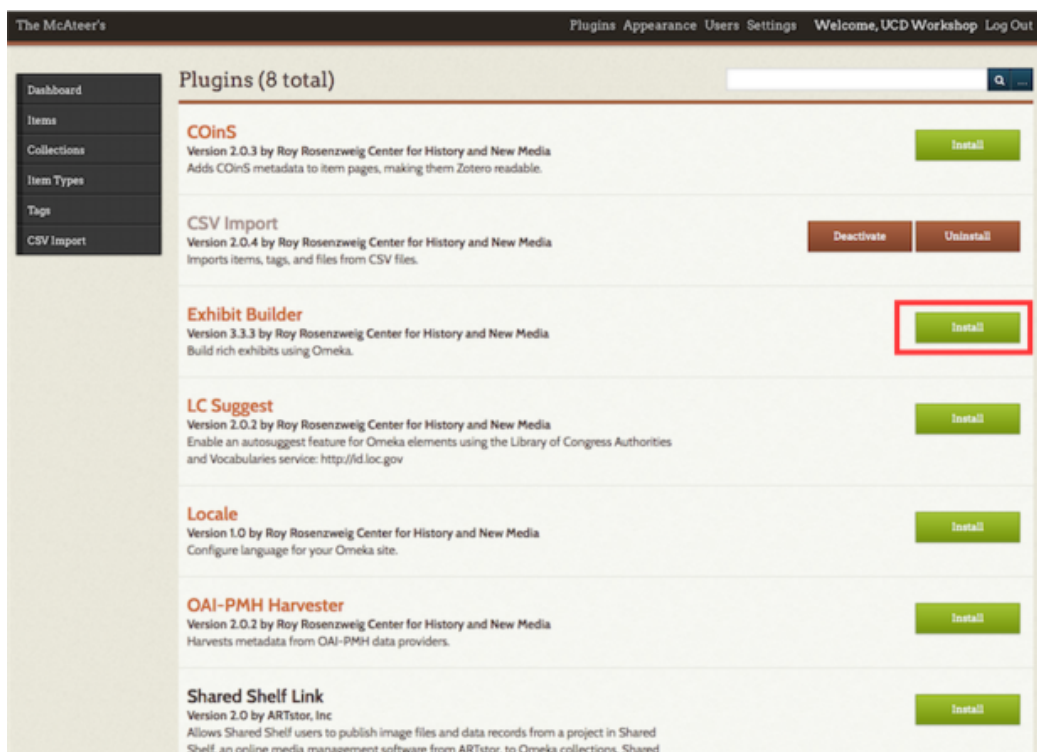
[Contact Us](#) [Terms of Service](#) [Privacy Policy](#)

## Step 2 - Create a New Exhibit

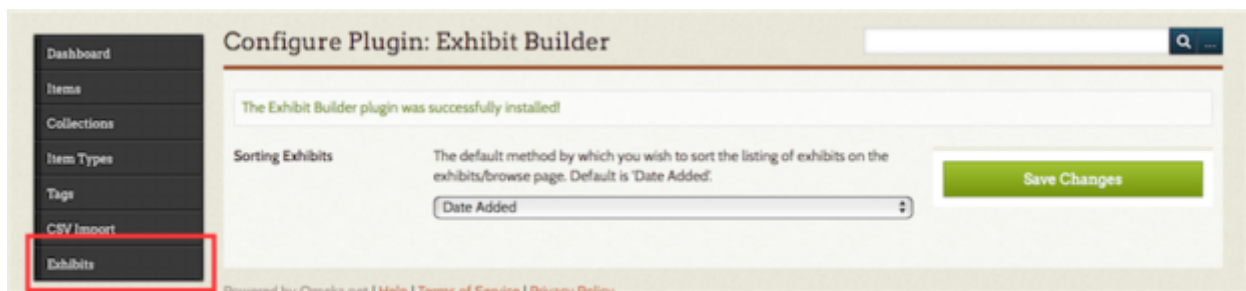
When you view your dashboard, you will see a summary of your items, collections, exhibits and currently selected theme.



We have no exhibits currently defined. In fact, we don't yet have the capability to even create exhibits. Let's fix that now. As you may remember from the first tutorial, when we want to add functionality to Omeka, we can activate plug-ins. **Exhibit Builder** is one such functionality. To enable this Plug-In, **choose Plugins** from the top menu and click the **Install** button beside the Exhibit Builder.



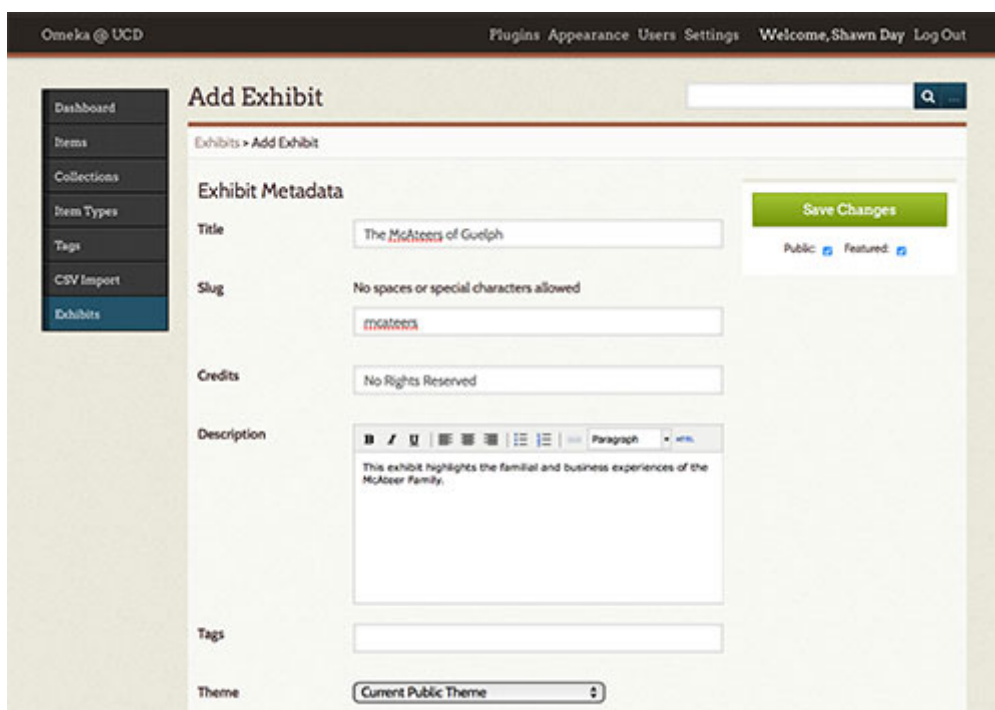
When you do this, you will be taken to a configuration screen for the Exhibit Builder.



The configuration options for the Exhibit Builder are rather limited - simply **click Save Changes** and let's begin to build our first exhibit. To do so **click** the button on the left menu labelled '**Exhibits**'



Although we have no exhibits (yet) the button to create one is right there. Choose 'Add an Exhibit'. Much as we have already seen, you are asked to create metadata describing the new Exhibit. The Exhibit is in fact a digital object itself. The various digital objects (items) I have provided for use in this tutorial relate to the McAteer family who emigrated from Ireland and found success in Canada in the pub trade.



Choose a Title for your exhibit and a short memorable 'slug' that will appear in the URL address for the exhibit. You can input information about the credits and provide a short description about the exhibition to aid potential users - a short, catchy abstract if you wish.

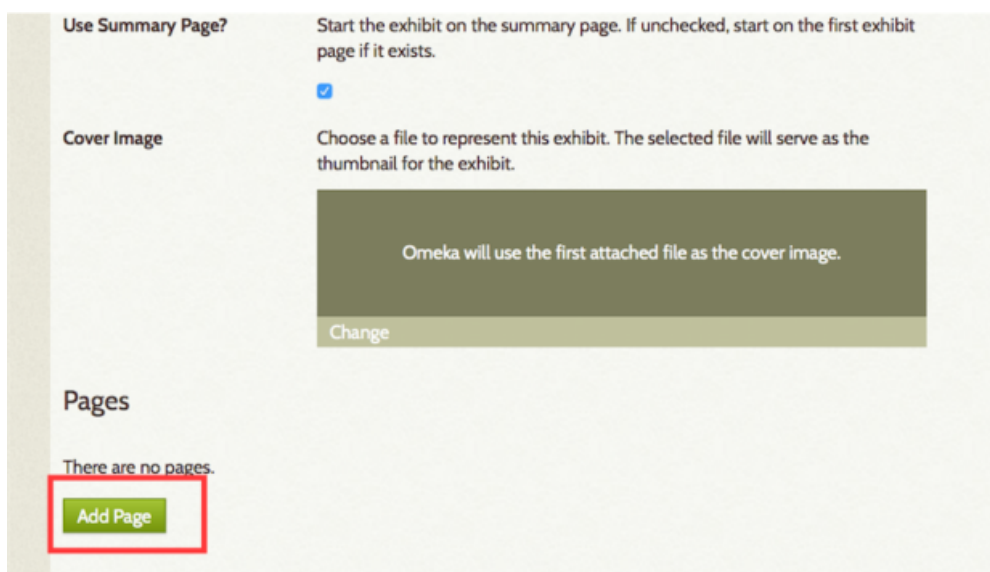
Note that you can choose to use the same theme as the wider Omeka site or a particular theme (choose one different from your wider Omeka site) to create a unique look and feel for it. Make it public, and featured (by clicking the checkboxes so labelled) and then save changes. When you do you will see that you now have a shiny new exhibit listed. Excellent!



### Step 3 - Add a Page to the Exhibit

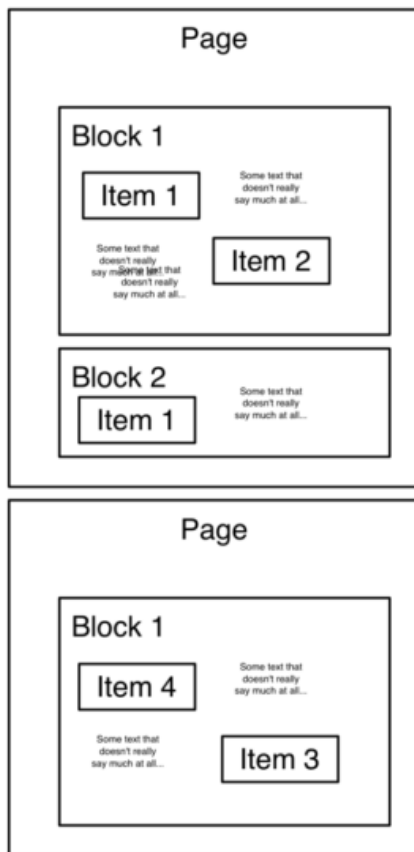
Exhibits are composed of dynamic pages that combine items from your repository with narrative to tell a story. Best practise in creating an exhibit would involve sketching out your objectives and structure in advance - for purposes of this tutorial we are going to work to a predefined path.

Choose the Edit link from below the Exhibit title and scroll to the bottom of the project metadata page. You will see a button inviting you to '**Add Page**'. **Go ahead - press it.**



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hibit



Note: Exhibits are composed of individual pages which are themselves composed of a series of blocks each of which can contain items drawn from Omeka as well as text and captions that you create to narrate your exhibit. This schematic illustrates this hierarchy.

You will now see a Page Builder screen. Pages are composed of blocks of text and items. Give your page a title (which will be used for navigation) and a slug for use in the URL. I like to start off with an introduction.

## Add Page

Exhibits > The McAteers of Guelph > Add Page

**Page Title**

**Page Slug**  No spaces or special characters allowed

**Content** [Expand All](#) | [Collapse All](#)

To reorder blocks and items, click and drag them to the preferred location.

**New Block**

Select layout

File with Text

Gallery

Text

File

**Save Changes**

**Save and Add Another Page**

To begin creating content we choose a layout for the first block. Let's kick off by choosing a 'File with Text' and then selecting 'Add New Block' beneath this section. The new block will provide options as below".

## Content

[Expand All](#) | [Collapse All](#)

To reorder blocks and items, click and drag them to the preferred location.

**Block 1 (File with Text)** [▼](#) [✕](#)

**Items**

Add Item

**Text** [Save](#)

Paragraph [HTML](#)

**Layout Options** [▶](#)

**New Block**

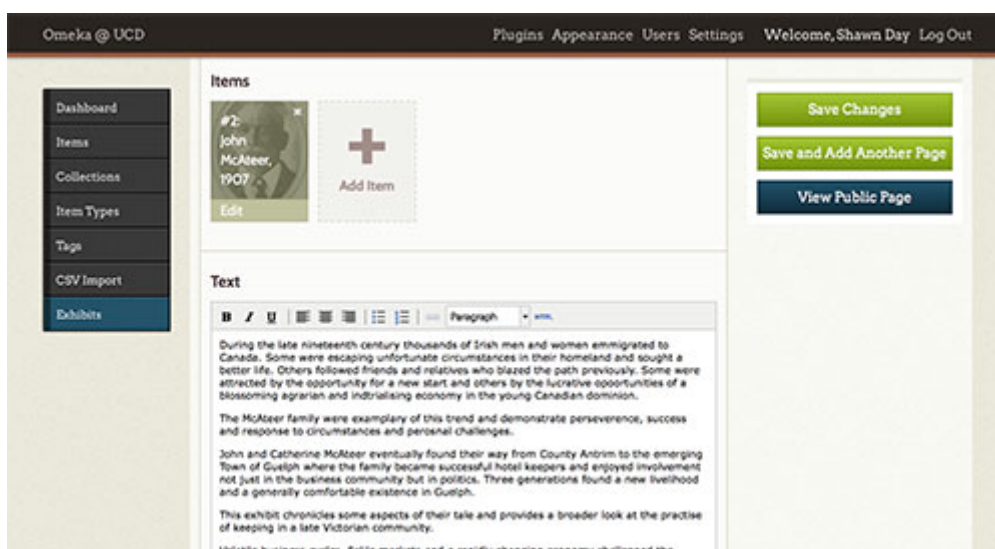
**Save Changes**

**Save and Add Another Page**

Clicking the 'Add Item' will let you select from all the items in your collection. Choose an image of interest - in this example I am starting with an image of the patriarch of the McAteer family, John. In the introduction, I will summarise the larger story to be presented. There is a particularly nice one taken in 1907:

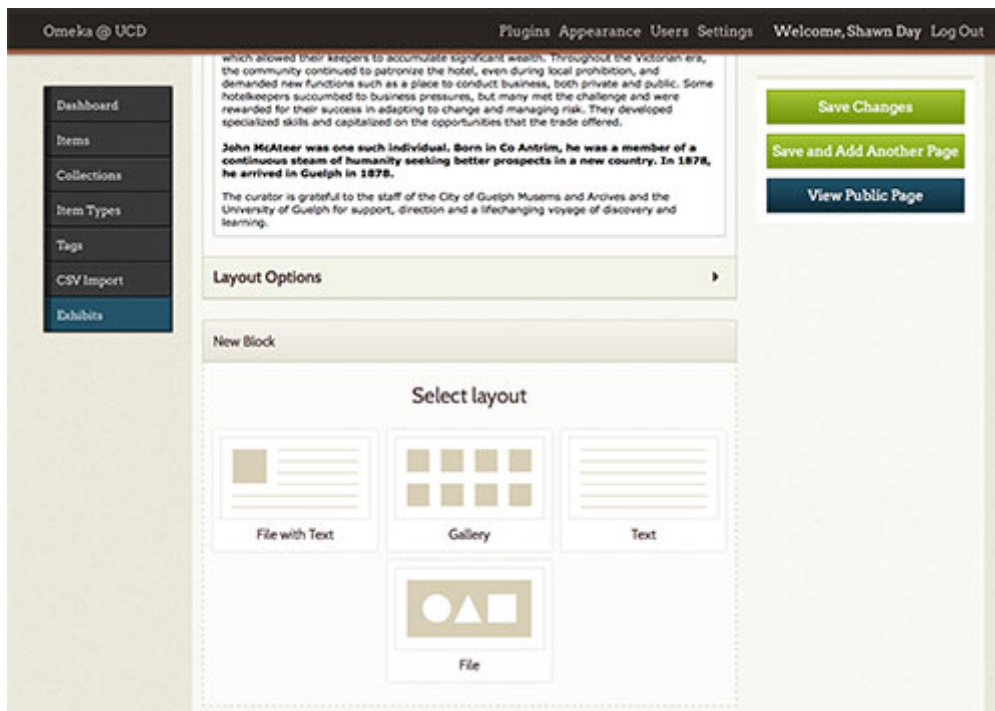


Omeka then allows you to add a caption to the item you insert. You can then add additional text that will work with the item. To help add this text easily you will find a text file '**ExhibitSource.txt**' which provides useful (and semi-real) text for use during this tutorial.





Final to the page construction you can add additional blocks containing additional items, text or combination son the two. Note that you can add plug-ins with functionality to Omeka that make additional blocks available for your pages.



You can also fine tune the various layout objects you insert by choosing layout functions. This allows you to orient your images to the left, right or centre and provide limited formatting. We have chosen to have the image of John McAteer displayed to the left of the text. We have chosen to use the full-size image (smaller versions of the image have been automatically created for us by Omeka). We are centring our captions for the images.



notekeepers succumbed to business pressures, but many met the challenge and were rewarded for their success in adapting to change and managing risk. They developed specialized skills and capitalized on the opportunities that the trade offered.

John McAteer was one such individual. Born in Co Antrim, he was a member of a continuous

**Layout Options** ▼

File position

File size

Captions position

New Block

When you have finished the page construction, you **save the changes to your page**. You can also save the changes and immediately create another page. In this way, you can build your exhibit in sequence. Save the page and then choose to **View the Public Page** and preview the page you have created.

[Browse Items](#)
[Browse Collections](#)
[Browse Exhibits](#)

## INTRODUCTION



During the late nineteenth century thousands of Irish men and women emmigrated to Canada. Some were escaping unfortunate circumstances in their homeland and sought a better life. Others followed friends and relatives who blazed the path previously. Some were attracted by the opportunity for a new start and others by the lucrative opoortunities of a blossoming agrarian and indtrialising economy in the young Canadian dominion.

The McAteer family were examplary of this trend and demonstrate perseverance, success and response to circumstances and perosnal challenges.

John and Catherine McAteer eventually found their way from County Antrim to the emerging Town of Guelph where the family became successful hotel keepers and enjoyed involvement not just in the business community but in politics. Three generations found a new livelihood and a generally comfortable existence in Guelph.

This exhibit chronicles some aspects of their tale and provides a broader look at

[The McAteer Family of Guelph](#)
[Introduction](#)

I've created some additional pages and their titles appear in the navigation above the page. The item and the text you create appear nicely arranged on the page.

## Step 4 - Navigating Exhibits

Now we have the beginnings of an exhibit. If you visit to the home page of your Omeka site you will see that users can choose from browsing items, collections and now exhibits.

**OMEKA @ NBTP**

[Browse Items](#)
[Browse Collections](#)
[Browse Exhibits](#)

## BROWSE EXHIBITS (1 TOTAL)


[— Browse All](#)
[— Browse by Tag](#)

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### The McAteer Family Of Guelph

Volatile business cycles, fickle markets and a rapidly changing economy challenged the ability of the Victorian hotelkeeper attempting to run a profitable business. To succeed, the keeper had to contend with far more. The late 19thC keeper sought a livelihood from a business that was the subject of this ongoing social contest - Victorian moral rectitude and the stringent demands of temperance movements cast the hotel as the site of illicit assignations, bar room brawls and drunken licentiousness, and as a result, it was subject to scrutiny by police and liquor license inspectors.

family history



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[— Browse Items](#)
[— Browse Collections](#)
[— Browse Exhibits](#)

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Proudly powered by [Omeka](#).

If a user chooses the first exhibit we have created they are taken to the home screen of that exhibit. Note that it has its own distinct look as we chose when completing the earlier exhibit setup. In the text file mentioned above you can begin to create additional pages as expanded in this support file. As you do, the pages will appear in a menu to the right.

[Browse Items](#)
[Browse Collections](#)
[Browse Exhibits](#)

# THE MCATEERS OF GUELPH

Volatile business cycles, fickle markets and a rapidly changing economy challenged the ability of the Victorian hotelkeeper attempting to run a profitable business. To succeed, the keeper had to contend with far more. The late 19thC keeper sought a livelihood from a business that was the subject of this ongoing social contest - Victorian moral rectitude and the stringent demands of temperance movements cast the hotel as the site of illicit assignations, bar room brawls and drunken licentiousness, and as a result, it was subject to scrutiny by police and liquor license inspectors.

## Credits

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[Introduction](#)
[Early Days](#)
[Starting Out](#)
[An Establishment of One's Own](#)
[Family Life](#)
[Civic Duty](#)
[Challenges](#)
[Success](#)
[A Desperate Last Gamble?](#)
[Failure and Demise](#)
[But Maybe Not ...](#)
[Lessons Learned](#)
[An Ode to the Inn Keeper](#)

Our single page is listed to the right and as we add pages to an exhibit they are automatically added to this right menu allowing for users to navigate to specific pages as you can see in this screen.

## Step 5 - Adding Additional Pages

The screenshot shows the Omeka Admin Dashboard. At the top, there's a navigation bar with 'Omeka @ NBTP' on the left and 'Plugins Appearance Users Settings Welcome, Shawn Day Log Out' on the right. Below this is a sidebar with a menu containing 'Dashboard', 'Items', 'Collections', 'Item Types', 'Tags', 'CSV Import', and 'Exhibits'. The main content area is titled 'Dashboard' and features a summary row with statistics: 19 items, 2 collections, 1 tag, 2 plugins, Minimalist theme, and 1 exhibit (the number 1 is circled in red). Below the statistics are two sections: 'Recent Items' with a list of items like 'John McAteer, 1907' and 'House on Waterloo Avenue, 1911', and 'Recent Collections' with 'People' and 'Hotels'. At the bottom of the 'Recent Items' section is a link 'Add a new item'.

Return to our Admin Dashboard and note that we now also have 1 exhibit indicated as created. If you click on the digit for the 1 exhibit we have you will get a list of

exhibits for further editing. Click the Edit button under our exhibit and we can start to add all the pages we would like to have in our exhibit.

Omeka @ NBTP Plugins Appearance Users Settings Welcome, Shawn Day Log Out

## Browse Exhibits (1 total)

[Add an Exhibit](#)

Title	Tags	Theme	Date Added
The McAteer Family of Guelph <a href="#">Edit</a> · <a href="#">Delete</a>	family history	Current Public Theme	Apr 26, 2017

Powered by Omeka.net | [Help](#) | [Terms of Service](#) | [Privacy Policy](#)

From the Exhibit detail screen choose to add a new page after the single existing page. We will call it 'Early Days'. Choose a useful 'slug' and then choose '**Save and Add Another Page**'. In a similar fashion, we can quickly add all the pages that we will have in our exhibit. The complete list appears in the Text file we downloaded earlier which also contains useful text to populate the pages. Don't enter the text yet, but do create a couple more pages. When you do so, you can choose to 'View Public Page'. This allows us to see the exhibit as our users will. You should see something like below. As you can note a list of pages now appears down the side of the Exhibit display.

## OMEKA @ NBTP

[Browse Items](#) [Browse Collections](#) [Browse Exhibits](#)

### THE MCATEER FAMILY OF GUELPH

Volatile business cycles, fickle markets and a rapidly changing economy challenged the ability of the Victorian hotelkeeper attempting to run a profitable business. To succeed, the keeper had to contend with far more. The late 19thC keeper sought a livelihood from a business that was the subject of this ongoing social contest - Victorian moral rectitude and the stringent demands of temperance movements cast the hotel as the site of illicit assignations, bar room brawls and drunken licentiousness, and as a result, it was subject to scrutiny by police and liquor license inspectors.

#### Credits

Shawn Day

[Introduction](#)

[Early Days](#)

[Starting Out](#)

[An Establishment of One's Own](#)

[Family Life](#)

[Civic Duty](#)

[Challenges](#)

[Success](#)

[A Desperate Last Gamble?](#)

[Failure and Demise](#)

[But Maybe Not ...](#)

[Lessons Learned](#)

[An Ode to the Innkeeper](#)

[— Browse Items](#) [— Browse Collections](#) [— Browse Exhibits](#)

Additionally, as pages are explored, the user can navigate via forward and back links automatically created by Omeka. A user can choose to follow the narrative from the list of the pages or as you can see below move through sequentially via the arrows to the next sequential page below the screen.

## CHALLENGES



Ben McAteer, 1910

John McAteer was employed as a manager at the Victoria Hotel from 1901-1904. This re-entry into the trade coincided with the family's purchase of a vacation property on Lake Simcoe, which may have demanded additional short-term income. Further expenses related to the maturing family may also explain why McAteer sought employment.

← Civic Duty

Success →

Challenges

— Browse Items — Browse Collections — Browse Exhibits

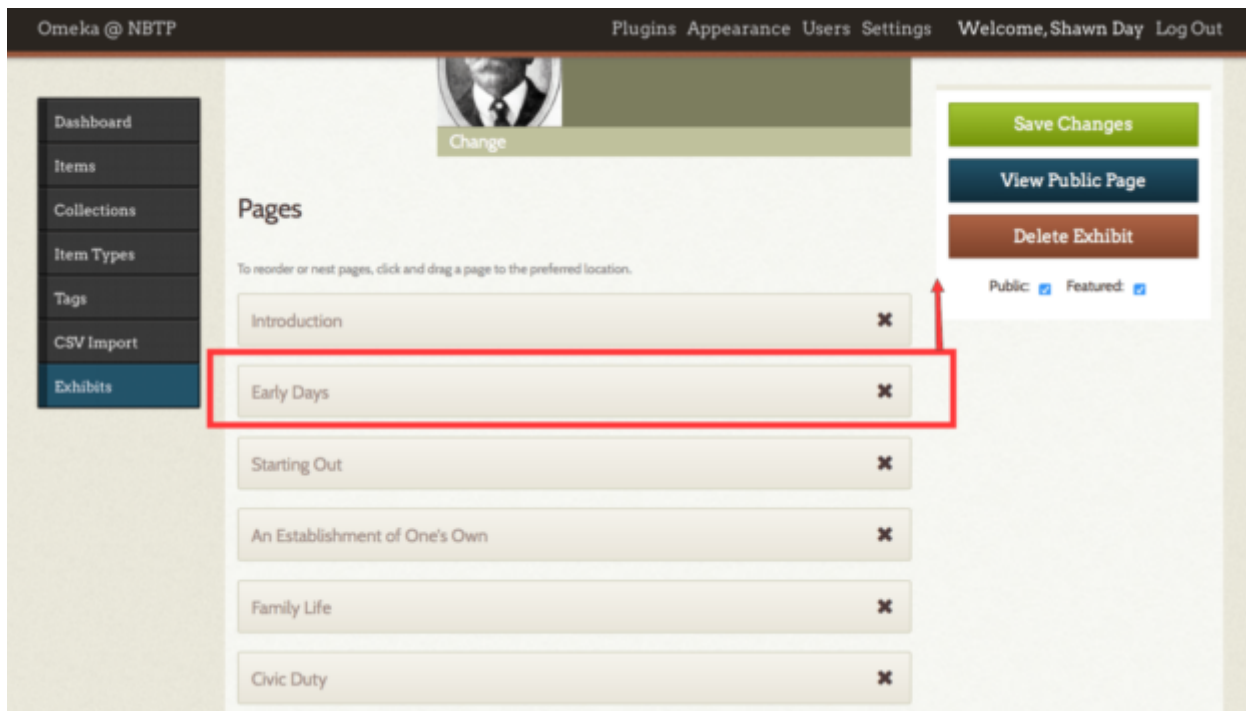
I will now leave it to you to populate and play with the exhibit. You have the text and there is a wealth of items available that we ingested in the first tutorial. Go forth and see what you can create.

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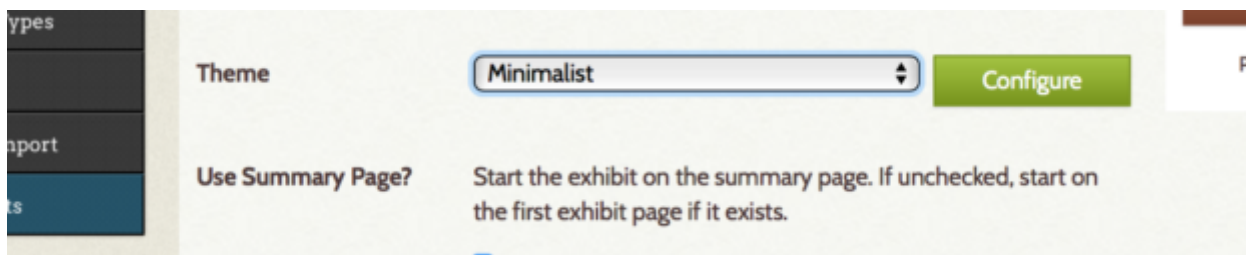
## Step 6 - Adjusting the Presentation

Pages can be re-ordered and edited at any time to alter your delivery. Choose to 'edit' the Exhibit again from the list of exhibits.

All your pages are shown below the description of the exhibit itself on this screen. Note that a page can be clicked and then dragged to another position in the order. The same holds true on individual pages when you wish to reorder blocks of text and items.



Additionally, you can change the appearance of the specific exhibit by adjusting its theme settings. To do this, choose a new theme from the **Theme:** popup menu. When you do so, a **Configure** button will appear to the right. Click this button.



The configuration screen will allow you to change the logo on your exhibit screen, footer and copyright text as well as some aspects of your styling. These depend on the particular theme chosen. You can also alter the way the navigation menu between pages is displayed. Try changing the page navigation style to **Full-Width** from **Sidebar**, save your changes and then choose **View Public Page** to see the results.



### Configure the "Minimalist" Theme

Configurations apply to this theme only.

**Save Changes**

#### Header and Footer

**Logo File** Choose a logo file. This will replace the site title in the header of the theme. Recommended maximum width for the logo is 500px.  
 no file selected

**Footer Text** Add some text to be displayed in your theme's footer.

**B I U** | **Align** | **Link** | **Format** | **HTML**

No Rights Reserved

**Display Copyright In Footer** Check this box if you wish to display your site's copyright information in the footer.  
☒

**Use Advanced Site-wide Search** Check this box if you wish to allow users to search your whole site by record (i.e. item, collection, file) and choose their boolean method.  
☒

#### Homepage

#### Items

**Item File Gallery** Check this box if you wish to display your item files as a grid of thumbnails and icons.  
☒

#### Exhibit Builder

**Select exhibit page navigation style.** Choose exhibit page navigation style: full-width is a bar that stretches across the page, and sidebar takes up a smaller fraction of the page width.

Sidebar

When you do you should see all pages now listed (and contained in menu boxes) across the top of the screen rather than down the side. Additional modifications can be made and experimented with now that you know where to find them.

A fully populated version is available at:

<https://ucdeireidium.omeka.net/exhibits/show/mcateers> if you want to see the potential results.

You now have a lively and engaging repository of digital objects constructed using Omeka. Enjoy!