

Bedfordshire
Archives & Records Service
established 1913

Anthology



REWRITE HISTORY CHALLENGE 2016/ '17

A collection of winners, finalists and
highly commended stories and poems.

In October 2016, Bedfordshire Archives and Records Service launched a creative writing competition for all Year 5—13 students across Bedfordshire. Students were invited to write a story of no more than 500 words or a poem that was no longer than 20 lines using one of the archives for inspiration.

Students could enter either the Key Stage 2 to 3 or Key Stage 4 to 5 category.

Author, Kate Milner was asked to judge eight finalists and select one winner from each category.

In 2014 I was putting together a bid to Heritage Lottery Fund to fund the three-year post of Learning Officer. This individual would work with all schools in the county, showing them the incredible resources we have at Bedfordshire Archive and Record Service - resources to help them in their school work but also to fire their imaginations.

Three years later this project has reached its culmination with Rewrite History, a competition challenging children to write poetry and short stories based on images and documents supplied from our archives. When our Learning Officer Clare Davison had the idea for the project we had no idea if it would create any interest or not. We need not have worried. Over two hundred children sent in entries and it was quite obvious to all of us just how inspired they were by what they had seen - and that inspiration had brought the past to life. More, it had made them think about feelings, events and ideas our forebears had felt, seen and thought years before us and which are reflected in our World today.

Had I known what an exciting event would crown our three-year project when I was labouring to put the bid together in March 2014 I would have been a happy man! Well done to all our entrants, whether they made the anthology or not; I hope that the good things stirred within you help shape your lives for years to come - archives have an odd way of doing that.

Thank you to Esther Bellamy (Archivist), Clare Davison and guest judge Kate Milner.

Martin Deacon, Archivist.

Key Stage 2 and 3 archives selection



Bedfordshire Archives Ref: Z1306/1/32/1



Bedfordshire Archives Ref: BTNeg2104



Bedfordshire Archives Ref: Z1306/83/8

Rewrite History Challenge 2016/'17 Highly Commended entries

Author: Ruby Skudder

Title of short story: The Wait

Representing: Manshead School

Category: Key Stage 3

Bedfordshire Archives reference: Z1306/83/8

The wait was long, it was stressful. I stood there, useless. I waited for hours, my mind flooded with thoughts. The last four years have been torture wondering if he is dead or alive. We have been through so much, he has been through so much. He has survived The Great War. I couldn't be more proud. He has seen deaths, injuries. Whenever he wrote to me it was like I could feel his pain.

After waiting for even longer at the top of the bendy road thinking whether he looks different or not. My mind is telling me he isn't coming back but my heart is telling me he must.

Whilst I am waiting I think of old memories. Memories of when we met, when the children were born. Memories of our marriage ceremony. Oh, how painful it's become to even remember. Round the corner of this bendy road out come a young couple. Their hearts filled with happiness and love, meanwhile my heart aches. They're holding hands so tight they are almost red, but they don't care, they are busy enjoying each others company. How I miss that, not having a care in the world, not a worry in sight, just in love. Tears suddenly rush to my eyes and I feel one run down my cheek, but I mustn't, I can't cry on such a glorious day, after all he is just late. I have to be happy.

Then the children come running from outside the house asking if their father is home yet. I hold back my tears and tell them it won't be long now. I sigh and slowly walk back inside. Even though this is meant to be a great day I can't help but think if he ever will come back.

rooted to the spot, unable to move. Only letting out the smallest whimper, buying the attention of the intruders. The two children stopped, motionless. They simultaneously turned their heads in her direction. Their eyes were solid black, gleaming in the moonlight. Boils and cuts covered their sickly skin, with red rings around their eyes. Wet, raven-black hair framed their grotesque features as they grinned wickedly in Angelica's direction. The girl stood up and sluggishly crawled on all fours towards the end of the bed and began to climb up. One cool hand crept under her sheets and brushed her toes. The boy cried out softly to the girl;

"Annie! Annie!"

She stopped in her tracks, and the devilish smile dropped from her face. She ran out of the room, the boy shadowing close behind. No floorboards creaked as they ran down the hall. Quiet. Angelica rolled out of bed and followed the pair of dark figures as they swiftly escaped her sight.

She wished that that was the last time the apparitions visited her during the night, alas, they continued to interrupt her sleep. Always on the third chime at three o'clock. Each night more terrifying than the last. By the fifth night, Angelica decided that she needed to tell someone about what she had witnessed. An older brother perhaps. She told him, he didn't take the situation lightly. He promised to help trap the ghosts and keep them from the house forever. Whether they succeeded was never documented.