

LOST LETTERS

creative challenge #10

BORROWED WORDS

IT'S NOT
YOUR
BIRTHDAY
BUT...



As part of our Lost Letters project with Surrey History Centre, It's Not Your Birthday But... are inviting you to 'borrow' words from old letters and reimagine them with your own thoughts, stories or creative responses.

Breathe new life into words taken from letters written in 1917 and the 1940's. Think about how these borrowed words may provide inspiration, or be used to explore our own experiences.

The words we have borrowed were found in two separate sets of letters in the archive. The first were written by Captain George Alexander Birnie in 1917, and the second were written by Frank Baker to his wife Isabel in the 1940's. Below is a photo of Captain Birnie, who was serving in the 8th East Surreys in WW1 in France:



TASK...

Reimagine words from old letters in BORROWED WORDS

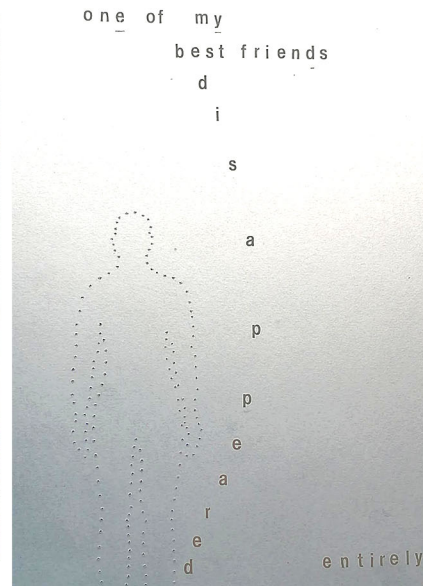
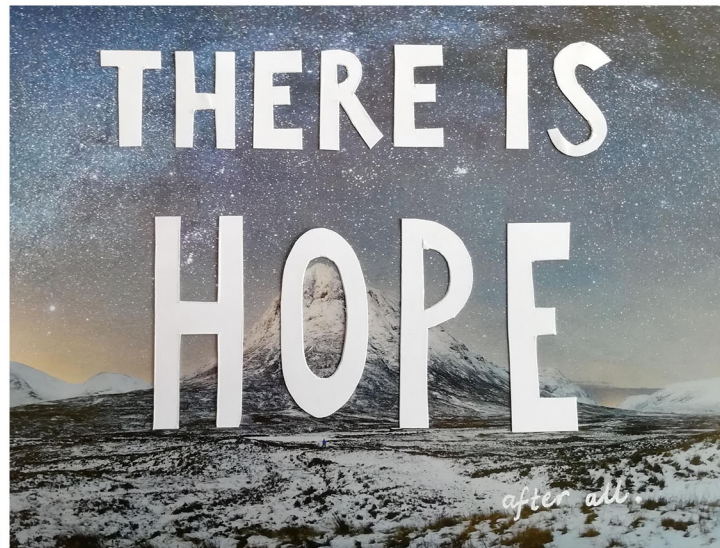


Respond to the borrowed words below and reinvent them. Use them in your own way in a story, poem or letter or as inspiration for a piece of art.

Some of the words below were borrowed from letters by Captain George Alexander Birnie of Victoria, Australia. He enlisted in the Royal Army Medical Corps in 1914 before sailing to England to fight in France. During his service, Captain Birnie was wounded in a bloody battle at Passchendaele Ridge, where '750 men went over the top' and less than 50 returned. In October 1917, he wrote home to his parents to tell them of his experiences.

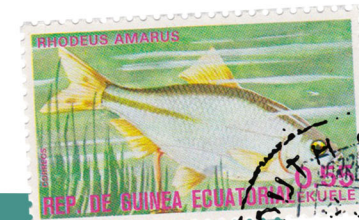
Here are some examples:

Use these borrowed words:



- I slept like a log
- One of my best friends disappeared entirely
- I have heard it now many times and each time it sounds more wonderful
- It was a pretty hot trip, we got through somehow
- I wondered if I dared kiss you
- The idea of a real day's work rather frightens me
- Like a burst balloon
- There is hope (after all)

Could you repeat the exercise?



SHARE...

Challenge created by: Sarah Bennett
Design by: Nicole Cowan



Share your Borrowed Words work with us. By sending your work to us it may be shared online, in a touring exhibition, and/or donated to the Surrey History Centre to be stored in the archives.

The more original artwork we receive, the richer our collection will be. We would be grateful if you could take a picture of your Borrowed Words and post it online:



itsnotyourbirthdaybut



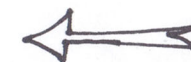
@INYBB_



It's Not Your Birthday But

or email it to:

itsnotyourbirthdaybut@gmail.com



and then post your original to us at:



INYBB, The Old Bank House, 26 Station Approach,
Hinchley Wood, Surrey, KT10 0SR



We recognise that not everyone can make it to a postbox or a post office at the current time, so if you are unable to post it, it is fine to just post it online or email it to us. If you need help with postage costs, please get in touch.



**HERITAGE
FUND**

Thanks to the support of The National Lottery Heritage Fund, Lost Letters is a project working with people across Surrey, thinking about local history and letters. The Borrowed Words contributions will be stored in Surrey History Centre so that people in the future will understand what people were doing in 2020.