

A Review of Famous Songs of the Past

'Fascinating Facts' January 2019

Track 1 The Hokey Pokey

The hokey cokey (United Kingdom) or hokey pokey (United States, Canada, Ireland, Australia), is a participation dance with a distinctive accompanying tune and lyric structure. It is well known in English-speaking countries. It is of unclear origin.

Ray Anthony (born January 20, 1922) is an American bandleader, trumpeter, songwriter, and actor. He is the last surviving member of the Glenn Miller Orchestra.

Track 2 Blow The Wind Southerly

A traditional English folk song from Northumbria. It tells of a woman desperately hoping for a southerly wind to blow her lover back home over the ocean to her. Kathleen Ferrier recorded what is perhaps the best-known version of the song in London in 1949.

Kathleen Mary Ferrier, CBE (22 April 1912 – 8 October 1953) was an English contralto singer who achieved an international reputation as a stage, concert and recording artist, with a repertoire extending from folksong and popular ballads to the classical works of Bach, Brahms, Mahler and Elgar.

Track 3 Jamaica Farewell

This track is a calypso tune about the beauty of the West Indian Islands. It was Belafonte who popularised the song outside the Caribbean Islands.

Harry Belafonte, born Harold George Bellanfanti, Jr in Harlem, New York, From 1932 to 1940, he lived with his grandmother in her native country of Jamaica. In the 1940s he became interested in American Negro Theater. He and Sidney Poitier, both financially struggling, regularly purchased a single seat to local plays, trading places in between acts, informing the other about the progression of the play. At the end of the 1940s, he took classes in acting. While primarily known for Calypso, Harry has recorded in many genres,

including blues, folk, gospel, show tunes, and American standards. As The Beatles and other stars from Britain began to dominate the U.S. pop charts, Harry's commercial success diminished; He supported the Civil Rights Movement in the 1950s and was one of Martin Luther King Jr.'s confidants. In 2001 he went to South Africa to support the campaign against HIV/AIDS. He was also active in the anti-apartheid movement. In January 2006 Harry said that if he could choose his epitaph it would be, "Harry Belafonte, Patriot."

Track 4 Cruising Down The River

Cruising Down the River is a 1946 popular recording song. Words and music were by Eily Beadell and Nell Tollerton, two middle-aged women who wrote the song in 1945. It became the winner of a public songwriting competition held in the UK.

Blue Barron (November 19, 1913 – July 16, 2005), born Harry Freidman, was an American orchestra leader in the 1940s and early 1950s during the "Big Band" era. Born in Cleveland, Ohio, he studied at Ohio State University before going into show business. He adopted the stage name Blue Barron and by 1940 had created his own orchestra. His band's more subdued tone was referred to as "Sweet" music to distinguish it from the "Swing" bands of the era. Barron's orchestra began in the New York City area but later toured the U.S. and performed at popular venues in Los Angeles where they also appeared in several motion pictures and recorded a number of LPs. During World War II, Barron served with the United States Army and at war's end resumed his musical career.

Track 5 An English Country Garden

Country Gardens is an English folk tune collected by Cecil Sharp and arranged for piano in 1918 by Percy Grainger. The tune and the Percy Grainger arrangement for piano and orchestra is a favourite with school orchestras, and other performances of the work include Morris dancing. Jimmie Rodgers sang a well-known version.

James Charles "**Jimmie**" **Rodgers** (September 8, 1897 – May 26, 1933) was an American country singer in the early 20th century, known most widely for his rhythmic yodelling.

Among the first country music superstars and pioneers, Rodgers was also known as "The Singing Brakeman", "The Blue Yodeler", and "The Father of Country Music". He loved entertaining from an early age and by age 13, he had twice organized and begun traveling shows, only to be brought home by his father. He continued singing until his early death at 35 from tuberculosis.

Track 6 The Party's Over

The Party's Over is a popular song introduced in the 1956 musical comedy *Bells Are Ringing* by Judy Holliday. Shirley Bassey recorded the song for her first Columbia album "The Fabulous Shirley Bassey".

Dame **Shirley Veronica Bassey**, DBE (born 8 January 1937) is a Welsh singer. She was born above a brothel in a docklands slum in Tiger Bay Cardiff. She was of paternal Nigerian and maternal English descent. She found fame in the mid-1950s and has been called "one of the most popular female vocalists in Britain during the last half of the 20th century". In the US, in particular, she is best known for recording the theme songs to the James Bond films *Goldfinger* (1964), *Diamonds Are Forever* (1971), and *Moonraker* (1979).

Track 7 Don't Laugh at Me

The song "Don't laugh at me ('cause I'm a fool)" was written by Norman Wisdom for the film *Trouble in Store* (1953) and became his theme song. He still uses it to close his one man show.

Sir **Norman Wisdom**, OBE (4 February 1915 – 4 October 2010) was an English actor, comedian and singer-songwriter best known for a series of comedy films produced between 1953 and 1966 featuring his hapless onscreen character Norman Pitkin. These films initially made more money than the James Bond film series. Wisdom gained international celebrity status. Wisdom later forged a career on Broadway in New York and as a television actor, winning critical acclaim for his dramatic role of a dying cancer patient in the television play *Going Gently* in 1981. Wisdom was knighted in 2000 and spent much of his later life on the Isle of Man. Some of his later appearances included roles in *Last of the Summer Wine* and *Coronation Street*, and he retired from acting at the age of 90.

Track 8 Two Lovely Black Eyes

The song was written by Charles Coburn. In a long career, Coburn was known largely for comic songs like *Two Lovely Black Eyes*. He adapted it in 1886 from an existing song, and it was premièred at the Paragon Theatre, in the Mile End Road.

Herman's Hermits are an English beat (or pop) band, formed in Manchester in 1963 as *Herman & The Hermits*. The group's record producer, Mickie Most emphasized a simple, non-threatening, clean-cut image, although the band originally played R&B numbers. This helped *Herman's Hermits* become hugely successful in the mid-1960s. In 1965 and 1966, the group rivaled *The Beatles* on the US.

Track 9 The Lambeth Walk

The Lambeth Walk is a song from the 1937 musical *Me and My Girl*. The song takes its name from a local street, Lambeth Walk, once notable for its street market and working class culture in Lambeth, an area of London. The tune gave its name to a Cockney dance first made popular in 1937 by Lupino Lane. The story line of *Me and My Girl* concerns a Cockney barrow boy who inherits an earldom but almost loses his Lambeth girlfriend. It was turned into a 1939 film *The Lambeth Walk* which starred Lane.

Dame Gracie Fields, DBE (born Grace Stansfield, 9 January 1898 – 27 September 1979), was an English singer and comedienne and star of both cinema and music hall. Fields had a great rapport with her audience, which helped her become one of Britain's highest paid performers, playing to sold out theatres across the country. Her most famous song, which became her theme, "Sally," was worked into the title of her first film, *Sally in Our Alley* (1931). At the start of WW2 Fields travelled to France to entertain the troops in the midst of air-raids, performing on the backs of open lorries and in war-torn areas. She was the first artist to play behind enemy lines in Berlin. However, because her husband remained an Italian citizen and would have been interned in the United Kingdom, she was forced to leave Britain for North America during the war, at the instruction of Winston Churchill, who told her to "Make American Dollars, not British Pounds," which she did, in aid of the Spitfire Fund. She lived on her beloved Isle of Capri for the remainder of her life while still performing occasionally on stage and in films.

Track 10 I Love Paris

I Love Paris is a popular song written by Cole Porter and published in 1953. The song was introduced by Lilo in the musical *Can-Can*. A line in the song's lyrics inspired the title of the 1964 movie 'Paris When It Sizzles'.

Frank Sinatra (December 12, 1915 – May 14, 1998) began his musical career in the swing era with Harry James and Tommy Dorsey. Sinatra became an unprecedentedly successful solo artist in the early to mid-1940s, after being signed to Columbia Records in 1943. Being the idol of the "bobby soxers", he released his first album, *The Voice of Frank Sinatra* in 1946. His professional career had stalled by the 1950s, but it was reborn in 1953 after he won the Academy Award for Best Supporting Actor for his performance in *From Here to Eternity*.

He signed with Capitol Records in 1953 and released several critically lauded albums (such as *In the Wee Small Hours*, *Songs for Swingin' Lovers*, *Come Fly with Me*, *Only the Lonely* and *Nice 'n' Easy*). He toured internationally, was a founding member of the Rat Pack and fraternized with celebrities and statesmen, including John F. Kennedy. Sinatra turned 50 in 1965, recorded the retrospective *September of My Years*, starred in the Emmy-winning television special *Frank Sinatra: A Man*.

Track 11 What Do You Want To Make Those Eyes At Me For

This song became a UK hit in 1959 when a doo-wop version, produced by Michael Barclay, became a number one hit for Emile Ford and the Checkmates over the Christmas and New Year of 1959/60, having overtaken Adam Faith's 'What Do You Want?'.

Emile Ford (16 October 1937 – 11 April 2016) was a musician and singer born in Saint Lucia. He was popular in the United Kingdom in the late 1950s and early 1960s as the leader of Emile Ford & the Checkmates.

Track 12 I Pretend

A song written by Barry Mason and Les Reed. Des O'Connor's recording of this track became a number-one hit in the UK Singles Chart in July 1968, and a number-one hit in Ireland the same month. His version was released in the United States on Diamond Records.

Desmond Bernard O'Connor, CBE (born 12 January 1932) is an English comedian, singer and television presenter. He was a long time chat show host, and the presenter of the long-running Channel 4 gameshow Countdown. He has recorded 36 albums and has had four top-ten singles, including a number-one hit with "I Pretend". O'Connor was born in Stepney, East London. His mother was Jewish and his father was from Ireland. Des claims to be the only O'Connor who ever had a Bar Mitzvah.

He was evacuated to Northampton during the Second World War and was briefly a professional footballer with Northampton Town. After completing his National Service in the Royal Air Force, he worked as a shoe salesman at Church's in Northampton before entering show business. Before his break in television, his first theatre appearances were in variety, where he appeared in venues throughout the country.

Track 13 The Flower of Scotland

The Flower of Scotland is a Scottish song, used frequently at special occasions and sporting events. Although there is no official national anthem of Scotland, Flower of Scotland is one of a number of songs which unofficially fulfil this role. It was written by Roy Williamson of the folk group The Corries, and presented in 1967. It refers to the victory of the Scots, led by Robert the Bruce, over England's Edward II at the Battle of Bannockburn in 1314.

The Corries were a Scottish folk group that emerged from the Scottish folk revival of the early 1960s. Although the group was a trio in the early days, it was the partnership of Roy Williamson and Ronnie Browne that it is best known.

Track 14 Home Boys Home

Home Boys Home is a traditional folk song, sung by The Dubliners with Luke Kelly on vocals.

The Dubliners are an Irish folk band founded in Dublin in 1962, the group line-up has seen many changes over their fifty year career. The band garnered international success with their lively Irish folk songs, traditional street ballads and instrumentals. The band were regulars on the folk scenes in both Dublin and London in the early 1960s and eventually appeared on Top of the Pops in 1967 with hits "Seven Drunken Nights" and "Black Velvet Band". The group's success remained steady right through the 1970s and a number of collaborations with The Pogues in 1987 saw them enter the UK Singles Chart on another two occasions. They are highly respected in their native Ireland. In 2012, they celebrated 50 years together; making them Ireland's longest surviving musical act and one of the most influential Irish acts of the 20th century.

Track 15 Just A Song At Twilight (Love's Old Sweet Song)

A Victorian parlour song published in 1884 by composer James Lynam Molloy and lyricist G. Clifton Bingham.

Eleanor Steber was an American operatic soprano. Steber is noted as one of the first major opera stars to have achieved the highest success with training and a career based in the United States. Beyond the opera, Steber was popular with radio and television audiences in frequent appearances on *The Voice of Firestone*, *The Bell Telephone Hour* and other programs. Her extensive recording output included many popular ballads and operetta tunes in addition to arias, art songs and complete operas.

Track 16 Sweets for My Sweet

A song originally recorded by The Drifters in October 1961. This was one of the few post-1958 Drifters singles that did not feature a string section. It also featured Jimmy Radcliffe and four female backup vocalists, all of whom would later have hit records, Cissy Houston, Doris Troy, Dionne Warwick, and Dee Dee Warwick.

The Searchers are an English beat group, who emerged as part of the 1960s Merseybeat scene along with the Beatles and Gerry & the Pacemakers. The band's hits include a remake of the Drifters' 1961 hit, Sweets for My Sweet; Needles and Pins, Don't Throw Your Love Away; and Love Potion No. 9. They were the second group from Liverpool, after the Beatles, to have a hit in the United States.

Track 17 How Much Is That Doggie In The Window?

How Much Is That Doggie in the Window? is a popular novelty song published in 1952. The best-known version of the song was the original, recorded by Patti Page in 1952. But a recording by Lita Roza was the one most widely heard in the UK. It also distinguished Roza as the first British woman to have a number one hit in the UK chart.

Lita Roza (14 March 1926 – 14 August 2008) was a British singer whose 1953 hit record "(How Much Is) That Doggie in the Window?" made her the first British solo singer to top the UK Singles Chart. She owed her sultry looks and Latin passion to her Spanish father. When she was 16, she got a job as a singer in the "New Yorker" club in Southport for £5 a week before signing up with the Harry Roy Orchestra in London. By the time she was 18, Roza had retired from show business, married an American and moved to Miami, Florida. However, the marriage did not last and shortly after World War II she returned to the United Kingdom. She remained a top UK recording artist all through the forties and fifties.

Track 18 Hang out the Washing On The Siegfried Line

We're Going to Hang out the Washing on the Siegfried Line is a popular song by Ulster songwriter Jimmy Kennedy, written whilst he was a Captain in the British Expeditionary Force during the early stages of the Second World War. The Siegfried Line was a chain of fortifications along Germany's Western border, analogous to the Maginot Line in France. The song was used as a morale-booster during the war.

Sydney John Lipton (14 December 1905 – 19 July 1995) was a British dance band leader, popular from the 1930s to the 1960s when he led "one of the most polished of the British Dance Bands". His band started recording in 1932, first for Zonophone and then Decca, and made regular appearances on BBC radio after 1933. Among his musicians were Ted Heath, George Evans, and Billy Munn. His daughter Celia Lipton, who later made a career as an actress and singer, joined as vocalist in the 1940s. After serving in the forces, he returned to the Grosvenor Hotel, and continued to lead the orchestra there until 1967. He later formed his own entertainment agency, and served as musical director for various venues and cruise ships.

Track 19 Everything Stops For Tea

Everything Stops For Tea was composed by the New York born Maurice Sigler, has lyrics by Al Goodheart and Al Hoffman. It was featured in the 1935 musical Come Out Of The Pantry. This popular wartime song featured in The Ministry of Food exhibition, is a jolly homage to the British 4 o'clock tea break.

Walter John "**Jack**" **Buchanan** (2 April 1891 – 20 October 1957) was a Scottish theatre and film actor, singer, producer and director. He was known

for three decades as the embodiment of the debonair man-about-town. Buchanan was a frequent broadcaster on British radio, especially during the Second World War. Programmes included The Jack Buchanan Show and, in 1955, the hugely popular eight-part series Man About Town.

Track 20 I See The Moon

I See the Moon is a popular song written by Meredith Willson. The song is normally performed as a lullaby-like ballad, though the Stargazers' version was a more humorous rendering with a pub-style piano accompaniment and the singers putting on "funny" voices.

The Stargazers were a British vocal group, jointly founded in 1949 by Cliff Adams and Ronnie Milne. They made their first broadcasts with BBC Radio on such programs as Workers' Playtime. The Stargazers enjoyed considerable commercial success during the 1950s. The group served as backing vocalists for Petula Clark on her first recordings.

Track 21 Black Velvet Band

This song is a traditional English and Irish folk song describing transportation to Australia, a common punishment in 19th century Britain and Ireland. The song tells the story of a tradesman who meets a young woman who has stolen an item and passed it on to him. The man then appears in court the next day, charged with stealing the item and is sent to Van Diemen's Land for doing so.

The High Kings are an Irish ballad group. They were formed in Dublin in 2008. The band consists of multi-talented performers Finbarr Clancy, Brian Dunphy, Martin Furey and Darren Holden. Together they play thirteen different instruments. On March 20th 2012 The High Kings were invited to perform at the Official St Patrick's Day Celebrations at The White House in Washington DC, United States.

Track 22 Wooden Heart

This track is a song best known for its use in the 1960 Elvis Presley film G.I. Blues. The song was a hit for Presley in the United Kingdom, making number one for six weeks.

Elvis Aaron Presley (January 8, 1935 – August 16, 1977) was one of the most popular American singers of the 20th century. A cultural icon, he is commonly known by the single name Elvis. He is often referred to as the "King of Rock and Roll" or simply "the King".

Born in Tupelo, Mississippi, Presley moved to Memphis, Tennessee, with his family at the age of 13. He began his career there in 1954, working with Sun Records owner Sam Phillips, who wanted to bring the sound of African American music to a wider audience. His energised interpretations of songs,

many from African American sources, and his uninhibited performance style made him enormously popular—and controversial. In November 1956, he made his film debut in *Love Me Tender*.

Drafted into military service in 1958, Presley relaunched his recording career two years later. He staged few concerts however, and guided by Parker, devoted much of the 1960s to making Hollywood movies and soundtrack albums. In 1968, after seven years away from the stage, he returned to live performance in a celebrated comeback television special that led to an extended Las Vegas concert residency and a string of profitable tours. Prescription drug abuse severely compromised his health, and he died suddenly in 1977 at the age of 42. Presley was one of the first big celebrities. At the age of 21, within a year of his first appearance on American television, he was one of the most famous people in the world.

Track 23 The Spaniard That Blighted My Life

The Spaniard That Blighted My Life is a comic song which was composed and first performed by music-hall performer Billy Merson. It was performed by Al Jolson in his show *The Honeymoon Express* and his recording of it was a hit in 1913, selling over a million copies.

Al Jolson (May 26, 1886 – October 23, 1950) was an American singer, comedian, and actor. In his heyday, he was dubbed "The World's Greatest Entertainer" His performing style was brash and extroverted, and he popularised a large number of songs. In the 1930s, he was America's most famous and highest paid entertainer. Although he's best remembered today as the star in the first (full length) talking movie, *The Jazz Singer* in 1927, he later starred in a series of successful musical films throughout the 1930s. After a period of inactivity, his stardom returned with the 1946 Oscar-winning biographical film, *The Jolson Story*. After the attack on Pearl Harbour, Jolson became the first star to entertain troops overseas during World War II. He died just weeks after returning to the U.S., partly due to the physical exertion of performing.

Track 24 The Way You Do The Things You Do

A hit single by The Temptations released in 1964 from their Motown album 'Meet The Temptations'. In contrast to the commercial failure of The Temptations' previous seven singles, the song was a huge success. Smokey Robinson and Bobby Rogers of The Miracles wrote it.

The Temptations are an American vocal group known for their success in the 60s and 70s at Motown Records. The group's repertoire has included, during its five- decade career, R&B, doo-wop, funk, disco, soul, and adult contemporary music. Known for their recognizable choreography, distinct harmonies, and flashy onstage suits, the Temptations have been said to be as influential to soul as The Beatles are to pop and rock. Formed in Detroit,

Michigan, in 1960 as The Elgins the Temptations have always featured at least five male vocalists/dancers. Having sold tens of millions of albums, the Temptations are one of the most successful groups in music history.

Track 25 San Francisco

San Francisco is a song from the 1936 musical-drama directed by Woody Van Dyke, based on the April 18, 1906 San Francisco earthquake. The film, which was the top grossing movie of that year, stars Clark Gable, Jeanette MacDonald, and Spencer Tracy. The then very popular singing of MacDonald helped make this film a hit, coming on the heels of her other 1936 blockbuster, *Rose Marie*.

Jeanette Anna MacDonald (June 18, 1903 – January 14, 1965) was an American singer and actress best remembered for her musical films of the 1930s with Maurice Chevalier (*Love Me Tonight*, *The Merry Widow*) and Nelson Eddy (*Naughty Marietta*, *Rose-Marie*, and *Maytime*). During the 1930s and 1940s she starred in 29 feature films, including *The Love Parade*, *One Hour with You*, *Naughty Marietta* and *San Francisco*. She recorded extensively, earning three gold records. She later appeared in opera, concerts, radio, and television. MacDonald was one of the most influential sopranos of the 20th century, introducing opera to movie-going audiences and inspiring a generation of singers.

Track 26 She Wears Red Feathers

She Wears Red Feathers is a popular song, which was written by Bob Merrill in 1952. The best-known recording of the song was made by Guy Mitchell in 1952 and was a No. 1 single in the UK Singles Chart in 1953 for four weeks.

Guy Mitchell, born Albert George Cernik (February 22, 1927 – July 1, 1999) was an American pop singer, successful in his homeland, the U.K. and Australia. As an international recording star of the 1950s he achieved record sales in excess of 44 million units and this included six million-selling singles. In the fall of 1957, Mitchell starred in his own ABC variety show, *The Guy Mitchell Show*.

Track 27 Lark In The Clear Air

Irish folk tune first recorded by Sidney MacEwan in 1932 with lyrics by Sir Samuel Ferguson of Belfast around 1850.

Sir Thomas Boaz Allen, CBE (born 10 September 1944) is an English operatic baritone. He is widely admired in the opera world for his voice, the versatility of his repertoire, and his acting—leading many to regard him as one of the best lyric baritones of the late 20th century.

Track 28 Go Down Moses

This song describes events in the Old Testament of the Bible, specifically Exodus 8:1: "And the LORD spake unto Moses, Go unto Pharaoh, and say unto him, Thus saith the LORD, Let my people go, that they may serve me", in which God commands Moses to demand the release of the Israelites from bondage in Egypt.

Louis Armstrong, nicknamed Satchmo, Satch, and Pops, was an American trumpeter, composer, singer and occasional actor who was one of the most influential figures in jazz. His career spanned five decades, from the 1920s to the 1960s, and different eras in the history of jazz. In 2017, he was inducted into the Rhythm & Blues Hall of Fame.

Track 29 Little Sir Echo

A song sung by Vera Lynn.

Dame Vera Lynn, widely known as "the Forces' Sweetheart", is an English singer of traditional pop, songwriter and actress, whose musical recordings and performances were enormously popular during the Second World War. During the war she toured Egypt, India, and Burma as part of ENSA, giving outdoor concerts for the troops. The songs most associated with her are "We'll Meet Again", "The White Cliffs of Dover", "A Nightingale Sang in Berkeley Square" and "There'll Always Be an England". She remained popular after the war, appearing on radio and television in the UK and the US and recording such hits as "Auf Wiederseh'n Sweetheart" and her UK Number one single "My Son, My Son". Her last single, "I Love This Land", was released to mark the end of the Falklands War. In 2009, at age 92, she became the oldest living artist to top the UK Albums Chart, with *We'll Meet Again: The Very Best of Vera Lynn*. She released the album *Vera Lynn 100* in 2017, to commemorate her centennial year, and it was a number 3 hit, making her the oldest recording artist in the world and first centenarian performer to have an album in the charts.

Track 30 L-O-V-E

L-O-V-E is a jazz song written for American singer-pianist Nat King Cole's 1965 album L-O-V-E (the last album released before Cole's death on February 15, 1965).

Nathaniel Adams Coles (March 17, 1919 – February 15, 1965), known professionally as **Nat King Cole**, was an American musician who first came to prominence as a leading jazz pianist. He owes most of his popular musical fame to his soft baritone voice, which he used to perform in big band and jazz genres. He was one of the first black Americans to host a television variety show, and has maintained worldwide popularity even since his death.

Track 31 Fings Ain't Wot They Used T' Be

Fings Ain't Wot They Used T'Be is a musical comedy about cockney low-life characters in the 1950s, including spivs, prostitutes, teddy-boys and corrupt policemen. The title song was recorded by Max and delivered in heavily accented working class dialect.

Max Bygraves OBE (born Walter William Bygraves on 16 October 1922) is an English comedian, singer, actor and variety performer. He appeared on his own television shows, sometimes performing comedy sketches between songs. Shows he presented included the game show Family Fortunes. Bygraves was born the son of poor parents in London, England. His father was a professional boxer, known as Battling Tom Smith, and a casual dockworker. Bygraves later changed his name from Walter William to Max after comedian Max Miller.