

# Vera Lynn

20<sup>th</sup> March 1917 - 18<sup>th</sup> June 2020



twinkl

# Who Was Vera Lynn?

Vera Lynn was known as 'The Forces' Sweetheart'.

She is most famous for being a singer with hugely popular recordings during the Second World War.



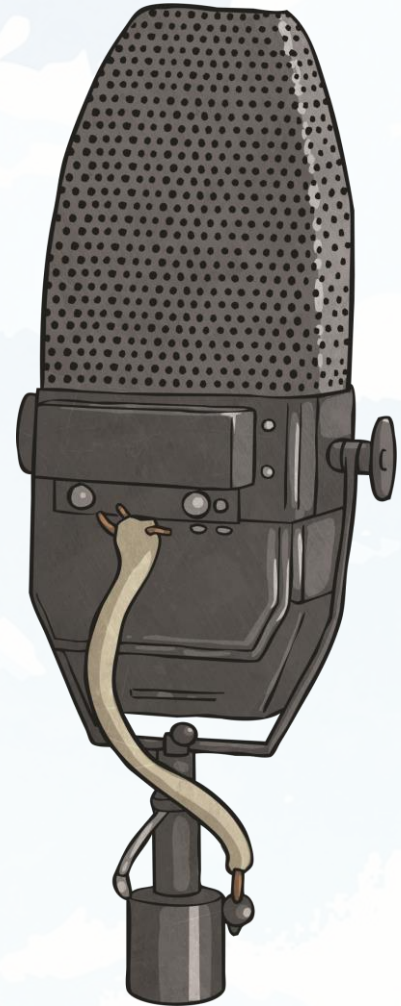


# Her Early Years

Vera Margaret Welch (as she was named) was born on 20<sup>th</sup> March 1917 in London during the First World War.

She started singing in clubs from the age of seven, which is when she adopted her grandmother's [maiden name](#) 'Lynn'. She was also a member of a dance troupe until the age of fifteen.

By the age of 11, she had left school to tour around the country singing with bands.



# The Second World War

During air raids in London, Vera Lynn would go into the underground stations where people were sheltering and sing to them to keep spirits up. She joined [ENSA](#), which helped to keep up spirits in the war effort.

The event that really made her name was singing for the [troops](#) in Burma (where many performers wouldn't go). She wore a specially-made uniform and performed on the back of a Jeep.

She called the soldiers her 'boys'.

In 1941, she also started her own radio programme entitled 'Sincerely Yours', which sent messages to soldiers serving in the war.



# Famous Songs

Although Vera Lynn has had numerous hit records, probably her two most significant songs are:

**'We'll Meet Again'** and **'White Cliffs of Dover'**

Both have a theme of hope and are about soldiers returning from the war and coming home to loved ones.



Listen to one of her performances [here](#).

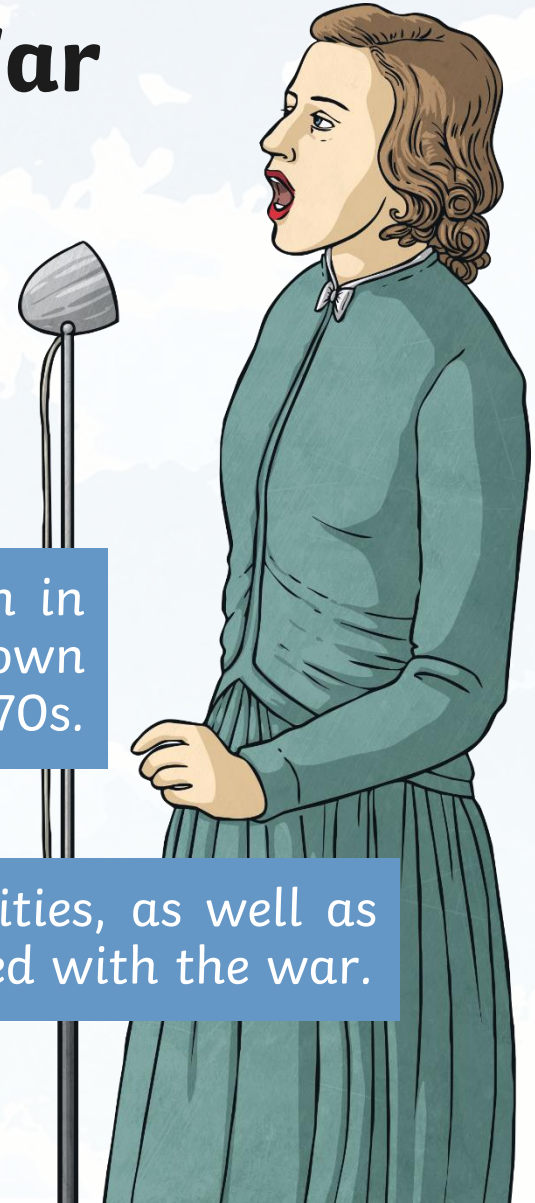


# After the War

After the war, Vera Lynn continued her recording career, releasing many successful songs and albums.

She continued to appear on radio both in UK and the US, as well as hosting her own television variety show in the 60s and 70s.

She was also involved in various charities, as well as celebrations and anniversaries connected with the war.



# Honours and Awards



For her work in Burma and other positions during the Second World War, she was awarded the [Burma Star](#) and the British War Medal 1939-1945

In 1969, she received an [OBE](#) from The Queen and she was promoted to [Dame](#) in 1975. More recently, she was also made a [Companion of Honour](#) in 2016.

She had numerous other awards and recognition over her lifetime including Freedom of the City of London and a steam locomotive named after her.

# More Recently...

Vera Lynn's name is still strongly linked to the Second World War and her songs continue to be known through the generations.

In fact, in 2017, aged 100, she became the oldest living artist to have a top 20 album. Amazing!

The same album re-entered the charts again in May 2020, due to the VE Day celebrations this year.





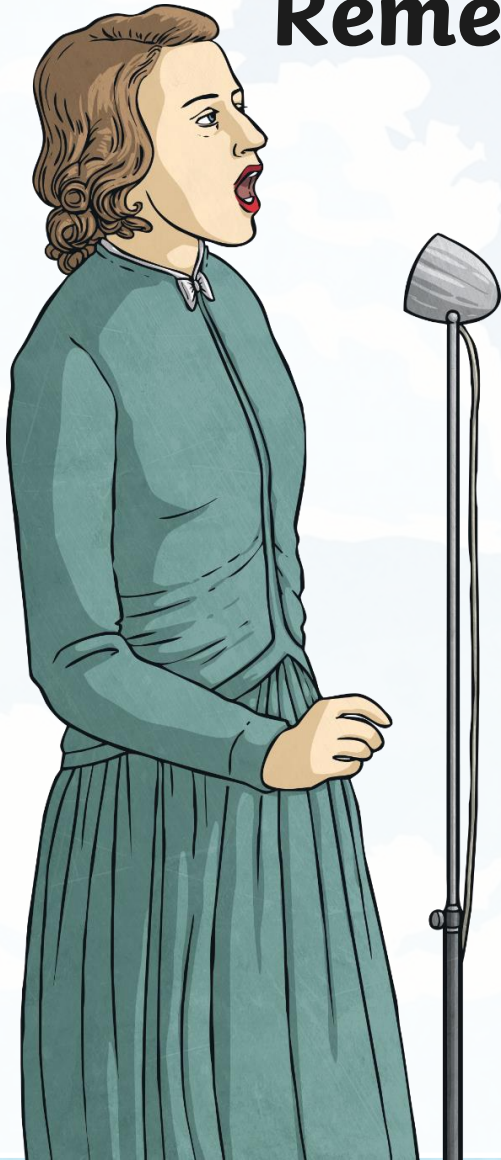
# VE Day 2020

Although she stopped singing several years before, Vera was part of a virtual performance of 'We'll Meet Again' with Katherine Jenkins, to celebrate the 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary of VE day.

Using hologram technology, and videos from the war of Vera performing her signature tune, the duet was created and broadcast on YouTube as part of the VE Day concert performance at the Royal Albert Hall.



# Remembering Vera Lynn



On the 18<sup>th</sup> June 2020, aged 103, Vera Lynn died.

The Forces' Sweetheart brought hope to a generation of people through the war and ever since.

She will not only be remembered for her role in the Second World War but also for her charity work.

Her music continues to inspire feelings of hope and camaraderie, just as it did during the war.

# Glossary



## Burma Star

A medal given to those who served in Burma during the Second World War.



## Companion of Honour

Shown as 'CH' after your name. Only 65 people can be a companion of honour (chosen by The Queen). It is given to people who have made significant contributions over a long time. You'll often find ex-prime ministers on the list.



## ENSA

Stands for 'Entertainment National Service Association'; an association set up for entertaining people during the war.



## Dame

A woman who has been given the honour of 'Dame Commander of the British Empire' known as DBE, which is two levels higher than an OBE. (Men given the honour would be a knight and therefore able to call themselves 'Sir'.)



## Maiden Name

The surname of a woman before she is married.



## OBE

Officer of the **O**rders of the **B**ritish **E**mpire. An honour given to people who have made outstanding contributions in a certain area.



## Troops

Soldiers or the armed forces.



