

# **A Centennial Celebration of Dick Van Dyke**

**"Chim Chim Cher-ee"**

**"Ain't We Got Fun"**

**"Supercalifragilisticexpialidocious"**

**"Chitty Chitty Bang Bang"**

**"Put On a Happy Face"**

## **Dick Van Dyke's Songs, Style & Showmanship**

For more than seven decades, Dick Van Dyke has brought music, laughter, and light to audiences of every generation. From the rooftops of London to the bright lights of Broadway, his performances remind us that song and movement can lift the heart, spark joy, and make us feel young at any age.

This month, we honor his centennial by singing and dancing along to some of his most memorable musical moments—songs that celebrate optimism, imagination, and the power of a good laugh.



## About Dick Van Dyke

**Dick Van Dyke (born December 13, 1925) is an American actor, comedian, and singer whose career has lasted more than 70 years. He began in radio in the late 1940s before moving into nightclub comedy, eventually making his Broadway debut in *Bye Bye Birdie*, where he won a Tony Award for his breakout performance.**

**Van Dyke became a television icon as Rob Petrie on *The Dick Van Dyke Show* (1961–1966), a role that showcased his signature mix of verbal wit and physical comedy and earned him several Emmy Awards. He went on to star in other series including *The New Dick Van Dyke Show* and *Diagnosis: Murder*, remaining a familiar face on screen for generations.**

**In film, Van Dyke is best known for his musical roles in *Mary Poppins*, *Chitty Chitty Bang Bang*, and the movie version of *Bye Bye Birdie*, along with later appearances in *Dick Tracy*, *Night at the Museum*, and *Mary Poppins Returns*. His lifetime achievements include six Emmy Awards, a Grammy, a Tony, Disney Legend status, the Screen Actors Guild Life Achievement Award, and a Kennedy Center Honor. Now celebrating his 100th year, he continues to be recognized as one of the most joyful and influential performers in American entertainment history.**



**Song: "Chim Chim Cher-ee" (1964)**

**Songwriters: Robert B. Sherman and Richard M. Sherman**

**Brief Context:**

"Chim Chim Cher-ee" was introduced in Disney's 1964 film *Mary Poppins* and became one of the most recognizable songs of Dick Van Dyke's career. Written by the Sherman Brothers, the song draws on old British folklore that considered chimney sweeps to be symbols of good luck—an idea that shaped Bert's cheerful, optimistic character in the film. The song won the Academy Award for Best Original Song and has since been recorded by artists ranging from John Coltrane to Louis Armstrong, proving its musical reach far beyond the movie musical world. With its recognizable melody and imaginative lyrics, "Chim Chim Cher-ee" has remained a favorite for generations, capturing both the whimsy and wistfulness at the heart of *Mary Poppins*.

**Activity: Singing and Discussion**

**What do you need?**

- Perfect Harmony "Chim Chim Cher-ee" video ([YOUTUBE](#))
- Perfect Harmony "Chim Chim Cher-ee" lyrics

**Suggested Discussion Prompt**

In *Mary Poppins*, Dick Van Dyke sang this song as the character Bert, telling us about the old superstition that chimney sweeps bring good luck.

Tell someone about a time you felt lucky.



# **Chim Chim Cher-ee**

**Chim chiminey, chim chiminey, chim chim cher-ee**

**A sweep is as lucky as lucky can be**

**Chim chiminey, chim chiminey, chim chim cher-oo**

**Good luck will rub off when I shakes 'ands with  
you**

**Or blow me a kiss**

**And that's lucky too**

**Now as the ladder of life as been strung**

**You may think a sweep's on the bottommost rung**

**Though I spends me time in the ashes and smoke**

**In this 'ole wide world there's no 'appier bloke**

**Chim chiminey, chim chiminey, chim chim cher-ee**

**A sweep is as lucky as lucky can be**

**Chim chiminey, chim chiminey, chim chim cher-oo**

**Good luck will rub off when I shakes 'ands with  
you**

**Or blow me a kiss**

**And that's lucky too**

**I choose me bristles with pride, yes, I do**

**A broom for the shaft and a brush for the flue**

# **Chim Chim Cher-ee**

**Though I'm covered with soot from me head to me  
toes**

**A sweep knows he's welcome wherever he goes**

**Up where the smoke is all billered and curled**

**'Tween pavement and stars is the chimney  
sweeps world**

**When the's 'ardly no day**

**Nor 'ardly no night**

**There's things 'alf in shadow**

**And 'alf way in light**

**On the roof tops of London**

**Cool, what a ...**

**Chim chiminey, chim chiminey, chim chim cher-ee**

**When you're with a sweep, you're in glad  
company**

**No where is there are more 'appier crew**

**Than them wot sings, chim chim cher-ee, chim  
cher-oo**

**Chim chiminey, chim chim,**

**Cher-ee chim cher-oo**

## **Song: "Ain't We Got Fun" (1921)**

**Songwriters: Richard A. Whiting, Raymond B. Egan, Gus Kahn**

### **Brief Context:**

"Ain't We Got Fun" was first published in 1921 and quickly became a popular anthem of the Roaring Twenties, known for its cheerful outlook in the face of financial struggle. Decades later, Dick Van Dyke helped introduce the song to a new generation when he recorded it with the Ray Charles Singers & Enoch Light and His Orchestra, bringing his signature charm and upbeat delivery to this early Tin Pan Alley classic. Though the song was written long before his time, its message—finding joy, humor, and togetherness even when times are tough—aligns closely with the roles and performances that have defined Van Dyke's career. His version reminds us that, whether in 1920 or 2025, a little music and a good laugh can still lift the spirit.

### **Activity: Listening**

#### **What do you need?**

- Perfect Harmony "Ain't We Got Fun" video ([YOUTUBE](#))

#### **Fun Fact**

Dick Van Dyke didn't hit Broadway until his mid-30s, when he starred in *Bye Bye Birdie* (1960) and won a Tony Award—launching his career just before *The Dick Van Dyke Show* made him a household name. Riding that momentum, he recorded his first album, *Songs I Like*, even though he never saw himself as a "real" singer.



***Song: "Supercalifragilisticexpialidocious" (1964)***

***Songwriters: Robert B. Sherman and Richard M. Sherman***

***Brief Context:***

"Supercalifragilisticexpialidocious" made its debut in Disney's *Mary Poppins*, sung by Julie Andrews and Dick Van Dyke during the famous animated "chalk painting" sequence. Written by the Sherman Brothers, the song was crafted to sound like a turn-of-the-century music hall tune, matching the film's 1910 setting. The invented word is used as "something to say when you don't know what to say," and its playful rhythm and tongue-twisting lyrics helped turn the number into one of the most iconic moments of Van Dyke's film career. The single even charted on the Billboard Hot 100, and today, the word—34 letters long—remains a symbol of the film's imaginative spirit and Van Dyke's celebrated performance.

***Activity: Movement***

***What do you need?***

- Perfect Harmony "Supercalifragilistic..." video ([YOUTUBE](#))

***Suggested Seated Movement***

**Follow Perfect Harmony leader Deb or create your own seated movement!**

***Use movements like . . .***

- Raising shoulders up and down
- Reaching to the side / up high / to your shoulders with jazz hands
- Marching and kicking heels out to the side and front



## ***Song: "Chitty Chitty Bang Bang" (1968)***

***Songwriters: Robert B. Sherman and Richard M. Sherman***

### ***Brief Context:***

"Chitty Chitty Bang Bang" is the title song from the 1968 film musical starring Dick Van Dyke as inventor Caractacus Potts. Written by the Sherman Brothers—the same songwriting team behind *Mary Poppins*—the song introduced audiences to Potts' magical flying car and became one of the most memorable musical moments in the film. Van Dyke performed the song on screen with co-star Sally Ann Howes, helping cement its place as a family favorite, and the tune later carried over into the stage musical versions in London and on Broadway. Nominated for an Academy Award, the song remains closely linked to Van Dyke's legacy of joyful, imaginative musical storytelling.

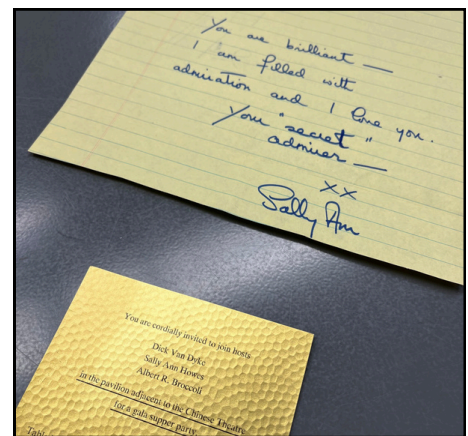
### ***Activity: Singing***

#### ***What do you need?***

- Perfect Harmony "Chitty Chitty Bang Bang" video ([YOUTUBE](#))
- Perfect Harmony "Chitty Chitty Bang Bang" lyrics

### ***Artifact Spotlight***

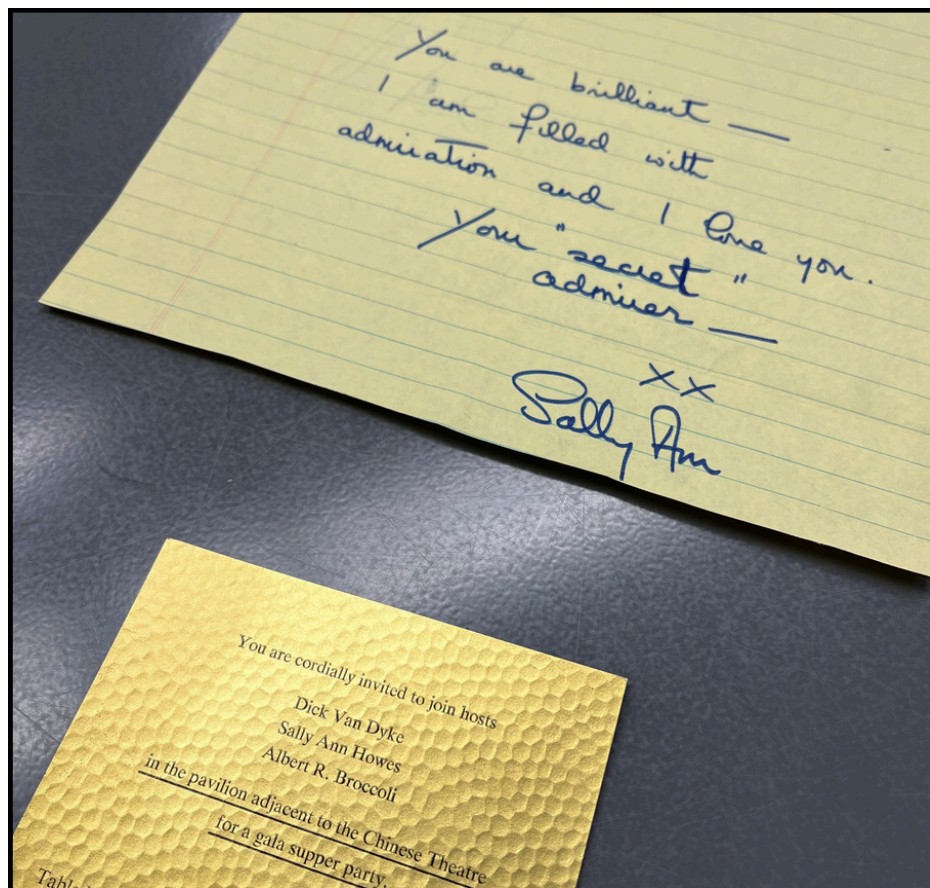
The Songbook Library & Archives houses several gold premiere tickets from the 1968 Los Angeles debut of *Chitty Chitty Bang Bang*, hosted by Dick Van Dyke, Sally Ann Howes and Albert R. Broccoli at Grauman's Chinese Theatre. Also preserved is a handwritten note from Howes to orchestrator Irwin Kostal, offering a behind-the-scenes glimpse into the relationship between cast and creatives.



From the Irwin Kostal Collection, Songbook Library & Archives







From the Irwin Kostal Collection, Songbook Library & Archives

# **Chitty Chitty Bang Bang**

**Oh, you, pretty Chitty Bang Bang,  
Chitty Chitty Bang Bang, we love you.  
And in Chitty Chitty Bang Bang  
Chitty Chitty Bang Bang, what we'll do.  
Near, far, in our motor car  
Oh! What a happy time we'll spend.  
Bang Bang Chitty Chitty Bang Bang  
Our fine, four-fendered friend.  
Bang Bang Chitty Chitty Bang Bang  
Our fine, four-fendered friend.**

**You're sleek as a thoroughbred.  
Your seats are a feather bed.  
You'll turn everybody's head today.  
We'll glide on our motor trip  
With pride in our ownership  
The envy of all we survey.**

# **Chitty Chitty Bang Bang**

**Oh, you, pretty Chitty Bang Bang,  
Chitty Chitty Bang Bang, we love you.  
And in Chitty Chitty Bang Bang  
Chitty Chitty Bang Bang, what we'll do.  
Near, far, in our motor car  
Oh! What a happy time we'll spend.  
Bang Bang Chitty Chitty Bang Bang  
Our fine, four-fendered friend.  
Bang Bang Chitty Chitty Bang Bang  
Our fine, four-fendered friend.**

***Song: "Put On a Happy Face" (1960)***  
***Songwriters: Lee Adams and Charles Strouse***

***Brief Context:***

"Put On a Happy Face" was introduced by Dick Van Dyke in the 1960 Broadway musical *Bye Bye Birdie*, where he originated the role of Albert Peterson—a performance that earned him a Tony Award and helped launch his career. Written by Charles Strouse and Lee Adams, the upbeat number quickly became one of the show's most recognizable tunes, later appearing in the 1963 film version sung by Van Dyke and Janet Leigh. With its cheerful melody and message of turning gloom into joy, the song has since become a pop standard, recorded by artists from Tony Bennett to Stevie Wonder, and remains one of the most notable musical moments associated with Van Dyke's early stardom.

***Activity: Singing***

***What do you need?***

- Perfect Harmony "Put On a Happy Face" video ([YOUTUBE](#))
- Perfect Harmony "Put On a Happy Face" lyrics

***Suggested Discussion Prompt***

Just like he did in *Bye Bye Birdie*, Dick Van Dyke made so many people smile when he appeared on screen over the last century.

Tell someone about your favorite Dick Van Dyke films or TV shows.



Dick Van Dyke & Mary Tyler Moore  
on *The Dick Van Dyke Show*.  
Rogers & Cowan, Public domain, via  
Wikimedia Commons



# **Put On a Happy Face**

**Gray skies are gonna clear up,  
Put on a happy face;  
Brush off the clouds and cheer up,  
Put on a happy face.  
Take off the gloomy mask of tragedy,  
It's not your style;  
You'll look so good that you'll be glad  
Ya' decided to smile!  
Pick out a pleasant outlook,  
Stick out that noble chin;  
Wipe off that "full of doubt" look,  
Slap on a happy grin!  
And spread sunshine all over the place,  
Just put on a happy face!  
Gray skies are gonna clear up,  
Put on a happy face;  
Brush off the clouds and cheer up,  
Put on a happy face.**

# **Put On a Happy Face**

**Take off the gloomy mask of tragedy,  
It's not your style;  
You'll look so good that you'll be glad  
Ya' decided to smile!  
Pick out a pleasant outlook,  
Stick out that noble chin;  
Wipe off that "full of doubt" look,  
Slap on a happy grin!  
And spread sunshine all over the place,  
Just put on a happy face!**