

# Who Was Pete Seeger

Pete Seeger

*in 1960. In the PBS American Masters episode "Pete Seeger: The Power of Song", Seeger said it was he who changed the lyric from the traditional "We will*

Peter Seeger (May 3, 1919 – January 27, 2014) was an American singer, songwriter, musician, and social activist. He was a fixture on nationwide radio in the 1940s and had a string of hit records in the early 1950s as a member of The Weavers, notably their recording of Lead Belly's "Goodnight, Irene", which topped the charts for 13 weeks in 1950. Members of the Weavers were blacklisted during the McCarthy Era. In the 1960s, Seeger re-emerged on the public scene as a prominent singer of protest music in support of international disarmament, civil rights, workers' rights, counterculture, environmental causes, and ending the Vietnam War.

Among the prolific songwriter's best-known songs are "Where Have All the Flowers Gone?" (with additional lyrics by Joe Hickerson), "If I Had a Hammer (The Hammer Song)" (with Lee Hays of the Weavers), "Kisses Sweeter than Wine" (also with Hays), and "Turn! Turn! Turn! (To Everything There Is a Season)", which has been recorded by many artists both in and outside the folk revival movement. "Flowers" was a hit recording for The Kingston Trio (1962); Marlene Dietrich, who recorded it in English, German and French (1962); and Johnny Rivers (1965). "If I Had a Hammer" was a hit for Peter, Paul and Mary (1962) and Trini Lopez (1963) while The Byrds had a number one hit with "Turn! Turn! Turn!" in 1965.

Seeger was one of the folk singers responsible for popularizing the spiritual "We Shall Overcome" (also recorded by Joan Baez and many other singer-activists), which became the acknowledged anthem of the civil rights movement, soon after folk singer and activist Guy Carawan introduced it at the founding meeting of the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC) in 1960. In the PBS American Masters episode "Pete Seeger: The Power of Song", Seeger said it was he who changed the lyric from the traditional "We will overcome" to the more singable "We shall overcome".

Toshi Seeger

*Award-winning documentary Pete Seeger: The Power of Song, released through PBS in 2007. In 1966, Seeger and her husband, folk-singer Pete Seeger, co-founded the*

Toshi Seeger (born Toshi Aline Ohta; July 1, 1922 – July 9, 2013) was a German and American filmmaker, producer and environmental activist. A filmmaker who specialized in the subject of folk music, her credits include the 1966 film Afro-American Work Songs in a Texas Prison and the Emmy Award-winning documentary Pete Seeger: The Power of Song, released through PBS in 2007. In 1966, Seeger and her husband, folk-singer Pete Seeger, co-founded the Hudson River Sloop Clearwater, which seeks to protect the Hudson River and surrounding wetlands. Additionally, they co-founded the Clearwater Festival (officially known as The Great Hudson River Revival), a major music festival held annually at Croton Point Park in Westchester County, New York.

Pete Seeger discography

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The discography of Pete Seeger, an American folk singer, consists of 52 studio albums, 23 compilation albums, 22 live albums, and 31 singles. Seeger's musical career started in 1940 when he joined The Almanac

Singers. He stayed with the group for two years until he was drafted into the Army to fight in the Second World War. After the end of World War II in 1945, Seeger helped found an organization known as People's Songs, along with the influential folk music magazine People's Songs Bulletin. He published several singles and a studio album with the magazine. Seeger would play at People's Songs events, called hootenannies, until the organization folded in 1949. After People's Songs, Seeger and another former member of the Almanacs, Lee Hays, founded the Weavers, who achieved commercial success. In 1952, The Weavers went on hiatus due to the Red Scare; Seeger and Hays both had Communist ties. After the demise of the Weavers, Seeger released a solo album, American Folk Songs for Children, in 1953 on Folkways Records. He continued to release albums on Folkways until he signed with Capitol in 1961.

## Charles Seeger

*composer Ruth Crawford Seeger, father of the American folk singers Pete Seeger (1919–2014), Peggy Seeger (b. 1935), and Mike Seeger (1933–2009); and brother*

Charles Louis Seeger Jr. (December 14, 1886 – February 7, 1979) was an American musicologist, composer, teacher, and folklorist. He was the husband of the composer Ruth Crawford Seeger, father of the American folk singers Pete Seeger (1919–2014), Peggy Seeger (b. 1935), and Mike Seeger (1933–2009); and brother of the World War I poet Alan Seeger (1888–1916) and children's author and educator Elizabeth Seeger (1889–1973).

## Pete Seeger: The Power of Song

*folk singer Pete Seeger. The film, which won an Emmy Award, was executive produced by Seeger's wife, filmmaker Toshi Seeger, when she was 85 years old*

Pete Seeger: The Power of Song is a 2007 documentary film produced by The Weinstein Company and Concert Productions International about the life and music of the folk singer Pete Seeger. The film, which won an Emmy Award, was executive produced by Seeger's wife, filmmaker Toshi Seeger, when she was 85 years old.

The documentary was directed by Jim Brown, who also directed The Weavers: Wasn't That a Time! (1982). The film includes interviews with Arlo Guthrie, Bruce Springsteen, Bob Dylan, Joan Baez, Tom Paxton, Mary Travers (of Peter, Paul and Mary), Natalie Maines, and numerous Seeger family members. One of its associate producers was Kitama Jackson, a grandson of Seeger.

## Alan Seeger

*Rupert Brooke. Seeger was born on June 22, 1888, in New York City. According to Alan's nephew, folk singer Pete Seeger, the Seeger family was "enormously*

Alan Seeger (22 June 1888 – 4 July 1916) was an American war poet who fought and died in World War I during the Battle of the Somme, serving in the French Foreign Legion. Seeger was the brother of Elizabeth Seeger, a children's author and educator, and Charles Seeger, a noted American pacifist and musicologist; he was also the uncle of folk musicians Pete Seeger, Peggy Seeger, and Mike Seeger. He is lauded for the poem "I Have a Rendezvous with Death", a favorite of President John F. Kennedy. A statue representing him is on the monument in the Place des États-Unis, Paris, honoring those American citizens who volunteered to fight for the Third French Republic while their country was still neutral and lost their lives during the war. Seeger is sometimes called the "American Rupert Brooke".

## Mike Seeger

*brother was Pete Seeger. His uncle, Alan Seeger, the poet who wrote "I have a rendezvous with Death", was killed during the First World War. Seeger was a self-taught*

Mike Seeger (August 15, 1933 – August 7, 2009) was an American folk musician and folklorist. He was a distinctive singer and an accomplished musician who mainly played autoharp, banjo, fiddle, dulcimer, guitar, harmonica, mandolin, dobro, jaw harp, and pan pipes. Seeger, a half-brother of Pete Seeger, produced more than 30 documentary recordings, and performed in more than 40 other recordings. He desired to make known the caretakers of culture that inspired and taught him. He was posthumously inducted into the International Bluegrass Music Hall of Fame in 2018.

### Electric Dylan controversy

*City Ramblers, who was Pete Seeger's brother-in-law, states that Seeger wanted to lower the volume of the band because the noise was upsetting his elderly*

In 1965, Bob Dylan, the leading songwriter of the American folk music revival, began recording and performing with electric instruments, generating controversy in the folk music community.

The response to his albums *The Freewheelin' Bob Dylan* and *The Times They Are a-Changin'* led the media to label him the "spokesman of a generation". In March 1965, Dylan released his fifth album, *Bringing It All Back Home*. Side one features him backed by a rock band, while side two features him accompanying himself on acoustic guitar. On July 20, 1965, he released his single "Like a Rolling Stone" featuring a more fully integrated folk rock sound. On July 25, 1965, he performed his first concert with electric instruments at the Newport Folk Festival, joined on piano/organ by Barry Goldberg and three members of the Paul Butterfield Blues Band: guitarist Mike Bloomfield, bassist Jerome Arnold and drummer Sam Lay, and also with Al Kooper playing organ or bass—he played bass on "Like a Rolling Stone" while Goldberg played organ. Some sections of the audience booed the performance. Members of the folk movement, including Irwin Silber and Ewan MacColl, criticized him for moving away from political songwriting and for performing with a rock band. Dylan continued his trend towards rock music on his next two albums, *Highway 61 Revisited* (1965) and *Blonde on Blonde* (1966).

On subsequent tours throughout 1965 and 1966, his electric sets (now backed by the Hawks) were often met with derision from the audience. Crowds became particularly acrimonious during a British tour, including an oft-cited incident in Manchester, where a member of the crowd shouted "Judas!" at Dylan. Shows from this tour have been documented in several Dylan documentaries, including 2005's *No Direction Home*. Over time, Dylan continued to evolve musically, turning to country music on *Nashville Skyline* (1969), and drifting through numerous styles throughout the rest of his career. Retrospectively, his electric period has come to be recognized by critics and fans as producing some of his best music, and his controversial performance at Newport has been considered a pivotal moment in the development of folk rock. The incident was featured in the 2024 film *A Complete Unknown*.

### The Weavers

*Greenwich Village area of New York City originally consisting of Lee Hays, Pete Seeger, Ronnie Gilbert, and Fred Hellerman. Founded in 1948, the group sang*

The Weavers were an American folk music quartet based in the Greenwich Village area of New York City originally consisting of Lee Hays, Pete Seeger, Ronnie Gilbert, and Fred Hellerman. Founded in 1948, the group sang traditional folk songs from around the world, as well as blues, gospel music, children's songs, labor songs, and American ballads. The group sold millions of records at the height of their popularity, including the first folk song to reach No. 1 on popular music charts, their recording of Lead Belly's "Goodnight, Irene."

Despite their popularity, the Weavers were blacklisted during much of the 1950s. During the Red Scare, members of the group were followed by the FBI and denied recording and performance opportunities, with Seeger and Hays called in to testify before the House Committee on Un-American Activities.

Pete Seeger left the group in 1958. His tenor and banjo part was covered in succession by Erik Darling, Frank Hamilton and finally Bernie Krause until the group disbanded in 1964. Seeger discussed the history of folk music and the impact of The Weavers in an April 1963 interview on Folk Music Worldwide.

Turn! Turn! Turn!

*or subtitled "To Everything There Is a Season", is a song written by Pete Seeger in 1959. The lyrics – except for the title, which is repeated throughout*

"Turn! Turn! Turn!", also known as or subtitled "To Everything There Is a Season", is a song written by Pete Seeger in 1959. The lyrics – except for the title, which is repeated throughout the song, and the final two lines – consist of the first eight verses of the third chapter of the biblical Book of Ecclesiastes. The song was originally released in 1962 as "To Everything There Is a Season" on the folk group the Limelites' album Folk Matinee, and then some months later on Seeger's own The Bitter and the Sweet.

The song became an international hit in late 1965 when it was adapted by the American folk rock group the Byrds. The single entered the U.S. chart at number 80 on October 23, 1965, before reaching number one on the Billboard Hot 100 chart on December 4, 1965. In Canada, it reached number 3 on November 29, 1965, and also peaked at number 26 on the UK Singles Chart.

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