**Patriotic Celebration Script. (A Walk Through Time)**

Good Evening and welcome to our Patriotic Concert Celebration “A Walk Through Time”. This evening we will be exploring some of our Nation’s most Patriotic Songs. We hope that you will sing along with us as we look back on the history and origin of some of the older songs and see how over time the style of music has changed.

At this time we would like to welcome Father ( ) as we bow or heads for an opening invocation.

(Wait until he is done with the opening prayer)

And now please stand and join me in the presentation of our Nation’s Flag presented by the ( ) Honor Guard and the saying of the Pledge of Allegiance followed by the singing of our National Anthem.

(Wait until the color guard is in place and the Colors are properly presented to begin the Pledge of Allegiance. Once the Pledge is complete, the National Anthem will be sung.)

The Final line of our National Anthem states “the land of the free and the home of the brave.” We live in a free society because of the brave men and women who have served in every aspect of the US Military throughout our history. Please observe with me a moment of silence for those heroes who have fallen.

(We will observe a few minutes of silence followed by the playing of TAPS. Once TAPS is finished, the Color Guard will retire the colors. As soon as they are completely done, we begin with the script below.)

We began our journey this evening with “**The Star-Spangled Banner**” which is our Countries National Anthem. The lyrics for the Anthem come from a poem written in 1814 by Francis Scott Key, a 35 year old amateur poet who wrote the poem “Defense of Fort McHenry” after seeing the bombardment of Fort McHenry in Chesapeake Bay, in Baltimore Maryland by Royal Navy ships during the War of 1812.

The poem was set to the tune of a popular British drinking song, written by John Stafford Smith that was already popular in the United States. It was then renamed “The Star Spangled Banner” and would soon become a well-known American patriotic song. With a range of one and a half octaves, it is known for being difficult to sing. Although the song has four stanzas, only the first is commonly sung today.

“The Star-Spangled Banner” was recognized for official use by the Navy in 1889, but wasn’t officially made the National Anthem until March 3, 1931 by a congressional resolution which was signed by President Herbert Hoover.

Assorted copies of “The Star-Spangled Banner” varied in words and punctuation as Francis Scott Key penned each one by hand.

Unlike Francis Scott Key, the Reverend Samuel F. Smith was diligent in preserving the original wording and punctuation of his song “**America**” sometimes known by its first line “My Country Tis of Thee”. This song was written in 1832 and many original “autographed” copies of Smith’s works still exist today.

By his own account in February, 1832, Smith was reading through a book of German music and was particularly attracted to the tune of God Save the King, although he was unable to understand the German Words. He had realized that they were patriotic, and in his own words, “in a brief period of time at the close of a dismal winter afternoon” he penned the verses to America as they now appear.

**America – Sung by All**

**“The Battle Hymn of the Republic”** is an American patriotic anthem written by Julia Ward Howe in November of 1861 and was made popular during the American Civil War.

The tune was written around 1855 by William Steffe. The lyrics at that time were alternately called “Canaan’s Happy Shore” or “Brothers, Will you Meet Me?” and the song was sung as a campfire spiritual. The tune spread across the Utied States taking on many sets of new lyrics.

Thomas Bishop from Vermont joined the Massachusetts Infantry before the outbreak of the war and wrote a popular set of lyrics, circa 1860, titled “John Brown’s Body” which became one of his unit’s walking songs. Bishop’s battalion was dispatched to Washington, D.C. early in the Civil War and Julia Ward Howe heard this song during a public review of the troops in Washington. Her companion at the review, the Reverend James Clarke, suggested t Howe that she write new words for the fighting men’s song. Staying at the Willard Hotel in Washington on the night of November 18, 1861, Howe awoke with the words of the song in her mind and near darkness wrote the verses to the “Battle Hymn of the Republic”.

**Battle Hymn of the Republic – All**

**“Oh Shenandoah”** is an American folk song dating to the early 19th century. It originated as a river shanty and then became popular with sea-going crews in the early 1800’s. It was immortalized by the jolly flatboat men who supplied the Missouri River in the early 1800’s. These flatboat men were known for the singing of their chanties, including the haunting “Oh Shenandoah” where it found its way down the Missouri and Mississippi Rivers to the American clipper ships and eventually around the world.

The lyrics tell the story of a roving trader in love with the daughter of an Indian chief. The rover tells the chief of his intent to take the girl with him far to the west across the Missouri River.

**Oh Shenandoah – All – (Should be sung Accapella if possible)**

**“America the Beautiful”** is known as the American national *hymn* as opposed to “The Star Spangled Banner” which is Americas National Anthem. The words were written in 1893 by Katherine Lee Bates, an English professor who had taken a train trip to Colorado Springs, Colorado to teach a short summer school session at Colorado College. She was moved by several of the sights on her trip wand the words of the poem started to come to her. She wrote them down upon returning to her hotel room at the original Antlers Hotel. The poem was initially published two years later in *The Congregationalist*, to commemorate the Fourth of July where it quickly caught the public’s fancy.

Several existing pieces of music were adapted to the poem. The Hymn tune composed in 1882 by Samuel A. Ward was generally considered the best music as early as 1910 and is still the popular tune today. Wasd had been similarly inspired. The tune came to him while he was on a ferryboat trip from Coney Island back to his home in New Your City after a leisurely summer day and he immediately wrote it down. Ward died in 1903 not knowing the national stature his music would attain. Miss Bates was more fortunate as the song’s popularity was well-established by her death in 1929 and continues to be one of the most popular patriotic songs sung today.

**America the Beautiful – Solo first verse then All**

Our next song is a spirited march written in 1906 by George M. Cohan as a tribute to the U.S. flag. Cohan wrote **“You’re a Grand Old Flag”** as part of his stage musical “George Washington, Jr.” where it was first publicly performed on the play’s opening night at the Herald Square Theater in New York City. “You’re a Grand Old Flag” quickly became the first tong from a musical to sell over a million copies of sheet music. It is said that the title and first lyric comes from an encounter Cohan had with a Civil War veteran who fought at Gettysburg. The two men found themselves next to eachother and Cohan noticed the vet hald a carefully folded but ragged old flag. The vet reportedly then turned to Hohan and said, “She’s a grand old rag.” Cohan thought it was a great line and as such originally named his tune “You’re a Grand Old Rag.” So many groups and individuals objected to calling the flag a “rag” however, that he geve them what they wanted and switched the words renaming the song “You’re a Grand Old Flag”

**You’re a Grand Old Flag – ALL**

We often hear the phrase it’s as American as hot dogs, apple pie and ………………………………….Baseball. **“Take Me Out to the Ballgame”** is an early 20th century “Tim Pan Alley” song which became the unofficial anthem of baseball, though neither of its authors had ever been to a baseball game It was written in 1908 by Jack Norworth, who while riding a subway train, was inspired by a sign that said “Baseball Today – Polo Grounds”. The words were then set to music by Albert Von Tilzer. Norworth finally saw his first Major League Baseball game 32 years later while Von Tilzer only waited 20 years to see his first game.

The song is traditionally sung during the seventh-inning-stretch of a baseball game in spite of being written from the perspective of someone who had never been to a game and you will usually find fans joyfully singing along.

**Take Me Out to the Ballgame – Preferably sung by a child or All**

The original version of **“God Bless America”** was written by Irving Berlin during the summer of 1918 for his Ziegfeld-style review. Berlin decided that the solemn tone of “God Bless America” was somewhat out of keeping with the more comedic elements of the show and the song was ultimately set aside.

In the fall of 1938, as war was again threatening Europe, Irving Berlin decided to write a “peace” song and recalled “God Bless America” from twenty years earlier. He made some alterations to reflect the different state of the world and singer Kate Smith introduced the revised version of “God Bless America” during her radio broadcast on Armistice Day, 1938. The song was an immediate sensation. Berlin soon established the God Bless America Fund dedicating the royalties to the Boy Scouts and Girl Scouts of America.

The song became the voice of our nation after the September 11th attacks and is a strong reminder of that dreadful day and how as a nation we once again came together as our Pledge of Allegiance states, “one Nation,…. under God,….. Indivisible”.

**God Bless America – Solo first verse – All**

**“This Land is Your Land”** is one of the United States’ most famous folk songs. Its lyrics were written by Woody Guthrie in 1940 in response to Irving Berlin’s “God Bless America” which Guthrie considered unrealistic and complacent. The melody was essentially taken note-for-note from a Baptist hymn called “When the World’s on Fire”. Tired of hearing Kate Smith sing “God Bless America” on the radio, Guthrie wrote his response and originally called it “God Bless America for Me”. He varied the lyrics over time, sometimes including more overtly political verses than appear in recordings or publications of the song. Although he originally recorded it in 1944, the song was not published until 1951.

In 2002 it was one of 50 recording chosen that year by the library of Congress to be added to the National Recording Registry.

**This Land is Your Land – All**

**“Boogie Woogie Bugle Boy”**, a wartime radio song about a virtuoso trumpet player, was an iconic World War II song. It was written by Don Raye and Hughie Prince and was recorded at Decca’s Hollywood studios on January 2, 1941, nearly a year before the United States entered into World War II but after the start of a peacetime draft to expand the armed forces in anticipation of American involvement in the war. The Andrews Sisters introduced the song in 1941 and it quickly became a huge hit for them.

The song is closely based on an earlier Raye-Pence hit “Beat Me Daddy, Eight to the Bar” which is about a virtuoso boogie-woogie piano player.

In 1973, Bette Midler recorded her version of the song, a close copy of the original, which peaked at #8 on the Billboard Hot 100 singles chart, and introduced it to a new generation of pop music fans. The track was also a #1 single on the Billboard Adult Contemporary chart.

**Boogie Woogie Bugle Boy – Trio (Girls)**

**There is a break here where we recognize any organizations that may participate but most of all honor or veterans. I need to update the information but it is all spoken. I will get this to you later.**

Although the military ultimately works as one unit, each Branch of the military is unique unto itself. They each serve a different purpose to insure that our great Nation is protected b Land, Sea and Air. Our Soldiers are extremely proud of the branches for which they serve and likewise are proud of the songs that represent each branch. Next we will hear the songs that represent the Army, Navy, Air Force, Marines and Coast Guard.

**Instrumental versions of:**

* **The Army Goes Rollin Along**
* **Anchors Aweigh**
* **Wild Blue Yonder**
* **Marines Hymn**
* **Semper Paratus**

So far on our musical journey we have seen how the music changed over time from songs about specific battles to songs about our Country in general. As time went on we saw a further change as the songs became more about the soldiers and individuals. If we look further ahead at the songs that are popular today we see that they have taken on a personal aspect that encompasses the soldier and that of the people and loved ones that are left behind.

The next two songs are an example of this type of song.

"**Travelin' Soldier**" is a song written and originally recorded by American country music artist [Bruce Robison](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bruce_Robison) in 1996 and again, in rewritten form, in 1999. It was later recorded by [Ty England](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ty_England) on his 1999 album, [*Highways & Dance Halls*](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Highways_%26_Dance_Halls). The first rendition to be issued as a single and by far the most popular version was by the [Dixie Chicks](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Dixie_Chicks) in December 2002, from their album [*Home*](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Home_(Dixie_Chicks_album)). It became the group's sixth and final single to reach No. 1 on [*Billboard*](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Billboard_magazine)*s* "Hot Country Singles & Tracks".

**Travelin Soldier – Trio (Girls)**

"**Letters From War**" is a single by singer/songwriter [Mark Schultz](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mark_Schultz_(musician)) on his third album [Stories & Songs](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Stories_%26_Songs_(Mark_Schultz_album)). Inspired by Schultz' family, this Contemporary Christian / Pop song released in 2003 along with its music video and has won several awards.

Mark Schultz stated that the song was written in honor of his Great-Grandmother's sons. All 3 of the boys went to fight in [World War II](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/World_War_II). Her 2 older boys came home a short time later but her youngest son was there until the end of the war.

**Letters From War – Preferably Male Solo**

The next song on our journey is perhaps the most popular Patriotic Song of our time. “**God Bless the U.S.A.**" (also known as "**Proud To Be An American**) was written and recorded by [country music](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Country_music) artist [Lee Greenwood](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Lee_Greenwood), and is considered to be his [signature song](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Signature_song). It reached No. 7 on the [*Billboard*](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Billboard_(magazine)) magazine [Hot Country Singles](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hot_Country_Singles) chart when originally released in the spring of 1984, and was played at the [1984 Republican National Convention](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/1984_Republican_National_Convention) with President [Ronald Reagan](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ronald_Reagan) and First Lady [Nancy Reagan](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Nancy_Reagan) in attendance, but the song gained greater prominence during the [Gulf War](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gulf_War) in 1990 and 1991, as a way of boosting morale, and was re-included on his 1992 album *American Patriot* as a result of its newfound popularity.

The popularity of the song again rose sharply after the [September 11 attacks](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/September_11_attacks) and during the [2003 invasion of Iraq](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/2003_invasion_of_Iraq), and the song was re-released as a single, ultimately re-entering the country music charts at No. 16 and peaking at No. 16 on the [*Billboard* Hot 100](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Billboard_Hot_100) pop chart in 2001.  The song had sold over a million copies in the United States by July 2015.

**God Bless the U.S.A – Verses – If possibly Male solo (Men otherwise) Chours – All**

This brings us to the end of our musical journey for this evening but we would like to leave you with one final song. This song is one of Peace that is sung throughout the world. If everyone living today could only embrace and truly accept and make the solemn vow as in the words of this song, there would be no more conflicts, no more war. Please join us in singing “**Let there be Peace on Earth**”.

**Let there be Peace on Earth - All**

Final Thank you……………