Peace prayer Ypres

Where have all the flowers gone

*"****Where Have All the Flowers Gone?****"   
is a modern* [*folk*](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Folk_music)*-style song.   
The melody and the first three verses   
were written by* [*Pete Seeger*](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pete_Seeger) *in 1955.   
Additional verses were added   
in May 1960 by* [*Joe Hickerson*](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Joe_Hickerson)*,   
who turned it into a circular song.   
Its rhetorical "where?"   
and meditation on death   
place the song in the* [*ubi sunt*](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ubi_sunt) *tradition.*

*(Ubi sunt is Latin for ‘where are (they)’. A number of medieval European poems begin with this Latin phrase. By posing a series of questions about the fate of the strong, beautiful, or virtuous, these poems meditate on the transitory nature of life and the inevitability of death.* 

*The song was sung   
at the funeral of* [*Harry Patch*](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Harry_Patch)*,   
the last British soldier of the* [*First World War*](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/World_War_I)*,  
in* [*Wells Cathedral*](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wells_Cathedral) *on August 9, 2009.  
In 2010, the* [*New Statesman*](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/New_Statesman) *listed it   
as one of the "Top 20 Political Songs".*

We invite you to listen, and to join us singing…

Let’s sing the last verse each in our own language…

Poppie moment, tender symbol for a hard history…

For a long time, people had the idea   
that poppies grow in places where someone was killed:   
the flower would pick up the blood of the fallen soldier   
giving it a beautiful red color.   
Long thought that this was the reason   
why so many poppies were found on battlefields.   
Although the roses in fact have nothing to do   
with the fallen soldiers, the symbol is not so far sought.   
The massive growth of poppies in battlefields   
has everything to do with the total destruction of those fields  
by the fighting and bombing.   
A poppy is a pioneer plant, which means   
that she will be the first to grow where other plants can’t.   
When a field is surrounded/wrecked (?),   
by a farmer or by grenades,   
the seeds that have been in the soil for years   
will come up with a beautiful waving red poppie-glow   
as a result.  
  
So the poppy with its tender leaves,  
red like the blood of the fallen,   
and its inner black heart , the color of mourning,  
it remains a beautiful symbol   
of the power and beauty   
that can grow from complete destruction.

We invite you to hold your poppy in your hands for a moment,  
thinking about the impressions you received today,  
thinking about pieces of peace now and then…  
And then, one by one, give this small piece of peace  
a place somewhere on the peace bank.  
Meanwhile we listen to a song…

Only remembered for what we have done

Old-English hymn performed by the British a-capella-trio   
Coope, Boyes en Simpson   
at the peace concert in Passendale   
"We 're here because we 're here" in 1994.   
The first verses are traditional:   
Dr. H. Bonar of Edinburgh wrote the words of this hymn   
which Sankey set to music in 1891.   
He sang it as a solo in The Tabernacle in London   
at the funeral of his friend, C.H. Spurgeon,   
a great London preacher.   
John Tams, English poet and play writer, added another verse.   
Hymns were often sung in times of war.   
They were expressions of solidarity and togetherness   
that went beyond rank and condition,   
beyond life and death.

Ritual with water…

At the end of this day with probably a lot of intense impressions  
we need a kind of closing ritual  
to let go what we have heard, seen,   
felt and even smelled perhaps  
and at the same time, to remember forever…

While the choir is singing the questions we all have to deal with:  
will there ever be a day of peace… (see next page)  
We invite you to come closer and do a cleansing ritual:  
it’s a Maori custom after being in the presence of the deceased,  
in the presence of death, hate, bad things...  
Here is a bowl with fresh water,  
feel free to cleanse yourself by sprinkling water on your body…

Zal er ooit een dag van vrede

Will there ever be a day of peace

will there ever be release

for those who are ignored

and broken for a lifetime?

Will there ever be a lasting present

full of good peace

where no more pain is suffered,

and life will be forever new?

See the branches on the trees

where the young greenery is opening

to a brilliant new summer

where the peace blossom smells.

As trees prove to people

that there is strength to grow,

the son of men will come

he who is called the tree of life.