

“Happy Days Are Here Again”: The Song That Launched FDR’s Presidency

In 1929, just prior to the Great Crash of the New York Stock Market, Milton Ager and Jack Yellen recorded, “Happy Days Are Here Again.” The song was an instant hit and would remain a popular refrain throughout the 1930s, as the theme of radio shows sponsored by Lucky Strike cigarettes.

In 1932, the song became closely associated to the presidential campaign of New York Democratic Governor Franklin Delano Roosevelt in his effort to unseat incumbent President Herbert Hoover. When Roosevelt arrived in Chicago to accept his party’s nomination for president, he entered the room to the sound of “Happy Days Are Hear Again.” The song and its cheerful lyrics matched Roosevelt’s upbeat tempo and stood in stark contrast to Hoover’s demeanor. In addition, the song resonated throughout the nation as most Americans were looking to Roosevelt in hopes that his pledge of “a new deal for the American people” would usher them safely through the Great Depression into a new era of economic prosperity.

“Happy Days Are Here Again” has long been associated with the Democratic party, and remains a sentimental favorite for its political leaders and supporters such as singer and actress Barbara Streisand, who has recorded her own version of the song. “Happy Days Are Here Again” is listed as #47 on the Recording Industry Association of America’s list of “Songs of the Century”.

**“Happy Days Are Here Again” by Jack Yellen & Milton Alger
As recorded by Leo Reisman and His Orchestra, with Lou Levin, vocal (November 1929) for
the 1930 MGM movie *Chasing Rainbows*.**

So long sad times, go long bad times,
We are rid of you at last
Howdy gay times, cloudy gray times,
You are now a thing of the past

Happy days are here again,
The skies above are clear again
So, let us sing a song of cheer again,
Happy days are here again

All together, shout it now,
There's no one who can doubt it now,
So let's tell the world about it now,
Happy days are here again

Your cares and troubles are gone,
There'll be no more from now on, from now on!

Happy days are here again,
The skies above are clear again
So, let us sing a song of cheer again,
Happy times, happy nights, happy days are here again