

Words and Their Stories: Auld Lang Syne

Now, VOA Special English presents a special program for New Year’s Eve.

That is a song millions of Americans will hear this New Year’s Eve. It is called “Auld Lang Syne.” It is the traditional music played during the New Year’s celebration. Auld Lang Syne is an old Scottish poem. It tells about the need to remember old friends. The words “auld lang syne” mean “old long since.” No one knows who wrote the poem first. However, a version by Scottish poet Robert Burns was published in seventeen ninety-six. The words and music we know today first appeared in a songbook three years later.

The song is sung in the United States mainly on New Year’s Eve. Here is Lou Rawls singing his version of it.

Another version is by the Washington Saxophone Quartet. As we end our program with “Auld Lang Syne,” I would like to wish all of our radio friends a very Happy New Year!