

Let's Talk Dusty!

The Ultimate Forum for Dusty Springfield Fans
<http://www.dustyspringfield.org.uk/forum/>

Polari/Palare

<http://www.dustyspringfield.org.uk/forum/viewtopic.php?f=8&t=5396>

Polari/Palare

by **Zoey**

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Posted: **Wed Aug 21, 2013 7:28 pm**

I don't have much to say about this subject, but I thought I'd see what you all knew about it. 😊 I'm sure I read somewhere that Dusty occasionally used Polari/Palare terms when speaking, which perhaps hinted at her sexuality at the time. I'm not entirely sure how much of it is true, it might all be rubbish.

This is what Wikipedia have to say about Polari/Palare:

Polari was used in London fishmarkets, the theatre, fairgrounds and circuses, hence the many borrowings from Romany. As many homosexual men worked in theatrical entertainment it was also used among the gay subculture, at a time when homosexual activity was illegal, to disguise homosexuals from hostile outsiders and undercover policemen. It was also used extensively in the British Merchant Navy, where many gay men joined ocean liners and cruise ships as waiters, stewards and entertainers.[9] On one hand, it would be used as a means of cover to allow gay subjects to be discussed aloud without being understood; on the other hand, it was also used by some, particularly the most visibly camp and effeminate, as a further way of asserting their identity.

I only knew what Polari/Palare was through the Morrissey song 'Piccadilly Palare' and realised I use a fair bit of the vocabulary even today. It was certainly common in east London where I was brought up.

Can anyone shed any light? 😊

Re: Polari/Palare

by **pat.dunham**

Posted: **Wed Aug 21, 2013 9:33 pm**

I recently did some research on the web for Polari, it is an ancient lingo that has come down through the years.

Often used by the gay community but it is also spoken by everyone straight/gay'. Older LTD's will remember the radio show "Round the Horne with the two gay guys played by Kenneth Williams and Hugh Paddick. The characters "Julian and Sandy", used a lot of polari in their sketches and it was taken up by the public, many of whom probably didn't know what it was all about.

If you go to Wiki and move down to the glossary there is a whole list of polari words with there translation, a lot of which are in common usage today.

PS. Dictionary :Polari derived from Parlance: a form of speech-idiom.

Re: Polari/Palare

by **oboe93**

Posted: **Thu Aug 22, 2013 12:26 pm**

I just had an Ah-ha moment! Dusty used "zhooshy" on her BBC program during the intro to If You Go Away , when she says "lots of lovely zhooshy clothes". I'd assumed she was saying the French word "joujou" since she was talking about Paris, but that means "toy or plaything". In context, "zhooshy" probably makes more sense. Maybe that's a really mainstream one, but I'd never heard of it or even of Polari before this post. So thanks! Mystery solved.

She says it at 7:24 in this clip:



Re: Polari/Palare

by Zoey

Posted: **Thu Aug 22, 2013 12:52 pm**

I'm not sure if she means 'zhoosh'. It's pronounced slightly differently to what she says. I say it in regards to getting ready to go out or doing my hair. I'll 'zhoosh up' or I'm 'zhooshing my hair' (making it bigger, giving it volume). Didn't know it was spelled like that though!

EDIT: Oh! I watched it again and she says 'zhooshy'! Yeah, that'll be it then. It means flashy. 😊

Re: Polari/Palare

by darren2722

Posted: **Thu Aug 22, 2013 5:45 pm**

I always thought she meant to say "Gucci" 😞 (Italian Fashion House, mainly Handbags Accessories Etc) and got her Countries mixed up, like when she said Jacques Brel Is French, although she does correct this in an later TV programme 🙄)

Interesting Subject. 😊

Re: Polari/Palare

by pat.dunham

Posted: **Thu Aug 22, 2013 11:11 pm**

Julian and Sandy - Bona Bookshops



Polari with "Julian and Sandy"

Re: Polari/Palare

by **Dotty86**

Posted: **Fri Aug 23, 2013 10:10 am**

This is really interesting to me. I'd never heard of it before but looking at the glossary of words I am familiar with quite a few of them! Thanks for posting Zoey 🤔

Re: Polari/Palare

by **villagegirl**

Posted: **Fri Aug 23, 2013 5:53 pm**

How interesting Zoey. I've never heard of this. I have used a few of the words listed but the vast majority are completely unknown to me. Thanks for posting this. I've learned something new today! 🤔

Re: Polari/Palare

by **dusty nut**

Posted: **Fri Aug 23, 2013 6:07 pm**

Very interesting Zoey ,love the clip Kristin especially the water is wide-fabulous.Since on other threads live/lip synch arose I find myself always wondering now which Dusty is doing.?whatever it's lovely. ❤️ 🤔

Re: Polari/Palare

by **IWannaBeABluesSinger**

Posted: **Fri Aug 23, 2013 10:57 pm**

All her BBC performances were live.

Maggie

Re: Polari/Palare

by **PeelMeAGrape**

Posted: **Sat Aug 24, 2013 3:17 am**

I recall her once talking about makeup (on her BBC show?) and referring to it as 'slap,' which is a polari term.

I've always wondered about this; the 'zhoosy' clip was what I thought of immediately upon seeing the name of this thread, but someone's already posted it! 🤔 As an American, I can't say I'm too familiar with "Julian & Sandy," but it sounds like fun.

Re: Polari/Palare

Hi Anna, must apologise to you and all our global friends that Julian and Sandy would mean nothing to you. If you would like to know more about the programme I refer you to Wikipedia Round the Horne. It's a good amusing read. The humour has a lot of sexual innuendo and camp comedy. Of its day it was quite daring but very popular.

In a way quite "goonish" I don't know if Dusty was a fan, wouldn't be surprised.

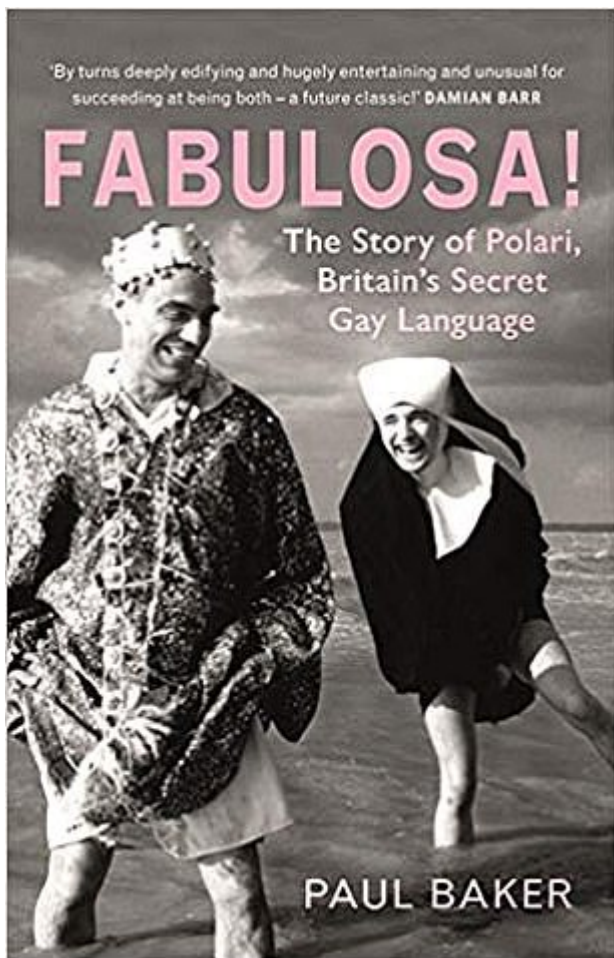
For UK peeps Round the Horne is being replayed on BBC Radio4 extra, next play Monday 26Aug.

Re: Polari/Palare

by IWannaBeABluesSinger

Posted: Fri May 17, 2019 10:36 pm

A new book on the polari language has been published in the UK called Fabulosa! by Paul Baker. The Daily Mail has done a review with an extensive explanation of the language:



Fabulosa!.jpg (42.9 KiB) Viewed 680 times

<https://www.dailymail.co.uk/home/books/article-7038299/When-homosexuality-illegal-gay-community-developed-language-Polari.html>

Maggie