

LIFE AFTER THE BEATLES

The Beatles' success in the 1960s was built on a balance between their different characters, especially John and Paul's. But that balance could not last forever. In the 1970s, John faced life after the Beatles.



John and Yoko campaigned against war

John and Yoko

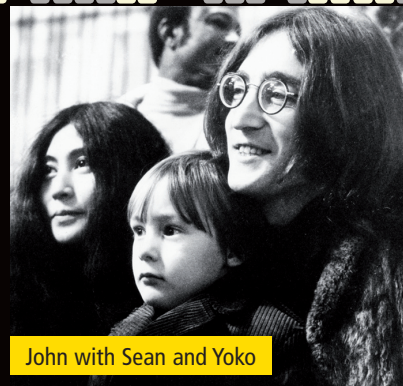
In 1968, John's first marriage ended. He had fallen in love with an artist called Yoko Ono. She changed everything for John, and he often spoke of her as his teacher. But he was becoming less interested in being a Beatle. The band continued to record albums, but John later spoke of the start of the band's 'slow death' at this time. When the band finally split up in 1970, John said, 'It feels good.' He and Yoko decided to begin a new life in New York City. He left the UK,

and never returned. In America, he and Yoko became interested in politics and campaigned for peace at the time of the Vietnam War.

Lennon in the 1970s

Some of John's most personal songs were on his first album after the Beatles, *Plastic Ono Band*. In painful songs like 'My Mummy's Dead' and 'Mother' he sings about losing Julia at a young age.

The title song of the next album, *Imagine*,



John with Sean and Yoko

became one of John's most famous: this contained the singer's hopes that 'the world will live as one'. The album also included 'How Do You Sleep?', an angry attack on Paul McCartney. As time passed, the two became friendlier – Paul later visited John's New York apartment a few times – but they never wrote or recorded together again.

For about eighteen months in the 1970s, John and Yoko lived apart; John called this time his 'lost weekend'. When he and Yoko got together again, John decided not to make music for a few years. He stayed at home and looked after their son, Sean. In 1980, he returned to the studio to record *Double Fantasy*. Much of this album was about the happiness of family life.

A Violent End

On December 8th, John and Yoko were returning home to their apartment building. Mark Chapman, a young man with mental illness, was waiting with a gun. He shot John in the back and chest. John Lennon died later that night; he was just forty.

Today fans can visit part of Central Park in New York near where John lived. It is called Strawberry Fields in memory of John. In the middle of this area is a single word, the title of one of his most famous songs: 'Imagine'.

Strawberry Fields, Central Park



Many people think that neither John or Paul were as good after the Beatles. What do you think?

What do these words mean? You can use a dictionary.

split up campaign apart mental