

The Beatles and the Jelly Babies

From the sweeties.net wiki

In 1963, as Beatlemania took hold in Britain, one small remark gave fans a new way to show their love. It was not a gentle one.

The remark

According to The Beatles Story museum in Liverpool, George Harrison said in a 1963 television interview that Jelly Babies were his favourite sweets, and that John Lennon had stolen his. The sweets were British, made by Bassett's and sold as Jelly Babies since 1953: see [what were Jelly Babies originally called?](#)

Fans were already sending sweets. A typewritten Beatles letter of 23 July 1963, sold at auction by Bonhams in 2016, thanks a fan for her jelly babies, which John and the writer had scoffed.

Pelted on stage

Boxes of Jelly Babies arrived for the band, and before long fans were throwing them at the stage. In October 1963, British fans pelted the Beatles with Jelly Babies after it was reported that Harrison liked them.

The band did not enjoy it. In a 1963 letter to a fan, Harrison wrote that they did not like Jelly Babies, or fruit gums, being thrown, that it was dangerous, and that he had once been hit in the eye with a boiled sweet. He asked fans to think how the band felt standing on stage "trying to dodge the stuff".

Jelly beans in America

When the Beatles reached the United States in 1964, the joke turned harder. Jelly Babies were not an American sweet, and, according to The Beatles Story, a New York newspaper reported that the band's favourite was jelly beans. At their concert in Washington on 11 February 1964, fans pelted them with jelly beans, far harder than soft Jelly Babies. The museum also records a concert at the Cow Palace in San Francisco in August 1964 being halted twice: see [how are jelly beans made?](#)

Around the world

The habit travelled with the band. At their first concert in Sydney, on 18 June 1964, the audience's Jelly Babies forced the Beatles to stop the show twice, and fans also threw miniature koalas and presents. Throwing things at the group became a fan ritual wherever the Beatles played.

A sweet with a fan club

Jelly Babies went on to another famous fan, of a very different kind: see [Doctor Who and his Jelly Babies](#). For more sweets of the decade, see [sweets from the 1960s](#)

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