



CAVE BALLADS SONGBOOK

NSS - 2001
Mt Vernon, KY

"Jenny and the Angels' Kings" (Patten's Cave)

Marian 1999

3-D LOVE

© Marian McConnell

C
Friday night we walked the land
Dm7 G
Pickin' berries, hand in hand
Dm7 G
Saturday we climbed the face
Dm7 G
Up the rock, a dance in space
C
Sunday found us far below
Dm7 Em Am
In the cave of Murder Hole

C Dm7
Oh Catawba Valley so fine
G Dm7 C
Peace for body, soul, and mind
Am7 Dm7
We love below, between, and above
G Fmaj7
Call it 3-D Love
G Fmaj7+G
Call it 3-D Love

Our bodies stand upon the land
Happy woman, child, and man
Our minds fly free while climbing stone
Way up high, we're still at home
Our souls find light in earth's dark womb
Magic flows from every room

Standing at the grotto's edge
We feel home on Gravely Ridge
Shafts of sunlight beam and glow
Lighting up the cave below
And we're reminded life is dear
It's a miracle we're here!

BEYOND THE LOST WATERFALL

© Marian McConnell
Tuning: Tune B down to A

Culverson Creek is baptizing me
A cave of such beauty I'm down on my
knees
Just like a wildcat she carries me on
Taking me underground past the unknown

Just like a wildcat she carries me on
Taking me underground past the
unknown

The water is pushing me taking me in
Calling me, beckoning as I crawl in
Climbing up sliding down mud's in my
blood
Dread pool is echoing, pray there's no
flood!
Climbing up, sliding down, mud's in my
blood
Dread pool is echoing, pray there's no
flood

The canyon is singing, I must heed her call
I can't resist going beyond the lost waterfall
The canyon is singing I must heed her call
I can't resist going behind the lost waterfall

BILLY POST

Warren Hoemann

Billy Post came from Nevada,
looked about age 23
Never knew much about him,
still he was a friend to me
Met him down in Arizona
Hiking some old dusty road
Saw his scarred and muddy hard-hat
Told him he could climb aboard

Goodbye Billy, Goodbye Billy Post
From the friends who loved you the most
There's no sorrow, among those who care
For Billy Post, you'll still be there

Came the August trip to Bigfoot
In the Marble Mountain air
On the road was still Yreka,
Billy Post was standing there
Never been to California,
Still as we hiked up that day
Everyone knew when the time came
Billy Post could lead the way

Seldom noticed when he'd leave us
Hardly knew from where he came
Though for months we'd never see him
He would be there just the same
I remember times in Onyx
And the drops in Water Cave
When we struggled on behind him
Billy Post would stop and wait

I was with him in Montana
Chimney'd cross an open dome
Down below there roared a river
When I got there he was gone
Checked with all the local Grottos
Said the name's a mystery
He was a caver pure and simple
And he was a friend to me

BORN TO CAVE WILD

"Born to Be Wild" by Steppenwolfe
Lyrics by Dan McConnell

Goin' to Convention, head out on the highway
Out in West Virginia, goin' cavin' the wild way
We're gonna go and make it happen
Take a bat in a love embrace
Pack all of your gear tonight and
Smear mud on your face

We like GORP and carbide,
blowin' holes and red clay
Pushin' virgin passage, past whatever's in our
way
We're gonna ride that nylon highway
into the depths of the great unknown
We're gonna find out what's down there
We're bad to the bone

And like a true caver's child,
we were born – born to cave wild
We'll go down so far – and never see the
stars
Born to cave wild ... Born to wild ...

Goin' to Convention, head out on the highway
Out in West Virginia, goin' cavin' the wild way
We're gonna ride that nylon highway
into the depths of the great unknown
We're gonna find out what's down there
We're bad to the bone

And like a true caver's child,
we were born – born to cave wild
We'll climb up so high – and never see the
sky
Born to cave wild ... Born to cave wild...!

BUCKNER CAVE BLUES

"Folsom Prison Blues" by Johnny Cash
Lyrics by Frank Reid

I hear the river flowing,
it's flowing 'round the bend.
And I ain't seen the sunshine
since I don't know when
I'm stuck in Buckner's Cave,
and time keeps dragging on.
But that stream keeps flowing,
on down to Blair Hollow.

When I was just a baby,
my mama told me, "Son,
Don't go climbing mountains,
or messing 'round in caves."
Well, I'm caving here in Buckner's,
to pass the time away.
How much longer must I stay here?
Maybe one more day.

I bet there's other cavers,
laying 'round the barn. ~
They're probably eating pizza,
and smoking big cigars.
Well, I know I had it coming,
I know I can't be free.
But that water keeps a-rising,
and that what tortures me.

If I get out of here if that crawlway I could find,
I bet I'd move on a little farther down the line.
Far from Buckner's Cave' that's where I want to
stay.
And I'd let the old Blair River wash all my blues
away.

CAVING AGAINST THE WIND

"Running Against the Wind" by Bob Seeger
Lyrics by Frank Reid

It seems like yesterday, but it was long ago.
A rope and a hard-hat were all of my life
There in the darkness, with the carbide burning low.
The charges that we set,
The breakdown that we moved
We ran down virgin borehole, out of control
Till there was nothing left to map
And nothing left to prove.
And I remember what they said to me
When I swore that it would never end,
I remember that crawlway oh so tight
Wish I didn't know now what I didn't know then.

Against the wind,
We were caving against the wind
we were young and strong
And caving against the wind.
(Spoken:) **If it blow, it goes!**

The years rolled slowly past, I found myself alone
Surrounded by cave walls I thought were my friends
I found myself further and further in the hole.
I guess I lost my way, there were oh so many roads
I was living to cave and caving to live
Never worrying about the NSS or grotto dues I owed
Dropping eight pits a weekend for months at a time
Breaking all the rules and sneaking in,
I began to find myself searching,
Searching for the entrance again and again.

Against the wind,
We were crawling against the wind.
I found myself taking shelter against the wind.
(Spoken in falsetto:) **Hypothermia!**
Those spelunkers days are past me now
I've got so much more to think about
Board meetings and committees
What caves to gate, who to kick out.

Against the wind,
We were spitting against the wind.
We were old and tired and spitting against the wind.
(Spoken:) **At the NSS convention.**

CAVING COUNTRY

Jeanette Kasnia

West Virginia
Can't wait to get in ya.
You may be country roads
And someone's home far away,
But to me you're caving country,
And right now I'm craving caving,
So let's get into those West Virginia Hills.

Now I'm from the city,
The crowded caveless city.
Tall buildings offer me my best rappels.
I've explored the sewer systems,
I've raced the subway pistons
And I've even done the few remaining
wells.

The pigeons fly and they drop their shit.
I fall to my knees and I crawl in it.
But I tell you folks, it isn't quite the same.
I long for the sight of a hanging bat
Aglow in the light of my old hard hat.
Go on old bat and let that guano rain.

COUNTRY ROADS

John Denver

Almost heaven, West Virginia
Blue Ridge Mountains, Shenandoah River
Life is old there, older than the trees
Younger than the mountains, blowing like
a breeze

Country Roads, Take me home
To the place I belong
West Virginia, mountain mama
Take me home, country roads

All my memories gather round her
Miners lady, stranger to blue water
Dark and dusty, painted on the sky
Misty taste of moonshine, teardrop in my
eye

I hear her voice
In the morning hours she calls me
Radio reminds me of my home far away

And driving down that road
I get the feeling that I should have
been home Yesterday... Yesterday

DARK AS A DUNGEON

Caver's version by Jan Conn
Tune: Traditional (Merle Travis)

Come all you young fellows
so bold and so brave
And seek not adventure
way down in a cave.
It'll form like a habit
and seep into your blood.
'Til your skin bleaches white
and your veins fill with mud.

Chorus:
Oh! It's dark as a dungeon
and damp as the dew,
Where the dangers are double
and the pleasures are few,
Where the grass never grows
and the rain never falls,
And the sun never shines
in those underground halls.

There's duckways and crawlways
and bottomless pits,
You're sore and you're tired
and scared out of your wits.
If you slip from your footing
you'll likely be dead.
But you can't straighten up
Without cracking your head.

Oh! It's many a fine man
I've seen in my time,
Who has sunk to the depths
And been lost to the prime,
Like a fiend with his dope
or a drunk with his booze,
He can't shake the mud
from his old caving shoes.

So if you are searching
for thrills and delights,
Stay above ground
on the tree covered heights.
For once you descend,
it's as though to the grave,
For your soul will be lost
to the lure of the cave.

DEDICATED CAVER

"Long Tall Texan"
Lyrics by Frank Reid

I'm a dedicated caver,
I wear a hard-hat on my head.
I'm a dedicated caver,
I wear a hard-hat on my head.
People look at me and say
"A-huh, a-huh, is that your head?"

I'm a dedicated caver,
I dump my carbide in a bag.
I'm a dedicated caver,
I dump my carbide in a bag.
(He dumps his carbide in a bag)
People look at me and say,
"B-duh, B-duh, is that your bag?"

I was sneaking through the boonies
with my carbide light,
Cave mud on my boots.
I seen a farmer coming,
coming with a gun and
I run before he shoot.

I'm a dedicated caver,
I bring my dynamite along.
I'm a dedicated caver,
I bring my dynamite along.
People look at me and say,
"A-huh, a-huh, is that your bomb?"

DO YOUR JUMARS LOSE THEIR TRACTION...

"Does Your Chewing Gum Lose Its Flavor"
by Paul Ash

Chorus:

Do your jumars lose their traction
On the Goldline when it's wet?
When you treadmill there in midair
Do you break out in a sweat?
When you climb 3 feet then slip 2
It's sure tough to forget
That your jumars lose their traction
On the Goldline when it's wet

It's such a fine device

But the rope is caked with ice
As you hang there in your halter
You feel your tired heart falter
But you give it one more try
It's a hell of a way to die
And as the pin slips from the cam
You begin to wonder why

But they're tested and they're proved

But the cam is badly grooved
But you keep on with your climbing
Good bites and proper timing
Up through the fluted hall
Up to the waterfall
And as the mist clings to the rope
It's then you may recall

The prusik's here to stay

But you found a better way
To climb from the deepest chasm
Just ask a guy who has'em
Up the muddy rope you go
But the going's kind of slow
And as you yo-yo up and down
You soon begin to know

On the Goldline when it's...

A dollar is a dollar and a dime is a dime

He'd bounce another pit But he hasn't got
the time

On the Goldline when it's...

Love to go pit-cavin', love to do it right
Every Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday,
Thursday, Friday, Saturday night
On the Goldline when it's...
Please Mr. Custer, I don't want to go...
On the Goldline when it's wet!

DON'T CAVE WITH JUST A LIGHTER

"Wolverton Mountain"
Lyrics by Donna Anderson

His name was Pudley, a Missouri caver.
Kind of wild and always high.
His hair was long, nearly to his waist.
He loved to party all night long.
All night long in Perkins Cave,
all night long he flicked his Bics.
They gave no flame, they were out of fuel.
But the sparks were good enough.

Chorus:

They say don't cave with just a lighter.
But he proved it could be done.
From the back of Perkins he started crawling.
A dead Bic lighter was in each hand.

He flicked his Bic with each step
he took through the mud and the long crawlway.
He was fascinated by those sparks
and the music running through his head.
Two Bic lighters and the gleam in his eyes
were his three sources of light that night.
But it's not clear if he remembered
that in his pack he had a carbide lamp.

A group of cavers were in the entrance
cooking supper and chugging beer.
In the distance they saw a strange sight,
it looked like strobe lights slowly comin' their
way.

He was nearly on them before they realized
that it was Pudley crawling on the ground.
No let me warn you, if you want to try this,
you'll get bad blisters on both your thumbs.

Well, I don't care about them bad blisters.
Let's all go get us some lighters.
Callused thumbs on all the cavers.
Pudley's lighter brigade.
Pudley's lighter brigade.

FLATROCKED BY LOVE

Mark Richardson

I was crawlin' through the underworld
When I heard that fearful sound
The creek is wild and angry
And headed underground
I'd be fine if I could climb
Before the passage floods
But long before I got to it
I was flatrocked by love!

Flatrocked by love
She broke my heart
She took off with my vertical gear
And left me in the dark
I'm crawlin' through the breakdown
She's dancin' up above
And then, KABOW, it's far too late
I've been flatrocked by love

I thought I'd seen the light of day
But now that's not the case
I gave her all my carbide
She gave me back the waste
She said I was her BNC
Of me she thought the world
But now she's just another hot-tub
Party caver's girl!

GRANDMA GOT RUN OVER BY A CAVER

"Grandma Got Run Over by a Reindeer"
Club 69

Chorus:

Grandma got run over by a caver
Coming from the bonfire last night
We all swore that she was sober
But Grandma, she was higher than a kite

She'd been drinking Jane's white spiders
And Don's elderberry wine
She said goodnight to all us cavers
And the last thing that she said was "69!"

Well we found her the next morning
By Registration and Vendor's Row
With salamander prints on her forehead
And a bat was sucking blood out of her toe

Now we're all so proud of Grandpa
We were sure that he would crack
He's got a Budweiser in one hand
And a funnelator stretched across his back

It's not MVOR without Grandma
All the bats are dressed in black
And we can't help but wonder
Should we sell her banquet tickets
or give them back?

Now the booze is on the table
Hot dogs cooking over twigs
And the ashes that they're making
Would've matched the hair in Grandma's wig

Now I've warned all my fellow cavers
They better watch out for themselves
Beware the phantom spelunker
He smokes cylumes
and gives out bullsh*t yells!
Sing it, Grandpa!

HARRY SNORT

Spike Werner

A predatory caver
had begun to drool and slaver,
For he'd heard of the Kentucky underground
Which was rich in gypsum flowers,
helictites and onyx bowers,
And where once archaic miners did abound.

Chorus:

Oh! Harry Snort, there's no other
A fellow that a vampire bat could mother!
One morning in a drizzle
he packed his maul and chisel
His helmet, and his
hundred feet of rotten sisal rope

He took a pint of liquor
and his trusty old lock picker
His dynamite, his carbide light,
and a bar of Dial soap.
In a paroxysmal tizzie
he stuffed his old tin lizzie
Until the springs were
groaning from the load,

Then down the road he purred alone,
his friends preferred to stay at home
Than trust themselves with Harry on the road.
Then he barreled down the highways,
shook the cops along the byways
And gave the guides the slip
as he whistled through the park

He wheeled his crate into the brush,
and in the evenings woodland hush
Repaired to Salt's Cave for his vandalizing lark.
With his pathogenic tremor
he dropped his lamp's tip reamer
But with typical abandon, he plunged into the dark.

He wrote his name upon the door,
he strewed his carbide on the floor
Caveman Harry makes his mark.
The cave was not quite damp enough

to fill is carbide lamp enough
He blundered as he plundered
indiscriminately on

So when his lamp had flickered out,
he groped about, he tried to shout
But only bat chirps answered him,
and they, in time, were gone.

The walls still bear the scratches
of Harry's sweat-soaked matches
And the bats still tell their children
of Harry's last moans.

When he dropped his bag of artifacts
and swallowed his last Atarax,
And ghosts of thirty centuries
wrought vengeance on his bones.
Oh the moon shines gray and ghostly
through the inky nite, and vastly
illuminates the spirits
of a thousand phantoms brave

As nightly on a sharpened pole
they spit poor Harry's tortured soul,
And roast him screaming
at the mouth of Great Salt's Cave.

HISTOPLASMOSIS

Barb McLeod

A sad story I have to tell, About a caver I knew well.
He frequented the places where the rain never falls
Where the sun never shines,
where on water fluted walls Bats do dwell.

He took his topo map and went to scout,
For a cave he had always heard about.
He had talked to all the farmers
and he listened with a grin
To the story that they told him
where four people had gone in
And not come out.

He was warned by everyone to stay away,
That he shouldn't go beyond the light of day
Where the enemy was lurking in the dry and dusty air
But to him it made no difference,
he decided to go there Anyway.

In a short time the entrance he had found,
Feeling just a little scared he looked around
But he saw nothing suspicious so he trolly-dotted on
Knowing nothing had ever happened
in the many times he'd gone Underground.

He took off down the passage with a bound,
He trolly-dotted through a guano mound,
He could've walked around it
and it wouldn't have delayed him
But he didn't know that there
Histoplasma capsulatum Did abound.

The enemy gathered forces silently,
Waiting for the perfect opportunity.
When this bold intrepid caver
with he limestone in his blood
Stubbed his toe and fell face downward
in the guano-covered mud; Oh tragedy.

With disgust he raked the guano from his hair
At the time he was completely unaware
Of the sneaky little critters whose primary occupation
Was to upset respiration and effect contamination.
TB or not TB.
c'est Histoplasmosis. . . .

Well they've had him in a fungus ward since then
And he's gonna be there till I don't know when
He's had to give up caving
and I know he must regret it
But as soon as they have cured him he'll go caving
and he'll get it ...Again.

HOLY GROUND

"Holey Ground" by the Clancy Brothers
*British cavers sing this, modified only by the spelling
of 'hoely.' The Holey Ground was the red-light district
of Liverpool in the early 1800's.*

Fare thee well, my lovely Dinah
A thousand times adieu
Fore we're going away from the Holy Ground
And the girls we all love true
We will sail the salt sea over
And we'll return for sure
To see again the girls we love
And the Holy Ground once more

Chorus:
Fine girl you are! [shouted],
You're the girl I do adore
And still I live in hopes to see
The Holy Ground once more

And now the storm is raging
And we are far from the shore
And the good old ship is tossing about
And the rigging is all tore
But the secret of my mind, my love
Is the girl I do adore
And still I live in hopes to see
The Holy Ground once more

And now the storm is over
And we are safe and well
We will go into a Public House
And there we'll drink our fill
We will drink strong ale and porter
And make the rafters roar
And when our money is all spent
We'll go to sea once more

HOLLOW HILLS

Barb MacLeod

As a child I'd often hear Stories of the last frontier
Far beneath the Ozark Mountains
Of my home, my thoughts would go;
I was young and fair and free
When the caverns called to me,
And through all the years I've loved that world below.

Yes the friends I made were good,
And we roamed as cavers would,
Through the wooded hills and hollows
Seeking out the secret lore;
Twas a Brotherhood of night,
Crystal pools and pure delight,
We were few, and it was ours forevermore.

Chorus:
Hollow hills, where time stands still,
Loved you then and always will;
Though a decade's changes tarnish
What a million years have done;
Though I know we're all to blame,
Can't go back the way we came
And like all frontiers you'll soon be overrun.

For awhile I went away, Lived a life of night and day,
Followed mountain streams to Silent glaciers,
wandered meadows high;
Scaled the peaks 'neath heaven's dome
Til' my limestone called me home,
With its tales of earth and dreams of days gone by.

But our brotherhood had grown,
Left its mark in pool and stone;
And the spirits of the hills had fled,
I knew they weren't around;
And the empty corridors,
Carbide names on walls and floors
Told me I'd somehow betrayed my sacred ground.

Friends of old have come and gone;
Guess it's time for moving on;
For together we're too many-long
Ago I should have known;
Most of them, they're just like me,
Lookin' for someplace to be;

I'm headin' South
where all the footprints are my own.

Yes, the years will come and go,
Like the water, they will flow;
And the ages will reclaim the hills
[We thought we understood;
But for now it makes me sad,
Thinkin' on the time we had,
And we let that time go by, as cavers would.

HUNTSVILLE CATS

"Nashville Cats"

Well, there's fourteen hundred and fifty-two
Vertical cavers in Huntsville
And they done more pits than the number of ants
On a Tennessee ant hill
Yeah, there's fourteen hundred and fifty-two
Vertical cavers in Huntsville
And any one of 'em'll rig his rack
Twice as better than I will

Huntsville cats ..
they slick as new Blue Water
Huntsville cats ...
they wild as mountain dew
Huntsville cats ...
been crawlin' since they's babies
Huntsville cats ...
been caving since they's two

I SMELL BAT SHIT

"I Feel Pretty" from *West Side Story*

Lyrics by Barb MacLeod

I smell bat shit
Fragrant bat shit
It's not cat shit
but bat shit for sure
It's not rat shit
And it's certainly not
horse manure

I WISH I WERE A LITTLE CAN OF BEER

Traditional; Anonymous Cavers

Oh I wish I were a little can of beer (repeat)
I'd go down with a slurp, and I'd come up with a burp
Oh I wish I were a little can of beer

Oh I wish I were a little slippery root (repeat)
I'd stick out in a trail and I'd flip you on your tail...

Oh I wish I were a little bar of soap (repeat)
I'd slippy and I'd slide over Dougie Lovie's hidie...*
(*infamous bathless caver*)

Oh I wish I were a little carbide lamp (repeat)
I'd build up lots of gas and I'd blow on your ass...

IT'S A LONG, LONG CRAWLWAY

Jan Conn

It's a long, long crawlway
And who knows what's beyond
I can picture slender soda straws
A-dripping in a pond.

It's a long, long crawlway
And who knows where it leads
What matter if my knee is pulp
What matter if it bleeds

Oh it's a long long crawlway
And who knows where it goes
Now my heels are on the ceiling
And the floor curls up my toes.

Oh it's a long long crawlway
That almost has a breeze
If it opens up a little
I can get back on my knees.

Oh it's a long long crawlway
And who knows ho 'twill end
No I've struggled to the corner
I can peek around the bend

To see a long long crawlway.

JERRY VINEYARD DID LOOK OUT

"Good King Wincelas"

Lyrics by Jim Zollweg & Mark Clemens

Jerry Vineyard did look out
As MVOR was leaving
Deep the cavers lay about
Drunk and sick and heaving
Warm the sunlight was that day
Though the caves were cool
But the whiskey from last night
On their stomachs was cruel

"Look upon this gorgeous day
Let us all go caving"
But the cavers paid no heed
They thought Vineyard was raving
Jerry wanted to go map
Cave Springs and Devil's Well
But the cavers still did drink
And said go to (!)

As he crawled into his tent
Biffle he did see
And asked where the real cavers were
And speleology
"Where has gone the MSS?
What's this diorama?"
They've all gone to Arkansas
Or to Alabama!

LEHMAN CAVES LINT CAMP BALLAD

"Drill Ye Tarriers, Drill"

Lyrics by Mike Bilbo, Jon, Kyle, Eric, Richard, Abby
*There is an acronym LNT pronounced "lint" which
stands for Leave No Trace.*

Out in Nevada, at Lehman Cave
They've got a new Lint Camp, it's all the rave
Cavers come from miles around
To wash and bag all the lint that's found

Chorus:

Soooo, spray ye cavers, spray
Spray ye cavers, spray
You clean all day til you're old and gray
Out of the light of day
Spray ye cavers spray

There was a Parkie, his name was John
He dreamt that he was a waterin his lawn
But then he looked up at the ceiling and saw
Lint festoons in the raw

Next there was a sprayer, his name was Rick
And he was a pourin' it on mighty thick
But then he stepped into the path of John
And he got washed away and now he's gone

There was a hoser, his name was Kyle
He vacuumed the water for a long long while
But then the tarp got sucked into the tube
And in went Kyle with the water, too

Oh, Robo-washer, size 15
Shor, ye kin bet he was really mean
Every time a linter walked on by
Robo stuck out his foot and Wham! Oh My!

In came the visitors, silently
Exploring the cave and its mystery
The caver talked this way and the Rangers
talked that
"Yes folks, it's cave restoration – and that's a
fact!"

Now here come the scrubbers – it's Jody and
Ray
They spend their time a-washin' squiggles
away
Jody jumped up and Ray crouched down
A-washin' them algae all around

I've got a mule her name is Sal
Sure you can bet she's a smart ol' gal
When we go to Lint Camp she stays away
And spends her time a eatin' hay

Les we forget our Leader, Dale
He just got a package in the mail
But when he opened the package we heard him
cry
"Yow! It's a pound of LINT! And that's no lie..."

There was this caver-type, his name was Mike
He liked to croon and the like
Ol' Eric looked over at Mike and said
Hey zip it Mike, yer a hurtin' my head!"

Now you can see this song is done
You can see at the Lint Camp we have some
fun
We borrowed this song from history
Those miserable ancestors, glory be

Drill ye tarriers, drill
Drill ye tarriers, drill
You work all day, no sugar for yer tay
Werkin' on the UP Railway
Werkin' your life away
Drill ye tarriers, drill
Drill ye tarriers, drill

Spray ye cavers, spray...
Drill ye tarriers, drill...
Spray ye cavers, spray
Spray ye cavers, spray

LIFE IS LIKE A CARBIDE LANTERN

"Life is like a Mountain Railway"
Lyrics by Barb MacLeod

Life is like a carbide lantern,
With a plugged up water drip.
As you sputter through existence,
You will carbon up your tip.
With a felt of fate all sodden,
And a spark of hope kaput,
Keep your thumb upon the flintwheel,
And your eye upon your foot.

You must bear life's broken gasket,
Leaking troubles all the while;
But keep a shine on your reflector,
Through the countless dents of trial.

Life is like an endless cavern,
With a stream of neck deep mud.
As you drag the tape of toil,
You must run before the flood.
Though your survey team forsake you,
In the water crawl of strife,
You must heed your obligations
to the catacombs of life.

Chorus:

Though you never make your closures,
And your stations wash away;
Keep your mind upon life's purpose;
Try to map a mile a day.

In the labyrinthine mazes,
you will surely lose your way;
Searching for one survey station,
Through the night, throughout the day.
Cling then to your inner virtue,
Though your light begins to fail,
Keep your eyes upon your footprints,
Never quake or never quail.

Searching through the corkscrew passage,
Into which your pack you tossed,

You will find your compass broken,
And your only pencil lost.
You will howl in desperation,
Throw your notes into the pit;
For this cave of tribulation,
You will often feel unfit.

You'll forever ask the question,
Why did I get into this?
Turn my back on rain and sunshine,
All those pleasures that I missed.
From the depths will ooze the answer,
Quote the mesmerizing call;
That the day is coming nigh when,
Into glory land you'll crawl.

MAMA, DON'T LET YOUR BABIES GROW UP TO BE CAVERS

"Mama, Don't Your Let Your Babies Grow up to Be
Cowboys"

Lyrics by Frank Reid and Don Paquette

Mama, don't let your babies grow up to be cavers
Don't let 'em smell carbide and swing on old ropes
Make 'em play tennis and golf with rich folks
Mama, don't let your babies grow up to be cavers
They're never around, they're always underground
Even with someone they love

Cavers aren't easy to love
And they sometimes get stoned
(spoken: **Just like old Floyd!**)
They'd rather sleep in the woods instead of at home
With a tape and a compass and an old carbide lantern
He's down in the ground like a mole
You can send him to college but he'll never get rich
Cause he'll always be in the hole

Mama's don't let your babies grow up to be cavers
The NSS News is gonna mess up their head
Give 'em the Wall Street Journal instead
Mama, don't let your babies grow up to be cavers
They're never around, they're always underground
Even with someone they love

Cavers like smokey old campfires
And clear moonshine whiskey

Great yawning shazams and boreholes
And tight slimey ones too
Them that don't know 'em don't like 'em
And them to do often also don't too
Sometimes he'd rather just dig in a sinkhole
Than find a loose woman and (!)

Mama, don't let your babies grow up to be cavers
Don't let 'em smell carbide and swing on old ropes
Make 'em drive Winnebagos and water-ski boats
Mama, don't let your babies grow up to be cavers
They're never around, they're always underground
Even with someone they love

MIDDLETOWN

©Marian McConnell

The people of Middletown
took a good look around
"Our city's as tidy and clean as can be
But the water tastes strange,
I'd guess we'd better change
We won't hide our trash in the sinkholes and streams"

'Cause underneath Middletown
a river flows underground
A wondrous place of caverns and caves
It took a little time but once they drew the line
The people cleaned up the mess they'd made

Chorus:

The river flows in,
the river flows out
What happens in the middle
is what comes out
The river flows in,
the river flows out
What happens in the middle
is what comes out

North of Middletown a city called Newtown
Flourished and grew, so did their trash every day
They said it'd be a pity to keep it in their city
So they used the river to carry it away

Well the people of Middletown
all began to wear a frown
"Think about the rest of us
living downstream
We're all in this together, you can do better
We'll teach you how to keep the river clean"

Chorus

We are all connected, everyone's affected
Trash or treasure, it all flows through
Takers or givers, we're just like the river
What will you do when it comes to you?

Chorus

You can solve the riddle, it's environmental
What happens in the middle is what comes out

NCRC

"Only the Lonely" by Roy Orbison
Lyrics by Dan McConnell

NCRC, won't you send some help to me
NCRC, bring some light so I can see
I dropped my flashlight, I'm feeling dumb
I only hope that real soon you'll come
Cause it's getting chilly
And I'm real scared ...
NCRC

NCRC, won't you come and rescue me
I wasn't looking
and I fell and broke my knee
It's very painful, I need some drugs
And lots of people My carcass to lug
You've gotta come
drag me out of this hole ...
NCRC!

NO FISHING FROM THE BRIDGE

Lyrics by Barb MacLeod
"Then Came the FFV"

Twos on a chilled and moonlit night
in old Virgin-i-ay,
We crept along the winding road;
in shadows we did stay;
Far up above the neon lights
was seen upon the ridge,
And we were there so there would be
no fishing from the bridge.

The tourist crowd comes with its kids
to view this God-wrought site,
But we, of course, could plainly see
it was the river that did it!
In seven days, from solid rock,
the tour guide leaders say;
God carved out the Natural Bridge
so's you could come and pay!
Spotlights played upon the arch
a gasp of awe arose;
We scrambled up a talus slope
where poison ivy grows;
The hallowed organ moaned along,
the voice rang loud and clear:
"You've got to see this work of God
come buy your tickets here!

We crouched down low and chunked a stone
square' at the tollhouse roof;
It hit the side with a great THUNK!
we figured that was proof
That we were safe, 'cause no one
stepped out to investigate;
So now we'd see the Nacher'l Bridge
and pay no tourist rate!

A geopick, a rusty nail, a sinister design-
Equipped us for the task at hand
-the hanging of a sign;
A sign we'd filched and hidden well
from prying eyes of fuzz,
And the Virginia Department of Highways,

whose property it was!
The trees stand gaunt and bare
along the road behind the stream,
But one stands out with message clear
the product of our scheme;
In brightest day, in blackest night,
the words there can be seen:
"No Fishing from the Bridge" they say
-and that is what they mean!

There's seven natcher'l wonders
in the world so people say,
There's Thornton Gap,
and Mary's Rock,
the Caverns of Luray;
But one stands out above the rest;
it arches over all,
From which there is no fishing from
the lines don't reach no how.

No fishing from the bridge,
no fishing from the bridge-
And we were there so there would be
no fishing from the bridge!

NOBODY WANTS YOU WHEN YOU'RE OUT OF LIGHT

"Nobody Knows You When You're Down and Out"
Lyrics by Warren Hoemann

Once I caved a lot, I was known everywhere
4 trips a weekend was only doing fair
Cavers would call me by night and by day
Saying "I found virgin passage,
would you please lead the way?
Then I began to mistreat my lamp
Didn't clean the bottom,
let the parts get old and damp
If I ever get my hands
on some gaskets and felts
I'm gonna burn that carbide
Til the wing nut melts, 'cause

Nobody wants you when you're out of light
In your cave pack you haven't got a candle
And all your friends treat you
like some kind of vandal

If I ever get my lamp put back together again
Everyone'll want to go like we did back then
Til then they'd rather be out of my sight
Nobody wants you when you're out of light

OH LORD, IT'S HARD TO BE HUMBLE

(Original by Mac Davis)
Lyrics by Doug Bradford

Oh Lord, it's hard to be humble
When you've been in 300 caves
I can't wait to get into my next one
I'm feeling so macho these days
I wish all the caves had some mirrors
I could watch myself wiggle and crawl
Oh Lord it's hard to be humble
But I'm going to give it my all

I do all of my cavin' alone now
Just me and my Gucci cave pack
I'm settin' all kinds of new records
'Bout how fast I get there and back
My camera has a self-timer
It takes the most exquisite views
Oh Lord it's hard to be humble
With your picture in the NSS News

Now some folks have said I'm conceited
Hell I don't even know that there word
If there's anyone out there don't like me
He's got to be some kind of nerd
Just look how I do all the big pits
And how I can climb any wall
Oh Lord it's hard to be humble
But I'm going to give it my all

ON THE ROPE AGAIN

"On the Road Again"
Frank Reid's Version

On the rope again
Just can't wait to get on the rope again
The life I love is going caving with my friends
And I can't wait to get on the rope again

On the rope again
Rappelling down where no one's every been
Doing caves that I may never see again

On the rope again
Down in Georgia, Tennessee and Alabama
And we just can't help being what we am-a

ON THE ROPE AGAIN

"On the Road Again"
Warren Hoemann and Doug Bradford's Version

On the rope again,
just can't wait to get on the rope again
Cause my whole life is going caving with
my friends
And I can't wait to get on the rope again

On the rope again,
Going places no one's ever been
Seeing spaces of the world that lie within
No I can't wait to get on the rope again

On the rope again,
Heading down that nylon highway
Til we reach the end of that subterranean
skyway
I'll do it my way

ONE SMALL LIGHT

©Marian McConnell

The crystal ballrooms of a cave
Lie hidden in the dark
For centuries the magic waits
For that initial spark
Then – one small light – and you can see
The earth unfold her mysteries
No more loneliness or doubt
The light has chased the darkness out

The crystal ballrooms of my dreams
Were hidden in the dark
The magic in me had to wait
For that initial spark
Then – one small light – and I could see
The beauty deep inside of me
No more loneliness or doubt
My light had chased the darkness out

It was there all along,
This wondrous world within
Shining and strong,
waiting to begin

The crystal ballrooms of your dreams
May be hidden in the dark
The magic in you has to wait
For that initial spark
Then – one small light – and you can see
The beauty that's in you and me
No more loneliness or doubt
Your light has chased the darkness out

ONE TON OF GUANO

"Guantanamera"
Lyrics by Warren E. Hoemann

Guanos noches, Senora
Could I please have refresco?
I come from deep in caverna
Where my amigos wait rescue
Across the guano we stealing

When we got sinking feeling.

Chorus:

One ton of guano,
I feel like one ton of guano.
One ton of guano,
I feel like one ton of guano.

One of our loco compadres
Was a North 'mericano
And to show he tough hombre
We enter room full of guano
Because he thought it was macho
We land in batshit gazpacho.

Adios, my Senora
Thank you for the kind favor
Pardon please my aroma
For I'm no longer a caver
I know I'd come to my limit
When they asked by to swim it.

PLASTIC JUSTRITE

"Plastic Jesus"
Lyrics by Barb MacLeod (1973)

Now Justrite's got a new device,
Superior design, economical price,
Construction unexcelled in quality;
It has an unadjustable water drip
A styrofoam felt and a plastic tip
And other blessings of technology.

Chorus:

Plastic Justrite, plastic Justrite,
Melted on the front of my hard hat;

Shoulda known better than to go and trust you;
If I ever get out I will stomp and bust you;
Underneath by Jeep I'll squash you flat!
Sittin' in a cave as black as midnight,
Cause I got a brand new plastic Justrite
Oozing off the front of my hard hat.
The lamp was fine, it was workin' OK,
I was trucking down a virgin passageway
Then it belched and melted out and that was that.

PLEASE DON'T BURY ME

Original by John Prine
Lyrics by Paul Ash

I woke up this morning, put on my helmet
Walked to the cavern and died
Oh what a feeling as my soul rose to the ceiling
All around the grotto I did fly
When the rescue team arrived
they said "this one's not alive"
They passed around my gear and went back home
They left me there inside like a pile of spent carbide
Left my spirit there free to roam

Please don't bury me
Up in the cold, cold ground
I'd rather haunt a cavern
When some fool comes around
Pop my light at a neophyte
And rattle my brake bars
Give a yell and scare them to hell
Watch 'em runnin' for their cars

Give my knots to Cuddington
if he runs out of cams
Put a fer-de-lance down in my pants,
I won't give a damn
Gil Ediger can have my hat,
I've always wanted his
He can use it for a chamber pot
if he gotta take a whiz

Give my rack to the racked up
and the busted flat
Take my rope, that ain't no joke
I'll soon be over that
Hand me down my mappin' gear
it's a sin to tell a lie
Send my card to Huntsville
and kiss my ass goodbye

SALLY SALAMANDER

"Smokey the Bear"
Lyrics by Rob Stitt

With a hard hat and carbide
and a pair of coveralls,
You will find her in the passage,
or crawlin' on the walls.
Cavers stop and pay attention
when she tells them to behave,
Cuz everybody knows that
she's the one who'll save the cave.

Chorus:
Sally the Salamander, Sally the Salamander,
Slippin' and a slidin' and a gettin' up her dander.
She can find a vandal,
before he writes his name;
She'll tell him to just stop it,
that was how she got her fame.

You can take a tip from Sally
that there's nothin' like a cave,
Cuz' they're lots of fun to crawl through
and they're what we need to save.
You just have to lock around you
and you'll find its not a joke,
To see what you'd be missin'
if formations all got broke.

You can crawl right through her passage
and she'll make you feel at home,
You can crawl, belay and prussik
all through her catacomb;
She will let you map her passage
and record it on your chart;
But don't you harm her cave cuz'
she's a caver in her heart.

If you've ever seen the cavern
with a vandal runnin' wild,
And you love the things with in it
like a father loves his child,
Then you know why Sally tells you
when she sees you passin' through:
Remember-please be careful-
it's the least that you can do.

SUBTERRANEAN PIONEERS

©Marian McConnell

CHORUS:

Em
We are subterranean pioneers
D Em
on an inner voyage
G D Em
Let's go see what lies ahead,
G C
just beyond this passage
G D Em
What is up around the bend?
G C
The only way we'll know
G D Em
Is if we're brave and forge ahead
D Em
... into the unknown

Em
We've been here ten times before
D Em
and never made it through
G D
But while we are underground
C Em
it's something we must do
Follow me into this hole
and don't forget your pack
Take a great big breath before
we push into the black
We are...

The river flows and on we go,
we're the first ones here
Aim your headlamps up ahead,
don't give into fear
This is it! It opens up
to virgin cave and more!
All the beauties of the cave
just beg us to explore
We are...

Our time is up, we must return
to the world above
Time to leave the shining walls
and darkness that we love
Up into the bright sunlight
we'll finally emerge
But we know we will be back
when we get the urge

Summer Wine

"Summer Wine"

Lyrics by: Donna Anderson

Chorus:

Cave coral, calcite, and a carbide lamp aglow.
My summer wine is really made from all these things.
Take off your caving pack and help me pass the time
And I will give to you summer wine. Oh summer wine.

I walked in town on cavin' boots with guano thick
A fine aroma only known to just a few.
She saw my AutoLite and said let's pass some time
And I will give to you summer wine.
Oh summer wine.

My eyes grew heavy
and my lips they could not speak.
I tried to get up but I couldn't find my feet.
She reassured me with the scent of her carbide.
And then she gave to me summer wine.
Oh summer wine.

When I woke up the sun was shining in my eyes.
My AutoLite was gone, my head felt twice its size.
She took my survey book, Suuntos, and a tape.
And left me cravin' for more summer wine.
Oh summer wine.

TAKE ME CAVING

"Scotch and Soda" by Kingston Trio

Lyrics by R. Nelson, A. Waldspurger, B. Nagy

Empty beer cans, mud in your eye
Baby do I feel high, oh me oh my
Do I feel high
Nice hot shower, can of cold beer
Wouldn't a fire feel good here?
Oh my, do I feel high
People won't believe me
They'll think that I'm complaining
But I could feel the way I do
And still want to go caving
All I need is a set of dry clothes
Sunshine from the sky, oh me oh my

Do I feel higher than a bat can fly
Take me caving, baby, I feel high

THE 12 DAYS OF CONVENTION

"The 12 Days of Christmas"

Lyrics by Rob Stitt

On the first day of Convention
My true love sent to me:

- 1) A Cave Conservation Policy.
 - 2) Two Carbide Lamps
 - 3) Three Hard Hats
 - 4) Four Brake Bars
 - 5) Five Gold Lines
 - 6) Six Jumars Jamming
 - 7) Seven Stellmacks Sleeping
 - 8) Eight Miles of Mud
 - 9) Nine Days Underground
 - 10) Ten Histoplasma Capsulata
 - 11) Eleven Vacuous Vandals
 - 12) Twelve Rane Curls
- [with each new verse, repeat all previous verses]

OR from the Spelunker's Songbook 1964:

12 calcite crystals
11 miner's hard hats
10 pounds of guano
9 piton hammers
8 carabiners
7 monkeys mating
6 bats a' winging
5 cans of beer
4 carbide lamps
3 meatballs
2 rubber bands
And a cougar in a pine tree.

THE BALLAD OF OBI-WAN KENOBI

"The MTA" (a.k.a. "The Wreck of Old 97")

Lyrics by Frank Reid

(re-parodied from a cave song by Paul Ash)

A long time ago there was a man named Obi
In a galaxy far away.
When a trash can and a kid
came knocking at his door
He knew trouble was headed his way.

Chorus:

But did he ever get zapped?
No, he never got zapped.
He knows all the tricks
those storm troopers use
They did trail him all around
but they never shot him down
Kenobi is never gonna lose.

Well, they loaded up their droids
and they drove into town
Right into a storm-trooper trap
He faked them with the Force
and he fooled them, of course
You can't catch Obi with sh*t like that!

He went in a bar, he met a starship pilot
And a thing with a cold wet nose.
Those storm troopers were a bunch of party
poopers
But Obi came out smelling like a rose.

One more story 'bout Obi-Wan Kenobi
On a tragic and fateful day
Old Darth Vader got left holding the bag
But Obi's gone clean a-way!

Spoken:

**Old Jedi never die,
they just hang around in a blue haze.**

THE CAVE MUSICIAN

"The Boxer" by Simon & Garfunkle
by Frank Reid

Well, I'm called a cave musician,
and my story's seldom told.
I massacre folk music
with three feet of beat-up plywood and a capo.
I take requests,
and play all the ones with just two chords and
disregard the rest.
Li li li, li li li, li li li li.

With my hard-hat and my carbide,
I go looking for a trip, and get no takers,
'cept a come-on from a groupie at the campfire.
I do declare, I was feeling kind of desperate so I
had her then and there.
Lay lay lay, lay lay lay lay lay lay.

Now, I play the cave tradition
with one finger in my ear,
'Cause half the songs I'm singing,
I just can't stand to hear.
From bar to bar, to the rhythm of an off-key
one-string Japanese guitar,
Ri ri ri, ri ri ri ri ri ri ri.

Now, to "Gory, Gory"
I clean forgot the 47th verse,
So I sang the 22nd twice as loud and in
reverse.
And no one noticed. I crawled for hours, till the
mud rolled down my trouser legs,
I thought I'd messed my drawers.
Li li li, li li li li li li li

On the rope I climb so proudly,
a caver to my trade.
And I carry the reminder of every trip I've made.
Like one night in Kentucky
when I fled in mortal fear
With the Imprint of a Mason jar

of moonshine on my ear
And a voice that shouted out, "Ain't no caves
here!"

Now I've got my thing together man,
I really have no fear.
I smoked up all my garden and I mainlined Billy
Beer (it's inexpensive)
Like all the rest, I've had problems with my sex
life since I fell and sprained my wrist,
And my other songs are even worse than this.

THE CAVE OWNER SONG

"This Land is Your Land" by Woody Guthrie
1st verse by Boy Scouts
2nd verse by Buffy St. Marie

This land ain't your land
This land is my land
I've got a shotgun
And you ain't got one
You better get off 'fore
I blow your head off
This land was made for only me

This land is your land
It once was my land
From California
To Manhattan Island
You placed our nations
On reservations
This land was stole by you from me

THE COMING OF THE ROADS

Billy Edd Wheeler & Bexhill Quartet

A E F#m
Now that our mountain is growing,
D E7 A
With people hungry for wealth
E F#m B7
How come it's you that's a' going
D E
And I'm left alone by myself?

We used to hunt the cool caverns,
Deep in our forest of green.
Then came the road and the taverns
And you found a new love it seems.

A B7 E C#m
Once I had you and the wild wood,
D E7 A
Now it's just dusty roads.
A E C#m
And I can't help from blaming your going
D E7 D E7 A
On the coming, the coming of the roads.

Look how they cut all to pieces
Our ancient poplar and oak.
And the hillsides are stained with the greases
That burned up the heavens with smoke.

You used to curse the bold crewmen
Who stripped our earth of its ore.
Now you've changed; you've gone over to them
And love what you hated before.

Once I thanked God for my treasure
Now, Like Rust it corrodes.
And I can't help but blaming your going
On the coming, the coming of the roads.
And I can't help from blaming your going
On the coming, the coming of the roads.

THE COVER OF THE NSS NEWS

"The Cover of the Rolling Stone" by Dr. Hook
Lyrics by Frank Reid

I'm a hard-core cover, I do owners a favor
'Cause they beg me to go in their holes.
I've done the world's deepest pi
and the world's longest crawl,
I'm loved everywhere I go. -
I make all kinds of waves to save all kinds of caves
And I always pay my grotto dues.
And they really ought to put my picture _
on the cover of the NSS News

Refrain 1:

NSS News . . .

Gonna see my picture on the cover,
Gonna get my dad to hide it from my
mother,
Doing all those dangerous things
on the cover of the NSS News.

I found virgin passage in commercial Mammoth Cave
And I mapped everywhere I went.
I cultivated speleo-political connections with the
East-Coast establish-ment
I went to the board meeting in the big city,
I licked stamps for the money committee,
I told them my face would sure look pretty
On the cover of the NSS News.

(spoken:)

**That's cave mud on my nose.
It's from Lechuguilla.
Since you're a special friend,
you may touch it!**

I got a mile of PHI and a high-tech rack
for sliding down slippery slopes.
I got a 44-D blonde graduate student
that wants me to show her the ropes.
I go on international scientific caving expeditions
And Mixon gives me good reviews.
But I never did get my picture on
the cover of the NSS News .

| R-O-O-O-O-C-K 'n roll!

I beat claustrophobia and histoplasmosis
There's so many fine things I've seen.
I've been just about every place a caver can go
Except "America's Caving Magazine."
I've been in National Geographic
and Discovery Channel
and Outside didn't refuse
But I just can't get my picture on the cover
of the NSS News.

Refrain2:

NSS News

Gonna see my picture on the cover
Gonna show it to my stock-broker brother
Me and all the other BNCs
on the cover of the NSS News.
NSS News gives me the blues,
'cause I Just can't get my picture
on the cover of the NSS News.
(spoken:) **Who you gotta know, anyway?**

THE DEATH OF FLOYD COLLINS

Al Craver (Vernon Dalhart)

Oh, come all ye young people
and listen while I tell,
The fate of Floyd Collins,
the lad we all knew well,
His face was fair and handsome,
his heart was true and brave,
His body now lies sleeping
in a lonely sandstone cave.

Oh , mother don't you worry,
dear father don't' be sad,
I'll tell you all my troubles
in an awful dream I had,
I dreamed I was a prisoner,
my life I could not save,
I cried "Oh must I perish
within this silent cave.

The rescue party labored,
they worked both night and day,
To move the mighty barrier

that stood within their way,
To rescue Floyd Collins,
it was their battle cry,
"We'll never, no we'll never,
let Floyd Collins die."
But on that fateful morning,
the sun rose in the sky,
The workers still were busy,
"we'll save him by and by,"
But oh how sad the ending,
his life could not be saved,
His body was then sleeping
in the lonely sandstone cave.

Young people, all take warning
from Floyd Collin's fate,
And get right with your maker
before it is too late.
It may not be a Sand Cave
in which we find our tomb,
But on that day of judgment,
we too must meet our doom.

THE FROZEN CAVER

From the **Spelunker's Songbook**
"The Frozen Logger," J. Stevens.

I went into a tavern, One evening near Luray
A forty-year-old waitress To me these words did say:
I see you are a caver, And not just a common
bum
For no one but a caver, Puts carbide in his rum.

My lover was a caver His equal I never saw.
If you poured cave mud in it,
He'd crawl right through a straw.
He never washed the cave mud,
from off his horny hide;
He said it improved the friction,
When down the rope he'd slide.

My lover came to see me

Before a descent one day
He held me a fond embrace
That broke six vertebrae.
He kissed me when we parted,
So hard that it broke both jaws.
I could not speak to tell him
His rope had thirteen flaws.

I peered into the entrance And saw my lover go.
Sliding gaily downward Five hundred feet
below.
The cave it tried to kill him It tried its vertical
best
But pits and chimneys were for him
A game and not a test.

The crawlways squeezed to nothing
And breakdown covered the floor
But when the whole earth split in two
My lover caved no more.
They tried in vain to pull him out
His bones were all they saved;
They made him into pitons,
To conquer virgin cave.

And so I lost my lover
And to this tavern I've come
And here I wait till someone
Puts carbide in his rum.

THE LEGEND OF FLOYD COLLINS

Rob Stitt

Well, it happened in Kentucky
not so many years ago,
When a man they called Floyd Collins
far underground did go;
He found a wondrous cavern,
or so the stories say,
But Floyd did not live on
to tell us of that day.

A Rock fell from the ceiling

and trapped him underground,
And before the story finished
it had surely got around;
For lithe young William Miller
to save Floyd did try
And put it in the papers
to tell to you and I.

Chorus:
Oh Floyd,
where are you today?
Your spirit crawls on,
so they say.
Through great limestone caverns
so far underground
The legend of Floyd grew profound.

The rescue parties labored
through winters short cold days
As Floyd's spirit wandered
through far cavern ways;
Before they got to him,
through tunnel long and wide,
Floyd had gone to meet his maker,
his body had died.

But his spirit wanders
on beneath the land
Through the great Kentucky wilderness
so close at hand,
Far beneath our forests,
in Mammoth Park so wild,
that through the years the hearts
of many has beguiled.

Floyd's body lies in Crystal Cave
in great Grand Canyon halls,
but his spirit ranges father
within the cavern walls;
For he follows ever onward
in his quest to find the end,
And in his footsteps only
will the later cavers wend.

Through Colossal, Bedquilt, Endless, Salts,

Great Onyx and Unknown
Floyd has led the path e'er onward
and his following has grown;
Propelled by song and legend
his followers so brave
Have pushed Floyd's cavern onward
to connect with Mammoth Cave.

Floyd's spirit leads us onward
through caverns ages old
And to countless new caverns
his story had been told;
But Floyd's far distant caverns
have become a place of play,
For too many now follow
in Floyd's way.

In the distant future
will our descendants know
That if they'd done it different
wild caving they'd still go,
To wander in freedom
through Floyd's marble halls,
Following his spirit that still calls.

THE LONESOME DEATH OF ENDLESS CAVE

"The Lonesome Death of Hattie Carroll" (Bob Dylan).
Lyrics by A. Speleothus

A deliberate vandal destroyed Endless Cave,
With a blow from a hammer
that pounded and pounded.
He smashed it and bashed it and packed it in barrels
To sell to the tourists
at famed Carlsbad Caverns;
And his money he gained was spent in cheap taverns
To drink down his sorrows both plenty and foolish
And capture the moment he'd had in the cavern
While hammers were flying and his happiness crying.

Chorus:
Ah, but you who philosophize,
disgrace, and criticize all fears,
Throw the rag away from your face,

now ain't the time for your tears.

Endless Cave lay 'neath New Mexico limestone,
Where eons of Nature's fine work had created
A sight for sore eyes, sure, but much underrated.
And flowstone and popcorn of every description
To be taken home and displayed in the kitchen
Of rich wealthy tourists who pay for the privilege
Of destroying Nature through buying the proceeds.

Those who were sworn to preserve and protect it
Stood silently by while the vandals collected;
And waited for God or some other divine force
To push back the vandals and pick up the pieces
Of litter remaining including dried feces.

The wild charging cavers killed poor Endless Caverns
By watching and waiting with harsh heavy footsteps
While smoking their long cigarettes in the passage
And kicking their feet in a dry rimstone pool,
Refusing to move them
when urged by their conscience,
And stomping the ground
with their giant ugly footsteps
Breaking off small formations
to lie on the floor ruined and dry;
To show an example for countless new cavers,
Who thought that their macho
had made them the heroes
Able to get there in constant scant seconds,
Unless they are lost, which often does happen.
And all the time crying "We must save our caverns"
Crying and screaming about conservation
And yet ruining the caves with no explanation
And breaking formation while at their convention.

Ah, but you who philosophize,
disgrace, and criticize all fears,
Throw the rag deep into your face,
now is the time for your tears.

THE OLD CAVER'S SONG

"Acres of Clams/Rosin the Bow," traditional
Lyrics by A. Speleothus (Rob Stitt)

I've traveled all over this country,
A hunting and searching for caves;
I've chimneyed and rappelled and prussiked,
And I have been frequently brave.

Chorus: (Note-repeats lines of verse)
And I have been frequently brave
And I have been frequently brave;
I've chimneyed and rappelled and prussiked
And I have been frequently brave

I took all my lights and my carbide,
and headed down deep in the ground;
And when I emerged it was raining,
In the country they call Puget Sound.

For each one who gets kicks out of caving,
I saw there were hundreds grew cold,
At the bottom of the rope they were waiting,
So rapidly covered with mold.

The rainfall round there was so tragic,
To leave it I saw that I must,
To go to a much milder climate,
Where mold is less likely than dust.

Away from the Puget Sound rainfall,
I headed my little Volks car,
To a land rich with caves and no moisture,
Under Mt. Adams bright star.

I got to the caves about sundown,
After I'd driven all day;
I pulled out my jug and my banjo,
And sat down and started to play.

I sang of the caves and their shadows,
Of speleothems and flow marks;
Of all of the caves that are twisting,
Under Trout Lake's City Park.

I'm camped in this campsite forever,
Of working I'm done with its curse;
I've made up my mind to try caving,
The only sport that is worse.

No longer the pawn of ambition,
I laugh at the world and its slaves,
And think of my happy condition,
Surrounded by acres of caves.

THERE'S GOT TO BE A MORNING AFTER

*Song from movie, The Poseidon Adventure ,
only slightly modified by
Frank Reid
(alone on bottom of Golondrinas at night, 1973)*

There's got to be a morning after
If we can hold on through the night
We have the chance to find the sunshine,
Let's keep on looking for the light.

There's got to be a morning after
We're moving closer to the sky.
why don't we climb the rope together
And find a place that's warm and dry?

It's not too late, we should be giving.
Only In love can we fall.
It's not too late, not while we're living.
Let's light our lamps up and crawl.

Oh, can't you see the entrance sunlight?
It's waiting right outside the door.
I know we'll be there by tomorrow,
And we'll escape the darkness
We won't be searching anymore.

TINKERMAN

©Marian McConnell

After working hard all week,
my spirits needed a lift,
So I set out with my trusty dog
to hike up Tinker Cliffs.
It was a cool, Virginia morn
still misty from the rain,
But the mountain called to me
as if it knew my name.

Step by step we climbed the mountain
breathing in the air,
There among the scent of pines
I stopped to braid my hair.

A tingle ran right up my back,
my dog got quiet too --
Someone there was watching us,
we weren't sure what to do.

My dog and I stood still as stone,
we felt his eyes on us.
A bear? A Buck? A rattlesnake?
Or could it be a ghost?
Then the sun burst thru the clouds
& out stepped an old man;
Twinkling eyes and shaggy hair,
a hammer in his hand.

Chorus:

Tinkerman, Tinkerman,
tell your tale to me,
Tinkerman, Tinkerman,
through your eyes I see,
Oh, thru your eyes I see!

He laughed a quiet, gentle laugh
then motioned us to come.
We climbed the cliffs up to a cave,
we saw it was his home.
He sat us down on leaves & furs,
somehow we weren't afraid,
He smiled & showed us all the wondrous
things that he had made.

Chorus

I marveled at the works of art
that filled his cavern-house,
For in each one a creature lived;
a bat, a bird, and a mouse.
I asked him where he got the metals
for his pots and pans?
He filled a silver cup with juice,
and placed it in my hands.

He told me...

Long ago the Civil War
was fought beneath his hill,
The tools of battle left behind
were only used to kill.

But he'd gathered them all up,
the weapons & the guns,
And turned them into pots & pans;
that's how his war was won.

Chorus

So if you're driving North or South
on Highway 81,
And catch a glimpse of something bright
& flashing in the sun,
Think about that Tinkerman
with all his pots & pans,
And realize it's war or peace
you make with your own hands!

Chorus

VANDAL, SPARE OUR CAVERNS

Gene Hargrove

Vandal, spare our caverns,
Sparkling beauty underground,
These wonders are not flowers
They may not grow again.
Go not with sacks and blazing lanterns,
To steal what can be found,
These wonders are not flowers
And they may never grow again.

VENDOR'S ROW

©Marian McConnell

Chorus:

If you want to go caaaa-ving,
Then you better start saaaa-ving
Before you go -- down below,
Come to Vendor's Row
Vendor's row, Vendor's Row
Save up your dough, It's time to go
To Vendor's Row

Dress in style with *Wunderwear*

Cecile will fit you right
Her caving coveralls won't tear
And the inseams aren't too tight!

Read a great book from *Inner Realm*
Rich is the man to see
Then get a batdanna from *Speleobooks*
From the "old bat" - Emily

Chorus

Get a "brain bucket" from *Bob & Bob*
He'll serve you with a smile
And a caving lamp from Alex and Dru
Light the *Inner Mountain* up for miles

Bruce will put you *On Rope One*
In a climbing system that flies
Howie'll put you in a harness so sweet
It'll bring tears to your eyes

Chorus

Bonnie will put you in a *Spotted Bat* shirt
That looks good even when wet
There's *Karstworks* and *Guadalupe*
Have you run out of money yet?

We're speleo-spenders and we love the
vendors
We're sorry if we missed a few
You can tell we care since our wallets are
bare
And the credit card bills are due!

(slow...)

Stickers and patches, 'biners and packs
Kneepads, ascenders and more
We'd love to go caving with you this week
But we can't fit through the door!

Chorus

VIRGIN CAVE

"Groundhog" (traditional)
Lyrics by Rob Stitt

Load up your lamp and start lookin' brave.
Load up your lamp and start lookin' brave.
We're off to the Guads to hunt virgin cave,
Virgin Cave!
Gari Davis, Mike and Dave
Went off to the wild woods to hunt virgin cave.
Virgin Cave!
Down the sink hole and up the side,
Somewhere out there big caves hide,
Virgin Cave!
Up came Mike with a forked stick,
Witch for the cave and find it quick.
Virgin Cave!
They looked and looked throughout the day
And just as the sun was going away
(They found it) Virgin Cave!
They crawled through the entrance on their
knees,
Full in the face was a forty mile breeze.
Virgin Cave!
Then out came Becky with a snigger and a grin,
She was coming out as they were going in.
(Not-so) Virgin Cave!
Old Lee Skinner is the mother of us all,
Took us out caving' as soon as we could crawl.
Virgin Cave!

VIRGINIA: LAND OF LIBERTY

©Marian McConnell

Chorus:
Virginia, Virginia;
From the mountains to the sea
Virginia, Virginia; Land of Liberty

You're the dogwoods in the springtime
You're the cardinal's joyful song
You're the monuments in Richmond

And the Chesapeake at dawn

We climb your Blue Ridge Mountains
Explore the Caverns of Luray
We hike your Misty Meadows
And sail upon your Bay

You are history and progress
You are what is yet to be
The future of Virginia
is up to you and me

Chorus

WE'RE CAVERS AND WE'RE RESCUERS

"Sink the Bismarck" by Johnny Horton
Lyrics by Dan McConnell
July, 1994 during NCR in Bristol, VA

1. We're cavers and we're rescuers
We're loaded down with gear
We're highly trained and eager
And we've never heard of fear!
With racks and ropes and stretchers,
Splints and pulleys up to there
We don't care where you're stuck
'Cause we'll travel anywhere

Chorus:

We'll find that broken caver
That's created such a fuss
We have to find the caver
'Cause their life depends on us
We hit the cave a-runnin'
And go blitizin' underground
We won't give up and we won't stop
Until that caver's found!

2. We're IRT's and EMT's
We're loyal and we're true
We constantly amaze ourselves
With feats of daring-do

We'll splint you up and pack you up
You'll really be a sight
We'll feed you and we'll beat you and
We'll drive you toward the light

3. We're riggers and we're stretcher teams
We know just what to do
We'll pull you out through passages
That wouldn't pass a shrew
We'll lay our bodies under you
To keep you safe from harm
But if we find you're faking it
We'll lose our grace and charm

Chorus

4. Don't worry 'bout your broken leg
Or 'bout your busted spine
We've lots of splints and other stuff
We'll treat you really kind
There's daylight just a mile away
Right down this flooded creek
We don't think you'll go under
'Cause it doesn't look too deep

5. It's nice to see you breathe again
We got the water out
Your color's coming back again
You'll live without a doubt
Though you'd make a real good submarine
You scared us half to death
When you're underneath the water
You're supposed to hold your breath

Chorus

6. We'd rather be at home
Watching TV with our spouse
'Cause the "Skins" are in the Super Bowl
And we just be the house
We know that you may have concerns
We really understand
But if you give us problems
We will break your other hand

7. We're cavers and we're rescuers
And we are here for you
But as a patient there's one thing
That you must never do
You cuss at us, throw up on us
We'll even handle this
But if you up and die on us
We really will be pissed

Chorus

8. We leave our homes and families
And jobs are lost by some
Because you lost your flashlight
Or did something really dumb
So if you're going caving
Here's a lesson tried and true
Get instruction, use the proper gear
So we don't rescue you!

Chorus

WHEN YOU'RE A CAVER

"In the Navy" by The Village People
Lyrics by Frank Reid

Where can you make music while you learn to prusik
Relieve al your monotony?
Stay out all night and set off dynamite
And study speleology?
Where can you go crawling,
learn how to keep from falling
Grab a rope and get on down?
Light up your carbide and go on a fine ride
where everybody's colored brown?

When you're a caver, you can do all that with the best.
When you're a caver, it's alright to be a mess.
When you're a caver, you can join the NSS.
When you're a caver, when you're a caver.

Send some bucks to Huntsville,
in a couple months you'll be
A member of the underground.
Go to the convention where there's no abstention
Drink or climb or hang around.

Night and day, day and night,
we want you for a neophyte.
Hey, man, don't mess with the Boy Scouts.
They got wimpy knots.
(Sheet bend! -- Yaaaaaaah CRASH)
They got no high explosives.
They got adult supervision!

When you're a caver, you can help a bat survive.
when you're a caver, you can really feel alive.
When you're a caver you can map a mile or five
When you're a caver you can get a 4-wheel-drive.
when you're a caver, you don't need a submarine
When you're a caver, be in that yellow magazine
when you're a caver, make your mom and dad turn
green.
when you're a caver, you don't feel really clean.
When you're a caver, when you're a caver, when
you're a caver.

WONDERS FROM UNDER

©Marian McConnell

I'm a little bat (I'm a little bat)
And this is my cave (And this is my cave)
If you come in here
Then you'd better behave
I like my home
Quiet and dark
This ain't no
Amusement Park
Keep your voices down
And your light out of my eyes
Or you might get
A Guano surprise!

Chorus:
Walk softly if you're coming down
We're wonders from under the ground

I'm a formation
And this is my cave
If you come in here
Then you'd better behave
I like to stay
Pretty and clean

Look, don't touch
My beautiful sheen
Please take care
Just like I said
Or I might fall
Down on your head

I'm a salamander
And this is my cave
If you come in here
Then you'd better behave
I like my MUD
Slippery and smooth
Footsteps leave
Some pretty big grooves
Watch where you walk
And don't take a chance
Or I might crawl...
Right UP your pants!

I'D RATHER BE CAVING

William Payne

People say I'm crazy Cause of where I put my feet
And by their standards I guess it might be true
I might be mad, but what the hell
It keeps me off the streets
And there sure ain't nothing I would rather do
You can have your cocaine,
And keep your mobile phone

Chorus:
I'd rather be caving
Deep in the dark underground
I'd rather be caving
Water and stone all around
I'd rather be caving
Where I'm happy and free

Give me darkness, deep and black
And silence all around
And a friend to lend a hand if I get cold
Cause I'm so tired of the same routine

I've got to get unwound
And I plan on pushing leads til I get old
I don't mind them flying things or
Crawling in the mud

Is Earth an artist, her canvas – stone
Her brush the quiet rain?
I think I've seen her paintings in a cave
I've learned to love the hidden things
That grow when left alone
That other men were kind enough to save
I've listened to the music of a cavern fantasy

I'd rather be caving
Deep in the dark underground
I'd rather be caving
Water and stone all around
I'd rather be caving
Where I'm happy and free

THE BALLAD OF FRED YATES

"The Ballad of Jed Clampett" by P. Henning
Lyrics by John and Lois Lyles

Come and listen to this story 'bout a man named Fred
The oil men say
he barely kept his drillers fed
Then one day
he was searching for some grease
And come the subject
of a guaranteed lease
Oil that is, black gold, Permian tea...

Well he hired the best lawyers
that his money could find
While the lawyer for the Feds
was too green to hold the line
They said, "Lechuguilla
is the place you oughta drill!"
So he paid a call to Leslie
and his other pal Bill.

They said, "700 cavers
are just a bunch of wind,"
So he started up the drill
down in Serpentine Bends.
Went ahead and drilled
just to test the cavers' might,
And the BLM folks,
well they all gave up the fight.

Next thing you know,
ol' Fred's a millionaire
He couldn't care less
if the well is suckin' air
Now he's about to ask
for another APD
Got 2 million for the 1st,
maybe this time he'll get 3

The crew, they did their darn'dest
to make old Fred content
But they found the hole they drilled
For the Diamondback was bent
They never touched the Morrow
and they never found the gas
So folded up the rig
and he kicked 'em in the ass

Now Fred is looking 'round
for another source of gas
And Leslie lost her post
and she moved to Denver fast
The cavers celebrated
and they partied mightily
'Cause Lechuguilla Cave
was safe for all eternity!

NYLON HIGHWAY

Lyrics by David Foster

**I'm gonna to ride the Nylon Highway
To the end of the line
Until I reach my journey's end
And when my body's aching
And when I've done my time
I'm gonna to ride the Nylon Highway home
again
So you think I'm crazy; I've a strange desire to
die
Well, you don't have to worry - I'll take care.
And if you ask me why I guess I'd have to lie
and say I only go because it's there.

You say you've seen the world
in all its splendor fine
As you ride the towns before you watch the
view.
But far below your castle walls
There's something on my mind
There's something that I'd really like to do

**I'm gonna to ride the Nylon Highway
To the end of the line
Until I reach my journey's end
And when my body's aching
And when I've done my time
I'm gonna to ride the Nylon Highway home
again.

The winds of change keep blowin'
Though our thoughts remain the same
Though the times have all (?become) beyond
repair
And the old men who began to think
Are wishin' that they could put the blame
On all of those who step without a care.

Well, you got to see we're all in this together
and we must stand
And throw our prides and jealousies away.
Yeah, we've got to save the caverns from the
threat of modern man

Lest the children have a greater price to pay

**I'm gonna ride the Nylon Highway
To the end of the line
'til I reach my journey's end.
And when my body's aching
And when I've done my time
I'm gonna ride the Nylon Highway home again.

Now the grand finale's waiting
As the curtain starts to close
On everything we fought so hard to save.
But the last frontier is dying,
And no one seems to know
If there's anything worth saving in a cave.

**I'm gonna ride the Nylon Highway
To the end of the line
'til I reach my journey's end.
And when my body's aching
And when I've done my time
I'm gonna ride the Nylon Highway home again.

I'm gonna ride the Nylon Highway
To the end of the line
I'm gonna ride her 'til I die -
And when my body's aching
And when I've done my time -
I'm gonna ride the Nylon Highway
To the sky!

HER FATHER'S WORST NIGHTMARE

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1. Each scene she describes,
is something her Dad
Can only imagine;
is that good or bad?
Each word that she says,
puts thoughts in Dad's head
If he only knew,
his face would be red
2. Dad thinks he knows,
the truth about "them"

Spelunkers who venture,
into those dark dens
Each time that his daughter,
tries to tell him the truth
His mind pictures something,
that's totally moot

Chorus:

He's her father's worst nightmare
But he's her dream come true
He's her father's worst nightmaaaaaare
He's a caver like me and you

3. A Dad always wants,
the best for his girl
Someone who lives like,
the "rest of the world"
Dad's gonna find out,
he's in for a shock
Her boyfriend just crawled out
from, under a rock

4. Each time Dad imagines,
what cavers all do
He pictures some things,
that aren't really true
Wait til he finds out,
what OTR's like
He might tell her boyfriend,
to go take a hike!

5. Her Dad hears her stories,
but he just wants the facts
Like the the truth about cavers,
and what's in their packs
His daughter is hoping,
that he'll come around
When he meets her boyfriend,
from under the ground

6. Two sides to each story,
but which one is right?
Should he trust this caver, or put up a fight?
It's his only daughter,
should he take the risk

Of letting her go with, some guy into pits?

Fathers are older, and set in their ways
Sometimes they forget
their, own wilder days
Or maybe remember,
how they used to be
And hope that it's something,
their children never see

7. Dads might surprise you, they have passions too
They might crave adventure, just like me and you
Watch out what you wish for, it just might come true
Dad might decide....
to be a caver too!

Ending Chorus:

He's his daughter's worst nightmare
Living his dream come true
He's his daughter's worst nightmare
He's a caver like me and you

I AM DARK, I AM DEEP

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I am dark, I am deep
There are secrets that I keep
Shine your light into me
There's so much for you to see

1. There are treasures here below
Whole new worlds to be found
Virgin passage waits for you
When you come underground
2. I've been waiting all my life
For you to discover me
All it takes is one small light
For you to set me free
3. Deep within my silent halls
You can find release
I will share it all with you
Here you will find peace

