

# RECORDINGS IN NATURAL CAVES

## UNITED KINGDOM

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### Cathedral Cave \*

Dan-yr-Ogof, Wales

RIC-GB1 United Kingdom 1976

### CÔR MEIBION GYRLAIS SING AT DAN-YR-OGOF CAVES

RIC – Folk – Vocal – Cave Pic Cover

#### Selections:

*Side One* – 1. Y Deryn Pŵr/ 2. Men of Harlech/ 3. Impossible Dream

*Side Two* – 1. My Lord What a Mornin'/ 2. Deep Harmony

#### Perf: CÔR MEIBION GYRLAIS

(Gyrlais Male Voice Choir)

Riona Bowen (piano)

**Cond:** Meirwyn Thomas

**Prod. Co:** Harp Recordings Ltd.; Resolven

**Rec. Co:** Harp Recordings Ltd.; Resolven

**Liner Notes:** Mansel Jones

**Time:** (?)

**EP:** CÔR MEIBION GYRLAIS SING AT DAN-YR-OGOF CAVES(PC-RE#)

Harp HEP 503

7" 45rpm (EP) (Sides 1 & 2)

**Notes:** In 1975 this choir performed a medley live for the public in the Dome of St. Paul's, which is the final chamber on the tourist route in Cathedral Cave (near the much longer Dan-yr-Ogof show cave).

At a later date this representative selection of their songs was recorded in the same cave setting.

**Ref:** Cor Meibion Gyrlais Sing at Dan-yr-Ogof Caves EP,

[rateyourmusic](http://rateyourmusic)

Dan yr Ogof, Info, [Wikipedia](http://Wikipedia)

Dan-yr-Ogof Showcave, Info, [showcaves.co.uk](http://showcaves.co.uk)



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### Fingal's Cave \*

Isle of Staff, Inner Hebrides Islands, Scotland

RIC-GB2 United Kingdom 2001

## Fingall's Lamentation/ FINGAL'S CAVE/ Wha'll Be King But Charlie

RIC – Celtic – Traditional – Instrumental

**Perf:** Abby **NEWTON** (cello)

David Greenberg or Mairi Campbell (fiddle)

Corrina Hewit or Kim Robertson (clarsach – Celtic harp)

**Prod:** Abby Newton

**Prod. Co:** Redwing Records

**Rec. Eng:** Scott Petito

**Rec. Date:** Spring 2000

**Liner Notes:** (12-page booklet) John Purser & Abby Newton

**Time:** 7:32

**CD:** CASTLES, KIRKS, AND CAVES

Photo D. Brison - 1977

Redwing RWMCD 5410 (Tk 3)

**Notes:** The American cellist, Abby Newton, made a second trip to Scotland in the spring of 2000, recording herself playing traditional Scottish pieces in various locations including Fingal's Cave. She tells the story – “From there we were off to the Island of Mull and Fingal's Cave. Ian Morrison took us out in his in his orange rubber boat over the unusually calm waters of the North Atlantic to the Island of Staff and Fingal's Cave. The cello, packed into two sleeping bags, was well protected while being bounced by the motion of the boat. We motored well into the cave in the small boat and then docked and unpacked the cello.” [Oldham records Fingal's Cave as 231 feet (77m) long.] She continues – “The cave is well-known for its acoustics; in the liner notes John mentions that its Gaelic name is actually 'Uamh Bhin' meaning musical or sweet sounding cave. It was an incredible pleasure to hear the sound of the cello reverberating around me. I felt as if I was playing inside the body of a bigger and more glorious instrument.” (Newton 2001) It's quite incredible to think how the musicians managed to get big string instruments like the cello and the clarsach into the back of that cave.

Earlier in the spring of 1998 she recorded another piece, “Roslyn Castle,” inside Smoo Cave (see below [RIC-GB5](#)). Both pieces are included on this album.

See also her cave-inspired Celtic piece under World Music – Scotland – Fingal's Cave.

**Ref:** Abby Newton, Castles, Kirks, and Caves CD, [abbynewton](#)

Abby Newton, Castles, Kirks, and Caves CD, [CDBaby](#) (◀AUDIO SAMPLE)

Abby Newton, Castles, Kirks, and Caves CD, [CDUniverse](#) (◀AUDIO SAMPLE)

Anon. n.d., Fingal's Cave Strathspey, [thesession](#)

Fingal's Cave, Description, [Wikipedia](#)

Fingal's Cave (2), Musical Notation, [tunearch](#)

Newton, Abby 2001, Interview with Abby Newton by Fiona Ritchie, The Thistle and Shamrock, [thistleradio](#)

Oldham, Tony 1975, *The Caves of Scotland*, Bristol, p. 53-58



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## Kent's Cavern \*

Torquay, Devon

RIC-GB3 United Kingdom ca.1980s

### TROGLADYTES TROGLADYTES

PO – Comedy – Political – Vocal & Instrumental – Recorded in Caves

**Selections:**

BAT IN THE USSR/ Black As Night/ A CLUB IN HAND (IS WORTH TWO IN THE BUSH)/ DANCING WITH THE DINOSAURS/ DENIS THATCHER (IS A CAVE MAN)/ ONE MILLION YEARS B.C.

**Perf:** **CAVE DWELLERS**

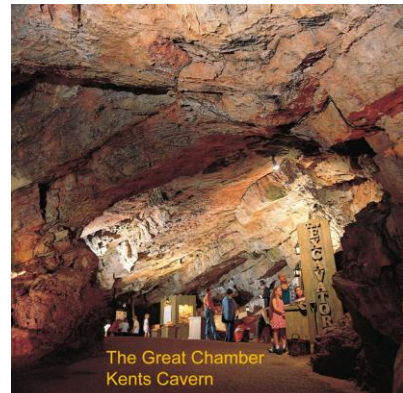
**Prod. Co:** (?)

**Time:** (?)

**LP:** TROGLADYTES TROGLADYTES (PO# )

(Label ?)

12" 33rpm



**Notes:** This is a very tentative entry based on only one source, *The Official Music Master Tracks Catalogue*, 4<sup>th</sup> Edition and one personal communication that this album was recorded in Kent's Cavern. Nothing else could be learned about it.

This album appears to be a collection of comic song parodies on the political situation in England during the period when Margaret Thatcher was prime minister (1979-1990). Denis Thatcher was her husband.

According to one source everything here was recorded live in Kent's Cavern, a show cave in Devon, southwest England, but this has not been confirmed.

Judging from the cave map made by P.M.B. Lake in 1934, it would seem likely that the performance was in the Great Chamber or adjoining Lecture Hall easily reached from the south entrance to the cave. (Pemberton 1972)

Several attempts were made to contact the show cave, Kent's Cavern, but with no success. Any further information concerning this album would be greatly appreciated. Please use the [Contact](#) page on the Home page of this Website.

See also under Rock Music – Novelty – *Trogladytes Trogladytes*.

**Ref:** Kent's Cavern, Info, [Wikipedia](#)

Kent's Cavern, Website, [kents-cavern](#)

Pemberton, Clive 1964 (1972), *Kent's Cavern, Its Origin and Story*, Bendles Ltd., Torquay, Devon

Smith, Pete; Blackman, Karen; Davis, Sylvia; Bellerose, Jennifer; & Kent, Jimmy (Editors) 1992, *The Official Music Master Tracks Catalogue*, 4<sup>th</sup> Edition, Waterlow Information Services Ltd., London, p. 257

## Smoo Cave \*

Durness, Sutherland, Scotland

**RIC-GB4** United Kingdom 1997

### SMOO CAVE CARNYX

RIC – Celtic – Traditional – Nature Sounds – Instrumental

**Perf:** John **KENNY** (carnyx)

**Prod. Co:** Kilmartin House Museum

**Rec. Date:** June 6, 1996

**Liner Notes:** (23-page booklet)

**Time:** (?)

**CD:** THE KILMARTIN SESSIONS ([WD#](#) )

Kilmartin House (No catalog number) (Tk 23)

**Notes:** "The 'Smoo Cave Carnyx' cut comes complete with running water and the sound of bats startled -- quite rightfully -- by the loud tones of the carnyx!" (Mackenzie 1997)

Smoo Cave is at the head of a sea inlet at the very northern end of Scotland. "The vast entrance of this cave, 100 feet [30m] wide and 50 feet [15m] high, [is] one of the largest entrances to any cave in the British Isles." (Oldham 1975) Another author gives the entrance measurements as 120 feet (40m) across and 60 feet (20m) high. "Beyond is a huge rectangular chamber, going back over 200 feet (67m) into the cliff...two small streams unite inside the main chamber and flow out of the entrance to the sea." (Bedford 1985) The poet, Sir Walter Scott, visited the cave in 1814. (Lockhart 1882) The unusual photo of cave is from the [heartlights](#) site.

However, I am told by British cavers, Martin & Kirsty Mills, who have studied this cave that they have never seen any bats there and that these sounds were more likely those of sea gulls flying around the entrance. (Mills 2013)

For further discussion of this piece see under World Music – Scotland – *Smoo Cave Carnyx* – [WD-SCOT7](#).

**Ref:** Bedford, Bruce 1985, *Underground Britain*, Willow Books-Collins, London, p. 164

Lockhart, L.G. 1882, *Memoirs of the Life of Sir Walter Scott*, Edinburgh, Diary 4, 19 Aug. 1814

Mackenzie, Iain Nicholas 1997, The Kilmartin Sessions, [greenmanreview](#)

Mills, Martin & Kirsty 2012, The Great Cave of Smoo, *The Grampian Speleological Group Bulletin*, Fourth Series, v. 5, n. 2, March 2012, p. 37-46, [gsq.org.uk](#)

Mills, Martin & Kirsty 2013, Personal communication, July 21, 2013, Brno, Czech Republic

Oldham, Tony 1975, *The Caves of Scotland*, Bristol, p. 146

Smoo Cave Heart Light, Smoo Cave Chant, [heartlights](#)



Smoo Cave, Home Site, [smoocave](http://smoocave)

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**RIC-GB5** United Kingdom 2001

## Roslyn Castle

RIC – Celtic – Traditional – Nature Sounds – Instrumental

**Perf:** Abby **NEWTON** (cello)

**Prod:** Abby Newton

**Prod. Co:** Redwing Records

**Rec. Eng:** Rod Cameron

**Rec. Date:** Spring 1998

**Liner Notes:** John Purser & Abby Newton

**Time:** 3:40

**CD:** CASTLES, KIRKS, AND CAVES  
Redwing 5410 (Tk 10)

**Notes:** The American cellist, Abby Newton, made a trip to Scotland with Rod Cameron in the spring of 1998, recording herself playing traditional Scottish pieces in various locations using a “hand held DAT machine.” In the liner notes she tells – “First, I want to thank Rod [Cameron] for opening up the doors to Scotland’s history and landscape and encouraging me to dive headlong into this project. I’ll never forget hauling my cello into the innermost depths of Smoo Cave with the water dripping all around, finding a dry rock to sit on, and wailing away on the tune Roslyn Castle. The sound was exquisite.” (Liner notes) It’s very true the bass notes resonate in that cave with might.



In a later article she writes a slightly different story – “We finally reached our small inn in the middle of nowhere and prepared for a trip the next day to Smoo Cave with the fiddle and tune master Alex Sutherland. Alex was extremely helpful in directing me to tunes related to Scotland’s history. I’ll always remember him hauling my cello into the innermost depths of Smoo Cave with the water dripping all around. I found a dry rock to sit on and wailed away on the tune Roslyn Castle.” (Newton 2002)

Again in the spring of 2000 she recorded another piece, “Fingal’s Cave,” inside Fingal’s Cave (see above [RIC-GB2](#)). Both pieces are included on this album.

**Ref:** Abby Newton, Castles, Kirks, and Caves CD, [CDBaby](#) (◀AUDIO SAMPLE)

Abby Newton, Castles, Kirks, and Caves CD, [CDUniverse](#) (◀AUDIO SAMPLE)

Newton, Abby 2001, Interview with Abby Newton by Fiona Ritchie, The Thistle and Shamrock, [thistleradio](#)

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**RIC-GB6** United Kingdom 2001

## CAVE OF GOLD (Uamh an Oir)

RIC – Celtic – Traditional – Nature Sounds – Synthesizer – Instrumental

**Perf:** Lynn **MORRISON** (vocal)

**Prod:** Lynn Morrison & Rod Paul

**Prod. Co:** Greentrax Records

**Time:** 4:20

**CD:** CAVE OF GOLD: CELTIC LULLABIES (WD#) (CPC#)  
Greentrax CDTRAX 212 (Tk 7)

**Notes:** We are told that "the natural sounds included on the album were recorded at Findhorn Beach, Oldshoremore, Smoo Cave..." etc. all located in Scotland. (Anon., n.d.) The water drips used during this piece were no doubt recorded there too.

**Ref:** Anon. n.d., Lynn Morrison, Cave of Gold, [musicscotland](#)  
Lynn Morrison, Cave of Gold: Celtic Lullabies, [Allmusic](#) (◀AUDIO SAMPLE)  
Lynn Morrison, Cave of Gold, [Amazon](#)



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## Unidentified British Cave

**RIC-GB7** United Kingdom 1992

### A CAVE IN ENGLAND \*

RIC – New Age – Nature Sounds – Synthesizer – Instrumental

**Perf:** LARAAJI (mbira)

**Prod. Co:** All Saints Records Ltd.

**Rec. Co:** Zefferelli's Ambleside; Lake District

**Time:** 12:19

A. British Releases:

1. **CD:** FLOW GOES THE UNIVERSE (NA#)  
All Saints ASCD 10 (Tk 3)
2. Reissue on **CD:** FLOW GOES THE UNIVERSE (2005)  
Hannibal HNCD 1497 (Tk 3)

A. American **CD:** FLOW GOES THE UNIVERSE

All Saints CAROL 6602-2 (Tk 3)

**Notes:** Sounds of an active cave stream recorded live in a cave, presumably in the Lake District where this recording company is located or more likely in Yorkshire – but the question is which cave?

This is New Age music where the cave plays a very dominant role for long stretches (see under New Age Music – *A Cave in England*). Fading up from silence with 48 seconds of sounds of a running stream becoming more and more present, the synth-music comes in backed by falling sheets of water echoing in a cave passage and a rushing cave stream, very much the feel of a serious water cave. At certain points one can hear the very distant mummings of cavers' voices muffled by the rushing waters.

The incomplete audio-video sample on [YouTube](#) uses slides from show caves and wild caves around the world. The first slide could be the waterfall in Smoo Cave, Durness, Scotland. Other slides are The Rumble Room of Rumbling Falls Cave, Van Buren County, Tennessee and the Lake in Reed Flute Cave, Guilin, China.

**Ref:** Anon. 2014, Caving in the Lake District, [lakedistrict-stay](#)

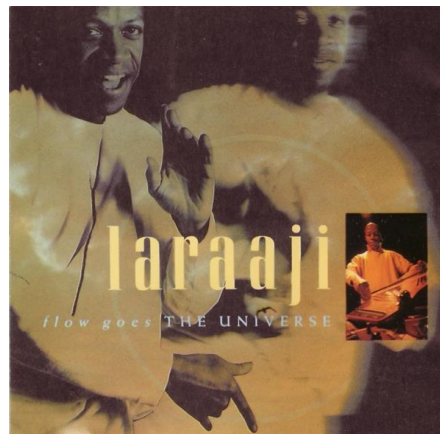
Laraaji, A Cave in England (12:30), [YouTube](#) (◀COMPLETE AUDIO SAMPLE)

Laraaji, A Cave in England (9:57), [YouTube](#) (◀INCOMPLETE AUDIO-VIDEO SAMPLE)

Laraaji, Biography & Discography, [Wikipedia](#)

Laraaji, Flow Goes the Universe CD, [CDUniverse](#) (◀AUDIO SAMPLE)

Laraaji, Flow Goes the Universe CD, [Discogs](#)



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## Unidentified Welsh Cave

Craig Y Ddinas, Pontneddfechan, Wales

**RIC-GB8** United Kingdom 1984

## PARADISE DISOWNED

RIC – Electronica – Dark Ambient – Noise – Synthesizer

### Selections:

*Side One* – 1. Beckoning – 4:11 (4:15)/ 2. Utterance – 5:52 (6:02)/ 3. Dreams of Dead Names – 2:42 (2:51)/ 4. Pyre (Necro Cristi) – 5:57 (6:05)/ 5. Purge (Banishing) – 3:49 (3:56)

*Side Two* – 1. Terror Against Terror – 5:03 (5:10)/ 2. Comahon Q. Q. Comahon – 6:16 (6:25)/ 3. 735 – 4:09 (4:13)/ 4. Pure – 7:18 (7:19)

**Comp:** (?)

### Perf: LUSTMØRD

Brian Williams [aka. Lustmørð] (voice, gong, noise generator, machinery, acoustic treatments, pipes)

John Murphy (noise generator, acoustic treatments, digital loops, voice, gong, shawn bows)

Isolrubin BK (noises of construction, demolition, & combustion)

Roy Batty (drum programming, rhythm generators, noises)

**Prod. Co:** Side Effects Records

**Rec. Date:** Winter 1983-1984

**Time:** (see above)

A. British Releases:

1. Original **LP:** PARADISE DISOWNED  
Side Effects SER 07

2. Reissue on **CD:** PARADISE DISOWNED (1990)  
Side Effects SECD 07

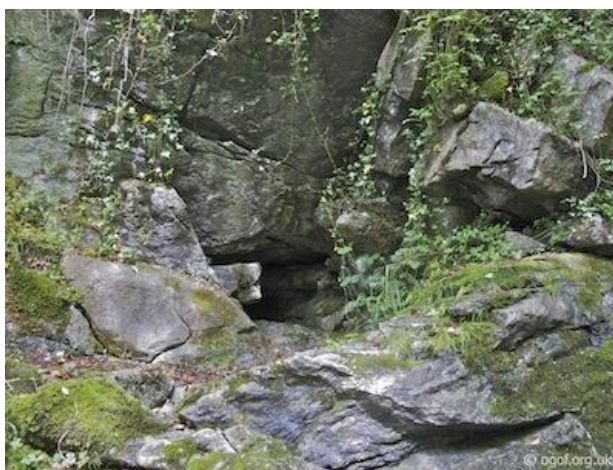
B. American Re-Mastered **CD:** PARADISE DISOWNED (2000)  
Solielmoon SOL 97 CD

**Notes:** Sound samples used in one or more of the above electronica selections (it is not known which) were recorded in a natural cave at Craig Y Ddinas [Dinas Rock], Pontneddfechan, in south Wales.

The spectacular Sychryd Gorge is located beneath Craig Y Dinas, southeast of Pontneddfechan village. In the lower section of the gorge there are at least 12 caves, most of them quite small, not over 12 meters long. Of these only two caves are most likely to have been used for these recordings.

The first likely cave encountered when moving up the gorge would be Ogof Bwa Maen (shown on left), which is 300 feet (91m) long and has a large entrance chamber.

The next would be Will's Hole, also known as Craig-y-Dinas (Dinas Rock Cave) or Ogof Arthur (Arthur's Cave) (shown on right), which extends to about 1,400 ft. (427m) in length. It is associated with the Arthurian legend as it is one of the many locations reputed to be the place where King Arthur's knights lay waiting for a call to defend Britain. (Anon. 2013)



Other samples used in these pieces were recorded at other underground sites: The crypt of the Chartes Cathedral; a deep shelter (bomb shelter) in Crewe, Wales; the Dunster Abattoir (slaughterhouse), Bangor; a site at Bedlam; and deep sea recordings by Dr. N. Newby-Carter. (Anon. n.d.)

The difference in running times between the original LP and the re-mastered CD was possibly due to the re-mastering process.

**Ref:** Anon. n.d., Lustmord Paradise Disowned, [progarchives](#)

Anon. 2013, Dinas Rock & Cave, [Wikipedia](#)

Evans, Lloyd 2012, The Legend of Ogof Arthur, [celtnet](#)

Fitoussi, Victor 1999, Personal communication about this album, Paris, France

Lustmord, History & Discography, [Wikipedia](#)

Lustmord, Paradis Disowned LP, [Discogs](#)

Lustmord, Paradis Disowned LP, Lustmord Website, Discography, [lustmord](#)

Map Showing Cave Locations in the Sychryd Gorge, (Zoom in bottom left portion), [ogof.org.uk](#)

Rhys, John 1901, *Celtic Folklore – Welsh and Manx*, Chap. XVII, Welsh Cave Legends, [sacred-texts](#)

Stratford, Tim 1978, *Caves of South Wales*, Cordee, Leicester, p. 40 & 42

Will's Hole – Ogof Afon Sychryf, Photos, Caves of South Wales, [ogof.org.uk](#)

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## Unidentified Cave

**RIC-GB9** United Kingdom 1996

### CAVERNS OF TRANQUILLITY

RIC – New Age – Ambient

**Comp:** Julian MENDELSON

**Perf:** Julian MENDELSON (synthesizer)

**Prod:** Paul Rayner-Brown

**Prod. Co:** Gong For A Song Ltd.; London

**Rec. Date:** (Nature effects) 1996

**Time:** 18:02

1. **CD:** THE MOUNTAIN STREAM

Gong For A Song GFS 045 (Tk 2)

2. **CD:** THE MOUNTAIN STREAM

Gong For A Song GFS 041002 (Tk 2)

**Notes:** The sound of running water from the previous track follows right into this track and suddenly the water is heard echoing in a cave chamber as synthesizer melodies with a distinct Chinese feeling are worked out to a gentle rhythm. Occasionally a distant cry or a squawking or chirping bird can be heard. Then wind in the pine trees and other bird songs are heard as, about halfway through, the melody finally fades and we hear only the water running outside now and more bird song.

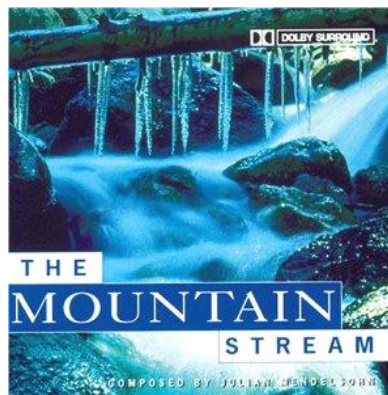
It is not known if these sounds of a "cave stream" were actually recorded in a cave. More likely, recordings of running water were simply run through an echo chamber.

On the 2006 reissue CD on the Vanilla OMP label this piece is entitled, *Caverns of Crystal Cascades*.

**Ref:** Julian Mendelsohn, The Mountain Stream CD, [Allmusic](#) & [Allmusic](#)

Julian Mendelsohn, The Mountain Stream CD, [Discogs](#)

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## Unidentified Sea Cave

**RIC-GB10** United Kingdom 1994

### UNDERWATER CAVE

RIC – Nature Sounds

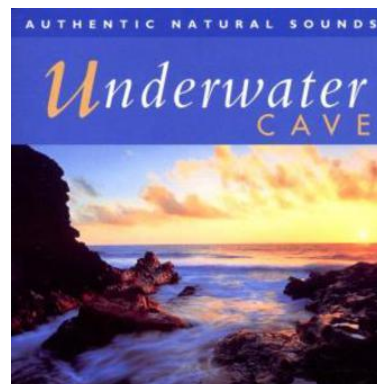
**Prod. Co:** New World Co.; Westhall, Halesworth, Suffolk

**Time:** 59:40

**CD:** UNDERWATER CAVE

New World NWCD 278 (Tk 1)

**Notes:** The sound of waves breaking and sloshing around inside a cave repeated in a continuous loop over and over again for an hour. Designed to help with sleep, stress, and anxiety, but otherwise quite



boring.

This could possibly have been recorded in one of the sea caves at Flamborough Head in East Riding, located some 190 miles (306 km) northwest of Halesworth.

[caveinspiredmusic.com](http://caveinspiredmusic.com)