



Flipper Flanagan's
Flat Footed Four
Damn Big Lake
The Songbook

Lyrics for songs on the CD "Damn Big Lake" by Flipper Flanagan's Flat Footed
Four

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The Curse of Nanabijou

(Jamie Gerow and Dean Hample)

*I am a miner,
I work in the ground,
And I'll dig anywhere that the silver abounds.
But I've never dug water,
Don't know what to do
'Bout the curse laid upon us by Nanabijou.*

We came in the fall of '68
Dug ore on Superior from out on the lake.
Sent a load back for assay to the company home,
Those Montreal miners who work where its warm.
And then through the season of sixty-nine,
We stripped the west vein down to its spine.
Sunk a shaft on the east side with those who were left,
But our nemesis held the rewards for this theft.

*I am a miner,
I work in the ground,
And I'll dig anywhere that the silver abounds.
I dug gold in the Yukon,
North West sixty-two.
It weren't near as cursed as old Nanabijou.*

We worked through the summer of seventy-one,
And dug ninety feet, sunk a shaft, thought we'd won.
The walls shone with silver and McFarlanite,
Like the curtains of winter in the great northern lights.
The ice and the waters tore away at the cribs,
The shaft filled with water and burst at the ribs,
But ruin bred ruin and cost led to cost.
We put ore on the 'Coburne' but both went for lost.

*I am a miner.
I work in the ground,
And I'll dig anywhere that the silver abounds.
Built cribs and breakwaters
For old Captain Frue,
But they wouldn't stop the curse of Nanabijou.*

The First People tell the story the best,
How Shuniah brought white men into the west,
Of the Sioux who were jealous of Ojibway wealth,
And traveled for miles with vindictive stealth.
Now Nanabijou in his anger and wrath
Stirred old Gitchee Gumee like a boiling broth,
And upon those tall seas the canoes were thrown.
So Manitou turned the giant to stone.

*Now the years have gone by,
Still the giant's asleep,
And water runs through , to the ore 'neath his feet,
Cold is the curse,
And the yields are too few.
Damned are the miners by Nanabijou.*

Grampa's Whiskey

(Jack Wall and Walter Martin)

*Go, go, go for Grampa's whiskey,
White lightning is only second best,
Go, go, go for Grampa's whiskey,
That bottle with no label beats the rest.*

Can Grampa ever make that whiskey;
It'll turn your eyes from blue to brown,
It'll grab you by the ears,
And blow apart your fears,
And hug you when you hit the ground.

I remember my first glass of that whiskey
Just fifteen years or so ago,
I remember how it smelt,
But never how it felt,
It just hit you, then you'd start to go.

*Go, go, go for Grampa's whiskey,
They tell me I became pure wild,
I'd find a gal to croon,
End up howlin' at the moon
And actin' like a grown-up child!*

They tell me one night at the barn dance,
I dropped some whiskey in the beer,
Them farmers eyes were gleamin'
And those milkmaid's started screamin'
And the rooster was chasin' a steer.

Well, Grampa went and died one mornin'
Left four bottles on the shelf
Now I'm drown' all my sorrows,
There's nothin' but tomorrows,
And I'm happy just bein' by myself.

Kilroy Was Here

(Bob Balabuck, Jamie Gerow, Brian Thompson, Jack Wall)

My great grandfather was a sailor lad
Came o'er with Columbus I was told by my dad
Columbus claimed a land that no one had seen
Then he found a rock where Kilroy had been.

*Kilroy was here, Kilroy was here,
God bless for tryin', but Kilroy's been here.
You're first in line, up pops that sign
From far and near, Kilroy was here.*

The day of our wedding we stood eye to eye
The preacher asked for any reason why
We shouldn't marry; She whispered in my ear
"Does it bother you that Kilroy was here!"

Went into a pub and sat on a stool
Ordered my pint from Barkeep O'Toole
Sadly he couldn't quench my thirst
The beer was all gone, Kilroy got there first.

Entered the lavvy when nature called
Sat down, got comfy in one of the stalls
When I shut the door, guess what appeared
Kilroy'd signed his name, drew his hands and eyes and ears.

When I'm dead and standin' at the pearly gates
St. Peter will greet me, if heaven is my fate,
I'll sure throw a party and give a mighty cheer
If I got there first and Kilroy ain't here!!!

Damn Big Lake

(Jamie Gerow)

*It's a damn big lake, and it's pretty lonely
And it's pretty damn deep, and it's pretty damn cold
It stole my heart, and it stole my soul
Left me afraid, left me alone.*

It's not a lake, it's a great big sea,
Bigger than the one in Galilee,
You drop your guard, in the morning calm,
The sky darkens, and drops a bomb!
The lightning strikes! The thunder roars!
The rocks threaten, on all the shores

In the prairie where the grasses wave,
Like the waters on that deep blue grave,
Wind whistling through, old tombstones
The women are weary, their hair windblown,
There is no spark, where their souls should be
They're just too far, from the sea.

In mountains and snow capped hills
Like waves with white capped frills
Wind whistles through, the evergreens,
Echos through, canyons and ravines
Getting lost, among the trees
You're just too far from the sea.

Breton Queen

(Dean Hample and Jamie Gerow)

Come gather young fishermen , a story I will tell
About a schooner called "Breton Queen", and her living hell,
Her speed and her crew brought respect and so much fame,
The moaning wind along the cove, still whispers her name.

*Rain on the road and fog out on the reach,
There's a light out on the harbour-break, while the village sleeps,
All around the horn, the death of her was mourned,
When the fog comes clean, you'll see the ghost of the "Breton Queen".*

On a cold dark rainy morning her keel they did lay,
Some say that she was damned from that very day.
It's said that she was clipper-built, her hull, long and sleek,
Fastest in the waters and death that she would cheat.

She went down last November, in the worst of winter gales,
I still see the splintered masts and ice along her rails,
Lost there in a frozen hell, they died 'neath the northern lights,
Frost running through their bodies and good ship froze in ice.

Her captain and her crew, the best along the shore,
The finest of the "Bluenose" breed will go to sea no more.
On that fateful night, they were not in God's good grace,
And when the fog runs thin and grey, you'll see each and every face.

Flanagan's Flippers

(Bob Balabuck)

*Our name is Flipper Flanagan's Flat Footed Four
You'll be dancin' on the tables and rollin' on the floor
You're all invited back again to our locality
To have some fun and be a part of Flipper's family.*

Brian plays the spoons, he's of Scottish origin
He strums an instrument with eight stings that's called a mandolin,
A story teller of ill repute, and singing Irish tunes
He's at his best in his vest, playing with his spoons.

Now Jamie has a weight problem, it's plain as you can see
His gut extends below his belt, and way down to his knees
But oh what fun to hear him sing in perfect harmony
He lays them tunes down lickety-split just for you and me.

Bob is a banjer player, if you look at him,
He's really just a guitar player with his brains kicked in.
He's the fiddlin' fool, the fastest fingers alive,
He'll move you and groove you and that's no jive.

Jack's our rock and roller, he plays electric bass,
If you think he's got a hairy face, you should see his ... Well!
His voice is always heard in town and Kakabeka
For it's down there, that he began a real Bluegrass Mecca.

Gone, Long Gone

(Jamie Gerow)

Don't go knockin' at my old front door,
'Cause when you open it you'll have a shock in store;
Behind the latch, you won't find me.
You'll find an empty room that like an open book,
Tells a story of gloom about the love you took
From a man who lived his life on a troubled sea.

*And I'm gone, long gone,
And I sure didn't miss your farewell kiss
If I sing any songs for you, they'll put you down.
Yeah I'm gone, long gone,
And I sure didn't miss your farewell kiss
If I sing any songs for you they'll put you down.*

And don't go dialin' four one one,
'Cause if you do, you'll find my line's undone
And Mr. Bell just won't reconnect.
He's been told that I just disappeared
From the face of the earth and the dismal fear
That to see your face again could be my last mistake.

And I hope that you can take the hint
When you find that the mail you sent
Came back to you still stamped and sealed.
And the postman won't have a forward address
'Cause when I left town I thought it best
To cut the ties until all the wounds were healed.

Night Owl

(Jamie Gerow)

*Gonna call "Night Owl"
Guardian angel at the phone exchange
Hands full of wires to rearrange
Everyone calls "Night Owl"
Ring one, crank three,
State your business in a hurry please
People are calling with emergencies
Everyone calls "Night Owl"
Everyone calls "Night Owl"*

Sally's tryin' to reach her workin' husband Bill
He's on the late shift over at the mill
Doctor said it'd be two weeks or more
But tonight that baby's knockin' at the door.

Chaplain came to see Jane from the army base
He said, "Girl you won't be seein' Johnny's face"
He died for his country in a foreign land
Left his new bride lonely with her wedding band.

Night Owl, Night Owl!
Night Owl, Night Owl!

Letter arrived from a college way out west
Accepted, scholarship, they were impressed
Grabbed the phone to share the news about their boy
The laughter, cheers and tears of joy.

My Hometown

(Bob Balabuck)

My hometown's at the crossroads of a country proud and free
Thunder Bays's a place that's made for you and me
The warm breeze of our summers and the cold of a winter's night
Are found in my hometown.

*The northern wind blows cold upon the Lake Superior shore
The winter snow falls softly over hill and dale and more
And oh how I sometimes wish for the breath of a summer's night
But I'm glad that this is my hometown.*

My hometown means a lot to me, I hope it does to you
You only have to live here to see the seasons through
Summer, winter, spring and fall are wonders to behold
And found in, my hometown

The giant in the bay is a wondrous sight to see
The golden leaves of fall, are nature's mystery
The hearth fires from the chimneys and the warmth that's found inside
Are found in my hometown.

Motor Cycle in the Living Room

(Jamie Gerow and Brian Thompson)

*Could be a Norton, could be a Harley, could even be a Honda Gold Wing
It might be shiny, it might be greasy, I don't really care what you think
But it's got a place in the livin' room next to the colour TV
Right in the spot where your favourite chair was sittin' when you used to love
me.*

Since you left there's been a hole in my heart that needed fillin' up
The house is so quiet that it deafens me, your leavin' was so abrupt
The stereo's louder than ever before but it only fills my ears
I need something in the livin' room to listen to my fears.

I must have had a hole in my head when I thought you were here for good
But that wouldn't be the first time I'd been betrayed by this cranial wood
Cause nothin' is more faithful, than rubber, chrome and steel
From now on I'll put my faith and love in things that have two wheels.

When I need to hang on, I'll grab handlebars
I can't remember what you told me about bein' from Venus or Mars
If the gas tank's full and the pistons have oil and the plugs are ready to spark
I know I can get it goin' in the livin' room after dark.

Super Sucker's Salvation and Septic Service

(Bob Balabuck, Jamie Gerow, Brian Thompson, Jack Wall)

Seemed like any old day, with the same old job,
But for Cecil Page, he found God,
He was drivin' his truck, through the rural route
Dressed for business, in his rubber boots.
He owned the truck, paid off the bank,
No one would buy it, it really stank,
The name "C. Page", painted on the door,
With "Super Sucker, Septic Fields Restored."

*He was a septic trucker, drove the Super Sucker,
Sludge removal, with a flare for prayer,
Bible thumper, in a cess pit pumper,
Owes his survival, to a tent revival.*

Down the hill, on Amen Corner
By the church, stood a tent reformer,
White and shiny, with sounds of prayer,
Hymns and singing, hands in the air.
Cec turned that corner, when he lost first gear
His load sloshed left, his wheels wouldn't steer
His heart in his mouth, he began to fly
Said prayers to the Lord, as he shot through the sky.

Quite a sight to see, that old yellow tanker,
Flying through the air, Cecil lost his anchor,
The truck hit the ground, sewage hit the fan,
The revival tent, where Cecil lands.

*Yes, we'll gather by the pumper.
The beautiful, the beautiful, pumper.
Gather with the saints and bible thumpers,
We're singing 'bout the glory road.*

It's not the time, to swallow one's pride,
The tent was covered, liquid putrified.
Cecil's safe, he soon discovered,
The saints and sinners, still under cover.
On the roof, 'neath the morning sun,
There he lay, prayers had begun,
All he heard, was the glorious sound,
Voices singing, 'bout the God he'd found.

The tent is gone, but when he's not pumpin',
He's down there preaching, he's bible thumpin',
A devil dodger, in a septic dumper
Sermons dispensed, from the pumper's bumper.

*Standing on the pumper watching all the sinners go by
Standing on the pumper underneath that big blue sky*

Dreaming of the Brier

(Rod Jackson and Jamie Gerow)

Well sticks and stones will break your bones
But curling never hurt you
Let's raise a stein to the last hog line
For those who would convert you
To the broom of straw and that perfect draw
And every bonspiel liar
Don't lose a grip; whether lead or skip,
Dreaming of the Brier.

*Hard! Hard! Hurry! Hard!
You gotta make that shot!
Hard! Hard! Hurry! Hard!
Give it all you've got!
Hard! Hard! Hurry! Hard!
You never seem to tire,
Hard! Hard! Hurry! Hard!
When you're dreaming of the Brier!*

All those years ago, it was played in snow
Weather was a factor
The winter breeze that made you sneeze
The only team distractor.

Hackner, Houston, Tetley, Lang
Remember Chucker Ross
The Brier to the Silver Broom
The hammer for the win or loss.

From when it starts to the Tournament of Hearts
Great shots you'll deliver
Til the sixteenth rock rests in the dock
The skip hopes you'll forgive her.

To the broom of straw and that perfect draw
And every bonspiel liar
Let's raise a stein to the last hog line,
Dreaming of the Brier.

Blessings

(Jamie Gerow)

*May Creation bless you and keep you
May she hold you in her arms forever.
May her face shine upon you.*

May the road rise to meet you.
May the wind be at your back.
May the warm sun shine on your face.
And soft rains fall on your fields.
May there be work for your hands to do,
And for your purse, a coin or two.
May the sun shine on your windowpane,
And a rainbow be certain to follow each rain.

May there be warm words on a cold night,
And a full moon in the darkness.
And the hand of a friend to cheer you.
And a downhill path to your door,
May the hills and mountains caress you.
May the lakes and rivers bless you.
May the luck of the Irish enfold you
And the eyes of a lover behold you.