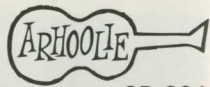


*Their original first recordings: 1946-1951*

## **The MADDUX BROTHERS & ROSE - VOL. 1**

**"America's Most Colorful Hillbilly Band"**



**CD 391**

1. GEORGE'S PLAYHOUSE BOOGIE
2. MIDNIGHT TRAIN
3. SHIMMY SHAKIN' DADDY (Fred)
4. CARELESS DRIVER
5. MOVE IT ON OVER
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SALLY ANN
21. FADED LOVE
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23. (PAY ME) ALIMONY
24. I WISH I WAS A  
SINGLE GIRL AGAIN

25. YOUR LOVE LIGHT NEVER SHONE
26. MEANEST MAN IN TOWN (Fred)
27. I WANT TO LIVE AND LOVE

*Total time: 69:10*

Rose Maddox – lead vocals (unless otherwise noted)

Cliff Maddox – mandolin (died in 1949)

Fred Maddox – bass and lead vocals on (Fred)

Henry Maddox – (after 1949) mandolin and lead  
guitar

Don Maddox – fiddle and lead vocal on (Don)

Cal Maddox – rhythm guitar and harmonica

Bud Duncan – steel guitar

Lead guitar: Jimmy Winkle, Roy Nichols,  
or Gene Breedren

This record is dedicated to the memory of Fred  
Maddox who died on October 29, 1992.

Re-issue produced by Chris Strachwitz by contrac-  
tual agreement with Rose Maddox.

Cover by Wayne Pope

All photos from the collection of Rose Maddox

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# **Maddox Brothers and Rose**

*Americas Most Colorful Hillbilly Band*

**THEIR ORIGINAL RECORDINGS 1946-1951**



**391**

# THE MADDOX BROTHERS & ROSE

"America's Most Colorful Hillbilly Band"

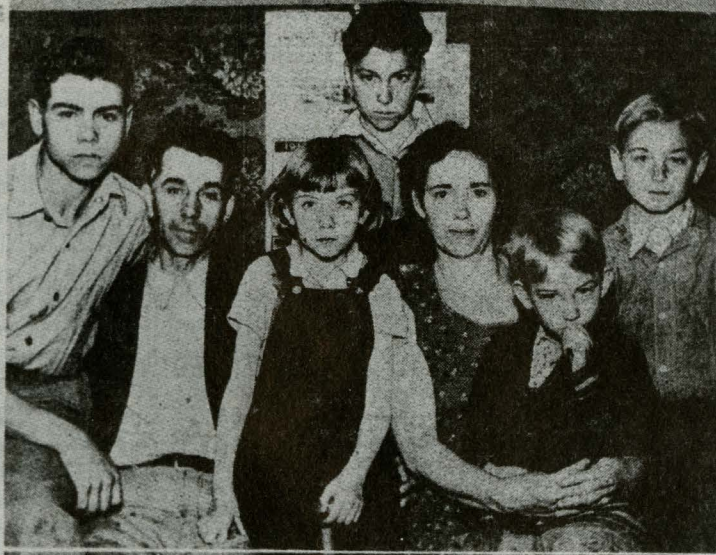
The depression of the 1930s brought about major changes and drastic movement in America, including the great "Okie migration." From the depressed Southern and Midwestern areas, large numbers of men, women, and children left their homes for the prospects of a new and better life in the hopefully greener fields of California and the West. In 1933, with these same hopes and five young children, Charlie and Lulla Maddox left Boas, Alabama, and hitchhiked to Meridian, Mississippi, to begin their own odyssey west. Friendly fellow travelers taught them the tricky and often dangerous skills of riding boxcars. Sympathetic railroad "bulls" or guards, befriended the Maddoxes and hid them during boxcar checks. The Salvation Army fed them along the way as freight trains bounced and carried them the remainder of their trip to California.

Like many others, the Maddox family ultimately wound up in one of the agricultural centers of California, the San Joaquin

Valley. Here, as Rose Maddox recalls, they became "fruit tramps," living in tents and following the harvesting seasons of the local crops. Charlie Maddox landed a job on a ranch, working and picking produce for 12¢ an hour, soon getting his son Calvin a similar position; and eventually, when peaches came in season, the entire Maddox family was harvesting — at 3¢ a box.

Fred Maddox, who always insisted that he "can't stand to work," decided it was time to try another profession. Armed with this distaste for work and a natural ability to "sell anybody anything," Fred approached the Rice Furniture Company of nearby Modesto, California, with a musical proposition. (The other family members were less than optimistic even though they were already musicians of sorts.) With a little talking he was able to persuade the owners to sponsor a Country Music show on the local radio station. The furniture company had a few stipulations: Along with the usual condition of

## FAMILY ROAMS U.S. FOR WORK



A hitch-hiking family of seven found shelter at Oakland's "Pipe City" after a cross-country trip from Alabama seeking work. The family comprises (left to right): **Calvin Maddox**, his father,

**Charles; Rose, Fred (standing). Mrs. Lulu Maddox, Henry and Kenneth.** They have "ridden the rails" in their westward trek, and hope to make their home in California.—Tribune Photo.

*From the Oakland Tribune (Calif.) 4/11/1933*



no pay, the band had to have a girl singer. Fred quickly assured them that they not only had a girl singer, but also that they had the very best girl singer. Unknown to their future sponsors, this “best girl singer” was eleven-year-old Rose, who at the time knew roughly three songs from start to finish! Nevertheless, in 1937 the Maddox Brothers and Rose began performing over station KTRB in Modesto, California. It is interesting to note that one of the three songs that Rose sang was Woody Guthrie’s *Philadelphia Lawyer*, known to her then as *The Reno Blues*, which later became their biggest hit and the song most identified with the band.

Using KTRB as a home base, the Maddox Brothers and Rose performed throughout the area, primarily following rodeos from town to town where they would approach local honky-tonk owners for permission to set up and play for tips. Primarily because of their ages and the presence of little sister Rose, their mother became something of a protectress of the group, and could be found traveling with the band and in the audience during virtually every performance. In fact, she even

participated in some recordings.

In 1939, as part of the California State Centennial Festival, Sacramento radio station KFBK sponsored a hillbilly band contest. First prize was a one-year syndicated radio show sponsored by the Anacin Company that covered California, Arizona, Oregon, and Washington and the Maddox Brothers and Rose won over fourteen other bands. The wide area covered by the show allowed the group to travel more widely throughout the Western U.S. The group’s popularity was steadily increasing when its progress was interrupted by World War II. In 1941, the Maddox brothers were drafted into the service, leaving Rose behind and out of work.

In 1946, however, her brothers returned and the band regrouped. Later, in 1951, the entire family moved to the Hollywood area, where the most remembered phase of the band started taking shape — complete with ornate costumes, profusely embroidered bell-bottom pants, tailored shirts, and short, tailored jackets. The garb, custom-made for them by cowboy tailor N. Turk of North Hollywood, was unique and somewhat extreme for the time. The band

further developed their elaborate shows, which included comedy routines, sound effects, uproarious laughter, the novel acting out of songs as they were sung, and continual ad-libbed comments by all the brothers. While comedy has always been a familiar and significant part of Country Music shows and bands, rarely, if ever, has it been performed with the strength or spontaneity of this band.

Likewise, while the majority of bands limited the comic figure and performance to a single member (most often the bass player), the Maddoxes carried it a step further, involving all members of the band. This extremist attitude toward showmanship was indicative of the group’s total approach and commitment to entertainment and performance. It was the rule not the exception, that when the Maddox Brothers and Rose played large dance halls, as they most often did, the audience stopped and watched, not danced. As Rose Maddox succinctly sums it up, “The people came to be entertained, and we entertained them.” This showmanship, in conjunction with the group’s fine singing and instrumental technique, jelled to com-

plete a show band unique to Country Music, certainly deserving of their later reputation and billing as “The Most Colorful Hillbilly Band in America.”

In 1946 the group also made their first recordings and was sponsored for another radio show, again over KTRB, this time by a San Francisco brewery. It was during the next six years that the Maddox Brothers and Rose really reached their peak, both in performance and popularity. Feeling the need to add to the group’s instrumental makeup — mandolin, guitar, harmonica, bass and fiddle — they added the first non-family members to the band, steel guitarist Bud Duncan and lead guitarist Jimmy Winkle. Winkle was soon replaced by Roy Nichols, some of whose excellent contributions can be heard, for example, on *New Step It Up and Go*. Nichols played with the group for about three years, and was in turn replaced by guitarist Gene Breeden. This was definitely the most dynamic and spontaneous period, producing the recordings most often identified with the band.

In 1951 the band began recording for Columbia (now available on Bear Family)





*Rose Maddox*



*From left to right: Bud Duncan, Jimmy Winkle, Don, Rose, Cal, Henry, & Fred*



and the label suggested that performances be "toned down," feeling that the public no longer wanted such an "unrefined" approach. Amazingly, at this time Columbia held three separate contracts with the Maddoxes: one for the Maddox Brothers and Rose as a group; one with Rose Maddox as a single and one with Rose and sister-in-law Loretta as a duet — "Rose and Retta."

In 1956, after ten years of recording and slightly less than twenty years of performing professionally, the Maddox Brothers and Rose disbanded. Cliff, the oldest brother and the last to leave Alabama and join the group, had died in 1949 at the young age of 37. Fred, Henry, and Don Maddox stayed together, performing for a short time with Loretta. Fred then became a club owner/operator, later retiring from the business completely, while Don Maddox retired and turned to cattle ranching. Henry Maddox passed away in 1974. Rose Maddox went on performing and recording as a single and she continues to do so today, having recorded for over half a dozen different labels. Cal Maddox, who remained with Rose as a part of her band and can be heard on many of her later

Capitol recordings, passed away in 1968.

The selections in this CD are the original recordings made between 1946 and 1951, and they demonstrate the band's eclectic and individualistic approach. Their style and material ranged from the country standards of Hank Williams, Merle Travis, and Bob Wills, to old-time, folk, gospel quartet and old-time church part singing, to Jazz, Swing, Boogie Woogie and even a taste of early Rock and Roll — all in the unmistakable Maddox style. The band earned its place in the history of Country Music and left a strong and undeniable impression on it. These recordings serve as a document and as a tribute to a band, the likes of which will not be seen again.

*Keith Olesen, November, 1976*

*Editor's note:*

The Maddox Brothers and Rose, "T-Texas" Tyler, the Armstrong Twins, Bob Wills, and Roy Acuff were my first introduction to American Country Music shortly after I arrived in the US in 1947 and listened to their records over XERB

broadcasting from Rosa Rito Beach, Baja California. About a year later, when I was living with my family in the Monterey, California area, I heard the Maddox Brothers and Rose broadcasting live over KTRB, Modesto, Calif. Their theme song was *I Want to Live and Love* and they would carry on like you hear on many of these recordings advertising their upcoming dances throughout the San Joaquin Valley along with furniture and I don't know what else. It was Fred's inimitable voice and joyful southern twang which was to stick in my mind over the years. He was always doing the announcing and his voice was just like music to my ears. This CD re-issue is dedicated to the memory of Fred Maddox who put so much joy and cheers into so many of our lives who had the pleasure of being entertained by this man. I am very grateful to Rose Maddox and her brothers for giving me the opportunity to make this material available once again to their many friends and fans around the world.

*Chris Strachwitz, editor - 1992*

*If you enjoyed this collection by the Maddox Brothers & Rose, may we suggest the following recordings currently available:*

ARH CD/Cass 314 - **ROSE MADDOX: "Rose of the West Coast Country."** Rose's best known songs accompanied by the Vern Williams band.

ARH Cass 209: **THE MADDOX BROTHERS AND ROSE: "Their Original Hits."** Includes most selections heard on this CD plus several others - a 90 minute tape. (includes ARH LP 5016 & LP 5017).

ARH Cass 222: **THE MADDOX BROTHERS AND ROSE: "On The Air."** Includes two songs broadcast on the Grand Ole Opry, a 15-minute program over KFBK, Sacramento in 1940, performances on KGDM, Stockton, and various transcriptions made at KTRB, Modesto - a 90 minute tape (includes ARH LP 5028 and LP 5033).

ARH Cass. 227 **FRED AND ROSE MADDOX: "50 Years In Country Music."** 90-minute program taped at KTRB

radio, Modesto, Ca., where the family got started, on July 29, 1987, where Fred & Rose talked with Bob Smith about being in the Country Music business for over 50 years! Some great stories and even several a capella songs – this is the tape you should get to really hear Fred talk! A most enjoyable document.

**THE LIFE AND TIMES OF ROSE MADDOX** (BAVC-VHS - 30 minutes - color) produced by Gail Waldron 1983 - \$19.98. Wonderful, professional documentary with interviews, old photos, and performances by Rose with the Vern Williams band.

ARH VHS Video tape # 402: **ARHOOOLIE'S 25th ANNIVERSARY PARTY** (1985) 120-minute tape which includes **Rose Maddox**, along with an all-star band, performing many of her best-loved songs. Other artists on the tape include: Charlie Musselwhite, Michael Doucet, Ann Savoy with the California Cajun Orchestra, Katie Webster, Los Campesinos de Michoacan, etc.

Johnny Whiteside has recently completed a book about Rose and the Maddox Brothers, as yet untitled, to be published by the University of Illinois Press.

For our complete our 100-page illustrated CATALOG of CDs, Cassettes, Videos and LPs, send \$2 to cover postage to:

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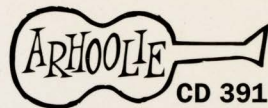
*The Maddox Brothers at an in-store appearance at a record store in Austin, Tx., February 21, 1949*



*Their original first recordings: 1946-1951*

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