

THE FOLKWAYS
YEARS
1964-1983



Smithsonian Folkways Recordings

RED ALLEN



FEATURING FRANK WAKEFIELD



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- | | |
|---|--|
| 1. LITTLE MAGGIE 3:04 | 15. CAN YOU FORGIVE? 3:37 |
| 2. SOMEBODY LOVES YOU, DARLING 2:19 | 16. OLD JOE CLARK 1:42 |
| 3. NEW CAMPTOWN RACES 2:31 | 17. KNOCKING AT YOUR DOOR 2:07 |
| 4. ARE YOU AFRAID TO DIE? 2:38 | 18. GREEN APPLES 2:14 |
| 5. SWEETHEART, YOU DONE ME WRONG 2:51 | 19. HELLO CITY LIMITS 2:14 |
| 6. ARE YOU WASHED IN THE BLOOD? 2:42 | 20. VICTIM TO THE TOMB 3:40 |
| 7. DEEP ELEM BLUES 2:31 | 21. ARE YOU TEASING ME? 2:30 |
| 8. GROUND HOG 1:57 | 22. MY SWEET LOVE AIN'T AROUND 3:05 |
| 9. CATNIP 1:42 | 23. DIG A HOLE IN THE MEADOW 2:20 |
| 10. THE LITTLE GIRL AND THE DREADFUL SNAKE 3:20 | 24. I'M WAITING TO HEAR YOU CALL ME DARLING 2:40 |
| 11. I'M JUST HERE TO GET MY BABY OUT OF JAIL 2:11 | 25. STONE WALL 2:53 |
| 12. SHAKE HANDS WITH MOTHER AGAIN 2:27 | 26. TROUBLES AROUND MY DOOR 1:47 |
| 13. ALL THE GOOD TIMES ARE PASSED AND GONE 2:03 | 27. I GUESS I'LL GO ON DREAMING 2:23 |
| 14. WHEN MY BLUE MOON TURNS TO GOLD AGAIN 2:32 | 28. CHRISTIAN LIFE 2:49 |

The late Red Allen is considered to be one of the most important exponents of the "high, lonesome sound," the epitome of bluegrass singing. Red Allen's spirited vocals and strong rhythm guitar make him one of the greatest innovators in bluegrass while remaining true to his roots, playing it straight and singing it with soul. Allen's 1964 Folkways album *bluegrass*, featuring mandolin virtuoso Frank Wakefield, is regarded as one of the most influential documents in the genre. Smithsonian Folkways presents this remarkable album plus six never-released cuts and additional selections from four later Folkways albums.

72 minutes, 36-page booklet, photos, and extensive notes.





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1. LITTLE MAGGIE 3:04

2. SOMEBODY LOVES YOU DARLING 2:19
(Wiley & Zeke Morris/Peer International Corp., BMI)

3. NEW CAMPTOWN RACES 2:31
(Frank Wakefield/Wynwood Music, BMI)

4. ARE YOU AFRAID TO DIE? 2:38
(Ira & Charlie Louvin-Eddie Hill/Acuff-Rose Music Inc., BMI)

5. SWEETHEART, YOU DONE ME WRONG 2:51
(Bill Monroe-Lester Flatt/APRS, BMI)

6. ARE YOU WASHED IN THE BLOOD? 2:42

7. DEEP ELEM BLUES 2:31

8. GROUND HOG 1:57

9. CATNIP 1:42
(Frank Wakefield/Wynwood Music, BMI)

10. THE LITTLE GIRL AND THE DREADFUL SNAKE 3:20
(Albert Price/Tanner Music Inc., BMI)

11. I'M JUST HERE TO GET MY BABY OUT OF JAIL 2:11
(Karl Davis-Harty Taylor/Universal Duchess Music Corp., BMI)

12. SHAKE HANDS WITH MOTHER AGAIN 2:27
(W. A. Berry/Stamps-Baxter Music, BMI)

13. ALL THE GOOD TIMES ARE PASSED AND GONE 2:03

14. WHEN MY BLUE MOON TURNS TO GOLD AGAIN 2:32
(Wiley Walker-Gene Sullivan/APRS, BMI)

15. CAN YOU FORGIVE? 3:37
(Roy Hall/Universal Songs of Polygram International Inc., BMI)

16. OLD JOE CLARK 1:42

17. KNOCKING AT YOUR DOOR 2:07
(Harmie Smith)

18. GREEN APPLES 2:14
(Frank Wakefield/Ownself Music, BMI)

19. HELLO CITY LIMITS 2:14
(Johnny Elgin-Benny Martin/Clydene Publishing Co. Inc.-
Ft. Knox/Trio Music, BMI)

20. VICTIM TO THE TOMB 3:40
(John Duffey/Wynwood Music Co. Inc., BMI)

21. ARE YOU TEASING ME? 2:30
(Ira & Charlie Louvin/Acuff-Rose Music Inc., BMI)

22. MY SWEET LOVE AIN'T AROUND 3:05
(Hank Williams/Acuff-Rose Music Inc., BMI)



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SFW CD 40127

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23. DIG A HOLE IN THE MEADOW 2:20
(Lester Flatt-Earl Scruggs/APRS, BMI)

24. I'M WAITING TO HEAR YOU CALL ME DARLING 2:40
(Lester Flatt-Chuck Johnson/APRS, BMI)

25. STONE WALL 2:53
(Pat Twitty/Universal Cedarwood Publishing, BMI)

26. TROUBLES AROUND MY DOOR 1:47
(Red Allen/Starday Music, BMI)

27. I GUESS I'LL GO ON DREAMING 2:23
(Johnnie Bailes-Walter Bailes-Zeke Clements-Muriel Wright/
Acuff-Rose Music Inc., BMI)

28. CHRISTIAN LIFE 2:49
(Ira & Charlie Louvin/Sony ATV Songs LLC, BMI)



INTRODUCTION

JON WEISBERGER

Though it is a genre which places a heavy emphasis on tradition, bluegrass is distinctly modern. While enthusiasts with an historical bent comb through earlier recordings in search of prefigurings of the style, its actual starting point can be precisely located in the set of country music recordings and performances offered by Bill Monroe and The Blue Grass Boys between 1946 and 1948. That specificity is at once a burden and a blessing to those who play bluegrass, and while the implications remain a subject of hot debate among its fans, it has exerted a powerful influence on virtually every musician who has worked within the genre, including Red Allen, Frank Wakefield, and all who accompanied them on the recordings that make up *The Folkways Years*.

Though Monroe (1911-1996) is widely referred to as “The Father of Bluegrass,” the Rosine, Kentucky, native was perhaps as much a catalyst in the process of inventing bluegrass as he was the actual creator. By 1939, when he arrived at WSM’s Grand Ole Opry – then on the rise to a position of preeminence among the “barn dance” country variety shows broadcast around the United States – he was already a well-known entertainer, thanks to years of duet work as mandolin player and tenor vocalist with his older brother Charlie (guitar, lead vocals) as The Monroe Brothers. By 1945, he had settled completely into the role of Opry star, having already fashioned a unique approach to country music that combined elements of traditional rural string band music, the brother duet style that he and Charlie had both influenced and been influenced by, Jimmie

*Opposite: Tom Morgan, Frank Wakefield, Red Allen, Pete Kuykendall, 1963.
Photo: Keith Russell courtesy of Tom Morgan.*



Bill Monroe (left), Frank Wakefield (center), Tom Morgan (right) –
Culpeper, Virginia, 1963. Photo: Courtesy of Tom Morgan.

Rodgers's Tin Pan Alley– and blues-influenced recordings of the late 1920s and early 1930s, and a healthy dose of his own creativity. Yet as rich as that approach was, it turned out to have been prologue to an even deeper one.

The turning point came in 1946, when banjoist Earl Scruggs was hired on as a Blue Grass Boy. Though he wasn't the first to use three right-hand fingers in picking the banjo, Scruggs (1924–) had developed a technically sophisticated approach that involved various patterns, called "rolls," giving him an essentially new ability to take dazzling solos based on song melodies and—no less importantly—a wide vocabulary of "licks" with which to accompany vocalists. As a Blue Grass Boy, Scruggs was in a position to be heard widely, and the effect he had on listeners, especially other musicians, was incalculable, especially when heard in

tandem with Monroe's driving mandolin, the smooth, swing-influenced fiddling of Chubby Wise, and the powerhouse vocal team of Monroe and lead singer/guitarist Lester Flatt, who had joined the Blue Grass Boys a short time earlier.

This "classic" Blue Grass Boys lineup lasted less than two years, but it created the musical doctrine for bluegrass and preached its gospel to audiences around the country through Opry broadcasts, extensive live appearances throughout the Southeast, and more than two dozen recordings made for the Columbia label. The testimonies of hundreds of musicians – including Red Allen and Frank Wakefield – record the impact it had; many speak of being almost transformed by their first hearing of it. Musically, the evidence is no less compelling, and not only among musicians who became life-long practitioners within the style.

Still, when it was created, the music of the Blue Grass Boys was not a style. Neither had it been named. Instead, it was Monroe's own take on what was widely called "hillbilly music" (Monroe himself disdained the term), from his vantage point as a bandleader and working entertainer then beginning an era of rapid and profound transformation. His anger and distress at others' adopting key elements of the sound, at least in the early years, were considerable and well known (and were, for instance, a factor in his decision to switch label affiliations from Columbia to Decca).

What made bluegrass into a style – a process in which Allen was involved, and which was not yet complete by the time Folkways 2408 (*bluegrass*) was made (though it largely was by the time of his later Folkways recordings) – was exactly that process of adoption and adaptation. By the mid-1950s, there were dozens, if not hundreds, of acts whose sound was substantially based on the 1946–48 model, starting with Monroe himself, who replaced members as needed and continued to change his sound as time passed. Flatt & Scruggs (Mercury, then Columbia), Jim & Jesse (Capitol), the Stanley Brothers (Columbia, then Mercury), Jimmy Martin (RCA, then Decca), the Lonesome Pine Fiddlers (RCA), and the Osborne Brothers (RCA with Martin, then MGM with Allen) all rang changes on the essential sound, yet retained so many of its elements in instrumentation, vocal styles, repertoire, and more, that they would inevitably be grouped together regardless of their own preferences. The emerging identification was reinforced, too, as the process of emulation and variation spread into smaller venues and was recorded by independent labels, many of them ephemeral.

It was during just this period that Red Allen (1930-1993) began his professional career, making his first recordings in 1953 for Cincinnati's Kentucky label and graduating within a few years to the majors when he worked with Bob and Sonny as "The Osborne Brothers and Red Allen." As an important enough part of the team to rank co-billing, he had developed tremendously as a musician by the time they did their first session for MGM in 1956, and by the time he left in the middle of 1958, he had not only grown further, but had helped to shape the nascent bluegrass style.

Though Allen had little in the way of formal musical training, he had a quick, sharp ear – "I don't think Red understood much technically about harmony, but he could sing it, it was a natural thing for him," Sonny says – and hence fit well with the brothers as they developed a hard-edged, yet sophisticated, even polished

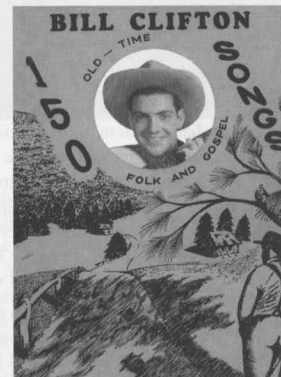
style of harmony singing; too, his booming rhythm guitar ably supported Bob and Sonny's innovative solos on mandolin and banjo respectively. Though he never achieved the popularity they did, his co-billing was an accurate reflection of the musical value he brought to the band. Even so, the arrangement proved unworkable in the end, and Allen departed, having helped to establish a sound that both refined and extended the 1946-48 one, especially in the vocal department.

By the time Allen made his first Folkways recordings with Frank Wakefield, bluegrass was being called that, and was being shaped by other musical forces. In the wake of the rock and roll revolution of the later 1950s and subsequent efforts by the young country music industry to retain its audience, many of the harder-edged, more rural performers – including many bluegrass acts – were being relegated to the business's margins, neither cosmopolitan enough to fit the smooth “Nashville Sound” nor suited for the electric instrumentation and heavy drum beats of the honkytonk and Bakersfield sounds that were its counterparts. Though most of the major-label bluegrass bands were able to keep their contracts, it was harder to find work in the larger country market (especially as it became more radio-driven), especially if they didn't update their sound to reflect changing conditions. Hits occasionally surfaced, like Flatt & Scruggs' late 1962 “Ballad of Jed Clampett” (the theme to the popular *Beverly Hillbillies* TV show), but no matter how tenaciously they and other major acts clung to their inclinations, bluegrass was being pushed away from the commercial country mainstream.

At the same time, and further helping to define it as a style and a separate set of institutions, bluegrass was being pulled toward the growing folk music revival and adapting itself to several kinds of urban environments. By the early 1960s, bluegrass acts were appearing on the folk music circuit, from the Newport Folk Festival to campus coffeehouses, stimulated by the respect and enthusiasm accorded to the style by figures like Pete Seeger, who included a chapter on Scruggs-style banjo playing in his instructional book, and Ralph Rinzler, who promoted Monroe's stature as the originator of bluegrass in print and, for a time, by acting as his manager and booking agent. Here the emphasis was on “authenticity” and the music's link to pre-commercial country styles, and audiences frequently preferred traditional songs to artists' more contemporary, commercially-aware material.

Finally, bluegrass was developing another important audience along the fringes of – and well-defined in – migration routes out of the Southeast. Though this trend was present almost from the beginning, it assumed greater significance as time passed; by the early part of the 1960s, performers were finding more than occasional jobs in working-class venues – frequently bars and social clubs – in cities like Washington, D.C., Baltimore, Cincinnati, Dayton, and Detroit, where Appalachian migrants were making new homes and communities for themselves. Though rough and sometimes dangerous, such places helped to shape bluegrass, too, as their inhabitants sought music that would both remind them of where they'd come from and help them cope with the gritty circumstances in which they were now living.

This, then, was the backdrop against which Allen, Wakefield, and their associates recorded Folkways 2408. It is reflected in the circumstances under which the album was made, in the selection of material and in its presentation. The sound was hard-edged, with some of the precision if not the smoothness of what was then contemporary country music; in its instrumentation and vocal arrangements, it followed squarely from the original Monroe template; in material – especially when the unreleased cuts are taken into account – it reflected the breadth of bluegrass's influences, drawing from traditional sources, old commercial country artists, Monroe's own pen, and the creativity of the participants. In its impact, it reached more than one of bluegrass's constituent audiences, thanks to the familiarity of the Folkways label to the folk music audience and the enduring ties of Allen, Wakefield, Emerson, and others to the Appalachian migrant communities and the respect in which they were held by their peers among bluegrass musicians.



Bill Clifton's song book served as the source of material for the original Red Allen-Frank Wakefield and the Kentuckians Folkways recording.

By the time Allen returned to Folkways in the late 1970s, much had changed. Thanks to the processes already in motion at the time of the earlier sessions, a distinct genre and a set of institutions – venues, record labels, radio shows, and music festivals – to support and nurture it had consolidated. Major figures like Lester Flatt and Carter Stanley had passed away, new generations of musicians – including Red’s own sons – had grown up in or been attracted to the genre, female musicians had become a persistent, if still small, presence on the scene, and new material was both being created within the style and finding its way into the repertoire from outside sources.

The selections from those years presented here focus mostly on that sizable part of Allen’s work which tended to look back, with material coming largely from 1950s country and bluegrass figures like Carl Smith, Hank Williams, Flatt & Scruggs, and the Louvin Brothers, as well as re-recordings of his own songs. Still, the LPs from which they come included entries from as far afield as the Monkees’ “Last Train to Clarksville,” and Red evinced a steady interest in recording with younger musicians who were both grounded in bluegrass tradition and aware of the musical world beyond the style; though he clung fast to his own way of doing things musically – largely unchanged since the 1950s – Allen wasn’t a “traditionalist” in the narrow sense, nor was he comfortable with the view of a musical world of bluegrass isolated from the larger country music context.

“There’s no difference between a bluegrass and country song,” he once told interviewer Pete Wernick. “It’s just the way I do it. I just hear a song and if I like it, it sticks in my mind. I’ll go home and it will ring in my head and I won’t be able to go to sleep. I just feel that it’s a grass song.” At the same time, he had a keen appreciation not just for the emotion of a song, but of what should be done with it, and though his language isn’t that of the music analyst, his thoughts – “If you don’t have your harmony, you don’t have nothing... You have to know your parts... learn and listen to each other” – revealed a devotion to the demands of technique that lies at the heart of the genre’s sense of musical values. In embracing that dual perspective – passion and ability – Allen exemplified the best bluegrass had to offer, and the best it still does.

RED ALLEN

MARK YACOVONE

Bluegrass is an elusive art, a powerfully redemptive and gripping form of expression that defies and opposes analytic dissection. Harley “Red” Allen epitomized this elusiveness. Not in the sense of mystery: he was not one of those hermetic artists who are by nature enigmatic. But to grasp what Mr. Allen conveyed as an interpreter of song is as complex as grasping bluegrass music itself. A path on this journey can be found in the recordings issued on the Folkways label from 1964 to 1983.

Red Allen’s forty-year career spanned almost all of bluegrass music’s most creative period. Born 1930 in Pigeon’s Roost, Kentucky, located in that musically rich area around Hazard, he came of age at a key moment in bluegrass history, when Bill Monroe and the Blue Grass Boys’ live shows, radio programs, and recordings defined this music. Red – much like other first-generation performers such as the Stanley Brothers (Ralph and Carter) and Jim & Jesse – listened, learned, and ultimately used his gifts as a stepping stone to a career and as a way out of eastern Kentucky.



The early 1950s witnessed the growing popularity and proliferation of bluegrass, which resulted in the blossoming of its most important artists and the nurturing of its repertoire. In part, this growth was due to the migration of people from the mid-South and Southeast to cities further north that offered job opportunities. Cities like Dayton, Ohio, Detroit, Baltimore, Washington, D.C., Philadelphia, and Cincinnati attracted transplanted Southerners and became friendly enclaves for those longing to maintain or retrieve their culture. It was in Dayton that Red made the acquaintance of – and performed with – other aspiring bluegrassers, including the Osborne Brothers, Noah Crase, and Frank Wakefield.

Red's intense, passionate singing was evident from the beginning; he epitomized the music's inherent demand for urgency and power. Bluegrass has given us many talented singers who possess the necessary tools to communicate, but who opt for a homogenized approach that softens the material. Red Allen, however, worked hard to present an immediately identifiable sound which was uniquely his own. He refused to render any material with anything less than the passion he would give to a classic Monroe song, like "Close By." Allen's vocal delivery was his stamp: everything was subordinate to the phrasing, whether he was singing lead or embellishing the tenor part. Bluegrass singing should not sound effortless. If it gives the impression that the singer is casually achieving the goal of rendering a text, then something is missing. Red Allen struggled with the shaping of a song and never backed down from its emotional demands. To partake of Red Allen is to partake of this music without confection.

Following a highly productive, creative, but all-too-brief stint with the Osborne Brothers (1956–1958), Red returned to Dayton in the late 1950s and then settled in the Washington, D.C., area. The nation's capital was a thriving bluegrass community, and performers such as The Country Gentlemen – who had modeled their trio harmonies on those developed by the Osborne Brothers and Red Allen – Buzz Busby, Bill Harrell, the Stoneman Family (The Bluegrass Champs), and others found venues and enthusiastic audiences. Red intuitively knew there might be a niche for his music in Washington, D. C., which while not similar to Dayton in terms of social or cultural milieu, did attract transplanted Southerners for the government employment opportunities it provided.

Red Allen's most creative period was officially launched with the re-emergence of Frank Wakefield. Wakefield, a visionary mandolinist and singer, had a vitae and peripatetic nature similar to Red's. Born 1935 in Emory Gap, Tennessee, Wakefield settled in Dayton, where he, Red, and banjoist Noah Crase collaborated and played the local bar circuit. Frank moved to Detroit in 1956 for an abbreviated stint with a group fronted by Marvin Cobb. When he returned to Dayton in 1959, Red was there, and they resumed performing in earnest. This resulted in outstanding recordings for Starday and BMC.

In a telephone conversation February 7, 2001, Frank Wakefield recalled that he first came to Baltimore in 1960 with Kenny Haddock. They performed briefly as the Franklin County Boys. Red arrived in the Washington, D.C., area about eight months later, and he and Wakefield reunited to form a bold and productive partnership. Together with Porter Church and Haddock, they began performing at two D.C. clubs: Whitney's and the Famous. This collaboration evolved into the Kentuckians.

Despite the tensions between them – a function of the depth of their relationship – when Wakefield was in the band, the music rose to another level. Along with Pete Kuykendall on banjo, bassist Tom Morgan, dobroist Kenny Haddock, fiddler Scott Stoneman, and others, this aggregation recorded some devastatingly powerful material for the Rebel label, and presented live music on WDON, the Wheaton, Maryland, radio station which showcased bluegrass. Red Allen was an imposing figure. A gaunt 6'2", he was a sight to behold when he hit the G-run on his Martin. Frank Wakefield was, and is, strikingly beatific. He would hold the Gibson F-5 high up to the microphone and execute passages that often sounded more like baroque transcriptions than bluegrass. This was an era which pre-dated a performer's dependence on technology. Playing into one or two microphones was the norm, and great players such as Wakefield and Allen intuitively knew the dynamics of this technology. On stage, these two fiercely competitive and complex individuals appeared larger than life.

Tragically, though, the partnership dissolved acrimoniously by the end of 1964. Bluegrass is a strong music, often with personalities to match. Differences occur – stemming from poorly timed verbal aspersions or simple misunderstandings – and become irreconcilable. There is no logical assessment of issues, no rational solution to things, no room for mending fences. It is ego against ego, and nobody wins. Frank would depart to take

Ralph Rinzler's place with the Greenbriar Boys, survive a near-fatal auto accident, and other than a few sporadic reunion concerts, was never again to perform with Red on a regular basis. Red himself would keep the Kentuckians intact throughout much of the decade. The ensemble of the D.C. period retained its dynamic sound. A veritable "who's who" in bluegrass passed through the Kentuckians – David Grisman, Porter Church, Richard Greene, the Yates Brothers, and Bill Emerson, to name a few. Although the music never regained the otherworldly splendor of Wakefield's tenure, neither did it succumb to mediocrity. Red would not allow this.

In 1967 Red departed for Nashville to substitute for an ailing Lester Flatt. In 1968 he became part of a group with J.D. Crowe and Doyle Lawson in Lexington, Ky. He made the decision to return to Dayton in 1969.

Red had a cantankerous nature and terse manner. One minute he would allow us to share his sublime insights into the songs he would weave and spin; the next, he would be enigmatically disagreeable. I recall a specific incident from 1964 – one of those moments which slip by almost unnoticed but reveals something about both the singer and the music.

Red and the Kentuckians were playing a club called the Shamrock in D.C. The band on this occasion included the Yates Brothers (Bill and Wayne) and Bill Emerson. They all seemed to be about seven feet tall, wore matching brown suits, and had to be the most serious people in the world. Bill Emerson had concluded a banjo tune when a young patron shouted out for the band to "play another instrumental." Red paused and, with a highly focused stare, firmly stated, "We don't play two instrumentals in a row." This seemingly matter-of-fact retort is resonant with meaning. From it, we learn that he subscribed to a certain bluegrass code: you give the audience a mixture of vocal and instrumental tunes. Dogmatic? Sure. Bluegrass is inherently conservative, engendering rigid codes which sometimes can be broken, but not often. Not this time.

Red embodied this tension within the music. Seemingly contradictory elements of creativity and rigidity manage to coexist. In making the statement to the patron, he also was saying that the Kentuckians had important work to do that evening. There were many trios, quartets, and lonesome duets to conquer – and nothing could interfere with the task ahead.

Red Allen pursued the "task ahead" his entire life. And his life, much like traditional bluegrass, was a medley of survival, frustration, and success. The tumultuous, difficult, and lean times were offset by periods of

astounding creativity. There were several milestones: the collaboration in the late 1950s with the Osborne Brothers, with its high-lead trio, which was nothing less than the very foundation of contemporary bluegrass harmony; a late 1960s partnership with J.D. Crowe and Doyle Lawson, which served a similar muse in his quest for the ultimate trio; the appearances at the W. VA. Jamboree in Wheeling, in the late 1950s with the Osborne Brothers and throughout the 1960s with the Kentuckians; an important Carnegie Hall appearance on September 21, 1963 as part of the annual *Sing Out!* concert which included Pete Kuykendall and Tom Morgan and served to introduce Red and Frank to a new urban audience; Grand Ole Opry performances and a tour of Japan with the Foggy Mountain Boys in the late 1960s. But it was the partnership with Frank Wakefield which reigned supreme.

In 1964, Folkways released Red Allen and Frank Wakefield's *bluegrass* (F 2408), one of the few bluegrass albums which could be considered indispensable. The magic, chemistry, and spontaneity were captured in two transcendent sessions organized by Pete Kuykendall, David Grisman, and Peter Siegel. Pete Kuykendall, an outstanding musician, engineer, and country music historian, and currently editor of *Bluegrass Unlimited*, was the catalyst for the first session. David Grisman and Peter Siegel, at that point in time, represented another complementary phenomenon from the late 1950s: the emergence of urban youth awestruck by traditional Southern music. For many, myself included, it was a coming-of-age not to be forgotten. I scanned the AM dial from D.C. in late-night quests to pull in WCKY, the Cincinnati country music station. Grisman and Siegel took a bus trip in 1963 from New York to D.C., where they would meet and informally record Red and Frank. (See *The Kitchen Tapes*, listed in the discography.) One year later, they would produce the second of the two sessions which comprised Folkways 2408). Both Grisman and Siegel were to make contributions to the world of acoustic music as musicians, record producers, and champions for bluegrass, old-time music, and its various offspring, with Grisman's impact being of major proportions.

Each of the two sessions had different personnel. The first included Pete Kuykendall on banjo and bassist Tom Morgan. Kuykendall was a multi-instrumentalist who had played with Bennie and Vallie Cain and recorded with The Country Gentlemen. He was and is a respected discographer and staunch advocate of traditional country music's place in American culture. Tom Morgan, a native of Tennessee who at the time was a staff ser-

geant in the Air Force, was a highly respected maker and repairer of stringed instruments. One notices how wonderful the instruments played by the Kentuckians sound. This can be attributed directly to Tom's passion. The guitar Red played throughout much of this period was Tom Morgan's own Martin D-45. Frank's mandolin – after he sold his Gibson F-5, which originally was owned by Pee Wee Lambert, to Harry West – was built for him by Morgan. Tom himself played bass and sang on the quartets.

The second session included bassist Fred Weisz, who was active in the New York bluegrass scene, and Bill Keith. Keith, from Brockton, Massachusetts, had worked and recorded with Bill Monroe and was literally transforming bluegrass banjo. Both Kuykendall and Keith were kind enough to share their recollections of this period in telephone interviews conducted in March 2000.

Yacovone: When was your first contact with Red and Frank?

Kuykendall: Red came to the D.C. area around 1960. At that time I was working for television station WETA. I had a recording studio in the basement of my home in Falls Church, Virginia. The late John Duffey of The Country Gentlemen contacted me about setting up a session with Red and Frank. This was in April of 1963. That session, which remains unissued, included Robbie Robinson on banjo and Jim Cox on bass.

Yacovone: When did you begin playing with the group?

Kuykendall: Well, the sequence of banjo players was: Robbie Robinson, Bill Emerson, Bill Keith, myself, and Ben Eldridge. So I replaced Bill Keith. Bill had departed to work with Bill Monroe. Along with Tom Morgan, it was an active band which had a regular series of broadcasts over WDON in Wheaton, Maryland. Our main venue was Cousin Nick's on 14th Street in D.C. The Country Gentlemen were at the Shamrock in Georgetown. Red himself would play there in the mid-1960s.

Yacovone: How did the landmark Folkways recording come about?

Kuykendall: I knew Ben Adelman, who was a talent scout for Don Pierce at Starday records. He had contacts in New York with the 99-cent budget drugstore labels. The Country Gentlemen had a budget release out (*Hootenanny* - Design DLP-613). Our goal was to present some material for Ben Adelman to present to one of these labels. So it was cut on speculation.

Yacovone: Where and when was this recorded?

Kuykendall: In August or September 1963. Wynwood Studios was in the basement of my home in Falls Church. There was no engineer riding gain. I would set up the mics, grab the banjo, and away we'd go. It was here that we recorded the earlier material with Robinson and Cox, as well as later Red and Frank sessions with Bill Emerson, Billy Baker, Eddie Adcock, Tom Morgan, and John Duffey in various combinations. All of this remains unissued.

Yacovone: How was the material selected?

Kuykendall: We were working out of the Bill Clifton song book (*Bill Clifton 150 Old-Time Folk and Gospel Songs*). Remember, this was to be a drugstore budget release, so we had to have a broad audience in mind. We opted for traditional songs rather than original material.

Yacovone: So the original concept of a drugstore recording now became a Folkways project.

Kuykendall: Right. It was brought to the attention of Moe Asch, the president of Folkways in New York.

Yacovone: Let me ask Bill Keith to recollect his tenure with Red and Frank.

Keith: I came to the D.C. area in 1962 to visit Tom Morgan, who was building a banjo neck for me. Tom provided an introduction to Red and Frank, and we began performing throughout the area and at the WWVA Jamboree in Wheeling. I stayed in Tom Morgan's attic in Takoma Park, Maryland. This is where I completed transcribing my Scruggs book (*Earl Scruggs and The 5-String Banjo* [New York: Peer International, 1968]).

Yacovone: And then you left to play with Bill Monroe?

Keith: Yes. I went with Monroe in 1963 and later returned to Boston where I played with the Jim Kweskin Jug Band.

Yacovone: So you were based in Boston at the time of the Allen-Wakefield recording?

Keith: Yes. This was the spring of 1964. I believe it was David Grisman who contacted me about coming to New York for the session.

Yacovone: Do you recall this session?


Keith: Red and Frank came in from D.C., and I asked Fred Weisz to play bass. We all met at the Folklore Center in Greenwich Village to rehearse. The session took place at Cue Recordings in midtown Manhattan. David Grisman and Peter Siegel were the producers. I believe it was they who originally presented the idea of completing the project which Pete Kuykendall had begun with Moe Asch at Folkways.

Yacovone: Was Mr. Asch at the session?

Keith: No, I don't recall him being there. I remember Winnie Winston – a fine banjo player and friend of David and Peter's. We completed the session and at David Grisman's suggestion had dinner in Chinatown at Sam Wo's.

The complete original recording is presented here intact with the addition of six unreleased tracks, all beautifully remastered.

Recording log from Cue Recordings in New York City, the second of the two sessions which comprised the original Allen-Wakefield recording. Note that the track titled "Frank's Tune" was released as "Catnip" on Folkways 2408.

PRODUCTION NOTES			
 117 WEST 46th STREET - NEW YORK 36 - PLaza 7-3641 PLaza 7-3560			
CLIENT:	TITLE/ARTIST/PROGRAM	DATE:	JOB #
EQUIPMENT & REMARKS			
TAPE #2			
20	New Campbell Races	5 fs	
21	" " "	6 fs	
22	" " "	7 fs	
23	" " "	8 fs cut	
24	" " "	9 fs	
25	" " "	10 maybe	
26	Frank's Tune	1 fs	
27	" " "	2 stop	
28	" " "	3 ok	
29	" " "	4	

The later years saw a gentler Red Allen. Torrents of emotional and irrational moods had given way to someone who was well aware of his formidable accomplishments and at least was somewhat at peace with himself. He subordinated his craft to the necessity of coming to terms with life and was content to stay close to home. However, family tragedies took their toll.

In 1974, Neal, one of his talented sons, died. In 1976, Red had open heart surgery. Following a brief hiatus, he returned to the music with enthusiasm and fervor, to encourage the musical aspirations of his sons Harley, Greg, and Ronnie. He and the boys recorded four splendid albums for Folkways in Nashville and Columbus, Ohio (see discography). The wide range of material on these recordings demonstrates his commitment to both maintaining and expanding the tradition.

The Folkways material from the late 1970s–early 1980s presents a Red Allen whose voice still shatters. All of the urgency is there, and the timing is impeccable. His penetrating rhythm guitar holds everything together, and there are moments of rare beauty and insight, such as the probing "My Sweet Love Ain't Around" and lyrical rendition of "I Guess I'll Go on Dreaming." These were not always working bands and sometimes lack the cohesion of earlier groups. Nevertheless, the players here, including Vassar Clements, Curley Seckler,



Red Allen, Chris Warner, and an unidentified bass player at the Elizabeth Moose, Elizabeth, PA, 1990. Photo: Harry McNeil courtesy of Norma McNeil.

Marty Stuart, and Tater Tate, all have a sensitivity to Red's music and contribute to making it vibrant and meaningful. Each of the participants on these recordings respects him and responds accordingly. The occasional lapses in continuity are more than compensated for by their responses to the Allen credo of music, without compromise.

Harley "Red" Allen passed away April 3, 1993. This compilation of selections from the Folkways label is a testament to one of the most formidable exponents of bluegrass song. He and the music emerge triumphant; may his power and conviction move you.

SONGS

AND TUNES

Red Allen sings some lead and all of the tenor parts on selections from *bluegrass* (F 2408). He provides all of the lead vocals on the other recordings. His robust rhythm guitar can be heard on all cuts.

1. LITTLE MAGGIE

Red Allen, vocal and guitar; Frank Wakefield, mandolin; Pete Kuykendall, banjo; Tom Morgan, bass.
From *bluegrass*, Red Allen, Frank Wakefield, and the Kentuckians, Folkways 2408 (1964)

Here is the essence of Red Allen, all summed up in this magnificent rendering of "Little Maggie." Red's vocal, pitched where few mortals dare to go, is mesmerizing. The instrumental opening is especially noteworthy. Usually, "Little Maggie" has a banjo introduction. In this version, Pete Kuykendall's banjo serves as a prelude to Frank Wakefield's captivatingly modal interpretation of the melody in his mandolin introduction.

2. SOMEBODY LOVES YOU DARLING

Red Allen, vocal and guitar; Frank Wakefield, vocal and mandolin; Pete Kuykendall, vocal and banjo; Tom Morgan, bass.
From *bluegrass*, Red Allen, Frank Wakefield and the Kentuckians, Folkways 2408 (1964)

This poignant song, written by the Morris Brothers, is presented as a trio. Red delivers a dazzling tenor which is refreshingly spontaneous. Many of today's groups learn their vocal parts exactly and never deviate from this formula; the sound is sculpted nicely but lacks emotion and is inimical to the creative spirit. Red would never

sing the tenor part the same way twice. Frank's lead vocal is both haunting and tantalizing. His instrumental virtuosity has overshadowed the fact that, in this period, he possessed a voice which conveyed a wide range of emotions. Another highlight is Pete Kuykendall's floatingly beautiful banjo. As he stated in the March 2000 telephone interview: "I tuned the fifth string up to A for this effect." Pete Kuykendall's baritone rounds out the trio, and Tom Morgan holds down the upright bass.

3. NEW CAMPTOWN RACES

Red Allen, guitar; Frank Wakefield, mandolin; Bill Keith, banjo; Fred Weisz, bass.
From *bluegrass*, Red Allen, Frank Wakefield, and the Kentuckians, Folkways 2408 (1964)

This was the second recording of an intricate, infectious piece that Frank Wakefield first recorded in 1957. Written in the key of B-flat, it is definitively performed in the Folkways version with Bill Keith's innovative melodic banjo assuming a prominent role. Keith was doing nothing less than re-defining the boundaries of bluegrass banjo. Along with Bill Monroe, Earl Scruggs, Don Reno, and Benny Martin, he is one of the few bluegrass musicians with an immediately identifiable sound. His note-for-note appropriation of a melody departed from the standard roll utilized by Earl Scruggs. Keith's breathtaking pyrotechnics coupled with Wakefield's soulful attack resulted in sublime music making.

4. ARE YOU AFRAID TO DIE?

Red Allen, vocal and guitar; Frank Wakefield, vocal and mandolin; Pete Kuykendall, vocal and banjo; Tom Morgan, bass.
From *bluegrass*, Red Allen, Frank Wakefield, and the Kentuckians, Folkways 2408 (1964)

A beautiful quartet version of this Louvin Brothers song, first recorded in the early 1950s. One of bluegrass music's mysteries is why some voices blend well and others don't. Allen, Wakefield, Kuykendall, and Morgan all had voices which complemented each other.

5. SWEETHEART, YOU DONE ME WRONG

Red Allen, vocal and guitar; Frank Wakefield, vocal and mandolin; Bill Keith, vocal and banjo; Fred Weisz, bass.
From *bluegrass*, Red Allen, Frank Wakefield, and the Kentuckians, Folkways 2408 (1964)

It is difficult re-interpreting classics, but Red and Frank were always up to the challenge. The original of this Bill Monroe song was an ethereal duo with Monroe and Lester Flatt. The Allen-Wakefield version is a trio with Red's high lead supported by two lower harmony lines sung by Frank Wakefield and Bill Keith.

6. ARE YOU WASHED IN THE BLOOD?

Red Allen, vocal and guitar; Frank Wakefield, vocal and mandolin; Pete Kuykendall, banjo; Tom Morgan, bass.
From *bluegrass*, Red Allen, Frank Wakefield, and the Kentuckians, Folkways 2408 (1964)

This perennial Southern gospel favorite was first recorded in the late 1920s. Red and Frank did not subscribe to the school of false reverence when performing gospel material, so there was nothing superficial in their approach. Their heartfelt navigation of the vocals results in a powerful performance.

7. DEEP ELEM BLUES

Red Allen, vocal and guitar; Frank Wakefield, vocal and mandolin; Bill Keith, vocal and banjo; Fred Weisz, bass.
From *bluegrass*, Red Allen, Frank Wakefield, and the Kentuckians, Folkways 2408 (1964)

This was one of their most effective songs, and one which Frank Wakefield still features. Highlights are Red's soaring tenor and Frank's engaging lead vocal and atonal mandolin. It was recorded by the Shelton Brothers in the mid-1930s and shortly thereafter by the Prairie Ramblers.

8. GROUND HOG

Red Allen, vocal and guitar; Frank Wakefield, vocal and mandolin; Pete Kuykendall, vocal and banjo; Tom Morgan, bass.
From *bluegrass*, Red Allen, Frank Wakefield, and the Kentuckians, Folkways 2408 (1964)

"Ground Hog" elicits a playfulness sometimes not recognized in these artists. Behind the austerity, there lay a very genuine response to humor. The song itself is well known in the upland South and remains a standard among "old-time" musicians. Pete Kuykendall recalled in the March 2000 telephone interview that they learned this song from the Bill Clifton book. "Our rendition was modeled on the Flatt & Scruggs version."

9. CATNIP

Red Allen, vocal and guitar; Frank Wakefield, vocal and mandolin; Bill Keith, banjo; Fred Weisz, bass.
From *bluegrass*, Red Allen, Frank Wakefield, and the Kentuckians, Folkways 2408 (1964)

This extraordinary modal mandolin number was originally titled "Frank's Tune." [The use of "off" notes is truly dramatic. It is in the key of A major. There is a prominent modulation to G major in which Wakefield uses F sharp as the root. This jolting harmonic shift is startling to those conditioned by traditional bluegrass harmony.] Bluegrass is blessed with many fine virtuoso players who sometimes force as many notes as they can into a tune. Wakefield never loses sight of the doctrine set by Bill Monroe: always adhere to the melody of a tune. Embellish within this structure and avoid complexity for complexity's sake. This avoids a merely kinetic or showy approach to the material. All of the unexpected twists and turns he takes remain faithful to the Monroe doctrine. Red plays inspired rhythm guitar. Bill Keith romps, and Fred Weisz stays in the pocket.

10. THE LITTLE GIRL AND THE DREADFUL SNAKE

Red Allen, guitar; Frank Wakefield, mandolin; Bill Keith, banjo; Fred Weisz, bass.
From *bluegrass*, Red Allen, Frank Wakefield, and the Kentuckians, Folkways 2408 (1964)

A genuinely compelling realization of the great Bill Monroe duet number, first recorded in the late 1940s. Red and Frank intuitively recognize that this dark and somber song requires the utmost conviction, and they deliver.

11. I'M JUST HERE TO GET MY BABY OUT OF JAIL

Red Allen, vocal and guitar; Frank Wakefield, vocal and mandolin; Bill Keith, banjo; Fred Weisz, bass.
From *bluegrass*, Red Allen, Frank Wakefield, and the Kentuckians, Folkways 2408 (1964)

Red and Frank dig into the vaults for this 1930s Karl and Harty song, whose roots are in late 19th-century Black folk song. But they are not content to simply revive it; the plaintive text becomes a cry from the heart, and an authentic sense of melancholy ensues. This is bluegrass singing at its most eloquent.

12. SHAKE HANDS WITH MOTHER AGAIN

Red Allen, vocal and guitar; Frank Wakefield, vocal and mandolin; Pete Kuykendall, vocal and lead guitar; Tom Morgan, vocal and bass.

From *bluegrass*, Red Allen, Frank Wakefield, and the Kentuckians, Folkways 2408 (1964)

The original album closes with what might have been Red's favorite gospel song. Rarely did he pass up the chance to perform this. The quartet, with Red, Frank, Pete Kuykendall, and Tom Morgan, is outstanding. They sing in the style favored by the early Bill Monroe and the Blue Grass Boys lineups, which did not utilize the banjo on gospel songs. The unique lead guitar is played by Pete Kuykendall. In a March 2000 interview he stated: "My contribution, in general, was to come up with something different. I learned the open D tuning from country/rockabilly performer Jimmy Murphy."

13. ALL THE GOOD TIMES ARE PASSED AND GONE

Red Allen, vocal and guitar; Frank Wakefield, vocal and mandolin; Pete Kuykendall, vocal and banjo; Tom Morgan, bass.
From unreleased out takes of *bluegrass*, Red Allen, Frank Wakefield, and the Kentuckians, Folkways 2408 (1964)

The highlight of this standard, recorded in the 1930s by the Monroe Brothers and others, is Red's overwhelming tenor. Another song from the Bill Clifton book.

14. WHEN MY BLUE MOON TURNS TO GOLD AGAIN

Red Allen, vocal and guitar; Frank Wakefield, vocal and mandolin; Bill Keith, banjo; Fred Weisz, bass.
From unreleased out takes of *bluegrass*, Red Allen, Frank Wakefield, and the Kentuckians, Folkways 2408 (1964)

Unreleased from the New York session, this explosive version of the Wiley Walker-Gene Sullivan 1940s classic features a blistering Red and Frank vocal duet and a sensational banjo break from Bill Keith.

15. CAN YOU FORGIVE?

Red Allen, vocal and guitar; Frank Wakefield, vocal and mandolin; Pete Kuykendall, vocal and banjo; Tom Morgan, bass.
From unreleased out takes of *bluegrass*, Red Allen, Frank Wakefield, and the Kentuckians, Folkways 2408 (1964)

Unreleased from the first session with Kuykendall and Morgan, this is a sensitive re-working of a song

first recorded by Roy Hall and his Blue Ridge Entertainers in 1940. A highlight is Frank Wakefield's dazzling mandolin break, reminiscent of Bill Monroe's demonic playing on his recording of "The Prisoner's Song."

16. OLD JOE CLARK

Red Allen, guitar; Frank Wakefield, mandolin; Bill Keith, banjo; Fred Weisz, bass.

From unreleased out takes of *bluegrass*, Red Allen, Frank Wakefield, and the Kentuckians, Folkways 2408 (1964)

From the New York session, not included on the original recording, this is a straight-ahead rendition of everybody's favorite fiddle tune. Musicians of Wakefield's and Keith's character do not feel the need to assault and overplay tunes. Instead, they are instinctively true to the melody and embellish within the limits of good taste.

17. KNOCKING AT YOUR DOOR

Red Allen, vocal and guitar; Frank Wakefield, mandolin; Pete Kuykendall, banjo; Fred Weisz, bass.

From unreleased out takes of *bluegrass*, Red Allen, Frank Wakefield, and the Kentuckians, Folkways 2408 (1964)

The antithesis of complacency, Red delivers a piercing solo on this song associated with Ed Mayfield. Although Mayfield never recorded it, he often performed "Knocking at Your Door" when he was Bill Monroe's lead singer in the 1950s. Pete Kuykendall believes that Mayfield learned this song from either Hank Locklin or T. Texas Tyler. This previously unreleased song is from the Falls Church, Virginia, session with Wakefield, Kuykendall, and Morgan.

18. GREEN APPLES

Red Allen, guitar; Frank Wakefield, mandolin; Bill Keith, banjo; Fred Weisz, bass.

From unreleased out takes of *bluegrass*, Red Allen, Frank Wakefield, and the Kentuckians, Folkways 2408 (1964)

An unissued Frank Wakefield instrumental from the first session. Pete Kuykendall points out that the melody is basically that of Hank Snow's "When the Gold Rush Is Over." This is a propulsive tune with blistering mandolin and banjo solos. Inspired by the challenge of playing with Red and Frank, Kuykendall's banjo playing during this period, as he recalls, was his personal best.

19. HELLO CITY LIMITS

Red Allen, vocal and guitar; Harley Allen, vocal and guitar; Greg Allen, vocal; Vassar Clements, fiddle; Marty Stuart, mandolin; John Farmer, banjo; Terry Smith, bass.

From *Red Allen Family and Friends*, Red Allen with Vassar Clements, Marty Stuart, others Folkways 31088 (1981)

A re-recording of a fine bluegrass song Red originally cut for Melodeon, a small, independent label known for traditional jazz. While not as strong as the original – which had the great Chubby Wise on fiddle – dad and sons Harley and Greg execute a nice trio. This all-star band, especially banjoist John Farmer, keeps things moving.

20. VICTIM TO THE TOMB

Red Allen, vocal and guitar; Harley Allen, vocal and guitar; Kathy Chiavola, vocal; Vassar Clements, fiddle; Marty Stuart, mandolin; Mike Lilly, banjo; Larry Nager, bass.

From *The Red Allen Tradition*, Folkways 31097 (1983)

This eloquent song penned by the late John Duffey and recorded by The Country Gentlemen for Folkways showcases Red in a nice trio setting capped by Kathy Chiavola's high baritone. Harley Allen sings the third part.

21. ARE YOU TEASING ME?

Red Allen, vocal and guitar; Buddy Griffin, fiddle; Jerry Butler, vocal and mandolin; Danny Milhoun, dobro; Greg Allen, vocal and banjo; Larry Nager, bass.

From *Live and Let Live*, Red Allen and the Kentuckians, Folkways 31065 (1979)

Although written by Ira and Charlie Louvin, this song was a hit for Carl Smith in 1952. Red often absorbed popular country songs from the 1930s through the 1950s and successfully gave them bluegrass interpretations. The band heard here exemplifies Red's Kentuckians during the later Dayton years, when he drew largely from among players who were identified with regional bluegrass. Performers such as Jerry Butler and Buddy Griffin from West Virginia and Danny Milhoun from Ohio, represent this neglected facet of the music.

22. MY SWEET LOVE AIN'T AROUND

Red Allen, vocal and guitar; Vassar Clements, fiddle; Marty Stuart, mandolin; John McEuen, banjo; Gary Scruggs, harmonica; Terry Smith, bass.

From *Red Allen Family and Friends*, Red Allen with Vassar Clements, Marty Stuart, others Folkways 31088 (1981)

Red's approach to this moody Hank Williams song reveals the depth of his art. The lyrics demand insight and sensitivity: Listen to the rain a-falling/Can't you hear the lonesome sound Oh, my poor heart is breaking/'Cause my sweet love ain't around. Red weaves a seductive spell each time he hits the word "around," which becomes more dangerous and menacing with each utterance. Many singers are unable to capture imagery of this nature, let alone convey it, but this is Red Allen – confronting and grasping something which is very personal to him.

23. DIG A HOLE IN THE MEADOW

Red Allen, vocal and guitar; Harley Allen, vocal and guitar; Greg Allen, vocal; Vassar Clements, fiddle; Marty Stuart, mandolin; John Farmer, banjo; Terry Smith, bass.

From *Red Allen Family and Friends*, Red Allen with Vassar Clements, Marty Stuart, others Folkways 31088 (1981)

This spirited selection is Red's take on the Flatt & Scruggs version of the traditional "Darling Cora." Red knew their entire repertoire and had the opportunity to fill in for Flatt at appearances in Carnegie Hall and on a tour of Japan.

24. I'M WAITING TO HEAR YOU CALL ME DARLING

Red Allen, vocal and guitar; Curley Seckler, vocal; Harley Allen, vocal and guitar; Tater Tate, fiddle; Marty Stuart, mandolin; Kenny Ingram, banjo; Gene Wooten, dobro; Pete Corum, bass.

From *In Memory of the Man: Dedicated to Lester Flatt*, Red Allen, Harley Allen, and Curley Seckler Folkways 31073 (1980)

Another song from the Flatt & Scruggs repertoire. Curley Seckler's presence lends authenticity; his Flatt & Scruggs tenure covered the glory days of the group. Seckler reprises the tenor he provided on the original. The only missing ingredient is the mandolin solo he played on the Flatt & Scruggs recording. Marty

Stuart, who would soon become a major country star, plays mandolin. Harley Allen's high baritone is prominent. With Tater Tate, Kenny Ingram, Gene Wooten, and Pete Corum, all consummate re-creators of the Foggy Mountain Boys.

25. STONE WALL

Red Allen, vocal and guitar; Harley Allen, vocal and guitar; Greg Allen, vocal; Vassar Clements, fiddle; Marty Stuart, mandolin; John Farmer, banjo; Terry Smith, bass.

From *Red Allen Family and Friends*, Red Allen with Vassar Clements, Marty Stuart, others Folkways 31088 (1981)

A nice rendition of a song associated with Hylo Brown, who was a highly popular performer in the 1950s and 1960s, with Vassar Clements at his audacious best and Harley's high harmony standing out. Of the Allen sons, it is Harley who has opted to carry the mantle of the Allen tradition. He has done so with distinction.

26. TROUBLES AROUND MY DOOR

Red Allen, vocal and guitar; Buddy Griffin, fiddle; Jerry Butler, mandolin; Danny Milboun, dobro; Greg Allen, banjo; Larry Nager, bass.

From *Live and Let Live*, Red Allen and the Kentuckians, Folkways 31065 (1979)

Red Allen was an excellent songwriter, and "Teardrops in My Eyes" and "My Aching Heart," from the Osborne Brothers period, are two sterling examples of his craft. "Troubles Around My Door" was first recorded for Starday in 1959 with Frank Wakefield, Don Reno, Chubby Wise, and Junior Huskey.

27. I GUESS I'LL GO ON DREAMING

Red Allen, vocal and guitar; Harley Allen, vocal and guitar; Greg Allen, vocal; Vassar Clements, fiddle; Marty Stuart, mandolin; John Farmer, banjo; Terry Smith, bass.

From *Red Allen Family and Friends*, Red Allen with Vassar Clements, Marty Stuart, others Folkways 31088 (1981)

Walter Bailes is associated with the gospel tradition, and his many fine songs include "Dust on the Bible" and "Give Mother My Crown." However, the Bailes Brothers also wrote and recorded a number of secular songs. "I Guess I'll Go On Dreaming" was recorded in the 1940s at their second session for Columbia. Red

learned it from the 1950s Kitty Wells recording. He had successfully appropriated other Kitty Wells songs and was later to possess her beautiful Martin D-28.

28. CHRISTIAN LIFE

Red Allen, vocal and guitar; Buddy Griffin, vocal and fiddle; Jerry Butler, vocal and mandolin; Danny Milboun, dobro; Greg Allen, vocal and banjo; Larry Nager, bass.

From *Live and Let Live*, Red Allen and the Kentuckians, Folkways 31065 (1979)

This Louvin Brothers song provides a meaningful conclusion to the Folkways collection. It is the profound optimism of songs such as this which prevented Red Allen from being defeated by inner conflicts and despair. When the final chord decays, there is a sense of resolution in which the man's spirit emerges victorious.

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The author gratefully acknowledges the above sources. The essential publication for this music is: *Bluegrass Unlimited*, P.O. Box 111, Broad Run, Virginia 20137.

SELECTED DISCOGRAPHY

The Osborne Brothers: 1956-1968. Bear Family Records BCD-15598 DI. This four-CD set contains all of the MGM recordings Red Allen made with the Osborne Brothers. The expense of this German issue might deter some buyers, but this beautifully documented set is essential listening. Red's solos and the incomparable trios are timeless testaments to the music.

Red Allen and Frank Wakefield. *The Kitchen Tapes*, Acoustic Disc ACD-11. A major document. The recordings were made at Mr. Allen's home in Hyattsville, Maryland, April 11, 1963, by David Grisman and Peter Siegel, and capture the duo in a relaxed setting. It previews some of the material later to be included in the 1964 Folkways release.

Red Allen, *Bluegrass Reunion*. Acoustic Disc ACD-4. Valuable as Red's final recording. An all-star session featured Jim Buchanan, Herb Pedersen, James Kerwin, and the late Jerry Garcia.

Red Allen, Volume 1. Rebel 1127. This set contains material from the Melodeon album, *The Solid Bluegrass Sound of the Kentuckians*, MLP-7325. It features the Yates Brothers, Bill Emerson, Tom Morgan, and Chubby Wise on one cut. This also has some of the Rebel material, including the chilling "Close By." Interestingly,

bluegrass has not had that many recordings which fully capture the music's intensity. Some cuts by Bill Monroe, the Stanley Brothers, Buzz Busby, Jimmy Williams, and Red Ellis come to mind, but they are surprisingly few. Red's recording of Bill Monroe's "Close By" defines this spirit.

Red Allen, Volume 2. Rebel 1128. Volume 2 has all the material and one unissued cut from Red's County albums: *Bluegrass Country* (County 704) and *Red Allen and the Kentuckians* (County 710). Some of Red's most inspired singing and high-level support from the likes of David Grisman, Porter Church, Craig Wingfield, and Jerry McCoury.

All of the above are available on compact disc. The listings below are LPs.

The earliest Red Allen recordings, cut for the mail-order Kentucky label, may be found on Rounder's *Early Days of Bluegrass, Volume 2* (1014), which also includes Frank Wakefield's original recording of "New Camptown Races." The material with J.D. Crowe and Doyle Lawson is available as *J.D. Crowe's Bluegrass Holiday* (Rebel 1598), on cassette. Other recordings include a few albums for the King Bluegrass label. These have their moments, but on a whole do not measure up to Mr. Allen's work listed above. His appearances on other discs include David Grisman's *Home Is Where the Heart Is* (Rounder 0251), a superb "Little Birdie" on the *Rebel Records 35th Anniversary* (Rebel 4000), and some inspired singing on *The Gravesdigger* (Heritage HBC-CD637) by Ron Mesing, who was one of Red's Kentuckians during the later years. Frank Wakefield has recorded with various groups on Rounder, Vanguard, Silver Belle, Flying Fish, Round, Old Homestead, Takoma, Rosewood, Acoustic Disc, and Patuxent. All of these recordings are worth searching out for his exploratory mandolin playing.

There are many unissued Allen and Wakefield tracks, including some from the radio shows from WDON that present the duo and the Kentuckians at their best. Additional sessions referred to earlier and recorded by Mr. Kuykendall remain "in the vault." Other gems include an Allen/Wakefield reunion session with a group which included Don Stover and Kenny Kosek. The legacy is rich; may it reverberate throughout the 21st century.

A listing of Allen's Folkways releases can be found in the song annotations.

CREDITS

Produced and annotated by Mark Yacovone

Introduction by Jon Weisberger

Cover photo: Keith Russell courtesy of Tom Morgan.

Photos: Ronald Clyne; Harry McNeil; Keith Russell - courtesy of Peter Kuykendall and Tom Morgan.

bluegrass - side A (Folkways 2408) recorded at Wynwood Studios, Falls Church, VA, September 1963.

Engineer: Peter Kuykendall (tracks 1, 2, 4, 6, 8, 12, 13, 15, 17, 18)

bluegrass - side B (Folkways 2408) recorded at Cue Recordings, 117 West 46th Street, New York, NY, Spring 1964. Producers: David Grisman and Peter Siegel (tracks 3, 5, 7, 9, 10, 11, 14, 16)

Live and Let Live, Red Allen and the Kentuckians (Folkways 31065) was recorded at Jack Casey Studios, Columbus, OH, Spring 1978

In Memory of the Man - Dedicated to Lester Flatt, Red Allen (Folkways 31073) recorded at Scruggs' Sound Studios, Nashville, TN, October 1979. Engineer: Steve Scruggs, Producer: Red Allen

Red Allen Family and Friends (Folkways 31088) recorded at Scruggs' Sound Studios Nashville, TN, January and April 1981. Engineer: Steve Scruggs, Producer: Red Allen

The Red Allen Tradition, (Folkways 31097) recorded at Vassar's Studio, Nashville, TN, Spring 1982.
Engineer: Frank Evans, Producer: Red Allen

Smithsonian Folkways production supervised by Daniel Sheehy and D.A. Sonneborn

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Mark Yacovone is Director of National Productions at public radio station WDUQ, Duquesne University, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. His projects include The National Heritage Fellowships Concert and The Lowell Folk Festival.

ABOUT SMITHSONIAN FOLKWAYS

Folkways Records was founded by Moses Asch in 1948 to document music, spoken word, instruction, and sounds from around the world. In the ensuing decades, New York City- based Folkways became one of the largest independent record labels in the world, reaching a total of nearly 2,200 albums that were always kept in print.

The Smithsonian Institution acquired Folkways from the Moses Asch estate in 1987 to ensure that the sounds and genius of the artists would be preserved for future generations. All Folkways recordings are available by special order on high-quality audio cassettes or CDs. Each recording includes the original LP liner notes.

Smithsonian Folkways Recordings was formed to continue the Folkways tradition of releasing significant recordings with high-quality documentation. It produces new titles, reissues of historic recordings from Folkways and other record labels, and in collaboration with other companies also produces instructional videotapes and recordings to accompany published books and other educational projects.

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For further information about all the labels distributed through the Center, please consult our Internet site (www.si.edu/folkways), which includes information about recent releases, our catalogue, and a database of the approximately 35,000 tracks from the more than 2,300 available recordings (click on **database search**). To request a printed catalogue write to the address above or e-mail folkways@aol.com