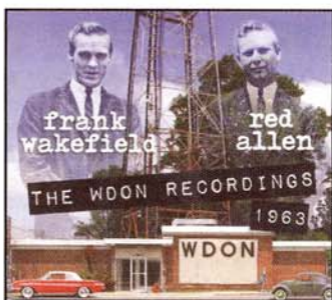


FRANK WAKEFIELD AND RED ALLEN
THE WDON RECORDINGS, 1963

Patuxent Music
CD-258



In 1960, mandolinist Frank Wakefield moved from Kentucky to Maryland. A few months later, vocalist/guitarist Red Allen did the same, and the two resumed their musical association. Their group was eventually filled out by, as is heard on this recording, banjoist Pete Kuykendall and bassist Tom Morgan. Work in local venues and a regular radio show on Maryland station WDon followed.

The 22 tracks on this excellent CD are not as the title sort of implies "live" performances taken from that WDon show, but are in fact recordings made in Kuykendall's home studio in 1963 and aired as their weekly show. Moreover, all the introductions and between-song patter have been cut, leaving us with what sounds more like a small studio recording of the period—one slightly over-driven, slightly muffled, and yet shouts *classic* from start to finish.

Most of the songs here are not found on other Allen or Wakefield or Allen/Wakefield recordings. Four of them, "Deep Elem Blues," "Somebody Loves You Darling," "Old Joe Clark," and "I Guess I'll Go On Dreaming," did later appear on Allen/Wakefield's Folkways F-2408 recorded a year or so later with the same band, but the rest seem to be one-offs. According to an interview with surviving bandmembers, the songs recorded were selected on the spot from memory and from Bill Clifton's songbook. They include such classic standards as "Give Me The Flowers While I'm Living," "I'm Blue And Lonesome," and "Little Rosewood Casket," along with songs then outside the bluegrass canon, such as "Pistol Packin' Mama," Bob Wills' "I Wonder If You Feel The Way I Do," and Vern Gosdin's "Don't Laugh." Highlighted by Allen's powerful and emotional singing, Wakefield's vibrant and emerging personal approach to the mandolin, and by Kuykendall's tuneful banjo solos, few recordings can capture the beauty and spirit of that era any better than this one. (Patuxent Music, P.O. Box 572, Rockville, MD 20848, www.pxrec.com.)BW