

## Alvis Edgar 'Buck' Owens

Alvis Edgar 'Buck' Owens was born August 12, 1929 in Sherman, Texas, the eldest son of A. E. and Maicie Azel Ellington Owens, and passed away at his ranch just north of Bakersfield, California, on March 25, 2006, at the age of 76 of heart failure.

A true child of the Dust Bowl, Buck's family worked as Texas sharecroppers with just the bare necessities and few frills except for music. "As long as I can remember," he once recalled, "we always had a piano around the house. And Mama would sit and play all the old hymns and we'd sing with her." A trip to California in 1937 ended in Phoenix where, eventually, the Owens family settled in Mesa, Arizona.

Married in 1948 to Bonnie Campbell, the two became parents with the arrival of



sons Alan Edgar (Buddy) and Michael Lynn.

Buck moved his young family to Bakersfield in 1951, close enough to Los Angeles for him to find work as a studio musician by day and still play the legendary Bakersfield honky-tonks at night. In 1956 Buck married Phyllis Buford with whom he had a son, Johnny Dale.

In 1957, just two weeks after Buck's 28th birthday, he was signed to Capitol Records by producer Ken Nelson and began a quick rise to stardom via a torrent of releases on the label. Starting in 1963, Buck had a string of 26 consecutive number one records. Buck was named Capitol Records Artist of the Decade concurrent with the placement of his star on the Hollywood Walk of Fame.

In 1963, Buck started his first of many media ventures, which included radio, television and print publications. He hosted his own nationwide television show "Buck Owens' Ranch" from 1966 to 1973, and later co-hosted the enormous ever-popular television series, "Hee Haw", from 1969 to 1986.

Following the death of his friend and lead guitarist Don Rich in 1974, Buck concentrated his efforts on his radio stations in Bakersfield and Phoenix, and married the former Jennifer Smith in 1979. He was inducted into the Country Music Hall of Fame and received The Academy of Country Music Pioneer Award. About that time, he fulfilled a long-time dream with the opening of the Crystal Palace museum and restaurant in Bakersfield.

Buck's influence on country music can be heard in today's young crop of stars. Dwight Yoakam, Brad Paisley, Marty Stuart and countless others carried his torch and introduced his music to new generations.

Buck Owens was preceded in death by his father A.E. 'Dad' Owens; mother Maicie; brother Melvin Owens; and sisters Mary McKinney and Dorothy Owens. He leaves behind to cherish his memory his son Buddy and wife Katy; son Michael and wife Kristin; and son John. Seven grandchildren: Paul, Doug, Amy, Jennifer, Brent, Demi, and Corbet. Three great grandchildren: Macy, Jake and Hailee. Nephew Mel Owens Jr. and wife Diana; nephew Larry Owens and wife Jan, niece Sandra Petty and husband Nathan, niece Nita Agee and husband Ray, niece Raejean McKinney, nephew Keith McKinney and wife Gaile, and niece Kim Owens. Also grieving are numerous great nephews and nieces, countless friends and millions of admirers and fans worldwide.

A public visitation at the Crystal Palace will be held Saturday, April 1, from 10 a.m. until 6 p.m. There will be a public funeral service on Sunday, April 2, at 2 p.m. at Valley Baptist Church, 4800 Fruitvale Avenue.

By Buck's wishes, and in lieu of flowers, the family asks that you consider a donation in Buck's name to the S.P.C.A., 3000 Gibson, Bakersfield, California 93308

Often at the end of an interview, Buck was asked how he'd like to be remembered. He said, "I'd like to be remembered as a guy that came along, did his music, did his best and showed up on time, clean and ready to do the job, wrote a few songs and had a hell of a time".