

Musician Buck Rambo Leaves Gospel Music Legacy

Richard Fay “Buck” Rambo, patriarch of the Southern gospel music family The Rambos, died Feb. 21 in Palmetto, Florida, surrounded by his wife and family members. He was 84.

With a career that spanned 60 years, Rambo played a significant role in Christian music. He was one of the first board members of the Gospel Music Association and a founding father of the Gospel Music Hall of Fame. In the early 1960s, he was also a member of the board for the National Quartet Convention.

Rambo was born in Dawson Springs, Kentucky, son of Noah Burton Rambo and Mary Irisilda Rambo. He became a Christian in 1949, entered full-time ministry in 1954 and married Mae Kutz in 1995.

He founded the group The Gospel Echoes, which later became The Singing Rambos, in 1960.

In the early 1990s, The Rambos disbanded, but Rambo ministered with his wife for the next several years singing in church concerts and serving as a missionary in many countries. In retirement, he visited hospitals and nursing homes praying for the sick and painting stills. He toured occasionally with Rambo McGuire and was a featured soloist on multiple projects.

In 1964, Rambo sang for over a million people at the first Washington for Jesus Rally. He also appeared on the first Gaither Homecoming Video and received numerous Grammy and Dove Award nominations. He is also the author of *The Legacy of Buck & Dottie Rambo*.

The Rambos were asked to go to the Strategic Air Command Bases

in 1966 and went on a six-week tour of northern outposts in Greenland, Newfoundland, Labrador and Iceland, entertaining American troops. In February 1967, because of the tremendous response to the Arctic Tour, they embarked on a six-week tour to Vietnam to sing for the U.S. military forces there. They also participated in concert tours for the military several times in Europe and ministered in many countries doing live concerts and television, including a concert with the Holland Symphony where they sang for 350,000 people.

In 1968, The Singing Rambos began working in television. They were a huge part of the early beginnings of *The 700 Club*, PTL, TBN and the *Gospel Singing Jubilee*, a weekly television show featuring gospel singing groups. With over 70 projects, The Rambos became a household name in the U.S., Central America, the Bahamas and Europe.

Rambo's zeal for God and the ministry led him to mentor many artists in every facet of the industry.

His wife eulogized him.

"Today the greatest man on Earth passed from this life to his heavenly home to touch the face of God," she said. "Buck had the most amazing time walking through this life on Earth, but he is now celebrating in the light and presence of our Lord. While he was preparing to leave this world, he could indeed say, 'It is well with my soul.' Buck had a huge heart, and when it stopped beating, it broke ours. I know with time that my memories will bring a smile more quickly than tears, and I was honored and blessed to be his wife for almost 21 years."

Rambo is survived by his wife; daughter Reba Rambo (Dony) McGuire; grandchildren Israel Anthem McGuire, Destiny Rambo McGuire, Dionne (Scott) Dismuke and Dyson Dismuke; sister Hilda Bullock; brothers Donald (Betty) Rambo and Jackie (Shirley) Rambo; sister-in-law Anna Jo Rambo; and brother-in-law James Aussenbaugh.