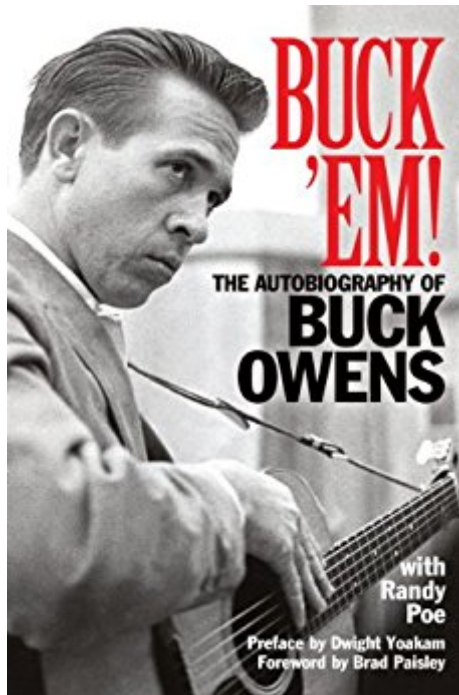


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# Buck 'Em!: The Autobiography Of Buck Owens



## Synopsis

(Book). Buck 'Em! The Autobiography of Buck Owens is the life story of a country music legend. Born in Texas and raised in Arizona, Buck eventually found his way to Bakersfield, California. Unlike the vast majority of country singers, songwriters, and musicians who made their fortunes working and living in Nashville, the often rebellious and always independent Owens chose to create his own brand of country music some 2,000 miles away from Music City racking up a remarkable twenty-one number one hits along the way. In the process he helped give birth to a new country sound and did more than any other individual to establish Bakersfield as a country music center. In the latter half of the 1990s, Buck began working on his autobiography. Over the next few years, he talked into the microphone of a cassette tape machine for nearly one hundred hours, recording the story of his life. With his near-photographic memory, Buck recalled everything from his early days wearing hand-me-down clothes in Texas to his glory years as the biggest country star of the 1960s; from his legendary Carnegie Hall concert to his multiple failed marriages; from his hilarious exploits on the road to the tragic loss of his musical partner and best friend, Don Rich; from his days as the host of a local TV show in Tacoma, Washington, to his co-hosting the network television show Hee Haw ; and from his comeback hit, "Streets of Bakersfield," to his induction into the Country Music Hall of Fame. In these pages, Buck also shows his astute business acumen, having been among the first country artists to create his own music publishing company. He also tells of negotiating the return of all of his Capitol master recordings, his acquisition of numerous radio stations, and of his conceiving and building the Crystal Palace, one of the most venerated musical venues in the country. Buck 'Em! is the fascinating story of the life of country superstar Buck Owens from the back roads of Texas to the streets of Bakersfield.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

Buck 'Em by Buck Owens and Randy Poe is a Backbeat Books/ Hal Leonard Corporation publication released on November 1st, 2013. I received a copy of this book from the publisher and Netgalley in exchange for an honest review. This book is an autobiography told in first person by Buck Owens via cassette tapes he had recorded prior to his death in 2006. Randy Poe went through these tapes that were not in any order apparently. Buck had recorded events as he thought of them and so Randy Poe had quite a job getting these tapes organized for this book. He did an outstanding job. The book starts out with Buck's early life, how he came up with the name "Buck", which was not his given name. His very humble beginnings, his first musical instrument, how he became a vocalist, and his first marriage at a very young age. Buck played in the "hole in wall" honky tonks and worked as a disc jockey. "Man, it was a lot of fun to be a disc jockey in those days. There was no music director, no program director- there was nobody around to tell you what to play or when to play it. Nobody talked demographics or ratings or any of that %&\*@ that's completely taken over radio today. I could play my favorite records the whole shift. I spun records I liked that I thought the listeners would like, too. There were no rules, and I loved it." Buck's career wasn't the overnight success type story. His career was a slow, steady climb. He didn't always follow the rules and some in the music industry didn't like that. The Nashville establishment wasn't who Buck was concerned about. He cared about the fans who were the ones buying the records. He wanted the fans to know he would stay loyal to them and his type of music.

I am the kind of fan that Buck Owens feared. Perhaps feared is the wrong word. I don't think Buck Owens feared much. But when Buck Owens crossed over from a country music songwriter and recording artist to a TV celebrity as co-host of "HeeHaw," he was concerned that overexposure might impact the public's perception of his artistry. He was right. I knew of Buck Owens back in the 60's, when his crossover country hits found a spot on the Top 40 chart, where The Beatles and The

Beach Boys played. Everybody got a kick out of "Tiger by the Tail." And "Together Again" found forever within my own list of personal favorites. But the essence of my perception of Buck Owens came from who and what he was on "HeeHaw," a seemingly happy country singer-turned-part-comedian with the energy and appeal for TV. But even years after "HeeHaw" I was still unaware of Don Rich, and the story of Don and Buck and The Buckaroos and the amazing run they had as country music artists the entire decade of the 60's. But all that changed in 2003 when I saw an old episode of "The Buck Owens Ranch Show," an early version of "HeeHaw" produced and syndicated out of Oklahoma City. "Who is that guy?" I said to myself seeing Don Rich standing next to Buck singing. Don had a twinkle in his eye and an infectious smile on his face. Grinnin' and-a-pickin' that lead guitar. Together the two of them emitted a vocal blend I'd heard before -- but never heard like this. The joy and beauty in their harmony seemed the audio equivalent of a rainbow. It was seeing them, as well as hearing them that seemed to make a difference. There was so much fun between them. From there, my desire to know more about Buck before "HeeHaw" snowballed.

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