

= Bud Dunn =

Emerson " Bud " Dunn (May 15 , 1918 ? January 11 , 2001) was a Tennessee Walking Horse trainer from Kentucky who spent most of his career in northern Alabama . He trained horses for over forty years and won his first Tennessee Walking Horse World Grand Championship at age 74 with the horse Dark Spirit 's Rebel ; at the time , he was the oldest rider ever to win the honor . He was inducted into the Tennessee Walking Horse Hall of Fame in 1987 and was named trainer of the year twice , in 1980 and again in 1991 . At age 81 , in 1999 , Dunn won his second World Grand Championship on RPM , making him the oldest winning rider for the second time .

His son Steve was also a successful trainer who matched his father 's record . Bud and Steve Dunn remain the only father and son to win World Grand Championships within their breed . Dunn died of a heart attack in January 2001 .

= = Life and death = =

Dunn was born Emerson Dunn on May 15 , 1918 in Scott County , Kentucky , near Lexington , to Lucius Dunn and Sadie Burgess Dunn . He grew up on his family 's farm and was involved with horses from a young age . He moved to northwest Alabama in the 1950s . He and his wife Elaine (née Lewis) had three children , Billie Ann , David and Steve . Steve Dunn also became a successful horse trainer . Dunn died on January 11 , 2001 at the age of 82 , following two heart attacks brought about by complications from knee replacement surgery . He was buried in Oakwood Cemetery , Sheffield , Alabama .

Steve Dunn himself won two World Grand Championships , the first before his father won one . Steve Dunn 's winning horses were Motown Magic in 1989 , and Out On Parole in 2002 . Bud and Steve Dunn remain the only father and son to win World Grand Championships . When Bud won his first World Grand Championship in 1992 , three years after Steve 's first , Steve said , " I think him winning meant more to me than when I won it . " Bud Dunn said of his partnership with Steve , " I always wanted him to work out here . But ain 't many fathers and sons ever got along that long . "

= = Career = =

Dunn began training horses in his teens , and began training Tennessee Walking Horses specifically in 1951 . He participated in the Tennessee Walking Horse National Celebration almost every year for 50 years , beginning in 1950 , and at one time was so popular he signed autographs for several hours before performances . In total , he personally showed 108 horses at the Celebration over the years , not counting an estimated several hundred others that were trained by him and shown by other riders . Dunn 's training facility , Bud Dunn Stables (later Bud Dunn & Son) were located in Florence , Alabama and covered ten acres . At one point in the mid @-@ 1980s , Dunn had over 50 horses in training .

Dunn was given the Trainer of the Year award for the first time in 1980 , by the Professional Walking Horse Trainers Organization . He trained Tennessee Walking Horses for over 40 years , and during his career won two World Grand Championships , with the horses Dark Spirit 's Rebel and RPM , and 20 World Championships with various other horses . In 1991 Dunn was again named the Tennessee Walking Horse trainer of the year by his fellow trainers for consistently showing and training top @-@ quality horses . He was twice the oldest rider ever to win the World Grand Championship , which he did for the first time at age 74 . He also judged Tennessee Walking Horse shows . In 1987 , he was inducted into the Tennessee Walking Horse Hall of Fame .

= = = Notable horses = = =

Dunn trained the bay stallion Dark Spirit 's Rebel to a World Grand Championship in 1992 . Dunn had been training for 42 years and was 74 years old , making him the oldest trainer ever to win the class . The competition was held in front of a record crowd of 28 @,@ 000 . " Rebel " was the

favorite horse going into the competition , out of a field of 13 , and the team of Dunn and the stallion was said to be the most popular in Celebration history . Dunn said after the win , " I 've been coming to the Celebration since 1950 and I 've never seen anything like it . That made it twice as good . It 's nice to know that I 've got that many friends and supporters . "

Dunn 's second World Grand Champion was RPM , a son of Dark Spirit 's Rebel . RPM won the Reserve World Grand Championship at the 1998 Celebration and Dunn had hopes of winning first the next year . In 1999 the horse was sold to L R & N Partners , LLC for \$ 1 @. @ 25 million . The new owners moved RPM to trainer Sammy Day 's stable in Shelbyville , Tennessee with the intention of entering him in the Celebration . Shortly before the Celebration , Day was convicted of bribing a judge , fined , and put on a five @-@ year suspension . Dunn was given the task of riding RPM in the show , and won the World Grand Championship . Dunn was 81 , making him the oldest rider ever to win the class for the second time , and breaking his earlier record .