

Robert Sloan Buff III!

LINCOLNTON, N.C. — Robert Sloan Buff III, (Robby) age 66, of 318 W. Sycamore Street in Lincolnton, passed away on Tuesday, December 9, 2025.

He was born March 27, 1959, in Gaston County, to Penelope Hoyle Buff and the late Robert Sloan Buff II. A Cherryville native, he completed his high school education at Cherryville High School and pursued music studies at Gaston College. He retired from the City of Lincolnton after 30 years.

Robby is survived by his beloved wife, Donna Shelton Buff, the love of his life and his confidante, who was his partner through nearly forty years of his life's journey. He is also survived by his daughter, Taylor Shelton of Lincolnton; mother, Penelope Buff of Cherryville; brother Chris Buff (Crystal) of Cherryville; sisters, Lara Britton (Jeff) of Cherryville, and Andrea Armstrong (Arnold) of Dallas, NC; grandchildren, Olivia and Ozlynn, and recent additions to his Papa list, Blake and Cole. He is lovingly known as Uncle Robby for many dear nieces and nephews, whom he loved greatly, including Heather, Trey, Sloan, Meggie, Brittany, Bethany, Lainie, Jarod, Amber, Chris, Trent, Aubrey, Gracie, Ayden, Brynlee, Jude, Stefan, Julian, Bohdi, Emery, Sutton, Tenley, Beckett, Sailor, Navy, Piper, Ford, Kelly, Zack, Donnie, Maggie and Josie.

Robby was a well-known musician throughout North Carolina, having played guitar and bass since he was 13. Over the years, he performed with countless bands and was an influence on generations of musicians. Known for his unrelenting commitment to perfection and his professional approach to every rehearsal and performance, he set a standard that others aspired to. While celebrated primarily as a bass player, he was also highly regarded for his talent on keyboards and synthesizers and as a vocalist - skills he showcased in the Rush tribute band Red Barchetta. Beyond performing, he generously volunteered as a musician for various local theatre productions with the high school, theatre guild and even tried his hand at a few acting roles. He also spent countless hours with his granddaughter, Olivia, sharing his love of music and teaching her drums and keyboard – she was his pride and joy and they shared a special, unbreakable bond.

He was a dedicated coach who poured his heart into youth sports and was proud to have coached many of his nieces and nephews. Over the years, he coached Pop Warner football, Little League baseball, Dixie Youth Softball, Lincolnton Wolves High School Softball, and spent many years as a travel softball coach for the Denver Dazzle and the CV Storm. Most significantly, he spent countless hours on the diamond and pitching mound with his cherished daughter, Taylor, who went on to pitch in college. He was passionate about working with young people, always encouraging them to give 100% and to take the same lessons of effort and resilience into everyday life.

He retired after nearly 30 years with the City of Lincolnton, including many years as Assistant Director of Public Works. A true steward of his beloved city, he was known for being tough but fair, and for his loyalty and dedication to those he led.

A proud member of the Sons of the American Revolution, Catawba Valley Chapter, he was deeply committed to the principles of American freedom, dedicating many hours to preserving and sharing the history of the American Revolution, particularly the Southern Campaign and the Battle of Ramseur’s Mill.

Robby Buff cherished his family, his dogs, his friends, and the connections he built throughout his life, living with passion and generosity. He touched the lives of everyone who knew him and will be deeply missed by many.

His funeral service will be held at Pisgah Methodist Church in Lincolnton with Pastor Justin Scoggins officiating. Receiving friends will be Monday evening from December 15, 2025 from 5-9 p.m. The funeral service will be held at 2 p.m. on Tuesday, December 16, 2025 in the sanctuary and the burial will follow in the Pisgah Methodist Church Cemetery.

Warlick Funeral Home of Lincolnton, N.C. is serving the Buff family.