

CH Bella Marietta

RETIREMENT CEREMONY

CH Bella Marietta needs no introduction to the show ring. A daughter of The New York Times and out of the WCC show pleasure mare, Marie Stonewall, CH Bella Marietta would begin her career in the state of Illinois under the direction of Dick Obenouf. She was bred and raised by Claudia Gardner Sipp who exhibited her in the show pleasure division for the first 14 years of her life. Together they earned an impressive record with wins at shows like St Louis National, Midwest Charity, Mid-America Mane Event, and Des Moines Springfest. Jenny Hackforth-Jones would take over in 2010 and they would be paired through the Worlds Championship Horse Show in 2011.

Jenny writes: "Dear Rich family, I am delighted to hear that our girl is getting a splendid send off, she was very special for me and created some extraordinary, wonderful memories. She truly is a once in a lifetime horse with her style and beauty and her wonderful work ethic. She was the consummate professional and clearly loved to show. To hear that Katie has had so much success with this special mare has been so rewarding and it is wonderful that you are giving her a forever home. I hope I can come and visit if I am down your way."

It was after that show with Jenny that she would be sold to Victoria McHenry of New Orleans and found her new home in Louisiana under the Cascade Stables banner.

Barbe Smith recalls: "Vicki had just lost her horse and we were looking for something that would carry her and build her confidence. We found her at Louisville and within minutes we knew she would be coming home with us." Just 5 months after acquiring Marietta, in January, she would be rushed to LSU hospital. She underwent a major surgery that resulted in the removal of a stomach stone the size of large grapefruit. Barbe adds, "She was off for 60 days and went right back to work as if nothing had happened. I still have her stone that sits on my desk as a reminder of her struggle and her tenacity to get right back up. I have been so happy seeing the success Nicole, Stephanie, Katie and Marietta have had together. I love that mare and am so glad she is getting the retirement she deserves."

Vicki McHenry says: "I can't say enough about Bella Marietta, and every time I try, I get all teary-eyed! Bella came into my life at a time when

I was desperate to ride in horse shows but too terrified to pull it off. I'll never forget our first day together, she was so gracious and sweet, despite being in a brand new environment with a neurotic middle-aged woman hanging on her neck. Bella took me places I'd never been before, we won many ribbons together and I'll never forget her. Letting Bella go was one of the hardest things I've ever done. I remember sitting in the chair at Pin Oak crying like a baby and watching Katie Bug meet her new horse. It was clearly a case of love at first sight for both of them, and I knew I'd lost her. Bella found her true home with the Riches, her last home, her forever home, and I couldn't be happier for her. May you frolic and rest and dance and graze to your heart's content, my sweet girl! Know that I will always treasure our time together!"

Katie Rich and had been riding for 4 years when she had her trial ride and it was clear to all that this horse was not returning to Louisiana. Bella Marietta would be sold to her forever owners, the Rich Family. Success followed the duo to shows like Big D, TASHA, and capped off that year finishing a respectable third in the Walk and Trot National Championship. In 2015 this pair would really get in sync and made a total of 18 victory passes at shows like SASHA, Pin Oak, Big D, and the Cleveland/Chattanooga Charity and placing third at the World Championship Horse Show.

Nicole Foster remarks: "Bella seemingly never had a bad day and gives 100% every time she was called upon. Another of my favorite things about this mare is that she never made it too easy or too hard for Katie and few horses can compare to Bella; her charisma, beauty and work ethic are to be admired."

Stephanie McKinsey adds: "In 2016 the new challenge was for Bella (now age 20) to take Katie into the Equitation ranks. And even though she hated patterns and taking the "wrong" lead, she did it to appease us. Bella would occasionally give us some stink eye, but always did the work anyway."

Sarah Rich says: "Buying Katie's first show horse was a task that seemed really daunting to us. Never did we imagine the wonder that is our Bella. Watching her for the first time brought us to tears and then to see Katie and Bella together in the stall was pure magic. We went to Pin Oak wanting a rescue horse, we left with a horse that changed our



lives forever. We love you Bella and are looking forward to having you at home."

Katie says: "Thank you Bella for teaching me what it means to show, for always being patient with me while I was learning the ropes, and for always giving everything you've got. You are simply the best."

In her career, CH Bella Marietta amassed an incredible 106 Champion and Reserve Champion ribbons, including at the age of 19 winning the Show Pleasure 12 and under Walk and Trot

National Championship and National Grand Championship at the UPHA American Royal Horse Show. In addition to all of the accolades, CH Bella Marietta might best be remembered for making so many dreams come true for each of the four lucky ladies that had the opportunity to show her.

Ladies and gentleman, may I present for the final time in the show ring, a Champion wherever she goes, CH Bella Marietta!