

# The 2016 Year In Review Is Dedicated To FLAIRETATION

BY BOB FUNKHOUSER



The HVK Bell Flaire daughter was described by the two trainers who have had her as "all show horse."



Peggy describes the feeling of driving Flairetation to be like the power of Corvette.

Morgans, Saddlebreds, Hackneys, many of the greats in those breeds come with a quirk (or two). The trainers with patience and the right temperament to see past those quirks, and more importantly have the ability to work with and around those imperfections, are the horsemen and women who make the difference in a horse that comes to the ring just showing potential and a horse coming to the ring loving what it's doing and beating a lot of competitors along the way.

Flairetation is lucky to have had two such trainers in her life. One is Forest Nealon who started her and moved her to the roadster division. The other is Peggy Alderman who has used her experience and taken her time developing "Flo" into the co-owner of the record for all-time World Champion Roadster To Bike titles (6). She'll hopefully have the opportunity to break that tie with Greentree Maryjane this coming October in her final Oklahoma appearance for Alderman.

Bred by George and Glendel Campbell, Flairetation is a daughter of the great multi-world champion HVK Bell Flaire out of the Campbells' former show mare Shadyshadow Satin Jewel, who was by Mantic Batman. Flairetation was her first foal. Satin Jewel also went on to produce Gordel's Deliverance (by Stand And Deliver), George Campbell's Grand National Amateur Masters Park Harness Champion and multi-times reserve world champion.

"Satin had a mind of her own," remembered her trainer Forest Nealon. "Flairetation was always hot but really tried hard at everything. You could say she had difficulty at standing for anything. She has all the heart in the world."

Flairetation's show ring career began as a yearling, winning the Fillies class and Reserve Junior Champion title at Far West Regional with Nealon. Far West would be her second horse show as well. This time Nealon led her to the Two-Year-Old Fillies blue, the Junior Champion tricolor and Reserve Grand Champion Mare honors. Her first trip to Oklahoma resulted in top three finishes in the Grand



Flairetation has six World Champion Roadster To Bike titles to her credit, which leaves her tied with Greentree Maryjane for the all-time record.



*It was Phil who encouraged Peggy to find another road horse when she took some time away from the division to focus on their children.*



*The Morgan mare took on the best Standardbreds in Freedom Hall and came away with a reserve world's champion title.*

National Two-Year-Old Mare and World Champion Futurity In Hand Two-Year-Old Mare classes.

In 2005, Nealon brought her out in harness, winning the Three-Year-Old Pleasure Driving class at Far West. Her only other outing that year would be to win the Three-Year-Old Fillies class at Morgan Medallion. Flo stayed at home her four-year-old year, making only one appearance in an in hand class.

Nealon had the mare's energy channeled in the park harness division to start out her five-year-old year. They won the open class and grand championship at Key Classic and then the open class and reserve grand championship at Far West.

The next time we saw this combination Nealon had traded in his fedora, coat and tie for racing silks. Flairetation was Morgan Medallion's Open Roadster To Bike Champion and reserve grand champion. They tested the waters once that fall at Oklahoma finishing as the Reserve Grand National Champion Roadster To Bike Mare.

"She was awesome as a park harness horse except for the line up," said Nealon. "She would make judges run. It was a lot like Kenny's [Swanson] horse.

"She really didn't want to stand in the line up. All she wanted to do was go on so I moved her to the roadster division and right away she told us that is what she wanted to do. She would get huge going to the ring. To this day you can watch her grow two hands on the way down the chute with Peggy. My first roadster class with her she just wanted to explode. It was the happiest she had ever been."

Flairetation's reserve in that qualifier at Oklahoma with Nealon was the first place Peggy Alderman was introduced to the mare with whom she would make history. Looking for a project she hadn't found what she was looking for when Keith Nelsen told her about a mare he saw on the west coast. The mare's trainer was Forest Nealon who happened to be a good friend of Alderman's so she made arrangements to try her at Oklahoma.

"I'm sitting there with Terri Travers waiting to watch her show and Forest brings her out with six trainers helping," explained Alderman. "She took them three laps around that warm up ring before they got her hooked and these were good hands. She would leap through the air all the way around that place. I fell in love with her right there. Any horse

that could be that smart and have that much grit had what it takes to be a road horse. There was no backing her up. That's what you look for in a road horse.

"They had a few others interested in her but that scene backed them off."

Alderman followed Nealon from the ring and purchased Flairetation. She got her home and went to work. Besides not standing to be hooked, the mare was also very fond of not standing in the line up. She would always take off to the left, always the left and there was no stopping her. "She had more talent on two legs than she did on four," laughed Nealon. "When Peggy first got her she told me everything I did wrong. After she had her for a while, she said, 'I don't know how you did what you did.'"

"I took her to New England in 2008 and she ran off on me," said Alderman. "Ran right through the bridle and I realized I had more to do. She got really big at the show. I had no bridle at all.

"We continued to work for a couple of years and finally got her pattern down, but we still had the line up problem. I remember one class we were trying to stand in the line up and Lynn Peoples is beside me and he yells over, 'Must stand in the line up,' as Larry Bolen is walking up to judge us. If we ever got beat it was a line up problem. I thought to myself, 'This is it, we have to fix this.'

"We had some meetings and some down in the dirt battles. When she wanted to go left I had to correct her. I never let her go left doing anything. It took me from that winter on until 2011 to get it like it should be. It took that long to get it fixed. I was sick of

losing like this because everything else she did was a show horse for sure. She not only has trotting ability, she has wicked show horse ways, so much presence. She's got the whole package."

The first year Alderman and Flo attempted Oklahoma was 2010. Their only other performance that year was a win in the Open Roadster To Bike class at New England. In the open at Grand National they defeated HVK Bold Spirits, CBMF Double Down and FRF Looking Glass. Back in the championship Steve DeBolt and Bold Spirits made the final pass as the world champion with Flairetation in reserve. It would be the last time she would lose a class at Oklahoma to this point and has only lost one Morgan roadster class since that time.



*Flairetation is known to be extremely smart. She is pictured here with Salem Farm assistant Jenna Domanico was teaching her to bow.*



*This is what happens when Flo is allowed to go left in the line up. She scattered a few judges in her career before she and Peggy came to an understanding.*

For six consecutive years now Alderman and Flo have swept the open division at the Morgan Grand National and World Championship Horse Show. They have ruled the ring with the best of combinations – power and presence.

In 2015, after having won the first four of those Morgan world championships, Alderman and Flo also ventured out and made their first trip to the Kentucky State Fair World's Championship Horse Show to take on the best in that world. In the bright lights of Freedom Hall the Morgan was named reserve world's champion in the qualifying mare class and then back in the championship was a good third behind Raymond Shively and Emerson who now hold the all-time record with six world's grand championships. In reserve that night was B-52 with Debbie Foley the world's grand champions in 2016. Among those Flairetation beat in the world's grand championship that night was the noted Chanteur PV and Belle Starr, the horse that beat her in the mare stake.

"I didn't know what to expect," said Alderman. "We compete against Standardbreds all the time here in New England but you just never know until you get there. I had never been to Louisville. I didn't know about the footing and those types of things. I wasn't sure if we were going to be embarrassed and hold up the class or if we would fit in.

"It turned out to be an amazing experience. All week long when I would work her or walk her I would hear people say, 'That's the Morgan.' People came by to see her. She had quite the fan club. I felt really good about the respect she was given."

Getting to this point in the roadster division wasn't an accident for Alderman. While she has and does excel in several performance divisions, she's long had a heart for the roadsters.

"In the '80s I remember Jim Anderson and Abbott Wilson with their roadsters. Abbott gave me a Standardbred to work about the time I was considering making Rake's Progress a road horse. Those two guys taught me a lot.

"I also had UC Tip Top but he was always in Rake's shadow. I did win the stallion/gelding class and a reserve world



*Nothing gives Peggy Alderman joy like sitting behind the six-time world champion.*

championship with him after Rake. I made Weatherwell Celcius a road horse for Murray Gibson at the end of his career. They won the amateur world championship in '91.

"I was looking for a new horse and was judging Oklahoma in '94 and Danny Williams came in with a horse I really liked. About a month later I tracked him down and bought the horse without trying him. That was Trinity Royal Bay. He was really talented but he died before he finished his career. That was about the time I was retiring from public training and was concentrating on my children. I went five or six years without a road horse. Out of nowhere Phil said to me, 'You need a road horse.'"

So, with six world championships between Rake's Progress and Trinity Royal Bay and a passion for the division that was still burning, Alderman found her way to Flairetation. That journey started out painful and slow but like all things that you put that much effort into, it turned out to be extremely rewarding and more fun than you can imagine all the while allowing the big-hearted mare to be who she is.

"There's not a better feeling," exclaimed Alderman. "All that adrenaline is pumping. The hardest thing is to control that adrenaline. It's a challenge not to overdrive. Even if you're tired or not feeling well, you sit behind her and you get a charge. If a horse could pee its pants Flo would pee her pants when we get to a horse show. You just hang on and go with her. It's a really cool feeling like when the power of a Corvette throws you back."

"She's one of a kind: the good, bad and really bad," said Nealon. "Even when she was bad she did it with her ears up. It wasn't like she was being nasty; she was having fun with it. Her heart and attitude are what make her so great. She's 1000% show horse."

2017 will be the final year this grand champion of the tanbark entertains her fans and makes it tough on her competitors. Alderman has one goal left and then it's time for Flo to enjoy the lush pastures of the family's Salem Farm where she will still have a job. That new career will be to provide future generations of show ring stars.



*Forest Nealon was Flairetation's first trainer. He moved her from pleasure driving to park harness to the roadster division and is pictured here winning her first class at Morgan Medallion.*