

Cash Jr.

and the Lovell Legacy

BY BOB FUNKHOUSER



Following his induction into the Carolina Horseman's Hall of Fame, Cash gave Cashlyn a piggyback ride out of the ring. The two were always having fun.



Throughout most of his career Cash could be found on the rail instructing his riders rather than showing himself. One of his favorite sayings was, "You all didn't buy that horse for me to ride."

You heard him before you ever saw him. It was the unmistakable laugh of Cash Jr., a laugh he inherited from his father, along with the love of the horse business. The recent passing of "Little Cash" brought much sadness to legions of American Saddlebred enthusiasts who will never hear that laugh again.

The son of the late Cash Sr. and Marge Lovell and sibling to Tommy Joe, Rodney, and Penni, Cash Jr. was born into a horse loving family that lived and worked in several places across this country before finally settling in the Carolinas. In the early '80s Cash Sr. turned over the family business to his eldest son who was still figuring out life.

"The Lovells moved here shortly after we moved to Norwood [North Carolina] in '62," said Claude Shiflet. "The Lovells were our best friends. We did a lot together and Little Cash worked for me off and on between jobs. He'd go off somewhere for a little while and then be back here. We had the best time together. We had one stretch where I was selling horses left and right. Cash couldn't believe how many we were sending out of here and he just laughed and laughed. He was always full of life and joy and always telling stories.



The 1997 Junior Three-Gaited Over 15.2 World's Champion, The Showstopper was Cash's first Louisville titleholder.

"Later on when he was on his own he was a great competitor. Cash didn't show a lot because he had all of those amateurs and juveniles but when he did show he was very competitive. We wanted to beat each other badly, but when the class was over we had a good time. I'll always miss his laugh."

Cash Jr. started following his dad around the barn and shows as soon as he was old enough to walk. At the age of six he showed for the first time taking reserve at the American Royal in the Parade Pony class. A gaited pony would soon follow.

"Cash would follow his dad everywhere and started going to horse shows when he was about three," said Marge Lovell in an earlier Horse World interview. "His dad would turn him loose and people would call me and say 'Marge he's going to get killed,' but he always survived."

Watching his father and uncle work horses inspired Cash to be a part of the family business. When he was a youngster he had a tough gaited pony named Little Ed. They showed against another youngster named Larry Hodge whose pony also would run off quite often. But then as a teen Cash struggled like most hormone driven young men. Girls, cars, horses. Girls, cars, horses. He had a hard time figuring out his priorities and which direction to go.

"I'd get fired at least one time every week, but dad would hire me back," said Cash in that earlier Horse World interview. "Payday was Friday and I'd be broke by Monday."

With a whole lot of patience Cash Sr. did bring Little Cash along. Just like his dad, Little Cash had a lot of natural talent and when he applied that talent,

good things happened. When Cash Sr. decided to leave the training business to be a full time bit maker the thriving Winston-Salem barn was turned over to Little Cash. He still struggled with staying totally focused on the horses as coon dogs and having fun still occupied a large part of his heart. In the late '80s he met Parker Nash, a news reporter with an Arabian background at the Roanoke Horse Show and his life took another turn. The two were married and she developed a love for the American Saddlebred as well. In fact, she became a part of the Cash Lovell Stables developing an incredible lesson program from which many great customers came.

Cash had a lot of natural talent . . .

When Cash Sr. passed away Little Cash seemed to be more dedicated to his profession but he never lost what made Cash Cash and that was having fun. In the early '90s he trained a gaited pony named Trouble Two to four consecutive five-gaited pony world's titles for Talmadge Hinkle. He would train many champions for Hinkle over the years. There was another customer who had a long and loving relationship and that was Vickie Byrd.

Before moving to Winston-Salem Cash Jr. was working out of a barn in Gibsonville where Johnny Lucas is now located. Not far away Vickie Byrd had her horses and home, and Cash convinced her to send one to him for training, the first of several over a 30-year span. When he left Gibsonville he moved



His love for all things fast came at an early age with this pony.



Vickie Byrd's great mare Jaunty Janette was brought out as a gaited horse by Cash, winning the Junior Five-Gaited Stake at Roanoke.



Cash had a great connection to his amateur and junior exhibitor riders. He is pictured here with Donna Finch.

his operation to her farm for a while. Their crowning glory would be the great gaited mare Jaunty Janette who was trained from the Lovell family's eventual Winston Salem location.

"We had some great times," recalled Byrd. "He was the funniest guy you've ever met. Everywhere you went he attracted a crowd of people. He was like a piper. He had a coin trick that he did for the kids all the time.

"Cash was a simple man, his life was not complicated. Besides people and horses he had three things he just couldn't without: the National Inquirer, Big Red gum and Pepsi."

Byrd also noted that Cash's family was a huge influence in his life. "No one had a better childhood. That was such a great family. I don't know how many times we showed up at his mom's unannounced for lunch. He called her Mom Mo (pronounced Mom Moo) and she would cook and cook and loved to feed everyone. They were such a close family. The Lovell family was a legacy and Cash was the last one in the horse business.

"One of my funniest memories of Cash was this old red van his dad had. They would take the battery out of the tractor and put it in the van to go to the horse shows. They parked it on a hill and rolled it to start it. It didn't have a speedometer or gas gauge. I don't know how they made it anywhere. Another thing about Cash was he always had a dog and Petie was one of his favorites. He would go everywhere with Cash. One time he was in the truck with Cash and actually fell out of the window and Cash didn't know it."

As mentioned earlier Cash had Jaunty Janette for Byrd and the three of them

racked up titles, including Louisville, over and over. Nothing made Cash happier than watching this pair do well.

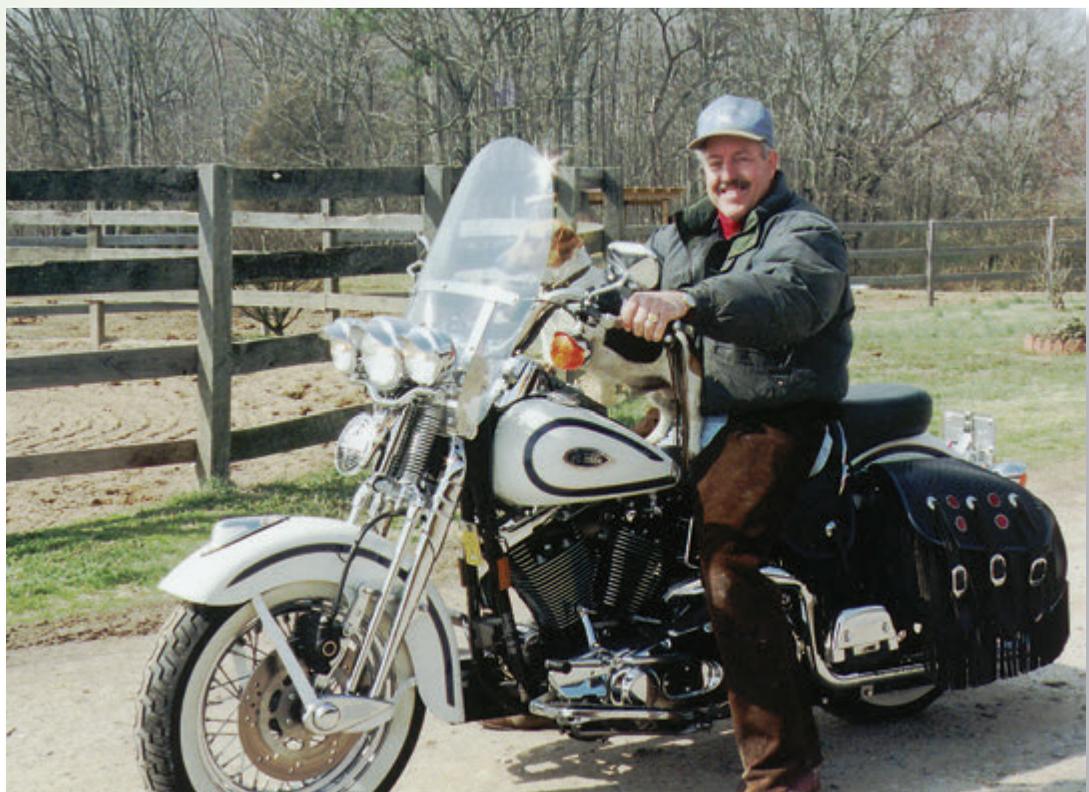
"I was showing her in the ladies championship at Louisville and in the line up Cash said, 'get ready, you're going to go again,'" recalled Byrd. "We were in a two-horse workout with Doubletree's Steel The Show and Cash was running up and down the rail with me. He was so thrilled for us."

One of the things that made Cash so endearing to his customers was the fact that he lived to make them happy with their horses. More than one customer recently recalled one of famous sayings: "You didn't buy this horse for me to ride."

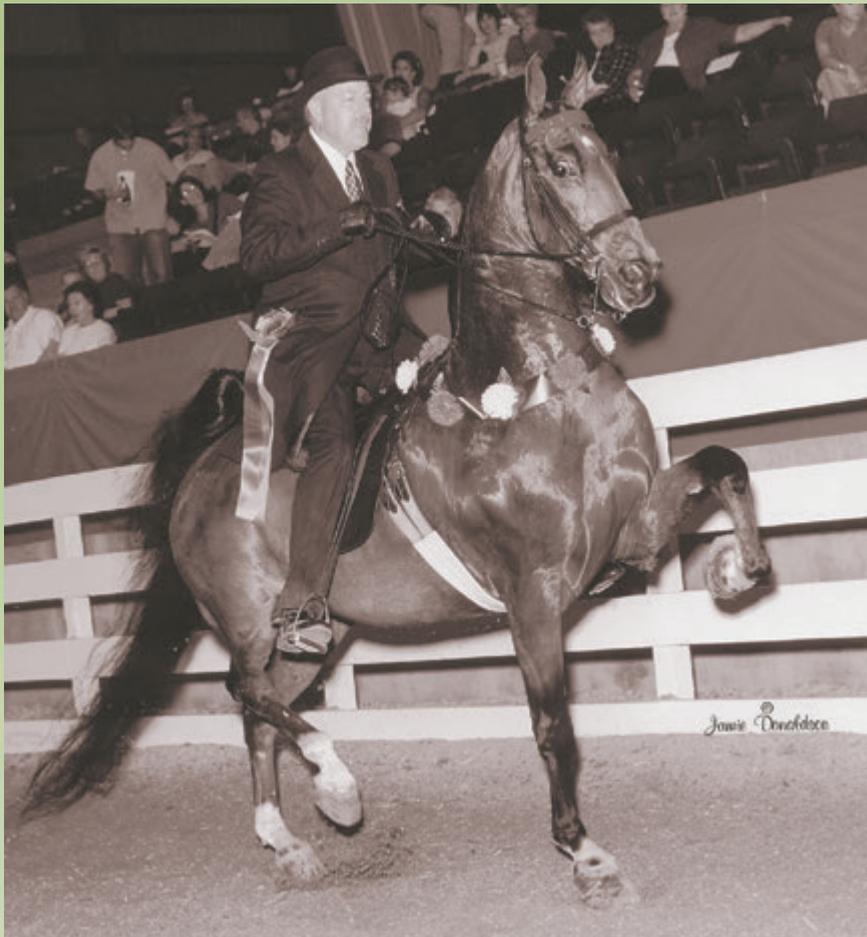
It was as much about his personality as it was his keen horsemanship.

One of his former students had this to say about her time at Cash Lovell Stables. "The horses were great, but he loved the people," said Mary Orr. "He always told me, 'we're not in the horse business, we're in the people business.' He gave me so many opportunities. I would get so mad at him sometimes but you couldn't help but love him. No matter the situation he had a smile and a laugh."

A sprinkling of the top horses trained by Cash over the years included his first personal world's champion The Showstopper who went on to win world's titles with Jessica Holmes; world's champion Attache's



Cash on a motorcycle was a common sight at many horse shows.



Man On The Run was a top walk-trot horse Cash had for Brooke Bodenhorst who won many top amateur titles. He is pictured winning the Three-Gaited Championship at J.D. Massey in 2002.



Kate Bryan and Sportster were world's champions under Cash's direction.

Irish Wine and Catie Hawley, world's champion The Champagne Lady and Sarah Thomas; reserve world's champion Our Wild Irish Rose; world's champion of champions CH In Neon ERB and Catie Hawley; and world's champion CH Absolutely A Lady and Trish Murray; world's champion Sportster and Kate Bryan; and of course the great World's Grand Champion CH Our Charming Lady. He also had several top gaited horses, including world's champion CH Sunken Treasure, Dr. Decker and Sue Nifong's Reserve World's Champion Five-Gaited Stallion The Irish Connection.

Cash left a lasting impact on all those who worked or rode for him. It was as much about his personality as it was his keen horsemanship.

"I've never met anyone like Cash, and I never will," said Marion Bryan, who along with her daughter Kate enjoyed many great times at Cash Lovell Stables. "We got into Saddlebreds and started riding locally and after a while realized we needed a different level barn. We moved to Cash's and it was a two and half hour drive but there wasn't one time when we made that drive that we didn't say or think, 'I can't believe we're riding at Cash's.' He had more life than anyone I know. He could tell the same crazy story 100 times and you would want him to tell it 101 times.

"He wanted everyone to have fun. If anyone had a bad ride or their horse was sick, he would find a way to make them feel better. Our time with Cash was the best years of our lives. We were very fortunate for the horses and success but more than that, to be around a person like him. Kate and I were just talking about Cash the other day and Kate said, 'he really loved us.'"

That was the Cash everyone will remember. He couldn't stand to see a child crying or unhappy even if he didn't know them. He would stop, cut up with them and soon have them laughing as loud as he was.

Of course this was never more evident than with his own daughter Shelly and her three kids as well as his and Parker's daughter Cashlyn. Cashlyn kept the kid in Cash alive and nothing made him prouder than to see her in the show ring. And nothing made him happier than when they were playing.

The Carolinas and the sport of showing American Saddlebreds in general lost a great legacy with

the passing of Cash Lovell, Jr. His laugh, his humor, his competitive nature and his love of everyone who loves American Saddlebreds will not be forgotten. Those who were fortunate enough to ride with him will forever cherish those memories and his peers who watched his successes will forever strive to make it as much fun for their customers as did his.



Parker, Cashlyn and Cash Lovell were fixtures on the southeastern show scene.