

PAHAKE WILLIAM RUFUS

Sire: Bull Hill Tangelo (Imp NZ) Dam: Pahake Pipette

We began our association with Rufus in 1996 when we purchased him from Jan & Neil McBain in Victoria, he had already been gelded at that time, so we never knew him as a stallion. We had previously been breeding & showing Riding Ponies & desperately needed a change in breed! The fun had gone out of riding – enter Rufus. After a short period of re-training, Rufus commenced an amazing performance history with us.

He basically revived my riding career. I started jumping and eventing again, after a break of about 15 years. I was amazed at how the New Forest breed could jump and was successful at many events, usually being in the lead after the dressage. He was fearless Cross Country and loved to show jump – even when the rider wasn't so brave. He was clever enough to compensate for rider incompetence!

We also showed him in hand & under saddle. He was moderately successful in the led classes, but under saddle he excelled. Rufus won many, many Championships under saddle and was excellent in the Show Hunter Classes. The most memorable was when he achieved Supreme Champion Ridden Exhibit at a major South Australian All Breeds Show against all the other breed champions in the ridden section.

Apart from a brilliant ridden career, Rufus was also to prove himself as a superb harness pony. He has been Australian & South Australian Champion in Combined Driving (Singles) with both Henry & me driving him on several occasions. He has won gold medals in the Masters games both ridden & driven. He has also won many 'Concourse De Elegance' titles both at National & State level (as a single & most recently in a pair)

Rufus' greatest achievement as a harness pony in Combined Driving was when he qualified for the 2005 World Pony Championships in U.K. at the age of 17 years.

He is the only 'Aussie' New Forest pony to achieve this international level of performance. This fulfilled a wonderful dream for us & Henry went on to represent Australia at the World Championships in 2005 thanks to Rufus!

Rufus has also stolen the limelight at many other local functions. At the Peterborough 150 year railway celebrations, he conveyed the local Mayor down a spectator lined Main Street to a rotunda where a live brass band played the national anthem on his arrival. He stood at attention as if knowing all eyes were upon him just soaking up the atmosphere. He does have a rather large ego!!

Earlier that same year he got another 'gig' delivering the Bishop of our Diocese to a large public celebration. He has also taken part in two weddings, safely delivering the bride & attendants to the Church, before whisking away the newlyweds.....not to mention countless poses for photos along the way.

His most famous photo shoot was a place on the TV Series 'McLeods Daughters' thanks to horse wrangler Bill Willoughby who knew Rufus would be right for the job. Bill has also contacted us regarding the availability of Rufus & Ziggy for an upcoming TV documentary on Sturt the explorer. They will be required to pull a dying Sturt on a litter behind them.

Apart from his more famous achievements that we have already mentioned, Rufus has been a part of our everyday lives. He has taken part in school plays with our kids, visiting school on many occasions to play a donkey in a religious play, or something more spectacular (Zorro) on dress up days. One Christmas he was led in a street parade with a young intellectually disabled girl on board & gave her a great thrill with people all around her.

Rufus has also left a great legacy – his offspring. We are lucky enough to own two of his grandsons & one great grandson. Forestway Zig Zag or 'Ziggy' is already a Champion ridden, both in open hack classes and in the Pony club arena, successfully competing at Pony Club Zone & State level in dressage & showjumping. Furthermore, following in his grandfather's footsteps, Ziggy is also winning in harness, at shows & in Combined Driving Events. Rufus & Ziggy have recently started competing together as a pair in combined driving & have already made their mark in the winners circle.

It appears that Rufus's great 'all-rounder' capabilities (from dressage, jumping, harness etc etc) have been passed on to his progeny and we look forward to enjoying them as much as we have Rufus.

At age 19 years (on Remembrance Day 2006), Rufus is still a handsome & striking animal with an incredible personality. He is retired from competing as a single pony in harness and now is a schoolmaster for Ziggy in the pair. We use him for pleasure riding now, as his ridden show career is finished (the grand children have taken over) although he still likes to take the lead & let them know who's boss!

We think Rufus is an excellent ambassador for the New Forest breed, both in his many achievements and the legacy he leaves in his talented progeny. He has touched the hearts of many and is a wonderful and much loved member of our family. As such we proudly submit this entry for the New Forest Pony Achievement Award for 2006/07

Shirley & Henry Crossley & family.



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