

Buckwheat died last week.  
He had been ill for some weeks.  
The veterinarian did a lot of tests.  
No specific disease was found.  
The fine Shetland pony was here for 24 years.  
Gail says that thousands of kids rode Buckwheat over the years.  
That is not an exaggeration.  
We got Buckwheat when he was only three months old.  
He was born on a farm ten miles away.  
We brought him home in the bed of my pickup.  
My son Joel and friend Terry happened to be along.  
I asked them to hold the pony down for the short ride home.  
Buckwheat was a spunky little colt. He kicked the dickens out of those two boys on that 15-minute ride.  
At first, we designated him as grandson Michael's pony. They are about the same age.  
Once when Buckwheat and Michael were both about four, Michael was riding him in the round pen.  
Michael asked me if I knew what the cowboys do when they ride their horses.  
Foolishly, I answered "no".  
Michael straightened his little legs out and then kicked Buckwheat in the ribs while yelling "Giddyap".  
The pony shot forward.  
Michael did three, full, reverse somersaults before he hit the grass.  
We trained Buckwheat to ride and drive.  
On many Farm Days he pulled a cart or a sled filled with kids.  
On other days, he gave saddle rides.  
Shetlands by nature tend to be energetic and head strong.  
Buckwheat was a particularly gentle horse, always attentive to the inexperience or timid rider.  
In fact, off hand I cannot recall a single time that he put a child at risk.  
His mischievous nature was expressed on other horses, however.  
In his younger years he would tease or antagonize the full-sized horses. Then, when the other horse was about to fight back, Buckwheat would run over to Gruella, the lead horse, and stand as close as possible to him for protection.  
Gruella was very tolerant of Buckwheat's troublemaking.  
The Gruella was my horse. We got him as a mustang stallion in 1993.  
The Gruella, passed away several years ago.  
He is buried under a majestic oak tree, just across the river.  
I buried Buckwheat under that same tree, close to the Gruella.

Tom



Buckwheat pulling a cart.



Buckwheat, patiently giving rides to a “first timer” on a Farm Day.







This is granddaughter Ella.

Buckwheat is standing patiently for the little girl who is determined to mount-up on her own.

She did it.

This photo was taken almost ten years ago.

Today is Ella's thirteenth birthday.