

We won a pony with this photo

For 75 years I thought we won the pony because we were so cute. My older sister Anne told me last week that we won the horse in a drawing; a lottery really. I was crushed.

Apparently, a photographer advertised in our local paper, if you hired him to photograph your kids, he would put you in a lottery for a pony. That is how we came by this pony.

You have to agree we were mighty cute. Ann says we were sitting on Mom's ironing board. Uncle John was living with us at the time.

The pony, a mare, was named Babe. She was pregnant at the time, but I think no one was aware of that. She was probably a 1/2 Shetland and 1/2 common saddle horse. Ann says Babe was poorly trained and ornery. Shetland are by nature strong willed and tough. Most people would be surprised to know they were not developed for children, but for use in English mine tunnels. The picture of Uncle John on the frozen ground attests to Babe's temperament. The gestation period of a horse is around one year. Babe was with us for less than a full year.



TOM, JOHN, ANN, 1948



Uncle John was thrown by Babe

That means the winter photos were all the winter of 1948-49.

It seems Babe never had a saddle.

The bridle that Babe is wearing in the photos, is a work horse bridle modified to fit.

Uncle John rode Babe to the mailbox one day in the Spring.

He returned Babe to the pasture after the ride.

Later someone noticed that Babe was dead in the pond, near the end of the lane.

I probably never had a ride on Babe, but I always loved horses.

I was only three the day the horse died.

I could not believe our pony was dead, so I walked to the pond by myself.

The long lake was high, so at that time the mound was an island.

Babe was about 30 feet from shore, but only a foot deep.

In my childhood, the time when we had Babe was always Camelot to me.

Every year after Babe died, I begged Pa for a horse.



John on Babe

Ten years later, when Pa bought Nevada, John rode him with a saddle and bridle.



Ann on Babe

There is a grain truck on the left of these photos I do not recognize.

It appears to be storing a full load of corn.

This photo was taken later in the same winter. Uncle John, brother John, Ken Croteau, Ann, Jim Croteau. They riding on the old bobsled that Pa used to haul manure on when the manure was broken. Pa once gave John and I are road ride on it behind the Ford tractor. The gravel roads were ice covered so that when he slowed the tractor, the bobsled gained on it and swerved.



The same group, Uncle John, brother John, Ken Croteau, Ann, Jim Croteau.



Uncle John was a teenager in the early winter of 1949.

Ken was walking to the house.

Tom.

