



days at
Dunrovin

March 2019



**Ranch
Talk**



Meet Bonnie and Clyde

A Mother and Son Pair of Shetland Ponies



A lovely and kind, but very poor, family called Dunrovin Ranch in 2010 to seek help finding a home for a pair of kind and gentle Shetland ponies that they could no longer keep. They insisted that the ponies remain together, as they were mother and son. The mother was going blind, and the son was becoming her eyes. While the family loved them dearly, they lacked the funds to properly feed them or provide the mother with medical care. Without hesitation, Dunrovin hitched up the trailer and drove to the south end of the Bitterroot Valley to meet the family and the ponies. It was love at first sight—for both the ponies and the family who were doing their best in a bad situation. Dunrovin bought the ponies, their wooden cart, harnesses, and all the tack the family was selling.

Our first stop was the vet's office, where the mother was diagnosed with "moon blindness," which is an autoimmune disease. It is a progressive disease that can be greatly slowed or stopped with proper care, but her disease had reached the point where nothing could be done except to ease the pain.

As the ponies were coming from a family with a number of small children, it was clear that the two were perfectly suited for Dunrovin's pony programs. Their given names made little sense to everyone, so the first thing Dunrovin did was to ask the pony club children to suggest some alternatives, and Bonnie and Clyde proved popular with everyone.

At first, Bonnie's blindness did not slow her down. She was a more-than-willing partner for pony rides with the small children. She loved being groomed, led, and ridden. She learned to follow the voice of the riding instructors and confidently carried her small passengers around and around the arena. Her blindness taught many children valuable lessons about living life to the fullest in spite of limitations.

Clyde was equally willing and engaged. His long, shaggy mane received endless hours of combing and braiding by little hands.



Bonnie



Clyde

Bonnie's Blindness Takes Its Toll

By the winter of 2015, Bonnie pain in her left eye could no longer be controlled by medications. The vet suggested we remove the eye to relieve the pain.. She was such a trusting, agreeable patient. It is at times like that having a good, caring vet is so important. Dr. Dick was gentle and took extra special care of her. She returned after only two nights away. The Dunrovin staff have never before heard such joyful whinnying for two equines as the explosion of sounds that Bonnie and Clyde made upon her return to the ranch. It was the *Sounds of Happiness!*



BEFORE



VET HOSPITAL



WAITING



AFTER



WELCOME BACK



During the last five years, both Bonnie's and Clyde's health have declined. They are retired from being actively used for pony rides. Now their jobs consist of being loved, standing for little hands to groom and pet and hug, and inspiring us all.

Their ages are unknown. The vet feels that Bonnie has to be approaching thirty, which is nearing the upper age limit. Clyde is old, as well, and he has begun to show signs of arthritis in his joints and feet. Both will live out their lives at Dunrovin Ranch—much to everyone's delight!

Thanks to
John Ashley
for this
beautiful
portrait
of our
beautiful
Bonnie.



Broadcast Date: _____ **Time:** _____

Location: _____