Mrs. Pugh along with 5-6 families was also instrumental in buying the adjacent land to Tara Farm. Ravenscroft School was moved to this property, and the kids also spent a lot of time around the Morgan horses and used the trails throughout the farm for cross-country running. Whenever Walter (the youngest of the Pugh children) was missing from school, they could always find him over at the barn.

Ben was the Pugh's first Morgan, but he wasn't the only one for long. Watson and some of his friends wanted to ride horses, so they bought Trophy’s Mate Merit and Coralee. One thing led to another, and Tara Farm took off in the 1960s. Fran looked after the horses on the farm, and hired Tom and Lola Hunt (Tom used to train Roy Roger’s horse Trigger) to help her with the horses during the winter months.

“I had never owned horses before,” Fran said, “So I had everything to learn. Barbara Cole was a great help to me.”

The first Morgan horse show Fran went to was the 1961 Mid-Atlantic Morgan Show, which at the time was held at the Frederick County Fairgrounds in Maryland. Ben won the Stallion class, and “I was on Cloud Nine,” said Fran. “From there we went to the North Carolina State Championship Horse Show [a show she has attended since 1960]. Originally we had to show our Morgans in open classes, but it wasn't long before they put in a Morgan division.”

When the Hunts retired, Fran had four young children, and after attending Mid-A, Fran saw the handwriting on the wall. “If I was going to make anything out of Tara Farm, I was going to need a trainer,” she said.

She had sent two horses to Harold Childs, who showed them for her at Mid-A. In 1971, she hired Leo and Cindy LeFave. “This is when we began to improve our stock,” Fran said. “We also had outside customers.”

Some of the horses at the time included Bar T Regina, Empyrean Apollo, Catskill Senator Lad and Tara’s Rhett Butler. Tara Farm horses were entered in shows throughout the Northeast, and at the first Morgan Grand National in Detroit.

“Our goal was to keep improving and upgrading our stock,” Fran said.

Leo and Cindy divorced, but Cindy stayed on at Tara Farm for 27 years.

“Activity on the farm seemed to fluctuate between periods of all showing and no breeding, to concentrating on the breeding program and no showing,” Fran said. If you look back through the record books, no matter what period Tara Farm was in, you will find numerous Tara-bred horses claiming world, national, and regional titles in a variety of divisions.

Cindy retired five years ago, and Tara Farm began a new chapter while staying the course of breeding and...