

To get the heavy equipment needed, Dr. Ben hired a dozer operator working on Morehead Mtn. doing terracing for the Forest Service.

Ben and Freda were both avid hunters and spent part of each Fall at the ranch. They kept up to a dozen horses (Dr. Ben favored Arabians), packing them into the ranch in June and out in November. In 1956, an early storm stranded them with four feet of snow. Knowing that the horses wouldn't survive the winter, the Morgans, being anesthesiologists, put the horses to sleep, trussed them up and rolled them into a Cunningham Hall biplane on skis, flying them out one by one.

Pilot John Peterson flew for several operators out of Boise and hauled freight to Morgan Ranch. He became good friends with Ben and Freda and eventually was hired on as caretaker. John could fix anything and was an outstanding bush pilot and instructor. Freda took lessons from John and became quite good herself, flying the ranch Tri-Pacer out to Boise on weekly grocery runs.

Benny was born in 1946 and Mary Dee in 1951. The kids spent all summer at the ranch, riding, digging ditches, shooting and hiking. Dr. Ben made Mary Dee swim a mile and run a mile every morning before breakfast. He had built a swimming pool early on, mixing cool and hot spring water for a comfortable temperature. They enlarged it in later years so that Mary Dee could swim training laps.

Mary Dee learned to ride at about age two. Dr. Ben rigged up Angel the burro with a barbed wire loop under its tail and had Mary Dee yank on the handle when she wanted to go. She graduated to horses soon after, riding the wilderness trails up and down river, to Morehead lookout, camping at Lincoln and Soldier lakes and on pack trips with her father.

Mary Dee met Allen Dodge at art school in Kansas City. They married in 1973 and honeymooned at the ranch. In 1974, they moved to Coeur d'Alene and began a lifelong art practice.

They began flying their Piper J-5 from CdA to the ranch in 1977, graduated to a Tri-Pacer in 1980 and finally traded airplanes for kids in 1983 with the birth of their daughter Rachel. Their son Morgan was born in 1987. Both kids love the ranch.

Allen and Mary Dee have worked in almost every medium, making public art, private commissions, doing gallery shows, maintaining studios and a small screen printing factory producing shirts and dresses which Mary Dee designed; Mary Dee Fun To Wear. Today they split their time between building steel sculpture, copper enamel wall pieces and jewelry in CdA and maintaining the ranch in summers.

