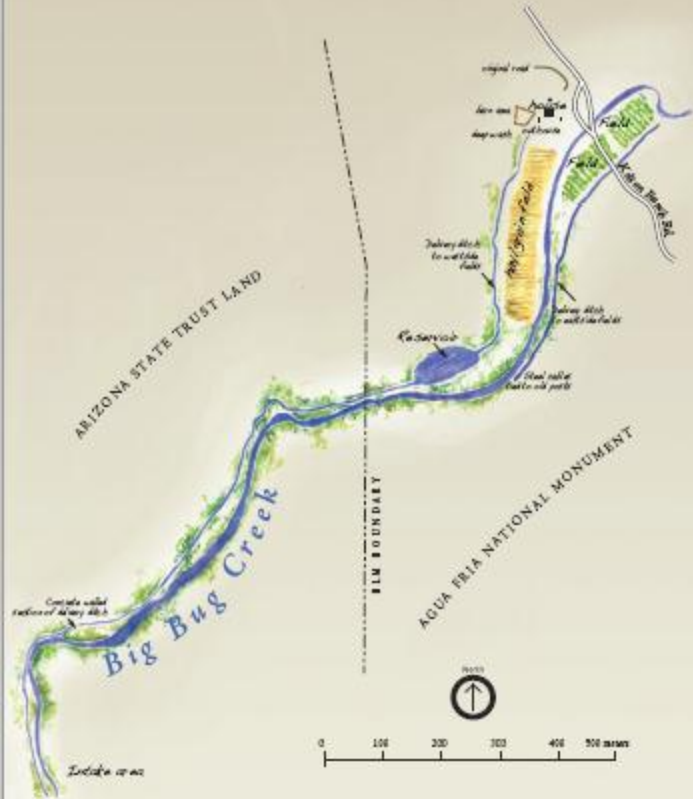


THE TESKEY HOME SITE ON BIG BUG CREEK, 1940-1948



This site was settled by Cornelius "Colonel" H. Teskey when he came to Arizona from Wyoming in 1925. He was nicknamed Colonel because it was easier to pronounce than Cornelius. In 1940 Colonel built a small house on this site and moved in with his wife Phoebe and baby daughter Trudy. The house was later enlarged to accommodate the arrival of two sons, Bert and Fred, and Colonel's mother, Emma Teskey.

Here he grew hay, grain and pinto beans in a field south of the house and in a field across the creek. The fields were watered from a reservoir that collected water from a canal that came off Big Bug Creek about one mile upstream. In addition, to water fields on the southeast side of Big Bug Creek, a pipe from the reservoir was suspended over the creek by steel cables. Phoebe grew a small vegetable garden west of the house.

Chicken coops, granaries, storage buildings and a barn and corral were located southwest of the house. Colonel Teskey had purchased a registered Morgan stallion in California which he bred for many fine horses for the family and others. Along with the horses, the Teskey family raised cattle which were shipped from the community stockyard near what is now Cordes Junction. Phoebe broke the horses and rode the range tending the cattle. Colonel tended the fields, maintained the canal and worked at the manganese mine at the TH Ranch.

The house had no electricity or plumbing and a simple pipe drained the kitchen sink. Water from the hand dug well was carried to the house by bucket and Phoebe had to wash clothes outside in a hand operated Maytag washer. Laundry and bath water was heated on the wood burning stove. She pressed the clothes with sad irons also heated on the wood stove.

Milk from their Hereford cow was kept cool, along with other perishables, in a clever evaporative cooler designed by Colonel. The butter was kept in the well. The cooler was screened to keep animals and bugs out and was suspended by cable and pulley in the oak tree west of the house.

Both parents helped raise their children. The children made their playhouse in the trees and bushes near the house. Their toys were metal trucks and jeeps, a log cabin syrup can and doll babies. The children had dogs for pets. Colonel made kites and there was a model airplane that didn't survive too long. Trudy rode the bus to school in Mayer, but Bert and Fred were not in school yet. The family enjoyed occasional get-togethers with the surrounding neighbors—for good food, good conversation and a chance for the children to have playmates.

After selling this ranch in 1948, the Teskeys moved to Mayer, Arizona for a brief time and later to the Dugas Ranch which was about eight miles northeast of here.



East side of Teskey home



Six acres of hay and grain fields



Project researched, written, planned and coordinated by the Friends of the Agua Fria National Monument. www.aguafriafriends.org



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