



View of Crail Ranch buildings, circa 1920

IN DECEMBER 1901, having recently ended his elected appointment as clerk of the district court in Bozeman, and approaching 60 years of age, Augustus Franklin Crail (called Frank) purchased for \$150 a 160-acre homestead in the Gallatin Basin area now known as Big Sky. Over the course of nearly 50 years, the Crail family expanded their holdings to 960 acres and turned their modest homestead into a working ranch.



Small Cabin c. 1906



Small Cabin today



The upstairs bedrooms are viewable only on guided tours. On display there: period clothing and many quilts, one dating to the late 1800s, sewn by Sallie Creek Crail.



Self-Guided Tour



Welcome to Historic Crail Ranch!

THE GROUNDS ARE OPEN at any time, weather permitting. We invite you to walk around the grounds and buildings. Use this guide to help you understand this treasure of Big Sky's past, preserved by the community for your interest and education.

THE BUILDINGS ARE OPEN for guided tours only on Saturdays and Sundays during July and August, and other times by appointment.

COME BACK to tour with our trained tour guides. You can find more information on the Crail Ranch at crailranch.org.



The Big Sky Community Organization connects people with recreational opportunities by acquiring, preserving and promoting sustainable places and programs for all.

START AT THE SMALL CABIN. In the spring of 1902, Crail brought his wife, Sallie, and their three children, Eugene, Emmett and Lilian, up the logging road from Bozeman and moved them into this 255 square foot cabin, which was already on the property. We do not know what they did with the extra space, although photographs indicate that Sallie's father, Abraham Creek, was living with them.

The cabin was originally located about 70 yards south of its present location. It was moved in the 1950s so that it would not block the view of Lone Peak from the main cabin.

Much later in its history, the small cabin suffered a fire, evidence of which can be seen on some logs and the boards around the door.



Tour guides highlight historic materials from the Crail family and other generous donors.

WHAT'S INSIDE? For many years, the historic small cabin was used for storage. It is now a primary display area of the Crail Ranch Homestead Museum. On view are artifacts and photographs depicting the Crail Ranch as a working ranch, when cattle and sheep ranged over the meadows that are now the Big Sky golf course, and when fields of hay covered areas that are now homes and condominiums.

THE CRAIL RANCH GROUNDS now comprise just about an acre. The last Crail, son Emmett, sold the ranch in 1950 to Jack and Elaine Hume,



A community garden project is tended in an old corral area on the ranch.

who annexed additional acreage and then sold to a man named Sam Smeding in 1962. Smeding sold 1440 acres and the existing buildings in 1970 to Chet Huntley's consortium that transformed the ranchlands and mountains into Big Sky Resort. The Resort gave the two historic buildings and an acre of land to the community. It is now preserved as an historic property by a Big Sky community non-profit organization.



Informative view signs show scenes from the working life of the ranch from the 1910s to the 1950s.

THE WEST VIEW SIGN is located at about the spot where the small cabin originally stood. The west-facing windows of the main cabin are directly behind you. As you read the sign, you can look up and see a magnificent view of Lone Peak, leaving

no doubt in your mind as to why Franklin Crail and his family built the two-story main cabin in just this spot.

TAKE A WALK AROUND the main cabin. The Crail family set about building the main cabin right away. See if you can pick out the lines of logs that show that the family first built a one-story cabin similar to the small cabin, and then extended it to the east and added a second story. We know that before coming to the Gallatin Basin area, Franklin Crail built a homestead ranch in the Springhill section of Bozeman. We believe that his son Eugene, who became a carpenter, built much of the main cabin that you see here.

The Crail brand from 1906 hangs on the shed and is the Lazy F R; the Hume brand from 1956 is on the south walk.



David Coffin, current owner of the first Crail homestead in the Bridgers, notes similarities in construction.

TAKE A PEEK IN THE WINDOWS. Among the artifacts in the parlor: Sallie's teaching guitar from the 1870s, a cabinet built by Frank that displays many items original to the ranch, paintings done by the Crail children, and donated period pieces.

The kitchen was the main work area in the home. Note the stove from the 1920s and the clothes washing area. *(continued on back panel)*