

You Can Help

The Bee Family Centennial Farm Museum is a work in progress. The museum continues to seek gifts of your time, talent, and treasure to bring the experiences of life on the farm to people of all ages.

Consider volunteering your time to...

- Repair and maintain the grounds and buildings
- Perform simple agricultural demonstrations
- Work in the garden
- Take care of the livestock or any service you can provide to the museum.

Your financial contribution to the Bee Family Centennial Farm Museum, a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization, is entirely tax deductible.



Bee Family Centennial Farm Museum

4320 East County Road 58
Fort Collins, Colorado 80524
(970) 482-9168
www.beefamilyfarm.com

Bee Family Centennial Farm Museum

National Register Historic District



INTERPRETIVE GUIDE

Brief History of Bee Family and their Centennial Farm

The Bee Family Centennial Farm Museum represents the most complete record of a single family's efforts to survive and prosper on the high plains of northern Colorado. Their story represents the broader history of agriculture and settlement in the Fort Collins area.

In 1882, John and Fanny Bee brought their family from Iowa to Fort Collins. Two years later Fanny's sister, Lizzie, and her husband, Al Morse, joined the Bees in Fort Collins. Both families took homesteads and started new lives on the arid prairie. In 1894, Al and Lizzie bought the present-day Bee Family Farm. After Al passed away in 1899, John and Fanny's son, Arleigh, took over the farm for Aunt Lizzie.

In 1902, John and Fanny Bee sold their homestead to the

North Poudre Irrigation Company in exchange for shares of irrigated water, a necessity in this dry climate. They moved their two-story house to the Morse farm. Irrigation and sugar beets were introduced to the farm at about this time, bringing about a measure of prosperity. Thus the Bee Family was able to build more farm structures and buy larger, more modern implements. Fanny and John Bee

died in 1905 and 1906 respectively.

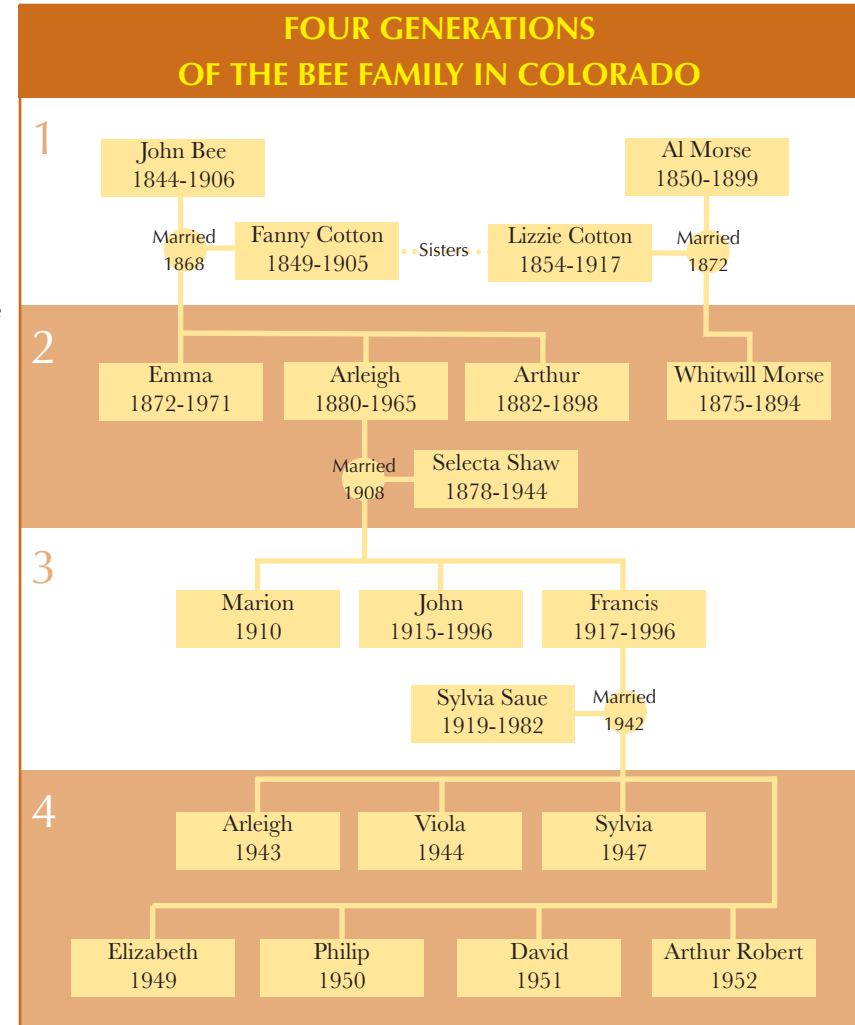
In 1908, Arleigh married Al Morse's niece, Selecta Shaw, and Lizzie Morse deeded the farm to the young couple two years later. They had three children: Marion, John, and Francis. Arleigh dug one of the first irrigation

wells in the area, and he also raised sheep, the preeminent livestock in Larimer County at that time.

In 1939, their youngest son, Francis, graduated from Colorado A&M—now CSU and joined his father at the farm. Francis married Sylvia Saue in 1942 and built a small house on the farm. He started a dairy operation with a herd of registered Jersey cows. Seven children were born to Francis and Sylvia and two sons continued the farm until its last harvest in 2004.

The Bee Family Farm was hon-

ored as a Colorado Centennial Farm in 1994 and was listed in the National Register of Historic Places in 2002. The Bee Family has preserved thousands of items, including farm buildings, tractors and equipment, automobiles, furnishings, journals, letters, and photographs. Almost all belonged to the Bee Family and are yours to explore today.



Welcome to the Bee Family Centennial Farm Museum.

To enhance your learning experience, we recommend that you visit the farm buildings and displays as they are numbered on this map. Along the way, take time to enjoy the gardens and displays of original farm equipment.

1. Interpretive Center (Green Machine Shed)

The Bee Family constructed the green shed in 1981 to shelter large farm equipment and to provide an expanded shop area for machinery maintenance. It is now used as the main entrance to the museum.

EXHIBITS: *Introductory Movie; Audio Story: the Bees Arrive in Colorado; 1894 Kitchen; 1936 Nash Lafayette Car.*

2. 1894 House (Original Morse Homestead)

Al Morse built this house after he purchased the farm in 1894. Francis Bee moved it to its present location in 1956. The house is an example of the hall-and-parlor plan typical of pioneer settlement.

EXHIBITS: *Original Furnishings; Audio Story: Floods.*

3. 1942 House and Garage

This house was built on the west side of the farm in 1942 for newlyweds Francis and Sylvia Bee. The Bee Family moved the house and its garage to their present location in 2004. The garage houses maintenance equipment.

EXHIBITS: *Original Furnishings; World War II on the Home Front; Grandfather's Life with Seven Children.*

4. 1957 Farm House

Francis Bee built the big farm house in 1957 to accommodate his growing family. It occupied the site of the original Morse-Bee homestead house. *This building houses offices and a private residence. Please do not enter.*

5. Garage and Shed

Arleigh Bee built this garage in 1918 to house the family's first car, a Studebaker, which they bought in 1916. The attached shed was added in the late 1960s as a calf pen. It now shelters the water wagon.

EXHIBITS: *1947 Chevy; History of Farm Transportation; Recreation; 1919 Trip to California; Domestic Water.*

6. Migrant Worker House

The migrant worker house was originally located on the west side of the farm. Migrant workers from Mexico or Texas would stay in it for several weeks during the summer while they tended the sugar beet fields.

EXHIBIT: *Life of the Migrant Worker.*

7. Milk Barn

Constructed of structural clay tiles, the milk barn was built in 1949 and was a great improvement over the old horse barn. Arleigh Bee commented that "it was the warmest building on the place." This was the farm's first building to be equipped with electricity.

EXHIBITS: *Audio Stories: Chickens; Sheep Feeding; Dairy Operations.*

8. Chicken House

This was one of two chicken houses that served the farm. The other one was west of the milk barn and was the first building on the farm. It was taken down in the late 1970s. The current chicken house was probably built in the 1920s or '30s.

EXHIBIT: *Buff Orpington Chickens.*

9. Cow Sheds

These simple structures provided shelter for farm animals. They were built in the late 1970s for the Limousin beef herd.

10. Horse Barn

Arleigh Bee built this horse barn between 1902 and 1905, after the Bee Family moved to the Morse Farm.

EXHIBITS: *Horse Harnesses; Branding Irons, Audio Story: "A Horse Named Dick."*

11. Loafing Shed

This shed connected the wagon shed and horse barn. It provided shelter for the animals.

EXHIBIT: *Horse-Drawn Equipment.*

12. Wagon Shed

The Wagon Shed and granary may have been the first part of the wagon shed-loafing shed-horse barn complex. The foundation consists of large, dry-laid stones.

EXHIBIT: *Beet Wagon (under restoration).*

13. Metal Granary

Granaries were used to store grain. It is uncertain when the Bee Family acquired this metal granary, but it dates to at least the 1950s. It may have been a storage tank from the Wellington oil fields.

14. Wood Granary

Many granaries were built "inside-out," with the studs on the outside and wall boards on the inside, so that the grain was easy to clean out. Al Morse may have built this granary. It was moved from its original location when the brick machine shed was built.

15. Brick Shed

The brick shed was built in 1956. It provided a shop area with a concrete floor and room for equipment.

EXHIBITS: *1945 Chevy Truck; John Deere Tractors; Surveying; Farming; Old Farm Shop (south end of building)*

16. Interpretive Center (Green Machine Shed)

Return to the Interpretive Center through its rear door to learn even more about the Bee Family Farm and agriculture in northern Colorado.

EXHIBITS: *Irrigation and Crop Displays*

