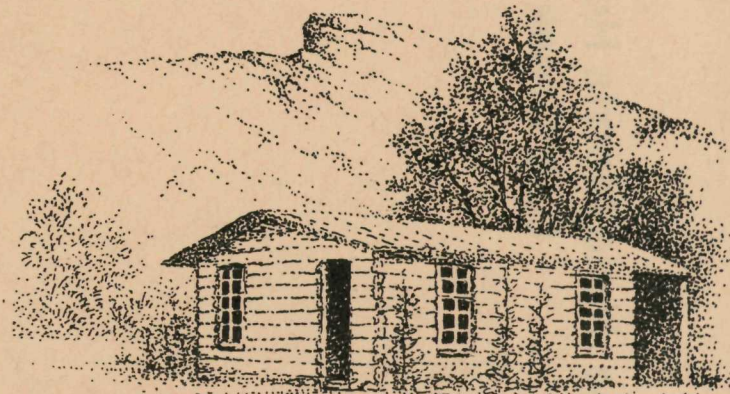




## Josie Bassett Morris



Josie Morris lived at Cub Creek from 1914 until 1964. She was born in Arkansas before her family moved west. The year of her birth, by various accounts, may have been 1870, 1873 or 1874. Her parents, Herbert and Mary, lived in Browns Park where Josie grew up along with her sister Ann and brothers Sam, Elbert and George.

Josie married Jim McKnight and bore two sons, Crawford and Herbert. They settled in Browns Park but separated after several years, and Josie moved to Craig, Colorado. How many marriages Josie had — formal or other-

wise — is open to question. Her last long-term association was with Ben Morris, who lived at Cub Creek and whose name she kept after his departure. Incidentally, she did know the outlaw Butch Cassidy from her youth in Browns Park, but she never claimed him as one of her suitors, and he never visited her at Cub Creek.

Josie settled at Cub Creek about 1914 (like many other dates, this one is not well documented), and built the present cabin in the mid-1930s. Crawford and his family also lived in the Cub Creek valley for a few years, raising cattle as did Josie. During the Depression they had to sell the cattle, and Crawford's family moved to Jensen. They remained in close touch with Josie but she was largely self-sufficient. Besides cattle, she raised pigs, chickens, feed for the stock, and a variety of fruits and vegetables which she canned or stored in the root cellar. The spring at the mouth of the box canyon provided ample water but she had no indoor plumbing, nor any other modern conveniences except a battery-powered radio. Periodically, she would drive her wagon into Jensen or Vernal to pick up supplies.

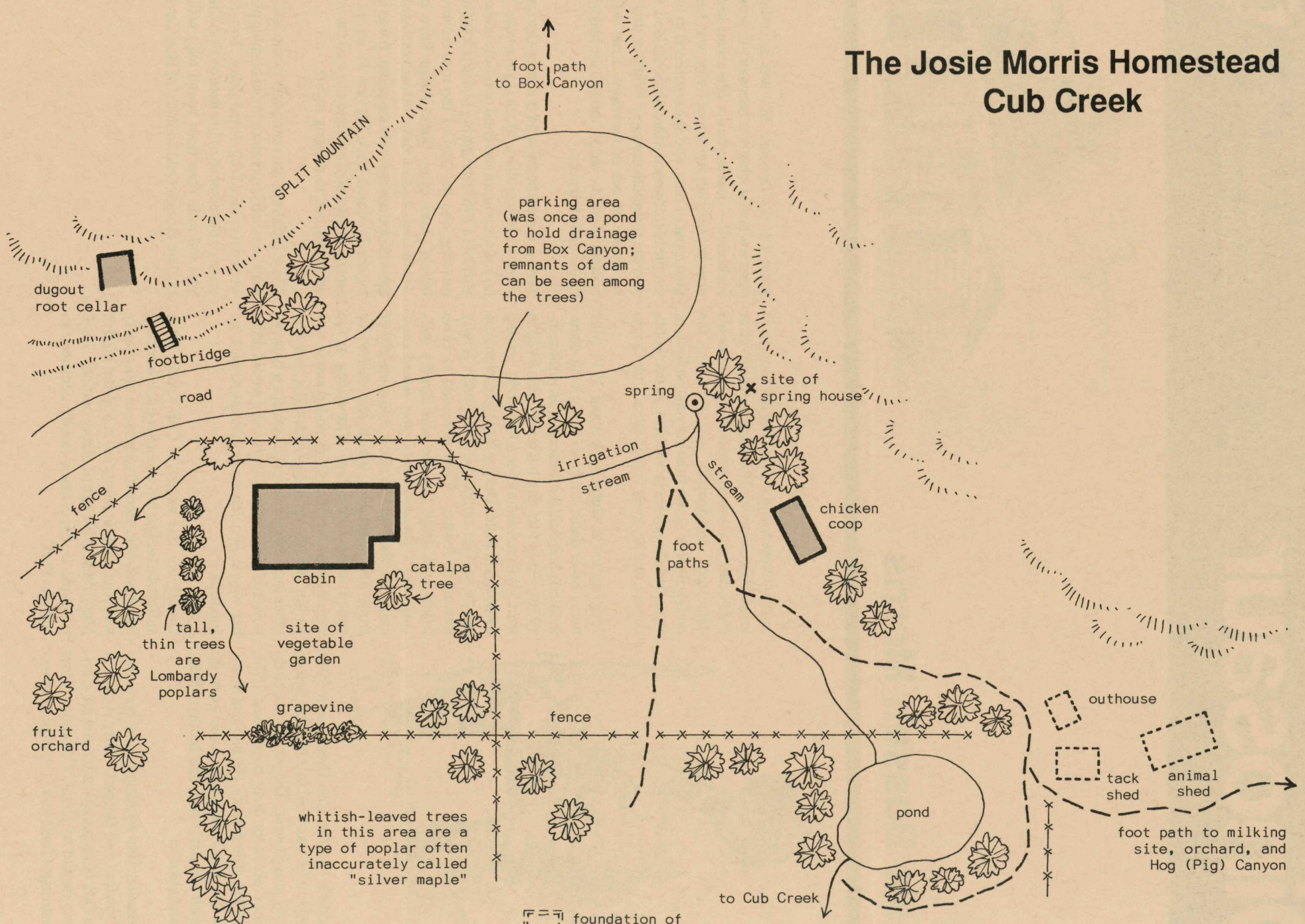
During her last winter at Cub Creek, Josie suffered a broken hip when her horse knocked her down. She seemed to be recovering fairly well, but complications set in and she died in May, 1964, at the age of ninety or more. Josie is buried in the Bassett family cemetery in Browns Park.

Josie was not famous. She was an ordinary person who did what was necessary to provide for herself — just as you do. She seems special now because her routine of living was harder than most of ours, and she continued to live a simple life, connected directly to the land, well into the twentieth century. Whether this was by choice or out of necessity, Josie was as content as we are today, though she had many fewer conveniences.

Today, Josie's homestead is a mere shadow of when Josie was alive. Much is gone now. The tack shed, animal shed and two-hole outhouse burned in 1988; the spring house is long since missing; and the roof of the root cellar collapsed years ago. Some things have been added since Josie's time. Most noticeable is the wooden canopy over the cabin. It was built by the National Park Service to lessen the erosional effects of rain and snow on the original cabin, and to prolong its life.

These buildings are reminders of the settler's lives and their importance in establishing places we seem to take for granted today. To capture some of the essence of life here on Cub Creek, take the mile (one hour round trip) walk to explore the quiet and coolness of Hog Canyon.

# The Josie Morris Homestead Cub Creek



foundation of  
 structure built by  
 H. Aumiller in 1930s