

Visit other Pinal County Sites

Self-Guided auto or walking tour of the Florence Town site Historic District is available at the Visitor Center.

Pinal County Historical Museum, 715 S Main, Florence, includes an Arizona State Prison historic collection, ranch and cowboy display, saguaro cactus furniture and much more. Closed Mondays; Tues-Sat. 11am to 4pm.

Saint Anthony's Greek Orthodox Monastery, south on Hwy 79, just past highway marker 124; turn left on to Paisano Drive. Tours-10:30am-2:30pm.

Florence-Kelvin Highway, a 32-mile cross-country mountain & desert drive on paving, gravel and sand from Florence to Kelvin, AZ

Tom Mix Memorial- located 20 miles south of Florence on highway 79. Tom Mix, a silent screen movie star in the thirties, died in 1940 after crashing his yellow Cord Phaeton convertible here into a dry wash.

Poston Butte- located 1.4 miles west of Florence on Hunt Highway. Charles Poston is known as the "Father of Arizona" and was the first elected delegate to Congress from the Arizona Territory. Poston is buried inside the pyramid on top of Poston Butte, formerly known as Primrose Hill.

Casa Grande Ruins National Monument located in Coolidge. The four-story Casa Grande, one of the largest prehistoric structures ever built in North America, is only a small part of what was once the Hohokam civilization.

Superstition Mountain Lost Dutchman Museum is located 3½ miles NE of Apache Junction at 4087 N. Apache Trail. There is a working amethyst mine located in the Four Peaks region that can be seen from the museum.

McFarland State Historic Park Florence Visitor Center



The McFarland State Historic Park is named for Ernest W. McFarland, the only known American to have served his state in all three branches of government (U.S. Senator, where he served as majority leader, Governor, and Arizona State Supreme Court Justice). He also purchased this site in 1974 and donated it to the Arizona State Parks.

McFarland State Historic Park and Visitor Center is operated by the Greater Florence Chamber of Commerce and the Town of Florence.

Hours
Monday – Saturday
Oct 1st – April 31st: 9 to 5
June 1st – September 30th: 9 to 2
Closed on Thanksgiving & Christmas

Florence — was founded in 1866 and is the sixth oldest non-native town in Arizona. In 1875 Pinal County was formed with Florence as the county seat.

Adobe building — an adobe-style courthouse began construction in 1878 and was completed in 1882. The original building consisted of a courtroom, district attorney's office, treasurer's and recorder's office and later a jail and sheriff's office. The second story was used as a jury room and quarters for visiting lawmen.

This adobe building served many roles during the late 1800s and early 1900s. First as a courthouse and then in 1891 it became the county hospital. In 1938, the building became the public health offices, and later, the site of the Pinal County Historical Society.

Tour of the McFarland State Historic Park:

Sheriff's Office — you are standing in the Sheriff's office, an addition to the original building. North Wall Photos: these are the four sheriffs who served in this office. Window to Gift Shop: below the window are hand and leg manacles and a large pad lock. The jail was in the gift shop. Also notice the print of the jail layout above the barred window. Photo Op: go behind the jail window; put the handcuffs on; have your picture taken. Vigilante "Justice": in 1888 a local vigilante committee stormed the jail, dragged two men from their cells and hanged them in the corridor of the jail. The two prisoners had been charged with holding up the Globe to Florence stage and killing the guard. A short time later, the same vigilante group attempted to lynch other prisoners. The jailer stopped their efforts by moving the prisoners to the second story and arming them to hold off the mob. More artifacts from the jail can be seen at the Pinal County Historical Museum.

Brochures: This room is now the Florence Visitor Center. All the printed materials are free.

Recorder's Office — This room was the Recorder's office in the original courthouse. Desk: this roll-top desk is a period piece that would have been found in the courthouse or the sheriff's office. Safe: notice the small safe; it is extremely heavy but protected the valuables. Filing Cabinets would have held legal documents back in the day. Mirror believed to be from the Tunnel Saloon. The bullet hole is said to have occurred on the night of the infamous shootout between the former Sheriff and his Deputy. Adobe model: A hands-on replica of a typical adobe building.

Step up and through — the treasurer's vault. Notice the thickness of the walls, making it difficult for someone to break in.

Treasurer's Office — was the original use of the room, and then the waiting room and nurse's office for the hospital. There is now an exhibit of the WWII Prisoner of War Camp in Florence and a video on the camp in this room. Several artifacts from the POW camps are on display in the two glass corner display cases.

District Attorney's Office — also served as an operating room. View the information about the historical figures that helped settle this area in the Arizona Territory. Notice the medical supplies in the cabinet and in the windows. A baby crib and kiddie-koop are on display in this room. There is an original ad for the kiddie-koop by the door explaining that it had been used to keep children safe from bugs etc. when it was used outside. It had a triple use as a crib, bassinet and play pen.

Courtroom — has been used for many purposes over the years: social events, community meetings, church services as well as the first courtroom for Pinal County. When the building was used as a hospital it was used for beds. Today the original courtroom serves this State Park in honoring its namesake, Ernest W. McFarland. Be sure to read the information on this man who is commonly referred to as the "Father of the G.I. Bill". North wall desk: Ernest W. McFarland's original desk. Several artifacts and narratives are posted throughout the courtroom.

Gift Shop — Be sure to stop by the gift shop to finish your tour as it has a lot of reasonably-priced one-of-a-kind items. Local artist and State Park gift items are available in the gift shop:

- Paintings by Wanda Mitchell Tucker
- Pottery items by Don Lash
- Fused glass by Lynn Pajer
- Photography by Michael Baca
- Metal Art by the Florence Prison
- Leather goods by Rail 3 Ranch
- Copper Crosses by John Kurt
- Cactus Wren Walking Sticks by Nick Marquez
- Goat products by Toggenburg Goats
- Native Drum & Southwestern art by Art With Vision
- Custom License Plate Signs by Junk Yard Art
- Jewelry by several local artisans
- Books by several authors, Local and beyond

Sign the Guest Book — If you haven't already done so, please sign the guest book now as it documents usage of the park and center.

Donations — We appreciate any donation as it is used for general upkeep and to update exhibits.