

McFarland State Historic Park

The history of the park's building provides visitors with a look into the past. The building represents a transition between Sonoran and Anglo-American architecture with its wood-shingled pitched roof surmounting traditional adobe brick walls. Like most buildings in Territorial Arizona, the original 1878 structure was constructed by hand using native materials. Soil from the area was used to make adobe bricks which were laid on a trench foundation filled with river rocks. All lumber for the floors and roof was hauled by wagon from northern Arizona.

The first jail was located in the courtyard at the rear of the building. It was a small adobe cubicle without windows. Burlap and canvas covered the entrance to keep the wind out in cold weather. Buried in the center of the jail was a huge boulder to which prisoners were chained. When a prisoner of importance was incarcerated, the jailer was obligated to bed down in front of the entrance. An 1882 addition to the building provided extra offices for the recorder and sheriff and a jail.

When a larger courthouse was built in 1891, the adobe structure became the county hospital. There, doctors provided up-to-date care for almost fifty years. The exterior was changed as a result, with plastering and wooden porches added. In 1938, the building became a welfare and public health center, and later, in 1963, the Pinal County Historical Society acquired and maintained the building as a museum until 1970. In 1974, former governor Ernest W. McFarland purchased the building and donated it to the Arizona State Parks Board for a historic park.

An archives building was completed in 1982 and now houses the McFarland papers. With the assistance of the National Historical Publications and Records Commission, the extensive collection was organized to file level and the U.S. Senate papers have been published. The park offers guided walking tours of Florence's downtown historic district by appointment. School and educational groups are invited to visit and provided courtroom talks and guided walk through the building.

[Link to McFarland State Historic Park](#)



Arizona State Parks Foundation is an Arizona 501c3 non-profit organization that supports Arizona State Parks through advocacy, friend building and fund raising.
www.arizonastateparksfoundation.org



2006-2007 Site Facts

Visitation: 3,968

Economic Impact: \$613,318

Local Jobs Supported: 6

McFarland State Historic Park attracted 3,968 visitors in fiscal year 2007. The total economic impact of expenditures made by these guests, directly and indirectly, is estimated to be \$600,000, making the park a critical component of the local economy. In addition, tourism spending at this level supports an estimated 6 jobs in Pinal County.

Arizona State Parks and historic sites make up a significant portion of Arizona's tourism industry. Over 2 million people visited Arizona's diverse state parks in fiscal year 2007 generating \$266 million in economic impact, \$22.7 million in state and local taxes and supporting more than 3,300 Arizona jobs.