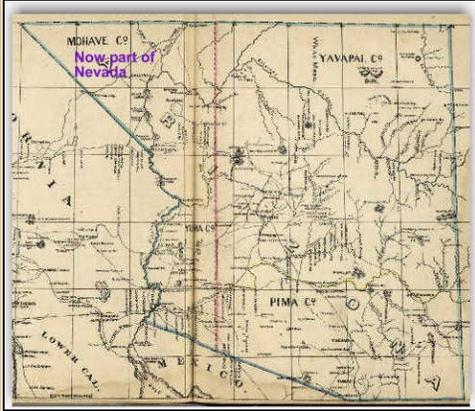


PINAL COUNTY 1891 COURTHOUSE HISTORY



This 1860's era map shows the Territory of Arizona... including a portion of Mohave County (later Pah-Ute County) that is now part of Nevada.

In 1866, the town of Florence Arizona was established. The town was formed from land patented by Levi Ruggles, who later transferred the title of the land to the Town of Florence. Ruggles was also responsible for the original planned layout of Florence. It was the fifth oldest white settlement in the state.

In 1868 a post office was built and in 1869 a general store.

In 1875, Pinal County was established from portions of Maricopa and Pima Counties. Florence became the county seat. The first Pinal County Courthouse was constructed in 1877 and is known today as [McFarland State Park](#). It is located on the corner of Ruggles and Main Street in Florence.

On December 21, 1877 the Silver King Mine was established. The mine was operated for about 35 years and shut down on May 5, 1912. The prosperity of the mine caused the establishment of the Town of Pinal, located 3 miles southwest of present day Superior.

In 1879 the City of Casa Grande was founded. The town, originally called Terminus, was the end of the rail line. Jere Fryer and [Pauline Cushman, a Civil War Union Spy](#), met and moved to Casa Grande. They later married and operated a hotel. Jere Fryer eventually became the Pinal County Sheriff. The establishment of Casa Grande marked the beginning of the rail transportation in the area.

In 1888 the "Duel at the Tunnel Saloon" took place in Florence between ex-sheriff Pete Gabriel and his ex-deputy Joe Phy. This became the most notorious gunfight in the history of the Town of Florence. Both Gabriel and Phy were shot. Gabriel recovered and lived another 10 years, however [Phy](#) died from his wounds. The duel reportedly stemmed from jealousy over a woman.



On February 1, 1890 Ed Bouvaille has been awarded the contract for the removal of the bodies from the old cemetery. Any persons having friends and relatives buried therein can have the removal by Mr. Bouvaille on very reasonable terms.

On February 22, 1890 it was noted that among the unknowns bodies removed from the old cemetery, and there are many of them, one was exhumed on Tuesday that was mummified. It was rigid and was stood up for identification but no one seemed to know him, although some traced a slight resemblance to Bill Fenton, a swamper for Dick Hastings' freighting team, who died in the hospital several years ago. It has sandy hair and beard, wore a gray wool shirt with a red necktie and blue overalls. The body was hard and the only evidence of decay was the absence of a portion of the nose.

Ed Bouvaille has about completed the removal of the bodies from the old cemetery and is prepared to contract for the removal of such others from the Catholic cemetery as their friends and relatives may desire. Superintendent Behan of Territorial Prison at Yuma, while on a wild carousel, tried to drive his buggy into the railroad hotel at the place and later on he sent several shots from his revolver through the large mirror behind the bar and committed several disgraceful acts. Get your pictures take at Buehman's photograph tent.

By March 8, 1890 all the squatters upon the cemetery lots have compromised their claim and no obstacles now remain in the way of building the courthouse thereon.

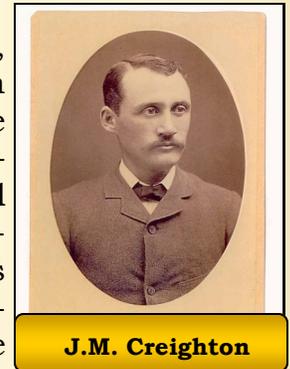
PINAL COUNTY 1891 COURTHOUSE HISTORY



On March 22, 1890 it was reported that George Cumline Wells Fargo stage driver robbed. Wood Porter secured contract for brick for new courthouse and Wood Porter corresponded to Attorney Georg Ohul to organize a militia.

News reports on September 20, 1890 noted that the great dome of the new courthouse reaches an elevation from which the smoke of the locomotive at Casa Grande can be easily seen, and the handsome proportions of the structure begin to show to good advantage. The metallic roofing is now being put on by A Weiffenbach and so far it shows the most careful and excellent workmanship. Later on the public will have an opportunity to judge of the structure and they are at perfect liberty to search for all the faults they imagine to exist in the construction.

On March 1, 1890, the Pinal County Board of Supervisors (W.C. Smith, G.W. Campbell, and E.W. Childs) hired architect J.M. Creighton to design a second county courthouse. The supervisors wanted to build a structure that represented their belief in future prosperity through mining and agriculture. Contracts to build the Second Pinal county Courthouse and jail cells were awarded to A.J. Doran and T.A. Adams. The two contracts totaled \$34,765, and extravagant sum for the time. In 1890, the operations at Silver King Mine were largely scaled back due to the devaluation of silver. The Town of Pinal, once 2000 residents strong, dwindled to a mere 10 people.



J.M. Creighton

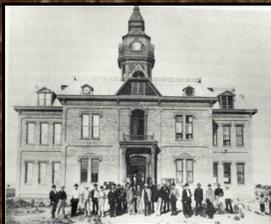
The Courthouse was completed on February 2, 1891. Built in American-Victorian architecture and totaling 15,000 square feet, the building housed the offices of the Supervisors, the Recorder, the Treasurer and the Assessor. The Sheriff's Office and jail occupied the back end of the first floor. The clock tower was constructed but there was not enough money to finance the installation of working clocks. Instead, clock facings were added with the time set at 11:44.

One of the many who were tried at the 1891 Courthouse was [Pearl Hart](#). On June 4, 1899, Pearl was jailed in the courthouse for robbing a stage coach.

On July 1, 1905 J.M. Bernal completed the painting of the courthouse. The building was given two coats of paint and a close inspection showed that the work was well done. The bright and finished appearance demonstrated that Mr. Bernal was a

conscientious workman, even on a county contract and understood his business. He was assisted in the painting by Ygnacio Moreno. "It is seldom that a mistake is made when county contracts are given to local people and the Board of Supervisors have certainly not erred in this instance."

In 1908 Florence was incorporated and in 1909 the Arizona Territorial Prison moved from Yuma to Florence. Today, Florence is still recognized as being the home of the Arizona State Prison.



1895 Courthouse

PINAL COUNTY 1891 COURTHOUSE HISTORY



Arizona officially became a state on February 14, 1912. By 1917, the first and only two story additions were made to the northwest and southwest corners of the courthouse transforming the cruciform shaped building to a “T” shape.

In 1925, Ernest W. McFarland was elected Pinal County Attorney. He served in that capacity until 1930.

Pinal County continued to grow and prosper. In 1926, the Coolidge Dam was dedicated, increasing agricultural opportunities in Pinal County. Humorist Will Rogers attended the dedication. He took one look as the Gila River was filling the storage dam and said, “If that was my lake, I’d mow it.”



In 1930 [Eva Dugan](#) received a sanity hearing in the courthouse after being convicted of murder. She was deemed sane and put to death by hanging. Her head came off during the execution. Death by hanging was immediately discontinued. She remains the only woman executed in Arizona. Ernest McFarland served as the attorney for the prosecution.

In 1933 [Winnie Ruth Judd](#) received a sanity hearing in the courthouse after a double murder conviction. She was represented by McFarland. She was deemed insane and was not executed. Her trials and tribulations become a footnote in Arizona political history.



In that same year, the Works Progress Administration, (WPA) labor helped with the first of the 3 single story additions to the courthouse. This addition expanded the northeast edge of the building.



In 1934 McFarland was elected as Pinal County Superior Court Justice. He served in this capacity until 1940. Then in 1940, McFarland was elected to the U.S. Senate, where he authors the “G.I. Bill”.

In 1943, the prisoners were moved out of the jail of the courthouse into a new county jail.

In 1952, the Pinal County Board of Supervisors voted to tear down the cupola, as its weight was causing the building to sag.

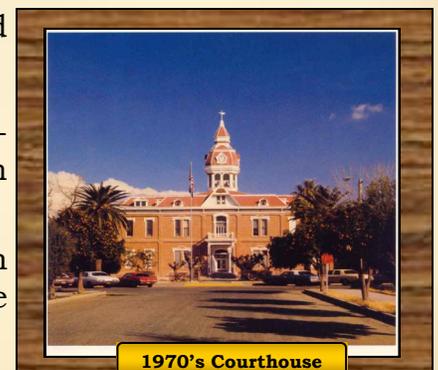
County residents protested this action and the cupola was saved.

In 1955, McFarland was elected Governor of Arizona.

In 1961, the third Pinal County Courthouse was opened and consisted of some 30,000 square feet.

McFarland was chosen as the Associate Justice of Arizona Supreme Court in 1964. He was elevated to Chief Justice in 1968.

The second courthouse was still in use by county offices and in 1975 a third addition was constructed and spanned the entire length of the north side of the building.



PINAL COUNTY 1891 COURTHOUSE HISTORY



In 1982, the fourth addition was completed on the southeast side of the courthouse. The building which had 15,000 square feet when first constructed, was now 24,000.

By the late 1990's the Pinal County Board of Supervisors researched the cost of restoring the courthouse. A building assessment report concluded that the cost of fully repairing the courthouse would be \$3 million.

In 2002, the first construction grant to repair the courthouse was secured from the State Park Heritage Fund. The grant of nearly \$100,000 and matching funds from Pinal County was used to repair the clock tower.



January 2003 began the multi-phased restoration / rehabilitation project that consisted of restoration of the clock tower, reinforcing the roof structure, reconstruction of the main entrance porch and restoration of some chimneys, roof dormers, exterior brick, and ornamental sheet metal items. Swan Architects, Inc. was awarded the contract. Completion of this project was January 2011 at a cost of \$1.3 million.

On May 19, 2004, the fourth and current Pinal County Courthouse was dedicated. The five story building, located on Jason Lopez Circle, cost \$26 million and provided the county with 145,000 square feet of space.



Brick Paver Project

While the Second Pinal County Courthouse had one courtroom for the one county judge, the new courthouse consists of seven courtrooms for nine judges. The increase in judgeships alone shows the growth of the county over the last 130 years as does the increase of the number of county employees. Starting with less than 20 employees, Pinal County currently employs slightly more than 2,100 people (circa October 2011).

In January 2011, the Pinal County Board of Supervisors voted unanimously to appropriate funds to repair the 1891 Second Pinal County Courthouse. The building is scheduled to re-open in 2013 as offices for the five county supervisors, the county manager, clerk of the board and auditor's offices. The lobbies on both the first and second floors and the courtroom are intended to remain open for the public to see and use.



On October 18, 2011, the [Arizona Historical Advisory Commission](#) (AHAC) sent a letter to Pinal County announcing that The "1891 Pinal County Courthouse Renovation" project was designated as an official Arizona Centennial Legacy Project.

And so, the 1891 Pinal County Courthouse will live on for generations to enjoy.

