

Historic Nogales Main Street

A program of Nogales Community Development

Thanks to the Pimeria Alta Historical Society & Museum and Sarah Renshaw for providing additional historic information and photos for this publication.

This Nogales Historic Tour of the downtown commercial district highlights the unique cultural and economic history of downtown Nogales. We hope you'll enjoy learning about Nogales's rich heritage, public amenities, businesses and landmarks.



Funded with support from the Union Pacific Foundation.

Produced by:



NOGALES COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT
BUILDING COMMUNITY.
ENRICHING LIVES.



PO Box 421, Nogales, AZ 85628
520-397-9219
www.nogalescdc.org

A GREATER NOGALES



A GREATER NOGALES

HISTORIC NOGALES TOURS

VOLUME 2

Downtown Commercial District

Historic Nogales Main Street

Interlacing the History of the Southwest through Nogales Historic Districts



nogalesusa.com



1. Sacred Heart Church
252 N. Rodriguez Street

2. The Bowman Hotel
245 N. Grand Avenue

3. The Noon Building
185 N. Grand Avenue

4. The Marsh Building
142-154 N. Grand Avenue

5. Old Nogales City Hall and Fire Station
136 N. Grand Avenue

6. The Herald Building and Monument
Grand Avenue at Crawford St

7. The Escalada and Gebler Buildings
81-85 N. Grand Avenue

8. The U.S. Custom's House
Grand Avenue at the Deconcini International Port of Entry

9. The Morley Gate Border Crossing
Morley Avenue at the Morley Gate International Port of Entry

10. The Levy Building
16 N. Morley Avenue

11. The Woolworth Building
34-36 N. Morley Avenue

12. The Ephraim Building
43 N. Morley Avenue

13. The Kress Building
48 N. Morley Avenue

14. The Vasquez Building
71 N. Morley Avenue

15. La Cinderella
85 N. Morley Avenue

16. Nasib Karam Park
Corner of Park Street and Morley Avenue

17. The Montezuma Hotel
104-120 N. Morley Avenue

18. The José Piskorski Building
180-184 N. Morley Avenue

19. The 1904 Santa Cruz County Court House
21 E. Court Street

20. Nogales Post Office
300 N. Morley Avenue

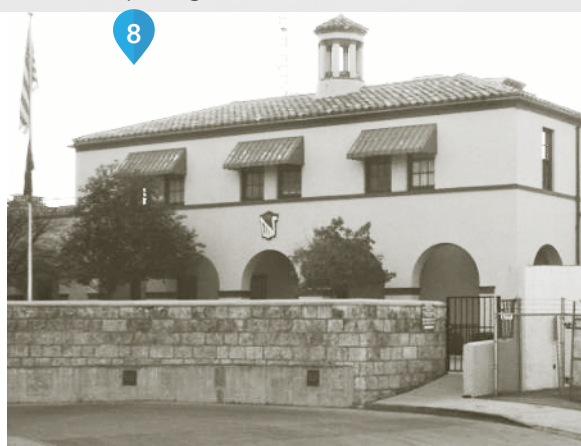
1. Sacred Heart Church was inaugurated on Thanksgiving Day in 1928, built at a cost of \$85,000 during two years of construction. In 1817, Sacred Heart Parish in Nogales, Arizona was a mission of the Sacred Heart Parish in Tombstone. The Fathers periodically visited to minister the Sacraments and offer the Holy Sacrifice. In 1897, the Diocese of Tucson was formally established, and Nogales became one of the 16 parishes. The materials used in Sacred Heart Church, including pews hewn from Spanish cedar, were furnished by pioneer Nogales industrial firm Roy & Titcomb.

2. The Bowman Hotel, built in 1917, was one of Wirt G. Bowman's many contributions to local economy. When he retired from the Southern Pacific Railroad in 1912, he became a cattle broker, owned a wholesale grocery business, operated a jobbing house, and created the Bowman Mercantile Company. His broader interests focused on politics and regional real estate development. He was mayor of Nogales, and was a powerful force in the Mexican Development Company and the Agua Caliente Company, responsible for the construction of the famous Agua Caliente Resort in 1928.

3. The Noon Building was built by Adolphus Samuel Noon, M.D., in 1908 as A.S. Noon Blacksmith. This two-story building is the only "flatiron" building in Nogales, sited on a small irregular plot that optimized available space in the rapidly growing city. It is constructed from cast-in-place concrete. Noon was an active entrepreneur and politician, with interests in many businesses, including ranching and mining. Noon helped to shape the Nogales economic, political and social landscape, and served on the original Santa Cruz County Board of Supervisors in 1899.

4. The Marsh Building, dating back to 1905, is the largest brick commercial building in Nogales. George B. Marsh had diversified interests in early-day Nogales, including hardware, furniture, and mortuary services. The original building included the Fulton Market and the Nogales Post Office. The building was greatly expanded in 1911, and then again in 1914 with the addition of a second story. Marsh was also proprietor of the earlier Marsh's Opera House (no longer extant), which housed Santa Cruz County offices prior to the original county courthouse opening in 1904.

5. Old Nogales City Hall and Fire Station, with its signature clock tower, was built in 1914 as the Nogales City Hall under direction of the renowned Tucson architect Henry O. Jaastad. It encompassed the offices of the mayor, the sheriff's office with two holding cells, and the fire department. Today, the building is home to many historic treasures, including the old jail facility and the doors that led from the original fire station to the street where the horse-drawn fire engine came and went.



6. The Herald Building and Monument on the southwest corner of Grand Avenue and Crawford Street has a bronze statue of the newspaper boy who is dedicated to Hanson Ray Sisk, the owner of the Nogales Herald, which was the first enduring daily newspaper in Nogales. The Herald was first published in 1914. Between 1885 and 1920, several newspapers were started and failed. Sisk, a reporter from Kentucky, arrived about the same time to cover Mexico's revolution for the El Paso Herald and stayed on and became manager, then owner of the Nogales paper.

7. The Escalada and Gebler Building is on the west side of Grand Avenue in the middle of the block, now owned by the Escalada family. Constructed with detailing that is a fine example of the Spanish Colonial Revival style, the building is one of the oldest stores in Nogales. Manuel Escalada emigrated from northern Spain and opened his dry goods store in 1892. Theodore Gebler was born in Berlin, and in 1884 he settled in Nogales where his many business interests prospered.

8. The U.S. Custom's House at Nogales was funded by the Public Works Administration in 1934. The building was constructed in 1935 in the Spanish Eclectic style under a design by the prominent federal architect Louis A. Simon. The evocative architecture is a reminder of Nogales's important role as a primary port of entry from Mexico along the Arizona border.

9. The Morley Gate Border Crossing is an historic crossing gate still in operation. The gate has been substantially fortified in recent years and now is for pedestrians only. Morley Avenue was the first "main street" of Nogales, and the Morley Avenue crossing was a major thoroughfare for people and goods during the rapid growth of Nogales in the 19th and 20th centuries.

10. Built in 1889, The Levy Building is the oldest stone commercial building in Nogales. The two-story structure is now home to a retail store. The building carries the name of Emanuel Levy, born in Texas, who came to Nogales in 1886 working as both merchant and miner. After constructing the building with a partner named Raas, Levy became a prominent local merchant serving both sides of the border until the financial panic of 1893, when he left Nogales.

11. The Woolworth Building, constructed in 1917 for the former Woolworth Company, still carries the original red and gilt signage emblematic of the early days of the retail chain that became known as America's "five and dime." This is the only neoclassical commercial building in Nogales as well as the only original terra cotta façade in Nogales. Woolworth's was one of the "anchor stores" on Morley Avenue in early 20th century Nogales that pulled in crowds of shoppers from both sides of the border.

12. The Ephraim Building is one of three buildings associated with Leopold Ephraim, a Nogales pioneer, and successful merchant and miner. Ephraim was born in Poland (then Prussia) and emigrated to the U.S. in 1869. His first local store was in Tubac, but Apache raids sent him to more civilized Nogales, where he set up a store in a half-frame tent. He constructed the Ephraim Building in 1917 on the site of his old tent store. Ephraim started the first commercial water company in Nogales.

13. The Kress Building is best example of Commercial Style architecture in Nogales, with its basic façade: pedimented parapet, cornice, discrete windows, and uniform storefront bays. Construction began in 1917, with the New York Kress seeking to outdo the Chicago-based Woolworth company next door. The Kress building is especially noteworthy for its brick masonry and cast stone detailing.

14. The Vasquez Building, Ramon Vasquez's mercantile establishment, was one of the most important features in the commercial climate of Nogales in the late 1880s. The Red House sold merchandise throughout the territory and also shipped goods by rail throughout Mexico, using a system of mail-order merchandising. Vasquez had interests in real estate in both Nogales and Tucson, owned a cattle ranch on the Lower San Pedro River and longtime friend and partner of Emanuel Ephraim.

15. La Cinderella, the distinctive pink building, has been a landmark for shoppers and sightseers for generations. Currently owned by the Kory family, La Cinderella for generations has offered everything from wedding dresses to handbags, shoes and costume jewelry for young women from both sides of the border. Built in 1909 and sporting a corbelled parapet atop its stucco façade, La Cinderella sits just east of the railroad right of way and across the south end of Nasib Karam Park.

16. Nasib Karam Park is also known as La Placita Park. It is named for Nasib Karam, a Lebanese immigrant who opened a mercantile store on Morley Avenue in 1906. By the time of his death in 1955, he was a successful businessman, well known throughout Arizona, who held several large properties in downtown Phoenix and Tucson.

17. The Montezuma Hotel dates back to 1886, and the current structure is the result of expansion and remodeling undertaken during the 1920s. Structural changes continued through the 1960s. As the largest hostelry in Nogales, the Montezuma was the center of the town's social and economic life. The hotel was a favorite gathering spot for the local elite, including General Francisco "Pancho" Villa among other dignitaries. A different description from 1888 refers to the hotel as "a board shack where gamblers and dance hall girls...made a ruckus."

18. The José Piskorski Building was built in 1906 by Nogales businessman and rancher José Piskorski, this building is one of the best-preserved stone commercial buildings in Nogales. It was constructed of native tufa stone. Between 1906 and 1908 the Nogales and Santa Cruz County Board of Trade occupied offices in the second floor. The second floor was then used as the San Antonio House Hotel, while various businesses used the storefronts and storage rooms on the ground level. Piskorski was born in Poland and became a U.S. citizen in Tucson in 1892.

19. The 1904 Santa Cruz County Court House is Nogales's only public Neo-Classical style building. Most of the building's material is tufa stone quarried nearby in Nogales. The eight-foot statue of the Goddess of Justice atop the dome for some unknown reason is not wearing a blindfold. Current restoration efforts being managed by "Friends of the 1904 Courthouse."

20. Construction of the Nogales Post Office was approved by Congress in 1913, but was not completed until 1924 due to economic and political delays. The poured concrete Colonial Revival building with stucco façade and carved stone door arch was symbolic of growth and stability in rapidly developing Nogales. With the opening, dependable mail delivery service to the city's newly numbered buildings began for the first time.