

Strange RV Encounters: The Rex Allen Museum and Koko the Horse in Willcox, AZ



The Weird, the Wacky, and the Wonderful



Juliana Mathews, Yahoo Contributor Network
Oct 15, 2013

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A small town large in history, [Willcox, Arizona](#), is home to some famous dead people and a famous horse. Here lie Warren Earp (Wyatt's brother), actor/singer Rex Allen, and his trusty steed Koko the Horse.

In "[Tombstones in Tombstone, Arizona](#)," I mentioned the running theme among roadside attractions in southern Arizona seems to be dead people. There is a good reason for this: the rich, albeit wild and often violent, history of the southwestern United States.

I'm young enough or naive enough that I occasionally catch myself thinking certain things only happened in the movies. But the Wild West didn't occur in those Clint Eastwood and John Wayne movies, it occurred in places like Tombstone and Willcox.

Warren Earp Gunned Down in Willcox

Willcox is probably only a day's horse ride from the site of the infamous gunfight at the OK Corral, but Warren Earp, the youngest of the Earp brothers, was in California at the time of the fight in 1882. It wasn't until 18 years later that Cowboy Johnny Boyett shot and killed Warren Earp on a street in Willcox. He was laid to rest in 1900 at the Old Cemetery.

Rex Allen and Koko the Horse

Dedicated to Rex Allen, Koko the Horse, and other famous cowboys is the [Rex Allen Museum and Willcox Cowboy Hall of Fame](#). A handsome cowboy with a smooth voice, Allen is known as the Arizona Cowboy and the last of the singing cowboys. Well before my time, Allen and Koko the Horse starred in Western movies in the early to mid-'50s.

Back in those days, cowboys had to provide their own horses, and Koko was Allen's personal horse. (I just can't see that on a celebrity contract these days, can you?) The public loved Koko, but no one more than Allen. Koko was originally buried on his ranch, but Allen had Koko exhumed and buried at the park across the street from the Rex Allen Museum. A statue of Allen playing guitar watches over Koko. At his request, upon his death, Allen's were scattered around the statue.

The Rex Allen Museum is at 150 N. Railroad Ave. in Willcox, Arizona. Koko's resting place is across the street at Railroad Park, watched over by the statue of Allen.

The Wild West lives on in old Western movies and more than a few roadside attractions. And southern hospitality is alive and well and living in Willcox, where some of the friendliest folks I've met on my journey reside.

My next trip is a long drive from Arizona. Come along with me when I blaze through New Mexico on my way to Texas, a state that seems like another country.

To see many more photos, [follow more of my weird, wacky, and wonderful RV adventures](#)

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My next stop: Strange RV Encounters: The World's Largest Blue Crab in Rockport, Texas.

Read how it all began: Strange RV Encounters: An Introduction.

Published by [Juliana Mathews](#)

In the summer of 2011, Juliana bought an RV, gave up most of her possessions and began traveling around the country with her cat, seeing all the weird, wacky and wonderful roadside attractions. She writes... [View profile](#)

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