WHERE THE BODIES ARE BURIED

It's October. The time of year when sweatshirts replace T-shirts, when pumpkins go on sale, and when little ghosts and goblins gear up to go trick-or-treating. In the spirit of the season, we sent one of our most ambitious photographers on a grave pursuit. Literally. His mission: to photograph cemeteries in every county of the state. Two thousand, six hundred and seventy-six miles later, mission accomplished.
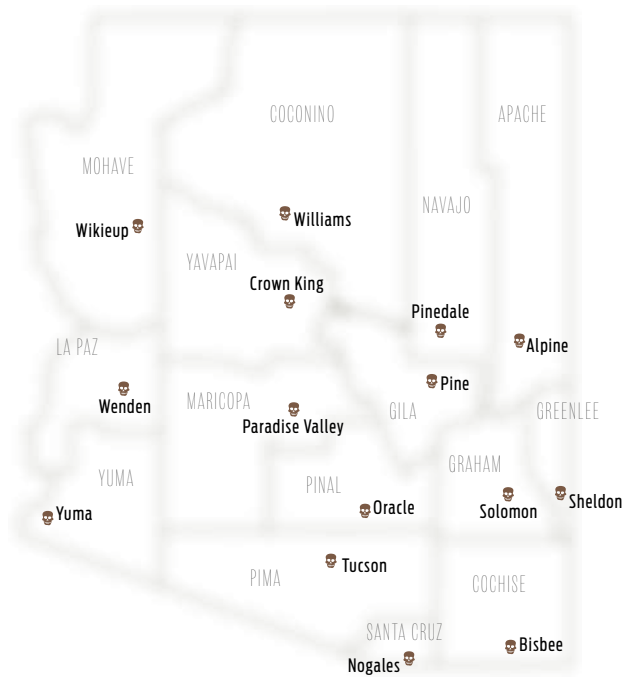
A PORTFOLIO BY MARK LIPCZYNSKI

ABOVE: A stone cherub rests in grass at Oracle Cemetery in Pinal County.
RIGHT: A single gravestone sits amid pine trees in a section of Williams Cemetery.

BONEYARDS, ARIZONA.

MOHAVE

COCONINO

APACHE

Wikieup

Williams

NAVAJO

YAVAPAI

Crown King

Pinedale

Alpine

LA PAZ

Pine

GREENLEE

Wenden

MARICOPA

GILA

Paradise Valley

GRAHAM

YUMA

PINAL

Yuma

Oracle

Solomon

Sheldon

PIMA

Tucson

COCHISE

SANTA CRUZ

Nogales

Bisbee

PINE CEMETERY
Location: Pine
County: Gila
Year Established: 1881

"I don't have any eerie incidents to report from the Pine Cemetery," Lipczynski says. "The blurred effect in most of my images is achieved by a tilt-shift lens. Many photo nerds will know what this is. It's made specifically for architectural photography, but it can be creatively adapted to isolate a point of interest in a picture, throwing the rest way out of focus."

EVERGREEN CEMETERY
Location: Bisbee
County: Cochise
Year Established: 1912

"I stitched together three shots to create this panorama of Evergreen Cemetery," says photographer Mark Lipczynski. "I converted the shot because there's so much information in the panorama; I thought black and white would simplify the image and make it easier to look at. Nothing strange happened here. This was made on Memorial Day weekend, so I think most of the ghosts took the day off."

YUMA TERRITORIAL PRISON CEMETERY
Location: Yuma
County: Yuma
Year Established: 1876

"The Yuma Territorial Prison Cemetery was my favorite, and I saved it for last because I really wanted to spend some time there," Lipczynski says. "I also wanted to shoot it after dark. It's the only cemetery I photographed after dark. When I first read about this place, it made me sad to think that the people buried there probably had very lonely and empty lives that ended in lonely, unmarked graves. I say it was my favorite because, for me, it had the most powerful energy."

SANDY CEMETERY
Location: near Wikieup
County: Mohave
Year Established: 1890

"This was a tough one," Lipczynski says. "I spent close to two hours driving on primitive dirt roads, trying to find another cemetery. I stopped to get gas and asked the clerk where to find Sandy Cemetery and was promptly met with, 'Who wants to know?' I explained what I was doing, and the clerk pointed me in the right direction. I blew right past the cemetery, but finally found it. Daisy's was an old headstone that I noticed tucked under a bush. I don't know what kind of bush it was, but I liked how the branches enveloped the headstone and the way the colors turned out in the final shot."

PINEDALE CEMETERY
Location: Pinedale
County: Navajo
Year Established: 1888

"One of the things I noticed about the cemeteries I photographed is that many of the graves were being reclaimed by the earth," Lipczynski says. "I took that to mean that no surviving relatives were around to maintain the graves, leaving them to decay and soon be forgotten. This lonesome, deteriorating bench left out in the elements in the Pinedale Cemetery was a symbol of that lonely and forgotten fate."

SOLOMON CEMETERY
Location: Solomon
County: Graham
Year Established: 1870s

"I loved this cemetery," Lipczynski says. "It was so serene, peaceful and beautiful. I journaled about it after I visited, because it touched me deeply. The sun was setting, and there were a lot of busy birds flying in, resting for a moment, then going off again. I watched one in particular dive down below the horizon of the mesa, then come back up and hover overhead before going back down. I wanted to get it into the shot. I made several unsuccessful attempts; then, as I was getting ready to leave, all the pieces lined up, and the bird flew overhead in just the right spot."

**CROWN KING
MAIN CEMETERY**
Location: Crown king
County: Yavapai
Year Established:
circa 1898

"When I found this cemetery, it was already late in the day, and the sun was getting into a low position, with about four hours before it set," Lipczynski says. "I didn't have to wait long before I got this shot. I just kept shooting everything around me that looked interesting. I remember it was very buggy there. Flies were buzzing around me wherever I went, and there were a lot of ants. That was a little disconcerting to me."

**CALABASAS
CEMETERY**
Location: Nogales
County: Santa Cruz
Year Established: 1756

"I had a film camera with tungsten-balanced film in it when I arrived at the Nogales Cemetery," Lipczynski says. "I knew that the tungsten film would give a bluish hue to the shots made in the daylight. So, to match, I converted my digital images to have the same or similar color cast as the film exposures. It would have worked if I had processed the film on time. I should mention that there was a decapitated chicken in a plastic bag sitting on the ground just under the arch that greets visitors to this cemetery. It was very disturbing."

WENDEN CEMETERY
Location: Wenden
County: La Paz
Year Established: 1916

"I don't know the technical term for the grave pictured here, but I had never seen one like it before," Lipczynski says. "It was unique to me, so I honed right in on it. The rest of the cemetery was flat, dusty and just baking in the sun. One end of the cemetery backed up to someone's residence. That was a challenge, because I wanted all the cemeteries to be void of any signs of modern life."

WILLIAMS CEMETERY (MOUNTAIN VIEW)
Location: Williams
County: Coconino
Year Established: 1845

"The Williams Cemetery is where my digital camera started acting wonky," Lipczynski says. "I was struggling to find something unique at this location. I had driven around the worn paths that navigate this cemetery, trying to come up with creative solutions. Here, I used a filter to reflect objects behind me into the lens while the camera was pointed forward, focused on the statue. So, the treetops you see to the left of the statue are actually a reflection of trees and sky behind me."

SHELDON CEMETERY
Location: Sheldon
County: Greenlee
Year Established: 1915

"As I was leaving this cemetery, I noticed the monument rising above almost everything around it, making it a strong focal point," Lipczynski says. "I stopped my car and got out so I could get low to the ground to emphasize the monument even more. I set the camera on the ground to include the sun, and dialed my aperture down to f/22 to make the sunburst."

ALPINE CITY CEMETERY
Location: Alpine
County: Apache
Year Established: 1871

"This photograph is actually a vignette of the entire grounds," Lipczynski says. "I liked many of the shots I made in Alpine, this one included. There wasn't anything particularly creepy about the cemetery. It felt peaceful and very quiet."

CAMELBACK CEMETERY
Location: Paradise Valley
County: Maricopa
Year Established: 1916

"I used the angel headstone in several shots that I was playing with during my time at this cemetery," Lipczynski says. "It wasn't until the sun started setting that I made a connection between the angel on the headstone and the light on the distant house. The scene is symbolic of an angel moving toward the light, the light being a representation of heaven or God or afterlife."

TANQUE VERDE RANCH CEMETERY
Location: Tucson
County: Pima
Year Established: 1868

"This cemetery was very small and very old," Lipczynski says. "The two crosses side by side make a great focal point, and the landscape behind it really makes it feel isolated — like it's far removed from civilization. It's the sort of place that might show up in an old Western movie."

ORACLE CEMETERY
Location: Oracle
County: Pinal
Year Established: 1904

"The Oracle Cemetery is really a neat place because there are actually levels of burials on the grounds, and there are primitive staircases for people to use to get to the different levels," Lipczynski says. "The thing that drew me to this spot is that gnarly looking tree. I wanted to incorporate that into a shot and, luckily, the headstones are situated in a spot that makes for a balanced composition." AH