

RV Traveling Tales: Women's Journeys On The Open Road

Fifty-two women answer the question: "What is it like to be a female on the open road, leaving family, community, and possessions to head into the unknown in an RV?" This wonderful book is a "must read" for women RVers.

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RV ARTICLES & OPINION : WOMEN RVERS : MALIA'S MILES

Life lessons from cemeteries

By Malia Lane

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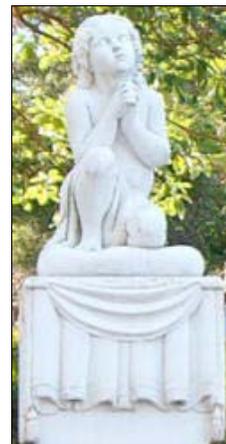
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I was discussing a mutual fascination with an RVer friend yesterday after she said she enjoyed my web pages about the 1800's [Jacksonville Cemetery](#).

Pat and I laughed and said not many people would choose to spend a day pouring over old tombstones. But we both agreed that the attraction was only to the really old graveyards, certainly not the sterile stick-em-in-the-wall-slot mausoleums of today.

I then got to thinking about what it is that fascinates me so about old historical cemeteries. The ancient ones I've visited in New Orleans where voodoo queens still live, Savannah's famous [Bonaventure](#) with the spooky Spanish moss, and Jacksonville's peaceful hilltop among massive Madrone trees - they're all quite beautiful settings where you can wander through lost time.

You can see the devastation left by diseases that wiped out entire families then that are no match for modern medicine today. You can still feel the parents' grief at these memorials to their "angels" when you see the tiny tombstones of babies lost before they could celebrate one year alive. Those scenes always makes me think about my own daughters and how totally unnatural and unthinkable it is for a parent to contemplate outliving their children.



An angel who left the earth

I walk around in the still quiet, wondering about what these people's lives were like - how they lived, how young they died - what made them leave the security of what was known about the world at that time to journey into uncharted and dangerous territory. These guys were the pioneers who blazed the roads that RVers ride on so comfortably today.

Pat said she and her husband Mel thought it was funny when they were younger to take a picture of him laying in one of those full length gravesites under a tombstone with his arms crossed across his chest like a corpse. She said they don't

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Don't go here before you've really lived

think it's so funny anymore because the scene feels too close for comfort now that they're older.

That's another thing I think most RVers have in common. We seem to be aware of the brevity of life more than most. All of us can cite examples of people who waited too long to follow their dreams. We're determined to follow the creed of the newbie generation of RVers going fulltime this year, The Graduating Class of 2005:

"Life is not a journey to the grave with the intention of arriving safely in a pretty and well preserved body, but rather sliding in broadside, thoroughly used up, totally worn out and proclaiming, "Wow, what a ride!" - unknown

Malia Lane has been a solo fulltime RVer for four years and has published her journal, "Inspiration's Journey" at [MaliasRV.com](#). She recently began a new site [MaliasMiles.com](#) as an "information service for RVers by a fulltime RVer."

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