**Tombstone Home of King Solomon Territorial Lodge #5.** The lodge was originally chartered as Solomon Lodge UD, F. and A. M.in the jurisdiction of the State of California. To clear up question about which Earp petitioned the Lodge for membership the Lodge offers the following information. The lodge has on file Virgil Earp’s petition for the Degrees. Virgil Earp giving his age as 37 and occupation as Chief of Police, petitioned the lodge for membership on July 12 1887. No records can be found (so far) to indicate that any action was ever taken on the petition.

Now some information of Tombstone and the “Gunfight at the OK Corral”. Tombstone is a former silver mining town in the desert in southeastern Arizona, known for its Wild West history and is world renowned for its mining history and the "Gunfight at the OK Corral" in 1881, between the Earp brothers -- Wyatt, Morgan and Virgil and Doc Holliday -- and Ike and Billy Clanton, Frank and Tom McLaury and Billy Claiborne.

Exhibits at the Tombstone Courthouse State Historic Park include a replica gallows. On historic Allen Street, the O.K. Corral outdoor theater re-enacts an 1881 cowboy gunfight. Resident ghosts are said to haunt the bullet-riddled Bird Cage Theatre. Outlaws are among the local townsfolk buried at the 1878 Boothill Cemetery, of southeast Arizona; home of the O.K. Corral, Bird Cage Theatre, Rose Tree Inn and Boothill Cemetery

Formerly called the "Tombstone Cemetery", the plot features the graves of Billy Clanton, Frank McLaury and Tom McLaury; the three men who were killed during the famed Gunfight at the O.K. Corral.

Boothill Graveyard is a small graveyard of at least 250 interments located in Tombstone, Cochise County, Arizona. Also known as the "Old City Cemetery", the graveyard was used after 1883 only to bury outlaws and a few others. It had a separate Jewish cemetery, which is nearby.

Originally, settlers had buried their dead at Army Forts located throughout the territories. But when lawlessness set in, and people were being killed faster than they could bury them, the need for a local cemetery became clear. Hence, the boot hills.

What's the difference in a graveyard and cemetery? The word cemetery (from Greek κοιμητήριον, "sleeping place") implies that the land is specifically designated as a burial ground and originally applied to the Roman catacombs. The term graveyard is often used interchangeably with cemetery, but a graveyard primarily refers to a burial ground within a churchyard.

After the gunfight at the OK Corral, you can take your picture standing next to the gunfighters. You can photograph the gunfight and the O.K. Corral grounds as long as the photos are for your personal use only. Listen to a recorded narration of the 30-second showdown that left three cowboys dead and Virgil and Morgan Earp wounded. The cost is $10.

A Brief History of the Famous Gunfight at the O.K. Corral.

In a Fateful 30 Seconds ...

On the cold afternoon of October 26, 1881, four men in long black coats strode purposefully down the dusty Fremont Street. Around the corner, in a narrow vacant lot behind the O.K. Corral, waited six cowboys. In a fateful thirty seconds, nearly thirty shots were fired at close range. The gunbattle between the Earps – lead by Marshal Virgil Earp, his brothers Wyatt and Morgan and their friend, Doc Holliday – and the Clanton-McLaury gang left Billy Clanton and the McLaury brothers dead and Virgil, Morgan, and Doc wounded.

Today we frame this event as a legendary example of Western vigilante justice, where lawmen preserving the peace faced down cattle rustlers suspected of robbing a Wells Fargo stagecoach. But the historical backdrop for this deadly tension is far more complex. After the Civil War, rapid growth in the American industrial economy spurred an interest in Westward expansion. Boomtowns like Tombstone provided fertile ground for the continuation of the war's sectional strife in the Western territories. Wealthy Northern mine owners and businessmen jockeyed with Southern cowboys from Texas for control and power. Each faction brought its economic, political, and social conflicts to the Arizona Territory – and to the Gunfight at the O.K. Corral.

The story began in 1877, when Ed Schieffelin's discovery of significant veins of silver ore in southeastern Arizona's Cochise County held out alluring promises of wealth and opportunity for enterprising people from all walks of life. Between 1879 and 1880, Tombstone's population exploded from a handful of prospectors to nearly 6,000 residents. With this rapid influx of newcomers, Tombstone's fledgling social and political infrastructure began to take shape. Profits from the mines created a business-friendly town center with a pronounced need for law enforcement officers to maintain justice and order. To provide protection and reduce crime and violence, Tombstone's town leaders sought out men like Wyatt Earp, who had built his reputation as a gunfighter and lawman in Dodge City.

Tombstone soon became the center of a feud which pitted a group of prominent ranchers headed by the Clanton and McLaury families against a coalition of Tombstone businessmen represented by the Earps. The ranchers, who sold meat to the town and nearby Fort Huachuca, often "supplemented" their income by rustling cattle. These "Cowboys" were Democrats with strong ties to Texas and were supported by Cochise County Sheriff Johnny Behan. The Earp faction – Wyatt, his brothers Virgil, Morgan, and Warren, and their friend Doc Holliday – had the backing of Tombstone's Republican business elite, including Mayor John Clum (editor of The Tombstone Epitaph newspaper), mining magnate E.B. Gage, and Episcopalian minister Rev. Endicott Peabody.

In April 1881, with passage of Tombstone's ordinance preventing citizens from carrying guns in town, tensions between the Earps and the Cowboys mounted. Stagecoach robberies, cattle rustling, and Wyatt's loss of the lucrative county sheriff position to Johnny Behan, a friend of the Clantons and McLaurys, compounded the conflict.

Political and personal disputes erupted in violence on October 26, 1881, in a narrow vacant lot behind the O.K. Corral. After a long night of poker that ended in an exchange of harsh words and a series of small scuffles, a confrontation appeared to be inevitable. According to historian Paula Marks, County Sheriff Behan insisted, "There is to be trouble between the Clanton and the Earp boys today."

Throughout the morning, various members of the vigilante businessmen's Citizens Safety Committee volunteered to intervene in the conflict, but Marshal Virgil Earp, seeking to avoid the involvement of armed citizens, respectfully declined their offers. Instead he sought Sheriff Behan's aid in disarming the Cowboys, who had now moved to the vacant lot behind the O.K. Corral next to photographer C.S. Fly's Boarding House (where Doc Holliday lived). Behan, however, was unable to convince the Cowboys to give up their weapons – and unable to prevent the Earps and Doc Holliday from heading to the O.K. Corral to disarm the Cowboys.

A Brief Overview of the Shootout

The stage was set. As the Earps turned the corner and entered the narrow passageway between the Harwood House and Fly's Boarding House, they met their rivals face-to-face. Each lawmen carried a six-shooter. In addition, "Doc" Holliday carried a shotgun hidden under his long coat. Less than six feet away from the Cowboys, Virgil called out, "Boys, throw up your hands, I've come to disarm you." Billy Clanton is said to have responded, "Don't shoot! I don't want to fight!" To which Wyatt Earp allegedly said, "You sons of bitches have been looking for a fight and now you have it." And bullets flew. Within thirty seconds, nearly thirty shots were fired.

During the gun battle, Billy Clanton shot Morgan Earp through the leg and Virgil Earp through the shoulders. A bullet just grazed Doc Holliday's hip. Cowboys Ike Clanton and Billy Claibourne were unarmed, and both ran away when the fighting began. The remaining three cowboys (Frank and Tom McLaury and Billy Clanton) were all killed. Tom McLaury, who also may have been unarmed, was shot and killed by a blast from Doc's shotgun. His brother, Frank McLaury, was shot in the stomach by Wyatt, then killed by a shot to the head by Doc or Morgan Earp. Nineteen year old Billy Clanton was shot in the chest and the right arm which forced him to continue shooting left-handed. He died of his wounds 30 minutes after the fight. Virgil Earp, Morgan Earp, and Doc Holliday were carried home, treated by Dr. Goodfellow. Only Wyatt remained unharmed. As reported in the Tombstone Nugget newspaper on October 27, 1881, the gunfight reflected "one of the crimson days in the annals of Tombstone, a day when blood flowed as water ... a day always to be remembered as witnessing the bloodiest and deadliest street fight that has ever occurred in this place, or probably in the Territory."

**The Aftermath**

The coroner opened a formal inquest on October 27th, which led to a month-long preliminary hearing before Justice of the Peace Wells Spicer. Ike Clanton's testimony obviously differed on key points from the recollections of the Earps and Doc Holliday. The townspeople were split in their allegiances, some believing the Earps used necessary force to quash a threat to Tombstone's civil order, others believing the lawmen were oppressors of individual rights. At the trial's end, Justice Spicer censured Virgil Earp but found insufficient cause for the defendants to be tried for murder: "I cannot resist the conclusion that the defendants were fully justified in committing these homicides." The wave of reprisals left Morgan Earp dead, Virgil Earp permanently disabled, and the Cowboys significantly weakened. Under indictment for murder in the revenge shootings of his brother Morgan’s killers, Wyatt Earp left Tombstone with Doc Holliday in April 1882.

There are those who say Wyatt Earp was the Lion of Tombstone, the man who saw his unpleasant duty and brought peace to a troubled town. There are others who just as strongly proclaim that the Earps were no better than the men with whom they fought, and the killings were the outgrowth of outlaw activities in which all were involved. Still others say Wyatt Earp was really just a hired gun, doing what he was told to do, a man no better and no worse than a horde of like contemporaries throughout the unstable West. Today, evaluation is difficult, for we judge by present standards the men who lived in a different world, at a hard to imagine time, and under a flexible set of rules.

For over 125 years, the dramatic events of October 26, 1881, have captured the imagination of historians and storytellers. The Earps and the Cowboys have become iconic symbols of the untamed Western frontier. But of all the Old West gun battles, why do these thirty seconds live on in history? In boomtowns like Tombstone, economic and political concerns dominated the community's culture, reinforced by social allegiances. Turbulent events like the Gunfight remain significant today not because of their the "good" defeated the "bad," but rather because they reflect the complex realities of the Western frontier.

**The Lawmen**

Drawn to Tombstone by the alluring prospect of striking it rich in the town's silver boom, James, Virgil, and Wyatt Earp arrived with their common law wives in 1879, and were soon joined by their close friend Doc Holliday, followed in 1880 by Morgan and Warren. They operated gambling concessions, ran saloons, and invested in real estate and mining claims. However, it was the Earps tough, unyielding skill as lawmen able to bring order to rowdy frontier communities that brought them to the attention of Tombstone's Republican businessmen ... and cast the brothers as central figures in the West's political and economic struggle for control and power.

**Wyatt Berry Stapp Earp** Born: March 19, 1848 (Monmouth, Illinois)

Died: January 13, 1929 (Los Angeles, California)

Celebrated by many as a man who brought law and order to America's boomtowns – while denounced by others as a revenge-seeker and murderer who took the law into his own hands – Wyatt Earp remains one of the Old West's most enigmatic figures. The subject of scores of movies, television dramas, and novels, Earp stands out as an iconic legend. Yet his actual life story reflects the thin line between respectability and notoriety that permeated America's frontier communities.

The middle brother of five, Wyatt was born in 1848 to Nicholas and Virginia Earp. A tall, quiet loner, he moved frequently with his family, settling in Illinois, Iowa, and California before returning east in 1869 to become constable in Lamar, Missouri. Married in 1870, his young pregnant bride died suddenly from typhoid. Devastated, Wyatt drifted, spending his twenties one step ahead of the law. Ever seeking his fortune in the next boomtown, he moved to Kansas to work in his brother James' brothel. When the summer cattle drives ended, he turned to police work in Wichita and Dodge City, making sure to keep the Texas cowboys out of trouble – businesses suffered when cowboys with money in their pockets were jailed. At age 31, Wyatt turned his sights to Tombstone. A gambler, faro dealer, and shotgun messenger for Wells Fargo, he was deputized by his brother, Chief of Police Virgil Earp, to keep the peace in the Oriental Saloon. The Earp brothers, as representatives for Tombstone's businessmen, were soon feuding with the Clantons and McLaurys, ranchers who lived outside of town.

**Armament**: Wyatt probably carried the Colt .45 single-action Peacemaker, with a 7½" blued steel barrel and wood handle, presented to him by Epitaph editor John Clum. The gun was tucked in Wyatt's waistband and reached through a pocket opening in Earp's long coat.

After the Gunfight: Arrested and tried for the murder of the Cowboys, the Earps and Doc Holliday were acquitted in November 1881 by Judge Spicer. With tensions running high, Virgil was shot and crippled in December and five months later, in May 1882, Morgan was assassinated. Wyatt, now a Deputy US Marshal, sought revenge. His vendetta ride (March 20-April 15, 1882) resulted in the deaths of Cowboys Frank Stillwill and Curly Bill Brocious, to name a few. Indicted for murder, Wyatt and Doc Holliday left Tombstone for Colorado, vowing vengeance on Ike Clanton and other Cowboys targeting the Earp family. He reconnected with his Tombstone lover, Josephine Marcus, and the couple moved to San Francisco, where Wyatt gambled on horses, invested in real estate, and refereed boxing matches. In 1897, they followed the next boom to Alaska, opening a saloon in Nome at the height of the Gold Rush. Returning to Los Angeles in 1901 nearly $80,000 richer, they staked claims for gold in the Mohave Desert, and Wyatt served as an advisor for Hollywood's new silent Western films. But Tombstone continued to haunt their lives. Aided by John Flood, Wyatt and Josie began crafting his memoirs. He died of cancer on January 13, 1929, and was buried in Josie's family plot in Colma, California. Five years later, Stuart Lake's film biography, Frontier Marshal, was released – and the legend of Wyatt Earp and the Gunfight at the O.K. Corral took hold as a symbolic icon of the untamed frontier.

**The Cowboys**

Through the early months of 1881, the Clantons continued to rustle cattle from Mexico, a crime that the Earp lawmen could do nothing about. Their hands were tied since cattle rustling was officially a county matter and John Behan was the county. The gap between the law and the outlaw faction grew wider and the town divided into two camps. While most of Tombstone's citizens supported the Earps, the politically strong outlaw element, with Behan in control, supported the Clantons.

**Joseph Isaac "Ike" Clanton** Born: Ca. 1847 (Callaway County, Missouri)

Died: June 1, 1887 (Springerville, Arizona)

Craven coward or rough-and-tumble roustabout? 34 year old rancher Ike Clanton has been portrayed as both over the decades. Certainly, he was the final catalyst in the events that led to the shootout. The Clanton family moved to the Tombstone area in 1868. Ike's ranch was on the San Pedro River about 14 miles SW from Tombstone.

Armament: Unarmed. His Winchester carbine and Colt. 45 had been taken away earlier that day by Virgil.

During the Gunfight: The unarmed Ike Clanton briefly grappled with Wyatt as he ran away from the fight into the front door of Fly's Boardinghouse, he continued running through Fly's back door all the way to a dance hall on Allen Street. He lived on a ranch built by his father "Old Man" Clanton who had arrived in the area in 1868 or 69 on the San Pedro River about 5 miles south of Charleston, and about 14 miles SW from Tombstone.

After the Gunfight: Ike managed to dodge Earp bullets during the gunfight and Wyatt's ride of revenge afterwards. But he wasn't able to dodge a bullet given to him by Deputy Marshall Jonas V. Brighton on June 1, 1887, six years later. Ike Clanton died at the age of 39.

**Billy Claibourne** died on November 14, 1882 at the age of 22. Claiborne insulted "Buckskin" Frank Leslie (who was tending bar at the Oriental Saloon) and refused to leave. After two men told Leslie that Claiborne was waiting for him outside, Leslie stepped out and saw "a foot of rifle barrel protruding from the end of the fruit stand." He told Claiborne "Don't shoot, I don't want you to kill me, nor do I want to have to shoot you." Claiborne, still drunk, raised his rifle and fired the weapon, missing Leslie. Leslie returned fire and hit Claiborne in the chest. Claiborne was buried in Tombstone's Boot hill Cemetery.