



THE VINTAGE ADVANTAGE

News Items for Vintage Airstream Owners & Admirers



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Vintage Airstream Club A WBCCI IntraClub

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The Vintage Advantage Quarterly Newsletter

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Submit publication items by the 15th of the preceding month. Annual dues of \$10 payable to "Vintage Airstream Club". Send all dues, applications and classified ads to the VAC Treasurer, Mr. Edward Stanley. The *Vintage Advantage* (VA) is the official newsletter of the Vintage Airstream Club, which is an IntraClub of the Wally Byam Caravan Club International, Inc. (WBCCI), the recreational vehicle club of Airstream owners. The VA welcomes contributions of letters, articles, photographs, news items and classified advertisements, however, their publication does not constitute endorsement. The opinions of the authors are their own, and do not necessarily reflect the opinion of the VA, the VAC or the WBCCI.

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RESIDENT'S MESSAGE

They say time flies when you're having fun. If that's true, then I must be having a lot of fun since returning home from the WBCCI International Rally in Rapid City last July because it sometimes seems that there is simply not enough time to do all the things that have to be done. Having said that, I want to describe some of the VAC activities with which I have been occupied with.

The first task that demanded attention was one of attempting to identify a person who could serve as the leader of a 1997 Vintage Airstream Club caravan, building on the great job that Bud Cooper and Don Perry did in leading the 1996 Wagon Wheel Ways VAC Caravan last June. Although I was not successful in that endeavor, I am pleased to report that a VAC Pre-Rally will be held prior to the 1997 WBCCI International Rally in Huntsville, AL. Reservations have been made at Monte Sano State Park in the Huntsville area. I will serve as the Pre-Rally Chairperson and expect

to be in Huntsville in late January, when final arrangements will be made. Details about the Pre-Rally will appear in the February 1997 VA. Please reserve the dates of June 23 to 25, 1997 for what should be another exciting VAC event.

The second matter that I wish to discuss is the subject of the proposed changes in the VAC Constitution and Bylaws, the substance of which appears later in this VA issue. As noted, most of the changes are not of great consequence, designed primarily to bring our documents in line with those of the International Club. The changes to which I wish to bring your attention are those that:

- 1) withdraw the right to vote from the privileges currently held by VAC associate members;
- 2) create a new office of 3rd Vice-President;
- 3) grant past VAC presidents the privilege of maintaining regular membership without the payment of annual dues;
- and 4) reduce the amount of notice required for amending the VAC Constitution from 60 to 30 days.

The proposed changes will be discussed by the Board of Directors at their meeting in Huntsville who will then make their recommendations to the membership at the General Business Meeting. Please read the information carefully and communicate any concerns or thoughts that you have to me or any other member of the Board prior to those meetings so that we have the benefit of your input.

Through the generosity of Richard and Shirley Rodrigues (#13213), a beautiful ceramic vintage Airstream cookie jar has been donated for a special raffle to be held at the International Rally in Huntsville. We plan to sell raffle tickets throughout the rally and then hold the drawing at the VAC Open House. Proceeds of the raffle will provide additional non-dues revenue for the VAC.

Again this year we are strongly encouraging regional VAC activities. Time was spent at the 1996 General Business Meeting in Rapid City to identify members who will take responsibility to lead VAC programs at regional and state rallies throughout WBCCI Land. Please let me know what your experiences are at that level this year so that a report may be made in Huntsville to reflect our growth.

Finally, I wish to thank everybody who is helping me to navigate through what could be difficult waters during my year as the VAC President. That includes a multitude of people, from WBCCI International President and First Lady Norman and Lucille Hower to the newest VAC members and friends. Together, we can continue to make the Vintage Airstream Club an organization in which we can take great pride and pleasure.

Dick Mumma, #4333



THE EDITOR'S DESK

I know that the last issue of the **Vintage Advantage** was late and this appears to have caused a stir within our VAC readership. As discussed in my last editorial, my job often requires much traveling as well as keeping me quite busy when I am in town. I also have three young children and have just moved to a new area. The reason I mention all this is that several folks have asked me to shorten the length and further edit the material in *our* newsletter. My position has been that our members (including VAC Associates and Friends who help support the VAC with their \$10.00 annual subscription to the VA) enjoy reading as much vintage Airstream information as possible and prefer this format instead of a letter format listing of club activities only (i.e., see the **Blue Beret** of recent issues or most Unit newsletters). I think that this is even more true when one considers how many folks are solely subscribing to the newsletter. It will be extremely appreciative if our readers will write in and tell me the types of features they enjoy. These letters are not for self-congratulatory purposes but for me, as your editor, to gain insight into what our membership and readers truly enjoy. I understand how some of our members prefer historical features, others are interested in technical know-hows while many others only wish for club news and happenings. Please let me know what you like and don't like in our newsletters. I will strive to put out the VA in a timely fashion but there will always be certain time-frames when the VA must

have a secondary priority. Enough said.

Our November issue continues with examination of Airstream in the 1930's. We begin with Part III of the Bowlus history where a focus on the Trailer Industry as a whole. Coop is beginning to introduce us to Wally Byam and is using this issue to establish the introduction of travel trailers as well as camping and RVing in general terms.

I was hopeful to have another 1937 Airstream trailer to present in this issue's *Classic Close-Up* feature but the logistics were not able to be coordinated. Because of this, I hope to publish a write-up on this trailer in the future. Since I have exhausted all my leads for Airstreams from the 1930's, I expect to begin introducing Airstreams from the 1940's when the column resumes. I personally know that there are several other 1930's out there but the owners have not seemed to want to participate so we will move on. This means that all of you 1940's owners begin your writing and photographing! I am very hopeful that we will have increased participation to continue chronologically featuring these Airstream classics.

I have continued to reprint from the 1937 Airstream sales brochure first featured in the August 1996 VA. In this issue we have reprinted a lengthy discussion written by Wally Byam on the available trailer specifications and features in 1937.

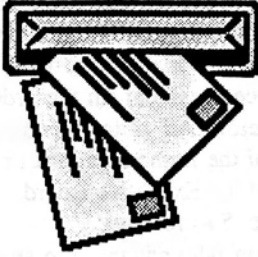
One of our new Friends subscribers has also contributed by sending in a historical Airstream perspective that he compiled via the Internet. Much of his information is in agreement with some of our past findings while he also asks some pertinent question for future investigations. Speaking of the Internet, the VAC homepage is being transferred to the stewardship of Mr. Duane Hedahl, our charter VA editor. In this issue he will introduce us to the new homepage directions and his hope in expanding Mr. Burkhart's work. We are also glad to continue our technical insights with an outline format discussing trailer brakes by Don Grayson as well as an article on floor repairs by Bud Cooper.

Since this is our last issue before the holidays, may everyone enjoy a great season and happy camping!



Correction

The description of *Friend* was misstated in the August 1996 VA on page 20 when it used the term "limited membership". The *Friend* category is not a VAC membership because membership in the VAC requires concurrent membership in the Wally Byam Caravan Club International (WBCCI). The *Friend* category pays the \$10.00 annual fee for subscription to the *Vintage Advantage* newsletter.



LETTERS

"3-D Airstreaming"

The Vintage Airstream Club is filling an important void in the WBCCI and is growing by leaps and bounds. I would like to add a third dimension to your growth. As an Airstream owner for over 38 years, we have promoted the single idea that Airstreams are a fun machine for well off, retired folks. Nothing could be further from the truth. Let me expand my idea with personal experiences.

1) As the president of a shoe manufacturing company, once when I had a sick sales representative and could not find capable temporary qualified help, I did the job myself. I converted my 1958 Airstream into a sample room with over one hundred shoe samples displayed such that even the smallest customers could see the entire shoe line at their doorstep for the first time. This saved time, sample room expense, set-up and tear-down time, and sold items that these customers had not heretofore seen.

2) After the shoe business was long gone, I switched to real estate as a broker. Then interest rates moved to the 17 to 18% range and I was in trouble again. At that time I quickly switched to a "Petroleum Land Man" profession. It involved leasing for oil, gas, and coal exploration. It was always in remote places across the USA so I acquired a 1967 Airstream 21' Globetrotter. This was my hope and salvation in doing work in constantly changing areas and assignments with all the comforts of home, yet away from home. Billed at motel rates, where there were no motels close to work, it provided an impossible answer easily and comfortably. This is the only Airstream I ever owned that my company paid for ten times over and I still own today.

3) At one point in my life I was forced to sell my home and start over with a new home. My youngest son and I took on a major building project which included a barn with living space built into it, along with a shop and storage area - 11,000 square feet in all.

This turned out to be a two year and three month project before my apartment was finished and I could move in. Guess where I lived during that time - you guessed it, in that 21' company Globetrotter through two winters, down to 20 degrees F below zero, in comfort. Perimeter straw bales made it possible. I still

own this unit. I have no idea when I will need it next, but one never knows, so I have kept it even though I also own a 1992 Airstream 350 LE Classic Motorhome.

So much for my story about the "third-dimension" of owning an Airstream. Maybe someone else can profit from my exploitation of a unique product to help justify their own ownership. My Airstream has been an Ace in the Hole for me and what's more important, I have thoroughly enjoyed my independence during the ups and downs of life.

In closing, let me say in all honesty that I still do!

Owen Dickerson, #116
1972-73 International President



VAC ANNOUNCEMENTS

Last Call for 1996-'97 VAC Dues

A number of VAC members have yet to pay their 1996 to 1997 Club dues. Club dues are payable in the month of July and become delinquent after the 31st of the month. Membership status is reflected on the mailing label of this newsletter. The date after your name shows the date that dues are due, e.g. (Jul97). Members with mailing labels that show letters (Del) after the name indicates that the VAC dues were due in July 1996 and that their membership is currently delinquent. Delinquent members in January 1997 will be dropped and will not receive the February 1997 VA.



The VAC dues are \$10.00 a year, payable to the Vintage Airstream Club and mailed to the following,

Mr. Ed Stanley, Treasurer
18940 Marine View Drive, SW
Seattle, WA 98166

Ed Stanley, #21491

Region 9 VAC Rally

As usual, the Region 9 Rally will offer Vintage activities hosted by Bud and Bettye Cooper. The event, to be held in Waco, Texas, this spring, has pump jacks and windmills as its theme. A dent removal seminar and a Concours d'Elegance will be on the program. Watch the Blue Beret for details on this Rally, normally held in March.



Rutherford L. Cooper, #2601

Proposed Changes to the VAC Constitution and Bylaws

In accordance with the requirement that members be notified at least 60 and 10 days in advance of any decision to amend the Constitution and Bylaws, respectively, the VAC's Board of Directors recommends the adoption of the following changes at the 1997 Annual Meeting during the WBCCI International Rally in Huntsville, AL. Most of the recommended amendments are designed to ensure that these IntraClub documents are not in conflict with the requirements of the Constitution, Bylaws, and Policy of the International Club. Since that is the case, the rationales for the amendments serving that purpose are not included here, but will be provided at the meeting in Huntsville. Rationales for those few recommended amendments that will substantively change the VAC's policies are provided here.

Recommended Constitutional Amendments

1) ARTICLE III MEMBERSHIP

Sec. 1 Line 1, after "International" insert ", Inc."

Sec. 2 Line 3, delete "and can vote" and substitute ", but have no vote".

Rationale: Given the need for the VAC membership to establish policy and make decisions that will maintain the essential character of the IntraClub as an organization focussed on the ownership and use of vintage Airstream units, it is deemed appropriate to limit such decision making privileges to regular members of the VAC. This section currently permits associate members, eg. those WBCCI members who do not qualify for regular VAC membership by owning a vintage unit, the same voting privileges as a regular VAC member.

Sec. 6 Substitute with the following: "membership shall be automatically terminated for the non-payment of TVC/WBCCI annual dues or failure to maintain membership in the International Club."

2) ARTICLE IV, insert "AND THEIR ELECTION" after "OFFICERS"

Sec. 1 Line 1, after "be" insert "a" before "1st" and before "2nd".

Sec. 1 Line 1, insert "a 3rd Vice President," after "2nd Vice President," and before "a Recording Secretary".

Rationale: In the interest of providing the VAC's membership with effective continuity of leadership, it is deemed appropriate to include an office of 3rd Vice President.

Sec. 2 Line 1, after "annual" insert "business".

Insert a new Sec. 4 as follows:

Sec. 4 In the event of the death or resignation of the President or the death, advancement or resignation of a Vice President, or an officer's inability to fulfill the duties of office, the next ranking Vice President (in the order first, second, third) shall advance thereto. All other vacancies on the Executive Board, except that of the Immediate Past President, shall be filled by a majority vote of the Executive Board.

Insert a new Sec. 5 as follows:

Sec. 5 An officer who advances to an office pursuant to the provisions of Sec. 4 of this ARTICLE shall not be deemed to have served a full term in such office unless said service is for a period of greater than one-half (50%) the term of such office.

3) ARTICLE V, insert "BUSINESS" before "MEETINGS"

Sec. 1 Line 1, after "annual" insert "business".

Sec. 3 Line 1, after "Board" insert "of Directors" and after "held" strike out "on the site" and insert "at the International Rally" and after "annual" insert "business".

Sec. 4 Substitute with the following: A quorum for conducting business at the annual business meeting, or at any additional business meeting, shall not be less than ten percent (10%) of TVC members attending the Rally.

4) ARTICLE VI, insert "BOARD OF" before "DIRECTORS"

Sec. 3 Line 1, after "Board" insert "of Directors".

Sec. 4 Strike out this Sec. and renumber Sec. 5 as Sec. 4.

5) ARTICLE VII COMMITTEES

Sec. 4 Strike out this Sec. and insert a new ARTICLE title NOMINATING COMMITTEE as follows:

Sec. 1 The Board of Directors shall, at the first meeting of the Board following the officer elections, appoint a three member Nominating Committee who shall, after having obtained prior acceptance for office of each candidate if elected, place in nomination one candidate for each office to be filled by election, and submit a written report to the Board of Directors which shall include all candidate names considered, and the President shall distribute the report to the membership not less than 30 days prior to the annual business meeting the election of officers shall be held. Additional candidates, who have previously consented to accept office if elected, may be placed in nomination from the floor of said meeting. No seconds are required for nomination.

6) ARTICLE VIII DUES

Sec. 1 Line 4, after "roster of members." insert "Past presidents of TVC/WBCCI are recognized for their service to the club by being excused from the payment of annual dues for the balance of their time as TVC/WBCCI members".

7) ARTICLE IX PARLIAMENTARY AUTHORITY

Sec. 1 Line 2, after "Board" insert "of Directors business".

8) ARTICLE X AMENDMENTS

Sec. 1 Line 2, after "annual" insert "business".

Line 3 and Line 5, delete "sixty (60)" and substitute "thirty (30)".

Rationale: This amendment changes the notification requirement for amending the Constitution from 60 days to 30 days prior to the annual meeting at which those amendments are voted upon by the members. It is deemed appropriate to make this change in the interest of effective administration of the IntraClub's business.

Line 4, after "annual" insert "business".

Line 5, after "annual" insert "business".

Recommended Bylaws Amendments

1) It is recommended the IntraClub include in the Bylaws an ARTICLE titled ORDER OF BUSINESS with Secs. as follows:

Sec. 1 Parliamentary procedures for all meetings of the IntraClub and the Board of Directors shall be governed by the current edition of ROBERT'S RULES OF ORDER NEWLY REVISED except when they are in conflict with the Constitution or Bylaws of this IntraClub.

Sec. 2 The order of business shall be:

- A. Pledge of Allegiance
- B. Roll call of Board of Directors and determination of a quorum
- C. Reading of minutes of previous meeting
- D. Treasurer's report
- E. Reading of correspondence
- F. Reports of Committee Chairpersons
- G. Unfinished business
- H. New business
- I. Announcements
- J. Adjournment

2) ARTICLE I DUTIES OF OFFICERS

Sec. 1 Substitute with the following:

The President shall preside at all meetings of the IntraClub and the Board of Directors; shall enforce the Constitution and Bylaws; shall decide all questions of order; shall sign all official documents adopted by the IntraClub; shall appoint all standing committees; shall appoint one member to audit the financial records of the IntraClub at the beginning of the term of office as President; shall notify International Headquarters, on or before November 15, the names of the IntraClub officers for inclusion in the Annual Membership Directory of the International Club; shall have such powers and duties as normally pertain to the principal executive officer.

Sec. 2 Substitute with the following:

The First Vice President shall attend all business meetings of the IntraClub and the Board of Directors and shall assist the President and assume the duties of the President in the President's absence; shall perform the duties as assigned by the President.

Sec. 3 Substitute with the following:

The Second Vice President shall attend all meetings of the IntraClub and the Board of Directors; shall assist the President and the First Vice President; shall assume the duties of the First Vice President in the absence of said officer; shall assume the duties of President in the case of the absence of the President and the First Vice President; shall perform the duties as assigned by the President.

Sec. 4 Substitute with the following:

The Recording Secretary shall record and preserve the minutes of all official meetings of the IntraClub and the Board of Directors; shall record the attendance of officers at each meeting and advise the presiding officer if a quorum is present; shall maintain on file a copy of the IntraClub Constitution and Bylaws.

Sec. 5 Substitute with the following:

The Treasurer shall maintain the financial records of the IntraClub and shall receive all monies and promptly deposit them in a bank previously chosen by the Board of Directors; shall receive all applications for membership; shall notify members of expiration of dues and issue receipts for dues paid; shall submit a full written

report of finances to the Board of Directors at each meeting; shall semi-annually provide the newsletter editor with the names and addresses of current members; shall prepare a list of members for the Annual Membership Directory of the IntraClub; shall, before retirement from office, have the books and accounts audited by a member appointed by the incoming President; shall deliver all books, monies and property of the IntraClub promptly to the incoming Treasurer.

3) ARTICLE II VACANCIES

Strike out this ARTICLE and the Secs. thereunder.

4) ARTICLE III DUTIES OF COMMITTEE CHAIRMEN

Sec. 5 Strike out this Sec.

Dick Mumma, #4333



IN THE NEWS

Interesting Tidbits about Vintage Airstreams

A Neiman Marcus Vintage Airstream

The Central Maryland WBCCI Unit (#166) newsletter, **The Merrylander**, recently had two articles of VAC interest in their October 1996 and November 1996 issues. Edited versions of the two articles are printed here.

Looking For A "New" Trailer

You Too Can Own One Like It!

Imagine, if you will, thinking about buying a "new" Airstream. Or imagine thinking about redecorating the one you already have. Then, there is simply the curiosity factor.

During a recent visit to Neiman Marcus in Bethesda, MD, it was noted that an Airstream trailer was offered on page 96 in their 1996 Christmas catalog. Well folks, you have NEVER seen anything like it -- nor are you likely to again! It seems that a couple came upon an Airstream (1968 31-footer) abandoned along side a road and decided to make it their own and fix it up. And fix it up they did!

The ceiling is painted to look like a sky with fluffy white clouds. A mural is painted on the walls and continues on the window blinds (so that when you pull the blinds down, you still have the "feeling of being outside"). The fold down table in the living room has an inlay top that resembles a checker board. The "curtain" between the living room and the galley reminds one of the days in a hippie apartment. Instead of beads, the strands were strung with items from

several "junk drawers" -- buttons, spoons of thread, paper clips, beads and anything else that you could possibly imagine. Then you reach the galley. The floor is covered in embossed tin and copper tiles and the counter top has a copper overlay. The floor is covered in embossed tin and copper tiles and the counter top has a copper overlay. As you approach the bedroom (with twin beds), you have to appreciate the crazy quilts that cover the beds, and the ceilings over the beds that are covered in 3-D tiles. Now you come to the rear bath! The counter sink is oval -- hard to describe. In the body of the sink is a fish (yes, you read that right -- a fish!) whose tail comes over the edge on one side and the head comes over the edge on the other! The ceiling was decorated quite differently. This one is a mosaic of bottle caps, stones and toothbrushes! The ceramic tile floor is indescribable. Suffice to say that I wouldn't want to get out of the shower and step on the floor -- it would hurt my feet!

Well folks, you too can own this trailer -- or at least one like it. All you have to do is place an order with Neiman Marcus before November 30th. That way you are guaranteed that your "new" trailer will be ready by May 1997 so that you may take it to Huntsville. Oh yes, when you place your order, they ask for a deposit and then payment in full upon delivery. Did I forget something? Oh, of course, you want to know the price tag for this "work of art." A mere \$195,000! By the way, someone beat us to the punch and gave the owner a WBCCI membership package. You may see this trailer at Huntsville!

Joe Jugal, #6823

Airstream Update

Membership Opening

Neiman Marcus pre-owned custom Airstream trailers continue to be a noteworthy item. At the October CMU (#166) Rally someone had a Nieman-Marcus catalog and the pictures gave me an impression of a great deal of attention to detail. I'm an old sailboater, and it looks to me to be excessive nautical.

John Travolta has purchased one of these for \$195,000. One of his hobbies is flying. Maybe there is a connection. The fact is that Mr. Travolta should be informed that this Airstream is a "baldy". This is an opportunistic situation to sign him up and introduce him to the Central Maryland Unit. I wonder what he will use for a tow vehicle?

Len Gaworski, #4670

[Ed. note, The December 1996 Trailer Life magazine has photographs of the exterior and interior of this trailer with a brief article on page 54.]



TV with Vintage Airstreams

Recently saw a couple of new television commercials featuring vintage Airstream trailers. One of the ads was for "Honey Nut Cheerios" while the other one was for "Toyota" (do they even make a vehicle capable of pulling an Airstream?). Both commercials appear to be trying to capture a "Made In America" type of patriotic feeling in presenting their products. Did any of our members participate in these commercials? Write in and let us know your experiences.

I've also seen a new weekly television drama called "Promised Land" that is on CBS at 8 PM (EST) on Tuesday nights. The show features a full-time RV family, including mother, father, grandmother, two high school children and one elementary school child, that travel around the country pulling an Airstream travel trailer with an old Suburban. The family all live in the trailer, with the children being home schooled, while the parents "solve" community problems and bring happiness to each new community they visit. Although the story lines have been kind of corny, the show is obviously trying to capitalise on the American dream of travel. For other VA readers who have seen the show there are two questions I have; 1) what year is their trailer (it looks to be '70's era to me but it is hard to tell) and 2) how does this family all "fit" in the trailer? Also, perhaps the WBCCI should contact the shows producer and get them to put some numbers on the trailer as well as film a show with the family at a Rally.

Tom Howarth, #6490



COOP'S CORNER

Putting the Tiger in the Sack-

With care we removed the slip covers from the front couch. "Badly soiled," Bettye murmured. As fast as the ravelings appeared they were clipped off and in the end became a multicolored baseball. Every seam was fray-checked. Laundered in cool water with mild soap, the still moist mass was returned to the steward of the coach for final encapsulation of the foam.

I picked up one of the husky foam chunks feeling it's muscles tense in defiance while I yet cradled it in my arms. To show any lack of resolution at this stage would be fatal, I body-slammed it to the couch frame. It lay there stunned but watchful, the legend "left front" showed on its thigh. I searched the wet mass, found the left front, and placed it to the right to match the marking on the beast. "Good strategy," I thought, "keep him confused."

Now the zipper had to be straightened out and a nice neat pouch formed. A last minute check revealed two ravelings trying to hide along the zipper track. Once one of these gets stuck in the zipper its like trying to find the key log in a logjam. Nothing moves till it is found and destroyed.

As a precaution I carried 12 place settings of Wedgewood into the bedroom where it would be safe if a battle should erupt. Memories flashed through my mind of strong men beaten into submission by the foam block. Shouldn't there be a way to chop up that block in a giant malted milk mixer then pour the foam into the cover, zip up, and reconstitute it just as you lay it on the couch? A friend has zipper parts which still show up on X-rays of his stomach. A mechanic in Illinois had to retire when his right hand was maimed from zipper burn.

My strategy is to force one end into a pocket, and while the block is bent in the middle, fight the remaining end into the opposite pocket. This produces a giant golden arch (not a sandwich) of foam which must be compressed and shortened. I pushed with my arms. The rubber pushed back frustrating me with seemingly little effort. I tried sitting on it but got off when I sensed that I was about to be thrown against the ceiling. I pressed with both hands stiff arm, and cunningly threw my whole weight upon it. The crafty mass suddenly subsided, swallowing my whole being in a writhing mass of fabric and foam. I was hopelessly trapped. Every move produced a tighter strangulation. I wondered if the technicians would notice my door open and come looking. What if I called out? What if I called 911? This was more harrowing than a New Jersey traffic circle on Friday night. Determined not to show my fear, I gave a mighty heave, found myself thrown into the bedroom.

There certainly would have been a loss of replaceable Wedgewood had I not moved it. To my

surprise, both ends of the rubber girder were safely trapped in the fabric, and the arch seemed a little more malleable. Time to start zipping. One has to pull the fabric tightly around the foam, pulling the opposing sides of the zipper together, then with the third hand try to advance that tiny shoe up the row of teeth. Have scissors handy. Like a surgeon looking for bleeders, snip off any stray threads. Have patience. When the zipper wants to move, it will move. In the meantime, I kept crowding more foam into the zipped-up end. I tried placing my knee on the mass just ahead of the zipper shoe; zipper technicians refer to this as the delta. Actually it seemed to work better if I placed my knee on the zipper just behind the delta. Somehow you must get eight feet of teeth through that tiny shoe. Watch out for zipper flash, that's when the shoe breaks loose and backs up, opening up the whole bag in less than a nanosecond. The heat generated by this reaction can cause a nasty flesh wound.

Fortunately, this didn't happen. And, the next block of foam, having seen its big brother beaten, was relatively tame. I stood up tall; sweating but tall.



Bettye and I will share this letter which we wrote to Diane McElligott (*see the May 1996 VA issue for the column "Member Spotlight" on Ms. McElligott (#4396) and her travels in her two Airstream Bambi's*) recently:
Dear Diane:

Bettye and I were so pleased to hear from you. What a nice up-beat letter. It is true that having a Bambi in one's life is great, but two, I just can't imagine. I have been told that there were about 800 total Bambis built during the years 1961, '62, and '63. One time I checked serial numbers in a list I have, and they appeared consistent with this number. Then, in '64, they built the Bambi II which was 17 feet long. I seldom encounter these and suspect that demand was not large, resulting in the death of Bambi. (It is not true that she was shot.) I think that these could be very attractive subjects for restoration because of the extra foot. The equivalent trailer built in '65 and onward was a full width Caravel.

Since you and I bought ours they have taken off in popularity in just an unbelievable way. The last two sales for which I have valid prices were \$7200 and \$6900. These were fully restored trailers. Prices of Vintage trailers in general have risen but not to this extent because the supply is still large. There are various factors that explain the popularity of vintage Airstreams. Airstreams are nostalgia pieces, and there are various groups who consider them art. Many people who became familiar with Airstreams through an uncle, a parent, or a grandparent can now afford to own one. The use of Airstreams in video advertising has helped to popularize them, but the image of quality is what made the advertising popular. The quality image came first.

Ed Stanley reports that the VAC home page on the Internet is bringing in members at an increased pace. On a recent date, there were 20 trailers advertised with prices ranging from \$1,000 to \$15,000. The high average price, around \$6000, is surprising. To get on this page, the Internet address is [HTTP://WWW.ELECTRICITI.COM/~PROTOLUX/VAC/](http://WWW.ELECTRICITI.COM/~PROTOLUX/VAC/).

Kathy Adams reported to me that people are beginning to call in about The Vintage Club though they had not previously heard about WBCCI. Our membership must be around 500 at this time if you count those associates who just receive the newsletter. Only Ed Stanley, who for our benefit squints at a computer day after day, knows the exact figure.

Naturally, all this activity suits me just fine. During the first year, when the club was just forming, I was frequently asked how large I thought the club could logically be. I said I could only guess, but I thought 250 was surely possible, though there are 5000 trailers out there that are eligible. All told, there have been well over 100,000 Airstreams built. As someone observed, eventually we will get them all.

An electronic flat tire detector sounds interesting. I haven't encountered this one yet, but will keep my eyes open. Trailers with four tires on the ground get more flats, in fact more than twice as many. Trailers with three tires on the ground? Waaaaal, don't know. But, now that I own one of those four wheelers, I'm watching all developments.

Last night, Bettye and I were invited over to Holland, Michigan for a berthing party. A gentleman over that way was kind enough to consult with me over a '59 Pacer that he had located. After buying it he invited Chuck Reed and myself over for an inspection. Thus the party. Bettye went along. (Reminds me of an occasion down in Indiana when we were invited over to view a new calf.) We had a great time, and got to meet the new member and his wife (I'd give names, but they aren't members yet).

I have been putting in eight hour days over at Woodland RV Center where my '74 is currently parked. It was a not bad looking trailer with all the accessories, and the previous owner assured me that everything worked and that it had always been winterized. When I got it home and began testing it, I found pipes which had been repaired and had burst the second time. Both the gray water and brown water tanks had large rips in them. This does not look like freeze damage, but is more likely fatigue from many rough miles with full tanks. In addition, the toilet had been frozen spoiling two valves, and the hot water heater had a pin-hole in it. This latter was probably a chance happening of which the owner had no knowledge. The factory supplied a brown tank, but for gray water I had to order a different tank from El Monte Plastics and this meant that all the plumbing routing and valves had to be changed. (Write for catalog, 2449

Strozier Ave, S. El Monte, CA 91733; 818/442-0162). While I was at it, I improved on the size and construction so that the tanks should last much longer than before. This moved ahead very slowly, but when the last tank arrived things shaped up fast.

Discussing all this with the dealer on a daily basis has changed my attitude toward holding tanks. A 2.5 gallon tank, full, has a 200 pound load in it. As constructed at the factory there is marginal support over a span of 58 inches, allowing the tank to bend downward in the center both from static (dead) load, and from the bumps at a railroad crossing which could be three times that. I put in extra support, lots of it, but I think I will be a little more cautious about dumping at every opportunity so as to minimize this kind of punishment. I put both tanks on a bed of silicone rubber, and arranged hold downs so that the tank cannot fly upward on bumps. Then, I introduced rubber couplings in all the connecting lines so that they can flex and not put a strain on the connections with the tank. Believe me, I held my breath on the day I towed it over to my house and tested all of this with water.

It is really discouraging to acquire a fine looking trailer and then tear out every bit of bathroom furniture. The poor thing looked like a disaster for three weeks. Of course, while all this was going on, I found many things that didn't suit me and had to be fixed. We haven't spent a single night in it, and may not until next year though it is usable at this moment.

We have had hard frosts the last two nights making me thankful that I winterized both trailers on September 15th, my drop dead date. Speaking of dropping dead all the hours of lying on my back struggling with overhead tanks and plumbing nearly killed me for a few days but then my body responded with more energy. As a result I feel unusually well.

Sincerely, Coop

Rutherford L. Cooper, #2601



[Ed. note, This is the third installment of research into the contribution of William Hawley Bowlus to the Airstream trailer. This historical recant is being presented in the *Vintage Advantage* in five parts; Introduction (printed in VA May 1996 issue), Lindbergh and The Spirit of St. Louis (printed in VA August 1996 issue), An Industry is Born (this issue) and Enter Wallace M. Byam, Bowlus and Byam. A line will be shown to connect The Spirit of St. Louis with the modern Airstream.]

THE AIRSTREAM STORY, An Industry is Born

PART III

In Parts I and II (May and August 1996 VA) we covered the Lindbergh story with special attention to Hawley Bowlus and his knowledge of stressed skin technology, but we have not yet connected all of this to Airstream. Let us first have a broad look at the history of the house trailer industry.

The true beginnings are probably beyond our grasp. Was it the first primitive travois rigged by some person on the Asian steppe? How different is a trailer from an ancient Egyptian chariot? Was it the first Gypsy cart? Pick a date! Do you like 3,000 BC?

The oldest known caravan club is in the United Kingdom (England). It traces its start to the late 1800's, which in those days caravans were horse drawn coaches fitted out for jaunts with the family, providing shelter, cooking, and storage a bit more refined than tenting.

David Thornburg, in his excellent book "Galloping Bungalows," shows how the trailer developed in parallel with the automobile. Once automobiles had reached a certain level of power and ruggedness, say the Model-T days, then tinkers began building adjunct devices to facilitate touring and camping. These were sometimes built on, sometimes trailed behind. Glenn Curtiss built his first camp trailer, a folding affair, in 1917. We could pick 1920 as a time when it was first a recognized art form carried on invariably by individuals, not in factories. Always in parallel was the American penchant for travel. 1920 to '25 was a time of frantic highway building. In 1921, a trip from Flint, Michigan to Vero Beach Florida was a distance of about 1400 miles where only about 40 miles of this was paved. In 1910 there were less than 500,000 automobiles in the United States but by 1920 there were 8,000,000 and the love affair had started (U.S. automobile registrations in 1978 were 114,000,000!). Times were good, automobiles sold well and Henry Ford was paying his workers \$5 per day, an amazing wage. There seemed no limit, optimism was high.

A syndicated columnist, and leading Wall Street financial advisor, Mr. Roger W. Babson, was able to predict a financial crash with uncanny accuracy. A few people listened. It came in 1929. After his earlier prediction, he could say nothing wrong and he became a leading critic and observer of the depression years. We shall hear more about him later.

Many of our readers had first hand experience with this depression. Volumes have been written about the fear, hardship and misery that it caused. That most of this literature has somehow missed the real essence, is a situation that I cannot correct here. Thirty billion dollars were lost in that crash and by 1930 there were 3 million people out of work. Many of us had our lives on "hold" from 1930 to 1939.

During all of this bleak economic times there was a single bright spot; the trailer industry. From the backyard activity of 1920 a small industry had silently developed. A few folding and hard sided trailers were being produced on a commercial basis. In Detroit, Michigan, a pharmacological manufacturer by the name of Arthur George Sherman bought a folding one and took his family camping. He disliked certain features of it and thought he could do better. The trailer he created in 1928 eventually became the famous Covered Wagon Trailer Company, and established Sherman as the father of the trailer industry. While his was a fold out, others were building hard sided trailers and by 1933 they became the favorites. Sherman followed suit. It is interesting that the soft sided trailers have a very long history in which they have repeatedly regained popularity after appearing doomed.

Accurate figures on the number of trailer manufacturers down through the years do not exist because many of them were small, existed for short periods, and because there were just too many to count. Estimates look something like this: 1932, <48; 1933, 189; 1934, 300; 1935, 400; 1936, 800; 1937, 700; 1938 and 1939, ?; 1940, 30 to 40.

All through the '30's up to 1937 growth was steady. Though a great number of people set up manufacturing in a barn or garage, failure rates were also extremely high. There were always 25 or so manufactures, better managed than the rest, who survived, produced a quality product, and enjoyed the lion's share of the business. In 1936, Covered Wagon could only fill 1 in 5 orders and all of the majors were enjoying very good business. One can imagine the excitement and optimism. We had an industry that had not yet identified what its mission or markets were, did not know where it was headed, and yet prospered in the midst of depression

September 1937 is recognized as the beginning of the recession of 1938. Trailer orders dried up instantly, catching virtually every manufacturer off guard. Covered Wagon, geared up for 100 units per day, could only sell

10. Nevertheless, 1937 was the best year to date for trailers because the recession struck late while 1939 was a down year and by 1940 there were only about 40 manufacturers left. But the road would soon turn sharply up because we were about to enter a war and by this time trailers were accepted as housing.

We should look now at some interesting events during that period.

In 1935 Roger W. Babson predicted that "within two decades one out of two Americans will live in a trailer." This is two shocking predictions in one; 1) there will be about 100,000,000 trailers, and 2) people will live in trailers. The next year, the New York Times estimated that a million people were then living in trailers. The trailer industry loved this prediction, but found it hard to believe. On the other hand there were 300 trailer parks in Florida. They watched and waited.

Babsons' prediction, of course, never came true. But the general public took serious note of trailers for the first time. It caught on. Trailers became love objects (at about that time I fell in love with trailers, and the affair is still on). Sociologists wrote papers on the probable effect that trailers would have on American culture. Not all were optimistic. Of course, since the depression many people had discovered that trailer living was affordable, flexible and comfortable, but now well off folks were saying it had unique advantages, was a whole new way of life. Governments, however, viewed with alarm the prospect of hundreds of trailers suddenly appearing in their community, consuming services such as sewers and schools, and paying substantially zero taxes. The issues were not easy to deal with. My father worked for one of the major companies so I can draw upon many family conversations.

Through this time the industry suffered from confusion. Though the trailers were selling, nobody yet knew where the genuine markets were. Typical sales literature of the day showed a picture of a trailer on a scenic highway. On the next page, the trailer was parked by a trout stream and the smiling models were standing by. In the next picture, the models wore tux and evening gown; the table was set with crystal, and candles were burning. In the last picture, the model was a business man having a serious conference in his mobile office. The true picture, the one that was never printed, was one of an industry that was firing scatter-shot because it had not yet discovered its own identity.

The fact that people might choose to live full time in a trailer was purely an accident. Not a single industry spokesman, to my knowledge, ever supported the idea till much later. They simply remained silent, hoping that the problem would somehow resolve itself and go away. They pretended that everybody traveled, when studies showed otherwise. The problem surfaced in 1936 when various cities enacted legislation restricting when and where trailers could park in the city, and in many cases levying a tax. Miami Beach and others had laws flatly forbidding trailers. San Diego had a tax of ten cents per day. This business of trailer people not being wanted had a sudden numbing effect. The owners had never thought of themselves as gypsies, tax dodgers, or cheap-skates. It all seemed unfair. Indeed it was unfair, and it almost stained the glitter of the concept from then till now. The state of Michigan has just passed a law forbidding municipalities, zoning entities, or taxing authorities from discriminating against mobile homes.

It is puzzling how the idea of a life with new dimensions of freedom could suddenly and firmly be branded as "reject, not wanted," but it happened.

The industry suffered from two other nagging problems.

Trailer parks were too few and poorly distributed. While Florida might have 300, there were not enough quality ones across the country to support travel in comfort. Furthermore, no one seemed to agree upon what services they should offer and what they should charge. For example, were sewer hook-ups to be provided, or was the bath house to be the thing? Should parks be private businesses or was this a government responsibility? This situation gradually mended itself. The better parks always commanded the better prices and better clientele, and the older parks ran down and then out.

Finally, lending institutions were very slow to accept contracts on trailers. They foresaw skips taking their trailers who-knew-where, and leaving the bank holding the bag. This was a problem to the dealers. They could not afford to hold the paper themselves, and more customers were asking for time payments. In time, first small loan companies, then banks, discovered that trailer people were really just like other people, largely honest.

Next Issue - Enter Wallace M. Byam

Rutherford L. Cooper, #2601

[The following write-up on Airstream specifications and features appeared in the 1937 Airstream Trailers sales brochure describing the first production Airstream travel trailers. The brochure also described five Airstream trailer models named "Clipper" (which was reprinted in the August 1996 VA), "Silver Cloud," "Torpedo," "Torpedo Junior," and "Silver Bullet." The write-ups concerning the other four Airstream trailers will be reprinted in the next issue of the VA. This article, describing Airstream trailers and features as originally authored by Wally Byam, is being reprinted here in its entirety without the accompanying figures.]

AIRSTREAM ON PARADE

BY WALLACE M. BYAM

Airstream trailers are unlike any other trailers built in America or England. Entirely new and exclusive engineering principles backed by four years of successful trailer building forms. Rather they combine in a new form a multiplicity of engineering principles and proved inventions.

The basic principle of Airstream construction is the elimination of bulky deadweight. Bridge construction is used in the side walls. The frame goes clear to the roof. This is an airplane principle known as "monocoque" meaning that the body and frame are one. Some of the new automobiles use it, the Chrysler "Airflow" and the Ford "Zephyr." This is a much lighter, stronger and safer way of building than the older method of building a platform frame and then a house or body on top of it. Airstream is the only trailer to utilize this newest engineering principle. Tremendous savings in space, weight, wear and tear and fuel consumption are thus made possible. It means

lower center gravity, a higher road clearance, a lower overall height, and the absolute elimination of side sway, bobble, weaving, tail wag, and makes the trailer actually lean in on fast curves and ride steady at high speeds.

Howard Cantonwine, well-known professional wrestler states, "I often times hit her up at 70 with my Airstream coming across the desert. My wife and daughter prefer to ride in the trailer." We don't recommend that speed, but it can be done.

These rugged principles of construction, proved by thousands and thousands of miles of road work in the last four years are the main reasons why Airstreams are so preferred by hunters and fishermen who go "way back beyond," circus and carnival men who give them the hardest kind of use, commercial travelers who must cover a wide territory, and to experienced trailer owners who appreciate the advantages of light weight combined with great strength and safety.

SPECIFICATIONS

The following applies to the Airstream "Silver

Cloud," "Torpedo," Junior and Senior and "Silver Bullet."

The undercarriage members are of 3 inch channel steel securely bolted and electrically welded together. The double tongue is of the same 3 inch channel steel, super strong and trouble proof. The coupling is heavy duty ball and socket. It "drops" on, snaps tight, cannot rattle and cannot come off without the aid of human hands. It has a zerk fitting for greasing, yet can be hooked and unhooked without the grease touching the hands. A husky safety chain is also provided.

The springs built to Airstream specifications are engineered for each model. Hubs, bearings, wheels are Ford. Other wheels can be installed at slight extra cost. Tires are 600x16, Firestone, U. S., or Goodyear. The axle is chrome vanadium steel with only a two and one half inch drop giving higher center clearance beneath the axle than your automobile, wonderful for dirt roads with deep ruts.

SUCCESSFUL INSULATION

For many months Airstream has been striving to develop a light weight efficient trailer insulation method. Airstream formerly used the double wall, dead air space principle, but found it wanting. It proved too costly to guarantee. Condensation and moisture formed between the double walls which eventually caused buckling and swelling of the wood, weakening of the joints, and rot. Now Airstream once more copies the airplanes and insulates with "Sea-pak" a form of kapok blanket. The trans-oceanic and trans-continental planes use "Sea-pak" to keep their passengers comfortable in any weather. This material is laid directly on the sturdy Airstream shell and then covered with a heavy grade of leather fabric. As a consequence Airstream trailers can never sweat and no moisture can form between the walls. You are assured of comfort in any climate, be it blistering desert or winter storm. Joints of the leatherette are glued with rubber cement and covered with duraluminum moulding which can never rust. The insulated roof is covered with bus topping.

CHOOSE YOUR COLORS

There is no extra charge for your own selection of leather colors. Most owners choose a color to harmonize with their car below the belt and with a

lighter color, or a cream or aluminum above. Some have the entire car all one color. In spite of the trend in steel by some manufacturers, still the most expensive trailers in America are covered with leather. A good grade of leather fabric is durable and lasting. It is difficult to mar or scratch. If injured in a collision it is less expensive to repair than either steel, wood or any of the composition materials.

Airstream doors never sag. The hinge is big, husky, piano type continuous steel hinges. The lock is "spin around," pick and crow bar proof. Two panels in the door lift out making the door into a screen door, a valuable and exclusive Airstream feature, eliminating the necessity of an additional awkward screen door.

Airstream water tanks are of heavy galvanized steel, filled from a screw capped aluminum spout on the outside. The tanks range from 28 to 40 gallon. A tap is provided in the top to measure how much water is in the tank. Another thoughtful Airstream feature. Copper tubing, the same as used in the most modern household installations runs from the tank to the pump, keeping the water clean, rust less and tasteless. The marine type pump is chromium plated and uses an easily operated handle rather than the lift up sump type pump. Airstream has discarded faucets and air pressure systems as open to too many chances of leaks, difficulties and no water.

The side windows are of plate glass, and raise and lower. They are water-proof and dust-proof. They cannot rattle. The end windows are hinged at the top and open from the inside with a special Airstream opener. They can be bolted tightly shut. When open in a rain they act as their own shield to keep the rain out of the window. These end windows are so placed that you cannot bump into them in walking around the trailer. All windows are covered with genuine copper screen. The ventilator in the roof is extra large, an Airstream invention of cast aluminum. Any size opening desired can be adjusted from a crank inside. It too is water and dust proof. The opening is copper screened.

The lower front curve on the outside is covered with steel to protect the trailer from rocks thrown up by the automobile - another Airstream feature.

Every trailer traveler knows the need of a place to carry shovels, axes, gasoline cans, garbage cans, tent poles, awnings, fishing tackle, what not and so forth. Airstream provides you with a baggage compartment behind the right wheel housing reached from a key-locked door from the outside. This "possum belly" as the circus people call it is an Airstream feature and far superior to a trunk on the rear.

Airstream was the first American trailer to be equipped with a "jack-action-bogie-wheel." This is a castor type third wheel, operated by a crank arrangement on the tongue. This wheel can be lowered to lift the trailer off the car and push it around easily "like a baby buggy" wherever desired. A woman can

easily connect or disconnect an Airstream. This device is permanently welded to the tongue and has no extra parts to lose or come out of adjustment.

LIVEABLE INTERIORS

So much for the engineering and construction of Airstream. But to perfect a livable and comfortable interior is an entirely different job. Airstream has employed the best designers and interior decorators available. But just as it "takes a heap of living in a house to make a home" it has taken a heap of living in Airstream trailers to bring them to their present state of perfection. Airstream owners have done a large part of the perfecting for us. And when we tell you that we think Airstream trailers are nearly perfect in their interior arrangement we tell it to you knowing full well all the things you might ask of a trailer. For Airstream trailers have been lived in and with by thousands of people before you. People of all sizes, all ages and widely different living habits. We know that you can go about all your daily job of eating, sleeping and living in perfect happiness. All the thinking for your comfort has been done for you.

LIVING ROOM

Let's enumerate just a few of the outstanding features. To begin with Airstream trailers give you the feeling of a wide expanse of space. You don't feel "cooped up." Airstream tries to make you feel that you are in your own living room or a train club car, not living in a kitchen or cooped up in a closet. There are windows all around the sides. You can see to every point of the compass. If you are riding in your Airstream behind the towing automobile on the road you can see right through the automobile on the road ahead and likewise the driver can see through the trailer. Airstream trailers give you the feel and freedom of the great outdoors.

The so called "disappearing" kitchens of Airstream trailers are a real feature. When closed they appear to be buffets. Nothing but a bright shiny small chromium pump is exposed. But when you slide back the top of the stove compartment, hinge down the front of this compartment, lift the lid off the sink and flip up the table leaf at the left of the sink you have a real kitchen about 7 feet long and 18 inches wide. A kitchen or galley, as trailer-eers call them, large enough to prepare a real thanksgiving dinner. The stove compartment top becomes work table space. It is covered with inlaid linoleum and trimmed on the edge with rust less always bright duraluminum. The compartment itself is lined with bright metal. The stove is an instant lighting gasoline three burner. Bottled or rock gas stoves can be installed if desired. The white enameled sink with a stopper is large enough to wash dishes in if desired. The refrigerator is specially designed to give perfect air circulation and to provide a maximum of food storage space per cubic foot. They are exceptionally well

insulated with Firtex and Sea-pak. They hold 35 lbs. of ice and can be made to hold 50 lbs. without extra cost. There is more than enough storage space for frying pans, kettles, coffee pot, etc. Above the galley are three generous compartments for dishes and food. There is a place for everything. There are two plate racks, a rack with holes for six glasses, a place for a roll of paper towels, a generous sized medicine chest, two magazine racks, and believe it or not, a built in concealed garbage can. It can be easily removed for emptying.

Marbleized inlaid linoleum is securely fastened to the flooring with linoleum cement. Bright aluminum kick plates or base boards are installed all around the edges of the floor extending three inches up from the linoleum. Shoe scuffings cannot mar the wood work. This is a valuable and exclusive Airstream feature.

UPHOLSTERY

Airstream mattresses are built for SLEEP. We are proud of them. They are double padded innerspring construction to Airstream specifications and covered in a wide variety of fabrics. Again, Airstream's infinite pains for detail and comfort gives you three degrees of firmness in the mattress springs, light, medium and firm, depending on the weight of the person to use them. And at no extra cost. At least one Airstream bed in all models can be left made all the time if desired. (Experienced trailer travelers demand this). But there is ample easy-to-reach storage space if you want to make the beds.

Airstream clothes closets are large, women appreciate that. And the panelled clothes closet door is really a double door that flips out and divides the trailer into two bed rooms if desired. Thus every Airstream is a two room trailer. And it is a mighty handy feature.

Airstream dining tables are a joy. There is nothing else like them. They can be used in three positions. In the day time the main portion swings down leaving a sort of end table for books, knick-knacks, ash trays, etc. At meal time the leaf swings up, a leg drops down and you have a dining table four feet long and two feet wide, large enough to seat two on each side and one on the end. And at night this same table drops on a hinge, so that it is impossible for you to do it wrong, and all done in a split jiffy, and becomes the bottom of the center section of a double bed.

And every Airstream model has a chest of drawers. In addition some models have a sliding top on this chest of drawers exposing a place for the wash basin, soap, etc. All models have a space for storing a toilet commode for use in emergencies. And most models have a specifically figured out unused floor space for the placing of a comfortable movable chair. All little features, but they all mean added comfort and happiness.

Any Airstream trailer can be finished completely in Philippine mahogany at an extra charge, (doors, drawer

fronts, etc.) which makes a very good looking interior at less cost than all mahogany.

The standard finish on all Airstream models is a natural varnish. We find this the most practical. However, they can be painted any color at a small additional cost.

Every Airstream trailer has a full length mirror on the closet door. And do the ladies appreciate that feature.

The hardware is modernistic in design and cadmium plated. Light fixtures are of spun aluminum, built especially to Airstream's design. They can be used for both 6 and 110 volts.

Awnings are not included as standard equipment. Little awnings for each window that can be quickly snapped on and off and cost \$2.00 each. A big awning over the door, making an outdoor living room costs \$14 complete with three poles and stakes included.

Each Airstream has two outlets for plugging in electrical accessories. The wiring system is also so arranged that the cabin lights can be run off the auto battery. Or a battery can be put in the trailer.

What about toilets? That is the first question inexperienced trailer people ask. Except in specific instances of some form of illness few trailers have toilets. Trailer toilets cannot be connected with a sewer. They all have to be emptied some way or other, some how or other. And there is the rub. Nothing good enough has yet been invented. Until it is, Airstream agrees with the health authorities of most cities and recommends the toilet facilities of auto courts, trailer parking lots, filling stations, public comfort stations, etc., except in emergencies.

For emergencies Airstream offers and furnishes three recommended devices. First, least expensive and considered by many the best, a commode in a case. The commode is the jar type of baked enamel easily cleaned and provided with a lid. We house it in a case that looks like a small cedar chest. It is placed against the wall opposite the door, has a custom to match the upholstery and looks like an extra seat. The outfit complete is \$7.50. Next an airplane type of toilet, same as used on the transcontinental planes. The weight of a person on the seat opens an inner lid which closes automatically when the weight is removed. Made of aluminum, white enameled seat. A small pipe vents to the outside of the trailer. Also housed in a chest type of case. The cost complete is \$24.00. And most deluxe of all, a yacht type of flushing toilet. A special trailer type uses but one pint of water each time. Built of aluminum and vitreous china. Standard type of toilet seat with an easily operated pump handle beside the seat. Empties into a septic tank, into which chemical can be put. Emptied when desired into a garbage can placed under the trailer. We recommend a separate toilet room built into the trailer for such installation. For the toilet complete \$85.00, and, really good.

What about the stove? Airstream trailers have an especially large metal lined stove compartment. Plenty

of room for a three burner stove. We install an instant lighting Prentiss Wabers as standard equipment. Other brands of stoves may also be used. Kerosene or coal oil stoves are seldom used in trailers. Rock gas or bottled gas becoming increasingly popular. A tank lasts a month and a half for three meals a day. A refill costs \$2.00. For heating the trailer there are small wood and coal stoves that can be easily installed for \$18.00. A gasoline radiant fire heater costs \$15.00. A gasoline lantern selling for \$5 or \$6 gives off enough heat to satisfy 90% of western trailer owners, even with snow on the ground.

Airstream Trailers, 1937

SOME AIRSTREAM HISTORY

In 1995, I wrote Airstream President Larry Huttle a letter with many questions about the Airstream Company. He responded with a very polite letter and a one-page information sheet on the Airstream. Because of the great detail of my questions, the short information sheet only touched on the things I wanted to find out. Later, I called the company to get some more information. Unfortunately, no one I talked to knew very much about the history of the product or the company. So, I went "on-line" on the Internet and began to ask questions. Over the last few months, I have corresponded via e-mail with several Airstreamers with the following information compiled from several different Airstream owners. I will continue to add to this as I receive new information. Most of this was in their original words with only slight editing. I have filled in the gaps and tried to make it more readable.

The major body style change was in 1968 for the 1969 model year. That body lasted until the 1994 models. Grey water tanks were added for the 1974 model year. Here are the names and sizes.

<i>Pre 1968</i>		<i>Beginning 1969</i>	
Bambi	14'		
Pacer	16'		
Caravel	17'		
Globetrotter	20'	Globetrotter	21'
Safari	22'	Safari	23'
Tradewind	24'	Tradewind	25'
Overlander	26'	Overlander	27'
Ambassador	28'	Ambassador	29'
Sovereign	30'	Sovereign	31'
		Excella 500	31'

The International Package included small options and water filter. The Caravel name came back for a couple of years in the early 1980's on small 21-23' trailers.

One Airstreamer added "I believe that the Excella

500 package was an upgrade from the Excella package in later 1970's model years. The first upgrade packages were just only available on 31' models and were called Excella's. They were distinguished by having a solid blue band about 6" wide painted the entire length of the trailer. The non-Excella models Airstreams had one or two blue stripes painted along the sides. The Excella 500 package was a real luxury package with things like built in central vacs and special clocks, if memory serves!"

The name/size relationship ended around 1982 or '83, when all sizes could be had in several series, Sovereign, Excella, and Limited. Also, sizes and names were not consistent and changed every few years. First year for a 34' triple axle size was 1983.

Let's talk about the problems with the rear bath. One Airstreamer said "We own a '77 31' Airstream, and my research says about 25% of models made around that time were rear bath models. Unfortunately, in the 70's two things happened: Airstream attempted to redesign the body/frame for lighter weight and better mileage, and also, Airstream was purchased by Beatrice Foods. Our '77 model is typical of rear bath models of that vintage in that there has been significant frame warp around the wheels, which, if left untreated, will cause the body to warp and bulge badly. We had the frame reinforced and had the rear end tied back to the frame where it had separated. This is a fairly common job on rear bath models at Airstream dealers, and it cost us about \$1700 to restore in this way. I would suspect that Airstream saw what was happening after only a few years and discontinued the rear bath models due to frame problems."

Charlie Burk added this about the drooping tail and adding black water tanks to an older Airstream, "...When Airstream added the grey tank in 1973 they didn't take it into consideration either and had problems with "tail droop". Keeping the tanks forward is a good idea, Airstream figured it out in the early 1970's. The original idea for rear bath was to offset the weight of the front mounted water tank. A principle goal way back when was to balance the load and reduce tongue weight. Thus the brag you could tow an Airstream with a bicycle (and you could). Centering the fresh water tanks over the wheel wells sounds good. You might consider plumbing them with a common feed line at the bottom so you can use a single input to fill, a single output to the pump and a low point drain."

The rear bath came back again around 1989 or '90 in the 30 ft. trailers for two years. Not many were made. Most of the weight in the newer models is from the oak cabinets and corian counter tops. When people stopped using cars and went to Suburbans and Club Wagons, why worry about weight? They are about 1,000 lbs. heavier after 1984 or so.

With regards to the Argosy line of trailers and motorhomes, Charlie Burk said, "Argosy began around 1971 through late '70s and into the early 1980's. The

Argosy motorhome started in 1975 and production stopped in 1979. They were built in a separate facility in Versailles, OH. In 1979 there were three models of motorhomes built. The Argosy, a painted Airstream (truly an Argosy with Airstream logos and different paint scheme) and the first silver bullet Airstream motorhome." The Argosy trailers were also built at the Versailles, Ohio plant. Charlie continued, "You could not actually strip and Argosy and find an Airstream. The Argosy motorhome (and the 1979 painted Airstream) were built differently. The upper rear segment was a one piece steel segment. True Airstream motorhomes used 5 aluminum segments instead. The motorhome and trailer underwent a significant structural design change in mid 1982. It is not readily apparent except in the trailer lower segments."

To investigate, I took a magnet and did my own (not so sophisticated) science experiment. I discovered that the Argosy trailers have the one-piece steel segment in the front instead of the 5 aluminum segments. The Argosy trailers also had slightly different interior appointments, supposedly not as "nice." Personally, I liked them both, Argosy and Airstream. By the late seventies, Beatrice foods had become the owner and was initiating their "CHEAPENING of an acquired company," something of which they developed a habit of doing after a takeover.

An Airstream feature over the years has been the tambour doors on cabinets. They were lightweight and looked good. Charlie had this info about them, "The tambour doors were used extensively by Airstream starting in 1970. They are still used in small applications today. From 1970 to 1973 the tambour used was paper backed with a 3/8" strip face. Starting in 1974 the tambour was canvas backed and had 1/2" wide strip face." Also in the late seventies, all the company operations were moved to Jackson Center, Ohio and the complete Argosy line and name were dropped. The Airstream motorhome has continued to be made in the classic silver.

About 6 years ago, Airstream made a squarish, bonded (glued) aluminum trailer, painted beige and called it an Argosy. They also made a very few 5th wheels. That Argosy only lasted about a year or two, then they painted it silver and called it an Airstream Land Yacht. Airstreamers still call them a SQUARESTREAM. It didn't sell...perhaps because at that time only "classic styled" Airstreams were allowed in the club. Airstreamers said, "WERE NOT AMUSED." I recently saw one in Dallas and thought it was a really nice trailer but it was not a classic Airstream. However it was as nice as any "non-Airstream" on the market. I would buy it!

Airstream has a new 5th wheel, Integrity by Airstream. Kind of like Cimmaron by Cadillac, it's not REALLY an Airstream.

It seems that Airstreams now comprise only about 2 to 3 percent of the market. "Thor" gave the word to

Airstream management that people simply wanted more space. Fifth wheels and slid-out models are becoming the biggest sellers. The Airstream company has been forced to expand the model line to include "non-classic" type Airstream models so we purists can continue to enjoy the classic Airstream. The WBCCI has also changed the rules to include any product produced in any of the Airstream facilities.

For the 1996 model year, all Airstreams became wide bodies, adding 6 inches to the width. There are still some quality standard problems but, I understand they are being rectified.

I have heard through the grapevine that the next project is going back to the aluminum cabinets on a 21-25' lightweight classic trailer that can be towed by a car. THAT is the model I would buy! Like many baby boomers, I want a lighter weight Airstream, like the earlier ones which could be pulled by a Ford or Chevy, an Airstream which does not need a \$35,000 Suburban for towing and does not cost the price of a small house. That is why many others like me are opting for the older Airstream products.

I have a few specific questions which no one has yet been able to answer:

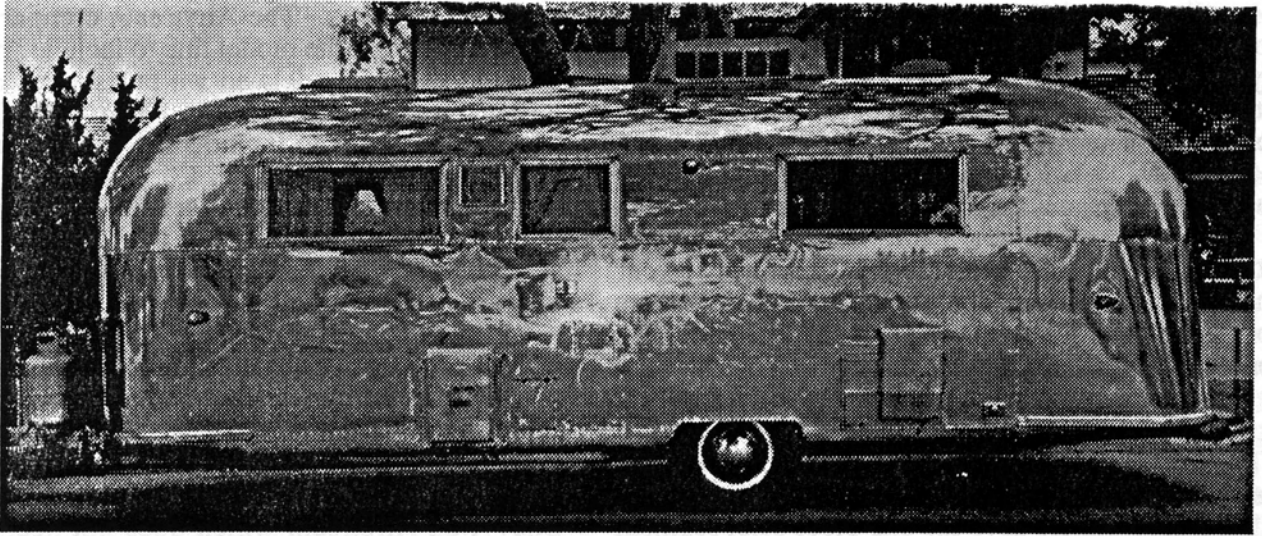
1. When did Wally Byam become the "non-owner" of Airstream and what were the circumstances or reasons?
2. When did Wally Byam pass away and from what cause? What was his relationship with the company at that time? Was he still leading caravans?
3. What about the Beatrice Foods connection and when and how did they actually change the trailers? What were the years of Beatrice Foods ownership?
4. When did "Thor" come into the picture?
5. I am trying to find films or videos from older WBCCI Rallies and caravans, preferably 1950s or 1960s. Also older production videos. Help!

Please write, call or e-mail if you can answer my questions. I hope you enjoyed this visit down Memory Lane.

Don Reasons, VAC Friend
6102 E. Mockingbird Ln.
Suite 222
Dallas, Texas 75214
214-265-8333
calldon@airmail.net



And the Winner Is.....



The 1996 International Rally Concours d'Elegance Best of Show Winner, the Reeds (#10283) 1963 24' Airstream Tradewind.

A couple of years ago I had a revelation, I was watching the television one evening and in the wink of an eye, a shiny Airstream trailer disappeared over the hilltop. I thought to myself "that's it!" I jumped up and called to my wife, "we're going to see the country and we're going to do it in an old Airstream." "An Airstream?", she asked. I said, "remember when you were a kid and there were all those shiny trailers lined up at the Airstream factory along the Santa Ana Freeway, they were beautiful."

That was the start of our love affair with Airstream trailers. I have been involved with aircraft design all my life and I knew that Airstream basically followed aircraft manufacturing techniques and were built to last. Why not fix one up and see the country?

So the search began. We looked for almost a year before we found one that was in fairly good condition. It had been parked under a tree in the mountains of Southern California. It was covered in pine needles, the exterior had a few minor dents and scrapes with lots of oxidation on the aluminum skin. But, the interior was perfect, completely original. It was a 1963, 24' Tradewind, and it obviously had seen most of the country already as judged by the number of decals affixed to the inside of the screen door by the original owners. This was just the trailer that we had been looking for!

We brought the trailer home and the fun began. The previous owners had installed carpet over the original flooring, which was in pretty bad shape. The propane refrigerator didn't work and the water tank was corroded. Our goal was to try and keep the trailer as original as possible, but because we planned on doing a lot of traveling, we felt some changes were justified. The front area had a pullout couch and a free standing fold up table. We decided to replace that setup with a U-shaped dinette that could be made into a queen size bed. The old pressure type water system was replaced with a 30 gallon demand system; another battery was added and we installed a new oak floor. After a lot of fooling around with the refrigerator, I found the ceramic burner element was cracked, fortunately I was able to locate a brass replacement that works well.

After refinishing the interior, it was time to attack the exterior. I stripped the remaining clear coat using an aircraft paint remover and also replaced a couple of dented panel sections. I worked the heavily oxidized areas with sandpaper working up from 600 grit to 2000 grit and then polishing compound. The final polish was done first with wool pads and then foam buffing pads. The exterior took about two months, working most weekends and evenings. I replaced the split rims with Kelsey-Hayes wheels, bought new tires, replaced the bearings and brakes, fixed a few things on the LP and electrical systems. We were now ready to go!

Our first outings turned out to be better than expected. Everywhere we went we met people that shared a common interest in enjoying life, but the best was yet to come. As soon as we saw the advertisement for the Wagon Wheels VAC Caravan prior to the WBCCI International Rally in Rapid City, we signed up.

Finally the day arrived and as we headed out across the desert (120 degrees F), I became a little apprehensive about the weight that I had added and the effect it may have on the tires in such hot weather. I had weighed the trailer loaded and it was still under 4000 lbs., but this was the first long trip we had taken.

We joined our friends Richard and Shirley Rodrigues (#13213), who were towing their 1951 21' Airstream in

Las Vegas, and headed together to Salt Lake City. We arrived in Rapid City a week before the International Rally and passed the early Airstream arrivals as we headed for Wall, SD, to meet up with the VAC Caravan. Six miles out of Wall we saw a row of shiny trailers lined up along the "Wall" overlooking the Badlands. Bud Cooper and Don Perry could not have chosen a more impressive location for hosting the first Vintage Airstream Caravan. In fact, Wagon Wheels was a huge success and we were happy to have participated.

After the Caravan we joined more vintage Airstreams outside of the Rally grounds. Forty-seven vintage trailers paraded into the International Rally. Later in the week the Vintage trailers opened their doors to the public which turned out to be a big success. We were surprised to see so many of the local town people, as well as the Airstreamers coming and reminiscing about the nostalgic trailers. The highlight of the day for us was the judging of the trailers for the VAC Concours d'Elegance. It was during the following day that the winners were announced and, to our surprise and delight, our trailer was selected *Best of Show!*

Needless to say, my wife and I have discovered a wonderful way of meeting and enjoying people that share a common interest in enjoying life to its fullest.

Tom and Corinne Reed, #10283

TECH TALK 1

TRAILER BRAKES

Trailer brake laws vary wildly across the various states. Kentucky requires brakes on all trailers, regardless of weight whereas Massachusetts requires brakes on any trailer in excess of 10,000 pounds! Indiana requires brakes "that can be applied independently from the drivers operating position" on any trailer weighing more than 1,500 lbs.

Trailer brakes come in a variety of styles: air (compressed and vacuum), hydraulic (direct action and surge actuated) and electric (hydraulic actuated, electronically timed actuation, electronic surge actuation and mechanically actuated). A brief examination of each is given in the following.

COMPRESSED AIR BRAKES:

ADVANTAGES: With air pressures around a hundred pounds, air hoses are small and actuating cylinders of only a few inches in diameter can provide substantial forces.

DISADVANTAGES: Requires a substantial air compressor and reservoir tank. No brakes will be available until the vehicle engine has been on long enough to build up pressure.

CONTROLLER: Requires mechanical attachment to the brake pedal in addition to the existing tow vehicle brakes.

COMMENTS: Used almost exclusively on commercial vehicles because of the size and cost. Capable of smooth, controlled stops.

VACUUM AIR BRAKES:

ADVANTAGES: Engine intake manifold generates vacuum without requiring extra equipment.

DISADVANTAGES: Maximum vacuum limited to around 10 pounds. This relatively low air pressure differential requires larger hoses and actuating cylinders to provide adequate forces to the brakes.

CONTROLLER: Requires mechanical attachment to brake pedal in addition to existing tow vehicle brakes. Should not tie into tow vehicle vacuum brake system to prevent potential loss of both braking systems. Capable of smooth, controlled stops.

COMMENTS: Maintenance of large, quick-disconnect vacuum lines have put this approach in disfavor.

HYDRAULIC BRAKES: DIRECT ACTUATION:

ADVANTAGES: High hydraulic fluid pressures allow very small lines and small actuating cylinders.

DISADVANTAGES: Quick disconnect hydraulic connectors provides another failure mechanism for contamination and loss of both trailer and tow vehicle brakes. Probably not compatible with Anti-lock Braking Systems (ABS).

CONTROLLER: Can use existing hydraulic system in tow vehicle or can add secondary system for trailer. Capable of smooth, controlled stops.

COMMENTS: Maintenance of high pressure quick-disconnect hydraulic fluid lines have put this approach in disfavor.

HYDRAULIC BRAKES: SURGE ACTUATION:

ADVANTAGES: No connection to tow vehicle, movement of trailer forward when tow vehicle slows down actuates hydraulic master cylinder on trailer brakes. Sealed system is tolerant to contamination. Capable of smooth, controlled stops. Since there is no direct connection to tow vehicle hydraulic brake system, this approach

is compatible with Anti-lock Braking Systems.

DISADVANTAGES: Brakes cannot be applied independently of tow vehicle. Shifting tow vehicle to lower gear on long downhill grades will automatically apply trailer brakes.

CONTROLLER: None required, all components self-contained on trailer.

COMMENTS: Standard brake system for boat trailers that may be submerged in water. May be technically illegal in some states since brakes cannot be applied independently applied. Several manufacturers (such as Atwood) make this type of brake.

ELECTRIC BRAKES: ELECTRONIC MECHANICAL CONTROLLER:

ADVANTAGES: Provides smooth, controlled stops using standard electric brakes.

DISADVANTAGES: Extra brake pedal height is awkward.

CONTROLLER: Pressure actuated device placed on top of brake pedal plus dash-mounted electronics.

COMMENTS: A reasonable approach if the added brake height can be tolerated.

ELECTRIC BRAKES: ELECTRONIC HYDRAULIC CONTROLLER:

ADVANTAGES: Provides smooth, controlled stops using standard electric brakes.

DISADVANTAGES: Requires a special, low-volume pressure sensor placed into the brake hydraulic line. Many installers reluctant to use with Anti-lock Braking Systems.

CONTROLLER: Low-volume pressure sensor in brake line plus dash-mounted electronics.

COMMENTS: New model tow vehicles with Anti-lock Braking Systems recommend placing sensor in a rear brake line and place a limit on controller extra volume to 0.02 cubic inches with pressures up to 1,000 pounds per square inch. At least one manufacturer (Kelsey-Hayes) makes a controller meeting these requirements.

ELECTRIC BRAKES: ELECTRONIC TIMED CONTROLLER:

ADVANTAGES: Simple installation connecting only to stop light wiring.

DISADVANTAGES: Trailer braking starts with stop light actuation and progresses through a timed cycle to maximum braking force until tow vehicle stop light turns off.

CONTROLLER: Simple dash-mounted electronics.

COMMENTS: Smooth, controlled stops are very difficult if not impossible to make. Several manufacturers (such as Drawtight) make this type of controller. Two versions available, 12 and 18 amp, for two axle and three axle trailers, respectively.

ELECTRIC BRAKES: ELECTRONIC INERTIA CONTROLLER:

ADVANTAGES: Simple installation connecting only to stop light wiring.

DISADVANTAGES: Substantial set-up and adjustment required.

CONTROLLER: Simple dash-mounted electronics with inertia sensor built into controller

COMMENTS: Once the set-up has been completed, system is capable of smooth and controlled stops. Steep downhill stops may be aggressive. Some versions provide continuous brake wiring continuity testing as well as brake current monitoring. Several manufacturers (such as Tekonsha) make this type of controller. Two versions available, 12 and 18 amp, for two axle and three axle trailers, respectively.

Don Grayson, #2758

KENNEDY KWESTIONS

This column has been a regular VA feature where VAC members and friends could email, fax or write in their restoration questions and answers, however it is unfortunate in that we did not receive the type of response we first expected. In light of this, this is the final column.

The Kennedy Kwestions Column is being discontinued as of this publication. The primary reason is the gradually diminishing number of questions that have been submitted, in conjunction with what has been a consistently sparse level of responses or answers, to the questions posed. Maybe the concept of a regular technical assistance column will serve a valid purpose for the membership at some time in the future, but that does not appear to be the case for now. My thanks to everyone who participated in the exchange of information. I hope you found it helpful.

Happy Trailing!

Tom Kennedy, #4810

FLOOR REPAIRS

It is well known that a few older Airstreams suffer from floor problems. Usually this manifests itself by areas which are no longer firm to the step. In some years, the rear of the trailer is particularly vulnerable. This is often referred to as floor rot, though a closer look will show that there are various causes. For whatever reason, a structurally sound floor is essential to the structural integrity of an Airstream. The floor is the connection between the relatively stiff body, and the relatively flexible frame.

This should not necessarily be looked upon as a weakness. It might be more correct to regard it as a weakness of past owners for not detecting and interceding in the problem years ago. Trailers of less durable construction often are junked before they are twenty five years old, thus sparing the bolt manufacturer from having the floor occasionally fail.

Moisture from leakage of the trunk lid, doors, plumbing, windows, vents, moldings, or seams is the usual cause, with the first two being the most common. Before attempting floor repairs, one should attempt to identify and correct these problems.

Because leakage at the rear is so common I must talk about it further. There are two separate causes which account for most leakage here, they are frame separation, and trunk lid drainage. Frame separation will be dealt with as a separate topic, but briefly, here is what happens. Starting in about 1972, and extending to 1982, but not confined to these years, a change was made to the frame which made it prone to bend downward just aft of the tandem running gear. The problem was most severe in trailers over 23 feet, with high mileage and with heavy loads on the bumper or the rear of the trailer. Usually the frame will break away from the body, opening a crack between the body and frame which can be seen at the trunk area. This allows rain water to run down the rear surfaces and directly onto the floor. Correcting frame separation is a job for your dealer. In severe cases, the frame is pushed up, and reinforcing members are welded in place. From that point on, general caulking will take care of the problem.

A second problem can induce leakage at exactly the same place, with or without frame separation. This is brought about by the design of the flat trunk lid and the sheet metal to which it attaches. They collect rain and snow and have no clear path provided for its removal. The water then runs up against the body at the joint below the rub rail, and contacts the rear edge of the floor. This joint should be thoroughly cleaned out and caulked with silicone rubber, and the joint regularly inspected thereafter.

In 1995, there was an excellent article in the Blue Beret, from which I have taken the following suggestions. To locate leaks from rain water, find an assistant who will stay inside and signal while you stand outside with a hose and spray water on questionable areas. This works. Choose a suspected area. Start from the bottom, working up very slowly. Obviously, if you start at the top, the leak could be anywhere from top to bottom. Don't hurry. You must be willing to spray a suspected spot for five minutes to be sure it does not contain a slow leak. Focus on the following: the vents where the three inch high collar joins the roof; windows and gaskets, especially in the front; drip moldings over windows; identification signs, brackets and attachments that may have been added; clearance lights; the moldings at the belt.; the molding at the rocker panels (banana wraps); and the wheel housings. Do not be afraid to use a nozzle with direct impingement on suspected spots. After you have finished, take your assistant out to dinner.

The shower, brown water tank and all associated piping are frequent sources. The fresh water tank, pumps and so forth can also be leaking.

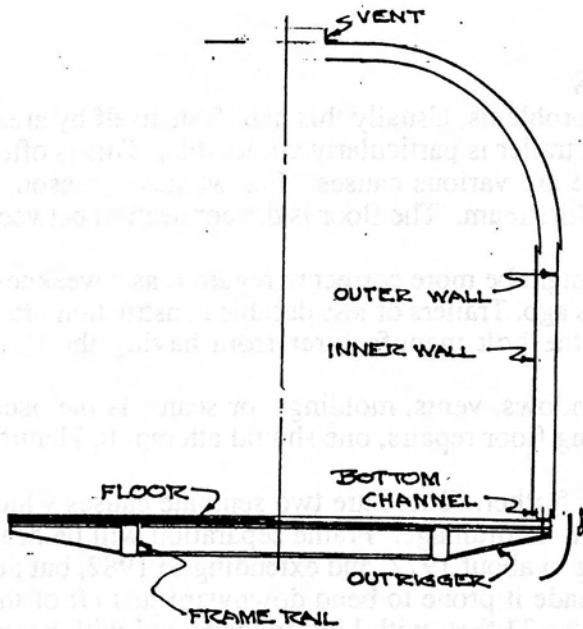
The floor may suffer rot. All rot is caused by a fungus. The spores are everywhere but tend to colonize when they find a delicious food like moist wood. The result is a brown mush which can easily be dislodged with a fingertip. There is no such thing as dry-rot.

Equally annoying is delamination which is caused when repeated wetting washes away the glue. The plies then separate (delaminate) causing loss of strength. Simple repairs are sometimes possible in either case.

Shown in figure 1 is a simplified cross-section of an Airstream trailer. In general this holds true for Airstreams from 1936 to the present time. Note that the floor, along with the out-riggers of the frame, connect the body to the frame. Do not under-estimate the importance of the floor as a structural member. Note how water might leak in at a vent, travel the inner skin of the body, and appear later at the floor. Or, it might collect in the bottom channel, travel forward or aft a distance, then appear at the floor.

Unless the floor is a complete and obvious disaster, local repairs are usually possible. After all, the loss of one outrigger, or even two, and its associated floor, will not cause the whole trailer to disintegrate. Look for shortcuts before tearing out furniture.

Figure 1: Simplified cross-section of an Airstream trailer.



In the case of the delaminated floor, several owners report good results fusing the layers back together using the polyester resin used in fiberglass construction. Some have troweled this over delaminated and splintered areas. Holes can be drilled through top plies so that underlying plies are glued together. Buy the necessary parts and materials from automotive supply houses.

There is a product sold through boat supply stores called *Get Rot*. This is a low viscosity epoxy material which can be applied to areas that are delaminated or contain rot. They recommend not removing the soft rot material, but let the *Get Rot* soak throughout. In a day or so it hardens producing a strong floor. Member Don Grayson (#2758) reports excellent results (See *Vintage Advantage*, August 1996). *Get Rot* Penetrating Epoxy kits, West Marine, P.O. Box 50050, Watsonville CA 95077; 800-538-0775.

Before we talk about the difficult job of outright replacement (part or all of the floor), there is one more method which merits discussion, that is capping over. Here one removes as much of the furniture as necessary. Then, a layer of 3/8 inch plywood is applied over all of the exposed area including aisles.

This is attached with resin, glue, or screws, or all three and has the obvious advantage of restoring a firm even floor throughout without getting complicated about it. The disadvantages are that when the furniture is reinstalled, some of it may have to be cut off at the bottom to compensate for the raised floor. Consider what may happen at the door sill for instance. Also, if you have lost the mechanical strength at the point where the body connects to the floor, this will not restore it. However, if this lost strength is not a major area (say four feet along the length of the trailer) this may be an acceptable compromise because the remaining floor gets stiffer. On the minus side is the undesirable increase in trailer weight. This is a very popular method, and I would estimate is chosen perhaps about half of the time.

If one elects to replace part or all of the floor, things get complicated. Certainly some of the furniture must be removed. Then, it isn't so easy to disconnect and remove the parts of the bad floor. The floor is connected to the frame and outriggers with carriage bolts, the nuts for which cannot be easily found and unscrewed. Further, the connection between floor and bottom channel varies. It is usually a mixture of long sheet metal screws and bolts at the outriggers. The sheet metal screws are hardened and cannot be sawed. Then, one is confronted with the problem of putting back floor pieces in such a way that they actually contribute to the strength rather than just going along for the ride (to take an extreme example, a group of shingles nailed together might look like a roof, but missing the underlying framing, would have no strength). The pieces have to somehow be worked down and under the bottom channel.

The 1974 service manual suggests the following: Cut out the bad sections with a saber saw or skill saw. Where steel frame members interfere, set the skill saw so it cuts only wood. Save the old pieces and use them as a pattern for the new. Alternately, lay the new floor over the hole and trace its shape from below. Cut 3 inch wide strips of new floor material. Using both glue and screws, fasten this underneath the old floor so it overhangs into the hole 1.5 inches. This way a ledge 1.5 inches wide will be built all around the edge of the hole for the new floor to rest upon. Cut the new piece and fasten it on the ledge with glue and screws.

What one would actually like to do is separate the entire body from the frame, lift it clear, and put down an entire new floor. But because of the unusual equipment required, and because of the enormous amount of labor, this has been done only two times that I have heard of (and they didn't say if they would ever do it again!).

In the above, I have offered you three choices: rigid, cap, or replace. Obviously, unless one loves hard work, it is important to spend hours looking, probing, locating the true cause and extent of the rot before starting work. Look also at how the moisture may have rusted the frame members. Often, the outrigger is held up by the floor.

Sometimes a firm piece of floor is absolutely essential, for example, to mount a toilet. But this problem can be solved by any of the three methods. I am of the opinion that the loss of a single outrigger is almost never a serious problem. So, choose a combination of methods which gets an acceptable job done with the least time and expense.

Rutherford L. Cooper, #2601



THE VAC INTERNET HOMEPAGE

This column is a regular VA feature discussing the VAC Internet homepage, its progress and interest. Beginning with this issue we are changing our website to a new server with a new operator. Our "new" operator is former VA editor Duane Hedahl (#1175). Mr. Hedahl is presently in the process of changing the server and maintaining our website. We also wish to thank Mr. Dan Burkhart (#14421) for getting our original site on-line and maintaining it during the last nine months. We wish Dan well as he returns to school and we will continue to promote the VAC with the Internet homepage through the fine efforts of Duane.

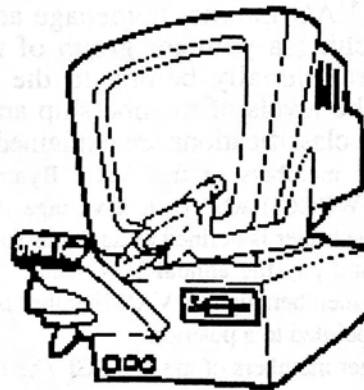
Our web-site operator moved and no longer can take care of the homepage and the classified advertisement section of that. I am working to get a new one running so we can have a current classified section updated as necessary. It takes time to get the old one released and to find a new server, one that we can afford. I talked with Dan Burkhart (#14421) about the VAC Internet homepage and he is going to send the entire setup to me on a disk that I can edit or change it as necessary and launch it from here. The maintenance cost will be \$10.00 per month and about \$150.00 setup charge. I want it to work like our original homepage in that members will be able to put their ad 'on-line' but only I will have the capability to take them off. I also want a date of entry of the ad and run it for 30 days only. If people want to put the ad back on, it can then be run for another 30 days. They will be able to notify me via e-mail or letter to add or delete an ad. I'll try and work in the letterhead of the N/L as a top page and links to several popular sites. Heard from Ed Stanley also with his suggestions and I will try to get something going here soon. Before I get anything on-line, I'll certainly have a hard copy circulated to all concerned so we get what we want on it. The ads do real well as far as I have been able to determine. We do need a method to remove them from the listing when the unit is sold, etc. I'm working on it! I'm sure it will work out well and other IntraClubs will be joining in soon.

Duane Hedahl, #1175

[Ed. note: As of November 1996, our original homepage is still on-line and may be accessed at the following. NEW SITE !!!

<http://www.commerce-center.com/vac>

however, we do not know how long this site will continue to be available. Once our new site is up and running, we will begin listing that address].



VAC EMAIL ADDRESSES

Below is a running list of VAC members and subscribers electronic mail (email) addresses. This list was compiled by VAC folks sending in their address, either through the computer or through postal means. If other folks would like to be included in the future, just send me your address. I will continue to print and update this list in upcoming issues until either the list becomes unmanageable or the WBCCI begins to list email addresses in their annual Membership Directory.

VAC Member	WBCCI #	Address
Baston, Stan	1348	sbastonnj@aol.com
Braun, Beth	3374	103231.64@compuserve.com
Dickinson, J & L	3884	76515.2222@compuserve.com
Dix, Frank	30215	fadix@vnet.ibm.com
Funke, Don & Caryl	11893	dfunke@sprynet.com
Grayson, Don	2758	dgrayso@indy.net
Habermann, Heinz-J.	Friend	habsi@usa.net
Hedahl, Duane	1175	dhdhl@worldnet.att.net
Howarth, Tom	6490	howarth@nrl.navy.mil
Kennedy, Tom	4810	tkx045@aol.com
Le Gresley, Farncomb	4314	farncomb@mail.durham.net
Pierce, Melvin	3724	mpierce@scranton.ctctel.com
Reasons, Don	Friend	calldon@airmail.net
Reece, Gene & Emily	19610	genereece@sava.gulfnet.com
Tenewitz, Rich & Diane	6726	diarichie@aol.com



NEW VAC MEMBERS

Classification of VAC Memberships and Subscribers

With the recent increase in membership, especially through the VAC Internet homepage advertising, the VAC is reaching a younger group of members than those that traditionally belong to the WBCCI. To understand the levels of membership and subscribers, the following classifications are explained.

Member: All members of the Wally Byam Caravan Club International (WBCCI) who own a vintage Airstream trailer (where a vintage trailer is defined as an Airstream trailer 25 years old or older) and pay the annual VAC dues. This is the dues paying, voting membership. A VAC member is entitled to hold office or be appointed to a position.

Associate: Other members of the WBCCI who do not qualify by owning a vintage Airstream trailer but wish for mutually beneficial reasons to belong. Associate members pay dues, vote and have all the benefits of a regular member, except that they can not park their trailer in the Vintage area at the annual WBCCI International Rally. A VAC associate is entitled to be appointed to a position.

Honorary Member: Membership bestowed upon VAC benefactors provided that they are WBCCI members. This is non-dues paying and a nonvoting membership.

Friend: Any person 18 years or older who has an interest in vintage Airstream trailers and wishes to receive the VAC newsletter (**The Vintage Advantage**). Trailer ownership is not a requirement. This category is for non WBCCI members who want a subscription to the newsletter only. It is the hope of the VAC that the Friends subscribers will be introduced to the WBCCI through the VA and then join the WBCCI such that they may be full VAC members.

Since the last VA issue, we are pleased to welcome in the following new VAC members, associates and subscribers.

VAC Member/Subscriber	WBCCI #	Trailer
Abruzzi, Christine	Friend	none
Anawaty, Mark A.	Friend	'58 19' ?
Ashley, Loren & Mary	Friend	none
Bednark, Kenneth	Applied	'64 19' Globetrotter
Beltran, Rod & Darlene	10320	'46 22' ?
Bottenberg, Robert & Helen	07696	'57 23' Caravanner
Bowman, Donald & Carolyn	05911	'63 22' Safari
Brockett, Richard & Edna	30150	'71 27' Ambassador
Brown, Gerald	Friend	none
Brown, Reggie & Gladys	12051	'74 25' TradeWind
Cometto, Tony & Mary Ann	Friend	none

Cooper, Kenneth & Florence	14840	'68 24' Tradewind
Corrigan, Tom & Betty	Friend	'76 23' Safari
Crawford, Fred	Friend	'71 25' Tradewind
Dallaire, Raymond & Joyce	06868	'91 34' Anniversary none
Dann, Herbert	Friend	'64 16' Bamb
Davis, Rachel M.	04356	'63 22' Tradewind
Detrich, Art	Friend	'62 16' Bambi
Dickey, David & Veronia	Friend	'69 31' Sovereign
Donahue, Daniel & Catherine	07227	'67 21' Globetrotter
Dow, Jim & Sowele	Friend	'69 27' Overlander
Downey, Paul	0215	'62 30' Sovereign
Durling, Wendell & Beverly	01071	'58 16' Bambi
Felling, Carl & Marilyn	Friend	'64 17' Bambi II
Felzman, Joe & Lisa	06387	'62 16' Bambi
Goodwin III, Vernon & Jo	01311	'68 17' Caravel
Grisso, Bill	14531	'62 16' Bambi
Hilliker, Richard	Friend	'62 28' Ambassador
Hoban, John & Barbara	Friend	'74 25' Tradewind
Hyslop, Thomas & Alice	02789	'86 25' Sovereign
Jackson, Jim	04186	'61 16' Bambi
James, John & Ann	Friend	'66 24' Tradewind
Jones, Garreth	03583	'68 26' Overlander
Jones, Rodd & Sally	Friend	'67 20' Globetrotter
Kurtz, Gary	Friend	'68 20' Globetrotter
Lachowski, Don	Friend	'66 24' Tradewind
Ladd, Jim & Karen	Friend	'65 22' Safari
Lermo, Ron & Jan	Friend	none
Loizon, William	Friend	'80 25' Excella
Lovell, Marvin	05575	'63 19' Globetrotter
Makel, Dave & Martha	05977	'67 26' Overlander
Maltby, Robert & Kleo	11891	'72 25' Tradewind
Manning, Dick & Katherine	Friend	'72 31' Sovereign
McClintock, Grant & Paula	Friend	'62 16' Bambi
Norris, Dick & Ann	06191	'77 31' Sovereign
Ozuna, Steven	Friend	'62 26' Overlander
Peterson, Howard	06398	'71 27' Overlander
Petura, Ron & Sue	06015	none
Reed, Tom	Friend	'68 17' Caravel
Reed, Tom & Jennifer	06768	'67 20' Globetrotter
Robertson, Dan & Sharon	04735	none
Rudolph, John	Friend	'73 24' Argosy
Rumple, Geno	Friend	'69 27' Overlander
Sartori, Robert & Shirley	06061	'58 22' Safari
Schrandel, Michael	Friend	none
Schuitema, Jeff	Friend	none
Schuldt, William & Merry Lee	Friend	'64 24' Tradewind
Sellers, Jerry & Diana	Friend	none
Shore, Steven	Friend	none
Short, John	Friend	none
Sprawls, Jan	05576	'68 28' Ambassador
Turner, Sam & Linda	Friend	'77 29' Ambassador
Wagstaff, Patty	Friend	'64 19' Globetrotter
White, John & Elaine	05962	'67 17' Caravel
Wilson, Ed & Opal	Friend	'71 21' Globetrotter
Woellner, Richard	05971	'57 22' Flying Cloud
Wolfbauer, Eugene	02210	'66 17' Caravel

Ed Stanley, #21491

CLASSIFIED ADVERTISEMENTS

Anyone may advertise in the VA since membership in the VAC is not a requirement. As a VAC member or Friend, one advertisement per year may be placed in the VA for no cost as a subscriber. Any additional advertisements in the same year cost \$5.00 per advertisement. For non-VA subscribers, the cost of each advertisement is \$5.00. In order to place an advertisement in the VA, please send all information to Mr. Ed Stanley, Treasurer, who in turn will forward them to the editor. Please send advertisements in the format shown.



AIRSTREAM PARTS

For Sale: Original aluminum vent cover with interior (removable) screen and telescoping mechanisms for opening. Original turn screw handles included. Removed from 1953 Airstream Flying Cloud. \$50 firm including shipping. Tom Howarth (#6490), PO Box 585, Oxon Hill, MD 20750; 202/404-8103 (days) or 301/855-3911 (eves).

Salvaging: A rolled-over 1972 Airstream Land Yacht travel trailer. Roof A/C, stove, windows, door, tail lights, etc. are available. No chassis parts are left. Bruce Duckworth (#7228), 3700 Decker, Moore, OK 73160; 405/769-3318 (M-F days); 405/799-8912 (eves); 405/769-9541 (FAX).

Wanted: Astro dome vent cover (26" by 14") for Airstream trailers prior to 1966, either plastic or fiberglass. Kathy & Harold Kloepfer, Silver City Classic Trailers, PO Box 445, Cornelius, OR 97113; email: trailers@fta.com.



TRAVEL TRAILERS FOR SALE

1959 18' Airstream Globetrotter, \$2,500. Nice condition inside and out, rear double bed, divan/couch in front, LP stove, oven, refrigerator and furnace, small commode with porta-potty, good tires with spare. Ashton & Ellen Robinson, HC 32 Box 32209, Ely, NV 89301; 702/289-4696 or 702/777-6316.

1963 19' Airstream Globetrotter, \$5,000. Awnings all around, A/C, TV ant., elec. jack, 30# LP tanks, new fan motors for stove and roof vents. L. H. Proctor (#6852), Box 327, Vidalia, LA 71373; 318/336-7872.

1963 22' Airstream Safari, Best Offer. Needs some work but is in good overall shape, Reese hitch with stabilizer bars and sway control. Ronald Rose, 2190 SR 534, Geneva, OH 44041; 216/474-0404.

1965 26' Airstream Overlander, \$3,500. Tandem axle, rear bath, front and side divan/bed with new cushions, new front tinted window guard and rear window awning. James Lyons (#9029), RR #1 Box 423, Troy, PA 16947; 717/297-2017.

1969 29' Airstream Ambassador Deluxe Land Yacht, \$5,700. Twin beds, rear bath, A/C, new parts include curtains, water pump, battery, style wheels, updated wiring, very clean with like new interior. One owner trailer. Ron LaChance (#5568), 1434 Arlington Avenue, Lincoln Park, MI 48146; 313/388-8659.

1969 27' Airstream Overlander Land Yacht, \$6,000. Beautiful walnut interior, very good body, A/C, 3 new Zip-Dee awnings, carpeted, microwave, built-in TV, good tires, power jack, EZ-lift hitch & sway control, everything works. Robert Sartori (#6061), 1541 Kuhle Drive, Sun Prairie, WI 53590; 608/837-3022.



Santa in his sleigh with his reindeers: now that's a tow vehicle!

Membership Application
Vintage Airstream Club
A WBCCI IntraClub

Please Print

Date _____

Last Name _____ First Name (His) _____ (Hers) _____

Mailing Address _____

Telephone Number _____ WBCCI# _____ Unit Number & Name _____

Trailer Year _____ Length _____ Model _____ Serial Number _____

Hobbies & Interests (His & Hers) _____

Occupation (now or before retiring) _____

Winter Address & Telephone Number (Newsletter will only be sent to mailing address) _____

- Please check one:
- Member (own a vintage Airstream & belong to WBCCI)
 - Associate Member (do not own a vintage Airstream but belong to WBCCI)
 - Friend (am interested in vintage Airstreams but do not belong to WBCCI)

Send this application, along with your dues payment of \$10.00 to Mr. Edward Stanley, Membership Chairman, 18940 Marine View Drive SW, Seattle, WA 98166.

Note: If you are not a WBCCI member, we will be happy to assist you with the application.
Caution: Joining this Club could change your life!

The Vintage Advantage
Mr. Duane C. Hedahl, VA Distributer
2225 Ninth Avenue, South
Great Falls, MT 59405

