



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.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

<i>President's Message</i>	1
<i>The Editor's Desk</i>	2
<i>Letters</i>	3
<i>VAC Announcements</i>	4
<i>In the News</i>	5
<i>COOP's Corner</i>	9
<i>The Airstream Story</i>	11
<i>1937 Airstream Brochure</i>	13
<i>Tech Talk 1 (Fly your Flags)</i>	15
<i>Tech Talk 2 (Serial Numbers)</i>	17
<i>VAC Internet Report</i>	19
<i>VAC EMail Addresses</i>	19
<i>New VAC Members</i>	20
<i>Classified Ads</i>	21
<i>Application</i>	22

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

I am writing this while sitting out a January rainstorm in Monte Sano State Park near Huntsville, Alabama. You may recall in my last President's Message (VA November 1996) that I promised to explore the possibilities for a VAC Pre-Rally next June 23-25, and to report on that excursion in this VA. It seems unbelievable that it will be only a few months until many of us will be travelling to the 1997 International Rally. I am happy to report that Monte Sano State Park, where the Pre-Rally is slated to be held, is an excellent location for such. It's situated on the eastern side of Huntsville so it shouldn't present difficulty when it's time to move to our site at International. Details about that movement, and all of the other activities with which we must be familiar with, will be covered at our "attitude adjustment" sessions once we arrive. There are two approaches to the park to be aware, both are fairly steep climbs. The easier route, particularly for large rigs, is from US-431 (Governors Dr) to Monte Sano Boulevard and into the Park. The other route, up Bankhead Parkway, is a fun drive

but does present one interesting hairpin curve!

Based on the experience of past years, I have reserved 30 VAC sites on the above dates. Each site has electricity and water (E & W), with some also having sewer (E, W & S). Sites are shaded, level and well contoured, with daily cost of \$12 for E & W and \$13 for E, W & S (there are senior discounts available for campers over age 62). Maintained bath houses are present as well as a covered pavilion for get togethers. I recommend an early arrival on June 23rd because the demand for the limited number of sites has already exceeded the Park's capability. The Park does not have an overflow area, so VAC members in excess will have to make their own alternate arrangements. Call Monte Sano State Park (205/534-3757) for reservations and identify yourself as a VAC member so that you will have an appropriate site assignment (reserved sites are for vintage trailers only, namely those 25 years or more and owned by a VAC member). An activity at a nearby restaurant is set for June 24th so please plan on attending.

Obviously the Pre-Rally is only the beginning of many fun events. As the VAC Rally Chairperson for this years International Rally, it is my responsibility to plan and oversee the VAC activities associated with that occasion, beginning with our parade onto the International Rally grounds with flags flying. A full description of our activities will appear in the next VA, the last issue in which I will have the pleasure of presenting a message. I can't believe how quickly this year is going by! Ruth and I look forward to seeing you in Alabama, have a great year!

Dick Mumma, #4333

THE EDITOR'S DESK



Well it appears that my call to arms in the last issue of the **VA** has raised some attention. I am very pleased with the responses received and am glad to hear from so many members. It appears from this informal survey of readers that everyone likes different parts of the newsletter. Many favor the technical notes only, others want the VAC news, the reprint of vintage brochures and magazine articles are a big hit and most readers seem to like to read each and every article. In light of these comments, expect more of the same!

This issue begins my second year as editor and I am enthused with the input received this month from within our membership and subscribers. By input I mean that I have received input from many new sources.

Just to show that our readers have been paying attention, our letters section reports on a sighting of the phantom Airstream truck camper. We have also received a nice letter from a true vintage Airstreamer that is out on the road and running his own business with the help of his vintage trailers and cars.

The "VAC News" updates us on upcoming Region Rallies with VAC activities as well as the results from a members survey.

Our "In the News" section which had been pretty dry in the last issue, has been significantly resurrected. I have reprinted articles and photographs from the **Wall Street Journal**, **Rural Heritage**, the **New York Susque-Lawrence Unit newsletter**, and two excellent write-ups concerning Airstreams in Hollywood.

"Coop's Corner" chips in with Bud's usual dry wit and great stories followed by his forth installment of his research in *The Airstream Story*. To follow up Bud's research, the **VA** is presenting the last of the **1937 Airstream Travel Trailer brochure** reprint. The subject in this issue is a presentation of the earliest trailers offered by Airstream before and concurrent with (in 1936-7) the famed aluminum sided Clipper trailer.

There is also another two "Tech Tip" columns in this issue. The first column concerns the rhymes, reasons and hows to "Fly Your Flags" at the International Rally. Just imagine how impressive the VAC parking area will appear when we all participate in this special request!

Coop is also reporting on some of his continuing research in unscrambling the Airstream serial number puzzle. He even has included a guide to allow our

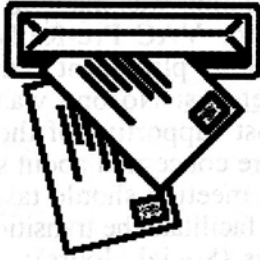
readers to try and understand the deeper meaning of their own particular serial numbers.

Our internet report is also pleasant news in that our new website is up and running. Web master Duane Hedahl has taken on this task himself and is anxious for our readership to jump on and provide him with feedback. This home page continues to be a strong source for our gains in membership. Although many of our readers originally are joining as Friends subscribers, we are now pleased to see many of our subscribers upgrading to join in the WBCCI and then participating in our activities. I am very hopeful that many of these new WBCCI members will join us at the 1997 International Rally in Huntsville this summer. I know that it was not until the 1995 International Rally that I found the true benefit in joining the WBCCI and participating in the VAC activities. After all, how else can one meet so many other characters as themselves in one setting! I am still sorry to have personally missed participation in both the charter Wagon Wheels (VAC) caravan as well as the 1996 International. This year I have planned my schedule for attendance to the Rally (there will be no Wagon Wheels 1997 unfortunately).

I have also had two sightings of 1930's era Airstream trailers. One is located in Oregon and one is in Arkansas. I will be writing to members that are within proximity of the sighting locations over the next month so that we might find out more about these trailers. I do want us to also return to our "Classic Close-Up" features and will continue writing to owners of 1930's and 1940's Airstreams. If any of our readers own such, or know where these trailers might be located, feel free to send in photographs and a write-up of features. This column has been a favorite of many readers and it would be nice to continue.

Until we meet again, Enjoy.....





LETTERS

“Sighting of the Phantom Airstream Truck Camper”

Earlier last year in a **Vintage Advantage** newsletter (“From the Editor’s Desk,” VA Vol. III, No. 4, May 1996) there was a request for information about a vintage “truck camper”. We thought that maybe someone with more information than we had would write in.

We encountered this contraption about three years ago when we were north of Chattanooga heading south. We were towing our vintage Airstream at the time and ran up behind this phenomenon. You can imagine our bewilderment as we approached this “thing” - an Airstream trailer being *driven!* We stared in shock at this strange sight, and the driver, obviously enjoying the look on our faces of disbelief, waved and grinned as we passed. We didn’t have long to take all of this in since we were traveling at 60 mph - and thus we had all of about 60 seconds before he turned off. It all happened too quickly to get the camera out to get a shot. He definitely got a kick out of being seen by another Airstreamer staring in shock at his contraption.

My husband, having had years of experience in the trucking and diesel field, thinks the trailer body was removed from the frame, and the front section where a sofa would have been located, was cut out and mounted on a cab-forward truck frame. The reason for this thought is because the original front, forward-curved windows of the trailer were still in place. The steering wheel and driver were located in the front driver’s side as you would assume. There was no license plate or identifying Airstream number on the vehicle.

The observation left us shaking our heads in disbelief at what we had seen for the many miles we traveled down the road. We felt that he certainly would be the center of attention at an Airstream Rally or Park!

Elmo & Audrey Pratt, #8337

“Case of the Missing Cruisette Door”

Yikes! Eegads! Tragic disaster! And I mean help!!

My name is Tad Pierson and I own and operate American Dream Safari, a tour company using 1955 Cadillacs and vintage Airstreams to give customers a classic Americana highway tour.

Disaster has struck. I was returning from Memphis, where I operate my tours from my family’s home in Kansas. The date was Monday, December 2nd, after the Thanksgiving holiday. I was pulling my 1953 15’ Airstream Cruisette heading south on I-35 from Wichita, KS. I was heading into a typical 30 mph prairie wind that was tough but the Airstream was handling it. I turned off I-35 and headed east on the Cimmaron Turnpike going towards Tulsa, then stopped at 35 miles past that exit at a service station. To my horror I then discovered that my door had completely blown off - hinges and all! I can’t describe the feeling....

In Wichita I recalled stopping at a rest area and locking the door to the trailer as well as the car. So it was somewhere between Wichita and that service station that I lost the door. Not knowing exactly what to do, I retraced my path back to Wichita, stopping at all the turnpike turnstiles and inquiring whether they had seen the door. I quizzed a couple of truckers if anything had come up on the CB. I called the Highway Patrol and reported the loss. I called both Kansas and Oklahoma highway maintenance crews to let them know. Naturally, on my return drive I did not find the door so reluctantly I turned around and headed back to Memphis with a trailer that was no longer functional.

The only hope I have of finding that door is the fact that on the inside of the door is a promotional sticker with my website address on it. So if whoever found the door is computer savvy and recognizes a website address, looks into my webpage and puts two and two together, then I might get my door back. I’m not holding my breath.

In the meantime, anybody out there with a replacement door that would fit a 1953 15’ Cruisette please call! Fortunately I have two other trailers to go with but they are a 1956 26’ Overlander and another non-Airstream make. Neither is nearly as eye-catching or as convenient to use on tour.

If anyone has any information or suggestions as what to do, please let me know. Thanks for your assistance.

Tad Pierson, Friend

PO Box 3129, Memphis, TN 38173-0129
901/382-6838; boxcar61@memphismojo.com

[Ed. note: Tad’s vintage Airstream touring business has been written about in the April 1995 *Trailer Life* (p. 13) and in the August 1995 *Esquire* (p. 36).]



VAC ANNOUNCEMENTS

Region 4 VAC Rally

The Region 4 Rally will be May 21-25, 1997 at the Mahoning County Fairgrounds in Canfield, OH. VAC activities will be hosted by the Wagners with the highlight being a Bud Cooper polishing seminar. The theme for this years rally is "Nearly Heaven in 97" which guarantees the weather to be heavenly! Water, electric and special VAC parking will be provided so plan on attending and enjoying the many festivities.

Clyde Wagner, #8441

Call for Vintage Rally

Is anyone interested in participating in a vintage trailer Rally? The Rally could be open to vintage trailers of all makes and models that are 25 years old or older and can include an open house, a Concourse d'Elegance and all other activities similar to WBCCI Regional Rallies. Perhaps other special vintage activities may also be suggested and hosted. For those interested, call for details at 313/561-4838.

Forest Bone, #9712

VAC Member Survey Results

VAC members parked at the 1996 International were each sent a survey. As of January 15, 1997, a total of 16 responses have been received with another 2 surveys returned by the Post Office as undeliverable. Appreciation is expressed to all respondents for passing along ideas and thoughts. Officers are reviewing all suggestions. The following is a summary of results.

Wagon Wheels Caravan: All respondents felt positive about the Wagon Wheels '96 (the first VAC caravan) and wished that it be continued whenever possible. Based on the responses, the caravan leaders selection should be a top priority.

Pre-Rally Parking: Most thought it was a necessary event to facilitate the entrance parade and International parking. There seemed to be confusion over expectations regarding this event; some viewed it as a

good time to meet and greet, others disliked the lack of activities. A suggestion was made to look for a more primitive setting for VAC Pre-Rally parking while others wished for closer placement to the Rally site.

Business Meetings: No one was critical of our meetings with most supportive of the current format although some were concerned about scheduling since it was felt that the meeting should take place near the end of the Rally to facilitate the transition of officers.

4 PM Meetings (Social Hours): This activity is generally seen as an important VAC activity. There were suggestions such as having daily meetings in the beginning of the rally and then tapering off to every other day; having meetings after the evening program; having get togethers earlier to allow for dinner and evening program preparation. Additional suggestions included purchase of a tent for VAC activities and encouragement of our talented members to bring instruments for group sing-alongs. There is also a need to communicate "time and place" better and possibly a printing of an event's calendar would be useful.

Concourse D'Elegance: Make it more low keyed, reduce the number of awards, base the top prize on original condition, continue the "Member's Choice" award, create a "Most Original" award and factor in the age of the trailer into the results.

VAC Parking at International: Six respondents want to use random parking because of its simplicity while others preferred using an order of age by size and/or size groupings only. It was pointed out that the Bambi grouping at the 1996 Rally was especially eye catching. One member felt that officers grouping should be maintained to facilitate communications.

July 4th Members Picnic: Only two respondents were not in favor of this so because of this positive response, someone needs to be identified as a chairperson for hosting this event. A tent purchase for this activity and the Social Hour was again suggested.

A final area of questions also brought some thoughtful responses. Most members were against a "Vintage International" because of the conflict it might create with the WBCCI. There was continued interest in the Region Rallies for VAC activities as well as planning special events at the Region levels.

It was suggested that the VAC consider two classifications; one for pre-1969 trailers and one for "classic" models from post-1969. It was felt that if we did not address the needs of the "classic" owners that we would have a hard time obtaining members from this era. And finally, we were cautioned as a WBCCI IntraClub to monitor our expansion of events so that they do not conflict with other WBCCI activities.

Forrest Bone, #9712



IN THE NEWS

Interesting Tidbits about Vintage Airstreams

Vintage Airstreams are once again being hailed as the ultimate sheek trailer to own. Since our last VA issue, several different mediums have featured vintage trailers front and center. One of these was the December 11, 1996, issue of **The Wall Street Journal** which placed an article about Airstreams on its front page! Because of this high publicity, VA is proud to present the article as it appeared in the newspaper in a full scanned form. I wish to thank our many members and subscribers for sending copies of this in. Now we just need someone to sign these new owners up for the VAC!

7/11/96

Sleek Airstream stealing the show

By Amy Gamerman
THE WALL STREET JOURNAL

Here it is," says actor Anthony Edwards, beaming with delight as he invites a visitor inside his "silver love sub." He shows off the knotty pine walls, the black-and-white tile floor, the convection oven. "I don't even have this at home!"

What is Edwards' pride and joy? His Airstream trailer. The aluminum-skinned Excella 1000 might look more at home in a trailer park than on the back lot of "E.R.," the prime-time hospital drama in which he plays Dr. Mark Greene. But here it is, Edwards' office and retreat. "The roundness, the curvature of the interior makes a really pleasing environment to be in," he says. "It's very womblike."

Long hailed as the Rolls-Royce of RVs for generations of well-to-do vacationers and retirees, Airstreams are going even further: to the stars. They're trundling out of the trailer park and into the Hollywood hills and studios, the Hamptons and even the Neiman Marcus Christmas catalog. This year's book touts an Airstream glitzed up with antique rugs, hanging beadwork and a cloud-painted ceiling as a "His and Hers House of Dreams" — \$195,000, delivery included.

Even Martha's a fan

Sean Penn, Tom Hanks, Tim Burton, Andy Garcia, Francis Ford Coppola, to name a few, are Airstreamers. And none other than lifestyle guru Martha Stewart will soon be spreading the Airstream gospel. "I love their modern antiquity," she says. "I've always wished I had one." So she is borrowing her sister-in-law Cheri Herbert's 1976 Land Yacht

for a spring antiquing trip to Maine.

The two will hitch the trailer to Stewart's Suburban, sleep on the built-in beds and cook in its compact kitchen — every moment captured by a photographer from *Martha Stewart Living* magazine. Although "the orange and brown plaid is not exactly to my liking," Stewart has been discouraged from bringing her glue-gun. But she is packing her down comforter, hibachi, two telephones, television, fax machine — and "my own eggs from my chickens and probably some homemade jam or jelly."

It isn't known whether Penn stocks his Airstream with homemade jelly, but he did live in it after his house burned down in a 1993 wildfire. Coppola, the director, works out of an Airstream motor home stocked with video equipment.

Nouvelle Airstreamers

The Airstream's ascension to trailer of the stars began in the 1930s. Wally Byam, an advertising man, invented it when his wife refused to go camping unless she could take her kitchen with her. The result was a trailer with built-in amenities that mimicked the bullet-shaped design of a commercial airliner, traveling the roads "like a stream of air."

Byam, who died in 1962, was clearly on to something. Since 1931, Airstream, now owned by Thor Industries Inc. in Jackson Center, Ohio, has produced more than 100,000 trailers — an estimated 70,000 of which are still on the road.

Then there are the nouvelle Airstreamers. Meet Barbara Jakobson: art collector, designer, board member of New York's Museum of Modern Art and owner of a '74 Airstream. "For people who prize American industrial design, Airstream... is one of the primary objects of this century," Jakobson says. "It's a genius piece of technology."

Many actors, who practically live in their trailers on location, agree. In fact, an entire Tinseltown industry exists to service and refurbish celebrity Airstreams. Garcia has his Airstream shined up several times a year; Hanks has his 34-footer washed and waxed monthly.

After spying Hanks' Airstream — which boasts a "really cool badge from NASA" — on location, actor Corbin Bernsen bought one just like it, which he redid with "masculine fabrics" and an elaborate entertainment system: big-screen TV, VCR, surround-sound laser disk and a satellite dish. He also bought a matching silver Suburban to tow it — and stuck his own NASA sticker on the Airstream.

"My kids love it," says Bernsen, calling from his trailer on a break from "The Cape," his TV show. "My big hope is one summer when I'm not working to take it across the country. Definitely all five of us can sleep in it."

Silver-mesh shades

Then there is Matthew Modine, who fell in love with Airstreams as a kid growing up on his dad's California trailer court. Rather than buy a new one ("They're so expensive! You're confusing me for Jim Carrey"), he snatched up a derelict '73 for about \$600. Once gutted, "it was so beautiful — the openness reminded me of a submarine," he says.

So along with the silver-painted aluminum walls, the panels of perforated aluminum and the silver-mesh shades, Modine's trailer now boasts a 50-pound metal bathroom door studded with rivets — "to look like the door of a submarine," explains Andy Rogozinski, who did the job at his Inland RV Service in Corona.

Right now, Rogozinski is working on three trailers belonging to director Tim Burton: among them, a '36 Clipper, which Burton is having completely restored as a Christmas present for his girlfriend, Lisa Marie. The trailer, which boasts a pair of slanted cat-eye windows, needs new aluminum panels (distressed to look old), a new suspension system, new maple paneling and an extra 10 inches of height. The job will cost close to \$100,000.

And what exactly does Burton plan to do with all these trailers? "These are supposed to be love pads," says Rogozinski, rolling his eyes.

Airstreams are even winning star billing — or at least drive-on roles — in movies, music videos, commercials and *Mademoiselle* magazine, which just used one in a fashion shoot. Monday nights, you can see an Airstream barrel through the credits of "Promised Land," a TV show about a family Airstreaming cross-country.

Even that arbiter of hip, MTV, is now a member of the Wally Byam Caravan Club: the lobby of its new West Coast headquarters will feature a '57 Airstream as a funky waiting room, nestled on a bed of Astro Turf.

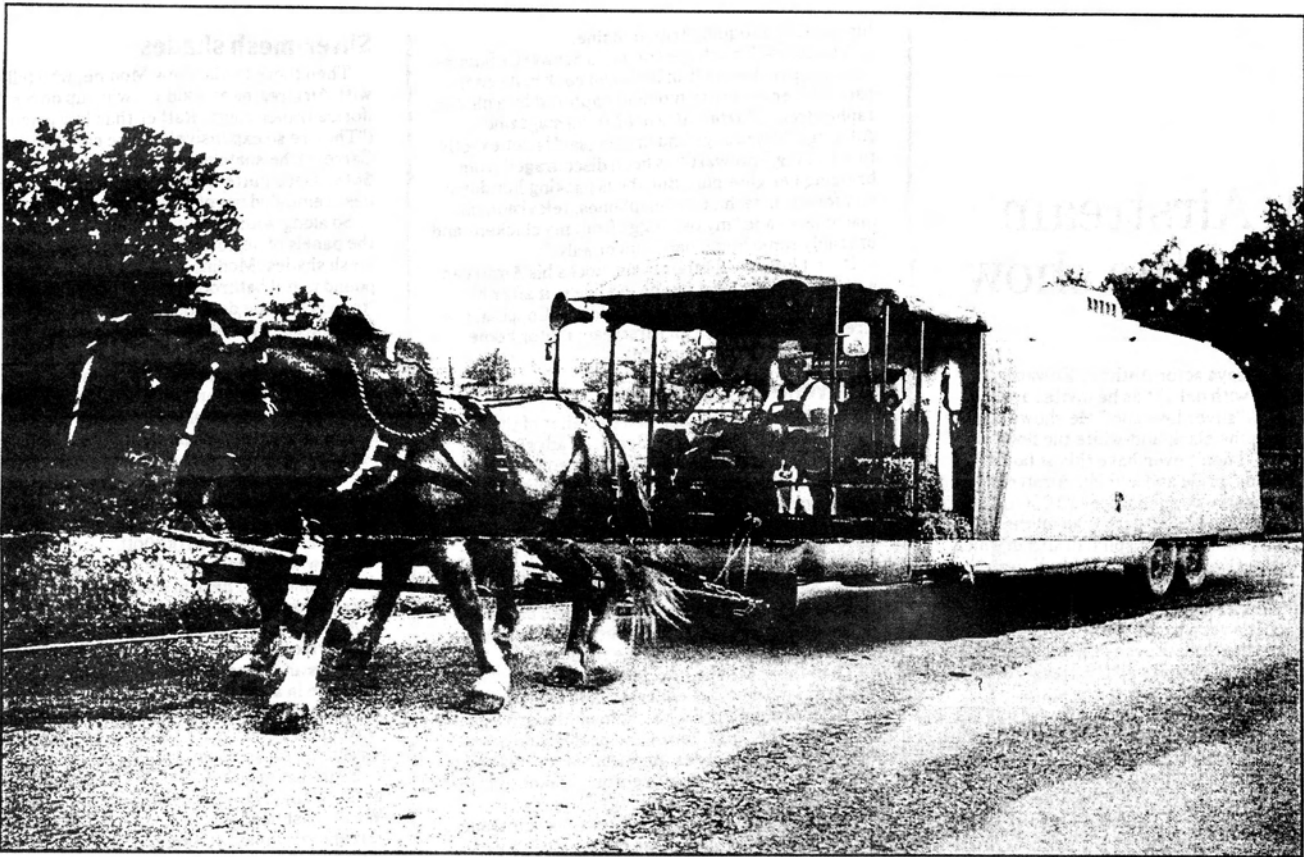
The Modern's Jakobson, for one, couldn't be more pleased with her Airstream. "I've had luncheons in it. I've entertained in it," she says. In fact, the only thing she hasn't done is take it on the road.

"Frankly," she admits, "I'd rather stay at the Ritz."

We thought we had seen everything but then again.....

Although the vintage Airstream truck camper might have sounded odd, VAC member Thomas Reed (#6768) has truly found a photograph of one of a most bizarre vintage Airstream. The following photograph is from the back cover of the Summer 1996 issue (flyer) of **RURAL HERITAGE**. Now this is a couple that we need to get to join the VAC and come to International!

The Last Word: Traveling in Style



Don and Vi Godwin of Udall, Kansas, travel all over the United States in their horse-drawn Airstream trailer. Don, a retired-mail carrier, added the front porch with a two-wheel dolly underneath to carry the extra weight. The Godwins claim their Belgians get about 25 miles to the bale.

Photo by ELWIN TRUMP

A Neiman Marcus Vintage Airstream

In response to our articles in the last issue of the VA (November 1996) concerning the vintage Airstream trailer being offered in the Christmas 1996 Neiman Marcus catalog, VAC member George James, Jr. (#6425) has sent in a copy of an article from the **New York Susque-Lawrence Unit (074) newsletter**.

The \$196,000 Vintage Airstream

On a pretty fall afternoon during the October SL rally at Cayuga Lake State Park, the Stamatels (#15830) and Dave Smiths (#13598) drove down the east side of Cayuga Lake looking for a rumored quilt shop. Pat Stamatels had heard that there was also an interesting ceramics factory somewhere in the neighborhood so that when we passed what looked like an enormous estate with a large Victorian house and a sign that said MACKENZIE-CHILDS and WELCOME TO OUR GALLERY SHOP, we drove up the long brick driveway and into a nicely landscaped parking lot. There were huge grey/green barns, one with a large brick silo-like building on one end and another lower building marked GALLERY SHOP, which we entered.

WOW! We thought that we had stumbled into another world, filled with 21st century Victoriana - all the decorative clutter of the Victorian era gone mod. The very large display room was completely filled with shelves and tables covered with ceramic and glassware in all shades and colors; rattan furniture decorated with every conceivable embellishment; huge table lamps dripping beads from fancy shades; a wicker bed with a canopy ending in a crown of dried flowers; a table set for lunch with a table cloth of no-longer-green moss lifted directly from a rock somewhere; ceramic sinks with a ceramic fish hanging out on both sides; chairs decorated with beads and bright enamel; bulbous stuffed footstools with round ceramic feet, etc.

We discovered that the company was started in 1983 by a husband and wife, and their wares have caught the fancy of the Yuppie world. They've grown to be one of the largest employers in the area, with 300+ artisans. They distribute their creations principally through one of the best known upscale companies in the country, Neiman Marcus.

Henry Stamatel happened to be wearing his Airstream cap that afternoon and one of the employees spotted it and suggested that we go over to one of the barns and view the company's Airstream, which was being decorated that very day.

We found it and it was amazing. The exterior looked like any other 1968 30' rear twin Airstream - a bit worn but still handsome. Inside - every square inch of surface had been embellished with paint or beads or rattan or rich fabric. Curtains made of strings of glass beads interspersed with spools of bright colored thread were hanging below a multicolored enameled ceiling. Short polished wooden spool work topped the

windows. The oven door was covered with a yellow and black checkerboard of rattan.

Inlays of wood were everywhere. The flooring in each trailer section was of a different fancy tile but the most remarkable thing was the bathroom ceiling. It was completely covered with a mosaic made of rows of beads, twigs, grains of corn, walnut halves, bottle caps, small brushes, etc. Embellishment was everywhere.



Interior of Mackenzie-Childs Airstream.
[Photograph from p. 54 of Dec. 1996 **Trailer Life**]

A crew was at work setting out a display of Mackenzie-Childs products on the dining table, demonstrating to Mr. Mackenzie exactly how they set it up around the U. S. at various Neiman Marcus shops when they park the trailer as a merchandising ploy. In fact, it was to leave the next morning for St. Louis.

Neiman Marcus puts out a very opulent catalog every Christmas with one piece-de-resistance in the centerfold, a gift so expensive and far out that takers, if any, would be far and few between. And this decorated Airstream will be that item in the 1996 Christmas catalog with a price tag of \$196,000! They pointed out that they will not sell the actual trailer that we saw since they want it for display, but a duplicate will be created and the buyer will have the choice of a brand new or a vintage Airstream.

Mr. Mackenzie and his crew asked us about our Rallies and about Jackson Center, then wrote down names and telephone numbers. Who knows, maybe the \$196,000 vintage Airstream will show up at an International Rally sometime. If it does, don't miss seeing it. And if you are ever in Aurora, NY, go and see this display shop just north of town. Studio tours are weekday mornings at 10 AM, the shop is open until 5 PM. But take your checkbook, other prices are on as grand a scale as the Airstream!

Carolyn Smith, #13598



TV with Vintage Airstreams

Seinfeld Weighs In-

Last night's (Thursday, January 16, 1997) episode of *Seinfeld* concluded with Jerry's parents trading in their Cadillac for what looked to be a 30' late 1960's model Airstream. The episode concluded with the couple discussing when to tell Jerry that they traded in the car. The next shot shows the exterior of the trailer, letting the viewer know why they traded the Caddy in. The Airstream had our red WBCCI numbers, however I couldn't make them out for sure. Looked like #7527, but there is no 7527 in the 1997 membership directory. Do anyone know if this was a VAC members trailer? Since it was the end of the episode it looks like the trailer will likely appear in future episodes.

Also, has anyone ever mentioned the animated Airstream used in a Starburst candy commercial?

Thomas P. Reed, #6768

Hollywood Airstreams-

Many Airstream owners have noticed the usage of our beloved trailers in TV shows, commercials and movies. As a contributor to this industry, I decided to formerly write an article about how this process occurs. I joined the VAC a couple of months ago and have been the owner of an Airstream(s) for 18 months. I live in LA and originally purchased a 16' 1958 model.

I own four vintage Airstreams (2 Bambis, a 1958 18' Wanderer, and a 1963 19' Globetrotter) which I restore and primarily sell overseas (I sold my original 1958 16' trailer in Japan), however, I always keep one restored trailer available for when Hollywood comes calling. I have been doing this for about a year and work about once a month. Originally I got hooked up with "Hollywood" through the Airstream dealer in Downey, CA, as well as others who had been involved years ago. I have a couple of agencies that have photographs of my Airstreams and who then forward these onto studios that are thinking of using Airstreams in their "shoots". These agencies will get calls from various film or advertisement companies looking for small Airstreams. This led me to a couple of firms which supply the TV industry with different types of vehicles including automobiles, limos, motorcycles, etc. These firms typically own most of the vehicles but

thankfully, they don't own any Airstreams. When requests for Airstreams come in to these firms, they will often refer the callers to either me or others in their listings.

For instance, say a film company wants a small Airstream for a commercial. They call the vehicle supply firm who will in turn send them photographs of my trailer as well as others available. The art director of the film will then make a selection and, if I am chosen, will notify me of when and where the film is being shot. Usually filming is for one day and I will receive around \$250. Sometimes I get lucky and they will need the trailer for a whole week! Although it was very exciting at first, film sets are actually rather boring. You end up sitting around a lot while waiting for sunrise, sunset or something else.

I now use a restored Bambi in the commercials with the 18' trailer soon to follow. Some of the work that my trailers have been in include the following: Yonex golf clubs (4/96), NBC pilot (never aired, 5/96), Cheryl Crow Album Cover (6/96), European chewing gum Commercial (6/96), Cannon Copiers (10/96 may not be out yet), Squirt soft drink (11/96, to be out in summer of 1997), Oscar Meyer hotdogs (12/96, shown during the superbowl) and Lux Shampoo (12/96 for Japanese TV).

There is also another Bambi which works a lot including commercials for Corelle dishes, Taco Bell etc. It is a BEAUTIFUL trailer, but I wish he would retire because he gets too much of the work.!!!

Airstreams are typically sought for background in commercials because of a couple of different reasons. They convey a feeling of Americana, old fashion values and quality. OR they convey a funny "white trash" type mentality [*Ed. note, this white trash mentality is the obvious type of image that the Seinfeld show was trying to portray in its January 16, 1997 show*]. A viewer has to really look for the trailers in a lot of films because they are often in the corner, next to a building, etc. In fact, I just saw a candy commercial that is a cartoon with a Bambi in it!

Keep your eyes peeled and you may see my Airstream soon!

Richard Hilliker, Friend



COOP'S CORNER

Our First Trailer-

In 1953 times were tough for us. I worked at an entry level engineering position, dirty work for which I was paid \$300 per month. We lived in Flint, Michigan. Nevertheless, Bettye was able to save a little out of this. We had always wanted a trailer, so we thought we could afford a used one if it were old enough. Naturally we wanted an Airstream, who didn't, but we knew we could never afford one. For a period of months we watched the paper, looked at several, all of which were too expensive.

One day on a business trip to Detroit, I spotted one on the back of a dealer's lot near Pontiac. It was early spring, the ground was just thawing. Mud was everywhere. This particular trailer sat with its tongue down in this mud. Probably it had been parked on frozen ground, and when it thawed, it simply sunk until it wouldn't go any further. It looked awful; a fact which encouraged me to think that I might have a chance to buy it cheaply. Cheap was the first requirement because we had so little money.

On the way back that afternoon, I stopped and asked to look at it. The keys were missing, and after a delay a salesman found them. It was cold and windy. Some boards were brought out, and with arms outstretched for balance, the salesman and I went up inside. I say up, because we had to walk sharply uphill just to see the interior. We tracked in some mud. Secretly, I was favorably impressed, but I found nothing good to say to the salesman.

It was a Superior, a quality trailer in those days. It was a 1947, 24 feet long, single axle, and painted an unflattering dull gray. This was a coach style trailer with a Pullman style roof. I will describe it further because this terminology probably means little today. Coach style means that the floor was rounded at the corners, and the roof was rounded as well, so the four roof corners were a spherical shape. The roof over the center aisle, was raised to full height for a tall man. To right and left, the roof dropped some eight inches to a lower level, making room for a series of slim windows, and these opened for ventilation. It was reminiscent of the Pullman cars. This complicated roof shape was formed from multiple curved roof bows bridged over by pieces of flexible plywood and covered with a sort of padding to hide any joints, then topped by canvas. If painted every year with aluminum paint, this was a satisfactory arrangement. It made for a light and airy interior.

In those days, as today, the absolute cheapest construction was caravan style; flat sides, with the front curving backward to make the roof, and finally down to form the rear. This is the standard today, with Airstream and one or two others being the exceptions.

Inside, the trailer had a couch across the front, a

large closet, a roomy kitchen with a Preway oven range, a Marvel electric refrigerator, a Duo-Therm heater, sink and hot water heater, but no bath. Behind was a bedroom with more closets and a rear door. There were other odd pieces of furniture; I don't remember the details, but the cabinet work was of light maple, thick, sturdy and attractive. I knew Bettye would approve.

I asked the price, pointing out that I was paying cash. He disappeared into a large trailer that served as the office, and much later returned saying that \$550 would buy it. I replied that I would have to bring my wife to look at it.

I could hardly wait to tell Bettye, because I knew she would like it, and we could afford it. That weekend we returned together, looked it over, offered \$450 and bought it.

It must have been two weeks before I could get a hitch on the car and return to pick it up. The weather was cold and dull. Arriving at the dealer's, I at first couldn't find my trailer, but later spotted it far to the rear by a fence. I checked in, and got permission to tow it away.

Hooking up to an old trailer is a tiresome job. The wiring was a mystery and had to be temporarily spliced together. As I worked, a man from a squalled house over the fence, came near to watch me.

"I see you bought yourself a trailer?" he volunteered, spitting tobacco juice on the barren ground.

"Yes," I replied.

"Don't know why you done that," he piped in a nasal dialect that sounded like New Hampshire.

"Very encouraging," I mused to myself. After all, I had been a trailer dealer for two years and should be able to handle this without much trouble. I did.

With it parked in the yard, good friends from up the street dropped in to look it over. Pleased, we showed it off. Then, since I had never tried the stove, I seized the opportunity to light the oven. This proceeded slowly. I lit several matches with no success. As I inserted the last match into the lighting hole, there was a resounding BOOM! The hair on my arm was singed; otherwise I was shaken but not hurt.

"I can see that you will get very few baked goods while camped in this trailer," my visitor said dryly. We all laughed.

Bettye found a set of dishes at a garage sale and got them for a song. The only trouble is that they were heavy hotel type ware. On the other hand they were of excellent quality and antiques of a sort, for each piece had on it a beautiful crest of oak leaves and acorns. It seems that back in about 1900 there was a large private mental institution by the name of Oak Grove. It had run its course and the property was now used by the public schools.

The vent pipe for the heater was missing its weather cap. To keep the rain out of the pipe, I borrowed from

my little daughter a toy pot which fit just nicely over it. Later I picked up a hub cap from a railroad crossing, and cut a circular piece from this stainless steel to form the cap. I merged the little toy pot into this construction. A person in a low-flying aircraft would have been able to read "Chevrolet". My daughter still remembers because she could look at the trailer any time and identify her contribution to the finished product.

A local paint store blended up some enamel, the same light green as my 1953 DeSoto. I then brushed this onto the trailer. We then had a pretty sharp looking rig. We never actually toured with this trailer, but instead used it as a sort of cottage, parking it in a municipal trailer park in northern Michigan. It was heavy, slow to tow, but for periods of weeks each summer, our kids enjoyed the beach.

Over the main bed we built a bunk for our young son. Placing him in it for the first time, we stressed the danger of trying to climb out. He loved it, calling it the "danger bed".

Until just now, I never looked at this as a restoration, but that is what it was. After about five years, I moved to Chicago and we thought there would not be a place to store it. So, we advertised it and sold it for a slight profit. I hope the young couple who bought it enjoyed it as much as we did, they were waving and smiling as they drove away.

Interesting Band Rehearsal-

The 1996 WBCCI Concert Band met as usual for the daily 8:30 AM practice in the high school at Rapid City. When our conductor announced time for a break, a young man in the front row brass section stood up immediately and shouted,

"Ladies and gentlemen--I hold in my hands the mystery box." He then told us he was a retired music teacher, having worked with sixth and seventh grades. The HUGE box he was holding had everyone's attention. Then he started asking questions such as:

"Who knows Bud Cooper? You will discover the contents of this box from some of my clues. When you know, please don't blurt it out, just raise your hand, and smile at me."

"About four years ago, a visionary by the name of Bud Cooper started a WBCCI IntraClub called *The Vintage Airstream Club*. The Franklin Mint became aware of this club, and wrote to Mr. Cooper to get the names of owners of the older vintage units. They were interested in finding an owner that would share their trailer to use as a model."

"Now, at last I can tell you; my agreed secretive time is over today. When the Franklin Mint made their agreement with me, it was with the understanding that I could not tell anyone for two years."

"The Mystery Box was opened and there appeared Mr. Paul E. Nelson's (#9422) 28 year old International Airstream in miniature. The Franklin Mint also

presented Paul with 10 additional models as a gift for sharing his trailer.

On the final rehearsal, the 60 band members presented a delighted Wayne Killian (#1943), band director, with his own model.

The above contributed by Helen Sutherland, #28998

Vintage Caravan (Wagon Wheels) 1998-

Unfortunately, at this time there is no Wagon Wheels 1997 caravan to announce because no one was willing to lead it. The leader could have been you. Plan now to lead one in 1998. While at Huntsville, attend the caravan leaders training course. Plan now, volunteer now. This is YOUR club!

Antifreeze-

I used to use regular automotive antifreeze in my Airstream. I have changed to using RV type antifreeze mainly to protect my own health.

Automotive antifreeze is composed of over 90% Ethylene Glycol. It also has some corrosion inhibitors and lubricants which don't interest us. In the years I used it I didn't notice any damage to the traps into which I poured it. However, it has come to my attention that over 50% of all poisoning deaths of dogs and cats are caused by drinking EG based antifreeze. At that time I reasoned that the little that remained in the system after I winterized my water pump wouldn't hurt me. Now I take no chances. Ethylene Glycol is metabolized to oxalic acid, which crystallizes in the kidneys and can cause death. Why should I take a chance?

RV antifreeze is composed of over 90% Propylene Glycol which is generally regarded as safe by the Food and Drug Administration. (I won't be drinking any of that either, thank you). Further, it is biodegradable and does not persist in the environment.

The brand of RV antifreeze sold by my dealer is used full strength. Automotive antifreeze, however, gives its greatest protection at about 50% dilution.

I am indebted to member Steven Guidry of Houston, TX for this information. He is in the business.

Rutherford L. Cooper, #2601



[This is the forth 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 (VA May 1996 issue), Lindbergh and The Spirit of St. Louis (VA August 1996 issue), An Industry is Born (VA November-1996 issue), Enter Wallace M. Byam (this issue) and Bowlus and Byam. A line will be shown to connect The Spirit of St. Louis with the modern Airstream.]

THE AIRSTREAM STORY, Enter Wallace M. Byam

PART IV

There has been so much written on the life of Wallace M. Byam that there is little need for me to write anything more. Besides, there are already so many conflicts in dates that I can not hope to sort out the truth. But, I will mention a few things that I find particularly interesting during my research.

The early trailer industry was never able to really organize itself through an industry-wide association because there were too many players that appeared and disappeared too fast, and most of them were too broke to pay dues. This hampered the industries' ability to standardize components and do meaningful marketing studies. Even counting noses was impossible.

The industry started to bloom around Detroit, but an entirely separate group flourished in the area of Los Angeles to a point where, in 1936, there were about 700 manufacturers in the eastern U.S. with another 68 around Los Angeles. This was a close knit group, and what one knew, they all knew. When the balance of the industry joined T.C.M.A., these men formed their own group. Those in the west operated by their own rules to such an extent that buyers tended to lump trailers into two categories: Eastern built, and Californian built. Because of the mild climate, for example, some of the California manufacturers skimped on insulation. If only one did it once, the Eastern dealers jumped on this as a negative selling point. This could be one reason that Mr. Byam was so intent on gaining a manufacturing point near Elkhart.

Wally Byam himself once wrote that he had been in the trailer business since 1930. That should settle all arguments on the point. First use of the Airstream name is reported by various sources as 1932, '34, '35, and '36. I know for a fact that Airstream Company appears on the drawings of Dr. Holman's 1935 Airstream Torpedo.



Photograph by Martin

Photograph of Wally Byam from cover jacket of Byam's 1960 book,
Trailer Travel, Here and Abroad.

Various stories report how Wally built a trailer, then sold plans for trailers, then gradually got into the business of building them. During the formative period there was great experimentation with shapes. In Europe, particularly in the United Kingdom, they quickly settled on a style a bit different than in the United States. They specialized in smaller trailers made of materials like Masonite, but found creative three dimensional shapes that they could form.

Between 1933 and '37, Wally specialized in building trailers of the British style with multicolored paint-jobs. The decoration sometimes bordered on bizarre. His literature shows several different styles in production at the same time. These trailers have been called copies of British caravans. Let me hasten to point out that in those days everyone was scrambling for what might turn out to be the winning idea. The patent laws were not adaptable to this situation, and besides even the largest companies were too busy and too broke to file. Representatives of each company flocked to the trade shows, then hurried home to incorporate the latest ideas. So, in that climate, it is hard to accuse Wally of copying.

From David Thornburg's book **Gallopings Bungalows***, the following statements were made, "Meanwhile, out in Los Angeles, an aggressive young printer by the name of Wallace Byam, who started trailer building in the late twenties with a tent platform on a Model-T axle, had just evolved a sleek, impractical, thirteen-foot canvas and Masonite teardrop he called the "Torpedo," when, about 1933, he too discovered the English caravan. Here at last was a design round enough to pass for modern, yet with interior space for more than one person at a time. The caravan shape looked like a winner- and it was..... Though Byam couldn't have known it at the time, these gaudy little Masonite boxes were only a stopgap for Airstream, a way of keeping up the cash flow until better things came along. Byam had not yet met the Aeronautical wizard William Hawley Bowlus. He had not yet seen the Aluminum Jellybean that Bowlus was riveting together up in the San Fernando valley, the trailer design destined to make Wally Byam wealthy, destined to make trailering --in this nation of two billion wheels, this country that has been called an experiment in transportation--almost respectable."

Note his use of the word "respectable". As I discussed in a previous issue, the American public had at first fallen madly in love with the trailer idea. But later, after it had been predicted that half the population would live in them, strong objections were raised, particularly from municipalities. They saw this as a sort of cheating against the general public. The negative reaction was surprisingly wide spread and trailerites frequently found themselves branded as something less than respectable.

During the depression, the hobo became a kind of folk hero. At the same time, to be a Gypsy was bad. Trailer people unfortunately found themselves lumped in with the latter.

It is important to remember that at about this time the trailer industry would feel itself being drawn in two different directions: one direction for travel, the other for permanent living. The tension developed almost in secret as the general trend in trailer design embraced living (they got larger and more complex) and yet the entire industry denied it. They said one thing, did another.

Wally Byam was always a staunch spokesman for travel usage and a builder of quality products. He once wrote that it was never intended from the beginning that people should live in trailers, and he had never heard a single manufacturer say he favored such usage. He once referred to trailers as "inadequate housing on two wheels". When the War Production Board said he could not have aluminum for trailers in 1942, he grudgingly dropped out of business rather than make the cardboard boxes mandated by the government for housing. We in WBCCI have inherited this legacy of towability and quality. Nevertheless, I have to wonder what he would say today? A huge number of people have lived in trailers for long periods, myself included. Sociologists, having studied the long term effects, are forced to agree that they cannot find a significant down-side.

While Wally Byam undoubtedly developed the trailer caravan to a point far above what any reasonable person would have expected, he did not invent it. The real inventor is more likely R. T. Baumberger. In 1933, this dealer in the Los Angeles area started forming up caravans which took trailers to various interesting points in the area. Apparently this was not limited to any particular brand and undoubtedly included home-builts. The operation was open to all comers. After several years these caravans faded and disappeared.

I have heard many opinions on the following, but Charles Kiefer says it as well as anyone; "When I first heard about Wally Byam, I found that although many people worshipped the ground he walked on, a lot of other people disliked him intensely. I wondered in my own mind, what kind of man could he be to cause such diverse reactions in people. After I met him I quickly found out. Wally was, basically, an honest man who did not fear expressing his honest opinion whether it bruised someone's ego or not." The above is from a fine article which Charles Kiefer authored and published in the March 1981 issue of Trailer Life.

* **Gallopings Bungalows** by David Thornburg, The Shoe String Press, Inc., Hamden, CT. Copies available through most libraries. There is much in this book that I could not include in these brief articles. RLC

Next Issue - **Bowlus and Byam**

Rutherford L. Cooper, #2601

[The following write-up on different types of Airstream trailers appeared in a 1937 Airstream Trailers sales brochure. The brochure described five Airstream trailer models named "Clipper" (which was reprinted in the August 1996 VA), "Silver Cloud," "Torpedo," "Torpedo Junior," and "Silver Bullet." The "Clipper" travel trailer was the obvious flagship model and was the first Airstream trailer to feature the renowned classic Airstream aluminum exterior. However, the other four trailers are also of interest and are a part of the Airstream heritage. In fact, Dr. Holman's 1935 Torpedo trailer (featured in the Classic Close-Up column in the May 1996 VA) is one of the models described, although Dr. Holman actually bought the plans and fabricated the trailer himself at a time prior to the Airstream Company formerly offering assembled trailers. The four trailers presented here are similar to the English caravan trailers described in Coops preceding write-up in The Airstream Story, Part IV (in fact, this brochure suggests that the Airstream Company began design in 1931 and manufacturing in 1933). The trailer models of this issue are the last of the 1937 brochure and are being reprinted here in their entirety without the accompanying figures.]

AIRSTREAM ♦ A Safe Investment!

When you buy an Airstream you not only buy a mere trailer. You get a skilled, faithful, dependable, courteous and willing factory organization behind you.

Airstream has been building trailers for four years. Airstream's state license is Number 7. And Airstream will be here tomorrow to back up what it does and says today.

Airstream always builds up to a QUALITY. Never down to a price. Airstream knows that the recollection of quality remains long after the price is forgotten, and fully realizes that nothing was ever built that could not be made cheaper and sold for less.

Yet compare Airstream's prices, model for model, and we believe you will find them possibly a little less than most. The reason - Airstream buys in large quantities, hardware direct from the manufacturers, lumber direct from the Northern Mills, tires direct from the factories, etc. Airstream has every needed machine and tool to work with. There is no lost labor. With this machinery it is able to make many of its own parts, mouldings, jacks, legs, sinks, ventilators, etc. And because it has but one ownership only one small profit is necessary.

Your old trailer can be traded in on a new Airstream. We will give you a fair value for it.

Any Airstream can be purchased on a budget plan. Low down payments and easy monthly payments. Reasonable insurance and interest rates.

The principal factory display lot is located at 5151 Wilshire Boulevard at Orange Drive, two blocks East of La Brea.

AIRSTREAM TRAILER COMPANY

304 West 22nd Street

Los Angeles, California Phone PRospect 3927

The Airstream factory family, which we believe to be the best paid and finest crew of trailer Craftsmen in Western America. Amongst these men you will find skilled metal airplane workers, top notch cabinet makers, careful electricians, licensed plumbers,

acetylene and electric arc welders, accurate mill men, neat trimmers, a blacksmith, brush and spray painters. Name your job. These men can do it.

The Silver Cloud

The Silver Cloud is a finished trailer. It is the leader in the Airstream line, and complete in every respect. Many consider it the ideal trailer at any price. The practical Airstream galley is at the left of the door as you go in. The double bed is at the rear. It can be left made all the time. If you want to get the bed clothing out of the way, you can do it quickly and easily by rolling it back into the curve of the body at the rear. We provide you with four big nice pillows to match the upholstery to place in front of the bed roll. And thus you have a very comfortable davenport. If you want to fold the bedding up, there are two big drawers under the bed. The large clothes closet has a double door that divides the trailer into two rooms. The chest of drawers has a sliding top which discloses the wash basin. The sliding top can also be used as an additional serving table.

The front of the Silver Cloud has a combination breakfast nook, double bed, or twin beds. And all practical and workable. The table can be used in three positions. If you want two twin beds you simply pull the bed ends and the bed extends out to a full length single bed, especially nice if you have a son or daughter. The back rests fill in for the extra mattresses. If you want a double bed you drop the table to fill up the central portion, and the same back rests help to make a big, comfortable full sized double bed.

A floor plan somewhat similar to the Silver Cloud is almost universally used in England. Many American trailers are coming to it. It is the most logical general purpose floor plan possible to devise.

Length 15 ft., Wt. Approx. 1380 lbs.

The Silver Cloud

Complete \$695.



This Silver Cloud trailer was designed in 1931 and produced at Airstream's first California plant in 1932. [From p. 15 of *Airstream* by R. Landau and J. Phillippi, Peregrine Smith Books, 1984]

The Silver Bullet

Small, sleek, trim. Perfect for the family. 11'6". 6' head clearance, 6'2" wide, weight approximately 1050 lbs. Sleeps three. Double davenport bed in rear, comfortable single in front. Two burner stove; 15 gallon water tank, ample storage space. Regular Airstream Construction. Especially good for mountainous country.



The Silver Bullet

F. O. B. Los Angeles

\$475.

The Torpedo Junior

The Torpedo Junior is deliberately designed to give you the most for your money. It combines many of the most desirable features of Larger Airstream trailers in a remarkable floor plan that gives a rather small trailer nearly as much room as a larger trailer. It has the things you want, such as the combination dining nook, that makes into a double bed, the three position table, the three burner stove, large clothes closet with double door that divides the car into two rooms, chest of drawers, large refrigerator, four big roof lockers.

The big feature of the Torpedo Junior is the davenport bed in the front. It is a clever new invention. In the day time it is a big comfortable davenport. To make it into a bed you lift up the front of the seat, the back slowly drops, the seat and back balancing each other so that there is hardly any lifting to be done. When the back has reached the bed height you hear a click and you can lower the seat, making a big comfortable double bed. There is plenty of space left to go in and out of the door. Space for storing the bedding and other things is provided under the bed.

This trailer is up to Airstream standards in every respect. Same construction, same insulation, same fine finish, same undercarriage - a real Airstream in every respect, and one of which we are justly proud. You

will be too!

Length 13 feet, 2 inches

Weight approximately 1250 lbs.



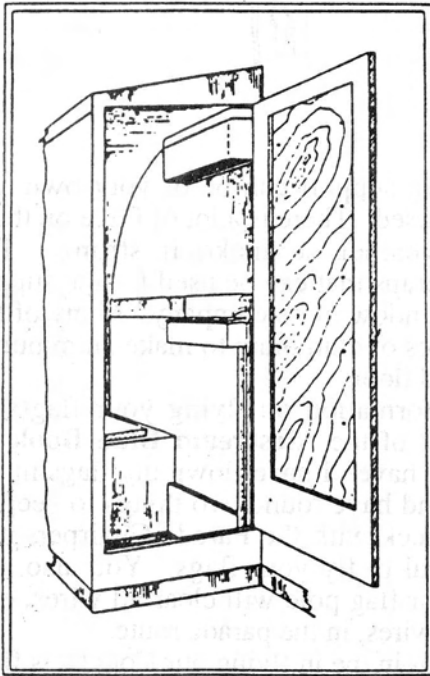
The Torpedo Junior

F. O. B. Los Angeles

\$565.

Torpedo

The Airstream "Torpedo" is built to live in. Full use is made of its 15-1/2 feet of length. Its top features are a separate toilet room equipped with a commode toilet, a monel metal wash basin with pump and drain, shower bath equipment, and with the entire floor being really a tank six inches deep with a drain in the bottom that can be used as a bath tub. This room is lined with Sanitas.



The toilet room in the Torpedo. Note the monel metal wash basin with pump, and the shower tank above.

There is a three burner bottled gas range with an oven. The oven is vented to the outside so that none of the combustion fumes gets into the trailer. So you can

use the oven for a heater. The sink and drainboard is extra large. The refrigerator, too is larger. The clothes closet is especially big to accommodate those who are going to make their permanent home in a trailer. There are many built-ins. It is as comfortable a permanent home on wheels as you could desire.

F. O. B. Los Angeles

\$795.

TECH TALK 1

Fly Your Flags



Have you noticed the above request that WBCCI President Norman Hewer has made at the bottom of each of his **Blue Beret** President's Corner messages?

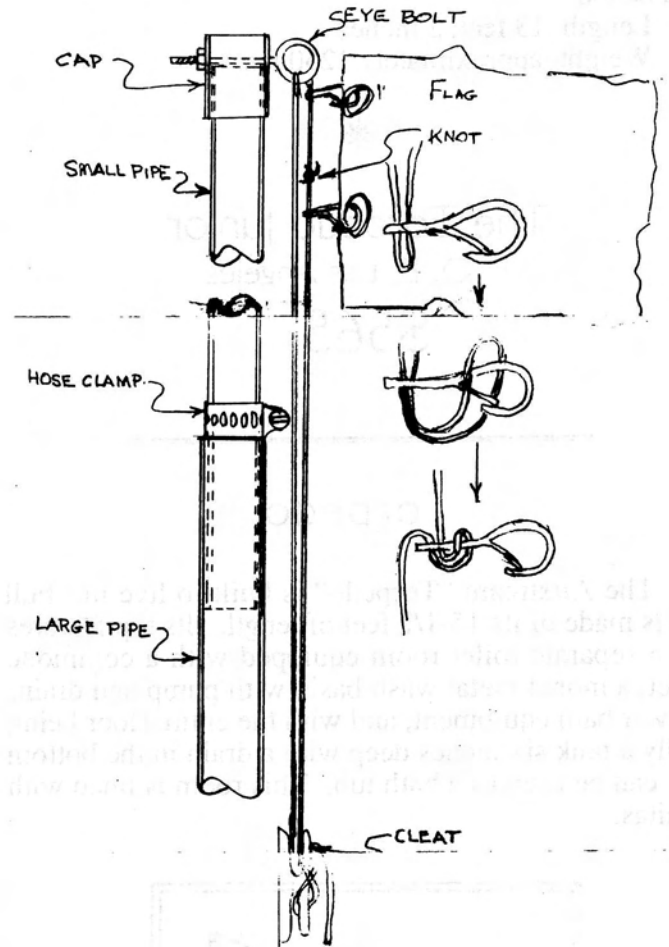
The view across the International rally site is spectacular for anyone, particularly the local residents and media who have never seen such a sight. The view would be especially awesome if everyone was flying a flag. I am proud to have the privilege to fly my American flag. We of the Vintage Airstream Club have a unique responsibility to do our part and fly our flag(s). Why the special responsibility? Bud Cooper was granted the privilege of a special, high visibility parking area for the Vintage Club at the International Rally the year that our VAC was formed. Our special location has attracted many local people, as well as the media, to the VAC and International Rally ever since. Yes, the vintage Airstreams are unique and of special interest, and because of their easy availability at the rally site, are often the first contact outsiders have with the WBCCI. With this unique responsibility comes the duty to properly fly the American flag each and every

day. I remember well the special pride and thrill of leading the Vintage Club caravan into the International Rally site. We had a special police escort along with the WBCCI International President and Vice Presidents proudly leading us to our rally site. WBCCI rally members were waving and cheering us in and the Airstream Band was playing as we parked. When we think of how much WBCCI supports our the Vintage club the least we can do is to support our WBCCI President's request to fly our flags.

Undoubtedly there are members who want to fly their flag but who have never quite gotten around to purchasing a mount and pole. Perhaps those who wish to make their own might get some ideas from the way I made mine. I fly three flags and have been using these poles for many years. So far they haven't been bent, although if the wind really gets bad I do take the flags down. My poles were made by purchasing two aluminum pipes at the local hardware store, one 7/8" in diameter and the other was 1 inch in diameter to accommodate each flag pole. The 7/8-inch pipe should be a perfect fit when slid inside of the 1-inch pipe. Since the pipe carrier under my trailer is a little more than 6-1/2 feet, I cut the two pipes to that length using a pipe cutter commonly used to cut copper pipe because this tool will slightly bend the pipe in. Thus, when I slide the inner pipe inside the outer when storing, it does not go through and out the other end. With a marking pen I made a line around the small pipe at one foot from an end. With about a 3-inch piece of the left over outer pipe, I drilled a hole across at a half inch from an end and then inserted an eye bolt through it. Through the eye bolt I threaded a length of nylon cord, the size that looks about right and will have the strength to last. The length should be sufficient to go from the top of the pole to the ground and back. Tie the ends together.

To hold the flag (the common size flag of 3' x 5'), I use nylon snaps. While chrome plated snaps are easy to find, I prefer the nylon because they don't rust and make the rattling noise that metal ones do when they hit the flag pole. You will note that I did not suggest threading the halyard (rope) through the eye end of the snap prior to tying the knot. The better way, because it allows for easy relocation of the snap, is to make a tight loop in the rope and pass it through the eye of the snap about 18-inches from the knot. Loop the rope over the snap and pull the rope tight. The reason I locate the knot of the halyard between the two holes in the flag is that it allows for raising of the flag without having the knot in the way.

To erect the flag, first slide the inner pipe out of the outer pipe to the mark and then slide a hose clamp down to the mark. Tighten the clamp on the smaller pipe. Slide the cap, which has the eye bolt with the rope through it, on the small pipe and then snap the flag on, raise it, and bend (weave) the rope around the cleat that is mounted to the flag support.



The flag support can be of your own design or can be purchased. There is a lot of force on the support in windy weather so make it strong. For nice aluminum scraps that can be used for the support, visit your local window glass company. Many of them use various shapes of aluminum to make aluminum framed windows and doors.

For information on flying your flag(s) look in Appendix 12 of the **Airstream Blue Book** that your Unit officers have. I have flown my flags in a number of parades and have found two things to keep in mind. One is to check with the Parade Chairperson to have their approval to fly your flags. You also should be sure that your flag pole will clear all wires, especially any electric wires, in the parade route.

Please join me in flying our Country's flag.

Stanley Baston, #1348

TECH TALK 2

Airstream Serial Numbers

The Whos, The Whats and The Whens

Your club has been faithfully recording serial numbers, as reported by yourselves, for over three years. Finally the VAC Membership Chairman, Ed Stanley (#21491) was able to provide me with two computer print-outs, one by year, and the other by serial number. There were 319 trailers in all. The good news is that I have been able to produce a single chart which applies to all trailers from 1959 through 1980 which will verify the year, length and certain other things. This will be printed in such a way that you can cut it out and use it (see the next page).

The bad news is that from 1936 through 1958 there is no pattern worth reporting. For example, the serial numbers vary in length from three to six digits within 1957 alone. And, they appear to leap-frog up and down as the years progress. There is no discernible relationship to length, plant, or age. This has been frustrating to myself and various other members such as Stanley Baston (#1348), who has also worked on the problem. I just talked to a gentleman who has a 1956 or '57. When he called the factory in California, in the 1970's, they could not tell him the year from the serial number. That makes me feel less stupid. We can hope that as more and better data accumulate, the puzzle may be partially solved.

It became evident that a few of the serial numbers we have are not correct. Some of this can be our fault, and some can be the owners fault. I will list some numbers which I question. Look for your number and see my comment. Some of us are not sure what year trailer we have. Have fun.

Any 16 foot trailer older than 1961 is not a Bambi, it is likely a Bubble (or a 15' Cruisette).

22TSS0414 is 1960 not 1951.

1022 we have two with same number.

2203500 probable is 220350D.

SS9012 is 19TSS9012.

00487657704 is an invalid number.

22TSS0521 is 1960.

162T461 is a 1962.

16TD5S1701 is likely 16TDSS1701.

785776242 please check number.

66F01756054 please check.

J1245084 please check.

12685F8 please check.

Model Name, Length (Size) and Year-

As names were introduced, they remained the same length for succeeding years. If changed, they appear a second time under the new length.

Model	Length	Year
Clipper	20'	1936
Wee Wind	16'	1949
Globetrotter	22'	1949
Cruisette	15'	1951
Safari	22'	1951
Tradewind	24'	1952
Flying Cloud	21'	1953
Bubble	16'	1956
Overlander	26'	1956
Sovereign	30'	1956
Wanderer	18'	1957
Caravanner	23'	1957
Pacer	17'	1958
Caravel	18'	1959
Caravanner	22'	1959
Ambassador	28'	1959
Pacer	16'	1960
Bambi	16'	1961
Globetrotter	19'	1963
Bambi II	17'	1964
Globetrotter	20'	1964
Caravel	17'	1965
Caravel	18'	1969
Globetrotter	21'	1969
Safari	23'	1969
Tradewind	25'	1969
Overlander	27'	1969
Ambassador	29'	1969
Sovereign	31'	1969
Excello 500	31'	1976

Rutherford L. Cooper, #2601

VINTAGE AIRSTREAM SERIAL NUMBERS

1959	1 (rare)	<---Length in feet-->	<- T, S, or SS----->	<-----Serial No.----->	
1960	1 (rare)	<---Length in feet-->	0=1960	<-----Serial No.----->	D or T
1961	1 (rare)	<---Length in feet-->	1=1961	<-plant->	<-----Serial No.----->
1962		<---Length in feet-->	<-T or D->	<---S--->	<-plant-> <-----Serial No.----->
1962	1 (rare)	<---Length in feet-->	2=1962	<-T or D->	<-----Serial No.----->
1963		<---Length in feet-->	<-T or D->	<---S--->	<-----Serial No.----->
1963	1, 2 rare	<---Length in feet-->	3=1963	<-T or D->	<-----Serial No.----->
1964		<-----Plant----->	<---Length in feet-->	4=1964	1, 2, or S <-----Serial No.----->
1965		<-plant->	<-trim-->	<---Length in feet-->	5=1965 <-----Serial No.----->
1966		<-plant->	<-trim-->	<---Length in feet-->	6=1966 <-----Serial No.----->
1967		<-trim-->	<---Length in feet-->	7=1967	<-plant-> <-----Serial No.----->
1968		<-trim-->	<---Length in feet-->	8=1968	<-plant-> <-----Serial No.----->
1969		<-trim-->	<---Length in feet-->	Floor Plan 9=1969	<-plant-> <-----Serial No.----->
1970		<-trim-->	<---Length in feet-->	Floor Plan 0=1970	<-plant-> <-----Serial No.----->
1971		<-trim-->	<---Length in feet-->	Floor Plan 1=1971	<-plant-> <-----Serial No.----->
1972		<-trim-->	<---Length in feet-->	Floor Plan 2=1972	<-plant-> <-----Serial No.----->
1973		<-trim-->	<---Length in feet-->	Floor Plan 3=1973	<-plant-> <-----Serial No.----->
1974		<-trim-->	<---Length in feet-->	Floor Plan 4=1974	<-plant-> <-----Serial No.----->
1975		<-trim-->	<---Length in feet-->	Floor Plan 5=1975	<-plant-> <-----Serial No.----->
1976		<-trim-->	<---Length in feet-->	Floor Plan 6=1976	<-plant-> <-----Serial No.----->
1977		<-trim-->	<---Length in feet-->	Floor Plan 7=1977	<-plant-> <-----Serial No.----->
1978		<-trim-->	<---Length in feet-->	Floor Plan 8=1978	<-plant-> <-----Serial No.----->
1979		<-trim-->	<---Length in feet-->	Floor Plan 9=1979	<-plant-> <-----Serial No.----->

DIRECTIONS FOR USING SERIAL NUMBER CHART-

The serial number is always on a plate, belt height, by the door. The name Airstream, should be on that same plate. Before about 1950, the plate was always brass, later, aluminum. If necessary use fine steel wool on the plate to reveal the numbers correctly. Use a magnifying glass if there is any doubt. Numbers on other plates in the neighborhood are not part of the serial number. G, 6, 5, and 8 are often confused.

Known manufacturing points are: Main Street Los Angeles, Los Cerritos, Santa Fe Springs, and Jackson center. Dates when these plants were opened and closed are not known.

This chart shows the meaning of each digit in a serial number. Just select a year. Moving to the right, each cell explains the meaning of a digit. The first cell is the first digit, and so forth. If the year is unknown, (it usually is not), measure the length of the trailer from ball to bumper. Try to locate the measured length within the serial number in question. Using the chart, find the years which have the length in this position. The year then may be deduced by further comparison with the chart. It is expected that some serial numbers will not fit the chart due to custom manufacture, mistakes, differences between the four manufacturing plants and so forth.

Note that there are two types of serial number in 1962 and 1963.

A number of letter codes are used to describe, Plant of manufacture, trim level, or floor plan. They are described below:

TSS= Calif., TY=?, TD=?, T=twin bed, D=double bed, SS=Calif, probably Santa Fe Springs. O=Land Yacht, and Overlander the older term. i= International. J= Jackson Center.

In 1964, 1, and 2 in column six may be number of axles.

In 1966, O= Overlander, 1= International, 2=?

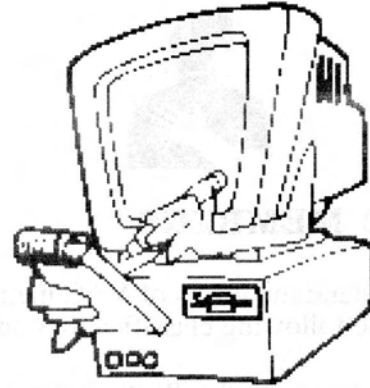
In 1967 and 68, Serial numbers over 500 indicate a double bed.

For 1969 through 1979, i=International, E=Excella, and L=Land Yacht. Floor plans are, B=Center bath double bed, A=Center bath twin bed, T=Rear bath twin bed, and D=Rear bath double bed. As before, J=Jackson Center, and S= Santa Fe Springs.

Report all errors and suggestions to Rutherford L. Cooper #26019

ALL DATA THE PROPERTY OF THE VINTAGE AIRSTREAM CLUB

Doc 12-15-96



THE VAC INTERNET HOMEPAGE

This column is a regular VA feature discussing the VAC Internet homepage, its progress and interest. Our website operator is Mr. Duane Hedahl (#1175), who has been able to get our new site up and running.

We are finally on-line with an honest to goodness webpage. Our address is the following:

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

Note that you must use have the dash between "commerce" and "center" to access the proper webpage.

There are several classified advertisements already available. I have also gotten a few questions and comments from that area. There is also a means for directly writing a letter-to-the-editor, so let's get with it and get some good stuff going into the VA. Let your conscience be your guide when naming names and dates and places, etc. Many people all over the world read our homepage so we probably don't wish to be too personal. If you have a favorite link that would be good for the club, send the address (URL) to me and I will help get it linked. If you have a classified listed, let me know through questions and comments when you would like to have it deleted. Originally we considered 30 days as the magic number but we will extend that if requested, however, please let me know when the classified advertisement is no longer required to be listed.

I am also trying to get additional information to put in for the first-time reader etc. Presently I am placing bits of early newsletters onto the site concerning earlier news and information items. These may be easily changed, expanded and updated since we are able to put a lot of information on there. I would like to get written information via a WordPerfect 6.1 format or plain text ASCII. Or via e-mail is always appreciated.

Duane Hedahl, #1175

[Ed. note: Way to go Duane, glad to see the VAC homepage is back on-line!]

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 Name	WBCCI #	Address
Allredge, John	Friend	72212.2652@compuserve.com
Baston, Stan	1348	sbastonnj@aol.com
Braun, Beth	3374	103231.64@compuserve.com
Demorest, Allan	14910	ademorest@aol.com
Dickinson, John & Linda	3884	johndick@sunherald.infi.net
Dix, Frank	30215	fadix@vnet.ibm.com
Fortner, Dale & Debby	3352	dfortner@pond.net
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
Hilliker, Richard	Friend	104404.3016@compuserve.com
Howarth, Tom	6490	howarth@nrl.navy.mil
Kennedy, Tom	4810	tkx045@aol.com
Landvoigt, Arnold	Friend	arniland@allware.com
Le Gresley, Farncomb	4314	farncomb@mail.durham.net
Lynch, Barbara	4382	babaha@aol.com
Pierce, Melvin	3724	mpierce@scranton.ctctel.com
Reasons, Don	Friend	calldon@airmail.net
Reece, Gene & Emily	19610	genereece@sava.gulfnet.com
Reed, Thomas & Jennifer	6768	tpreed@mindspring.com
Stanley, Edward	21491	estanley@gte.net
Tenewitz, Rich & Diane	6726	diarichie@aol.com



NEW VAC MEMBERS

To understand the levels of VAC membership and subscribers, the following classifications are provided.

Member: 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). This is the dues paying, voting membership. A VAC member may hold office or be appointed to a position.

Associate: WBCCI members 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 may not be elected to office or park their trailer in the Vintage area at the annual WBCCI International Rally. A VAC associate may 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 (note that the "A" after WBCCI number denotes associate VAC member).

VAC Member/Subscriber	WBCCI #	Trailer
Alexander, Don & Joyce	Friend	'74 31' Sovereign
Aldredge, John & Janet	Friend	none
Allison, Jay	07398	'70 21' Globetrotter
Appleton, Malcolm	01077	'67 17' Caravel
Babin, Roy	Friend	none
Bailey, Martin & Betsy	Friend	none
Baltzell, Lee & Joan	14087	'62 16' Bambi
Bartram, Dick & Eileen	06625	unknown
Bismark, Paul & Jeanette	Friend	'57 22' unknown
Bolan, Michael	Friend	none
Boram, Larry & Sherry	07235	'72 31' Excella 500
Brancato, Donald & Mary	01046A	'82 34' Excella
Caes, Kevin	Friend	none
Cannon, Karen	Friend	none
Carr, Brad & Susan	01079	'62 19' Globetrotter

Chess, Bob	Friend	none
Connors, Robert & Mary	09398	'63 24' Tradewind
Cramond, Harry & Yvonne	15046	'60 16' Bambi
Crittendon, James	Friend	none
Crouse, Nancy & M. Mefford	Friend	'57 18' unknown
Davenport, Robert	07394	'66 24' Tradewind
Drag, Paul	Friend	'73 21' Globetrotter
Durban, Jennifer	Friend	none
Elliott, Micheal	Friend	'60 26' Overlander
Faltesek, Anthony	Friend	none
Farnham, Alan	Friend	none
Fortner, Dale & Deborah	03352	'65 26' Overlander
Gibson, Gary	Friend	none
Guidy, Stephen & Marla	01149	'68 24' Safari
Gulley, David & Mary	12540	'59 18' Caravel
Hall, Mark	Friend	'66 22' Safari
Hayes, Sherry	Friend	'63 15' unknown
Hedgecock, Terry & Judith	07387	'70 27' Overlander
Hennequin, Jim & Yvonne	Friend	none
Henry, Micheal	Friend	'57 16' Wanderer
Hicks, Fred & Kathryn	03297	'70 unknown
Hood, Malcolm & Julia	Friend	'75 31' Sovereign
Hoffmann Sonderboeg, Peter	Friend	none
Horvath-Dori, Sandra	Friend	none
Huff, Bob & Judy	Friend	none
Jones, Huntington	06506	'63 19' Globetrotter
Katz, Melle	Friend	none
Ketokoski, Jon	Friend	none
Lampert, Baris & Estelle	Applied	'69 18' Caravel
Lewis, Mark	Friend	none
Lloyd, Harlene	Friend	'49 18' unknown
Maxey, Dusty	31684A	'74 31' Sovereign
McAdams, Jim & Carolyn	Friend	none
McGaughy, Leroy & Suzanne	06731	'66 17' Caravel
Muecke, Michael	7231	'63 16' Bambi
Oschman, Jim & Nora	Applied	'70 23' Tradewind
Palmer, Dave & Jennie	Friend	'54 18' Wanderer
Parsons, Susan	Friend	'67 23' Safari
Pearson, Preston	05502	'61 16' Bambi
Pinegar, Marta	Friend	none
Raymer, Randy & June	29834	'58 22' unknown
Ritchie, Gerald	07395	'71 25' Tradewind
Roberts, Lon & Laverne	02715	'63 24' Tradewind
Robinson, Ashton & Ellen	Friend	'59 18' Globetrotter
Sawicki, David	Friend	'69 18' Caravel
Schales, Walter	Friend	'49 17' HSE
Schmidt, Roger & Muffin	Friend	'64 19' Globetrotter
Shireman, Larry & Eleanor	Friend	'71 23' Safari
Sparks, Nelson & Loretta	Friend	'46 21' unknown
Surprenant, Rick & Kim	Friend	'56 26' unknown
Treaster, Eric	Friend	none
Voell, James & Jacqueline	Friend	'69 31' Sovereign
Walbridge, Richard & Dorothy	03371A	'73 31' Excella
Waring, Stephen	Friend	'58 24' unknown
Wichmann, Don & Ora	07353	'58 22' CCH
Winn, Coulter	Applied	'65 20' Globetrotter

Ed Stanley, #21491

CLASSIFIED ADVERTISEMENTS

Anyone may advertise in the VA since membership in the C 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

Wanted: Vintage, round AIRSTREAM dealer sign. In the center of the sign is a picture of an Airstream trailer towed by a bicycle. Steven Guidry (#1149), 719 Timor Lane, Houston, TX 77090; 713/440-6041.

Lost and Wanted: Trailer door from a 1953 15' Airstream Cruisette. Blown off my trailer in a mighty wind on I-35 between Wichita, KS and Tulsa, OK. Replacement available anywhere? Can send dimensions. Tad Pierson (Friend), P.O.Box 3129, Memphis, TN 38173; 901/382-6848.

For Sale: Floor cloths for your vintage Airstream. Fabricated from 12 oz canvas with a hand painted vintage trailer design and our WBCCI number. Jeri Bone (#9712), 21535 Outer Drive, Dearborn, MI 48124; 313/561-4838.



TRAVEL TRAILERS FOR SALE

1954 25' Airstream, Negotiable. Single axle, 7.00X15 tires, excellent exterior that needs polishing, roll-up awning, spare tire, interior in good shape with birch cabinets, four burner stove with oven, 14 cf 110V 'fridge, 5A cooler, rear bed, white ceiling and blue carpet. Frances Welhouse, 2777 W. 6th St., Yuma, AZ; 520/726-8536.

1959 16' Airstream Bubble, Negotiable. The first International Airstream built and the only 16' in that series, a true one-of-a-kind classic, near mint condition. Charles Cochran (#4762), 1710 Holiday Court, Murray, KY 41071; 407/951-3164 (note that after 4/15/97: 502/753-0114).

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 74 Box 160, Pioche, NV 89043; 702/962-5326.

1963 19' Airstream Globetrotter, \$5,900. All original, won Best-of-Show in 1993 Concours d'Elegance, very good condition, stored inside, new tires & battery, ready to travel. Howard Lawson (#8060), 2889 Marian Street, Lewiston, MI 49756; 407/267-4769 (note that after 4/15/97: 517/786-4349).

1963 24' Airstream Trade Wind, \$3,000. Single axle, polished in 1993 (not coated), new 5 cf 'fridge, catalytic heater, new brakes, 30# alum. LP tanks with new regulator, welded hitch, 1000# bars and sway control. Lester Jenison (#18830), 4444 US-98 #698, Lakeland, FL 33809; 941/853-2919.

1965 17' Airstream Caravel, \$6,000. Zip Dee awnings, new hitch head, wheel covers, 30# aluminum LP tanks, new 'fridge & water heater & toilet & holding tank, refinished mahogany interior with new upholstery & pump & battery & univolt, fan, original manual, extra front window, catalytic heater & screen, all extras included (pots, pans, blankets, etc.). May be seen at 1997 Florida State Rally in Sarasota 02/25-03/02/97. Bill & Adair Weston (#2872), NATO Box 1418, Sarasota, FL 34230; 941/488-3496.

1967 27' Airstream Overlander, \$1,500. Blow out special for handyman with TLC. Tandem axles, exterior shell in good condition, floor in rear and at step needs replacement, step outrigger rusted, door gaskets & lock need replacement (new lock available), rear bumper bent, trailer presently located in Jackson Center, OH. Bill Van Horn (#0020), 205 E. Walnut, Anna, OH 45302; 937/394-4072.

1969 18' Airstream Caravel, \$3,500. New AC, Roadstar antenna, 3 burner stove with oven, carpet, mini-blinds, rear bed & front couch with shower in side bath, new elec. 'fridge, new elec. converter, catalytic hear, awning, tie carrier with spare, new tires & shocks, road ready. Virginia Dutcher (#7732), 3114 SE 11th St., Ocala, FL 34471; 352/694-7732.

1972 29' Airstream Ambassador, \$8,000. International package in excellent original condition, exterior aluminum with plastic coat near perfect, electric jack, stabilizers, auxiliary step, new Zip Dee patio awnings, new tires, rear bath, center twins, large 'fridge with separate freezer. Richard Keegan (#9242), 39 Conifer Rd., Rindge, NH 03461; 603/899-5285.

CLASSIFIED ADVERTISING

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) _____

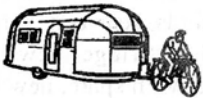
Winter Address & Telephone Number (Newsletter will only be sent to mailing address) _____

- 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



Bulk Rate
U S Postage
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Great Falls, MT
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