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membership application
The Vintage Airstream Club
a WBCCI Intraclub

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Hobbies & Interests besides polishing _____

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Please check one:

- Member** (own a vintage Airstream & belong to WBCCI)
- Associate Member** (do not own a vintage Airstream but belong to WBCCI)
- Friend** (I am interested in receiving this newsletter as a admirer of vintage trailers.)

Renewal

New

Send this application, along with your dues payment of \$20.00 to:

Wayne Moore, Membership Chairman
P.O. Box 4173, Windham, NH 03087 email: vamembership@airstream.net

Note: If your are not a WBCCI member, we will be happy to assist you with the application.

Reminder to all: HELP US KEEP YOUR EMAIL CONTACT INFO UP TO DATE!



The Vintage Airstream Club

Vintage Advantage Newsletter
Membership Chairman
Wayne Moore
P.O. Box 4173
Windham, NH 03087

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THE VINTAGE *Airstream* CLUB



presents THE VINTAGE ADVANTAGE NEWSLETTER

In this issue

⊕ **RUBY: A 1948 WEE WIND**
Fred Coldwell

⊕ **OUR LABOR OF LOVE**
Bill & Judy Jones

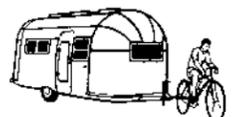
⊕ **THE ALUMINUM BUG**
Dan Teree

⊕ **RETIRE TO ADVENTURE: BY HARRISON M. KARR (A SERIES)**
Terry O'Neill

⊕ **COOP'S CORNER**
Bud Cooper

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Volume 9
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Issue #4



★ ★ ★

What about Ruby's early years?

It seems she was purchased new from Airstream by Harry and Ruby Mann when they lived in the Los Angeles area.

Ruby Mann, recently deceased, often mentioned to her nephew how proud she was that she owned the third Wee Wind built. Her husband, Harry Mann, was a famous sportsman of the 1940's and 50's. The couple hobnobbed with the rich and famous. Harry was an authority on and collector of vintage firearms.

While in Los Angeles, he advised many famous people, including numerous movie stars, on firearm purchases and sporting matters in general . . .

CONTINUED PG. 10



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Hi!

I hope your Holidays went as well as ours did. The days are getting longer and the planning of our 2003 travel is in progress. Much of the fun is in the planning and anticipation of the year ahead.

The Wagon Wheels Caravan, to be lead by Tom Howarth has filled to capacity without being publicized. This caravan will start in Rhode Island and cover the east coast. It would seem that there would also be some good possibilities for additional Wagon Wheels Caravans, Possibly approaching from the west or south. Another possibility might be to run a second Caravan along the eastern route with a slightly different schedule. "Any volunteer caravan leaders out there?" It would be great if there were multiple caravans this year.

For those who would like to join the Parade into the rally grounds on June 26th, Overnight parking for VAC members will be available at the Essex community Education Center after noon on the 25th. The Center is located less than a mile from the International Rally Site. More info will be posted on the web site as the time approaches.

As of this writing, the International rally registrations have surpassed 1825 trailers. Considerably above total attendance last year. We have been asked to provide an accurate estimate of the number of spaces the VAC will need. To take this out of the wild guess category please let me know via email if you expect to attend, are NOT on the Caravan, and want to park with the VAC.

Carol Carlson has stepped down as Blue Beret editor since the Carlson's have sold their Vintage trailer and purchased a newer motor home. Thanks for a great job Carol. Terry O'neil has volunteered to be the new Blue Beret editor so keep him posted on your activities.

To get the most benefit from WBCCI/VAC membership, participate in some of your local activities on a unit or regional level. The website will have up to date postings of what is happening around the country.

Carol and I will be at the Florida State Rally in February There will be vintage parking and other activities again this year. Try to make it if you can.

Rick Davis 1602
President
Vintage Airstream Club



ABOUT THE COVER IMAGE...

A rare combination of style and engineering, the 1952 Flying Cloud, pulled by a 1967 Citroen ID, travels the "Passage du Gois", a road between the French Atlantic coast and the "Ile de Noirmoutier". This route can only be traveled when the tide is out, thus you have to carefully plan your island departure and return.

Owned by Akos Kecskos of the Neatherlands, he relates the following story.

"During my visit to California in September 1999, I bought the Flying Cloud. I fell in love with it because it was so incredible original.

When I was about eleven years old, we overtook a group of "Blue Berets" on a Dutch highway. I was so impressed with the sight of the shining Airstreams, towed by huge pickup trucks, that I asked my father if they were towing "airships".

So the vehicle to tow my just purchased Airstream had to be a pickup.

Through a friend, I located a nice original Chevrolet 3600 series pickup, which, with the Airstream, was shipped to Holland. In January, 2000, the large container arrived in Rotterdam and was transported to our company in Drachen.

Unfortunately it turned out that large sections of the trailer floor were rotten. I repaired these parts and changed the axle and wheels for European ones because electric brakes are not allowed. I made new wheels to fit the original hubcaps and built a strong transformer to reduce 220V to 110V.

We had a great vacation in 2001 with the Airstream and the Chevy. It was a boys dream come true. But the fuel consumption was astronomical and the road handling a true adventure. So in 2002, we took my Citroen ID that has a 2300cc engine and five speed gearbox, and now had a fantastic combination; speed, comfort, economy and great appearance."

SENT IN BY TOM TOEDTER



The Editor's Desk

MORE SCOOP, LESS POOP

“THE MOBILE HOME IS THE 20TH CENTURY BRICK.”

PAUL RUDOLPH

Welcome to another story-filled issue. Flipping through the pages you will get caught up on the 2002 Vintage Rally in Santa Clara, Ca. featuring Don Alexander's fantastic image taken from a remote control balloon above a Rally circle. Good shot Don! The ingenuity doesn't stop there...

Next up is Fred Coldwell's detailed account of "Ruby," a 1948 Wee Wind; Bill & Judy Jones' diary of finding and refurbishing their new old vintage rig; Dan Teree's downward spiral wrestling with "The Aluminum Bug"; the always vital "Coops Corner"; and Wayne Moores account of finding an Airstream and joining the Caravan Club. This issue also includes a "media survey and priorities" outlined on page 30 that will be followed up by a mail in survey include in the next issue.

Also, continued from Issue #3 is "Retire to Adventure," a lively account of a caravanner's travels with the man, the myth, Wally Byam, aka: "Mr.Ulysses." This will be serialized in upcoming issues.

* * * * *

Last spring, I had several conversations at the Vintage Airstream rally in the California Delta and online with several people regarding the early forms of mass production techniques integrated into the early trailer and housing factories. After Ford, several manufactures took early cues and set up their own process for creating parts that could be assembled quickly by setting up a conveyor belt type assembly line. The multi-talented Arthur Sherman and Curtis Wright both were early adapters of mass assemblies. Talking to Bob Olson and several other people at the Delta rally, with R.L. Mcfarland via email, our conversations veered from one interesting topic (vintage travel trailers) to the next in this case,(prefab housing), and you realize many subjects' histories are gathered through a kernel of info here, a story there, a photograph, a memory. To me, oral histories continue to come forward and there is a fascinating overlap of these subjects beyond the fact that they developed in parallel for much of their most active periods in the last century. Many trailer designers also had a hand in developing prefab housing during the war years.

Traveling down those roads of curiosity and interest, I

recently pulled over to explore a book on prefab housing with Allison Arieff (the writer of Trailer Travel). The book presents a detailed history of prefab housing from the Sears, Roebuck & Co. Houses by Mail first marketed to the general public in 1908 to ground-breaking proposals from architects and designers such as Sir Richard Rogers (late 60s Airstream designers worked for him), Le Corbusier, Walter Gropius, Charles and Ray Eames, Buckminster Fuller, and many others working today. PREFAB examines the history of prefabricated housing over the last century and then goes on to present the work of more than 25 contemporary architects and designers who are exploring the wide range of possibilities that prefabrication offers for future housing.

Thank you all for your feedback and submissions, and keep the good, bad, and the just plain curious material coming forward, sending in your stories and photos makes the newsletter happen.

Drive slowly, appear quickly,
Bryan Burkhart

SUBMISSIONS I want to invite all readers to send in letters, stories and photos for upcoming issues. Our goal is to have an issue 4 times a year = every three months. So lets move forward and leave only tire tracks behind . . .

LETS GET TECHNICAL! *(image specs: up to 3 megabits per image per email message, black and white, 240 dpi . . . Text: Word documents, or within the body of an email.) shoot me a note if you got a question. Or burn a CD and mail me your images and text.

This arrangement may soon be a familiar sight in urban areas. There is heavy demand for mobile home parking area in urban communities where land values often make a single level park impractical. Mr. Elmer Frey of Marshfield Mobile Homes, Inc., has suggested the above park plan.



I am proud to have restored the inside/outside of my 1961 Bambi including white-walled tires according to the 1961 factory Airstream catalog. (see photos) If you think my photo of "Bambi" and my sport of fishing would add some luster to the newsletter, please submit my photo.

Both Max Carmichael and Bud Cooper have seen my Bambi and where very impressed with the appearance and condition. I have the greatest respect for Bud Cooper who gave me super assistance and valuable technical advice on my restoration.

Thanks for your time and keep up the good work!

Most Sincerely,

Joe J. Benak #12242



SPARTAN AIRCRAFT COMPANY WAS ONE OF THE FIRST TRAVEL TRAILERS EXPRESSLY DESIGNED AS A HOUSE. 1947. ANYONE WHO HAS TOWED ONE CAN ATTEST TO THAT.



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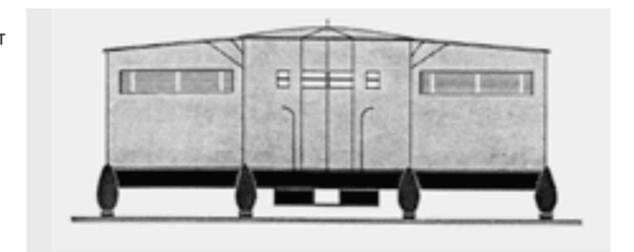
Thank you for creating the book, Trailer Travel. I've enjoyed it several times (even used a magnifying glass). Enclosed is a 1950 snapshot I thought you'd enjoy. It's yours to keep for your archives. The name on the back, "Abigale Mand Grant", is a relative of my wife's. Aunt Mand died in the '50's'. Nothing else is known about the snapshot.

Thank you again for your book. Let me know when you make another one and I will get it.

Sincerely,
Vic N. Voss

I just received your new book, *Trailer Travel*. You did a good job. I just bought an old Silver Streak Clipper and am currently looking for any information on my trailer. I also have a 17 foot Airstream and a 10 foot Serro Scotty Sportsman. I have a copy of your *Airstream* book and it is a very good book, you did a good job along with the newsletter.

Thanks,
James Etter



WILLIAM B. STOUT'S 1936 METAL FOLDING HOUSE TRAILER EXPANDED TO TRIPLE IS SIZE (COURTESY MILTON NEWMAN)



QUONSET HUT DESIGNED IN WWII AS PREFAB and PORTABLE SHELTERS COULD BE SHIPPED FLAT ANYWHERE.



2002 FALL VINTAGE RALLY

SANTA CLARA, CALIFORNIA



10/22 – 10/27/02

AS USUAL, THESE RALLIES JUST GET BETTER AND BETTER.

Tuesday's arrival found a well-organized wheel configuration materializing right before our very eyes. The parking crew did a masterful job of engineering. The first row of 30 rigs were facing another wheel configuration of picnic tables arranged under a massive green parachute with a 35 foot pole sporting an American flag protruding from the center. There was a kitchen in 'Wally's Shack' complete with the kitchen sink, cook tops and work tables. Happy hour found everyone huddled around three ex-washtubs turned outdoor fireplaces or the Sangria in their Rally T-shirts (hand designed by Ellie Whitlock). Trailers streamed in day and night all the while music and announcements came over speakers placed throughout the campsite. (Glad I wasn't on parking detail.) The second row of rigs soon turned into three rows. On the nights it was 'dinner on your own', a large barbeque was put into service cooking hot dogs, sausages, hamburgers and steaks.

Activities included tours of the wine country, visiting the Dunes, shopping and eating in Solvang and marathon games of Mexican Train. Other groups went touring on their own taking in the sites in the area, driving ON the beach, antiquing, etc. While all of this was going on, back at camp balloons were flying. Large helium filled balloons. These balloons were pressed into service on a covert operation. THE INGENIOUS DON ALEXANDER TOOK THE REMOTE CONTROL FOR HIS CAMERA AND RIGGED UP A TINY TIMER SO THE CAMERA WOULD TAKE PICTURES EVERY 10 SECONDS WHILE SUSPENDED FROM THESE BALLOONS FLYING HIGH OVER THE CAMPSITE. IT WAS A SITE TO BEHOLD IN ITSELF.

As for food, the first night was potluck. And we were lucky! One morning there were biscuits and sausage gravy; another morning it was breakfast burritos. Evening meals included barbeque beef, chicken, beans, salad, coleslaw and fruit salad.

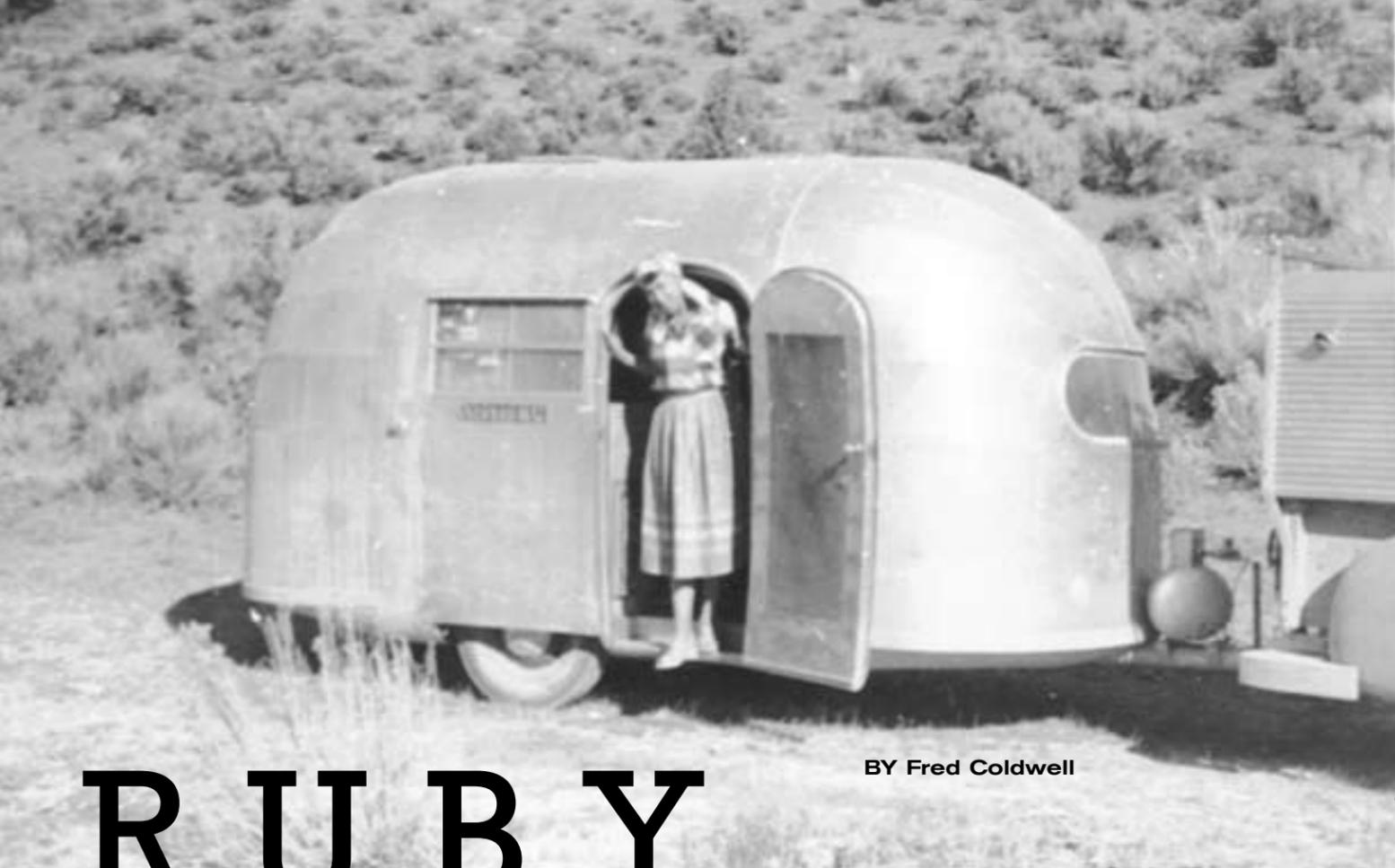
IF ANYONE WENT HUNGRY, IT WAS THEIR OWN FAULT.

As for people, it was a wonderful mix of people you only see once in awhile, people you see at your regular Unit rallies and people you had never met before; original owners of vintage trailers and vintage trailers with new owners. Some of the tow vehicles were an attraction by themselves. There was a Stepvan, a vintage Reo, a bright orange hotrod and a thirties-something Ford crew cab to cover just a few.

Of course there were things that make each rally memorable: chairs lined up outside of Tom Reed's trailer watching the World Series on TV until he took pity on us and brought it outside so we could hear it too; the water pipe that blew out in the early morning hours, the electrical connections that didn't quite connect and water heaters that wouldn't light, rain that held off until after dinner and then let loose and sent everyone under the parachute or inside. What fun! This is what the WBCCI life is all about.

Saturday's Open House was quite a success. It seems a local TV station came out and took some video and announced the open house. This brought out more than just our own group getting ideas for decorating or repairing. I believe we even have a few potential new members avidly scouring the area for qualifying rigs. (Hee, hee)

Kudos to those who put this rally together. Joyce Alexander was the spearhead while Don made her wishes come true. Ellie and Mark Whitlock worked side by side to help prepare and cart the supplies and set up the campsite. Herb and Pat Richter came early to help set up. Jim Foster and Don Alexander masterminded the parking while Lynn Foster aided in the organizing and kitchen. There were, of course, others who helped prepare, serve and clean up, but these four couples were the backbone of a well thought out and executed rally. Thank you from all of the 100+ happy campers!



RUBY

BY Fred Coldwell

A 1948 WEE WIND



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RUBY

by Fred Coldwell

A 1948 WEE WIND

Dull, routine mid-life suddenly sparks and sparkles again when stage left from Las Vegas enters a woman of a certain age named Ruby. Here's the story of how we got hitched up.

Life was calm and composed this past March when quietly there appeared in my E-mail in-box a message seeking a valuation and possible buyer for an old Airstream trailer. The three photos accompanying the E-mail showed a dusty old girl long ago parked in the shade of a carport. Though a bit thick around the middle, her rivets were tight and orderly and kept her well pulled together. Her black cast bronze jewelry proudly proclaimed AIRSTREAM on her side and across her full and well-rounded rear. But a quick look at her curbside window revealed this lady had been around the block, and more than once, to hideaways named Bryce, Zion and Death. She soared on Boulder Dam then plunged to the depths of Grand Canyon. She was even seen in (gasp) Ensenada! What sordid and storied past did this grand dame have? What baggage did she still carry with her? I was driven to find out.

Web site addresses for VAC Rally Reports showing similar vintage trailers on display, for R.J.'s price vs. value web page, accompanied by an expression of interest and an offer to take care of this old gal. Their plans for her uncertain, her caretakers demurred but promised to keep me in mind. Long story short, six months later they accepted my offer. Quickly, it was off to Las Vegas to see how much trouble I had bought.

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Ruby is a very early, 16' long 1948 Wee Wind, model number 4813 and serial number 3003, indicating the third Wee Wind built. She is in excellent unrestored original condition and will be kept and maintained that way, with minimal repairs as necessary.

Many of her exterior features appear only on 1947 and very early 1948 model year Airstream trailers. The large, 1-inch diameter exposed thread jack in the front should be kept greased for smooth operation, making it a magnet for dirt, grit and the owner's clothes. This exposed screw jack was soon replaced in later production by a Marvel jack with an enclosed mechanism that kept both itself and the owner much cleaner. Ruby's still has her original butane tank, stamped built on January 8, 1948 by Butane, Ltd., 1804 So. Main Street, Los Angeles, Calif., about 35 blocks away from the Airstream factory at 1755 No. Main St., Los Angeles, Calif. The January 8, 1948 date stamped into the butane tank suggests Ruby likewise was built in the first month or two of 1948.

The hinges for the inner and outer door use small thin "C" channels across the doors, which were soon replaced in later production by taller and stronger flat metal straps. Ruby's two roof vents are hinged across the front, so open only toward the rear. These were soon replaced by the Hehr no draft roof ventilator that opens fore, aft or vertically. Black painted cast bronze AIRSTREAM name plates add a deco flourish to Ruby's curb side and rear end.

The stacked rectangular side windows used on Airstream Liners from 1947 to 1950 were made by Air-O-Lite Window Co., 832 W. Fifth St., Los Angeles, 13, Calif. Ruby's windows still have small red factory decals on the inside vertical center rib that succinctly instruct the user to "open upper first / close lower first". These windows and contemporary butane tanks built by another Airstream supplier, Manchester Welding & Fabrication, are pictured in nearby ads from the June 1947 issue of Trail-R-News.

Ruby has the early center-pole frame that was used in 1947 and 1948 trailers. It is a sufficient but not robust design comprised of a 1/8 inch thick, 4 inch diameter seamless Shelby pipe running down the center, with thin 6 inch deep "I" beams stretching perpendicular off each side to the trailer body perimeter, as depicted in the split-in-half Wee Wind illustration below. These early "I" beams were back-to-back "C" channels formed from .051" thick aluminum stock and riveted together. The low combined weight of the trailer and its simple furnishings made such a lightweight frame practical, though marginal, for these early trailers. The 1947-48 center-pole

NUMERICAL PHOTO CAPTIONS PAGE 16-



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RUBY by Fred Coldwell
A 1948 WEE WIND

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frame was strengthened in 1949 and later production by adding an interior 3 foot long doubler pipe inside the front three feet of the center-pole and by extending to ahead of the front door the undercarriage frame side rails to which the spring hangers were attached. This last measure purportedly cured door misalignment, an ailment not suffered by Ruby.

The trim strip that wraps around the bottom of Ruby's front and rear semi-circular ends is a very shallow "C" channel that appears to be a solid strap. The rear underbelly skin still has factory workmen's chalk marks showing where to screw the trim strip into the body side, revealing Ruby was not used much at all by her previous owners. Her leaf springs have no shock absorbers, which were later added as standard equipment on 1949 Airstreams. Her wheels are the same one piece stamped steel 16 inch diameter wheels used on Mercury cars, and wear four ply 600-16 tires. One 1955 date-coded B.F. Goodrich Silvertown 600-16 tubeless tire that is still mounted to Ruby's street side wheel likely was installed that year for a move from Los Angeles to Las Vegas, discussed below.

Ruby's interior has been very well preserved. The front single and rear double bed each have mattresses with full arc circumferences. Ruby was manufactured before shallow storage compartments were added as a standard Liner feature underneath the front and rear oval plexiglass windows. These storage compartments, shown in the adjacent "sleep three" Wee Wind floor plan from a June 1948 Trail-R-News magazine ad, appear in later production Wee Winds and in most later Airstream trailers having a semi-circular end.

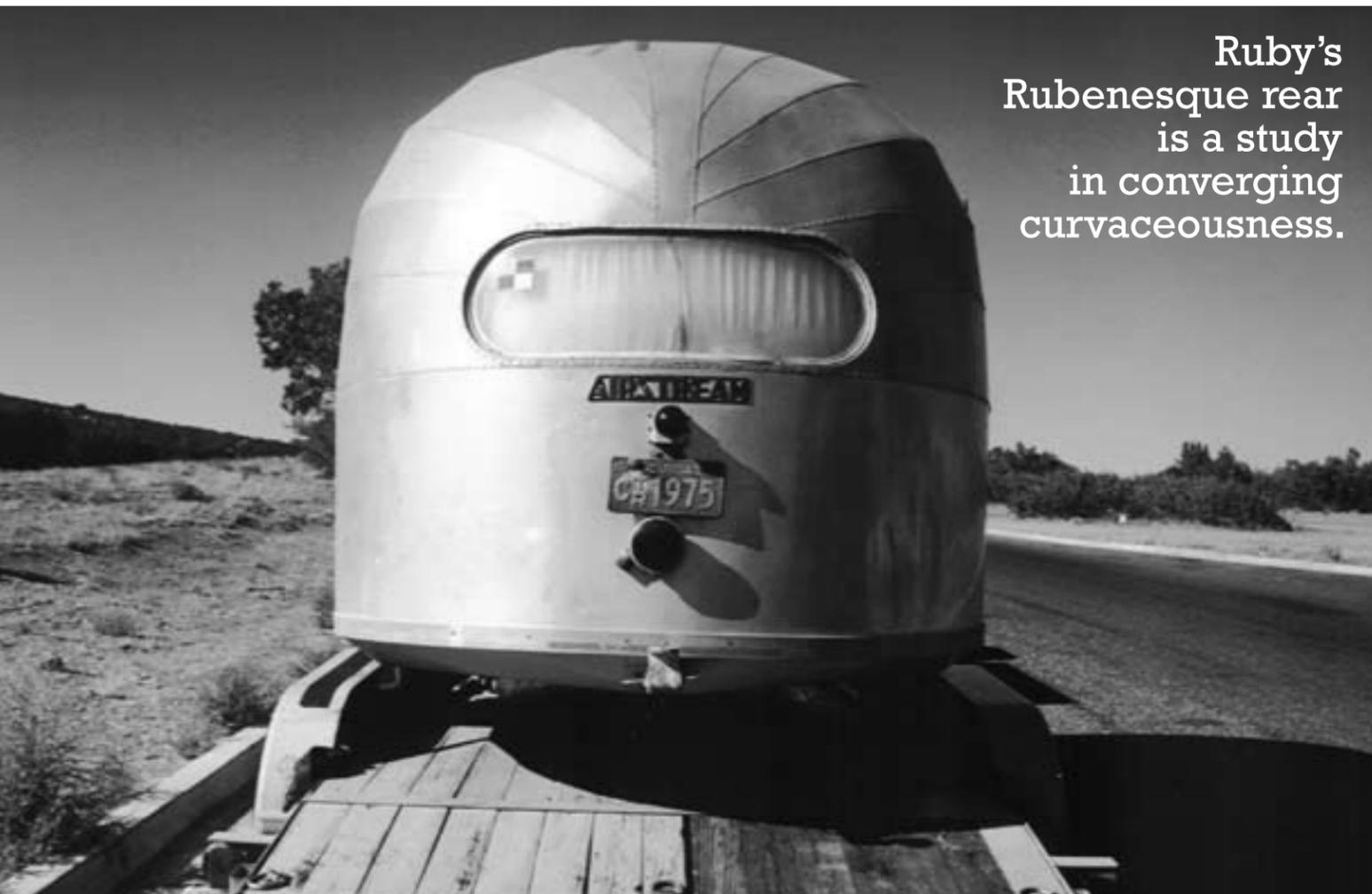
The front 3 foot deep single bed and the rear 4 foot deep double bed each have plywood boards on the bottom, supporting their spring cushions. The beds rest upon very light aluminum horizontal stringers, and each bed can be raised to access more storage underneath. There is an aluminum storage under the rear bed, but none up front. A two foot wide upholstered chaise sits between the galley and front bed. Moving it toward the center of the trailer and pulling it's back forward releases a catch and allows the chaise back to be lowered level with the seat cushion. When so positioned, the chaise forms an extension to the 3 foot deep front bed that easily accommodates two supine people. It's ability to sleep two in front bed and two in the rear bed leads me to conclude Ruby has the un-illustrated "sleep four" floor plan.

Mattress ticking slip covers on the upholstery have kept the blue, white and yellow rose pattern seat fabric crisp and clean during the past 55 years. The overall little used condition of the interior yellow/buff paint, cabinets and galley suggests the upholstery fabric may also be original. The chaise even sports a button-held ribbon identifying it as a "Gruda Product" made by I. Gruda Upholstery, 11844 W. Jefferson Blvd, Culver City [Calif.], phone Santa Monica 7-3404. If they were in business in 1948, perhaps Gruda manufactured many of Airstream's early upholstered furnishings.

Attached to the front side of the small curbside chest of drawers is a visually busy Elite model unvented propane heater made by the Deluxe Wall Heater Co. (no address given). Three ceramic heating inserts were found carefully wrapped in newspaper inside the rear bed drawer. One ceramic insert appears in the heater photo. Neither the chest of drawers nor the closet has any manufacturer name plate or identification, suggesting by omission they were both made in-house at the Airstream factory. A curbside radio antenna with a long lead-in permits a radio to be placed and played on top of the chest of drawers or wardrobe.

The three burner stove top is made by Hansen Burner Products, Inglewood, Calif. It rests on two full depth "P" shaped brackets that leave a 4 inch space underneath the stove top to store cookware. The sink is riveted in four places to the galley top and is served by a single cold water faucet that attaches to an outside pressurized water hose. There is no water storage tank or hand pump in Ruby. There is no manufacturer name plate or identification on the stainless steel and aluminum kitchen galley. The sheet aluminum specifications "ANC ALOCA .032" /

03



Ruby's Rubenesque rear is a study in converging curvaceousness.

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RUBY by Fred Coldwell
A 1948 WEE WIND

"ALCAD 24S-T" printed in red ink on the inside of the galley storage compartment door below the stove top are identical to the sheet aluminum specifications for her body panels. This coincidence suggests the galley was built in-house by Airstream, before they began using an outside manufacturer for the galley. The long horizontal ice box and another storage compartment reside below the stainless steel galley top. The overhead storage bin lacks any device to hold its wood door open in a raised position, so the former owners bent a small rod that went through a hole in the ceiling and curled around the latch to accomplish that important task. A 110 volt AC unbranded translucent plastic light fixture mounts to the overhead storage bin above the sink, complimenting identical fixtures at each end of the trailer. A sturdy hook on the bottom of the storage bin awaits a liquid fuel lantern to provide illumination during remote camping away from 110 volt AC electricity.

What about Ruby's early years? It seems she was purchased new from Airstream by Harry and Ruby Mann when they lived in the Los Angeles area. Ruby Mann, recently deceased, often mentioned to her nephew how proud she was that she owned the third Wee Wind built. Her husband, Harry Mann, was a famous sportsman of the 1940's and 50's. The couple hobnobbed with the rich and famous. Harry was an authority on and collector of vintage firearms. While in Los Angeles, he advised many famous people, including numerous movie stars, on firearm purchases and sporting matters in general.

Harry and Ruby Mann moved to Las Vegas in 1955, where he soon established the Frontier Gun Shop next to the Last Frontier Hotel. Harry was a founder and co-sponsor of Hotel Sahara's Gun Show, shrewdly scheduled mid-winter during the first week of February and reputed to be the best gun show in the country. A second Sahara gun show was held mid-summer.

Though her condition reveals she was not used often, the Wee Wind did occasionally roll her tires across great Southwest. Nearby photos (date and location unknown) show Harry and Ruby at her door. Harry installed a trailer hitch into the rear of the pipe frame and used it to tow his fishing boat behind the Airstream. I will use this rear trailer hitch to install modern, bright easily demountable (for show) 12 volt tail lights and turn signals to supplement the original single rear 6 volt S&M Lamp Co. tail light and the large auxiliary 6 volt STOP light installed by Harry.

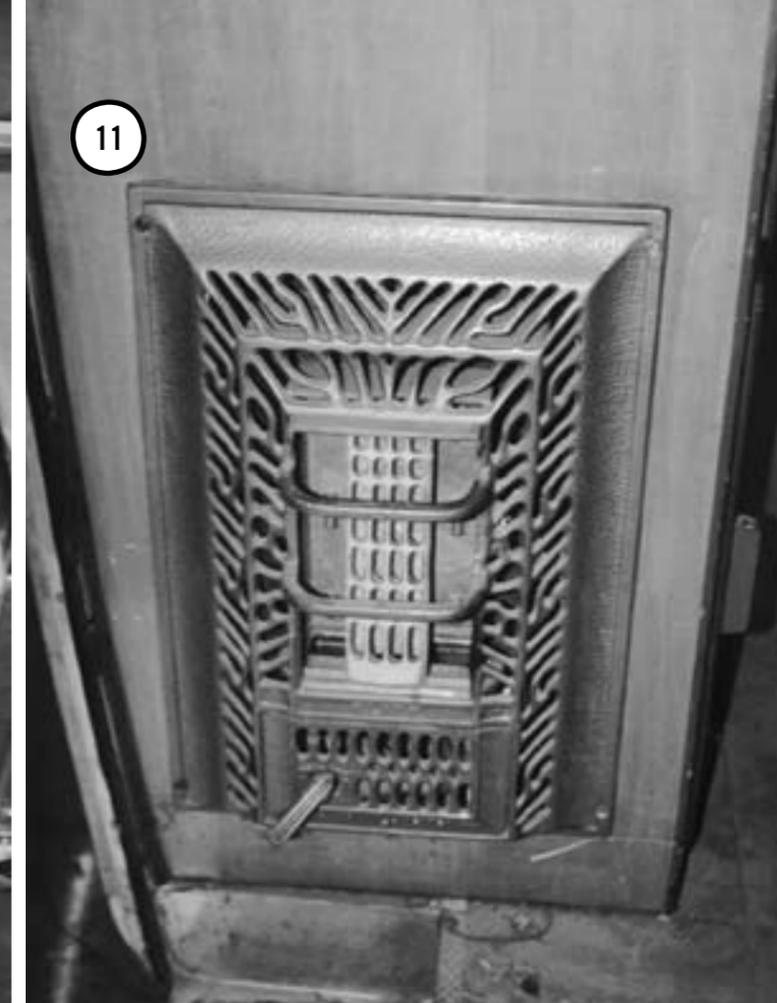
Harry Mann died at a young age in 1960, and it seems the Wee Wind was little used from that time to the present. The last 40 or so years were spent under a carport on the south side of Ruby Mann's central Las Vegas home, on a quiet residential street just 8 blocks west of the "Strip". This past August, the Wee Wind was moved on a flatbed trailer to her new home in Denver, Colorado.

As you may have guessed by now, this unmodified gem of a Wee Wind has been named Ruby in honor of her original co-owner, Ruby Mann. Ruby the Wee Wind will be preserved, maintained and shown at Vintage Airstream Club and WBCCI events throughout the Rocky Mountain Region. Come on out and meet her sometime.

08



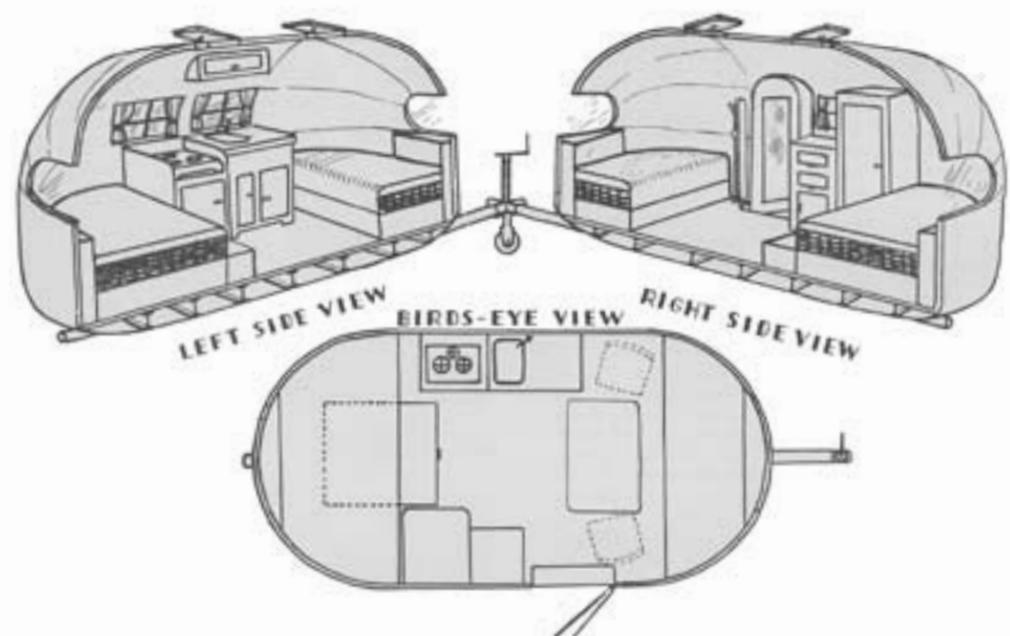
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FLOOR PLAN OF THE 16-FOOT 3-SLEEPER "WEE WIND"

Approx. Weights; 16' — 1200 lbs;



Above drawings show the interior of the 16 ft. "Wee Wind" model. Left side view; starting from extreme left shows storage compartment, half of the double bed, 3-burner plate, stainless steel and aluminum galley, storage compartments, ice box, roof locker, half of the single bed and front storage compartment. Right side view; shows the other half of the front storage compartment, single bed, Formica top folding table, sensational new type screen door, chest-of-drawers, clothes closet, the other half of the double bed and storage compartment.

Note 6 inch I Beams and double floor. Upper floor; 5/8 ply-wood covered with asphalt tile. Bottom completely covered with metal. Insulation; 1-1/2" plasticized spun glass is packed between the outside and inner shell; thus insuring ample protection from both heat and cold. Also furnished to sleep two or four.
This is the trailer our Pal "Doug" towed with his tricycle. TRULY ONE OF THE GREATEST AND EASIEST-TOWING TRAILERS EVER BUILT!



10



16



02



06

RUBY by Fred Coldwell
A 1948 WEE WIND

NUMERICAL PHOTO CAPTIONS

01. leave home: Ruby in her Las Vegas, NV driveway, loaded and ready to begin the gentle journey to Denver, CO. Her cast bronze AIRSTREAM nameplate and the lightweight "C" channel door hinges are features found only on 1947 and some early 1948 Airstream trailers.

02. vail pass: Ruby resting after conquering the west side of Vail Pass in aptly named Summit County, Colorado.

03. round rear: Ruby's Rubenesque rear is a study in converging curvaceousness. Her 13 roof panels and oval rear window are underlined by her cast bronze name plate. Former owner Harry Mann added a large auxiliary STOP lamp beneath her original S&M Lamp Co. tail light, and he also installed a trailer hitch in her rear pipe frame.

04. jack tank: Very early postwar Airstream Liners used an exposed thread screw jack with a removable bar for the handle. I would not be surprised if these large screws were surplus airplane parts (landing gear retractors?) adopted for use on early Airstreams. The original butane tank see here was built on January 8, 1948 by Butane, Ltd., 1804 So. Main Street, Los Angeles, Calif, a mere 35 blocks away from the

Airstream factory then at 1855 No. Main St., Los Angeles, Calif. The date stamped into her butane tank and her low serial number, 3003, suggest Ruby likewise was built in the first few months of 1948.

05. front interior: The curved front bed is 36 inches deep and the chaise next to it is 24 inches wide. When the chaise is pulled in front of the bed and it's back is lowered level with its seat, the sleeping area can easily accommodate two close adults. The fabric on the bed and chaise appears original to the trailer.

06. chaise ribbon: Looking towards the front through the door, the chaise is seen still wearing a ribbon, held in place by the rear cushion left button, that reads: "A 'Gruda Product' made by I. Gruda Upholstery, 11844 W. Jefferson Blvd, Culver City, phone Santa Monica 7-3404." The seat fabric has blue, pink and yellow roses against an off-white background. The former owner's dishes found the overhead galley cupboard feature a near matching rose pattern. The curtains are a dull yellow that compliments the buff/yellow interior paint.

07. galley: (not pictured) The street side kitchen galley has an icebox below the sink countertop and a storage compartment on the bottom. Open and closed storage exists below the stove top. The aluminum sheet specifications "ANC ALOCA .032" / "ALCAD 24S-T" are stamped in red ink inside the door of the far cabinet. The cold water faucet peeks out from the curtains. The floor is covered with 9" x 9" asphalt tiles having a medium grey color is a modest marble pattern.

08. stove top: The Hansen Products 3 burner stove top still has most of its original grey paint, as well as its original label. It is installed at galley top level on two full depth "P" brackets, which provides cookware underneath. Used matches go in the small tin can on the right.

09. rear interior: (not pictured) The rear semi-circular bed is 48 inches deep and sized for two adults. An aluminum drawer fits underneath.

10. Curb interior: A small chest of drawers and a 3/4 height wardrobe occupy the curbside wall. The top trim piece is pulled in front of the bed and it's back is lowered level with its seat, the sleeping area can easily accommodate two close adults. The fabric on the bed and chaise appears original to the trailer.

11. heater: The unvented Elite model butane heater has a very busy cast iron front. One of two ceramic elements that fit inside the heater and radiate heat is visible behind the guards. The drop-down step just inside the door, found on all 1947-50 Liners, is visible here.

12. Harry Mann: Sportsman and former owner Harry Mann strikes a confident pose in front of his 1948 Wee Wind. Date and location unknown, although the Nevada backcountry is suspected.

13. Ruby Mann: Former owner and namesake, Ruby Mann, smiles from the doorway of her 1948 Wee Wind (date and location unknown). The butane tank seen in this photograph remains on the trailer today.

14. ruby barn: Ruby rests against their 1948-1953 GMC short wheelbase pickup truck that pulled the Wee Wind on this trip (date and location unknown). Does anyone recognize the barn or location of this photograph?

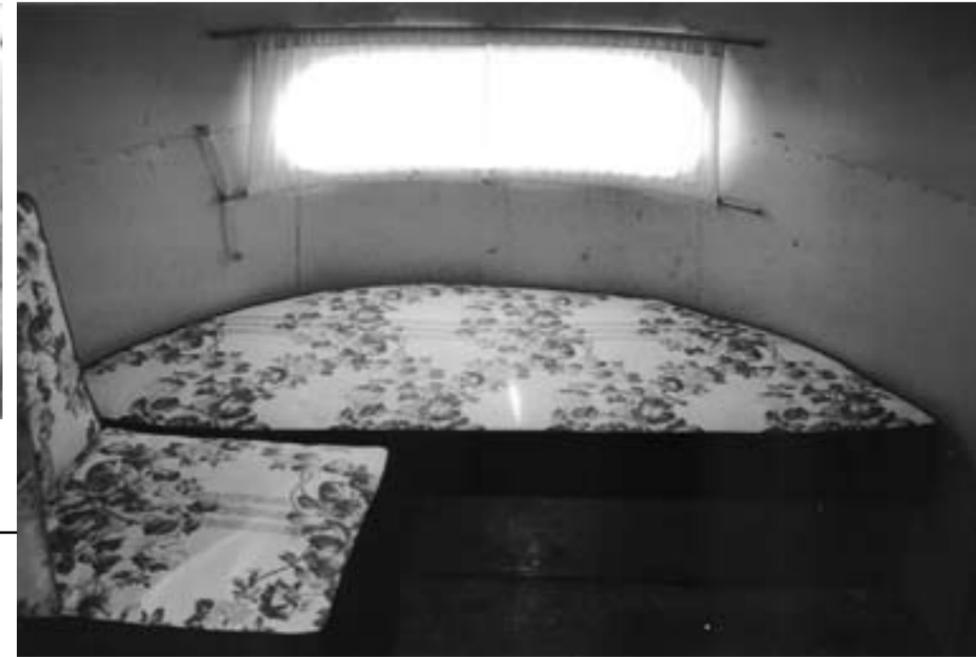
15. wee wind + gmc: The GMC and Wee Wind rest in the back country, date and location unknown.

16. window tank: Ruby's Air-O-Lite side windows are shown in this advertisement from the June, 1947 issue of Trail-R-News, an old travel trailer magazine. Her butane tank, though made by a different manufacturer, is similar in design to contemporary butane tanks offered by Manchester Welding & Fabrication Co., Los Angeles, California, who soon became a supplier to Airstream.

17. wee wind cutaway: The Wee Wind "3-sleeper" floor plan is shown in this illustration from the June, 1948 issue of Western Trailer Life magazine. The Wee Wind was also available in 2-sleeper and 4-sleeper floor plans, though I have not yet seen any illustration of them. With her fold-down chaise, Ruby may have the 4-sleeper floor plan.



01



05



The Simplified Design of the Wee Wind

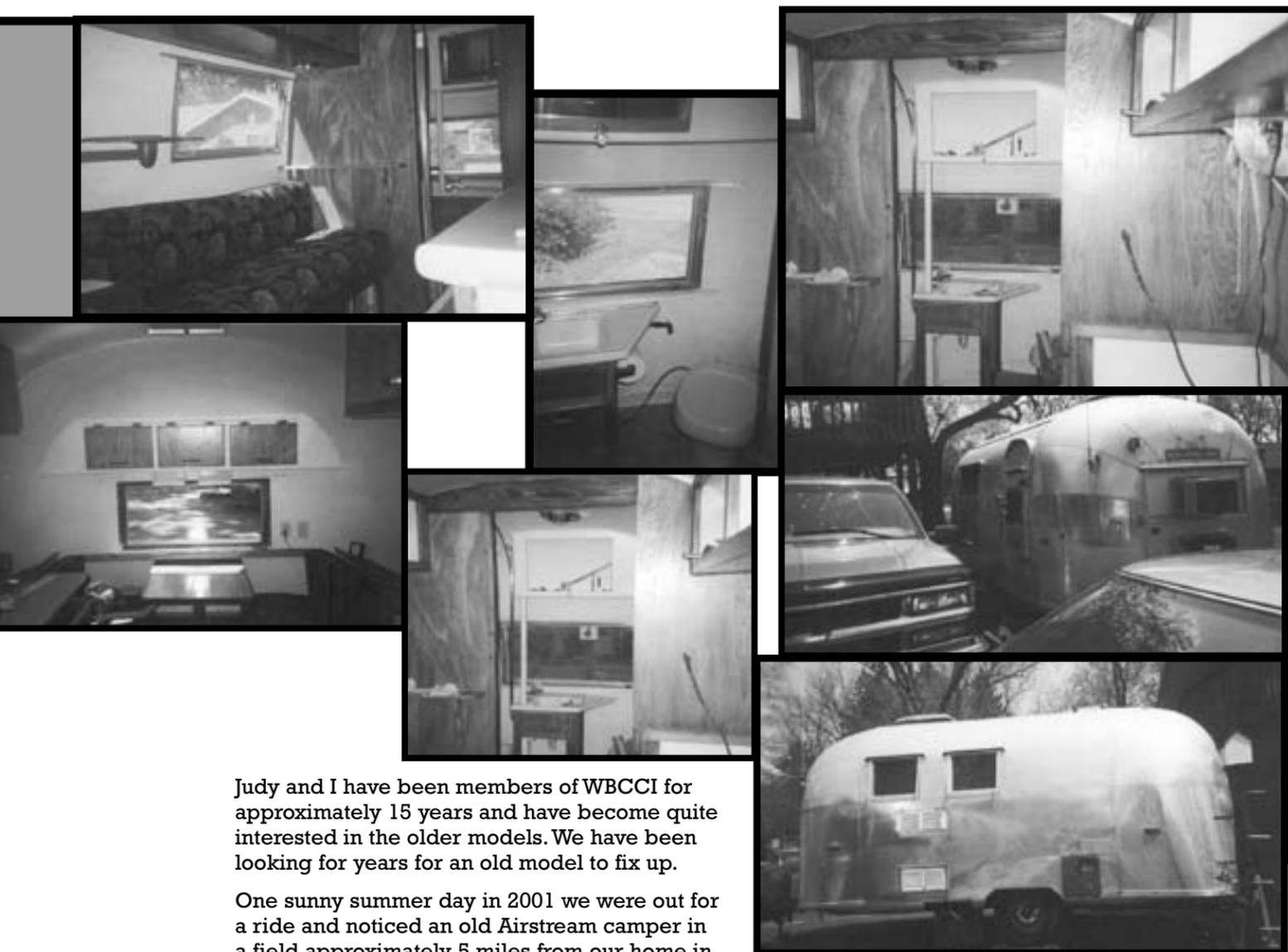
The 22 foot aluminum model "Clipper" trailer that Wally Byam helped Curtis-Wright Industries design in 1946 was a complicated and costly trailer to manufacture. The prow shaped front and rear ends of overlapping panels joined together at a center seam that curved down from the roof to the floor. The seam was covered by a "V" shaped aluminum batten riveted to each adjoining panel along its entire length. These C-W ends appear to be identical front and rear, a simplification from the pre-war Airstream Clippers which had two very different ends, a nearly vertical front end and a very pointed rear end. Yet Wally strove for further simplification, and found it in the 1947-1949 Airstream Liner series of trailers.

The Airstream Liners, such as the 16 foot Wee Wind, had identical rounded semi-circular ends front and rear. The labor intensive center seam and double riveted batten were eliminated, replaced by riveting together the two layers of converging overlapping panels into a single structure. The two large "D" windows on either side of the C-W Clipper center seam were replaced by a single oval clear plastic window that was easier to manufacture and provided better visibility on the road. Only one jig was needed to produce the simplified semi-circular end, which was used front and rear on all Liner models. Four different 16', 19', 22' and 28' Liner models were produced by simply increasing the length of the easy-to-build tubular trailer center section.

The Airstream Liners had a center-pole frame that helped maintain their light weight. But as interior furnishings gained features and weight, the original center-pole frame proved inadequate. It was strengthened in the 1949 models but was still subject to detachment caused by the trailer body twisting and turning about the round tube. A much stronger ladder frame design was introduced in 1950 along with vertical flat front ends with double horizontal windows that opened. These new flat ends added more interior room and welcome ventilation. The Liner era ended as these new features quickly became standard on all Airstream trailers. But the Liner round end design lives on as a simple yet elegant approach to lightweight aluminum trailer construction.

our labor of love

*after looking for years for an Airstream to fix up,
finally, a 1962 Globetrotter found us . . .*



Judy and I have been members of WBCCI for approximately 15 years and have become quite interested in the older models. We have been looking for years for an old model to fix up.

One sunny summer day in 2001 we were out for a ride and noticed an old Airstream camper in a field approximately 5 miles from our home in Conneaut Lake, PA. We decided to stop to see if anyone was home and inquire further about this Airstream. It turned out to be a 1962 – 19 foot Globetrotter.

Although quite rough, the outer shell was in good shape and the owner's family had used the camper in the past year. We offered the owners a price for the camper and within a couple weeks it was ours. After some close scrutiny we determined the camper needed a new floor, refrigerator, oven, and some new plumbing. The floor plan was such that there was one couch adjacent to entry door and a second couch at the front of the trailer. Judy and I wanted a dinette area so we discarded the front couch and built in a dinette area that converts to a bed.

The wood cabinets and wood partition wall separating living area from bath area was in excellent salvageable condition. Previous owners went a little overboard with painting and repainting everything inside the camper including all aluminum trim, hardware, etc. We

removed all furniture from camper so we could replace the floor. Enclosed are pictures that tell the story better than words.

While I performed most of the carpentry, plumbing, and electrical tasks, Judy did most all of the old paint stripping and refinishing of cabinets, walls, etc. Judy recovered the dinette and couch units, also made new drapes for the camper. The old walls and ceiling were sanded down to eliminate any old paint runs. These surfaces were then primed with base paint, and two (2) different sponge coats, all with different colors. We then replaced cabinet furniture, built in new dinette area, and placed a new countertop in kitchen, along with new plumbing fixtures and drains. The old copper water lines were salvageable except for repairs made to a few frozen and broken spots. The old bathroom tub and lavatory were salvageable but after the first inaugural trip out with the camper we replaced the toilet.

Fortunately the previous owners had placed new tires on the camper and had all the outside lights on trailer fixed up. The camper had only an emergency hydraulic brake system, but no braking capability with your tow vehicle. Therefore I replaced the brake system with electric brakes. While on this project, I added new wheel bearings. I placed a new 12volt battery on the tongue of the camper, along with two (2) new 30lb gas tanks and pressure regulators. The original 35-gallon aluminum cold-water storage tank and air compressor were bench tested and proved to be in good shape, so we are using these.

We have had very little time to work on the outside of the trailer before our planned trip west too Arizona, and Utah. We left on this 8,000-mile round trip in mid September and arrived back home in Pennsylvania in middle November. During this trip our camper went over back roads and mountains in Tennessee, Missouri, Oklahoma, New Mexico, Texas, Arizona, and Utah. The trailer performed with flying colors with only a few fix-ups.

New Mexico, Texas, Arizona, and Utah. The trailer performed with flying colors with only a few fix-ups.

Now we are concentrating on shining up the outside and making good progress, except the winter weather here in Pennsylvania has slowed us up. This Project has been a "labor of love" for Judy and myself. We have not had to pay any labor costs towards this fix-up, maybe one exception, my friendly mechanical neighbor helped with the electric brake system, and would not accept any pay, but we knew of his favorite beverage, and he won't go thirsty for awhile.

Bill & Judy Jones

The Aluminum Bug:

Patterns
OF

Airstream Addiction

*Bryan Burkhart will never admit this, but I lay square blame on him for the affliction that befell my wife Kath and I this past spring. Twelve months after reading his book, *Airstream: History of the Land Yacht*, our rapid descent began. I am not a medical doctor, but put forth the following patterns of aluminum addiction. If you, or someone you love, follow this pattern, please have them read this article. And for God's sake, don't encourage their habit by buying them Airstream party lanterns or Christmas ornaments!*



*the confessions of
Dan Jeree*

Phase 1: Innocent and Eager. After meticulous online searching, we finally stumbled on something unique: a 1958 Traveler. Great shape, smart layout and even polished! Putting our own cart before the horse (we didn't own a tow vehicle), we rented a U-Haul and towed what we now call "Betty" from Las Vegas to her new home in San Francisco. We were as happy as two grown adults could be. The Las Vegas origins of our first trailer seemed particularly poetic. No doubt, we had finally gotten our piece of the Airstream pie.

Phase 2: Excuses. We had no plans to buy another trailer after we bought Betty. But as the famous potato chip commercial says, "You can't have just one." There we were, every night searching the web, combing through the VAC website's classified ads and RJ Dial's archives (no RJ, I don't blame you). We were becoming bonafied experts. Next up was a 1965 Caravel in western Canada (yup, we drove all the way up there to get it). Then, a beautiful 1957 Flying Cloud just north of San Francisco. By now, we needed some explanations (read: excuses) for why we were acquiring Airstreams faster than a lottery-winner gains friends. Ahhh, I've got it. An Airstream rental business for the fashionably retro? Or, the dream of all dreams, an Airstream motel, where we could enjoy the company of like-minded enthusiasts. I suppose the motel idea would have made sense...had it come with a fully-padded unit for me and Kath.

Phase 3: Can't Stop. After three trailers, Kath and I went radio silent. I even kept the details of our buying spree from my own twin brother. He just wouldn't understand our shiny kind of love. The bleakest hour of our "little problem" would involve the grandest deal of them all. A two-trailer "aluminum harvest" from our country's heartland. A 1968 Safari in western Indiana, then a quick jog down into Missouri to pick up a 1957



Caravanner. Then onward to Northern California. My thinking: two 22-foot Airstreams would fit perfectly onto a standard 48-foot flatbed trailer, thus reducing my per-trailer transportation costs. It was pure genius. It was grand. Unfortunately, Kath and I were going the way of Sid and Nancy.

Phase 4: Face the Music. Did I tell you that my wife and I live in downtown San Francisco? We can barely fit our Honda Accord in our garage let alone 5 Airstreams. Not only were we acquiring Airstreams with no clear purpose, we had to store them an hour north of San Francisco. And the storage costs alone were beginning to pile up. The long nights searching the web, asking mind-numbing questions to strangers across the country about the condition of their window cranks, and juggling ever decreasing amounts of our would be retirement money had taken their toll. We were finished. We were exhausted.

Phase 5: Redemption. You learn a lot by living through crisis. Kath and I learned that we had married well. We had supported each other fully during our rise and fall, and we accepted each other - complete with all of our oxidized faults. It wasn't a difficult decision to sell three of our five beauties. We decided to keep the Flying Cloud (22-feet for our longer trips) and our original Traveler (18-feet for our weekend getaways). OK, so it's hard to stop cold turkey.

Our shiny delirium had taken a mere 7 months. But all was not lost. We made our money back (I often joke with people that you know the economy is bad when your best investment is your trailer). We met some wonderful people along the way and all of the trailers found new and loving homes. The '68 Safari was to be used for a son's bedroom while his parents built their new home. The '65 Caravel went to a savvy hobbist in Southern California and the '57 Caravanner went to a talented restoration specialist in the high desert town of Susanville, CA. After personally delivering this last unit, I found myself winding my way back down along the Feather River, just south of Lassen National Forest. How nice it was to be enjoying the beauty of this place, peacefully alone, my trailer addiction behind me. And I thought to myself, as I think all trailer enthusiasts do after a long trailer trip, how nice it was to be...trailerless.

VAC REGION REPRESENTATIVES

Want to get in touch with VAC region representatives to see what they got going on? Do you want to organize a rally? Well here is the list of your region representatives to get it going. You never know when you'll be a thousand miles from nowhere and want to find an Airstream caravan...

REGION 1

ME-NH-VT-MA-RI-CT-NB-NS-NF-PEI-PQ
Bard Fuller #5406
36 Panorama Drive
Southington, CT 06489
BardFuller@aol.com

REGION 2

NY-NJ-PA-MD-DE-DC-ON
Walt Sandy #4159
1157 Rt.40
Pilesgrove, NJ 08098
swsandy@mindspring.com

REGION 3

VA-NC-SC-GA-FL (exp. CT ZONE PORTION)
Bert Kalet #6957
3132 Gladstone Street S.W.
Winston Salem, NC 27104
dkalet@juno.com

REGION 4

MI-OH-WV
Scott Scheuermann #13497
363 Baldwin Drive
Berea, OH 44107-2623
scheuermann@airstream.net

REGION 5

IL-IN-KY
Gary Salmon 7959
1510 S. Pointe Drive
Rantoul, IL 61866
g-salmon@ux1.cso.uiuc.edu

REGION 6

TN-AL-MS-AK-LA-FL (CT ZONE PORTION)
John Dustin #3728
505 N. Airport Road
Jasper, AL 35504
jofd@earthlink.net

REGION 7

WI-MN-ND-SD-MB
Ed Emerick #4425
838 E. Eldorado Street
Appleton, WI 54911
eemer59728@aol.com

REGION 8

IA-MO-NE-KS
Russell Moss #335
Rt.2 Box 2681
Piedmont, MO 63957
russnora@aol.com

REGION 9

OK-TX (except MT ZONE)
Bud Cooper #26019
1401 S. Cage Blvd. #600 -
Pharr, TX 78577
RUC00p@aol.com

REGION 10

MT-ID-WA-OR-BC-AB-SK-YK
Pat Ewing #3675
3661 Alm Road
Everson, WA 98247
pre52@gte.net

REGION 11

WY-CO-UT-AZ-NM-TX (portion in MT)-MEX
Randy Unter ##4991
2400 Sims St.
Lakewood, CO 80215
runter@earthlink.net
303.237.0629

REGION 12

CALIFORNIA-NV
Tom Reed #10283
1038 Meadow View Ct.
Corona, CA 91720
tereed@pacbell.net

OLD AIRSTREAM CARAVAN FILMS NOW AVAILABLE ON DVD

The Vintage Airstream Club is proud to announce the release of nine old Airstream trailer caravan movies on a two disc DVD set. You no longer have to buy and restore a vintage 16mm. film projector to enjoy the exciting caravans of yesteryear. The title, year made, and running time in (minutes:seconds) for each color movie in this DVD set is:

1. Building Dreams is our Business (1968) (19:02)
2. Mexico Caravan (1956) (23:33)
3. Capetown to Cairo (1959-60) (47:57)
4. Around the World Caravan, S.E. Asia (1963-64) (23:07)
5. Around the World Caravan, India Part I (1963-64) (22:44)
6. Around the World Caravan, India Part II (1963-64)(23:00)
7. Around the World Caravan, Middle East (1963-64) (23:16)
8. Around the World Caravan, Europe (1963-64) (23:29), and
9. Guatemala (1966) (24:53).

Experience first hand 3 hours and 51 minutes of trailer travel in the "old days" as Wally Byam and his adventuresome band of Caravanners conquer the world in their gutsy Airstreams. Narration by Jose Ferrer, Vincent Price and Ricardo Montalban complete the period touch that whisks you back to the Golden Years of caravanning. All movies are in color, but due to the inexpensive original master film stock used movies 3 to 8 above, their color has shifted to magenta (but you will enjoy them nonetheless).

The two disc DVD set is available in the USA for \$40.00 plus \$2.00 for first class postage and packaging. Please mail a check or money order for \$43.00 payable to the "Vintage Airstream Club" to:

Linda Moore
VAC Treasurer
131 Castle Hill Road
P.O. Box 4173
Windham, NH 03087

along with your name and mailing address, and the DVD set will be mailed to you. We have experienced some problems getting older Toshiba brand computers to play similar DVD discs, but otherwise they seem to play well on most every DVD player or DVD drive equipped computer.

If you have a technical question on the DVD, please contact Fred Coldwell at 303-399-8104 or E-mail him at Agrijeeep@qwest.net. If you have a question concerning payment, please contact Linda Moore by E-mail at Moor eLinda@airstream.net or by regular mail at her address above.

***A must have!**
Siskal and Roeper

SPRING FLING VINTAGE RALLY

When: April 17-20, 2003
Where: Mystic Springs Cove Park - Florida

Description: The Pensacola WBCCI Unit invites Vintage Airstreamers to attend a club rally at Mystic Springs Cove Park on April 17-20. Surf to the Mystic Springs web site (www.geocities.com/mystic-springs) to see the rustic beauty of the campground high on the banks of the Escambia River 30 miles north of Pensacola. The web site includes a map to the park. Display your vintage Airstream and tour others at the vintage open house on Saturday afternoon. Enjoy fellowship with the other members around the campfire or in the park's cozy clubhouse. The rally fee includes Friday and Saturday night meals in the clubhouse as well as coffee and a light breakfast Saturday morning. Rally agenda includes: Thursday night 'Grill Your Own' Charcoal Fire, carpool to a country style restaurant for Friday lunch in Jay FL, Friday night dinner, Saturday toast and coffee at 7:30AM, Vintage Open House at noon, Dinner at 5:30PM followed by games and fireside stories, Sunday morning toast and coffee at 7:30AM, optional worship service at 9:00AM, and pot luck dinner at 11:00AM. Gulf beaches, the Battleship Alabama and the Naval Aviation Museum are nearby for you to visit.

Contact: Herb Spies
 by April 12th, 2003, PO Box 844, Shalimar, FL , 32579
 850-651-1074 email: spies@nwflorida.net

THE SILVER TRAILER SOCIAL

When: May 8-11, 2003
Where: at the Calistoga Fairgrounds, California
 (1435 N Oak St, Calistoga, CA 94515)

Description: Come join us in the California Napa Valley for a weekend with your vintage Airstream or other classic vintage riveted aluminum trailers (Curtis Wright, Silver Streak, Avion, Bowlus or the like). This gathering is just for fun and not sponsored by any club. This get together was planned especially with Bay Area vintage trailer owners in mind, but folks coming from anywhere with a vintage aluminum trailer are welcome. Relax at a spa, tour some wineries, show off your trailer at the "open house", join in a potluck, enjoy a Saturday night pizza, and attend a couple Airstream maintenance workshops. Calistoga is a popular "laid back" weekend tourist destination with plenty of interesting things to do -rain or shine. There are hiking trails, small town shopping, and countless other attractions in and around Calistoga. Come for the long weekend or just for a day - whatever fits your schedule.

For more information see this link:
<http://globetrotter64.home.att.net/gather.htm>

contact: Arlen & Shirley Manning **email:** globetrotter64@att.net
fees: The campground fee charged by the Calistoga Fairground is:
 \$22.00 per night (water and electric). There is a dump station on the grounds.
 \$25.00 per night (water, electric and sewer).

REGION 3 RALLY

When: May 14 to 18, 2003
Where: Williamsburg, Va. (Pottery Campground)

Description: A fantastic rally has been planned and the Region President, Don Shafer has cooperated 1000% to let us park together at the Pottery Campground, 5 miles west of Williamsburg. Make campground reservations by calling 800-892-0320, ask for Linda Brown. Tell her you are from the Airstream Vintage club and you want to park with the group and she will hook you up. After setting up, go to the colonial KOA, just down the road, register and get your ribbons.

Fees: 24.50 per night w/ water, electricity, sewer dump.
 You will need to pay one nights reservation fee. Space is limited due to a GoodSam Samboree the same weekend. Reg form in the Blue Beret.

Contact: Linda Brown at 800 892 0320
 Submitted by Bert Kalet



Accompanying pictures are from VAC members Alex & Rozella Szabo (L)of Lanesville, IN with their 1971 23' Safari (pictured above) and Glenda & Mel Woods (R)with their 1967 19' Caravel (not pictured) of Peoria,IL and visiting the Longaberger (basket) Headquarters enroute to the Swiss Rally Festival at Sugar Creek,OH Sept 21-1 October 2002. The Rally had 260 units attending graciously hosted by Region Four's Land-O-Lakes Unit 81.

They represented VAC participation in the Airstream contingent of the Festival Parade.

Alex J.Szabo WBCCI# 25195

We hope everyone is enjoying the search for their first Airstream, and if you already have one, we hope your enjoying your travels and meeting new friends, because if your not, you are missing out on much of the fun. That is where membership in the Wally Byam Caravan Club International / Vintage Airstream Club comes in. It's sometimes difficult to attract people to a social organization like ours, if 'their thing' is to go it alone, so let me elaborate on why we feel belonging to this organization is the best way to get the most out of your Airstream, new or old.

Let me start off by telling you the story of how we came to be members. My wife Linda and I, are in our 40's, and have been campers and travelers since the early 80's when our kids were small. We always wanted that "getaway to the wilderness with the family" experience. We bought a tent, and then went to a tent trailer, then we started hiking and backpacking and went back to using tents. We often wondered what we would do after the kids were finished camping with us. So while the old tent trailer went moldy, we decided that some day, we would buy a hard sided recreational vehicle.

Three years ago in January we stumbled upon an ad in the local paper for a 1966 Airstream Trade Wind for \$2000. After much discussion, we went to see it. In the small town of Wakefield in eastern New Hampshire, we found this hulk of aluminum, wood and steel. It was a mess! To make matters worse it was encrusted in ice from a recent storm of wet snow that changed to rain, then to ice "Just another day in New England". There were numerous dents, open windows, mold and algae growing out of all crevices. The door lock was



missing and a broom handle was keeping the door closed. We were greeted by the current owner who said he had bought it to fix up, but discovered that he didn't have the time (read that as too much work). I walked in first and after only a glance, I thought, "Linda will never buy this". I proceeded towards the rear of the trailer, taking note of all the warped and delaminating wood, missing floor tiles, tattered cushions and the evidence of rodents everywhere. I was about to enter the bathroom, when I heard Linda's voice from the front of the trailer. "This is Cool!!".

Upon hearing that, I suddenly realized, "We're In"! We had just bought the project of a lifetime, so I thought. Nothing more was said between us as we viewed the rest of the trailer.

The drive home was eerily quiet and I began to suspect that maybe we weren't going to get this after all. After a night of researching the Internet and seeing all the information available on Airstreams, we went to sleep. I awoke in the morning, put on a pot coffee, went to my office and turned on the computer to continue the search for more Airstream related websites. About a half hour later I heard Linda come down the stairs, get a cup of coffee, and go into the living room and sit down. I got up from my desk and went to get a cup for myself and went into the living room. As I turned the corner I could see her sitting there with a perplexed look on her face. Before I could say anything she looked up at me and said, "I don't know why, but we have to buy this trailer". And with that, I made a phone call and a week later we had our first Airstream parked in the side yard.

We sent in our application to join the VAC/WBCCI, for all those resources that they had to offer, then spent the next year restoring it. Since our only exposure to the club was through the Vintage Airstream email discussion list we decided that we wanted to go to a rally, just to see what they were all about and to see other

Vintage Airstreams, even though our trailer was not ready to roll. Through the discussion list we had corresponded with a number of people and decided to join a new WBCCI unit that had just received its provisional charter. The joint event we were going to was the inaugural rally of the Washington DC, Unit and the 2nd annual Northeast Vintage Club Rendezvous in Shartlesville, PA. Well we got there and despite both our reservations, were overwhelmed with the outpouring of friendly hospitality that we have now come to know as "Airstreaming".

The Vintage club enhances this by providing all sorts of Vintage Airstreaming information and activities of interest to Vintage Streamers. They include providing the tools and information to repair and restore their coaches. Creating opportunities to discuss the history, evolution, and construction of these great legacy Airstream trailers through our regional network of Vintage Rallies, caravans, website and news magazine. All of these combined with a sense community and a goal of just having fun. The main club, WBCCI, provides administration, event insurance, a member's directory, a schedule of National Caravans and Rallies and best of all, it's members.

Most of our involvement has been through VAC/WBCCI events because the majority of our unit members are Vintage Airstream owners. After attending a number of other unit rallies and three Internationals, where our trailer has won a major award in the Vintage Concourse D'Elegance each year, we have come to the conclusion that for all the vintage club has to offer in the way of technical info and trailer related discussions there is a common theme that all units share, and that is having fun and enjoying travel to new places and meeting some of the best people that this organization has to offer. The local units provide the best opportunities, information, and event costs available for enjoying life on the road to fun and adventure in an Airstream.

There is another element to the club that we find both fun and challenging and that is to get involved in the unit and help organize its events and take our turn at leading and directing unit business. During the year 2001-2002, I was President of the Washington, DC unit and its Newsletter Editor. Also for the year 2002-2003 I was nominated 3rd Vice President of the Vintage Airstream Club and became the Membership Chairman. Linda is currently the Treasurer of the VAC and had been its Membership Director until this year when an increase in workload at her company made it necessary to give it up.

There is for us, one more benefit to all of this. We always wanted a hobby where both Lin and I could share more time together. It turns out that the skills each of us learned individually are a perfect match for restoring Vintage Airstreams. I do the mechanicals and the polishing, we share the woodworking and she does the coachwork and decorating. To date we have restored 2 and are working on a third. Over the last three years we have rescued more than 10 Vintage Airstreams and will be done restoring them by the time we're ready to retire in 2009. Just in time for the 50th Anniversary reenactment of the Capetown to Cairo African Caravan of 1959.

Linda says "Not Me" and I say "We'll See"!

Thinking back on all we've done and been through in the last 3 years makes me think about the ad in a brochure for the Vintage Club that beckons! "Join the WBCCI and the Vintage Airstream Intra Club! It may change your life" And so it has!!!

Hope to see you down the road!

Wayne A. (WAM) & Linda M. (Lin) Moore, Washington, DC Unit #170, VAC/WBCCI 15116



WALLY BYAM PALM SPRINGS RALLY, 1954

VAC MEDIA FEATURES AND PRIORITIES SURVEY

I got the chance recently to sit down and read the VAC's Constitution and Bylaws as I placed them on the VAC website (<http://airstream.org/members/VACConstitution.pdf>, or link from the Resources Page.). They are really worth printing and reading when you get the chance, as I did.

What stuck in my mind was Article II, the VAC Objectives*, and if our club tools - the Vintage Advantage, VAC Website and sponsored Rallies are geared to meet those objectives. Less than 10% of VAC members have attended a vintage rally, so the question begs to be asked; what does the majority of the membership look to the VAC to supply?

Could it be that the driving force behind joining the VAC is as Article II states, "the exchange of knowledge and experience in the maintenance and restoration of vintage recreational vehicles"? It is evident the average VAC'er uses their vintage Airstream far more for family and personal camping, travel and living than for attending rallies - is the club serving these people? Even I, an avid proponent of attending vintage rallies, am able to attend but one annual rally - but go out on 6 or so additional personal trips each year.

So, in an effort to direct the club's finite resources, there will be a survey in the next issue of the Vintage Advantage seeking the features and priorities members would like to see offered on the club's website and in the Vintage Advantage news magazine. This will help direct the board officers and volunteer content administrators in determining the direction of these medias. Surveys like these are an extension of club representation. Life's reality dictates that very few of us will ever be able to attend an International Rally in our lifetime, let alone annually. Start thinking now of meaningful and achievable ways the website and magazine can benefit you in the joys of meeting the Objectives of the VAC.

RJ Dial
#16262
VAC Webmaster
(<http://www.airstream.org>)

***Article II, Sec. 1. "The objectives of the Club shall be to provide a forum for the display, judging and enjoyment of vintage recreational vehicles manufactured by Airstream, Inc; to provide means for members to help each other by the exchange of knowledge and experience in the maintenance and restoration of vintage recreational vehicles; to assist in the modification of vintage recreational vehicles to meet family objectives; to provide a buy and sell market place for vintage recreational vehicles; and to promote fellowship and enjoyment through rallying, camping, newsletter and various social programs."**

A follow-up send-in survey will be in the next issue.

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Dr. Ralph Lee and his wife, Muriel, on a caravaning holiday in Greece in the 1970's. Dr. Lee, whose love for travel in recreational vehicles spanned six decades, said, "The pleasure of caravaning is taking your time."

Ralph Lee, a King of the Road, Is Dead at 99

By DOUGLAS MARTIN

Ralph Lee, a celebrated knight-errant of the British road, who built his own vacation trailer in 1931 and went on to pull it and its 10 successors a distance equal to 20 trips around the world, died on Sept. 18 in Cheltenham, Gloucestershire, England. He was 99.

In 1999, Queen Elizabeth made Dr. Lee a member of the Order of the British Empire, an order of knighthood. His death was mourned by flags flown at half-staff at trailer parks throughout Britain.

The Times of London in 1998 called him "the spiritual founding father of British caravaning," a national pastime both beloved and belittled. It began in 1884 with Dr. William Gordon-Stables's journey to Scotland with a horse-drawn van, a trek richly described in his book "The Cruise of the Land Yacht Wanderer."

Caravan, the British term for trailer, comes from the Persian word karwan, meaning a group of desert travelers, and van is a shortened form.

Dr. Lee and his wife, Muriel, made contributions to the long, proud history of recreational vehicles that included being the first British caravaners to vacation above the Arctic Circle and the first from any country allowed into the Soviet Union. They crossed the English Channel 74 times with a caravan in tow. The Lees went more than 500,000 miles - far enough to make it to the moon and back.

Moreover, Dr. Lee, a dentist, was an important technical adviser to Sam Alper, who became a millionaire with his Sprite Caravans and other models, now treasured as

funky antiques. Mr. Alper was the British equivalent of Wally Byam, who invented the Airstream trailer, the slender silver cylinder that became an American icon.

Mr. Alper's company, first called Alperson Products, was the world's largest van maker in the 1950's, turning out 20,000 a year.

Today more than two million Britons are RV enthusiasts, and caravaning is the most popular British

A British traveler, most at home in a vacation trailer.

pastime after walking, gardening and fishing, according to The Times of London.

The Economist magazine reported that Britons spent more nights in the beds of recreational vehicles, 18 million in all last year, than they did at hotels and bed-and-breakfasts.

But they do it differently from Americans, who have wide roads, cheap fuel, excellent camping facilities and consequently immense RV's with dishwashers and king-size beds.

The Economist said that in Britain, caravans are seen as "the last resort of those too poor to afford an overseas holiday."

Caravans are an endless subject of debate. A big complaint is that they hold up traffic.

For example, Jeremy Clarkson, a British automotive writer, was outraged when a new Lotus he was test-

driving got caught behind a caravan. It was not his first complaint.

"I know the Caravan Club says its members are considerate but we must never forget that the Ku Klux Klan says its followers are respectable too," he fumed in The Sun last year.

Andrew Martin, writing in The New Statesman in 2000, called caravans "a ludicrous and creepy fetish of the petit bourgeoisie."

Dr. Lee answered by saying the critics should just slow down.

"The pleasure of caravaning is taking your time," he said in an interview with The Daily Mail in 1999. "I never did more than 100 miles a day."

Ralph Langdon Lee was born in Kettering, Northamptonshire, England, on April 5, 1903. His father, a Congregational minister and a mountain climber, instilled a love for the outdoors. At 16, he made a tent using his mother's sewing machine and soon became a scoutmaster. He was even invited to tea with the first chief scout, Robert Baden-Powell.

He met Muriel Waters at church and took her camping after their marriage in 1930. It rained a lot, and he vowed to keep his bride dry in the future. He had heard about caravans, but had never seen one. He built one from a crashed automobile at a cost of \$50, a lot of money then.

Luckily, his dental practice was active and remunerative.

He named his first caravan "Who Cares?" after a phrase from a song by Peter Dawson, a star in the early recording era. He kept the same name for his next 10 trailers.

In 1940, his house was destroyed by wartime bombing, and he and his family lived in a caravan in a

friend's field. He rebuilt his house to resemble a caravan.

After the war, he and his wife kept traveling. In Belgium, they were marooned in an antiroyalist riot. In Romania, they were detained in a steel cage by Communist authorities. In Norway, north of the Arctic Circle,

they listened to wolves prowl around their trailer at night.

"I like to do things that other people have never done," he said in an interview with The Mail.

In 1993, Mrs. Lee died from a stroke, and Dr. Lee went ahead with a trip to Ireland that they had

planned together. He said it was a mistake. He was lonely.

Dr. Lee, who is survived by two daughters, took two flying lessons in a glider and two in a helicopter at 95. The lessons went well.

"I wish I'd taken up flying sooner," he said.



In retrospect ,certain truths are so valid and useful that they never grow old. Even more important, the newer members have never heard some of them. Here is a letter I wrote on the subject of "hot shells". This refers to the trailer skin becoming a source of electrical shock.

February 20, 1991

Dear Jim:

How have you been since the region five rally? Bettye and I have completed our move from Indiana to Michigan, and are now spending our winter in Texas.

Starting in December, Bettye and I took the Airstream to Mexico where we spent six weeks traveling around, mostly visiting archaeological sites. On our way back we parked for two days in a cramped camp ground behind the hotel at Playa Azul. (Blue beach) At the end of the second day I turned the trailer around and prepared for an early morning departure. I left the trailer hooked to the car on the moist beach sand, and did not put down the jack stand. As in many places in Mexico, the electrical plugs were of the two-prong, ungrounded type. I accidentally plugged in with reverse polarity. I am sure the polarity light did not come on because I checked it, both then and later.

Later in the evening Bettye stepped out in her bare feet to retrieve a chair. As soon as her foot touched down, she received a severe electrical shock which sent her tumbling to the ground, and left her dazed for two minutes. As soon as she could tell me what had happened I checked the polarity light and unplugged the trailer. No need to do anything more; I knew what had happened.

You may remember our conversation last year on the subject of "hot shells". I have now had time to check it out. Here is what I found.

I was curious to know which circuits were isolated, and what was the source of current to the trailer shell (body). There are three circuits inside my 75 trailer, all alike and completely isolated. But, the polarity light connects between the neutral wire and the shell. The ground wire is also isolated. The black and white wires are not connected to the shell in any way except through the polarity light. It appears that the light is the killer. I was surprised to find that it was not a small neon light, but a 1/3 watt incandescent lamp. I have now removed it from the trailer.

The joke (but not a funny one) is that when your trailer is most dangerous, the light cannot come on.

Sincerely, Coop



Subsequently, I recommended that all owners remove bulbs from their ground lights wherever they are found. I have encountered them in years from 61 to 75. They were discontinued shortly thereafter. Today, the GFI (ground fault indicator) where used, nicely protects the occupants without complication. They can be retrofitted and I recommend them.

There is always the hazard of reverse polarity, but in Latin-American travel it is a daily hazard. Sometimes 240 volt power is available side-by-side with 120V. Watch for labels. Trailer and electrical stores have a simple plug-in device which can be carried in the trailer for testing. This is a must for world travelers.

At rallies, where extension cords are shared, the polarity can easily be reversed, subjecting all subsequent trailers to possible shock hazard. This happens when ancient two-prong plugs are used, or where damaged cords are mended without regard to polarity. Shocking, but true.

* * *

Have you ridden in your trailer this year?

If not, do so in the Spring.

Why?

Watch this space.

* * *

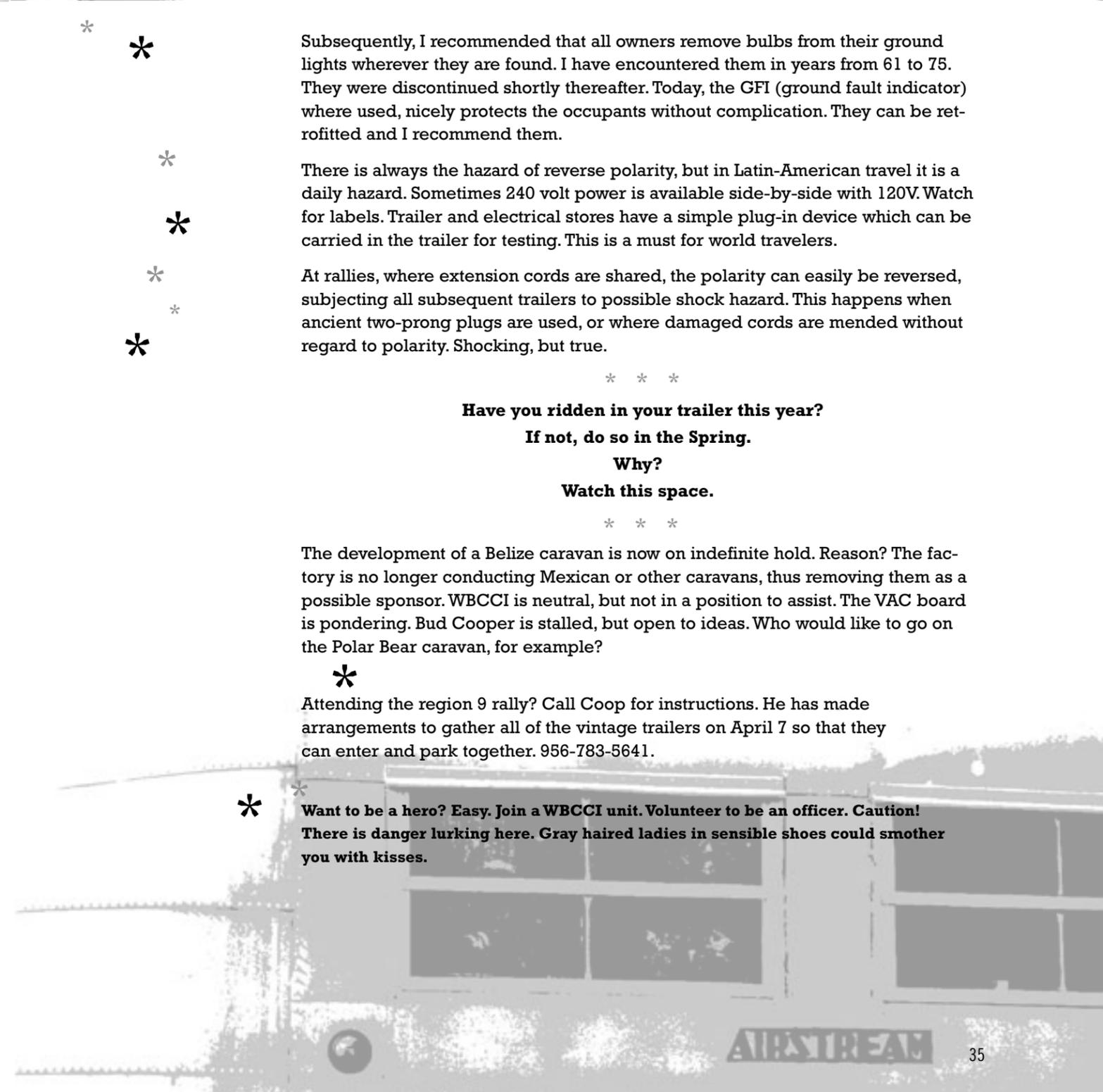
The development of a Belize caravan is now on indefinite hold. Reason? The factory is no longer conducting Mexican or other caravans, thus removing them as a possible sponsor. WBCCI is neutral, but not in a position to assist. The VAC board is pondering. Bud Cooper is stalled, but open to ideas. Who would like to go on the Polar Bear caravan, for example?

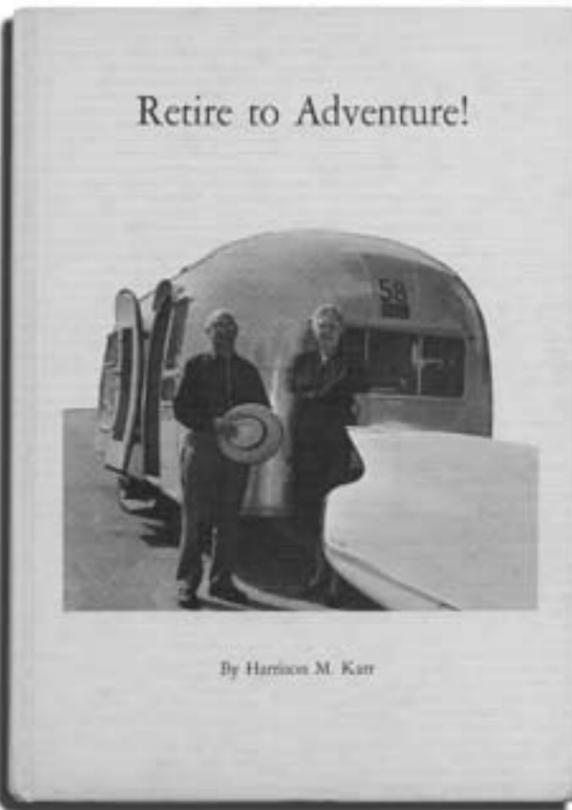


Attending the region 9 rally? Call Coop for instructions. He has made arrangements to gather all of the vintage trailers on April 7 so that they can enter and park together. 956-783-5641.



Want to be a hero? Easy. Join a WBCCI unit. Volunteer to be an officer. Caution! There is danger lurking here. Gray haired ladies in sensible shoes could smother you with kisses.





A note from the transcriber of Retire to Adventure:

Hi Bryan,

I finally got around to sending you the 1st chapter from *Retire to Adventure!* by Harrison M. Karr 1962, by Griffin Publishing. Glendale California.

Harrison is very careful not to plug Airstream or any other brand. He even refers to Wally Byam as "Mr. Ulysses" Though the book is dedicated as follows:

Dedicated to the late Wally Byam, bold adventurer and dynamic leader, who showed many thousands of us the way to a rich and full retirement through following the adventure trail.

Near the end of the book Kerr confirms that Mr. Ulysses is in fact Wally Byam.

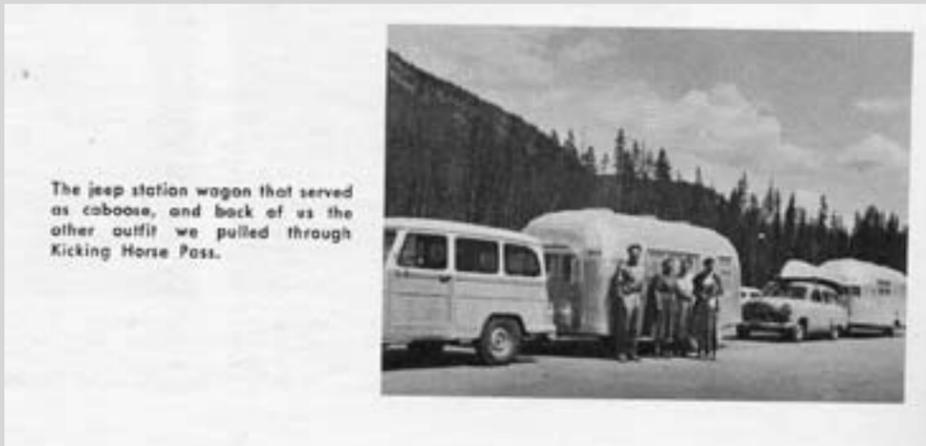
Take Care
Terry O'Neill
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CHAPTER I (part 2 of the read aloud book series)

FROM EMPLOYMENT TO UNEMPLOYMENT IN ONE EASY LESSON

When I got home and heard the news I was excited. That matter of car expenses pulled a lot of weight. About to go on a restricted diet, financially speaking, expenses weighed heavy in our thinking. With car expenses provided for, one big obstacle to going on a caravan was removed. But I didn't have much hope. Shirley is a musician, not a golfer, swimmer, or mountain climber. In fact she's not the outdoor type at all. I had felt lucky when I got her to take up trailering, and profoundly grateful when she had come to like it as much as I did. But the thought of her tagging along with me in a jeep, even if it was a station wagon, behind a whole battalion of trailers-the secretary had told her that sixty-some already had signed up and more names were coming in all the time-1 couldn't see her doing it. For that matter, neither could she. She said so with emphasis. And to tell the truth, although I didn't admit it to Shirley, I had trouble getting the picture of myself as the transporter and guardian of all that paraphernalia, even if I didn't have to use the stuff. But I was eager to tackle it. Whatever deficiencies the setup had, it was far more inviting than drifting aimlessly into the worrisome period of transition from employment to unemployment. But, as I say, from Shirley's reaction I felt that the deal was hopeless. At that point, however, I got an assist from the family doctor-who happened to be our son. That evening at his home, after his wife had put the children to bed and we could hear ourselves talk, I told him of the invitation. His response was immediate and positive. "Why, that's great, Dad! What a wonderful way for you to start retirement! To tell the truth, I've been worried about you, the next few weeks that is, while you are getting used to no job." Then, noticing the expression on my face, he added, "You're certainly going to accept the offer, aren't you?" "Talk to your mother," I said. "Mom," he said, "your doctor says for you to go! Doctors orders, you know . . ." That was how it came about that one week I was listening to student speeches at the University of California and the next week I was driving across country in a small, compact, somewhat phlegmatic jeep station wagon carrying equipment with which I was hardly on speaking terms. We were on our way to Glacier National Park in Montana, where the caravan was to assemble. The jeep had had some rather hard usage on previous caravans-hauling a half hundred cars and trailers across a bridgeless river in Guatemala, and similar feats of strength and endurance-and showed its years. The paraphernalia consisted of four-wheel drive, compound low gears, altimeter, compass, shovels, axes, ropes, cables, and of course the winch. All of this stuff bothered me a good deal. I felt like the Connecticut Yankee in King Arthur's Court, accoutered with a heavy set of armor that didn't fit me. Besides the machinery there were other things that gave me concern. On the long slow trip we had plenty of time to ponder them. What kind of people went on these caravans? What about regimentation? One thing about trailering that we particularly enjoyed was the freedom to come and go without regard to anybody's wishes but our own. No worry over room reservations, time schedules, or any other of the customary bothersome details associated with traveling.

And here we were starting out on a long journey with a gang of people we didn't even know. Would we have to "knuckle under to the wishes of a bunch of strangers? Just what had we let ourselves in for? In particular, just what had I let myself in for with all that machinery! Well, we'd just have to wait and see. We were nearly a week out of Los Angeles when we finally pulled into the caravan's campground on the shore of St. Mary's Lake in Glacier Park. We arrived as the sun was dropping toward the mountain peaks to the west. The huge aggregation of trailers-ninety-three of them-was arranged in a series of concentric circles after the custom of the Forty-niners on the plains. In the center was a hum of activity. Tables were set for an outdoor meal and people were beginning to sit down. As we approached, a man detached himself from the group and came over to us. He introduced himself as chairman of the parking committee. "I'll help you get parked," he said. "Then come to supper. We're having potluck." "Oh, we couldn't," Shirley protested. "Not tonight. I haven't a thing ready to bring." "Bring your appetites. That's all you'll need ... Here, let me introduce you to some of these people. I'll take care of your rig while you get acquainted." He led us to a couple of vacant chairs, introduced us



to our table mates, and as he left, admonished, "Dig in! Don't be bashful. There's plenty, you'll see."

And there was plenty, no question about that. And there was no question about the heartiness of our welcome. There was an air of conviviality all around us suggestive of a big family reunion at a picnic. And in a sense it was a reunion, for many of these people, we learned, had been on previous caravans together. They were greeting each other like long-lost brothers and sisters. But the fact that we were new did not exclude us from the sociability, nor from the festivities that followed the meal. After supper a huge bonfire was lighted. Someone sang out, "Any musical instruments in the crowd?" A slender middle-aged man whom everybody called Bill . . . later identified as Bill Martin—went to his trailer and brought out a violin which he began to tune. When no one else volunteered, Shirley mustered her courage and said, "I have a small electric organ, if someone can provide the electricity." "Fetch it out," commanded a big, jovial, farmerish-looking fellow near us. "I got a light plant on my truck. Plenty of juice." The little electric organ that Shirley brought out was one that we always carry with us. The manufacturer really intended it for a toy—an expensive toy. It is no bigger than a typewriter. Shirley can carry it around as easily as I carry my typewriter. But it has two octaves of true tones of considerable volume—achieved by a wind bellows. By clever manipulation of the tiny keys Shirley can play many of the best-loved old familiar tunes. Together she and Bill Martin accompanied us while we sang The Old Mill Stream, Darling Nellie Cray, Sweet Adeline, and so on down the line. When our windpipes got tired someone called out, "How about square dancing? Anybody who can call?" "Ah reckon ah could do that," came a soft Southern drawl. A tall, spruce-looking Southerner stepped forward. He was, we learned, a chiropractor from South Carolina on a prolonged vacation. He had already been in camp several days while the caravan was assembling and evidently had established himself as quite a favorite. "Good for you, Doc Joe," somebody yelled. "Git goin'!" Doc Joe had an engaging grin and a warm, friendly voice to go with the grin. Shortly he had us all dancing a square dance. We had to watch our step because of

After the introductions came the setting up of committees, which was largely a matter of volunteering. In addition to the parking committee which was already functioning, there was a committee to take charge of mail, one on social activities, one on civic affairs (chiefly to exchange courtesies with local dignitaries in the towns and cities we visited) one on cleanliness and sanitation (one of our M.D.'s headed this committee), and several other committees essential to a democratic society. These committees were, in a large sense, our governing bodies. And there we got the answer to another of our questions, "What about regimentation?" We were accustomed to living in a democratic society where the majority ruled, setting up such regulations as seemed necessary for the well-being of the group. This was no different. At last the Karrs were presented as "caboose." Mr. Ulysses considerably announced, "Mr. Karr lays no claim to mechanical skill. He will not be expected to use the equipment he is toting. But he'll have it along, just in case." Another of those whoppers! Unintentional, of course, but it goes to show you never can be sure. I'll tell you more about that fib when the time comes. In fact, it would be hard to keep me from telling about it. Blue berets, the distinguishing insignia of the caravaners, were distributed. These when perched on our heads at the rakish angle most of us oldsters affected, made us feel young, Bohemian, and a bit devilish. They also served wherever we went to get us a lot of recognition, and not a few favors. As we were disbanding Mr. Ulysses sang out, Just a minute! Just a minute! An important announcement!" The announcement was that the Canadian border officials were coming to our camp to take care of admission details. The border was twenty or thirty miles away, but they came. One of the trailers was converted into a temporary immigration-customs office, and registration for the entire caravan was taken care of in about an hour. Next morning the crossing of the border consisted of an exchange of smiles and hand waves with the officials, nothing more. On Canadian soil, we headed for Calgary. On the highway our caravan spread out. This took care of one of my anxieties, an anxiety shared by one of our Los Angeles friends when we told her our proposed caravan trip.



From our Montreal camp we could watch the great ocean-going ships plying their way to the Great Lakes cities on the newly opened St. Lawrence Seaway.

AND THEN THERE WAS CANADA . . .

group, occupationally speaking, as you'd be likely to find. One fairly common element, however, was noticeable. That was age. On the whole we were well along in years. The reason: it is usually only retired or semi-retired persons who can take time to go on such long excursions. But even in this particular there was no complete uniformity. One couple in their twenties were on their honeymoon. Several middle-aged couples were on long vacations. And there were quite a number of grandchildren traveling with the grandpas and grandmamas. A newspaper along our route stated that our ages ranged from eight to eighty—an understatement, for one man accompanying his son and daughter-in-law was well past eighty.

"Imagine!" she exclaimed. "How'd you like to get hung up on the highway behind a string of seventy-five or a hundred trailers?" She needn't have worried. We didn't travel in a string. Our custom was to set the time of meeting at our next destination, then let nature take its course. Some like to get up early, some late. Some like to travel fast, some slowly. There was only one limitation, and that was self-imposed by the group at Mr. Ulysses' suggestion.

Out of consideration for other traffic no more than two trailers were ever to travel close together—except when we were convoyed by Royal Mounted Policemen, a courtesy which was extended to us whenever we entered a city and whenever we traveled through rugged or potentially dangerous country. When Shirley and I are on trailer tours she always keeps a brief account of our doings, sort of a trip log. Her skeletonized account of the next few days' activities reads . . .

July 1. Leaving for Calgary. Raining. Detour on muddy roads. Arrived in Calgary camp to find parking committee standing in rain and mud. One man told us he had changed clothes three times. Still they were on the job, waiting for our arrival and helping us park. Dominion Day in Canada, all stores closed.

July 2. Sun shining. Great cleaning of muddy cars and trailers. Milk, bread, and ice delivered at trailers. Men using power mowers preparing ground for dancing tonight. (Evening) Doc Joe called for square dancing and taught us some new steps very quickly. Still light at ten o'clock.

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Or, contact me by email at wam52@airstream.net Payment MUST accompany the ads to be considered for publication.

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- 1 Only advertisements deemed of direct interest to the VAC membership shall be accepted.
2. All commercial advertisements in the VAC cost \$25 per issue.
3. Commercial ads will be placed only in the classified advertisement section of the VA.
4. Commercial Advertiser must be a VAC Member. 5. WBCCI members receive 20% discounted rate

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