

Vintage Airstream TODAY

The Official Newsletter of the Vintage Airstream Club



July/August 2020 <https://vintageairstreamclub.com/>

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Items needed for upcoming newsletters: tech ideas, maintenance procedures, courtesy parking. Short articles with photos that you have taken this summer.

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Email us newsletter items at:
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Message from our new Vintage Airstream Club President Ed Valentin

I'm Ed Valentin, and I am honored to be the President of the VAC club for the next 12 months. My wife and I maintain two vintage Airstream trailers, a 1961 16ft Bambi and a 1985 25ft Sovereign . We live in the Northeast and retired several years ago. We travel extensively in our trailers spending the winter in Baja, Mexico and the summer in the Northeast. Our vintage trailers are an integral part of our lifestyle, and we have a great appreciation for the flexibility they provide in our travels. .

As a vintage trailer owner, I have dedicated a lot of time and effort upgrading and maintaining our units, learning from many folks how to maintain vintage trailers. The knowledge is available, and our goal is to deliver it to the members of the club. We recently hosted a virtual rendezvous which was well received. Many insights were shared with the audience surrounding the upkeep of the trailers ranging from 12volt appliances to polishing and everything else in-between! Our intent is to continue the virtual connection with members, offering opportunities for us to continue the communications and knowledge sharing virtually. We plan to capitalize with outreaching tools-- VAC YouTube, Facebook and Zoom meetings - . The goal is to keep you well informed and connected with folks that can contribute to the upkeep/enhancement of your vintage trailer(s). Announcements of the virtual sessions shall be emailed to members and / or reflected in the VAC newsletter.

The VAC board, regional representatives, and I meet monthly. Our meeting occurs the 3rd Monday of each month. Currently, there are officer opportunities on the board. If you wish to explore, please reach out to me or a board officer. Interested in joining our monthly meeting, reach out to us and we will make arrangements for you to partake. I look forward to meeting, learning, sharing, and working closely with many of you.

Be safe— Ed Valentin

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Dear Members,

Recently, we hosted a virtual Rendezvous (Zoom meeting) since it was not possible to meet in Loveland, Colorado due to the COVID-19 situation. The VAC board was committed to share with members its traditional open house held during the yearly International Rally. It was agreed to embrace technology and sponsor a virtual open house which we did.

The turnout was pleasing and many shared insights surrounding upgrades and restoring techniques. The sessions were recorded for future access. The virtual "rally" allowed for the audience to question the presenter, enhancing their knowledge and potential application of the subject that was discussed. It was very interactive and many of us learned from each other, following up with the member presenting the material (polishing, 12volt appliances, axle replacement, restoring approaches...)

Our commitment is to continue to enhance our knowledge and establish a network of information and contacts for our members. During the next few months, we will continue to host virtual sessions. We are reaching out to you, requesting you to share your restoration experience, insight, approaches and to brainstorm with others. Please contact one of the VAC officers or Newsletter Editor and we will schedule you for a Zoom Virtual session. Looking forward to hearing from you; we can all learn from each other!

Be safe, Ed

3rd VP. , Treasurer, Merchandise person, Newsletter editor needed.

Link to Constitution , By-Laws/Duties of Position: <https://vintageairstreamclub.com/vac-operations/>

Humphrey Gas Lamp Conversion to 12V Electric *By Joe Peplinski #6768, VAC Historian*

During the 2020 VAC Virtual Open House, I showed off our Humphrey Propane Lamp that I had converted to run on 12V electricity, and I was asked to submit a story for the VAC Newsletter explaining how to make this conversion. Once I found the right parts, making this conversion was a snap. At a high level you just remove the gas control valve and ceramic burner nose; install an automotive bulb socket for an 1157 bulb and an on-off-on toggle switch; connect a few wires, and install an 1157 bulb and voila, you have an electric lamp that can be operated at two brightness levels.

Here are the more detailed step by step instructions with the best photos I have. My photos may not be perfect as I did not anticipate creating this story during the conversion, so I am working with what I have. Please note that there are different models of Humphrey gas lamps that have been used in Airstreams over the years, so if your model is different than mine, use these instructions as a general guide and adjust as necessary.

Step 1: Remove the glass shade, ceramic burner nose, and gas control valve assembly.



Step 2: Measure the threaded opening where the ceramic burner nose was removed and purchase an automotive bulb socket that is the right size to fit in the opening. I found the opening on my lamp to be about 1" in diameter and a generic 1157 Bulb Socket with six little tabs around the perimeter to be a perfect fit. Every auto parts store likely has this socket, but the brand name may be different. Since this is a two-level bulb, also buy an automotive 12V On-Off-On Toggle Switch so you can operate the light on both the dim and bright settings.



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Step 3: Feed the wires from the 1157 bulb socket from the threaded opening toward where the gas valve used to be and screw the 1157 bulb socket into the threaded opening. I started screwing it in by hand and when it got hand tight, I used a screwdriver across the little tabs to turn it just a little more to make sure it was secured in place. Make sure that you don't screw it in too far and short the back of the spring-loaded bulb contacts to the metal housing. Temporarily insert a bulb to compress the terminal spring and verify there is not continuity from the bulb wire to the housing, since the housing must be grounded to get the bulb to work.



Step 4: Install the On-Off-On Toggle Switch where the gas control knob used to be and connect the wires from the bulb socket to the two outside switch terminals. I found that after crimping terminals onto the bulb socket wires, they were just long enough to reach the switch terminals without having to add length. Sorry no photo. The third (center) terminal will be connected to your 12V power source after you install the lamp. I chose to connect the switch wires such that toggling the switch up is bright and down is dim, while center is off.



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VAC Membership - Lindy Brown

New Membership Chair

Lindy Brown has volunteered to be the next VAC Membership Chair. Lindy is enthusiastic about the appointment and I know she will bring her personal touch to the membership process.

Step 5: Install the Humphrey Lamp Assembly in the trailer and connect a properly fused 12V power wire to the center terminal of the switch and a properly grounded wire to the housing. I connected the ground wire to the screw that is used to secure the air mixture ring. I would recommend installing the ground wire even if your Humphrey Lamp is installed on an aluminum roof locker, though you might get away without grounding it in that case. If your Humphrey lamp is installed on a wooden roof locker like mine, the ground wire is mandatory.



Ground Wire Connect to Air Mixture Screw



Ground Wire Connection Close-up



Test Fit with an Incandescent 1157 Bulb



1157-WW3W-G Warm White LED Bulb

Step 6: Install an 1157 bulb, the glass shade, and any other lamp parts you removed during the conversion (e.g. the top mounted heat deflector). I installed and tested the lamp with an old incandescent 1157 bulb I had, but after I proved the lamp worked, I purchased an LED bulb to reduce the current draw and heat produced by the bulb. I choose to purchase an 1157-WW3W-G Warm White LED bulb from Super Bright LEDs for about \$15 because of its 360-degree light pattern and because the LEDs were contained within a glass dome. There are less expensive options.



Installation Complete and Working on 12V



The End!

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A Trip Back Home submitted by Robert Brennecke, #11773, Ballwin, MO. The #11773 has been in the family since his parents joined the WBCCI in the early 60's.

My mother was in her 80's and traveled by herself after my father passed away. The trailer she traveled in was a 34 foot Airstream # 11773, and the tow vehicle was a one ton van. Mom had no qualms towing that big rig that was as long as an 18 wheeler from one part of the country to another by herself.

When she was traveling home from a trip to Florida, she became tired and decided to pull into a "*once professionally operated*" camp for the night. Now, when mom came home from Florida, she always filled the bathroom shower with as much fresh fruits and vegetables she could carry back to Missouri. When she pulled in, all the spots close to the facilities and the shady spots were taken. The campers who were there looked like the Grapes of Wrath camping set-ups. The clothes lines were full of drying clothes, kids running all over, and trash laying about. Since she was tired and the shower tub was full, she decided she would cleanup at the shower house and leave in the morning early.

She wore her brightly colored mumu, took her towel, shower clogs, soap and wash cloth and keys and started walking a good distance to the shower house from her parking spot. When she was done showering, she reached for her towel on the outside of the shower door, and it was gone; she then fumbled for her mumu which she found was gone also. The only thing she had to cover up with from the shower house to the trailer was a wash cloth, soap and keys.

What to do? She was always tender footed and didn't know if she could negotiate the gravel path to the trailer. Well, she didn't have much of a choice; she covered up the best she could with the wash cloth, soap and keys and walked "*briskly*" down the road back to her trailer. Now mom was never a slight woman and didn't move quickly under the best conditions but she made it and said she was glad to have her keys in hand. She stated later that she learned what not to do when showering at a bath house.

Submitted by: Don and Marilyn Sluyk, Wbbci #1109, VAC and Region 11, 4 Corners Unit. From Scottsdale and Flagstaff, AZ.

We were so looking forward to Loveland 2020, like everyone else. Hopefully, it can happen again some year.

We decided to come anyway with our 1960 24' Tradewind and enjoy Colorado, as we do every year like for the Rocky Mountain Rallies every other year for the last ten years. We have also enjoyed Pismo Beach Vintage trailer twice, Mardi Gras Airstream rally in New Orleans, Rose Parade, and many 4CU rallies, such as Restoration rallies, Balloon Fiesta, Mardi Gras, etc.

In almost 800 miles, we saw only six other Airstreams on the road, between Flagstaff, AZ, stopping overnight in Pagosa Springs in a hotel.

We stayed at the Ft Collins, Lakeside KOA, recommended by VAC member, Jim Cooper. There were four other Airstreams (all newer) at the KOA. Even though we have full hookups, I tried out my new gray water holding tank and three new slide valves, replacing the leaky black water slide valve and no gray water storage. Plus my new aluminum box on the back, I made to store very light weight stuff, since older Airstreams can't support much in the back without cracking the frame.

Don retired from Honeywell Process Control Systems after 40 years traveling the world, mostly for the oil and petrochemical business, plus some Pulp & Paper, and Electric Utility businesses. Marilyn is still a travel agent, helping numerous clients/friends cancel and re-book cruises.

Life is good!



Ft Collins KOA put us in the number one spot that everyone sees when coming in! Some would say it's because the site is one of the few back-in's; but as a VAC member, we believe it was because our trailer is a showpiece! Great campground!



VAC REGION REPRESENTATIVES NEEDED

Region Representatives are your best source of VAC information in your region. The VAC does have positions open for **Regions 7 and 12**. Being a Region Representative is a good way to be involved. If interested contact:

Ed Valentine president@vintageairstreamclub.com

A note from Lynn Talsma, VAC 2nd VP : “I am happy to announce that we have a new Region 3 Representative, Dick Martin, who has volunteered to serve in this position. Dick has been a VAC member for several years and has at least 3 vintage trailers including a couple of 345 Motorhomes. Dick is also involved in solar panel installations.”

More member news: Submitted by Tedd and Ila Johnson #05094, Minneapolis, MN.

When I received our last Membership Renewal request from VAC, I sent the request form back, indicating that we had recently sold our 1970 27 foot Airstream Trailer. Sorry, with that, I expected to be removed from the membership directory.

We bought our Airstream in Dec 2004 for less than \$5000 and began updating it to bring it back into Vintage condition. It had not been used and was neglected for a few years. In the fifteen years we traveled with it, we pulled it for over 65,000 miles including all Provinces of Canada (including Newfoundland) and most all states in the Continental US (from Florida to Alaska).

In 2013 we attended the WBCCI International in Farmington, New Mexico, entered the Vintage Trailer competition and won the GOLD Award.

In June 2019 we sold our 1970 27 foot Airstream Trailer for \$26,000, proving an Airstream only gets better with use and a little loving care. I think all members of VAC should see this example.

Submitted by Joe Peplinski, VAC Historian; “I worked with Samantha Martin, the Airstream Company Archivist/Historian to create a new **1959-1980 Airstream and Argosy Serial Number Decoder** that is far more accurate and complete than what was previously posted on Airstream’s website and more complete than the one created by Bud Cooper in 1996 that is on the VAC website. This document has been posted and it can be accessed in the Document Archive on the Airstream, Inc. website under the title **Airstream VIN Numbers Pre-1980**: https://www.airstream.com/owners/document-archive/?s_documents=VIN It can also be accessed on the VAC website as well.”
