

SIERRA NEVADA UNIT, WBCCI

AUGUST 2002 *Airstreamers* NEWSLETTER



JULY MEETING at MILLS PARK, CC, NV

Under the trees in the middle of Mills Park, on a balmy day with a gentle breeze, we gathered around a large picnic table to enjoy a modest feast provided by those attending: Don & Mary Lou Damoth, Virginia & Dale Leipper, Diane Leipper, Fred & Ann Hersey, their son Mark and 3 grand-kids from Austin, TX, and Bill & Jan Heaton, possible new members from Minden, NV. Entertainment was provided by the Mills Park Railroad, chuggin around the park from time to time.

Unit plans and problems were discussed, including the dearth of warm bodies willing to perform as unit officers, vs the plethora of vacancies to be filled. At this time, an amendment to the Unit Bylaws reducing the required number of officers seems to be in order. Copies of the Bylaws were available to those present. amendment proposals will be discussed at Davis Creek.

Our rally scheduled for Washoe Lake Park has been moved to Davis Creek Park, and notices sent to Jackson Center et al. It is on the west side of Washoe Valley, just north of Bowers Mansion. If you attended the Bowers Mansion meeting, you must have zipped right by it, on the west side of the road. Arriving from either north or south, turn onto Old 395 at the north end of Washoe Valley, as the road swings to the south, look for Davis Creek Campground Rd on your right. Leippers plan to be there by 11:00 on Friday, Aug 16. Diane says they will have a very informal "happy hour" Friday & Saturday about 5pm for anyone to stop by for a visit. The main event will be our potluck and business meeting on Saturday at midday. Com'on down! Call Diane at 972-9392, or Fred at 775) 266-3435, or hersey.4-way@775.net. We would like to know how many to expect.

August Birthday greetings to:

8/2 Emily Pierce 8/30 Milan Wight

August Anniversary greetings to:

8/2 Frank and Steve Burnham

*The Leipper family is planning an outing in November around Thanksgiving to Lahontan. If anyone would like to join us with your trailer, you are more than welcome. If you are interested or have some specific dates in mind, contact Diane Leipper.

**There has been some interest expressed in a campout at Eagle Lake near Susanville. September might be a good month for such an expedition or sometime next year. Let us know if you are among the interested and when you would like to go. Contact Diane Leipper.

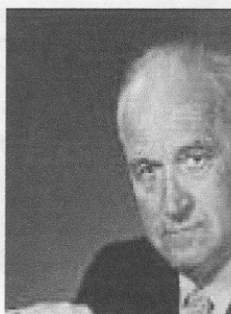
Dues deadline is Nov 1. Mail \$55 check to Membership Chair, Frenk Burnham, POB 10602, Reno, NV 89510.

"In the Limelight"

Wally Byam

You may be lucky enough to have known Wally Byam, but more and more of our new members will need to be satisfied with reading and hearing about him. Of course we're all familiar with his aluminum legacy or we would not be here. The following is what I have been able to dig up about him. May our newer members be fortunate enough to fill in the cracks with first hand stories from those of you who knew the great one.

Wally Byam, Airstream's founder, was practically born a traveler. As a young child he traveled extensively with his grandfather, who led a mule train in Baker, Oregon. Later, as an adolescent, Wally was a shepherd, living in a two-wheeled donkey cart outfitted with a kerosene cook stove, food and water, a sleeping bag and wash pail. These early experiences no doubt contributed in large part to the direction his life would eventually take.



After finishing high school, Byam signed on with the merchant marine, serving three years and working his way up from cabin boy to ship's mate. Upon returning to the United States, he entered Stanford University, working his way through school and, in 1923, earning a law degree.

Wally Byam never practiced law; perhaps he would never be happy in such a constrained profession. Instead, he found work in the rapidly growing advertising business, first as a copywriter for the Los Angeles Times and then as the owner of his own agency. He apparently did well in advertising, but soon switched to the opposite side of the street and became a publisher of magazines.

One of them published an article that described plans for the construction of a travel trailer. When readers began complaining about the plans, Wally tried them out and found himself agreeing with his readers -- they didn't work. Thereupon, he set out to build his own model. And while he considered the finished product primitive, it was widely admired and sold immediately.

An article in his magazine describing how to build this improved trailer for less than \$100 drew an enthusiastic response, and Byam began selling sets of plans for five dollars. Soon, in response to demand, he was building improved versions of his trailer in his backyard in Los Angeles.

(To be continued)

Mark Your Calendars:

September 12, A Barbeque at the Leipper's in Lemmon Valley north of Reno. Details and a map will be in the next newsletter or you can contact Diane Leipper, at 972-9392.

October 16, Pinon Plaza, Highway 50 East, in Carson City, 11:30. (Free lunch for Keith McGill.)

We will need a volunteer to do the October newsletter, because Fred & Ann will be on Vacation in the Northwest.

The 2nd copy of the newsletter is to use to introduce potential members to our unit. We hope you will find it useful in your recruiting efforts. We need to build our membership. If you see an Airstream and can't find the owner, tape one to the door.



1935 AIRSTREAM (back) and "TORPEDO" built from \$5 plans