



TOW Line

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Teardroppers of **O**regon and **W**ashington
Serving those who are or wannabe teardroppers

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SPRING FLING #9 IS FILLING UP FAST!

By **Trudy Glassett**

May 1st finds 40 teardrop and other vintage-style trailers signed up for the 9th annual Spring Fling. This year's event will be held at Gust Backstrom Park in Morton, Washington. The hosts will provide the usual Sunday and Monday breakfasts. We'll have Saturday and Sunday night potlucks.

Some special entertainment for Sunday afternoon has been added! We are pleased to announce "The Cowchips" will be providing bluegrass and other favorite sing-along type music for our listening pleasure. We'll pass the hat to help with their fuel expenses and hope they'll join us for the big Dutch oven potluck. If you haven't signed up yet, this may encourage you to do so. **Cutoff date for registration is May 15th.** I need to know you're coming so I can get enough dash plaques.

There are a few full hook-up sites (\$17/night) and many tent sites (\$15) available. We cannot guarantee the weather, but do have a large picnic shelter to keep us dry, if needed. In case of sunshine, there is a small beach for fishing along the nearby Tilton River. A ball field is available for baseball, soccer or Frisbee. Horseshoe pits are there too. You'll need to bring your own equipment.

If you haven't registered yet or need more information, please contact us at glassettgang@juno.com or give us a call at **360-293-1108**. We'd love to have you at the first teardrop campout of the season.

GREAT BEAVER STATE CAMPOUT HAS NEW WEEKEND FOR 2007

By **Ed Colvin**

Hi all you teardroppers. I would like to see all of you folks this year at the Great Beaver State Campout. This is a very nice place to have a teardrop gathering. The camp is in a forested area.

It's **July 27-29, 2007** near Eugene, Oregon for the 10th Annual Great Beaver State Campout at Camp Lane, where once again the teardrops will gather for a weekend of fun, food and relaxation. Camp Lane is located 42 miles west of Eugene on Hwy 126 and 23 miles east of Florence.

The weekend includes several meals prepared for you (Friday supper, Saturday breakfast and lunch, and Sunday breakfast), and we'll be having a Saturday night potluck and Dutch oven cookout. The park is right on the Siuslaw River and has some paved walking trails. There are tree houses and bunkhouses for those who want to come without teardrops. This is a teardrop only event, the parking is on the lawn in front of the 1920s-vintage lodge, and pets are welcome on a leash. The fee is \$45.00 per trailer. Contact Sheryl Aaron at aaroncruiser@aol.com or phone 541-688-9545.

A BRIEF HISTORY OF THE HOMEBUILT TEARDROP TRAILER

The following is a history of homebuilt teardrop trailers that was researched by **John Blewitt** of Rhode Island. John let us abridge his work. For the complete text that includes illustrations call up John's very interesting teardrop web page www.tinytears.cc. Scan down the index to "Teardrop Stories" and find "Homebuilt Teardrop History". The complete article is available on the site.

The beginning of the travel trailer craze was 1936. In an article published in an issue of *Popular Science Monthly*, there are pictures of two teardrops. The caption describes the teardrop trailer as designed to accommodate two persons and has cooking facilities at the rear. But, we don't know for sure that they were homebuilt.

Another article published in 1936 specifically addresses the construction of a teardrop trailer. This may be the first article ever written on how to build one. It is called "The Ideal Outdoorsman's Trailer". It has many similar features we see in homebuilts today. In fact, you get the feeling this trailer could be made today even though the plans appeared in a magazine 70 years ago!

Awhile ago, there was a unique trailer sold on e-bay that had the shape of a teardrop except that it had only one wheel that swiveled. With the trailer clamped to the bumper, it became part of the car. This is called a "uni" trailer. No jackknifing when backing that rig! In fact, John Blewett tells us in his story that this trailer was used during the depression years by the builder to travel west in search of work. Perhaps the trailer was built according to plans found in a 1937 issue of the *Sportsmen's Manual*.

In 1939, many homebuilts were made from "Complete Plans and Instructions for Building the Jim Dandy Cabin Cruiser Model 'C'". Jim Dandy himself claimed that his teardrop could be made with an ordinary tool kit and a little skill.

Also in 1939, plans were published in *Popular Home Craft* magazine for the "Honeymoon House Trailer". This was a wedding trip trailer built by the groom.

From 1940 to 1946 there is no history/articles about building teardrop trailers. It can be presumed that World War II had an impact on this period where not many people thought about building a tear.

Then in October of 1945, C.W. "Bill" Worman and Andy Anderson formed Kit Manufacturing Co. in an abandoned fruit stand on Telegraph Road in Norwalk, California to produce "Kit Kamper" Tear Drop Trailers." This was the start of commercially produced teardrop trailers. Kit Manufacturing is still in business today but it doesn't produce a teardrop trailer.

Popular Science Magazine in 1946 had a two-part article on "Building and Finishing Your Weekend Trailer. This trailer, even though a walk-in, does have a galley in the back under a separate hatch formed to match the roofline of its overall teardrop shape.

Then in 1947, the article that perhaps gets credit for starting the post WWII teardrop mania was published in *Mechanix Illustrated*. It was called the "Trailer for Two". It reflects the current thinking about what a teardrop trailer looks like. You know, a sleeping cabin in front and a galley under a hatch in the back. Of course, it had the ubiquitous teardrop shape too.

"Wander Pup" teardrop plans appeared in a *Popular Home Craft* published in 1951. It was suppose to lick the problem of excess weight and in many ways did. It was a lightweight.

Another set of plans showed up in a 1951 issue of *Mechanix Illustrated*. The trailer was named "L'I Guy". The author stated that he couldn't find a commercially built trailer that could be stored in his garage. It too is a lightweight at 780 pounds.

In the April 1953 issue of *Popular Mechanics* the "Wild Goose" was introduced. Wild Goose is the origins of the Kampmaster, a commercially produced teardrop trailer that opens up via the back, or what would be the kitchen hatch on the smaller teardrops. It has canvas sides that attach to a hatch that lifts up high enough to walk into..

The last article that can be found about building teardrop trailers was published twice. First in the August 1956 issue of *Mechanix Illustrated*, next in Volume 4, 1961 issue of *Mechanix Illustrated How-To-Do-It Encyclopedia*. Called "Camp Trailer" this was a traditional teardrop except it had a squared off back, very similar to the "Tiny Tears" teardrop that John tows.

Around 1996, web sites started to sprout up about building your own teardrop trailer. The information is easily obtained for free. National magazines no longer publish plans.

TEARDROPPER'S MIDWINTER POTLUCK

By **Katie Boehme**

The midwinter Potluck on Sunday, March 11th was much fun. About 30 teardroppers joined together for some good eats and time to catch up on each other's lives. After a long spell of no campouts – it was great to see everyone again.

Our hats are off to **Danny and Jane Fantoni** for coordinating this event. When our traditional Auburn city park was unavailable they found a great place for us at Frontier Park in Graham, Washington (Tacoma area). They had reserved a large open picnic shelter but when it rained hard that morning, a

kind maintenance man moved us inside a building used for the Pierce County fair. This worked very well for our group, though at the time of the event the skies had cleared. Danny even had his teardrop inside on display as a centerpiece for our lunch - combined with cheery red tablecloths and some primroses on the tables it was very festive. Both **Ken Masden** and **Jack Jacobson** helped with tables, chairs and service utensils. Thanks guys!!

The summer schedule was reviewed with the announcement of a new Father's Day Weekend (June 16,17) at Whidbey Island, Washington. See details in this TOW Line for more information. It is amazing how many events and activities are available now after our one-event beginnings just 10 years ago.

After the potluck a few of us visited Danny's home and shop. It was fascinating to see his great set-up and the high-end cabinets he makes for banks and businesses. It was very first class indeed but no surprise after seeing his fine craftsmanship skills in his homebuilt tear.

DRIVING, CARS AND TEARDROPS IN ITALY

By **Hiram Stumpjumper**

After two weeks of being treated to the most spectacular Italian ancient art and buildings you've ever seen, we rented a car. With a country villa B&B as a goal, we struck off on our own.

Our "upgrade" ended up being a small Ford Focus station wagon. It's one not available in the USA as it was diesel powered. We were thankful, as diesel was a bit less than the \$6 USA being charged for gasoline. It was also a five-speed that's typical of all European cars. Those who have never driven anything but automatics pay twice as much - about \$150/day!

If anyone would ask us about what NOT to do it would be: "Don't be far from home after dark". Picture yourself in an unfamiliar country. Poor signage is against you. Only automatic gas stations are open. Stopping to ask for directions does not work - customers pumping gas only speak Italian. Finally a young person was found who spoke some American. We did find home.

Driving in small ancient towns was a hoot. Most streets were cobblestone. One town had a narrow street leading into it with one-way traffic being controlled by a stoplight. We went up one steep street so narrow, that I thought we were going to have to fold-in both rearview side mirrors. One castle gate even had a slight turn in it that I thought was going to scrape the sides of the car. I could see that the natives drive small cars for a very good reason.

My most favorite car I stopped to photograph was the 1973 500 cc Fiat. It's really cute like our family's '59 Vespa car. I took pictures of several. One was with a good-looking Italian girl. I told her I was from the "Fiat Polizza" and needed her in the picture.

Several photos were taken of the minuscule Smart two-person sedan. I measured its wheelbase at 72 inches!! Yet, it was observed on the freeways running faster than our tour bus.

Our innkeeper has a retired neighbor who owns several collector cars. I was treated to a private shop tour. Most were pre-WWII cars. There were lots of Fiats including two little Topolinos. One car was an early '60s Cadillac convertible. It wasn't driven much because it got only 4 kilometers per liter. He's in the process of building a vintage racecar. All he has are the headlight buckets; an original restored motor, a radiator shell and grill. Asked about street rods, I found that government regulations do not permit modified cars. However, there was a similarity with an American car-collector's shop - they smell the same. By the way, he's never seen a Vespa car.

We saw no campers or camper shells on pickups. No tent trailers or teardrop trailers either. We saw several "caravans", the walk-in Tiny Travel Trailers ala USA. Outside cities and on freeways there were a few truck mounted RVs the max being about 20 feet.

VINTAGE TRAILER RALLY PART OF SALEM CRUISE-IN

By **Jerry Kwiatkowski**

Rollin' Oldies Trailers would like to invite all vintage trailer and teardrop owners for a fun-filled rally June 15th, 16th and 17th, 2007. Our rally will be held in conjunction with Obsolete Fleet Chevy Club's annual Salem Cruise-In at Antique Powerland located near Brooks, Oregon (seven miles north of Salem). The location is off I-5 at exit 263 and a quarter mile west of the freeway. Gas, restaurant and a convenience store are in the vicinity.

We are offering on a first-come basis 36 (20amp) elect & water hookups with dry camping also available. Restrooms are on site, each with a shower stall. We will also have available two portable restrooms located in the campground area.

June 16th will be an Open Cruise-In for classic, vintage and restored cars and trucks. Along with the car show we will have a silent auction (one of the best around), raffle drawings, DJ playing music from the by-gone era. Antique Powerland personal sponsors games for adults and miniature train rides.

A restored 30's Texaco station and the Pacific Northwest Truck Museum will be open along with other museums. Trolley rides will be available on a restored trolley. Food vendors will be on site as well

as various other vendors. A swap meet will be held during the cruise-In. We will have a welcome party Friday night for the rally participants and a food vendor available so you can eat out!

From 10 AM until 2 PM on Saturday there is an open house for teardrop and vintage trailer owners to show off their trailers & tow vehicles. Saturday night activities will be announced at the welcome party Friday night.

Sunday (Fathers Day) will be a free day. There is an automotive swap meet in Salem at Chemaketa Community College. We will have information available for this event at the rally.

Camping is \$20 for hookups (no sewer) and \$12 for dry camping. A \$20 fee is being charged for entering the three-day rally and having your trailer judged but only \$10 if you only attend the rally and don't have your trailer judged on Saturday. We will also have awards for the judged trailers that are presented Saturday afternoon during the car show awards presentation.

You are welcome to drive in anytime on Friday the 15th. Please be out of your campsite by 4 PM on Sunday. We look forward to seeing you at our first annual Oregon Vintage Trailer Rally at Antique Powerland in Brooks, Oregon!

Contact Jerry at **503-831-4991** or jerryk20002000@yahoo.com for more information.

GOLDENDALE'S BLUE MOON FESTIVAL FOR VINTAGE TRAILERS

By **Lorraine Reynolds**

Goldendale, Washington is proud of its astronomical telescope. This year the city is using it to help celebrate the "Blue Moon" month of May. That means the month has TWO full moons in it (the next blue moon month will be in 2009). The first full moon is May 2nd and the second full moon is May 31st so the festival starts on Thursday, May 31st and lasts the entire weekend. NASA will be setting up exhibits at the Goldendale Observatory telescope site with a NASA Astronaut Stephen Robinson present to greet people. Bluegrass music will be performed at Ekone Park all day and at the Observatory from 6:00 PM until 11:00 PM.

Along with the festival the Great American Classic Truck, Antique Tractor and Vintage RV Hoedown is being held at the county fairgrounds. The Hoedown will be on Saturday, June 2nd. A sanctioned tractor pull will be on that day at the fairground as well. An open house "show n' shine" is planned at the fairgrounds for vintage RV folks. Registration begins at 8:00 PM and Trophies will be awarded at 3:00 PM.

Ekony Park is where you experience bluegrass music. Camp n' Jammers will be setting up on Wednesday and jamming throughout the afternoon and evening. Nine bluegrass groups play continuous on Thursday, Friday and Saturday from noon to 10 PM. Hundreds of "jammers" will be sitting around jamming with each other throughout the three-day festival. Shuttle busses take folks from Ekony Park to the Observatory, to downtown, to the Fairgrounds and back to Ekony Park. There will be a Bluegrass Gospel Revival on Sunday morning.

You are welcome to arrive as early as Wednesday to be a part of the Blue Moon Festival and join the Camp n' Jammers at Ekone Park. There is FREE dry camping for us teardroppers and TTT's at the fairgrounds. However, water and electrical hookups can be had for \$16 per night. There is a septic dump station too. Inside restrooms and showers are available. Call Anita Cleaver at **509.773-3900** for your reservations. Call up Goldendale's website at www.cityofgoldendale.com and look for the events calendar for more detailed information.

TEARDROPS WELCOME AT GREENBANK CAR SHOW

By **Bob Sines**

The second annual Greenbank Car Show will be held the Saturday before Father's Day on June 16th, 2007. The show is at Greenbank Farm located on scenic Whidbey Island in Washington State. You can find out more information on the farm by calling up its web site.

We would love to see a great turnout of teardrop owners to the show this year to add an extra fun attraction. Last year we had several teardrops and other small vintage camp trailers entered in the show. They were definitely crowd pleasers! For 2007, we have added a separate class just for this unique group of car and trailer owners and hope to establish a tradition of having a large showing each year.

Greenbank Farm offers a great venue for the car show. This is a fundraiser for the Alzheimer's Society of Washington. *Free camping* is available for those wanting to spend the night. You may enter the show for free or register your car or trailer for judging for \$35 to be eligible for awards and prizes. Call me about camping on Friday and Saturday nights..

Island Transit provides free bus service though Whidbey Island. You can catch the bus and explore the nearby historic waterfront villages of Coupeville and Langley. They offer fine dining, art galleries and fun shopping. A variety of activities are available at the Farm such as hiking, antique and specialty shops, wine tasting, pie shop, café and playground. The car show will bring in a number of food booths and auto related vendors.

In addition, a 1903 Thomas Flyer (one of five in the world) will be in display from the LeMay Auto Museum. All types and years of cars, trucks, motorcycles and vintage trailers from Canada to California are entered. Last year we had 250 vehicles entered.

For more information, please send a message to **Bob Sines**, Event Director, to the e-mail address of greenbankcarshow@hotmail.com or call **360-929-1609**.

FINDING A PLACE TO BED DOWN

Traveling with a teardrop camp trailer is a great way to see the country. However, sometimes the final destination is more than a day's drive away. To find a place to camp for the night can take lots of planning with maps, camp guides and personal recommendations. Perhaps the following hints can help.

First of all, you have to decide exactly what you are looking for. A lot of that depends on the way your tow rig and trailer are outfitted. For those of us with street rods, we find that our drive does not carry much so we have to pack the trailer too. This means that you can't sleep in the TD without having to unpack it. We usually have to find a campground or RV park. On the other hand, maybe that's why we're seeing more and more teardrops with roof racks.

Commercial RV parks are nice and have all the amenities close by. But, on the other hand, most are located close to major highways, are really lit up at night and noisy. So, we see the good and bad for camping in an RV park.

However, for those of us towing our tear with a van or truck, we can go to sleep day or night in the teardrop because it's usually empty.

So, what are some of the things to look for when driving on a two or more day trip? It's great (and cheap) to boon-dog it where you just pull off the road and park, leave the trailer hitched-up, crawl into the TD and go to sleep. If you feel safe doing this, one suggestion is drive off a main highway on a side road. If you are in open range country (as in most of the Western states), find a cattle guard through a fence-line, drive a ways and stay the night. Usually, open federally controlled rangeland belongs to the BLM and as US citizens, we own it. Maybe a howling coyote will wake you, but other than that, you have to feel safe to do this. Remember, this is only a hint. And remember also to leave only tire tracks behind when you leave.

Another suggestion for a free place to stay in the country is to scout out a local Grange Hall. These are found by asking the locals. Usually no one will hassle you and you might not chose to stay if it is also well lit and is too noisy. Most are not.

Often times the locals at gas stations and restaurants can recommend the county fairgrounds. More and more of them have RV lots because fairs and rodeos are usually a weeklong event. Some are very nice with power, water and even a heated bathhouse. The one in Goldendale, Washington is exceptionally nice at a very reasonable cost.

For those driving from the Pacific Northwest to Minden, Nebraska for ITG2, the campground at Crystal Hot Springs (off I-15 exit 372 in Northern Utah) is great. The nearby town is Honeyville! Shade by large trees at each site. The non-hookup sites are \$13 per night. Hot spring pools, café, bathhouse and showers are included. This place is off the freeway about two miles. For macho drivers and you are on a two-day trip to Minden, you are 700 miles from Portland with only 800 miles left!!

PORTLAND ROADSTER SHOW WAS GREAT FOR US

By **Jay Herber**

We had a great time at the show. We won first place in our car class. It was '49 – '54 hardtop conservative custom. Cari and the boys were very excited. Cole (my youngest) ran up to the stage pulled the trophy out of Ms. Oregon's hands. There was a great laugh from all.

I wanted to have the teardrop in the show, but I didn't get the frame and wheels painted in time. I think the TD will be there next year.

We're looking forward to the Spring Fling. Just a few more items to get first. New rain boots, tarps, more rubber ducks, - Ha Ha. Should be a great time and I think it will be dryer too.

Editor's note – **Jay and Cari Herber** helped with the TOW exhibit at October's Northwest Car Collectors Swap Meet and Car Show by displaying their combo car and teardrop trailer. The car is an early 1950's Chevy blue and white in color. The teardrop is a wonderfully restored and highly polished Lonely Teardrop. Jay has a great solution to polishing vintage aluminum.

UPDATED CALENDAR FOR UPCOMING EVENTS

MAY 3RD – MAY 6TH - Lake Shasta Meet- Northern California

14TH Dam Gathering of Tears at Lakehead, California. Contact **Grant and Lisa Whipp** for registration information at info@teardrops.net See this TOW Line.

MAY 25TH – 28TH - *Spring Fling, Our 9th Gathering – Morton, WA*

New location in Morton near last year's location. See more in this TOW Line issue. Contact **Rod and Trudy Glassett** at 425-760-4967 or glassettgang@juno.com

MAY 31ST – JUNE 3RD – *Blue Moon Festival - Goldendale, WA*

New gathering for all vintage trailers and teardrops. Stay at county fairgrounds. For more, contact **Lorraine** at 509-773-0567 or web site www.cityofgoldendale.com.

JUNE 8TH – 10TH - *Kelson Kampout 2007 – Roslyn, WA*

Held on rural property in Roslyn, Washington. Room for all teardrops and vintage tiny travel trailers. Contact **Kelsons** at 253-630-3423 or Raisinldy1@comcast.net.

JUNE 13TH – 17TH - *International Gathering #2 – Minden, Nebraska*

See this issue for announcement. Look at www.teardrops.net for more info.

JUNE 15TH – 17TH - *Vintage Trailer Rally – Brooks, OR*

New event for all vintage and teardrop trailers. At Antique Powerland. For more info contact **Jerry Kwiatkowski** at 503-831-4991 or jerryk20002000@yahoo.com.

JUNE 16TH - *Greenbank Car Show – Whidbey Island, WA*

For more information, please send a message to **Bob Sines**, Event Director, to the e-mail address of greenbankcarshow@hotmail.com or call 360-929-1609.

JULY 3RD – 8TH – *Carnation Fourth – Carnation, WA*

This is the 6th annual gathering at Ken's '36 Fun Park. For all vintage trailers. Lots of fun. Contact **Ken or Marty Masden** at 425-333-5219 or 36fun@centurytel.net

JULY 20TH – 22ND – *Larry's Fun-Time Rally – Castle Rock, WA*

New location this year at Silver Lake Resort. On the way to Mt. St. Helens view points. Contact **Larry Snedden** at 360-423-5326 or ldsnedden@hotmail.com.

JULY 27TH – 29TH – *Great Oregon Campout – Lane County, OR*

At Camp Lane near Florence for teardrops only. This is the 10th for Northwest Teardroppers. Call **Lonnie/Sheryl Aaron** at 541-688-9545 or aaroncruiser@aol.com

AUGUST 16TH – 19TH – *TCT Vintage Trailer Rally – Deming, WA*

Contact **Pat or Joanne Ewing** at 360-966-4253 or pre47airstream@aol.com

AUGUST 24TH - 26TH - *LeMay Open House Campout – Tacoma, WA*

More later. Contact **Marty Boehme** at 503-632-6563 or teardrops@bctonline.com.

SEPTEMBER 1ST & 2ND – *Oregon Coast Aquarium Car/Trailer Show*

Contact **Dick Miller** at 541-867-3474 ext 5640 or dickmil@aquarium.org

SEPTEMBER 7TH – 9TH– *3rd Canadian Teardrop Meet – Langley, BC*

Contact **Brian Ireland** at 604-533-0874 or brian@northern-teardrop-trailers.com