



TOW Line

Number **29** September 2009

Published whenever
Marty Boehme, Editor

20232 S. Jasan Dr.

Oregon City, OR 97045

503-632-6563

teardrops@bctonline.com

www.teardroptrailers.org

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

IN THIS ISSUE

- 1- October Teardrop Campout (Fall Brigade #2)
- 2- Our LeMay Tour During the Annual Open House Campout - **By Kathy Mager**
- 3- Kelson Kampout at Roslyn, Washington - **By Linda Kelson**
- 4- Our Carnation Fourth - **By Barb Jussaro**
- 5- Antique Powerland Rally was Too-o-o-o Hot
- 6- Let' Not Forget the Vintage Trailer Rally
- 7- Something I Didn't Think of - **By Reg Armstrong**
- 8- I Need to Display a Teardrop Trailer in Houston, Texas - **By Susan Day**
- 9- Applegate Lake Gathering Near Jacksonville, Oregon - **By Katie Boehme**
- 10- My Car Made it into the Movies - **By Glenn Anderson**
- 11- TOW Nametags, Patches and Jackets are Available
- 12- A Brief History of the Homebuilt Teardrop Trailer - **By John Blewett**

OCTOBER TEARDROP CAMPOUT (FALL BRIGADE #2)

Let's not put away our teardrop trailers yet!! We have a campout on October 9th - 11th (second weekend of October). It will be at Elk's Park, just south of the Portland area. We have rented a mini-lodge that's heated by a stone fireplace. So even if we have some rain, we have a great place to breakfast and potluck.

We will have to pony-up the cost of firewood, cleaning fee and rent. In addition to the registration fee of \$15, you will be paying \$15 per night for your camp outfit. Several sites have power, so bring your themed light strings and extension cords. All sites are under large, tree-shaded areas or on RV hookups next to the hall.

The charming town of Aurora is nearby with its many, many antique shops. If you fish, bring a pole (we're on the banks of the Molalla River). A golf driving range is just down the road. Silver Creek State Park with its many waterfalls is south about 25 miles. The Oregon Botanical Gardens in Silverton is about 15 miles away. Both Oregon City with its End of the Oregon Trail center and Frey's Electronics at Wilsonville are an easy 10 mile drive from the park.

You can stay Sunday night too if you want to spend most of that day visiting the Evergreen Aviation and Space Museums located in McMinnville (that's where the famous Spruce Goose is displayed). Remember, Monday is a holiday for some folks.

So, bring food for lunches and snacks. Breakfasts for both Saturday and Sunday are provided. The coffee pot will be going all day. For Saturday supper, plan on helping out with your favorite potluck dish. Last year, we had an abundance of Dutch Oven recipes for the potluck and this year we expect even more.

Call or register before October 1st (use the registration form seen on the TOW website www.teardroptrailers.org, look for the Events Link and scan down to the Fall Brigade announcement. This year, vintage travel trailers are invited too. **Marty & Katie Boehme** are hosts. Phone **503-632-6563**. E-mail teardrops@bctonline.com

OUR LeMAY TOUR DURING THE ANNUAL OPEN HOUSE CAMPOUT

By **Kathy Mager**

"This is your first time here, isn't it?!"

"Ahhhh. How could you tell?"

"Well, your chin is approaching your belly button! Your eyes are the size of a full moon! And your speech seems limited to 'Awwwwwwsome!'"

My husband, **Russ**, and I had driven 300 miles across the state of Washington in a restored 1958 GMC Suburban (no AC) with a home-designed, hand-crafted teardrop trailer in tow in record-approaching 100+ temperatures, slowly and fearfully making our way through the Seattle-area, Friday-afternoon-grid-lock-traffic -- a rather stressful start to a teardrop trailer campout! We were "newbies!" New to teardrop camping, new to the group, new to the LeMay Open House!

Soon we were invited to join **Marty Boehme** for a Saturday 8:00 AM special guided tour for "newbies" of the LeMay Homestead. What an experience! From the moment we boarded the LeMay bus at Marymount with not only a friendly driver but also an informative tour guide to our return by an equally jovial driver at noon, we were treated to an unbelievable world. A world not only of old cars and more old cars and rare cars, but of trucks and fire engines, bicycles and peddle cars, steam engines - yes, puffing and snorting in operation! There were hubcaps, radiator caps, and horns! Not a couple of each but a collection spanning many makes, models, and years tucked into every nook and cranny, upstairs, downstairs.

And dolls! Baby dolls, Jacqueline and JFK dolls, Barbie and Ken dolls, ethnic costumed dolls, old bisque dolls . . . and a red-haired doll dressed in a holiday plaid dress . . . just like the one under the Christmas tree when I was six years old! And tea sets. And baby cribs and quilts. A newspaper clipping of an advertisement for hand-crocheted baby garments, from Harold LeMay's mother's lucrative business during an era when women had few entrepreneur opportunities.

In each of the many, many rooms we found friendly, knowledgeable volunteers. Several shared stories of the privilege of cleaning the collection, the floors, and the windows in preparation for the show. One gentleman related how he was handed the keys to a presidential limousine and instructed to drive it from the Scottsdale Barrett-Jackson Auction where it had been purchased for the LeMay collection to Mesa, Arizona! And finding it had less than a quarter of a tank of gasoline in it! How does one approach a gas station in a presidential limousine?! Then arriving in Mesa, he discovered one of the four "one of a kind" hubcaps was missing! Imagine that!

Another volunteer told of meeting Harold LeMay for the first time nearly 20 years ago. A friend had invited him to a private viewing at the LeMay Homestead on a Sunday morning. Nobody else was present. After an hour or so they encountered a slight-built man dressed in greasy coveralls as he rolled from underneath an old vehicle. Oh, it was nice to see a maintenance man on the grounds on a Sunday morning, he thought, as the little old man began showing them one vehicle to the next, sharing intimate details of each of the vehicles . . . later to learn that the greasy maintenance man was none other than Harold LeMay himself.

Another volunteer recalled his first meeting with Harold. He asked, "So, when did you start 'collecting' automobiles?" The older gentleman's face became stern. "I don't 'collect' automobiles! I SAVE automobiles!"

Too soon we had to depart for our two-hour volunteer privilege at Marymount but not before we were treated to lunch with Nancy LeMay and other volunteers in her house at the homestead. We were so impressed not only by the remarkable overwhelming collection and the presentation, but also by the many, many dedicated, friendly, knowledgeable volunteers. We look forward to the last Saturday in August of next year and the opportunity to see our new teardrop friends at the LeMay Open House!

KELSON KAMPOUT AT ROSLYN, WASHINGTON

By Linda Kelson

The quaint little town of Roslyn had their population bump for the weekend of June 12th -14th, as 10 teardrops gathered for the Kelson Kampout. This is the ultimate laid-back gathering as you can walk to everything, cook a little or not, visit or nap.....everyone kind of just does their thing. Some strolled in town (2 blocks) or to the historical cemetery (fascinating old tombstones) - some just visited at the cabin.

The new Quilting Store had a delightful find; it had quite a few bolts of fabric with trailers of all types including some with teardrops. Several purchased fabric to do curtains or pillows for their trailers. We did go one night and eat pizza at Village Pizza - the best in the West.

On Saturday evening, the sky put on an awesome thunder and lightning show, rained a bit, but all went great. My brother and sister-in-law were here from LaPine, Oregon. He put on one nice spread. I couldn't eat but others said it was the best food they ever had. That was about all. Hope to see you all next year and a special "Thanks" to all who attended.

OUR CARNATION FOURTH

By Barb Jussaro

We had a great time at
Marty's and Ken's
One of the best times
That have ever been!

We all had lots of fun
In the rumble seat
After eating spaghetti,
We had ice cream for a treat.

We went to the parade,
On the Fourth of July,
Then quickly came back
For a potluck surprise!

With our tummies filled up
We went to our dens
To sleep through the night
At Marty's and Ken's

ANTIQUE POWERLAND RALLY WAS TOO-O-O-O HOT

Our display of teardrop trailers at Antique Powerland on the car show grounds of the Northwest Vintage Car and Motorcycle Museum went off without a hitch. There was a good representation of trailers for visitors to view and ask questions about. Many spectators came onto the grounds to see the collection of antique and show cars that were parked nearby the tears.

The main attraction was the annual Steamup put on by all 15 museums that make up the Antique Powerland Museum Association. The museums are an impressive display of antique machinery in action, cars, trucks, motorcycles, tractors, a steam lumber mill and blacksmith shop. What a time was had by spectators who gathered around the many displays to see how some of these steam-driven monsters worked! Talk about tractors! All makes and types were present and most took part in the noonday parade. It's a great place to take families as kids

rode on the miniature railroad and on a full-scale operational electric trolley that runs around the whole park.

Those that attended had a wonderful time combing through all the stuff that the many Flea Market vendors brought to sell. Many vendors were in the main display building with tables set up to sell antiques, books, wooden models of tractors (wonderful craftsmanship here) and collectables.

Teardrop attendance was down because of the extreme heat but all had a good time visiting with one another and showing off their trailers. Hopefully, next year will see better weather. We enjoyed the shade of a large building to have Saturdays' BBQ- burgers, potato salad, and ice cold watermelon. A small wading pool under a canopy provided some relief during the day from the 90's temperatures. Fortunately Powerland has many shade trees and there were some breezes throughout the day. As always, the steam-up event provided a fascinating opportunity to enjoy some living history.

LET'S NOT FORGET THE VINTAGE TRAILER RALLY

Coming up immediately (Sept 10th - 13th) is the new and improved vintage trailer rally that everyone is looking forward to. No more dust. No more cruddy bathrooms. No more dry camping. Instead, it's just a great location at the NW Washington Fairgrounds located in Lynden, Washington.

For late registration, contact **Pat & Joanne Ewing** at **360-966-4253** or pre47airstream@aol.com for more information.

SOMETHING I DIDN'T THINK OF

By **Reg Armstrong**

I had the scare of my life recently. I have completed my homebuilt teardrop. On Friday night, my daughter, aged 13, was excited and wanted a sleep over with one of her buddies. I had lighting built into the TD, they had the portable DVD thing, radio, etc. I turned up the security light outside the shop and left the house back door open. The two girls also had their two dogs with them. I had the windows cracked and the roof vent open about an inch.

I woke up at 3:30 AM and got this horrible thought! If the kids got cold, they would close everything tight, as it was chilly that night.

Sure enough, I ran out and found they had the TD buttoned right up. With two girls and two dogs using up the oxygen, I had reason for concern. I stayed up the rest of the night, after opening the vent, windows a bit, etc.

You know, us builders, go out of our way to build these little units water tight. Naturally, this is real close to airtight also.

So the next day, I spent some time researching vents to prevent this situation. I have never seen mention of this before. Certainly, we all realize the danger of propane stoves in enclosed areas and should also think about the hazards of sleeping in a small enclosed area too.

I NEED TO DISPLAY A TEARDROP TRAILER IN HOUSTON, TEXAS

By **Susan Day**

Plans are to introduce a new line of fabric, featuring vintage trailers and TTT's (Tiny Travel Trailers) at a HUGE fabric show in Houston. They want to have a teardrop trailer as part of the display. The show will be October 10th, 11th, and 12th.

The problem is, we are having trouble locating a teardrop! If **Steve & Peggy Birley** lived nearby, their tear would be perfect. Please let me know if you have any suggestions. You can contact me at **503-702-1755** or e-mail me at susanday1106@msn.com

The fabric will not be ready until December. For more information and see images of the material, after the show go to www.michaelmillerfabrics.com.

APPLEGATE LAKE GATHERING NEAR JACKSONVILLE, OREGON

By **Katie Boehme**

Guy Mazzeo (from Vermont) put on this wonderful campout. He brings his tear yearly to The Dam Gathering on Shasta Lake then spends his summer camping in Oregon. Guy was on the way to the coast last year and discovered this awesome lake nestled in the mountains (elevation is about 2000 feet). Applegate Lake provides summer breezes, perfect scenery and each parking lot spot backs up to green grass just 20 feet from the lake (everyone had a lakeside camp site!). The weather in August is very comfortable

Guy had kayaks and row boats available all weekend for our use. A larger pontoon boat gave tours of some coves of the 3 ½ mile lake. At night, we were all dazzled when the full moon rose from behind the mountains and shimmered across the lake under a canopy of brilliant stars. A potluck, complete with Dutch oven cooking, was enjoyed in a beautiful grove of trees beside the lake. The lake is very clear and has a huge grass lawn next to the forest sweeping down to a beach area for swimming. The site also has a small store and a boat launch

The lake is just 25 minutes from the historic town of Jacksonville. On Sunday **Marty** and I enjoyed exploring the town, took the narrated trolley ride and ate an excellent meal on the vine covered patio of an Italian restaurant.

The 20-some trailers that attended all had a great time at this first (and we hope not last) event. Thanks Guy for sharing this great site with your friends.

MY CAR MADE IT INTO THE MOVIES!

By **Glenn Anderson**

It has always been a dream of mine to have one of **Laurie** and my cars in a movie. Last week I learned about a movie being filmed the next weekend in Brownsville, Oregon. I made calls and sent e-mails but it seemed like the dream would go un-filled. Late Thursday I finally made contact, sent photos of all our cars and our teardrop plus our newly finished 1957 ElRey 19-foot trailer.

I had heard the movie company was looking for a teardrop trailer but when they saw the picture of the ElRey they changed their mind. They wanted me to tow it with my 1961 Ford Falcon Ranchero. But the trailer is bigger and heavier than the Falcon, so I spent hours taking off tongue weight and the Ranchero was able to tow it slowly anyway.

They seemed to have all the other spots filled for cars (1962 and older) and we were hoping to get the Metropolitan in the movie and my Studebaker too, but that was not to be - or was it? Saturday morning, 7:30 AM, call from the movie company, "Can you have the 1957 Nash Metropolitan here by 11:00 am". If I have to push it all the way we will be there! We had the Met drive through a really cool set in front of a doctor's house.

Our Trailer/Ranchero duo was scheduled for Sunday around 4:00 PM so we headed home. Sunday morning, 8:15 AM, Movie People Called "Can you bring back the Met and one more Pre-62 Car. We need them NOW!" Oh ya! The race was on. Laurie and I got them out, wiped down and on the road to Brownsville. We pulled into town at the end of rehearsal and parked the cars just in time for their shoot. We left for home at noon, parked the cars, hooked up the trailer behind the pickup and headed back to the movie set with Laurie driving the Ranchero. We got to town, connected the trailer behind the willing, but barely able, Ranchero (6-Cylinder Engine 170-Cu In.) and waited for our cue. We finished around 7:00 PM and loaded up and headed home.

My dream for one vehicle in a movie came true times four - one car appearing twice. The movie is called "A West Texas Children's Story". So many local cars made the movie that Laurie is going to ask the PIX Theater here in our hometown of Albany if we can have a big show at their theater when the movie comes out. It would be great to have all the local movie cars show up to line the street!

TOW NAMETAGS, PATCHES AND JACKETS ARE AVAILABLE

The attractive nametags with the cartoon TOW logo are showing up at all the teardrop campouts. Be sure to get yours for the next event!

At last year's Midwinter Luncheon the new TOW jacket patch went on sale. It was designed by **Herb & Elaine Kipp** and features the TOW logo. It can be seen on the TOW website www.teardroptrailers.org. The new magnetic nametag everyone is wearing at our gatherings is shown on the site also. There is an additional supply of patches available. They are quite attractive and have to be seen to be appreciated.

Along with these two items, a jacket for both sexes can be purchased with the patch embroidered on the back. But, many prefer to sew the patch on a favorite jacket. Look for the order form on the website. The order form has pricing information.

If orders are received by the end of the 2009 year, free delivery will be made at the Mid-Winter Potlucks. Remember, what you pay is what TOW buys them for.

We also have a source for small patches used for hats and shirts at a cost of \$6.00.

A BRIEF HISTORY OF THE HOMEBUILT TEARDROP TRAILER

By **John Blewett****

"America's homes are rolling . . . Seven years ago, trailers in which you could live as you traveled were virtually unknown¹." This statement was published in 1936. It establishes the beginning of the travel trailer craze that is still going on today. As for the start of the homebuilt teardrop trailer phenomenon, well, that is a bit hazier.

In the same article, written by Andrew Boone, it's stated, "The typical trailer of today is a one-room affair with the kitchen usually as part of the combination living-dining room."² This almost sounds like it could be a teardrop trailer, but maybe not quite. The article goes on to talk about the cost of purchasing a travel trailer and even shows pictures of two teardrops with the following caption: "A 'teardrop' trailer designed to accommodate two persons. Below, one of the small units that have cooking facilities at rear."³ This establishes the existence of teardrop trailers in 1936. It does not establish whether these teardrops were home-built or commercially built.

An article written by Hi Sibley and published in 1936 specifically addresses the construction of a teardrop trailer. This may be the first article ever written on how to build a teardrop trailer. It is called "The Ideal Outdoorsman's Trailer"⁴ and is the first part of a two part series. The trailer developed in this article is identical to many of the renovations seen on the road today.

Moving along to 1937 "The Ideal Outdoorsman's Trailer"⁵ continues to finishing and equipping the trailer. "With the chassis and sleeping compartment built according to the instructions and drawings given last month, we are now ready to start on the kitchenette of this lightweight trailer. The general dimensions of the extremely compact and convenient kitchenette are given."⁶ Amazingly, at least to us in the 21st century, the trailer is built out of plywood, calls out for a built-in water tank and ice box; yet is designed for the use of a ready-made ice box. Do you suppose that ready-made was one of the original Coleman's? Reading on you get the feeling that this trailer was meant to be made today yet the plans were published so many years ago.

Also in 1937, another article on building a teardrop can be found. Although technically this is about a utility trailer it is still a teardrop. It proves that people were thinking about

¹ Boone, Andrew R., 1936, "Modern Gypsies", *Popular Science Monthly*, April 1936, page 29

² Boone, 32

³ Boone, 32

⁴ Sibley, Hi, 1936, "Ideal Outdoorsman's Trailer", *Outdoor Life*, December 1936,

⁵ Sibley, Hi, 1937, "Ideal Outdoorsman's Trailer", *Outdoor Life*, January 1937, page 28

⁶ Sibley, 28

building teardrop trailers. The unique thing about this trailer is that it's a uni, i.e. a one wheel trailer. "Designed especially for sportsmen and light delivery use this single wheel trailer is well suited for hauling moderate loads simply by clamping it to the rear bumper of the car."⁷

The significance of this article is that it establishes the fact that uni-wheel trailers existed in 1937. This substantiates the claim made by the seller of a uni-wheel trailer seen on e-Bay. He states, "Here is a really unique and very rare trailer that I bought from a gentleman who is in his eighties. He told me his father built it back during the depression and moved out west here in Oregon in it. It's been awhile since I talked with him about the history of the trailer, but if I remember right he built it from scratch with this very unique and rare design. The trailer has one swivel wheel with very unique and retro rubber covered coiled band springs and two ball hitches that mount to the bumper of the towing vehicle so it becomes part of the vehicle and the whole thing stays straight with the vehicle, the wheel under the trailer turns not the trailer itself, this makes it very easy to back - it can't Jack Knife on you! It sounds like it had quite a history and held everything he needed to camp in while he traveled across the country looking for work; a real *Grapes of Wrath* story."⁸

Also, Boone states in his 1936 article, "Four workmen engaged in constructing a gas line in the Middle West save rent as they move from job to job by 'batching' in their trailer. Instead of paying rent of sixty dollars or more a month, they live in their trailer for less than five dollars. Elsewhere, families beat the high cost of living as they follow seasonal occupations."⁹ This corroborates the eBay seller's story and introduces another use of teardrop trailers that most people may have not have thought of. Of course if the trailer was going to be used to save money it must have been home built.

Around 1939 home built teardrop trailer construction started to heat up, as well as for other travel trailers. Around this time period, a designer named Jim Dandy started selling plans for travel trailers. One of these was a teardrop. His goal was to make the construction very simple. He states, "Just an ordinary kit of tools and a little skill in handling them are all you need to build the 'Cruiser'.¹⁰" Many of these home built trailers were made.

Also in 1939, Hi Sibley was at it again with his "Honeymoon House Trailer" article published in *Popular Home Craft*. Hi doesn't take credit for designing the trailer and states, "This trim little trailer, designed by Louis Rogers of Pasadena for his wedding trip, has proved its practicability in long service on the road."¹¹ With a second article published in a two year period it can be seen that there was much building activity going on. One author was certainly taking advantage of it. This later trailer is very similar to the trailer in the 1937 article. The theme of the story changed but the design didn't. Obviously the public felt that "you don't need to fix what ain't broke."

More evidence of interest in building teardrop-like trailers at home is shown by the 1940 article in *Mechanix Illustrated*: "A Model Airplane Trailer." It exemplifies the theme of a cheap and easy build. "A trailer for the purpose of carrying model airplanes can be built at a considerably lower figure than those commonly used for camping or traveling. Any old automobile frame from a light or medium weight car will make an excellent chassis."¹² Obviously this wasn't the only thing about the design that the airplane model enthusiasts must have liked. They must have also like the aerodynamic shape and streamlining that they thought about when they built their models.

⁷ 1937, "Uni-Wheel Trailer Hauls Sportsmen's Equipment", *Sportsmen's Manual*, 1937 Edition

⁸ Wallscapes, 2003, "1930s Antique Teardrop Travel Trailer/RV", [On-line]

<http://cgi.ebay.com/ebaymotors/ws/eBayISAPI.dll?ViewItem&rd=1&category=34287&item=2418086636>, 6 June 2003

⁹ Boone, 31

¹⁰ Dandy, Jim, 1939, *The Complete Plans and Instructions for Building the Jim Dandy Cabin Cruiser Model 'C'*, Jim Dandy Designs, Wausau, Wisconsin

¹¹ Sibley, Hi, 1939, "Honeymoon House Trailer", *Popular Home Craft*, March-April 1939, page 447

¹² 1940, *Mechanix Illustrated*, October 1940, page 114

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 teardrop trailer.

However, "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.¹³" This was the start of commercially produced teardrop trailers. Kit Manufacturing is still in business today selling RV related products but it doesn't produce a teardrop trailer. We won't take this string any further as this article is the history of the homebuilt trailer.

Other 1946 activity was seen in the March and April issues of *Popular Science* in a two part article written by John Gartner on "Building and Finishing Your Weekend Trailer." "Part I covered the construction of the chassis, walls, and chimes. The next step is to stud the sides.¹⁴" While this is not a teardrop trailer in that it has a kitchen in the back under a separate hatch formed to match the roofline but it does have a teardrop shape. This trailer has all the amenities inside and provides standing headroom. It shows a trend on how people were starting build their teardrops just a little bit bigger.

Then in 1947 the article that gets credit for starting the teardrop trailer mania was published. It was called the "Trailer for Two" and was published in the September issue of *Mechanix Illustrated*. If you look at the article you will see that Hi Sibley was at it again, this being his third teardrop trailer construction article. This time he starts, "Getting away from it all doesn't mean giving up the comforts of home, for with this compact camp trailer you bring them right along with you. As it's only a fraction of the size and weight of a full-grown trailer, you can take this 10-ft. tourer wherever a car will go.¹⁵" Ok, you make your own judgment here as to if this is truly the article that started it all. I believe that Hi Sibley certainly did his share of starting the fire a few years earlier than this.

Continuing with the trend towards a bigger teardrop that seemed to start around the time of the 1946 *Popular Science* article, another larger teardrop was introduced in the *Popular Home Craft* February 1951 issue. The "Wander Pup" article was another one written by John Gartner. Do you remember this name? Do you see the similarity with the design from 1946? This time Mr. Gartner states, "WANDER PUP licks the one big bug-a-boo of trailers - excess weight.¹⁶" You need to go back and compare the two Gartner trailers. I think we found another designer that found a way to capitalize on his design.

With another design very similar to Wander Pup, this March 1951 author, Clinton R. Hull, in *Mechanix Illustrated* says, "Li'l Guy was made because I could find no factory job light enough, or one that would enter the average garage.¹⁷" In addition to the slightly larger size, weight is also emphasized. So now it seems that what people want to build is a larger and lighter trailer. We can see that builders are drifting away from the small teardrop with the kitchen in the back.

Or, perhaps not. Perhaps the larger trailers were just a trend. In the April 1953 issue of *Popular Mechanics*, Vic Goertzen introduces the "Wild Goose." 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. Vic describes his trailer, "Overnight campers, hunters, fishermen, and vacationers with limited time can appreciate the convenience, comfort and ready roadability of 'Wild Goose.' Hung low to the ground, yet with ample road clearance for the back trails, it tows anywhere your car will go. Keep it packed with necessary bedding, also canned and dried foods and you can get away for a week-end trip in only a few

¹³ Mooney, Mike, 1998, "Teardrop Trailer Heritage", [On-line] <http://www.tinytears.cc/history.gif>, 6 June 2003

¹⁴ Gartner, John, 1946, "Finishing Your Week-End Trailer", *Popular Science*, April 1946, page 198

¹⁵ Sibley, Hi, 1947, "Trailer for Two", *Mechanix Illustrated*, September 1947, page 113

¹⁶ Gartner, John, 1951, "Build the Two-Place Sportsman's Trailer, Wander Pup", *Popular Home Craft*, February 1951, page 156

¹⁷ Hull, Clinton R., 1951, "Build Li'l Guy", *Mechanix Illustrated*, March 1951, page 106.

minutes' time. When you arrive at the destination, Wild Goose sets up into a neat outdoor 'kitchenette' in less time than it takes to put up a tent.¹⁸

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 the *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. "Mr. Art Harvey of Brockway, PA. . . . takes off . . . pulling a camp trailer - one that he has constructed in his spare time.¹⁹" This trailer was 10' long and 4' wide. The article claims that the whole family can camp inside.

After this last article there is an apparent lack of articles or building activity for teardrop trailers. You can be sure there was activity though, especially in California, but it was minimal and in small pockets of areas. There was one periodical publication about teardrop trailers being published. That publication is still being distributed today, to more and more people.

Around 1996 though, the *World Wide Web* was beginning to become very active. Home builders began to post websites about the trailer they built. It was this time, in 1998, that "Tiny Tears" had its beginnings. It posted its original website and started the first teardrop bulletin board. It was also in this time period that so many others posted their websites and created their bulletin boards. The history of the homebuilt teardrop trailer now swamped the public. TV shows were even made. With all this activity, and information that is easily obtained for free, one doesn't see articles in national magazines any more. Building information is found in a growing number of plans distributors and on the *World Wide Web*. And, it's there that a person should go to learn the detailed modern history of the homebuilt teardrop trailer.

"It really is a simple project, when you divide it into manageable components!" All the above mentioned articles are available at "[Tiny Tears](#)". This article is the first chapter of the "Tiny Tears" teardrop trailer building manual.

**Copyright (C) 2005 "Tiny Tears" Teardrop Camping Trailers.

PO Box 3014, Newport, RI 02840 USA

(Note: Everyone is permitted to copy and distribute verbatim copies of this license document, but changing it is not allowed and credit must be given to the original author.)

¹⁸ Goertzen, Vic, 1953, "Build 'Wild Goose'", *Popular Mechanics*, April 1953, page 187

¹⁹ 1956, "Camp Trailer", *Mechanix Illustrated*, August 1956, page 120