



TOW Line

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Published whenever
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Teedroppers of **O**regon and **W**ashington

Serving those who are or yearn to be a teardrop trailer enthusiasts

OUR NEXT TEARDROP EVENT

The granddaddy of all teardrop gatherings will celebrate its tenth anniversary this year at Lakehead, California. This event is simply referred to as “Shasta” by many of us and is enjoyed by many teardroppers from all over the western United States. The dates are from May 1st to May 4th. Call up the teardroppers universal web site www.teardrops.net and link to the “Destinations” page for more information. There is a \$10 registration fee. Each trailer pays \$11 per night. Jack Jacobson at 253-927-6568 can be contacted if you are interested in joining a caravan of tears that will start in Washington on the Wednesday prior to this weekend event on Lake Shasta.

FIFTH NORTHWEST TEARDROP SPRING FLING – NEW LOCATION

This Memorial Day weekend campout will be at a new location this year. The dates are May 25th to the 29th. It's being held at Cascade Peaks RV Resort and Campground located along the Cowlitz River on Washington State Hwy 12. Exit I-5 at mile 68, drive east on #12 for 55 miles. Look for the campground on the north side of the highway. It's near the town of Randle.

Enjoy camping Northwest style with potlucks, Dutch oven cooking, games and the great outdoors. Saturday and Sunday breakfasts will be provided by the hosts, Rod and Trudy Glassett. A feature of this weekend is the all-city Packwood Swap Meet on Saturday.

Registration is \$10 and sites are \$13 per night. There are a limited number of RV hookups at an additional fee. No pet fees, but pets must be on a leash. To register, contact the Glassetts at glassettgang@juno.com or phone 360-659-1082. Call for more information.

AN OREGONIAN AT THE SWEETWATER TEARDROP GATHERING

Southern California Touring Tears held their seventh annual gathering in the San Diego area the last part of February and Saturday/Sunday, March 1st and 2nd. Katie and I were able to attend the event with our new teardrop trailer.

LOCATION - Sweetwater Summit County Park is located about 20 miles southeast of downtown San Diego. The campground is on a peninsula point of land and is actually the summit of a small hill with approximately 50 RV camp spots reserved for us teardroppers. Each site had electrical and water hookups. SCTT had arranged with the park staff to put two or three trailers in each site. The reasoning is that there is less physical impact on the spots from our small teardrop trailers than with a full-sized RV. There was more than enough room for two trailers.

ORGANIZATION - This was the fifth year of the gathering at this location. Through the years, SCTT has come up with a well-organized event. They rent several very first-class porta-potties that include a small sink and gaskets that we've never seen before. Along with these units, they supply extra garbage cans. The cans were emptied every day by park staff.

For this weekend event, the regular park restroom had been supplied with paper towels and soap in teardrop shaped dispensers. One of the teardroppers and his son pride themselves by maintaining these items. This was really appreciated by the rest of us. During the one group meeting we had, they were applauded for their efforts.

One of the neat things we got when we checked in was a printed directory of everyone who had pre-registered. It was organized in three ways: alphabetically by last name, state/hometown of the teardropper and an alphabetical listing of the trailers. We got this as well as a large placard with our name and hometown shown on it.

The booklet was very helpful, because there were 109 trailers and owners listed in this booklet. I started to keep track of everyone I met, but did not get very far.

Sweetwater is so big that there is no group potluck or campfire. However, there were lots of visiting from one campsite to another. On Saturday, we had a group ice cream social. I was introduced to the group where I made announcements promoting the gatherings we have in the Pacific Northwest. It was also announced that I had the "Trailer Travels" book for sale. For the group raffle, I had donated a copy that was displayed at the sign-in table with the many other raffle items. I sold 36 books I had brought with me. I could have sold 50.

The cool thing about the books was that the author of the teardrop section was in attendance. She is related to one of the organizers and was autographing the books.

ATTENDANCE - We arrived on Thursday during a very heavy rainstorm. It kept up for the rest of the day as hard showers that kept the gutters in the street running full. Friday saw some brief showers. Saturday was cloudy. Sunday was sunny. The nights were very, very cold.

Because of the unsettled weather, about thirty pre-registered teardrops did not show up. But on the other hand, Friday and Saturday had 20 trailers just show up at the last minute. We ended up with an even 100. It was also announced that there were 38 new attendees (us being one of them). We had many visitors who were interested in looking at the trailers. We met a family from Tijuana, Mexico who plan to attend next year with their new homebuilt teardrop. The long-haul couple came from Cheyenne, Wyoming. We were second longest attendee at 1105 mi.

Katie was asking why there were so many trailers. I thought about the demographics and concluded: 1) within 150 miles north of the Mexican border there are approximately 10 million people in California and 2) this area was the manufacturing hub for just about all of the mass produced teardrop trailers after WWII.

I would estimate that about 40% to 50% of the tow vehicles were vintage. Quite a few were vintage pickup trucks. For a while, it looked like we were having a show and shine event. We had some outstanding cars, i.e., a very cherry 1949 Plymouth red convertible, a few very nice tri-year Chevrolets and a couple of Ford and Chevy woody station wagons.

Predominate in the vintage teardrops were the Kits with fourteen '46's/'47's. We saw a lot of homebuilts, called Special Construction trailers in California. One was a very weird triangular trailer that looked like a large doorstop on wheels. A couple of us theorized that the builder was really scared to build a curved hatch, so made it flat. A trailer for a handicapped person appeared that was a 6' X 6' X 6' aluminum box on wheels. We saw quite a few woody trailers; one of note had wheel covers made of highly varnished wood.

COZY CRUISER – There was only one Cozy Cruiser in attendance. It was #6 and had an Oregon connection. The present owner bought it from Joe and Marilyn Freeman who were regular attendees at Pacific Northwest events before they moved to Nebraska. Because both Oregon and Nebraska do not require their trailers be registered, the new owner told me about the very difficult hoops he had to jump through to get a valid registration in California.

SENIOR TEARDROPPER – One of the most remarkable teardrop owners was Margie, a 79 year-old widow from California who loved to camp while raising her family. In later years, she missed camping so much that she started to tent camp. Then she purchased an old Benroy. She told me that she felt safer, more comfortable and the tear was small enough to move around. Her son has a street rod business and helped her buy a 1955 Pontiac tow car. He painted the car and trailer to match. He also fixed a spare tire on a bracket that swung out of the way of the galley hatch and flipped to a horizontal position that ended up being a round table. Since the galley was a mess when the trailer was purchased, a Home Depot oak bathroom vanity was modified to fit into the galley area. It looked really cool with the raised panel door, the finished drawer fronts and other oak trim cut from other parts of the vanity. This gal also used a patio umbrella attached to a bracket by the cabin door. Using Velcro, she attached long tent-like fabric around the edge and used this arrangement for a change room.

BARN FRESH TEARDROP – A great example of a teardrop that could be a genuine museum exhibit was an all-original Kenskill that had just been resurrected from storage by the adult son of the original owner. It was in great shape with the patina of an antique. The only update was repop fiberglass fenders. A lot of the original trailer paperwork and family pictures were on display. Original home movies had been converted to VCR and were part of the show via a TV set; it was neat to see a vintage Jeep towing the TD across creeks and rocks, through desert canyons and to see campsites in groves of trees. The Jeep is still in the family and will be restored this year.

A CAL CRAFT TRAILER – I noticed a trailer sporting a beautiful "Cal Craft" decal. It was a TD made from Desert Teardrops plans expanded to a ten-footer. This trailer had the most unusual galley area in that there were Montgomery Ward vintage appliances in it. It had a gas stove and refrigerator. The builder had purchased a derelict Cal Craft walk-in camp trailer and decided to build the tear using these

appliances in the galley area. The galley area was the most vintage I have ever seen. With the new decal, this new teardrop was registered as a 1960 Cal Craft.

THE 8' CUBBY – During the ice cream social, Kevin Houser was introduced as a vendor who, last year, sold more than 350 teardrop plans all over the world. Kevin is the creator of the 8' Cubby teardrop trailer. His plans are based on a Harbor Freight trailer chassis. “Most people who want to build a teardrop don't know how to weld,” he told me. “So my plans use a bolt-together chassis.” The trailer he brought to Sweetwater was outfitted with a galley trimmed in cherry. Its finish was beautiful! Another feature of the Cubby is that most of its hardware can be purchased at Home Depot type stores. I reviewed his plans and was impressed with the quality of the many detailed color drawings and abundance of the illustrations. They sell for \$100.

THE LeMAY TEARDROP RESTORATION PROJECT

By Jack Jacobson

I want to thank everyone that came to the potluck. I didn't see anyone go away hungry. It was nice to see the TD friends again. It was at the potluck that we loaded the LeMay teardrop onto a trailer for transport to Ed Kelson's shop.

The trailer made it to Ed's shop without any problems. Ed, Bob and I got it on the hoist and took a quick look at it that night. It was hard not to jump right in and start working on it. Bob and I were able to control ourselves. Ed was able to wait a couple days before he started to scrutinize it and start a list of known needed items. Doug Cronn stopped by later and took a look at the wood to see what refinishing it would take. Sanding the wood and refinishing will take some time. The first work party was scheduled on Saturday, February 15th.

I have been in contact with Eric LeMay; he continues to appreciate everyone's help in this project. Eric reported that the museum's collection committee authorized \$1000 towards the restoration project.

Now for some news on the trailer that were not known before this time.

Another teardropper named Ed Avila (you might remember him with the early blue Chev p/u and matching TD at the last Spring Fling) found that the LeMay TD appears to be built from the plans that were in the Sept 1947 issue of *Mechanix Illustrated*. The pictures of the article he found looked like the trailer, even down to the cabinetry design. Although not a commercially produced TD, knowing the origins of it is pretty exciting. The plans are available from Grant Whipp as seen on the teardropper's universal web site www.teardrops.net.

(Editor's Note – Rod Glassett was given the task of finding items at the Portland Swap Meet needed to finish off the trailer. Vintage hub caps, two 12 VDC tail lights from the 1950's and a Washington State 1947 trailer license plate were found.)

ANTIQUE CARS AND A SWAP MEET IN PARIS

By Rick Sladen

I love my wife. She is a truly wonderful lady. She's kind, considerate, generous, loving and most of all – *“understanding”*.

In 1984 I brought home a 1946 teardrop trailer to tow behind my 1939 Packard and she was – *“understanding”*. When we traveled around Europe and camped with the teardrop, she was – *“understanding”*. We took countless vacations over 15 years with it including a three-month, 13,000-mile cross-country trip and she was – *“understanding”*. When told each year that the Portland Swap Meet was a “guy” thing, she smiled and waved goodbye; definitely – *“understanding”*.

Now that I'm retired it's payback time! How about a romantic week in Paris for Valentines Day (also our anniversary)? Included was a sightseeing boat trip along the Seine River, a trip to the top of the Eiffel Tower, a day at Versailles, a visit to the Louvre, the organ concert at Notre Dame Cathedral and the topless girls at the Moulin Rouge. And, fabulous restaurants with sumptuous (and expensive) cuisine. A four star hotel with a balcony overlooking a park and – what's this – the Museum of Technology across the street!

Suddenly there was a flash in my memory. It was a recent article in one of my vintage car magazines about the 1777 Cugnot steam wagon being in Paris. Could this be the place? Were there other old cars? Off across the street I went only to discover the gate and door closed and locked.

By this time I had heard that the annual antique car “auto retro” show and swap meet was being held this week. With my *“understanding”* wife in tow, off we went on the subway.

This event was being held in a huge facility, all under cover. There was a large swap meet area with vendors all very well organized. About 30 cars were cordoned off and had been through an auction the previous day. Several marque clubs had booths. There was a very nice antique boat display.

Donald Campbell's Blue Bird speed-record car was there. No Packards were present but lots of antique Peugeot, Citroen, BMW and Mercedes cars were displayed. Modeling appears to be a big thing in Europe with many vendors displaying thousands of units mostly in glass cases. Luckily, my "understanding" wife brought a book to read, as her old-car attentions span is very short.

On our last day in Paris I again crossed the street and found the Museum of Technology open! Again, my "understanding" wife came along. This time she found lots of very interesting displays. About one and a half hours later, I still had not seen anything automotive until I headed down some stairs. There was the Cugnot, considered by many to be the first motor vehicle. Down the hall were several cars of the pre-1900 type. In an adjacent ex-church were about 20 antique cars of the 20's and 30's. From the very high ceiling hung a couple of antique airplanes. Many of the cars were displayed on heavy scaffolding with stairs to get to them. A most interesting museum and car collection and worth taking your "understanding" wife to if ever you are in Paris.

TEARDROPS AND THIS SUMMER'S AMERICRUISE

Submitted by Matt Basher

The Americruise is a cross-country tour that starts from where ever and ends up in Lincoln, Nebraska. Rod and Custom magazine has been putting on this tour for the past 10 years with great success. Typically there are pre-determined starting points from hot rod and street rod related businesses that host the tour. This year is different because they have changed the format to one official tour per year. When I called to ask about any Pacific Northwest tours, Rod & Custom told me to throw one together and they would support it. We took that on in full force and with the cooperation of the Hot Rod Café, Ravon Street Rods, and Heinzman Street Rods, the tour is promised to be a great time whether your pulling your house or not.

How cool would it be to see a caravan traveling across the county with hot rods and custom cars pulling teardrop trailers? We have signed up the LeMays to go along on the tour with us and it's been said that Nancy LeMay is looking forward to driving a leg of the tour. She wants to bring her '39 woody and there is no doubt that her teardrop will be done with its clean up by then.

DropTear Trailers is taking our '68 International, a recently acquired '56 Plymouth Suburban and my '56 Dodge that has been sitting in storage for about 8 years. Of, course we will be bringing our trailers with them and hopefully a couple of motorcycles (provided the Harley mechanic ever finishes).

The tour leaves LeMays Sunday, June 22 and stops at the Hot Rod Café in Post Falls, Idaho for a major cruise-in and car show. Then we go on to Billings, Montana for a plentiful BBQ hosted by Ravon Street Rods. The next couple days is spent wandering the Black Hills of South Dakota and Ogallala, Nebraska, then on to Lincoln for the three day car show that is Americruise.

So hose off the pine needles, tune up your six and Bleach-White your bias-plys Ma, we're goin' on a road trip. Give me, Matt Basher, a call at 1-866-803-1836 or visit the website at www.droptear.com.

FOURTH OF JULY FUN IN CARNATION

Submitted by Ken Masden

Please join us for the second annual "Fourth of July Teardrop Fun in Carnation" campout. The dates are from Wednesday July 2nd to Sunday, the 6th. Carnation is located a few miles east of Seattle. You're welcome to come anytime during the gathering.

Camp on our five-acre property just outside of town, then on Friday, the Fourth, join in the fun of a real small-town celebration including a pancake breakfast, Hot Rods & Harley's show, and parades in Carnation. In the afternoon, it's back to the Masden's for a potluck dinner.

At dusk we'll go back to town to see the fireworks. On the 5th, and 6th we may caravan to Snohomish to view antiques and old cars, picnic at Snoqualmie Falls and/or perhaps attend a car show in Issaquah. On Saturday evening we will have a "Dutch oven cook-off" dinner. We will again have plenty of rumble seat rides this year plus Model T rides! For more information, please email us at 36fun@centurytel.net or give us a call at (425) 333-5219. Ken and Marty Masden, Carnation, WA.

NWCCA SHOW DISPLAY RESULTS - -

Our final accounting has been completed for the Northwest Car Collectors Car Show and Swap Meet held last October 2002. The net proceeds will be divided this year between the two original campouts for teardroppers in the Pacific Northwest. Hosts for the Spring Fling are Rod and Trudy Glassett. Gary and Shannon Wampole, founders of Northwest Teardroppers, host the annual Oregon Campout held at Oregon's Champoeg State Park. Both events are five years old.

TOW only qualified for one-half share of the show's net proceeds because of a clause in the NWCCA bi-laws for rookie clubs. Our share this year was \$570. There are 35 shares.

Expenses: NWCCA 2002 Membership = \$25.00; Mileage (five TOW members @ \$25 each) = \$125; Decorations for the display = \$79; Food (breakfasts for four for two days and 20 lunches for both days) = \$75; Miscellaneous (supplies/tee shirts/phone/postage) = \$63. The total is \$367. Thus, the two events will receive \$101.50.

MARYMOUNT CAMPUS POTLUCK A GREAT SUCCESS

Submitted by Katie Boehme

Hats off to the Books and Jacobsons for hosting a fun, fellowship gathering for teardroppers! The potluck was held Saturday, May 8th at the LeMay Marymount Campus in Tacoma (our first outing without our trailers). We had 35 to 40 teardroppers in attendance and no one left hungry. Highlights of the day included a continuous slide show of past year's tear gatherings shown on a large screen. It was first class! We all enjoyed Eric LeMays sharing with us the history of the Marymount facility and his tour of the exquisite chapel. We learned that regular tours of the campus will be held on Saturdays to benefit the Harold E. LeMay Museum, "America's Car Museum".

After lunch Kitty Hammer of the LeMay staff led us on a personal tour. We closed the day with the first step towards TOW restoring the LeMay teardrop. As a team, we loaded the trailer on the car hauler for transport to Ed Kelson's shop. The restoration by TOW is a great idea and LeMay organization is most appreciative of this joint effort. A special thanks to Jack, Sue, Bob and Tonya for creating the slide show and this fun event.

TOUR OF MUSEUMS IN EUROPE

Recently, I had to chance to chat with one of the 19 people who visited nine European museums on a tour sponsored by the LeMay Museum. The tour's purpose was to look at some of the foremost automobile related museums to glean ideas for the new museum in Tacoma. It was found that one of the important features is to build a museum to economically survive.

My friend had a very good time. He has written a report for his club newsletter that will be included in the TOW Line at a later time. His most enjoyable tour was the Morgan factory in England. The Morgan is 1930's car still being hand built using methods dating prior to WWII.

TIME FOR SNIPPETS

1. See the next page for a calendar of teardrop events in our part of the world.
2. 2003 Portland Roadster Show: Three teardrops on display – Lanegan, Harmon & Basher
3. Teri Fahrendorf reports her engagement to Jon Graber; both at LeMay 2002. Congrats!
4. Sold: An all-steel, very straight with Kenskill steel fenders teardrop at the Swap Meet
5. Ken Masden showed us a great looking teardrop weathervane at the Potluck gathering.
6. See the 2001 November issue of *Car and Driver* for a great story about teardrop trailers.
7. I sell "*Trailer Travels: A Visual History of Mobile America*". Vintage trailer book - \$17.50.
8. Great bushwhacking location along CA I-5: Kettleman City exit – 3.5 mi west on the right.
9. *Apricot House* restaurant at Panuche Rd between SF and LA on I-5: Free ovnite parking.
10. A collection of more than 400 square-type kids lunch boxes displayed in *Apricot House*.
11. Sold at the 2003 Portland Swap Meet: Two Benroy-type teardrop trailers for \$3500 each.
12. Next issue: Invitation to camp/display at OR and WA truck museum open house events.
13. The best California I-5 rest stop is between Williams and Artois north of Sacramento.

TEARDROP CALENDAR FOR 2003

(More details in this TOW Line unless noted)

MAY 1 – 4 *The 10TH Annual Shasta Teardrop Campout*

Lakehead, California – North of Redding on Shasta Lake

Contact www.teardrops.net for further information

Convoy organizer: Jack Jacobson at castiron43@aol.com; 253-927-6568

MAY 23TH – 26TH *Spring Fling Campout*

Cascade Peaks RV Park – 55 miles east of I-5 Exit 68 near Randle, Washington

Contact Rod/Trudy Glassett at glassettgang@juno.com; 360-659-1082

JUNE 22ND – 29TH *Americruise Caravan of Tears*

Leaves from LeMays in Tacoma on Sunday, June 22nd for Lincoln, Nebraska.
Contact Matt Basher at www.droptear.com; 1-866-803-1836 toll free

JULY 2ND – 6TH *Fourth of July Fun in Carnation Campout*

Campout at the Masdens on their five acres near Carnation, Washington
Contact Ken/Marty Masden at 36fun@centurytel.net; 425-333-5219

AUGUST 8TH – 9TH *Truck Show Display - Washington*

Teardroppers invited to display vintage/restorod cars/trucks & trailers at the Mason County Fairgrounds near Shelton. Overnight camping available.
Contact Roy Friis at rjfriis@attbi.com; 360-866-7716 (more info next issue)

AUGUST 14TH – 17TH *Tin Can Tourists' Fabulous Mt. Baker Rally*

Teardropper have been invited to participate in this vintage travel trailer event. Held at the Deming Log Showgrounds nine miles east of Bellingham, Wash.
Contact Pat Ewing at pre52@verizon.net; 360-966-4253 (more info next issue)

AUGUST 22RD – 23TH *Truck Show Display – Oregon*

Display trailers in Brooks at Antique Powerland. Overnight camping available.
Contact Jim Abbott at jsn4d@aol.com; 503-874-0330 (more info next issue)

AUGUST 29TH – 31ST *LeMay Open House Display/Campout*

On the Marymount Campus in Tacoma, Washington. **More in next TOW Line.**
Contact Jack Jacobson at castiron43@aol.com; 253-927-6568

SEPTEMBER 11TH – 14TH *RV Show Teardrop Display – Portland*

Invitational only: Display teardrop trailers at a RV Show at the Expo Center
Contact Bill/Cindy Birt at oldchevy@hevanet.com; 503-667-0556

SEPTEMBER 26TH – 28TH *Oregon Teardrop Campout at Champoeg*

Family campout at Champoeg State Park just south of Portland. **See next issue**
Contact Gary Wampole at teardrop@onlinemac.com; 503-876-4431

OCTOBER 17TH – 19TH *NWCCA Car Show with Teardrop Display*

Display of our teardrop trailers at the Car Show/Swap Meet in Portland
Contact Marty at ktormarty@bctonline.com; 503-632-6563 (more info later)