

AIRSTREAM

For nearly 70 years the industry leader

The history of Airstream began with a single man and a most singular dream.

The man was Wally Byam; his dream to build the perfect travel trailer, one that would move like a stream of air. One that would be light enough to be towed by a standard automobile. One that would provide first class living conditions anywhere in the world.

The first trailers were built in the backyard of Byam's Los Angeles home. They were built of plywood, but he soon switched to masonite.

An innovator, his most significant and long lasting improvement was to drop the floor down between the wheels, allowing the ceiling to be raised so campers could stand up straight inside the trailer. He added chemical toilets, ice boxes, gasoline stoves and water pumps.

Airstream trailers began taking on a more "aero-dynamic" look as Byam incorporated aircraft construction methods to lessen wind resistance and improve the strength-to-weight ratio of his trailers.

The name Airstream was introduced in 1934 because Byam thought his improved trailers cruised down the road "like a stream of air."

Clipper was revolutionary

The "Clipper" was introduced on Jan. 17, 1936...an American legend was born. It was revolutionary with a monocoque, riveted aluminum body. It had more in common with the aircraft of the day than other trailers. It could sleep four, thanks to its tubular steel-framed dinette, which would be converted into a bed. It carried its own water supply, had an enclosed galley and was



Even the early Airstream trailers had a distinctive look that distinguished them from others.

fitted with electric lights throughout. The Clipper even offered "air conditioning," using dry ice. At \$1,200, the Clipper was expensive, especially during the Depression, but they couldn't be built fast enough to keep up with the demand.

In the post-World War II period a factory was opened in Jackson Center, Ohio to serve the eastern market and Byam continued to improve and refine the product.

Airstream's long tradition of design and manufacturing excellence led *Money* magazine to declare it one of the "99 things that American's make best." Airstreams can be found on display in the Smithsonian and Henry Ford museums and an Airstream trailer was selected by NASA to house the first astronauts back from the moon.

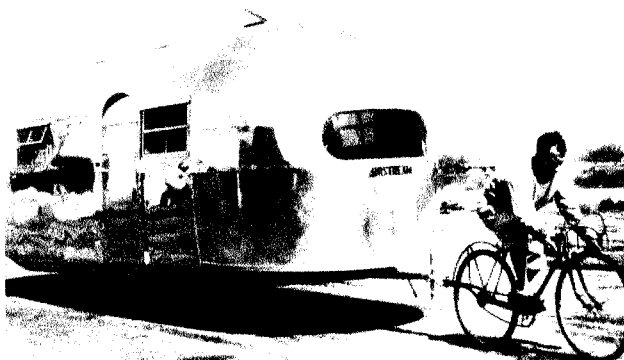
60% of Airstreams built still in use

Over 60 percent of all Airstreams ever built — including some of the original \$5 plans — are still rolling down the highways.

Wally Byam died in 1962 and the company was sold to Thor Industries, one of the leading manufacturers of recreational vehicles in the country.

Airstream trailers range in size from 34 feet to the 19-foot Bambi. Flagship of the line is the Limited, which has a slide-out model. The new Airstream Safari, introduced in 2000, is 1,000 pounds lighter for greater towing ease. Safari models range from 23 feet to 27 feet.

In 1979 Airstream introduced the Classic motorhome, with the rounded shape of a trailer and made of aluminum. In 1989 the Land Yacht was introduced, made of laminated fiberglass, which now comes in 30, 33, 35 and 39 foot models and powered by either gas or diesel engines.



Wally wanted to demonstrate how lightweight his Airstream trailer was so he arranged for one to be successfully pulled by a bicycle.