

AIRSTREAM TRAILERS / MOTORHOMES



TWENTY-FIFTH ANNIVERSARY

THE LEGACY
OF THE
TEXAS HILL COUNTRY UNIT

Twenty-Fifth Anniversary of an Airstream Unit of the

WALLY BYAM CARAVAN CLUB INTERNATIONAL
(WBCCI)

Compiled by:

Louis Lester Purvis
-and-
Louis Duane Hendricks

PREFACE

by

Louis D. Hendricks

In 1979 Bob Crees was president of the Texas Hill Country Unit. For the fifteenth anniversary, a plaque was given to the past presidents. A decade later, Bob felt a twenty-fifth anniversary celebration was a good idea. Bob spoke about his idea to the new president-elect, Louis Hendricks.

Hendricks thought over the matter. Taking responsibility for unit leadership is one thing, but planning for a Silver Jubilee is yet another thing. He decided that it was the right thing to do for the unit. As you might expect, Hendricks asked Bob Crees to be chairperson of a committee to plan for an appropriate ceremony.

Hendricks wrote a letter to the unit past presidents and past first ladies who were active in the club. He asked for their own thoughts about the year they held those offices. In the letter he explained that their summaries would be featured in the 1990 unit newsletters.

Those summaries evolved into a historical document. Louis Purvis, historical chairperson, was contacted concerning the notion of a book about the history of the unit. Purvis, already author of a history book, accepted the challenge. He developed an outline and layout for a quality publication.

At the May 1990 rally in Davilla, the unit members voted to have a history of the unit published. They voted to fund the project by pre-publication donations. \$90.00 was collected on the spot. More donations were received during the summer and early fall.

The method of funding redefined the scope of the document. Purvis and Hendricks got to work under the new guidelines.

Purvis and Hendricks acknowledged their lack of knowledge of the charter members. Harold and Clara Wies, charter members who are still active as associate members, served as consultants. Unit newsletters, minutes, and the card file that is carried in an old wooden box, provided additional historical data. The summaries of the past presidents and first ladies added input to the project.

What they have developed, at best, is only a beginning. Members may be able to add or correct information in the book. Should a revision be made in the future, their contributions would be helpful. After all, it belongs to all Texas Hill Country Unit members, past, present, and future.

FOREWORD

by

Louis L. Purvis

The story of the Texas Hill Country Unit of the Wally Byam Caravan Club International is an excellent success story. It portrays the life of its members while on caravans, rallies, car-rallies, and in the communities where they live. They leave a trail of good will in every host city in the Hill Country area of Texas. The silver Airstream trailers are always welcome on any occasion due to the high standard of citizenship of the club members.

The story includes men and women of vision, leadership, honor, integrity, and a willingness to serve. The club, as a whole, has lived by the Wally Byam Creed and Code of Ethics. This has made a great contribution to the success of the unit.

Many have served in leadership positions ranging from being host at local unit rallies to president of the Wally Byam Caravan Club International. The club remains a reservoir of potential leaders fully capable of serving on every level of activity.

Together, the membership of this unit has developed from a vision in the mind of its founding fathers to the great organization it is today.

The twenty-fifth anniversary story is a true account of how the unit became one of the best in the world-wide organization of caravanning.

THE INTRODUCTORY YEARS

The Texas Hill Country Unit was the brain child of a man named Hamp Millender. Mr. Millender recruited two other men to help. These men, Jack Bursley and George Lieser were chosen wisely. The three men had special talents that when combined as a unit made an excellent team.

Mr. Millender was a thinker with vision and leadership qualities. Mr. Bursley was more apt at doing things with his hands, keeping records and writing bulletins. Mr. Lieser was a public relations sort of person who acted as social chairman. He did most of the enlisting of new members.

Each of these men made a great contribution to the success of the club. Other members of the Texas unit of the Wally Byam Caravan Club International, (WBCCI), saw the need of a new unit. They became a rather close knit group even before they received their charter from WBCCI.

Jack Bursley had a workshop back of his residence where he made tobacco pipes and stems. His hobby had grown into a business of sorts. Even though space was at a premium he made his little shop available for the three founders to work and plan for the club.

In late October 1965 those three men combined their efforts to organize and establish the new club. Harold Weis and his wife Clara tell the story of how they met in Mr. Bursleys' shop on a daily basis to talk, formulate policies, keep records, write to friends, and put out newsletters and bulletins. Mrs. Weis points to Hamp Millender as the leader and the author of the documents that were necessary to obtain a charter for the new organization.

Records do not show how the club got its name. It is reasonable to assume that Hamp Millender would be the one responsible while Jack Bursley and George Lieser approve. However, the membership adopted the appropriate name "Texas Hill Country Unit".

After finishing the legal documents, they made application for a charter. On January 20, 1966 they received word that the charter had been granted.

Hamp Millender did not call a meeting of the entire group until March 16, 1966. The purpose of the meeting was to elect officers. Considered temporary, the officers elected were to receive the charter and preside over the process of election of a permanent slate of officers. The following temporary officers were elected:

President: Hamp Millender
Vice President: Jack Bollinger
Secretary-Treasurer: Jack Bursley.

The second meeting of the unit was held under charter on April 6, 1966. They assembled at the Commanche Club, Sherwood Shores for the purpose of electing permanent officers. First on the agenda was the selection of a committee to count the ballots. Selected were Hester Bollinger, Myrtle Bursley, and Alicia Oser. Second on the agenda was the election of a slate of permanent officers. The following unit officers for 1966 were elected:

President: Hamp Millender
First Vice President: Jack Bollinger
Second Vice President: Dr. Neal Davis
Secretary-Treasurer: Jack Bursley
Recording Secretary: Mrs. Neal Davis
Director: Jesse Gilbert
Director: Oran Flow.

The newly elected officers were immediately installed. Thus the unit was legally and officially launched.

Committies were appointed. The entire membership joined in the work of developing details such as flags, I.D. cards, decals, and lists of needed equipment.

They met again, May 2-6, 1966 to plan rally sites for the rest of the year. A Labor Day rally was planned for the first week-end in September at Fredericksburg. A rally for October was set to be in Llano. For November 16-18, a rally was planned for Burnet, to be held at the City Park. No rally was planned for December.

A caravan was planned to go to the WBCCI pre-rally at Harrison, Arkansas, on Bull Shoals lake. Twenty-five members attended that rally. They were responsible for some of the entertainment. They continued in caravan to the WBCCI rally at Cadillac, Michigan.

Even though the unit organizational activities kept the members busy, there was still time for doing fun things during the first year. The records reveal the unit spent time on hobbies, crafts, games, and educational and religious activities.

The unit's progress was marked by tremendous growth. Thanks to the masterful job of recruiting under the direction of George Lieser and the enthusiastic rallies, by the end of 1966 there were 180 unit members.

For the second year, 1967, the elected officers remained in the same positions they held previously. That was to insure unit growth and conservation of gains.

The January rally in 1967 was held at the Yacht Basin in Aransas Pass. In February the rally was held at San Saba. The March rally was timed for attendance at the Easter pageant in Junction.

In April the unit had a caravan to Big Bend National Park. Some members took the caravan train to Los Moches, Mexico. The others took Big Bend explorations.

The unit met in Llano in September and in Tyler for the October Rose Festival.

In 1968 activities were delayed by the illness of president-elect Jack Bursley. He was still in the hospital on April 2, 1968, when past president Hamp Millender assumed a new role as installation officer. The following officers were installed:

President: Jack Bursley
First Vice President: Jack Lamkin
Second Vice President: George Lilly
Corresponding Secretary: Elva Cater
Recording Secretary: Zera Schiller
Treasurer: Paul Cater

A standing ovation for Hamp Millender was given by the members. That gesture of tribute also expressed for those of us who joined later, appreciation for the founder of such a great unit.

Jack Bursley returned home from the hospital and was able to keep the club active. But at the time of the next rally in November he was ill again and unable to attend.

Some important matters were passed in the business meeting. The members voted to limit unit officers to a one-year term that was to begin in November of each year. Those elected for 1969 were:

President: George Lieser
First Vice President: Lyndon Walker
Second Vice President: Howell Burnett
Corresponding Secretary: Virginia Hamilton
Recording Secretary: Edna Wahrman
Treasurer: Earl Hamilton
Directors: Frank Wahrman and Jack Wood.

One of the first newsletters of the Texas Hill Country unit had the following masthead:

THE TEXAS HILLBILLY
Vol. II No. 4 Sept 1967

A later issue included these words about some important people: "Our distinguished organizer and first president of the unit, Mr. Hamp Millender, welcomed the following new members into the unit: Isaac and Juanita Rhoades of San Antonio, Texas, Chester and Pauline Husman of Kerrville, Texas. Wood for a camp fire was provided by our host, Andy Kaiser..."

Charter members, Harold and Clara Wies, share their memories of those early introductory years, 1965 to 1970.

Hamp (our first president) was the brains of the group and came up with most of the long-term plans and policies. Jack (our second president) kept the records and wrote the unit bulletins. George (our third president) acted as social chairman for the group. George was the chief cook at unit pancake breakfasts or chili dinners. Those three worked together as a team in which each had his self-appointed specialty.

By 1970 when Jack Woods was elected president, all three of those first inspired leaders had become too old to carry on; and in a few years had died of strokes. We owe them much for the fun unit they founded.

THE DEVELOPMENTAL YEARS

Howell Burnett served in 1971 as president of the Texas Hill Country Unit. Along his side as first lady was his wife, Alma. Successful rallies were held in San Marcos (Jan.), Georgetown (Feb.), Fredericksburg (Mar.), Del Rio (Apr.), Brady (May), Glen Rose (Oct.), and New Braunfels (Nov.). Sixty-eight families were registered at the November rally.

In 1972, because of the sudden death of Earl Hamilton who was serving as unit president, Andrew Kaiser technically became the president in June. He was officially installed in November for the year 1973. Andy and Bea began their career of leadership.

Andy supplied the following account of 1973 unit activities. A February rally planned for "sunny San Antonio" became a new experience for the unit when all awoke to a heavy snow fall on Saturday morning of the rally. The most unusual outing of the year was the "Strictly for Fun" rally at Six Flags Over Texas in Arlington during September. The senior citizen kids all had the prescribed fun.

Units had just been introduced to "Carallys", so in October after a rally in Buda, the unit left on their first week-long carally to East Texas. Stops at the Tyler Rose Gardens, Lake Livingston, Baytown, Houston Ship Channel, San Jacinto Monument, Battleship Texas, Humble Refining Company, NASA, and LBJ Space Center made-up the planned itinerary.

Andy was approached by the officers and nominating committee of Region IX to accept nomination for second vice president of the region upon completion of his year as president of our unit.

Additional honors were accorded Andy and Bea when Andy accepted the invitation to serve as international treasurer in 1976. He was elected WBCCI third vice president in 1977 and continued to be president for the year 1980-1981.

Amon and Will Etta Short served in 1974 as president and first lady of Texas Hill Country Unit. A surprise rally was conducted in Llano in honor of the fiftieth wedding anniversary of Amon and Will Etta. Other rallies were held in Brownwood, Junction, Fort Davis, Hamilton, and again in Llano.

Russell and Alta Sindt led the unit in 1975 as president and first lady after the death of Charles Clark who had been elected in the fall of 1974. THCU celebrated it's tenth anniversary at

the Burnet rally. It was a fancy event in which the women wore long dresses. It was held at the Inn of the Hills.

Clifford and Mabel Thomson headed the unit as president and first lady in 1976. Unit rallies were conducted in Llano, LaGrange, Waco, Glen Rose, and once more in Llano.

George and Mary Krause continued the fine tradition of leadership in 1977. The rallies were held in San Antonio, Sam Rayburn Lake, Fredericksburg, and Llano.

The records of the preceding period, 1974 through 1977, are very limited in details. None of the presidents or first ladies are active in the club. Such is not the case for the following years. The presidents and first ladies will speak for their particular year in office.

Past president C.H. (Ted) Nix remembers how good 1978 was for the unit.

"Eleanor and I planned all our rallies by what we thought to be best for the club. That was before the unit adopted the 'host' system. Although we bought all supplies and carried all equipment, we had a lot of help from the membership.

"At the rally in LaGrange, we had eight or so past presidents from the unit, Region IX, and International. The Kerrville rally had 69 trailers plus drop-in members. Only 44 trailers showed up for the rally at Golead. Those were the high and low numbers for the year.

"From Golead we went by caravan to Harlingen, where I served as emcee for the Region IX rally. We roasted the region officers and wives as well as International second vice president, Andy Kaiser, and his wife, Bea.

"1978 was the first time that the unit was offered CFR by John and Bea Wright, a defensive driving course, and a Christmas party. Eleanor and I have no regrets, only enjoyment in being a part of such a wonderful organization and being able to form so many lasting friendships. We have many beautiful memories."

1979, another good year for the Texas Hill Country Unit, was led by president, Robert Crees and first lady, Nell. Here is their brief summary.

"It was 1979 when we adapted the unit emblem onto the directory covers. We had a very good year of fun and fellowship. Celebrating the fifteenth anniversary of the unit, we presented a past presidents plaque to all of the living past presidents in honor of their service."

THE MATURE YEARS

Arlyn Merrill served as president of the Texas Hill Country Unit in 1981, with husband, Dan, as first mate.

Slightly unusual to have a rally in December in Central Texas, the unit had a two-day rally, Dec. 12-14, 1980, at Maricopa. It was a new site for us. Called "O Come All Ye Faithful", the rally proved to be an occasion for some members to develop a big dose of cedar fever.

The Merrills hosted the mid-winter IBT rally in January for Andy and Bea Kaiser, WBCCI president and first lady.

Other rallies were held at Llano, Utopia, Bellville, San Antonio, and again at Maricopa.

Howell and Belle Brock followed the Merrills in the leadership of the unit in 1982. The following report is extracted from the 1982 newsletters.

Paul Weiss and George Hoop showed slides of the Holy Land at the Christmas dinner.

After the January rally, held in San Antonio, the unit went to Harlingen in caravan for the winter Airstream Company rally. The temperature at the time of departure for the event was 13 degrees.

Marvin Fenn put on a super fish-fry at the February rally at Boerne's Cascade Caverns. Jay Daniels prepared wonderful hush puppies for the meal.

The unit was represented at the international rally held in Bozeman, Montana by 38 trailers.

In September the unit joined Texas Tropical Trails Unit for a no-fee rally at Duffs Ranch.

1983 was the year for George and Edith Hoop to direct the unit as president and first lady. They gave the following notes to be included in this historical record.

"Our first rally was at Bluff Trails Ranch. Fact is, we had two rallies there during our year. Howell Brock called us to say we had a conflict for November, 1982 (our installation rally). Already we had reserved Bluff Trails for an October rally.

"The host system for rallies was first used by our unit in 1983. Couples could sign-up to host each rally. It worked! More people enjoyed themselves by being a part of the work.

"A shipwreck party at Freeport was a first for the unit. You won't believe the costumes worn, especially those who dressed for a sinking ship."

The Hoops used a variety of pictures for the monthly mastheads that were appropriately coordinated to the upcoming rally. They also mailed the newsletters by using commemorative stamps, to the delight of stamp collectors.

Fred and Mildred Holliday were installed at Maricopa as president and first lady in November, 1983 for the year 1984. Installation officer was Pat Carpenter, Second Vice President of Region IX, attending the rally with his wife, Gwen.

Fred tells about unit participation in the Harlingen rallies.

"When we went to Region IX in 1984, our unit was in charge of preparing hamburgers for 600 to 700 people. As luck would have it, the afternoon before the hamburgers, we could tell it was going to rain. Taking Dan Merrill's truck, we picked up the grills, big grills, eight feet long. We placed them as close as we could to the building where we were to serve. It was beginning to mist.

"At the maintenance building we picked up plywood and other items that might keep the rain off the fires and workers. The next day, no sooner had we got to cooking, the wind came up and got so strong that you could hardly stand. Then came rain like I have never seen! Needless to say, our crew stayed with it, getting soaked, but did the job (as the unit always does). I might add, they did all the parking in the rain, making it a rally never to be forgotten."

The Texas Hill Country Unit had 34 trailers with 68 persons at the region rally. The Airstream Company rally followed, with our unit members serving as ushers for the Sunday worship service.

A caravan to Big Bend was a major event for the unit in 1984. Planned and coordinated by the Davenport and Crees, it included tours of Sul Ross University, McDonald Observatory, and Sonora Caverns. The year book includes pictures of the final banquet that show the close attachments that had been established by attendees.

A rally at Bluff Trails included tours to the LBJ Ranch and the Y.O. Ranch that features exotic animals. Maricopa was the site for another rally in 1984. A tour of Wimberley included a trip through the flea market and a picnic on the Blanco River at the riverside home of Barney and Wanda Snell.

Ralph and Verna McIlwain initiated their year of leadership in 1985 with a three point appeal. They stressed unit membership, loyalty, and competitiveness.

They set up two teams to compete in attendance at rallies. The enthusiasm ran high during the year. It ended in a win for the "A" team. Members of the winning team were awarded ribeye steaks while the "B" team losers feasted on beans.

McIlwains had this to say about their year as president and first lady.

"It was a year for surprises. At the opening bell Ralph made Christmas dinner reservations at the wrong Wyatts cafeteria. The money we paid to the Tyler Rose Festival for reserved seating for the parade that they cancelled due to rain went down the drain.

"At the final round Ralph forgot the unit gavel that was to be ceremonially submitted to the new president."

Only a past president and first lady can look back on their year and fully appreciate that kind of humorous analysis.

But let's go back to something that the McIlwains captured. It is something that the Texas Hill Country Unit needs to retain.

"All rallies and events connected with WBCCI are planned and conducted for the mutual benefit of all members. When you can't come (or don't come) we all lose something. Most likely you'll find that the more effort you put forth for the benefit of others, the more your own 'cup runneth over.'"

After a year promoting Blue Bell ice cream, the McIlwains got across to the membership what that quote from the Bible implied.

Finally, although the McIlwains were too modest to mention it in their review of 1985, the "GRAND OPENING" of Artesian Park RV Campground occurred during the April unit rally.

On hand for the ribbon-cutting ceremony were dignitaries from both the Washington County and Brenham chambers of commerce. Some of our members have since been heard to say that Artesian Park should be made a Land Yacht Harbor.

Comments like that reveal the fact that Texas Hill Country folks have great respect for leaders who put forth the effort to keep the unit strong.

Ralph and Verna, as to the long list of leaders over the twenty-five year period, we salute you.

Texas celebrated its sesquicentennial in 1986. For the Texas Hill Country Unit, WBCCI, it was the year that Louis and Lilla Swisher were president and first lady.

One of the first things they did was to auction off the big iron kettle that added so much weight to our equipment inventory. The highest bidder and winner was Ralph McIlwain, who picked it up for a mere \$180.00.

With the Swishers in leadership, rallies were exciting events, packed with indoor and outdoor games, craftwork, and tours.

Members of 35 trailers were present at the Fredericksburg rally entitled "German Heritage." A unique uniform was adopted by the unit. For the ladies, it was a dark blue denim skirt with a decal of the unit, red sash, and white blouse. For the men it was a neck scarf, red, white, and blue, with a unit patch. The scarf was to be worn with blue jeans or navy slacks and a white shirt.

A sewing session at the Belton rally helped get the uniforms finished in time for the Region IX rally in Waco. The uniforms are still worn by some unit members from time to time.

We had another great fish-fry and a Hawaiian Luau at Davilla. There were real-live Hawaiian dancing girls showing their stuff.

The unit had 36 families registered at the WBCCI rally in Boise, Idaho in 1986. Everyone had a hot time out west. The Merrills found a good place to cool off, below the dam of the lake east of the city. Other members found refuge in the mountains nearby.

After summer the unit got back together at Ingram and Maricopa. Both rallies took full advantage of the wonderful pleasures of life in the Texas hill country.

Two people packing a powerful punch served as leaders of the club in 1987, Barney and Wanda Snell. Here is the saga they told about their year (Barney did most of the talking for the family).

"As President and First Lady of Texas Hill Country Unit the main thing that helped us the most was the staff that served with us as well as the faithful membership. Of course my room-mate had a hand in it also. Although I made mistakes, everyone was helpful, considerate and kind. Main thing I wanted was to have a fun year and bring a feeling of closeness in our unit, and I feel we had that.

"One of the most exciting events that happened was when our granddaughter, Alisha Campbell, was honored by the unit to be their representative in the Texas teen queen contest."

"Alisha won the Texas contest and went on to the WBCCI contest and swept it to become International Teen Queen."

Her escort at the International was O'Brien Merrill, the youngest Airstream owner in both WBCCI and Texas Hill Country Unit.

Alisha Campbell made all of us extremely proud. So did her grandparents. Their rally at the Hancock Ranch in Hondo, March 5-8, was one that will be etched in our memories for a long while. The goals of the Snells were fulfilled, namely, fun and closeness. Ralph and Wanda Hancock, with loving care, made everyone feel as if each owned the ranch. It is that same feeling that we have in ownership of the Texas Hill Country Unit.

From the typewriter of Norman and Genie Rech we have this summary of unit activities in 1988.

"The ultimate highlight of our year was having our own Alisha Campbell as International Teen Queen. She overwhelmed everyone with her performances at Rapid City. She has won her place in the hearts of all WBCCI members.

"Another highlight was that our unit voted to make Don and Mary Anderson, WBCCI president and first lady, honorary unit members. They have honored our unit by visiting with us often; and this action was taken to show our appreciation.

"At the January meeting, the Executive Board voted to add Article XIII to the unit By-Laws. This article states that all unit assets are to be transferred to WBCCI in the event our unit is ever dissolved.

"Unit members helped other area WBCCI members in hosting the ICA caravan from Great Britain at the KOA in San Antonio on April 3-4. For the Region IX rally in Waco, we had the prestigious assignment of purchasing, preparing and serving hot dogs at one of the meals.

"Our unit did not have an organized caravan to the WBCCI rally in Huntsville, but we did have an Ozark Fall Foliage caravan in October, with Andy and Bea Kaiser as our caravan leaders."

"The success of this caravan was beautifully and vividly described in a poem written and narrated by Don & Mary Anderson." (Presented in Appendixes).

Norman and Genie Rech had a series of good rallies held at Lake Buchanan, New Braunfels, Brenham, Rockport, Bandera, San Antonio, and Ingram. They were real happenings!

For 1989 Billy and Iris Embry headed up the unit as president and first lady. Conducting the installation on November 11, 1988 of the officers for the coming year were Don and Mary Anderson, former president and first lady of WBCCI.

The Christmas dinner was held in the historical Stagecoach Inn located at Salado, halfway between Dallas and San Antonio. There were 73 persons in attendance.

Soon after the first of the year, January 4-8, the "Back Forty" rally was held at Maricopa. The weather remained between 70-80 degrees during the daytime. But it was the February rally that was cancelled due to dangerously icy conditions.

The March rally was held in Utopia under the huge oak and cypress trees on the banks of the Sabinal River. The Region IX rally at Boerne was perhaps the best region rally ever. John and Shirley Wittman, president and first lady, made the rally a fun time.

The "Wildflower" rally was held in Brenham. The "Westward Ho" rally was at Fredericksburg. Both were filled with great times.

Texas Hill Country Unit was well represented at the WBCCI rally in Bozeman, Montana. Our bulletin board won "Best of Entry". The Silver Airstream with three flags was presented by our unit to Olajoe Behrens who had designed the board.

In October the "Ghosts and Goblins" rally was at Bellville. George Hoop taught "55 Alive" and some members made Christmas crafts. The "End of Trail" rally at Ingram included the open house of Jim and Helen Kelly, CPR course by John and Bea Wright, and a book review of Louis Furvis' "The Ace In The Hole".

Louis and Mary Hendricks were installed as president and first lady for 1990 in an impressive ceremony. Andy and Bea Kaiser, WBCCI past president and first lady, were on hand to install the incoming officers. Following the program was a fine reception, organized by Iris Embry, immediate past first lady.

The unit returned to Boerne for the Christmas luncheon, December 9, 1989. "I feel like I've been to a Christmas party" was heard from members leaving the Po Po Family Restaurant that Saturday. Among the 72 persons attending were WBCCI president and first lady, Walter and Mary Agnes Kneusel.

A New Year's rally was held at Artesian Park at Brenham to bring in 1990. It also served to celebrate the RV Park's "Second Grand Opening" with Ralph and Verna McIlwain.

The rally at Seguin in January revived our belief in the WBCCI family for the 1990's. Among the guests were WBCCI first vice president, Ed Minty, and his first lady, Pat, and Pearl Main, president of the WBCCI Free Wheelers. We had other visitors at the "First Love" rally in Edna in February. Vernon and Jayme Goodwin, Region IX first vice president and lady, and Region II past president and first lady, Ed and Martha McCabe joined in with stories of their courting days.

Two Whing Ding rallies in March fostered the rodeo spirit among our people. Visiting with us at the Utopia rally were Harold and Vivian Finch, second vice president and lady of Region VIII. The caravan to Odessa, led by Dick Westley, went off without a hitch. John and Shirley Wittman, Region IX president and first lady, put on a truly successful West Texas Whing Ding rally at Odessa.

At the close of the Easter Bonnet rally at Bulverde, we had to bid farewell to Raymond and Polly Burford. They had made the big decision to stop trailering due to health considerations. At the "Rally Around The May Pole" at Davilla we made Christmas globe hanging lights, took tours of Temple, had a class for women that Dick Westley called "hitch in your get-a-long", and voted on the admission of the Airstream B-190 van to WBCCI membership. John and Bea Wright led an uplifting Mother's Day worship service.

- The 33rd WBCCI rally in Notre Dame was a great adventure. That was especially true for Harold Wies who was awarded the Airstream trophy for "Best of Show" in needlepoint. There were 3350 units registered for the rally.

At publication time for this history book, three rallies remain. Howard and June Duff invited our unit to join the Tropical Trails Unit in an informal rally at their ranch at Paige in September. The October rally in Brenham will certainly feature Blue Bell ice cream. We will likely have lasting memories as a result. During the November rally at Ingram, we will have our twenty-fifth year celebration on Thursday, November 8, 1990 at the Y.O. Hilton in Kerrville. The rally will end with the installation and reception of Henry and Olajoe Behrens as president and first lady and their officers for the 1990-1991 year.

There you have it, twenty-five years of fun and games, friendship and family, and sweat and tears. It was so brief that hundreds of hard working members and significant events were not mentioned. The compilers have tried to leave the Texas Hill Country Unit of Region IX of the Wally Byam Caravan Club International, (9-104), a historical document and a beginning record.

ODE TO "OCTOBER IN THE OZARKS"

Don & Mary Anderson, 10/31/88

There was a Caravan from Texas that journeyed north to MO, At
Branson--shows and eating and to Silver Dollar City some did go.
There the Minnesota renegades joined this merry group.
The trees now burst with color at each curve and loop.

Then onward to Eureka Springs--more antiques, crafts and frills--
And even breakfasted upon a train that ran right by a mill.
Some rode a bus turned trolley car for the price of a small bill--
And were enthralled by the Passion Play giving us a long
remembered thrill.

And then in charge of a parking site they put the newcomers to
the game, And before you could get the mind to working a camp-
ground change was made. No fear, however, War Eagle was so handy--
One nite we did a Barbecue that turned out to be a dandy.

The crafts and colors of the season, caused us to appreciate--
the LONG LONG days of travel, to meet the next camping date.

We had an agitator in the group who made a grievance at each stop
However, it was done in fun, so we didn't call a cop.

We enjoyed a lovely boat ride on the Lake that was so Grand,
Then onward to Tenkiller Lake in Cherokee Indian Land.
At that stop upon a knoll came bountiful treats galore: Pancakes--
Hamburgers--full moon, and a bonfire with yummy s'mores.
Twenty-five Sweet Adelines sang to us one nite so great, We also,
played a game of bridge that Hoyle would never rate!

Then another shift in plans from scheduled Ft. Smith, Arkansas
Where trailer fronts sat high--at rec. area called Sallisaw.
More fun was had and sights to see from Wister OK Park, Heavener
Ruinstone and Talemina Drive, all felt our might mark!

In Poteau our leader's wife, called Bea--
spied a sign on a marquee--
It said it was a store of photo,
The name she liked was Photo Poteau!

From there the weather did turn cold and dreary--
But the cheerful group had not grown weary.

At Beaver's Bend a wet camping night. Then to Weyerhauser Paper
for a tour that was just right.
And then a final Banquet to cheer more laughs and fun, Including
all the jokes which have lasted the entire run.
--And yes, I'm almost done--

So finally here's to the part time Grays & Connallys--

Then Behrens, Bills, and Embrys, to name a few--The Griffins,
Rechs, McIlwains, and Thomases--The caravan just grew!

And to the leaders and arrangers, the fearless Kaisers, we did
pursue--This Minnesota couple, now turned Texan, says: "Ya, Ve do
Tank You!"

25 YEAR ASSESSMENT OF THCU/WBCCI DUES

<u>YEAR</u>	<u>\$ THCU DUES</u>	<u>\$ WBCCI DUES</u>	<u>\$ TOTALS</u>
1966	1.00	3.00	4.00
1967	1.00	3.00	4.00
1968	1.00	3.00	4.00
1969	1.00	5.00	6.00
1970	3.00	5.00	8.00
1971	3.00	5.00	8.00
1972	3.00	5.00	8.00
1973	3.00	5.00	8.00
1974	3.00	5.00	8.00
1975	3.00	7.50	10.50
1976	4.00	7.50	11.50
1977	4.00	7.50	11.50
1978	4.00	7.50	11.50
1979	6.00	7.50	13.50
1980	6.00	10.00	16.00
1981	10.00	20.00	30.00
1982	10.00	20.00	30.00
1983	10.00	20.00	30.00
1984	10.00	20.00	30.00
1985	10.00	20.00	30.00
1986	10.00	20.00	30.00
1987	10.00	20.00	30.00
1988	10.00	25.00	35.00
1989	10.00	25.00	35.00
1990	15.00	35.00	50.00

THE POLITICS OF THE FORMATION OF
THE TEXAS HILL COUNTRY UNIT,
WALLY BYAM CARAVAN CLUB, INTERNATIONAL

LETTER WRITTEN BY
HAROLD WIES
CHARTER MEMBER, THCU

TO
LOUIS D. HENDRICKS
PRESIDENT, THCU, 1990

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PREFACE

Harold and Clara Wies are charter members of Texas Hill Country Unit (THCU) of the Wally Byam Caravan Club International (WBCCI). They are now associate members of the Texas Hill Country Unit.

No longer able to pull a trailer, they continue to attend WBCCI rallies by staying in dormitories, hotels, or motels. In 1990, at Notre Dame, Harold won the trophy for "Best of Show" with his needlepoint creations.

The Wies' served as consultants for a project to write a history book of the Texas Hill Country Unit, WBCCI. The project is part of the celebration of the twenty-fifth anniversary of THCU. The book was compiled by two club members, Louis Purvis and Louis Hendricks.

Purvis, a historian, is author of "The Ace In The Hole, A Brief History of Company 818 of the Civilian Conservation Corps." It was published in 1989 by Brentwood Christian Press, Columbus, Georgia 31904.

Hendricks, a chaplain at the Olin E. Teague Veterans' Center in Temple, Texas, is the 1990 president of THCU.

The account that follows is an attempt of Harold Wies to describe the early days of Airstream clubs. The original was a letter to the president of THCU. It was ten pages of handwritten notes. Hendricks added the topical divisions for this document.

INTRODUCTION

Dear Louis, I am not sure whether or not you may be interested in the politics at the time the Hill Country Unit was formed. But I'll give you a little as I remember them.

What I say will be very incomplete and only be highlights, as I was not involved in the politics of the formation of the Texas Hill Country Unit. I was just a member of WBCCI and an owner of property in what was at that time "The Airstream Basin", now part of the city of Granite Shoals, Texas.

IN THE BEGINNING

Early when WBCCI units were organized, area units were the first to be formed. The Mid-West Unit was composed of trailers from the states of Ohio, Kentucky, Indiana, Michigan, Illinois, Wisconsin, Iowa, and Minnesota. There was a New England Unit, a Texas Unit, and a California Unit.

The Mid-West Unit had two rallies a year, over Decoration Day and over Labor Day. Very soon the Mid-West Unit gave rise to other units that were a combination of fewer states. For example the states of Illinois and Indiana formed a unit. But after one year two state units were formed. The reasoning for this was to let the members have monthly rallies closer to their homes. Another factor was the rapid growth of the units that provided support for autonomy at a state level.

I maintained membership in the Mid-West Unit while joining the Illinois unit. I attended all the rallies and meetings of the state and Mid-West units. The membership at both levels agreed with the changes. Most people were highly enthusiastic about it. The first president of the Illinois unit was Roy Schellhass.

MULTIPLICATION BY DIVISION

At that time the California Unit started having units splinter off to form what was called chapters. Members of the chapters maintained membership in the California Unit. Each chapter had their own set of officers. They collected dues so that they could send notices of meetings to the members and could provide coffee at rallies. The chapters, as such, had no vote or voice in WBCCI affairs. The members voted through the sponsoring unit.

Roy Schellhass, after the California lead, organized three state chapters in Illinois; Northern, Central, and Southern. The system worked well for us without disharmony. But the California Unit, as we learned, could not avoid friction with the splinter chapter concept. For the chapters wanted to have complete control of the affairs and destiny of their organizations. The members wanted to vote their desires at the International level, never completely satisfied with the decisions of the sponsoring unit.

The Texas Unit did not go along with the splinter chapter idea (as other selected state units, such as Michigan). They were set and determined to keep one big unit.

Sales of Airstream trailers and club membership grew rapidly and simultaneously. Almost every purchaser of a trailer joined WBCCI. Each year the International rally would have about 300 trailers more than at the previous rally. At Bemidji, Minnesota, the site of the sixth International in 1963, 1882 trailers were present.

I bought my first Airstream in March, 1962. The dealer gave me an application to join the WBCCI. It included the prices of club items, such as badges, trailer numbers, and berets. Members wore berets and badges wherever they traveled with their trailer. They used red paint to put their names on the front of their trailer. Some members also listed the International rallies that they had attended under their names.

The application was sent to the WBCCI Executive Secretary, Helen Byam Schwamborn, located in California. For many years our annual dues were sent by members directly to the Executive Secretary. International dues were \$3.00 through 1968. International rally fees were \$10.00.

After a couple of years with splinter chapters in some states, WBCCI by-laws were changed to turn all chapters into units with their own rights. No longer were they dependant upon the original state unit. Units began the collection of International dues and were allowed to vote according to the number of WBCCI dues paid members.

Many units were composed of about 100 trailers. But the three states that kept their big single unit, California, Michigan, and Texas, emerged with voting power at International rallies. They provided the presidents and teen queens for a number of years.

FOCUS ON TEXAS

The Texas Unit, one of the big single units, was controlled by a group in Houston. Meeting weekly at a restaurant in Houston, the group solidified positions on issues that became decisions at the unit business meetings.

At the same time, "The Airstream Basin" was originated in an area along the Colorado River west of Austin, Granite Shoals. In less than two years there were over fifty members of the organization known as "The Airstream Basin Protective Association." Airstream owners were encouraged to build a house next to their trailer and install a septic system. No mobile homes were permitted.

This group held a few rallies of their own. They discussed issues that were of importance to Airstream members. Quite often they disagreed with the positions of the Houston group. As members of the Texas Unit, their dissatisfaction grew to the point that they contemplated organizing a separate WBCCI unit. The Houston group objected strongly at the suggestion, resisting for about a year.

Hamp Millander, the natural leader of the Airstream Basin group, sought to implement Wally Byam's concepts. One was to have more small, local units that would encourage growth, and more sales of Airstream trailers. Application for a charter from WBCCI met with approval under the name of "The Texas Hill Country Unit."

Although the breakup of the big single Texas Unit caused some bad feelings between the two units, relationships have mended over the years.

A NATURAL LEADER

I thought you should know more about Hamp Millander. Once again I can only give you a sketchy picture.

Hamp graduated from Texas A & M University in Agriculture. After graduation he got a job as an agriculture inspector along the Mexican border. He spoke Spanish fluently. His hobby was cactus, collecting and growing cacti, all kinds of cacti. At Airstream Basin he had a cactus garden.

He was one of the early people to buy an Airstream trailer. When Wally Byam first had an idea of a caravan to Mexico, he selected Hamp as the "scout". His job was to find places for the caravan stops. He was to organize and lead the parking committee. He was expected to make all arrangements prior to the caravan arrival. That responsibility included arrangement of a welcome speech by the mayor of each village where the caravan stopped.

Prior to the organization of WBCCI, Wally Byam conducted the now famous "first caravan". It was composed of all makes of trailers, almost 500 trailers, of which only about 100 were Airstreams. Let it be said here that Wally wanted WBCCI open to all trailers. His reason was that owners of "X" brand trailers would soon see that Airstreams were much better and would buy one. He lost that one.

Life magazine carried the story of that first caravan, stop by stop. I think Hamp was the scout on the first five caravans that Wally lead to Mexico. All but the first were composed exclusively of Airstream trailers. I was on a caravan with 410 Airstreams in 1967.

CONCLUSION

Prior to my retirement December 1, 1966 from my job in Illinois, I owned property in the Airstream Basin. I received a letter from George Lieser telling me that a new unit was being formed. It was to be called the "Texas Hill Country Unit". He wrote that he had put down Clara and my name as charter members and paid our dues for the first year. By the retirement date we had sold our home and put our furniture in storage. We pulled our trailer to the Airstream Basin, which was then in Sherwood Shores, and set up our new residence in our Airstream trailer.

Don't think you will want much of the above for your history. But I felt that you should know about it. (signed) Harold Wies

ABOUT THE COMPILERS:

Louis Lester Purvis, the son of Perry and Fannie Purvis, a tenant farmer in Callahan County, Texas, was born August 24, 1910.

Purvis enrolled in the Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) April 20, 1934. He was assigned immediately to CCC Company 818 located at NP-3-A on the floor of Grand Canyon National Park in Arizona.

Upon separation from the CCC, Purvis returned to his home. He attended Howard Payne College in Brownwood, Texas. He received a Bachelor of Arts degree in 1941 and a Master's degree from Texas Technological College in 1951.

Purvis entered the Navy soon after graduation from Howard Payne and served in the South Pacific for the duration of WW II. He returned to Texas and spent 30 years in the teaching profession. He is now retired. Purvis is author of "The Ace In The Hole, A Brief History of Company 818 of the Civilian Conservation Corps," copyright 1989, published by Brentwood Christian Press, Columbus, Georgia 31904.

Louis and Marie Purvis live in Brownwood, Texas. They have three children and six grandchildren. Louis and Marie were members of the West Texas Unit, WECCI, when they joined the Texas Hill Country Unit. In 1984 they began paying their International dues through THCU. They have served the unit as rally hosts. In 1990 Louis has been historical committee chairperson.

Louis Duane Hendricks, a native of Oklahoma, is a chaplain at the Olin E. Teague Veterans' Center in Temple, Texas. He is a veteran of twenty years military service as an Army chaplain. He holds a Bachelor of Arts degree in psychology from Oklahoma Baptist University and a Master of Divinity from Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary at Fort Worth, Texas. He earned a Master of Education in guidance and counseling at Sul Ross University, Alpine, Texas.

His parents, Rev. and Mrs. Louis M. Hendricks reside in Edmond, Oklahoma. His father is a retired Southern Baptist minister.

The chaplain and his wife, Mary, have three children and seven grandchildren.

Louis and Mary Hendricks joined the Paso Del Norte Unit, WECCI, in 1975. They belonged to the Kansas Unit and Greater Wichita Kansas Unit in 1980. They joined the Texas Hill Country Unit in 1982. They serve as the 1990 president and first lady of THCU.