

Crossroads of America 2013 Gathering

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August
2013

COOLtears™

and tiny campers

Miss Piggy

A Rolling Work of Art



Review
Overland Trailer's
Historic Camping
and Teardrop
Trailers DVD

**Runaway
Campers**
An Interview with
Stephen Shives

COOL Tears™ and tiny campers

Vol. 1 No. 4

August 2013 M A G A Z I N E

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Miss Piggy

A Rolling Work of Art

By Brian Woods



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What would you like to see?

Cool Tears and Tiny Campers Magazine was created with you mind. When I originally became interested in teardrops and other small campers I got my initial questions answered by Dana Parsons who owns a local teardrop and lightweight camper dealership here in Missouri. Then, of course, I turned to that great world-wide database of knowledge we call the internet. There is a never ending amount of information about the subject out there but, I am sure you will agree, it can be a little overwhelming.

Although there are great websites offering a wealth of information I still felt like something was missing. Since Tales and Trails was no longer being produced I realized there were no publications out there dedicated specifically to tiny trailers. I know how put together magazines. Wala! Cool Tears is born!

My goal is to bring you highlights of what is out there in the teardrop and tiny camper world presented in a great familiar format. However, this magazine is dedicated to you - the reader - so I want to bring you what you want to see.

Tell us the kind of articles, trailers, events, and products you would like to see in the pages of Cool Tears and we will do our best to get it in here.

Thank you,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Kevin Cross'. The signature is stylized with a large, sweeping 'K' and a cursive 'Cross'.

Kevin Cross

Editor

Cool Tears and Tiny Campers Magazine™

READER'S TEARS AND TINY CAMPERS

Show your tiny trailer pride!

Send us a picture of your teardrop or tiny travel trailer. From classic teardrops, to non-traditional, to canned hams, we want to see your tiny home away from home. Whether you built it yourself or you bought a manufactured unit we want you to send us a picture or two with as much of the information below as you are willing to provide and we will publish it right here.

Owner:

Trailer Name:

Home State:

Builder:

Trailer weight:

Tow vehicle:

Feature highlights:

Email your pictures and info to:
submissions@cooltears.com



Owner: Barry

Trailer Name: Cabin Car

Home state: Massachusetts

Builder: Barry

Trailer weight: 2100 lbs.

Tow vehicle: 07 Town and Country

Feature highlights: Barry says he built everything but the chassis which was custom built by a member of his club.



Owner: Joe

Home state: Kansas

Builder: Joe

Trailer weight: 1600 lbs

Tow vehicle: Ford 1/2 ton pickup truck

Feature highlights: 10X6 Benroy style that is insulated, airconditioned and heated with LED lighting, and a fantastic fan.



Owner: T.Hoefer

Home state: Camano Island, Washington

Builder: DMN / Northwest Teardrops, Salem Oregon

Tow vehicle: 2000 4cyl/5sp Chev S-10

Feature highlights: R & L Doors, insulated, 110 hook-up, LED Lites, W-M 4inch memory foam bed, Just basics - nothing fancy.



Crossroads of America Gathering

Been there, done that, got the shirt!

We wanted to attend at least one of the larger gatherings this year and hopefully work in a few others. When I heard how well the last Crossroads of America Gathering in 2011 was attended and that there was one planned for this year we were very enthusiastic about going. The nice thing was that it was relatively close to home. I say "relatively" because we also wanted to go to the 20th Dam Gathering but it was about 2,000 miles away while CRA 2013 was just over 400.

We were definitely not disappointed! It is one of the most beautiful parks we have ever been to and we met so many new friends and saw so many great trailers that it was almost overwhelming. We were only able to be there for the weekend so we had to make the most of it. We walked around the park and talked to as many of the attendees as possible but there were still quite a few we missed. In fact Sunday morning as we left we saw a few really cool trailers leaving that we don't even remember walking by. We must have missed at least one of the roads in the campground.

As we began to meet folks and get tours of their campers, I was reminded of why I so easily fell in love with teardrops and tiny trailers in the first place. The creativity and craftsmanship that goes into these trailers is amazing! Among the home built trailers there were no two alike. In fact, for the most part they were very different other than their small size. There were also a good number of manufactured trailers there as well with their own unique designs and quality construction.



Apparently Scottys are being made again and have been back in production for the past few years. Of course they are modernized versions of the classic originals but they made a nice first impression on us. We are going to be talking with them again to find out more.

There was always something going on if you wanted to participate. There was a great corn toss tournament and



a movie night with popcorn. Both a silent as well as a verbal auctions were held to benefit St. Jude Children's Research. We were able to sit in on a couple of the seminars that

were provided including a Dutch Oven Seminar with great information like how to care for your dutch oven and how to make your own liners. We were also able





to catch some of the trailer builders seminar hosted by Dan from Whetzel Trace Travelers and Craig from Camp Inn. They discussed things like construction materials, axel types and weight distribution. Both seminars offered a wealth of information and a great time.



I think one of the most impressive things we saw was the number of people who attended. On Saturday night there was a pot luck dinner and I think just about everyone cooked something up and came to eat. Most of the time we were there the attendees were spread out throughout the campground visiting with each other but when it was time for the big meal it suddenly became very obvious just how big this gathering actually was. I don't think the pictures even do it justice. It was like a small town festival with an unbelievable amount of great food and a seemingly endless line of people eager to dig in.



We took a ton of pictures of but unfortunately we can't include them all. We have included some of our favorites. (Some of them with captions.) You know what they say.... "A picture is worth a thousand words." ... and maybe cash depending on who is in the picture and what you have caught them doing. (Grin)



This was the smallest member of the Tear Jerkers gathering and definitely one of the cutest! This little fan was showing his pride with a CRA 2013 wristband/collar.



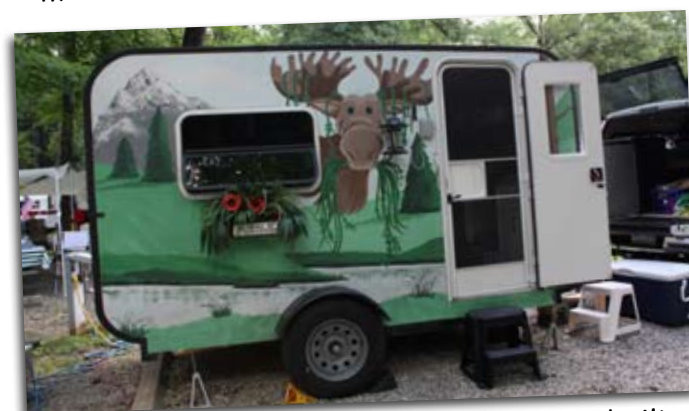
This trailer looked somewhat familiar and then I realized I had seen it before. It is one of the trailers I had seen online made by a company in Wisconsin. I have been in contact with them and you may be seeing more from them soon.



We did not get the chance to speak to the owner of this trailer but it was pointed out to us by a number of people. It was a very nice trailer that was towed by a motorcycle!



This trailer was based on the "Weekender" teardrop pans. However it took quite a bit more than a weekend because the owners decided to cover the entire thing with aluminum. Nice Job!



This was one of the roomier home built trailers there. We loved the hand painted mural and flower box.



Representing some of the manufactured teardrops at the gathering was one of the trailers for TCTeardrops



You cant say tear-droppers dont have class. This great looking trailer was decorated to the hilt and even had a table and chairs set up for a little fine dining complete with a candelabra.



Grant Whipp and Kay Cortapassi showed up in this great canned ham. This gathering was one stop on a seven week tour around the country following their 20th Dam Gathering.



We thought this was an awesome-looking vintage teardrop! Love the wheels!



Don't have a teardrop yet? Well.. Just bring the materials and build a foamie while you camp!



This teardrop had a unique system of removable panels below the hatch that exposed more storage space.



Little Guy Worldwide was represented by one of their great-looking Silver Shadows.



We were never able to catch the owner of this nice little woody at their campsite but it looked great from the road.



I think this was the only convertible, there but I think it would be a great way to camp. You gotta love fresh air!



The really nice folks with Camp-Inn brought their number 3 trailer. It still looks great!

Photo: MG




We were given the grand tour of this eye catching woody. Lots of room and really great details.



These were two great examples of creative solutions. The above trailer appeared to be covered entirely in duct tape and the one below made great use of a truck camper shell. I love creative ingenuity!




This was a really sharp trailer created by a custom builder from Indiana. His wife made the cool awning.



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This little dog was getting lots of attention in his tricked-out teardrop. The inside had countertops with food and water dishes, wall decorations, and windows to peek out of while cruising the park behind an electric scooter.

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This trailer had a fairly rare front galley style design. The owner took a lot of time with us and explained how it had been built from a variety of reclaimed material and parts. For instance the side panel material is fiberglass laminated plywood cut from the sides of a box truck. The whole family had fun making the most out of their site number with a great Roswell theme. From now on I think I will try to get site 51 when I go camping just so I can do that. Great job everybody. I love it! (Don't worry... I'll give you guys all the credit for the idea.)



History of the Tear Jerkers

By: Todd Brunengraber - Founder



I started Tearjerkers in 1997 based upon memories of my childhood camping trips with my family. We would head to Hither Hills in Montauk Pt. I'd see these little trailers & canned hams. When I got married in 1970, my brother & I split a couple of trailers & we started camping again. I never forgot the little teardrops. In 1996, I spoke to Fletch, a dealer of vintage campers in upstate NY. We talked & he proceeded to fax me a copy of Tales & Trails Teardrop Times. It was the only teardrop publication at the time.

I called Grant Whipp, the publisher, & we talked teardrop trailers for an hour or so. I told him of my idea & he sent me other issues & a compilation of members of his periodical. His thoughts were I was on to something & there weren't many clubs or groups. Also, most if not all were on the west coast.

The rest is history. I bought my first teardrop, a 1958 Scotty Sportsman from a fellow in Roanoke VA, which was advertised in Tales & Trails. Tearjerkers was on it's way. As silly as it sounds, you hook the little teardrop to your vehicle & jerk it along.

After the turn of 1997, Bubba, my Giant Schnauzer, set out to camp in the teardrop. We headed to Maine, for the Maine Streetrodders event. Low & behold there were other teardrop trailers in attendance. Some of these people soon after became members. Word of mouth filled soon after. I received phone calls & emails. It just parlayed. My first gathering, so to speak, was held at the Seaport Campground in Mystic, CT. We had 7 teardrops from as far away as Lansing, NC. All of these early followers are members, directors or Administrators today.

With the inception of the Yahoo Chat Group, things really exploded & I started forming chapters. The first chapter I came up with was the NE Chapter taking in the 6 NE states. From there it was on to the Liberty Bell Chapter in PA. After that it would be the Southern Appalachian Chapter taking up most of the South. We started experiencing huge spurts in membership. To join Tearjerkers, one would have to use his/her real name & where they hailed from. Real names make it more personal & the location helped me figure out where we needed a chapter. From there we had interest from fellows in Great Britain & Finland. We started getting people joining from many different states. We

had people coming to gatherings. As the numbers grew, so did the chapters.

We currently have 32 chapters in the continental US. We have 4 in Canada, 1 in the UK & 1 in Finland. Normally, we have a Director & a Co Director for a chapter. Some chapters have a Social Director. That person does the planning for the chapter's gatherings. We have 7 Administrators responsible for the board & chapter directors. 4 of the Admins are members since early Tearjerkers.

The 2000's brought some major gatherings. We felt a need to bring our membership together as much as possible. It was suggested to me by our directors we join the North & South at a major gathering. A lot of the membership came from these areas. A centralized location, Wytheville, VA was chosen for the 1st North/South. This was a major success. 2 years later brought another gathering, the South/North. In 2011 another Director planned the CRA. Known as the Crossroads of America, this gathering was held in Spencer, IN. People attended from states in the North & Southwest as well as the east. There were 142 trailers in attendance. Of course, we just completed CRA II.

Tearjerkers is a family oriented camping group. It was originally for Teardrop Trailer owners, but has added small or tiny travel trailers. Many of our members have more than 2 trailers. We have always stated that anyone is welcome to attend a gathering. You do not need to be a member. Once you attend a gathering, we're confident you'll have a blast & join.

Aside from our gatherings, Tearjerkers has a full functioning PHbb forum website. Our website has information pertinent to trailers, members, vendors, products & much more. Our board is private. One has to join to use the board features. Our member's privacy is my utmost concern.

We've managed to keep our membership numbers in line with the active members. As a camping group, it's about the time you have, not how many members you have. There are other forums for that. Our site has become a very personal site for the members.

As we always say: "Our campfires are always open to you: We'll leave a lantern on for you!"



Miss



As always *Cool Tears Magazine* is on the look-out for great examples of creativity in the teardrop and tiny camper world. There are, seemingly endless examples of great craftsmanship and ingenuity but occasionally one stands out above the rest when it comes to being unique. Such is the case with the Brian and Sandi Woods creation dubbed Miss Piggy. Along with some great pictures we asked Brian for some insight into the thoughts and methods that went into this incredible trailer. I hope you enjoy his commentary as much as we have.

Piggy



“The project included the use of parts from 10 cars, 4 trucks and 2 motorcycles. That is now the opening line we use when giving tours of Miss Piggy.”

My name is Brian Woods and my wife is Sandi. We live in Westbank B.C. I am 61 years old and just retired May 1st of this year. I have been building and restoring cars since I was 15 years old. (46 years) For the past 19 years I have owned a Street Rod Shop called Woody's Street Rods & Restorations.

Two years ago I got the bug to build a teardrop as going to Rod Runs over the past 40 years I have seen many. Not being much of a woodworker, I decided to use my car building skills to create a "Non Traditional" Teardrop. I had just purchased a 1959 Simca Vedette



for the flathead V8 motor, and thought the car was just too cute and in too good of shape to throw away. Originally there were thoughts of turning it

into a couch, then a barbeque, or even a utility trailer. But I already had all of those things so the teardrop project was launched.

I had a vision and access to a 1951 Studebaker 4dr so the overall picture was created in my head and the plan was to make it cool enough to tow



to Studebaker meets. I went looking on the internet for "Teardrops made from cars" and came across the TnTTT Forum, that also linked me to the Tear Jerkers. Over the winter months I gathered information from the members of both these Forums and found out what the Criteria was for my creation to be a Teardrop. I hoped that I would be welcome in the Teardrop Community if we ever attended a Gathering.

Originally I made the same mistake as many of my customers have made in the past. I under estimated the time and cost to complete the build. And I must admit that I broke my first rule or recommendation to my customers. "Don't Get Carried Away!" The build took about 14 months and I did love every minute of it, as it allowed me to be creative without restraint.

The project included the use of parts from 10 cars, 4 trucks and 2 motorcycles. That is now the opening line we use when giving tours of Miss Piggy. The name Miss Piggy? This just happened in an instant



one night while working on her in the shop. I had the three main components tacked together and was fitting the nose. As I walked into the other room and turned to get an overview of what it would look like before calling Sandi out for a look. Pow! It struck



me! It looked like a large Piggy Bank. So when I went in the house I said to Sandi "come out to the shop and see Miss Piggy" the name stuck from that moment on.



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On our cross country trip with our 1946 Studebaker M Series PU (without Miss Piggy) we ran into members of the Tear Jerkers doing a "Crawl Across the UP of Michigan". They opened the arms to us and allowed us to camp with them!



We enjoyed their company and friendship so much and the welcome feeling we had with them, that I came home and contacted the Founder of the Tear Jerkers in NY and formed our own Chapter here in B.C. of which I am the Director. We now have 17 Members over the past nine months and plans for our first Gathering are in the works.





Miss Piggy is made up of parts from the following cars, trucks and motorcycles:

- 1959 Simca Vedette** - Main body, chrome moldings, and hood on roof.
- 1951 Studebaker** – Roof, door tops, nose, grill, bullet, interior moldings, and parts of under belly.
- 1950 Studebaker** – Roof, rear window, and door tops. Interior lights.
- 1946 Chev PU** – Rear cab used for front sheet metal and front window.
- 1942 Chev PU** – running lights.
- 1954 Ford PU** - Hood was used on under belly and front corners.
- 1955 Merc PU** – Hood was used for cheeks on nose.
- 1936 Ford** - Interior door pulls.
- 1937 Ford** – Taillight lenses and rings.
- 1947 Ford** – Park light Rings with Red Lenses.
- 1961 Studebaker** - Rocker panels and heater blower fan and assembly.
- 1955 Chrysler 300** – Hubcaps
- 1979 Acura** – Air Conditioning fan & switches
- 1993 Toyota Trecel** – Jacks for rear
- 1972 Honda Trail** – Wheel used for shoreline holder.
- 1965 BSA** – Reflector for tail light.

To see more pictures and read more comments on the process visit www.tnttt.com and check out [Brian and Sandi's build journal](#).



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Runaway Campers

An Interview with Stephen Shives

By: Kevin Cross

One of the greatest things about teardrops and other tiny campers is the broad spectrum of people that it draws attention from. The people they bring together from a variety of walks of life are amazing. Some people choose to build their own trailers and some choose to purchase commercially built trailers. For those who choose to purchase their trailers there are a variety of options available. From basic camping to the top of the line, optioned out trailers, there are a lot of things to consider. In this issue we decided to feature a trailer that gets you camping in style while being easy on the budget. Whether you are a no-frills camper who just wants the basics or someone who is simply on a tight budget Runaway Campers will get off the ground and into the tiny trailer world at an affordable price.

For this manufacture feature I decided to interview Stephen Shives the owner of Runaway Campers.

How did you get started in the business?

I've started and run more than a dozen of my own businesses since high school; and I never really planned on building a camper... or starting another business. I used to do a lot of bus/motorcoach refurbishing. This time last year I was actually dismantling an old bus for the scrapyard, when I started thinking of ways I could use the windows and parts of the fiberglass wall sections. I was literally cutting the sides of a bus apart with a circular saw, and thinking of how I could put it all together again to make something different to sell.

That first camper sold in less than 2 days, and I got numerous phone calls for several days after. Which got me thinking that maybe I should try it again. And the second one sold just as fast. So in October of 2012, I decided to build 10 campers as a test run. On December 31, we sold out! We haven't slowed down since, and I'm honestly still trying to figure out what's happening.

How did you come up with the name "Runaway Campers?"

I was actually writing the advertisement to sell the first camper and stated in the ad it was "Just what you need to runaway." I immediately told my wife I was going to call it "The Runaway". Then I started looking for an idea for a logo. I originally thought of using an image of a classic locomotive, you know, a "Runaway Train"? When I searched for train images on the internet, I came across a train with a mountain and lake in the background that seemed perfect. It had to have been Divine inspiration, because the name and logo design was decided on and designed in about 15 minutes; and I'm just not that good!

Obviously one of the most outstanding features of your trailers is the price. How do you keep your prices so low?

I believe strongly in the idea that "Less is more."

While most builders offer an ever-growing list of options, I've decided to do just the opposite. In the beginning, customers would call wanting me to give them a price for customizing a camper with all of their ideas. I didn't want to lose a sale, so I soon found myself overwhelmed with lots of unique projects. Every custom feature adds to the cost in both time and materials; and I soon discovered that I was defeating my own challenge to build the most affordable product of its type on the market. Customers who aren't looking for all the bells and whistles (or want to add their own) can save a lot of money.

Secondly, we are debt-free and keep our overhead as low as possible. We also do not have dealers. When you purchase a Runaway directly from us, there is no middle man, dealer fees or salesman's commission to pay.

With the low price our readers may suspect that your trailers are not built very well. Are runaway campers going to hold up over the years?

While we obviously don't have a 10 year track record to show; we're determined to build a quality product. It's pretty common for people to think that the more you pay for something, the better the quality, but that rarely seems to be the case. Many of the key components that we use (i.e. doors, windows, axles, siding, etc.) are made by the same manufacturers that provide them to companies that build RVs costing more than \$100,000. So, I know we don't cut corners in that department.



We've recently had several customers return from road trips ranging from 6,000-9,000 miles and have come by so we could inspect the trailers and do some general maintenance. This has allowed us to see how well the trailers are holding up, and also see things we could do differently to make them even better in the future.

What types of options do you offer?

Since we typically build 20-30 trailers at a time, most of the options are added after completion; such as wheel/tire upgrades, graphics, extra shelving and an



outside cargo box. A/C used to be an option, but 9/10 get it anyway, so a trailer without A/C is actually a special order now. Another special order is a driver's side entrance door. (Some couples prefer the convenience of getting in and out on their own side of the bed.)

How did you arrive at the current design?

I'll admit the Runaway design was a little risky, since teardrop style campers have dominated the market for so long. My main purpose in the design, was to minimize wasted material, and maximize interior space while using standard 4 x 8 plywood



sheeting for construction. We get a lot questions about aerodynamics too; but with the height of the leading edge at about 60 inches, there's really not much wind



resistance; and most owners have noticed very little change in fuel economy, even with smaller cars.



The design seems as if it would be very lightweight. How much do your trailers weigh?

With A/C it weighs in at 690lbs

We have readers from across the nation. If they don't live near your sales center in Florida, what is the best way for them to take delivery of a Runaway Camper?

We've had customers drive from as far away as Las Vegas to get their trailer. If you have the time, it's a great excuse for a roadtrip! Otherwise, we can ship to most locations for about \$.80 mile. For farther distances the best rate is by freight, where we actually put the entire trailer in a crate and ship to the nearest city to your destination. We can also have a driver meet you at a half way point to save time and money on shipping.

In researching you product on your web site I noticed you have a philosophy about business that is pretty unique in today's world. Can you tell us more about that?

The most important thing to me, is to run our busi-

ness in line with Christian principles. I am convinced that our talent, skills, money, businesses, etc. do not belong to us; but are on loan to us from God, to use and manage in a way that honors Him, while we're alive.

We're a debt-free company, and will stay that way or close the doors. I know what it's like to have bill collectors calling everyday; and that's a place in life I refuse to go back to. I started the business with \$10,000 that I had set aside to invest. If it had gone belly up once that money was gone, that would have been then end of it. I would have recovered from the loss and moved on.

It's really an amazing thing, to just let the business grow itself. Personally, I'm content with whatever success we have, whether it's big or small. I've just found my biggest troubles in life always came while trying to be something I'm not.

Any final thoughts you would like to leave our readers with?

I was just thinking how God often orchestrates our life, when we don't even realize it. Six months ago, I had no idea some of the things that would be happening in this venture. My father-in-law was close to retirement and was excited about coming onboard to help out.

At the time, I was just kind of taking things easy. I figured that in addition to a lot of the other projects I "dabbled" in, we could build a few of these a month together and make some extra money. After the first 10 units sold in less than two months, I started scrambling to find components to build more and discovered it was not going to be as easy as I thought.

Doors, windows and trailer parts to build a few here and there was one thing; but to start consistently building multiple units was a whole new ballgame! In a very short time, I feel like God put me in the path with the right suppliers and sent me the right help. My wife has been a constant encouragement to keep going; and

we're having a great time watching this thing take root.

This is a product/business that is supposed to encourage people to enjoy the journey; so I feel like the best thing I can do, is lead by example and enjoy the journey as well.

What is the best way for our readers to contact you to purchase a unit or to find out more about Runaway Campers?

My brother Marvin, has recently stepped in to help me with sales. The easiest way to place an order or get a question answered is to call him directly at 352-299-6799. Our website is still a work in progress, but has answers to most of the common questions. You can visit us there at www.RunawayCampers.com



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Campfire Cookin'

Summertime Side Dishes

By Rhonda Gentry

“T is the season for roadside produce stands and farmers’ markets. When we’re driving by, the sweet corn and fresh fruit usually catch our eye, but there are so many other wonderful items perfect for outdoor cooking and eating. On one recent trip, we stopped at a farmers’ market and bought green beans, potatoes, eggplant, Patty Pan squash, asparagus, and Brussels sprouts. If you are turning up your nose at most of our selection, then your mother probably boiled them to death, leaving them mushy and tasteless. Take a risk and try them again, using more appropriate cooking methods. Besides, everything tastes better cooked outdoors!

Grilled Asparagus

To grill vegetables, they need to be large enough to not fall through the grill, or placed on skewers or in baskets. My favorite method of controlling asparagus spears is to place them on bamboo skewers. Face them the same direction so that the thick stems can be placed over hotter coals while the heads just get warmed.



Once the asparagus spears are skewered, drizzle them with olive oil. Place them across the bars of a grate over hot coals. Cook for about five minutes, then flip over and cook until tender. The stems should be bright green. Season as you wish. I like to use lemon pepper or a sauce made with mayonnaise thinned with a little lemon juice.



Steamed Patty Pan Squash

Steaming is a nutritious way to cook vegetables and you don't have to worry about burning them. Since most of us don't travel with steamers, I use a metal colander. To steam any kind of squash, it should be very young and tender. These Patty Pans are smaller than the palm of my hand and took about 20 minutes to cook.



To steam – place squash in the colander over a pan of boiling water. Cover. Steam for about 15 minutes,



then poke with a fork to check for tenderness. When they are as soft as you like them, season them as you wish. I like to use a rosemary and herb mix on summer squash.

Roasted Brussels Sprouts

Even if you think you don't like Brussels sprouts, you'll like these.

Brussels sprouts can be roasted on or off of the stem, with or without blanching. Blanching involves dunking the vegetable in boiling water for just a couple of minutes to increase the moisture content of the vegetable and reduce burning.



To roast on the stem – cut off a row of sprouts along one side, so that the stem will lie flat in the roasting pan or Dutch oven. Drizzle with olive or grape seed oil and white cooking wine. The wine isn't necessary, but it creates a nice, sweet glaze. Cover. Place over hot coals and spread a layer on top of the oven. If you are using a roasting pan on a barbecue grill, close



the cover so that the heat surrounds the pan. Roast for about 20 minutes, pull off a sprout and test for doneness. Continue roasting until done.

To roast just the sprouts – place the sprouts in a heavy pan or Dutch oven. Drizzle with oil and white cooking wine. Because the sprouts are sitting in the liquid, they will be less crunchy than roasting on the stem, but will absorb more of the wine flavor. Roast for about 15-20 minutes then check for doneness.



Green Beans and Potatoes

The sign on these potatoes was “new potatoes,” but they're the biggest “new” potatoes I've ever seen. However, cut into fourths, they cooked up nicely and were wonderfully fine-textured.



To cook green beans and potatoes this way, all you need is a source of bottom heat. It's a great dish when the rain is pouring and you have no dry firewood. Add some ham, and you've got a complete meal.

To make – sauté 3-4 tablespoons chopped onion in vegetable oil or bacon grease. If you use oil, you still get that smoky flavor from cooking over the fire. Add 8-10 new potatoes (or 2-3 regular potatoes, cut into fourths), about 2 pounds fresh green beans and $\frac{3}{4}$ cup of water. Cover. Place over hot coals and cook, stirring occasionally. Add more water if needed. Cook until potatoes are just tender and the beans are still bright green. Salt and pepper to taste.

Scalloped Eggplant

Cut one medium-sized eggplant into cubes. I never peel eggplant, but you may, if you want. Boil about 5 minutes in just enough salted water to cover. Drain.



Place eggplant in Dutch oven. Add: $\frac{1}{2}$ cup chopped onion

$\frac{1}{2}$ cup sliced mushrooms

two slices bacon, crumbled

two slices bread crumbled

Beat two eggs with $\frac{1}{2}$ cup milk. If you use powdered milk, mix it with the water that you boiled

the eggplant in for extra nutrition. Pour the egg/milk mixture over the vegetables. Cover. Place over hot coals. Spread a layer of hot coals on the lid. Bake for about 30 minutes. If desired, sprinkle grated cheese or cracker crumbs on top, then bake for about 5 more minutes. If the casserole is too “wet” for you, put it back over the coals with the lid off to allow some of the liquid to evaporate.

See? Corn isn't the only vegetable at the farmers' market that you can cook over a fire. Be brave and try something new!



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HISTORIC CAMPING & TEARDROP TRAILERS

By Rachael King



In the pursuit of learning more about the things that we love we encounter a myriad of informational avenues. Everything from literature, (like what you're reading right now), to radio, to television and internet. In our pursuit of learning more about Teardrops, we have come across a wonderfully informational, (and entertaining!) video all about the history and current life of Teardrop Trailers. History teacher Mark Janke is behind the making of "Historic Camping & Teardrop Trailers", a film that was set apart as an official selection of the Spokane International Film Festival in 2012.

We love that this film is an entertaining crash course in teardrops for both established lovers of the tiny campers, as well as for new comers to the world of the teardrop trailer. For those who already own a teardrop, the history and origins of teardrops and the interviews with other owners and folks currently working on restoring teardrops is a huge point of interest, and for those newbies out there (myself included) the historical information and real life interviews, and the looks at all of the different types of teardrops are fascinating. The film is infused with humor and beautiful scenes from around the U.S. as Mark travels to different locations to meet up with different folks and talk with them about their experiences with teardrops. Along the way we meet up with families who have discovered and fallen in love with teardrop camping, a woman who has found an exciting hobby in restoring antique teardrops,

the National RV Hall of Fame, and the makers of customized teardrops, lending a little variety to the standard quo of the campers.

After watching “Historic Camping & Teardrop Trailers, we thought it would be interesting to hear from Mark a few of the reasons he made this film and where his love of teardrops came from. So, in the spirit of modern technology, we shot him an email and got some great answers to our questions:

Mark, what inspired you to make this film?

“The quick answer: My student’s interest in the subject. The philosophical answer: I think it is important to balance the core requirements of a history class (as defined by the state) with what the students are interested in learning. High school history books cover what the authors think

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is important to know. There is a consensus on the basics for most subjects so most textbooks are basically the same. What students don't realize is that there is much more to our past than what is in the textbook. This is why I cover music, fashion, accepted social protocol, and other supplementary topics to help bring vibrancy to class.

An additional reason is what I see happening in America. In my 11 years as a teacher, I've taught about 4,000 people. This is a small slice of humanity but it has shown me that my students, for the most part, are pretty disconnected with the earth, outdoors, and the wild places of the planet. Sure, there are track stars, football players, etc. but those who go backpacking, rock climbing, and actual camping (not in a motorhome with a microwave and TV) seem to be a shrinking group. One of my goals, that has seen some fruition with my students, is that it will inspire them to unplug from time to time and go outside. I think that gaming, media, and other technologies are amazing and they teach us valuable skills, but I also know that nature brings a balance to life that cannot be found anywhere else. Being in nature can put our egos, our problems, our victories, and our existence in perspective.

As I stated at the Spokane International Film Festival when introducing my film, "I made this film, in part, to inspire those who see it to go outside. So if you leave part way through the film, I've accomplished my goal!"

It is obvious that you're passionate about teardrops, but many people are passionate about a subject and don't take the steps that you have in putting this film together, so what is it that lead you to this project?

"I have a colleague at another school who was lamenting that he wanted to share the history of camping & teardrop trailers but he didn't have a teardrop trailer to bring to the school (like I do).

He was the first to suggest a video in 2007. In the fall of 2009, I was invited to the US Library of Congress to see what the library is doing to digitize their collections. While there, I ended up helping them devise ways of making their materials easier for teachers to access. I also did some research. While talking with a few of the librarians in the rare books collection, they asked me if I was working on any projects. I didn't really have any major projects going but I mentioned the possibility of a teardrop film. They latched onto that topic with surprising enthusiasm and began emailing materials to me (which they still do to this day). It was at that point I realized that this might be a project worth pursuing. I began passing the idea past some people and slowly a group of institutions began supporting the idea. From there it really took on a life of its own (and nearly eclipsed my own life). What started out as an idea for a 10 min classroom video turned into a feature length travel documentary. I was additionally surprised that the film had appeal outside of the classroom. That wasn't the intent of the film but I am happy if others find it a well spent 46 min.

How did you encounter the people that you interviewed for the film?

"There was no one way that they came together. Like I stated earlier, this film took on a life of its own. Some of the people, I pursued interviews with because they are experts in their fields. Through my contacts at the Library of Congress I spoke with some historians at the Smithsonian Museum and they forwarded me to the National RV Hall of Fame (the place the Smithsonian calls when they have questions about camping or RV history).

Debra Kellerman sent me an email after she heard about my film project (perhaps through the overlandtrailer.com website). She told me about her collection. I hadn't found such a great collection of historical trailers in one location. To make her story further enticing was the fact that she was

beautifully restoring the trailers despite her claiming a lack of knowledge of tools.

Larry Shank's story is one of my favorites. Larry is a jeep owner as well as a teardrop owner (something we both



have in common). I don't remember how I originally heard his story but I do know the first time I thought I had to contact him was after reading the story of his Dad's WWII era Willie's Jeep online. It took me a while to track down contact information but we eventually emailed and spoke on the phone. He sent materials and information. I started piecing together a segment and working with musicians to soundtrack it. Through the magic of the internet, his story is in the film. I still haven't met Larry but I hope to in the future."

Is there a community of teardrop campers that lovers of teardrops who watch this film may like to know about?

"The obvious answer is the teardrops and tiny trailer's forum (www.tnttt.com). It is a great place for all teardrop and small trailer related subjects. Teardrop campers are a great group of people from all walks of life. In general, I've found them to be supportive, helpful, and willing to offer quality criticisms of ideas. Another common trait is a general acceptance that they're style of camping is unusual and will attract attention. There are some great stories on the forum about encounters with curious people."

You focus on both restoring older teardrop trailers as well as how to order a new or custom made teardrop. Do you have a preference?

"For the purposes of the film, I didn't have a preference. In the film, I wanted my students to see that teardrops are not only a valuable part of camping history but that they are still relevant to our contemporary times."

Do you enjoy restoring older models, or do you prefer the idea of a new one?

"Personally, I haven't restored a vintage trailer for two primary reasons. First, they are difficult to find, and second, they are usually overpriced when you do find them."

I've worked on a few vintage trailers but mostly to help and not to do the entire restoration myself. As a history teacher I love things from the past and hope to restore one at some point.

My business partner and I went into building new trailers pretty much by accident. Our first customers recognized and cornered me at a concert I was attending and demanded that I make them a trailer. I called Nathan (my business partner and fellow educator), and asked him what he was doing during summer break. That, as they say, is that. It is an accidental business that we've got on our hands."

Thanks to Mark for his willingness to share about his experiences and for a great film! We highly recommend this film to anyone who enjoys teardrops or anyone who is interested in learning more about them, or really anyone just looking for a good documentary. Trust us, you won't be disappointed!

To order your copy of *Historic Camping and Teardrop Trailers* or to find out more about Mark and Overland Trailer visit: overlandtrailer.com



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