

# HISTORICALLY SPEAKING

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## Heritage

Airstream and WBCCI have a unique shared heritage that cannot be duplicated by any other RV brand nor club; a heritage of exciting, globetrotting travel, to Europe, Cuba, Africa, and even Around the World! I try to highlight this special heritage in Historically Speaking articles. One passionate club member recently went further and developed a series of “heritage” motions that were presented to the International Board of Trustees (IBT) at the International Rally in Escanaba. These motions were created to recognize and celebrate the club members that made historically significant contributions to the club and the Airstreams that participated in historically significant events.

Support for the “heritage” concept was strong among IBT members, but the initial motions were a little too complex, so they were withdrawn to allow some concerns to be addressed. After some quick work, a single, simpler heritage motion was developed which was subsequently approved by the IBT. The hope is that future “heritage” motions can capture the remaining aspects of the withdrawn original motions.

The approved motion created a new category of membership numbers called **Heritage Numbers**, which are WBCCI membership numbers that were used on Airstreams that participated in historically significant events, such as famous caravans. The approved motion also converted 83 membership numbers to Heritage Numbers and these numbers will no longer be reassigned to members after the current assignees do not renew their membership.

It seems appropriate that we highlight approved Heritage Numbers and their original assignees in the *Blue Beret* so that the names and accomplishments of these members are not forgotten and there is no better time to start than now. Some of the 83 recently approved Heritage

Numbers were used by club members that were instrumental in the creation, promotion, and growth of Airstream and WBCCI:

### #2 – Helen and Dale Schwamborn

Helen was Wally Byam’s cousin and her list of contributions to Airstream and WBCCI is long. She was responsible for the formation of WBCCI during the 1955 Eastern Canada Caravan, the development of and participation in several historically significant caravans, and she was the WBCCI Executive Secretary and the *Blue Beret* Magazine Head Editor for many years. Helen’s son Dale participated in several caravans and was an advance scout on the 1959-60 African Caravan.



Dale and Helen - 1955 Eastern Canada

### #81 – Andy and Connie Charles

Andy joined Airstream in 1947 and rose to become the Airstream Ohio Plant President in 1952 and the Airstream Chairman of the Board of Directors in 1962. Andy and Connie participated in five caravans and developed and personally led two caravans, with the most significant being the 1963-64 Around the World Caravan (ATWC).

Their children, Nick (21) and Christine (17) Charles were as-



signed their own WBCCI #35 and were the scouts on the ATWC, traveling ahead of the main group in a Ford C700 truck with an Airstream body on the back.



Charles Family - Before the ATWC

### #100 – Art and Caroline Costello

Art joined Airstream in 1947 and rose to become the Airstream California Plant President in 1952 and the Airstream President in 1962. His leadership ensured the continued existence and growth of Airstream (and because of that, WBCCI) after Wally Byam’s death in 1962. Art and Caroline participated in four caravans and personally led one.



Costello Family - 1957 Mexico Caravan

For various reasons, #1 for Wally and Stella Byam could not be included in the motion that was approved, but it is hoped that #1 can be added as a Heritage Number in the future.

The remaining 80 approved Heritage Numbers belonged to members on the official rosters of the **1959-60 Cape Town to Cairo Caravan** and the **1963-64 Around the World Caravan**. These were the two longest, most challenging, and most publicized Airstream caravans ever run. They are more responsible for the Airstream travel mystique than any other caravan and are a source of pride for club members. Over a dozen Airstreams from these two caravans are known to still exist, with six currently owned by WBCCI members. While all the participants on these two caravans are pioneers worthy of recognition, I'd like to highlight one participating couple right now:

**#50 – Louis and Mildred Mousley**

#50 was designated as a Heritage Number because the Mousleys participated in the 1959-60 African Caravan, but they did so much more than merely participate in a single historic caravan. They traveled with Wally Byam on eight early caravans, including 1956 Europe and 1956 Cuba.



**Mousleys - 1956 European Caravan**



**#50 Leading the 1956 Europe Caravan**

On each caravan, Lou was the “Wagon Boss” leading the group to the next campsite. Lou is credited as being the father of the “wagon wheel” parking formation, having perfected the technique for parking the Airstreams in a perfect circle using sticks and string.



**Lou Parking Rigs in a Wagon Wheel**

The 1956 22' Flying Cloud Airstream that the Mousleys used on the 1956 Europe and 1956 Cuba caravans, among others, is currently owned by a club member and was at the 2017 International Rally in Escanaba, MI. Their 1959-60 Africa Airstream is still waiting to be rediscovered.



**Mousleys 1956 Airstream in Escanaba**

That's it for now. I'll highlight other Heritage Numbers and the corresponding assignees from time to time in the future. Please let me know of other member numbers that you think should be recognized as Heritage Numbers.

**The 83 Currently Approved Heritage Numbers**

In case you are wondering if you are currently assigned a Heritage Number, they are:

- 2, 35, 50, 81, 83, 87, 100, 115, 120,
- 163, 165, 310, 329, 342, 360, 503,
- 598, 606, 608, 616, 627, 692, 747,
- 751, 767, 975, 985, 1042, 1166,
- 1199, 1242, 1309, 1408, 1506,
- 1604, 1954, 1986, 2058, 2186,
- 2194, 2198, 2201, 2209, 2279,
- 2345, 2359, 2374, 2375, 2380,
- 2397, 2400, 2420, 2421, 2474,
- 2476, 2925, 3238, 3317, 3560,
- 3690, 3912, 4032, 4091, 4255,
- 4936, 5232, 5289, 5618, 5980,
- 6065, 6082, 6472, 6524, 6705,
- 6730, 6768, 6781, 7170, 7305,
- 7505, 7667, 8511, 8671.

A few more may be added in the future if appropriate cases are identified.