

The “Trailer”

by
Larry Kern

My “Trailer”* is one proud possession that enhances my enjoyment of attending band organ rallies. One can easily note that the large white and blue striped trailer actually extends in length beyond the actual exhibit area that displays my Model 187 Stinson Band Organ (Fig. 1). A glance into the trailer from the rear walk-in access door appears to reveal a compact but well arranged over-the-road workshop and music roll storage area. But a closer inspection reveals an unusual feature for a band organ trailer. A full size folding “Murphy Bed” can appear and disappear from the wall almost like magic. And that's just the beginning of the travel trailer-like features that my son, Don, and I built into the trailer nearly ten years ago.



Figure 1 The Kern truck and “Trailer”

Features such as an electrical on-board generator, air conditioning and electric heating are all functional (the air conditioning might account for why so many members were seen going in and out of my trailer last summer). A complete entertainment center with TV, VCR, AM/FM radio, CD, stereo cassette player & recorder, along with an emergency 2-way weather alert radio, are neatly racked in an upright console. An AC/DC refrigerator, hot water capability, coffee maker, oscillating fan, lamps, magazine racks, framed pictures, and my favorite carousel horse, in miniature, also share space.

What's missing? Well, not the toilet! Not many people ask, but a functional one is on board. When “cabin fever” strikes, I enjoy extending a 20-foot long porch awning on the rear of the trailer and setting the lawn chairs out to read a good book. And, if needed, I can remove my bicycle from the rear of the trailer for bike riding. Couple all of these things together with storage cabinets for essentials and P.J. (a mischievous Miniature “Yorkie”) and I are able to enjoy travel trailer life. While on the road, I find only a singular inconvenience and that is showering remote from the trailer. Although a daily must, this as only a minor obstacle to overcome while on the road. While parking overnight, recognized travel trailer campsites and large truck stops provide excellent hygiene facilities.

While at band organ rallies I normally like to stay at the motel arranged by the host. Occasionally being able to travel trailer in the host's back yard before and after rallies has proven to be a great way to visit. Having travel trailer features does not eliminate the need to use motels, but does offer a certain aspect of independence in being able to decide when and when not to use them. Curtailing the use of motel rooms, especially those needed for late night check in, significantly reduces the overall cost of traveling.

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Figure 2 The interior of the “Trailer” reveals a most home-like setting with an entertainment center, refrigerator and most important, air-conditioning.

Larry Kern is a retired fire chief from El Paso, Texas. Not only is Larry's organ outstanding (a large Stinson Model 187) but also the trailer in which the organ is displayed.