

## **Oldsters' Caravan to Tour Africa**

By ROBERT PETERSON

**B**AKERSFIELD, Calif.: I've heard of many novel groups for senior citizens, but none that tops the Wally Byam Caravan Club. It has several thousand trailer-owning members and its lofty purpose is fun, companionship, and travel by trailer. There are no fees and anyone can join who owns a car and trailer. The club has made dozens of jouncy journeys to far-away places, and is packing its gear for an 18-month trailer tour of Africa starting next June.

I asked Wally Byam, a ruddy extrovert of 62 who throbs with vitality, how it all started. "When I first laid eyes on a trailer some 30 years ago," he recalled, "I was so fascinated that I decided to become a trailer manufacturer. I opened a factory, things prospered, and soon my wife and I were able to devote more and more time to trailer travel.

"About 20 years ago, we announced we were going to Mexico and that if anyone was interested to come along. A dozen couples with trailers showed up and the pattern was set for some pretty terrific caravans. Our most rugged trip was one we took ten years ago into the heart of Central America. Our biggest was a caravan of 487 trailers to Acapulco, and our longest was a six month tour of Europe a few years ago.

"We camp each night at the edge of towns and require an area about the size of a football field. We're self-contained and we leave every campsite cleaner than we found it. Evenings we get together around a big bonfire and enjoy the fellowship which comes from traveling together and sharing experiences.

"Our members average 68 years of age and most are retired. Many say they were bored to death with retirement until they began traveling with us. In addition to our major caravans we have smaller groups in various parts of the country which conduct caravans as often as once a month.



PETERSON

"Most members are in good financial circumstances, although the trips are fairly inexpensive since your trailer serves as your hotel. Some couples budget \$10 a day or less for expenses. All members have homes of their own and use their trailers only when traveling.

"We'll have about 60 trailers, or 'land yachts' as we call them, in the African caravan. We'll go by ship from New York to Capetown, and then we'll cross the continent to Cairo at a leisurely rate of a hundred or so miles each day. We'll be in Bethlehem on Christmas Eve, and later we'll cross into Europe and wend our way to Norway where we'll take ships back to the States. We'll see and be seen by millions of people and we hope to be a good advertisement for democracy and international friendship."

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I SUSPECT WALLY BYAM will go down in geriatric history as a sort of Pied Piper who not only led his followers out of apathy into adventure, but gave many people a new appreciation of the lively satisfactions to be found in the retirement years.

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If you would like a free folder describing in detail the Wally Byam Caravan Club, write to this column care of the N.Y. Journal-American, 220 South st., N.Y. 15, N.Y., enclosing a stamped, self-addressed envelope.

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*Thought you might like this*

## 90 Americans Seeing Africa the Hard Way

Addis Ababa, Ethiopia — (AP)—Smelling of the bush, covered with red dust and with sores on their hands, Wally Byam's "lost tribe" of 90 Americans groaned into Addis Ababa Thursday — 20 days after leaving Nairobi, Kenya.

Emperor Haile Selassie put the imperial race track at their disposal as a parking lot for their 35 trucks and trailers. Hundreds of curious Ethiopians gathered to peep through the fence at the "American invasion."

The caravan chief Byam of Los Angeles is leading a safari 11,900 miles from Cape town to the Mediterranean through darkest Africa.

### Women in Majority

Most of the caravan's members—from 24 states—are elderly people with itchy feet. But 21 are from 6 to 19 years old, and there are more women than men.

The corns, Wally explained, came from building their own roads in many parts of Southern Ethiopia.

"We are thinking of presenting a bill to the Ethiopian government for improving the roads," quipped one sore-handed caravanner.

The caravan had now covered 10,000 miles from Cape town.

### Heading for Cairo

The adventurers are eager to push on to Cairo before Christmas. They expect to tackle the arid wastes of the Nubian Desert, where a five-man, American-French expedition recently met disaster.

By the time they reach the Mediterranean, expedition members will have filmed a wide range of big game, climbed Mt. Kilimanjaro and fished off the African coast.

From Suez, most will continue by sea to Lebanon, Turkey, the Balkans and Europe.

# ~~Brit~~ American Caravan Of Truck Travelers Traverses Africa

More than 100 Americans are touring the world in trailers.

The tourists, representing 25 states, are at present traveling from the Cape of Good Hope in South Africa to Cairo, Egypt, in 42 trailers and panel trucks. They are averaging between 100 and 150 miles a day.

In the party are retired persons, farmers, doctors, school teachers, business men, architects, and children, all out to see the world.

## Natives Friendly

The caravan left Capetown, South Africa, July 7 and is scheduled to cover 11,000 miles in 82 days. The group is planning to reach Cairo by Dec. 11.

Little trouble with maintenance has been encountered by the party thus far, inasmuch as the roads and servicing facilities have proved to be adequate enough.

And the Americans are more than pleased with the cordial reception they have received along the route. They are finding Africans interesting and friendly.

From Africa, the group will travel through the Middle East and Europe.

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### American tourists don't seem to know

# That caravan trek may be heading for big trouble

By the Motor Editor

THE 105 AMERICANS who intend travelling up Africa in luxurious caravans may well find that their light-hearted dream holiday trip will turn into a nightmare. Four Johannesburg people with wide experience of travel in Africa say the party will face greater difficulties than its members seem to realize.

The people to whom I spoke were the touring expert of the Automobile Association, Mr. L. L. Leppan, Miss. Eugene Seeuwen, Mr. A. Freudenberg and Mr. John Everard.

Their opinion is that the Americans have chosen the most difficult route. Instead of planning to travel through Ethiopia and the Sudan — where Americans are not particularly welcome — they should have decided on the route through the Sahara.

Their projected route will tax their courage — and their pockets

— to the limit in spite of the fact that they are magnificently equipped.

Many of the people in the party are no longer young, while others are far too young to face a journey of this type.

Unless the drivers are extremely skilful they face a distinct possibility of getting themselves stuck, or of seeing their expensive caravans wrecked.

In some places where there are hairpin bends the caravans will have to be manhandled round the corners; in other places they will become stuck in dips in the road or on tall "middelmantjies."

### FERRY TROUBLE

If the Americans follow their original route to Nairobi, which will take them through Albertville on the western side of Lake Tanganyika, they will have difficulties at the ferry at Kiambi.

They can expect to spend at least three days here getting their vehicles across the river and may even be forced to wait twice as long.

### DESERT HEAT

After Nairobi their difficulties will increase rapidly. They hope to get through Kenya into Ethiopia, but it seems doubtful that permits will be given to them for this.

In Ethiopia and the Sudan they will find bad roads and the weather may be against them.

They then face the Nubian Desert, where the heat may be unbearable for the older people.

The fact that some of the Americans have no idea of what lies ahead seems to be expressed in the remark of one driver who said that the road between Kokstad and Port Edward was appalling. He hoped that there was nothing else in Africa like it.

## Sad family's proudest possession

By a Staff Reporter



Barbara Anne Wilkinson . . . for fortitude.

A medal seldom before awarded in South Africa—the Badge of Fortitude—is today the proudest possession of a Parktown North, Johannesburg, family.

It was awarded to 12-year-old Barbara Anne Wilkinson who, though she knew about the award, was not there to receive it recently when the Chief Commissioner of the Girl Guides in the Union, Miss Marjorie Grant, presented it to her mother.

The little blonde girl, suffering from a serious illness almost since birth, died before the presentation could be made to her.

Barbara was a First Class Brownie of the 11th Johannesburg (Parkview) Pack and had been awarded 10 proficiency badges, mostly for handicrafts and writing, since joining in 1955.

### The weather

Forecast by Weather Bureau, Pretoria, till sunset tomorrow:

TRANSVAAL.—Mainly fine and mild to warm.

LOCAL SUNSET today: 5.46; sunrise tomorrow, 6.30; sunset tomorrow: 5.46.

### Court hears of prison "gang" war:

# Convicts sang to drown cries

RIVALRY BETWEEN TWO "GANGS" of Native prisoners at Baviaanspoort which, it is alleged, led to the death of a member of one of them in a cell on August 12, was described at the Pretoria Criminal Sessions today.

Five prisoners appeared charged with the murder of Mtandeni Nzubane. The trial, which may last a week, is before Mr. Justice Williamson and two assessors.

The accused men are Jack Mashilo, Somson Stetswayo, Green Ngomo, Daniel Magokane and Jimmy Masimula.

The five were known respectively as "Lord," "Governor," "Inspector," "Doctor" and "Soldier," according to the evidence.

Mr. G. G. van der Walt, Q.C., with him Mr. P. Oosthuizen, appeared for the Crown. Mr. M. Mentz, Mr. I. W. B. de Villiers and Mr. K. L. Simons appeared (pro deo) for the defence.

### STATEMENTS

Mr. G. J. Ellis, additional magistrate at Pretoria, in evidence today read lengthy statements made before him on January 21 and 22 by Green Ngomo and Jimmy Masimula (two of the accused) describing the manner of Nzubane's death, and the events leading up to it.

The statement implicated all five accused men but alleged that they had acted on the orders of "Lord" (Jack Mashilo).

The dead man belonged to a rival gang and had fought with one of the five the previous night. The dead man, according to one alleged confession, was kidnapped, made to strip and ordered to sit on his haunches, holding a pack of blankets over his head.

They then began to hit him with their fists and with a wooden spoon. When he fell they kicked him and jumped on his chest and abdomen.

After that they stopped for a while and ordered him to wash and dress. After he had done so, they told him to undress and

began assaulting him again.

While the assault was proceeding Jack ("lord") ordered the other prisoners in the cell to sing to drown Nzubane's cries.

Later they put his clothes under his head and covered him with a blanket. Green Ngomo said in his alleged confession that Nzubane was cold at this stage. In the early hours one of them got up and found that he was dead. They arranged that two men—including Green Ngomo—should take the blame.

Det. Sgt. A. D. J. Bezuidenhout read statements made on August 4, 1958, by the other three, in which they blamed Green Ngomo and Jimmy Masimula for Nzubane's death.

(Proceeding)

## SURGEON TELLS SECRET OF SUCCESS

# Beauty's reputation butsed

TOKYO, Thursday.

A PLASTIC surgeon said today that he performed a bust-enlarging plastic-injection operation on lovely Miss Aikiko Kojima before she won the Miss Japan and Miss Universe contests.

"I must emphasize that Miss Kojima is just one of many such Japanese beauties who have had plastic surgery treatment—a number of famous actresses have also had similar operations," Dr.

Toshizo Matsui said in an interview.

He confirmed a Tokyo newspaper report which said Miss Kojima, a fashion model, "worried about her small bust," had liquid plastic injected into her bosom at Dr. Matsui's hospital.

"Miss Kojima came to my clinic a few days before the Miss Japan contest (June 12)," Dr. Matsui said.

The 24-year-old beauty, whose measurements are 37-23-28, is on

her way home to Tokyo after winning the Long Beach, California, beauty pageant last month. She is due here tomorrow.

Dr. Matsui added: "I didn't tape-measure her. If she came to my clinic, I assume she did so because her bust measurement fell from last year.

"As a medical practitioner, I can assert that a woman's bust can shrink after hitting the peak, usually around 20 years of age."

—Sapa-Associated Press.

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Fairground Rally Group Heads for Game Refuge

8/27/59

# Trailer Caravan Excites Africans

Wally Byam, whose trailer club rallies each spring at Los Angeles County Fairgrounds, is leading a modern American "caravanserai" of 41 trailers through South Africa.

The trailers, with 105 persons, are on an 18-month safari of Africa, the Middle East and Europe, according to an Associated Press dispatch.

They are drawn by pastel-colored, four-wheel drive trucks which left Johannesburg, South Africa, the other day for Kruger National Park, one of the biggest game sanctuaries in Africa.

While the American party was in Johannesburg, approximately 2,000 persons

spent a Sunday afternoon filming, prodding and examining the trailers whenever they got the chance.

The silver, Zeppelin-like trailers are comfortably fitted with the necessities of life.

At the rear of the trailer, the bathroom, hardly big enough to turn around in, is useful for wash day, as Mrs. Darrell Diamond of San Diego put it.

The heat from a gas refrigerator passes through the top half of a cupboard where Mrs. Diamond keeps her cereals, tea towels and other things which need to be dry.

The stove and refrigerator use butane gas which can be bought in disposable contain-

ers in almost every country in Africa.

The families have been eating indoors these South African winter nights but will probably have barbecues when they get farther north and the weather warms up.

There are 20 teen-agers with the group and most of them will miss school for the time being but, when the party reaches the Middle East, Mrs. Diamond's daughter, Shirley, will fly to Switzerland to attend school until June of next year. She will go back to the States in September 1960, to continue her normal schooling.

Mrs. Diamond remarked at the similarity between

South Africans and Americans, and at the lack of envy for Americans in South Africa. Americans are liked, she says, not for what they represent, but rather for what they are.

The group has, so far, visited most towns in the Cape Province and has covered the famous "Garden Route" on the south coast which Mrs. Diamond found much like California.

Mrs. Gladys Donlavy, assistant secretary of Los Angeles County Fair, says Byam is the author of an article on land yachting in a late issue of a trailer magazine. Byam calls his trailer club the "Wally Byam Travel Trailer Club."

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