

Wally, Me and Pee Wee

by Dale "PeeWee" Schwamborn #00002

Wally wrote a letter to the principal of my Junior High School, dated November 18, 1951. I will extract a few paragraphs, it is very interesting.

"This is an attempt to get a release for Dale Schwamborn to be away from school from approximately Thanksgiving of this year until March 1st of next year."

"In view of the fact that the type of person going on this tour is unusually high, there being three millionaires, two retired Army Generals, two Navy Admirals, four doctors, several lawyers and many prominent businessmen, we estimate that at least half of the people going on the tour have college educations."

One of the prophetic comments is as true today as it was then.

Wally wrote, "We believe that Dale Schwamborn will receive an education on this trip down to Central America that will be very valuable to him throughout his life." Wow, Wally knew, and I know.

"We would like to have him travel with us in a trailer that we will provide and be a member of my official party."

"He will have an opportunity to meet President Aleman of Mexico, as well as Senor Somoza, the present Dictator of Nicaragua, and many others of importance."

"Dale will be my guest at a dinner in Mexico City, wherein all of us will be the guests of Ambassador O'Dwyer, the former Mayor of New York City."

Wally always believed that his Caravans were more than just sightseeing. He sincerely believed in the Goodwill brought by the Caravanners to every nation, and city. That "people to people" principle was one of the highest forms of diplomacy.

Wally goes on to say, "But over and above all this, he will have an opportunity, seldom offered youth of this age, to meet those of his own kind in other countries and to further the goodwill of our International relationship by the youth of today. Maybe sometime it will pay off after you and I are buried."

There is no doubt that Wally was successful in his selling Principal Krause on my leaving for four months. I was on the road before Thanksgiving.

On November 19th C.H. Dodge Assistant Chief of Police certified, that I had no criminal or juvenile record. A relief!

Then on November 22, my Mother gave Wallace M. Byam the custody of

Wally, as the leader, had enormous responsibilities to the Caravanners. He had a front man, or scout by the name of Major Millender. This provided Wally with road information, location of gasoline stations, and set up camping sites in various cities. In addition the governors and mayors made arrangements for local tours and entertainment. Wally wasn't just going down the highway; he was making a trip of a lifetime for trailer enthusiasts. On this first Caravan and ending with the 1955 Eastern Canadian Caravan the tours were open to all trailer makes.

Leadership includes responsibilities which Wally was very capable of managing. One responsibility is the care, and safeguarding his cousin Helen's son. This will be put to the test later on.

Clive and Gareth Glassey did the support work for Wally. They used the 1948 Airstream that Wally and Neil Vanderbilt had toured Europe and Great Britain. Their tow vehicle was a brand new dark green Dodge Power Wagon. On the back of the Wagon was an Airstream constructed storage compartment. Items that Wally felt he needed on the tour were stored there. As a plus for the Caravanners Wally

had two medium sized generators and several hundred feet of power conduit. The Wally Byam Power Authority could supply lights to the various units, but that was all. The boys had to pull out the generators, fuel them, and string the cables. They also put up a 30 by 40 tent when appropriate.

Wally never passed a war surplus store. One of the generators on the Caravan was surplus, but had a very interesting origin. It was a generator from a German Panzer tank.



Dale, and my guardian. On the same letter on November 28th Wally attested that I was an American born citizen. This was in El Paso, Texas.

One requirement didn't happen. My passport did not arrive prior to my leaving with Wally. I have Wally's passport and the visas and information stamped in it read, "y su hijo John Dale Schwamborn." Now I am traveling as his son. Wally having custodial power and guardianship over me allowed me to travel on his passport.