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OPERATION TRAILERING

Turning the hands of time back a few years from the recent Eastern Canadian Tour, we find the first Wally Byam Caravan Goodwill Tour leisurely wending its way down the coast of Mexico. Arriaga could well be called a *Good* living sieve - groups of ragged, dirty people around every corner, mongrel dogs scurrying through dark alleys, cars darting down the one way streets, and the temperature ranging in the 90's. The only reason for our being in this "hole" is to board our rigs, cars and trailers, on the Mexican Railway. It didn't take us long to realize that this was no ordinary railway, the wheels were square, and the tracks were tubular; with vibrating jolts and jerks we were on our way. For two days this "rock n roll" contraption was to be home to the sixty-five people who were the first to attempt to tour Central America by trailer.

*Don't change*  
At the end of the line lay the border town of Tapachula where we crossed in to Guatemala. The roads in Guatemala are most inadequate, *potholes* ruts, dust, bumps and steep hills, but eventually we reach the capital. Guatemala City is more than just a capital, it brings to you the life of the Latin American people, the beautiful architecture of the Moors, brought from Spain. Here is the gateway to Antigua with its romantic past; Lake Atitlan with its azure water and the snow capped mountains reflecting their majestic peaks in the shimmering surface; and last but not least, Quiche where the Indians have their market place and display potatoes, scarfs, whiskey, coffins, jewelry, chickens, etc.

We visited San Salvador and Honduras and in due time arrived at Managua, Nicaragua. In Managua we chartered a plane to Panama and was thrilled with the resplendant view of the countryside as seen from the lofty heights of the plane. Coming into Panama City was like holding a diamond in the sun - it had a radiance all its own. We stayed in the newly opened El Panama Hotel, then the most advanced hotel design in the world. The ground floor is incased in plate glass while the

upper floors are without windows. The suites are one room deep and are very modern in design with bright, cheerful colors. At night a multitude of colored lights throw their iridescent rays on the out door cafe. Inside the hotel one can eat in any one of the many dining rooms or have a drink in any one of the several bars. Our visit to the colossal Panama Canal <sup>where we saw -</sup> ~~and seeing~~ the massive ships lifted through the locks was the most spectacular part of our stay in Panama.

After a two day stop in San Jose, Costa Rica, we were again headed back to Managua where, after a few days rest, we would embark on the long trek home.

Wally Byam, who has made these wonderful caravans possible, is worthy of many paragraphs relating his accomplishments in the promotion of trailer travel but I have only a few.

Wally is <sup>b x</sup> middle age, average height, has keen gray eyes and is turning bald. He once said, "first have a dream, then a plan, and if you work hard enough it will come true, but only you can make it come true." It is a lovely philosophy and one he has made work. He is a successful business man and a world traveler, one who has visited most of the foreign ports of the world. It is typical of Wally that the more worldly success he attains the more he does for other people, particularly for young people. He gives freely of his time and money to make others happy and has made it possible for several of his young friends to have the opportunity to travel and other advantages that otherwise might never have been possible. In his association with young people he keeps before them the thought that America is the land of opportunity. If one works hard, is honest and true to his fellow man, and if one has a definite goal happiness and success are within reach.

Wally Byam has taken his caravan down the West Coast, East Coast and Central part of Mexico. He has conducted tours to Central America, Western Canada, Eastern Canada and many parts of the United States; future plans call for Cuba, Europe, South America, and who knows what next - perhaps Africa and possibly Asia.