Travel Down the Wally Byam Highway

Around the World Caravan Background Notes

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A Merry Christmas, Season's Greetings and a Happy and Prosperous New Year. What is Caravan America?

When Wally Byam became ill, his wife Stella Byam and the Airstream Executives discussed how to honor Wally after his passing.

They came up with the Wally Byam Foundation (1961-1977).

"PURPOSES...to help achieve a greater knowledge of the daily life and cultures and of the history and aspirations of peoples in our own county in all the Americas, and around the world - and thus to enhance international understanding and good will…

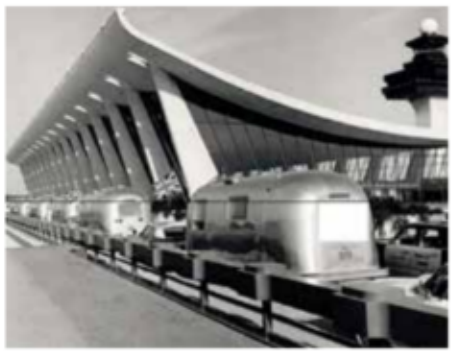
to further the concept of travel by trailer as a unique and an increasingly rewarding medium for the advancement of such education and communication on a people-to-people, person-to-person, basis; and to that end, to encourage improvement in the environment in which such travel takes place, both at home abroad.."

For fifteen years various programs were carried out by the Foundation. Airstream, General Motors, the Wally Byam Foundation and National Geographic provided for Caravans, and individual tours across the United States.

American diplomats were given the opportunity to familiarize themselves and their families to the greatness of the United States. Larger groups came from the United Kingdom, France, Germany, Japan and the United Nations diplomats.

The question might be, as usually asked, what might Wally think? His pride in the Foundation's accomplishments might give the sparkle in his eyes that was so familiar to those who knew him.

During this Holiday Season, have a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year!



The story doesn't begin here at Dulles International Airport located in Chantilly, Virginia. It begins in Los Angeles, California in 1962 after Wally Byam passed, when Stella Byam and Airstream executives had a meeting and set in motion the Wally Byam Foundation. The Foundation spanned 15 years from 1962 to 1977.

In 1967, a major event happened, Caravan America. Sponsored by the Wally Byam foundation a contingent of British Caravanners flew into Dulles. The group was going to travel cross America from Chantilly, VA to Santa Rosa, CA. Airstream and General Motors furnished twenty rigs for the group to travel coast to coast. With the group was Mr. Frank Collins, not only their leader on this sojourn but he also was the president of the Caravan Club in the United Kingdom founded in 1907.

Assisting with this group were Wally Byam Caravan Club members. They familiarized the group with their rolling equipment and traveled with them for a few days.

When the British group returned home from Santa Rosa a similar trailerist group came in from France and returned to the East Coast retracing the British itinerary.

More groups and individuals were Foundation guests over the next ten years. The Foundation worked with the United States State Department to have returning Foreign Service officers use equipment to travel through various parts of the United States to familiarize them with the Nation they were representing.

To understand the Wally Byam Foundation please read the following "Purpose" defining their mission.

"Purposes...to help achieve a greater knowledge of the daily life and cultures and of the history and the aspirations of peoples in our own country, in all the Americas, and around the world---and thus to enhance international understanding and goodwill..