

WALLY BYAM, 66, CARAVAN LEADER

Head of Auto Trailer Treks in Many Countries Dies

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LOS ANGELES, July 24 — Wally Byam, who led caravans of automobile trailers through North and Central America, Africa and Europe, died of cancer Sunday at his home here. He was 66 years old. His full name was Wallace Merle Byam.

Mr. Byam's six-month trailer trek from Capetown to Cairo in 1959-60 attracted wide attention. It involved forty-one trailers, the occupants of which had an average age of 61. His North American tours sometimes included as many as 500 trailers. This year approximately 5,500 people in 1,759 trailers attended the fifth annual rally of the Wally Byam Caravan Club at Auburn, Wash.

The trailer tours were both an avocation for Mr. Byam and promotional ventures in behalf of Airstream, Inc., the trailer manufacturing company of Sante Fe Springs, Calif., and Jackson Center, Ohio, which Mr. Byam founded.

The caravans customarily have included gasoline trucks, butane trucks and other service vehicles. Participants have been normally middle-aged couples of means. The first of thirty caravan tours recognized officially by the Wally Byam Caravan Club started in 1951 — to Mexico, Guatemala, El Salvador, Honduras and Nicaragua. But Mr. Byam had led many tours before that, for recreation.

Born in Baker, Ore., he received a Bachelor of Laws degree from Stanford University in 1923. He worked as newspaper man, advertising salesman and publisher of small magazines until 1932, when he built his first trailer. He retired as chairman of the board of Airstream, Inc., last February when his illness became severe.

Surviving are his widow, the former Stella North of Detroit, and a stepson, John Hall, Mrs. Byam's son by a previous marriage.

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