

Trailer Towing

By WALLY BYAM

The opinions expressed herein are the writer's, and not necessarily those of the editors of this magazine.

THE Wally Byam Caravan offices receive dozens of letters every month asking the simple question "What car do you recommend for towing a trailer?" or

"What car makes a good tow car?" or "What automobile is the best for towing trailers?" This is our answer for cars available in 1958.

I have spent most of my active business life in the travel trailer business, and in the last ten years I have been conducting Caravan Tours over most of North America, Central America and Europe. On these tours there have been many thousands of trailers. And every trailer was towed by every kind of a motor vehicle. Sometimes the roads were good and sometimes they were pretty terrible. Some of the trips were an acid test for any car. I don't think any man living has seen more cars performing with more trailers than I have, nor has lived as intimately with them as I have. On most of the hard trips we have a tow truck riding "caboose" to give assistance or to tow the broken-down car into the next repair station. And when the going is the roughest you usually find me with the caboose.

Before we get too far along I want plainly to state that I don't consider myself any great shakes as an automobile mechanic. In the old days I well remember that I could grind the valve of a

Model T before breakfast, but the intimate details of today's automobiles are just as much a mystery to me as the details of the automatic transmission are to the average mechanic. So I don't want to get into any arguments about the relative mechanical merits of automobiles. **When I make a statement it is based entirely and only on the actual experience that I have had through the years with cars towing trailers and not on any academic arguments of mechanical systems.**

Next, I don't want to say anything against any car. They are all good, as automobiles, when not expected to tow trailers. But as tow cars some show themselves up to being very obviously better than others. When you are pulling a steep, steep dusty hill you aren't thinking a bit about the chrome trim, or the shape of the body or the advertised advantages of mechanical principals. The only thing you are at all interested in is whether or not you get up the hill with your trailer. Some do and some don't. This article has to do with those that do. But the mere fact that we don't mention a car is not to say that it isn't tops for what it was designed to do. It is to say that through the years it has not distinguished itself as outstandingly good at towing trailers. Also before we start naming names there are several things that must be taken into consideration. Some makes change greatly from year to year. One year might be good and the next year not good. And if a late model is not good enough we are not going to mention it regardless of how good earlier models might have been. Also, we are only going to deal with the best known makes because they are the ones that the average travel trailerite encounters. One other factor—a tow car should weigh somewhere within shooting distance of the trailer it is towing. For instance a 4,000 pound trailer should be towed with a 4,000 pound car. It obviously wouldn't be fair to match a 3,000 pound car with a 5,000 pound trailer. Regardless of how good the little car might be.

So here we go and let the chips fall where they may. Obviously there are going to be many who won't agree with me. Remember that these are only my opinions based solely on my own experience.

At the top of the list as the best all around trailer tow-car is the Chrysler New Yorker, year in and year out. We have practically never had to rescue one. I have never heard of the transmission of a New Yorker going out. On a terribly steep hill you might swear that it would never make it but it inches over the top with the outfit barely moving and with the engine pulling like a Mis-



T-R-N's Jennie Lee Marling looks up at Wally Byam.

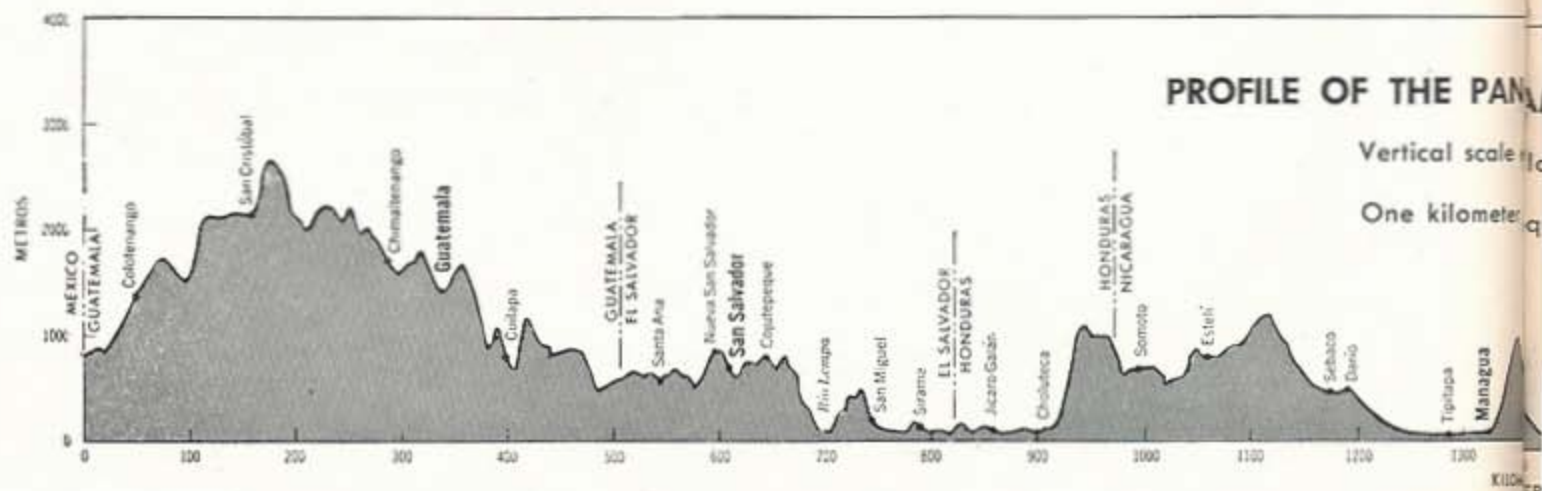


South to Costa Rica

Cover Story

Photos by Faith and Pat Terry

Text By ETTA PAYNE



souri mule. I have never known one to lose a transmission seal, the nemesis of many automatic transmissions. I have known them to go for years without touching a wrench to the engine. Some of the earlier models did not do so well holding back going down hill in gear, but this has been corrected in the newer models. With the exception of brake linings and an occasional grease job and oil change they just seemingly don't need any repairs or attention.

Next, neck and neck, in second position, as tow cars, come the Buick and the Oldsmobile. They both work far beyond the bounds of reason. I have heard other drivers say of these two cars that "they carry buckets of horse shoes". Yes, I have known them to quit—a number of times—but it is amazing what a beating they will take before they do.

If you want to get the mostest tow-car for the leastest money and providing your trailer is within shooting distance of the weight of the car, buy a Ford with a Fordomatic transmission. It is the old Model T with three college degrees. If there were any bugs in it (and most new things do have) they have long since been removed. I have never known of a Fordomatic transmission to quit working. You can shift them anytime you want to, they never leak oil, and are wonderful going down hill.

The common garden variety of body makes the best tow car, no station wagon, no hard top, no convertible, but a plain two or four door sedan with a post between the windows. That is the toughest body. Order it with station wagon rear springs, the biggest radiator you can get, a five bladed fan and the lowest ratio rear axle that they have. If you are going to drive it where good premium gas is always available get the middle sized or the biggest Ford engine. Have Monroe Level-Load Shock Absorbers installed and a Reese Bar-Level hitch and you will have as fine a tow car as money will buy, for the weight of the car. The Ford engines may sometimes need a little tinkering but you can always find someone to do it. There are Ford agencies all over the world.

As for the refinements. Power steering takes power, to run it is one more thing to need repairs. Same goes for power brakes. Neither are needed on a Ford.

Some people think station wagons the best body design for tow cars but they have many disadvantages. They are easily broken into and one broken window and the thief is in. Not so with an ordinary touring car body that you can lock securely. I have never heard of a rack deck being broken into. And for my money they will hold just as much or more than a station wagon.

And a few remarks. The Chevrolet is a good trailer tow-car. They are equipped with two kinds of transmissions. One good thing about them, if anything does happen to the transmissions, they may just get weak but usually won't go completely out all at once.

Another good thing to know of any car. If a transmission starts losing oil you can usually keep pouring more oil in and go an unbelievable distance until you can get it fixed.

Until the last couple of years cars with standard clutches and gear shifts were considered more reliable than automatic transmissions but I personally don't think this is any longer true of passenger cars. An automatic will start on a steeper hill than the same car with a clutch. And with an automatic you can shift down from second to low going down hill most any time you want to, but with a gear shift and a clutch you have to almost stop to do it. And the new automatic transmissions especially the Ford, and the New Yorker, will give you about as much hold-back going down hill as a standard gear shift transmission. And of course, you never burn out a clutch with an automatic. But a standard hand shift and clutch is still easier to get repaired than an automatic.

Each year, Detroit designs seem to be getting a little worse for tow cars due to their lowness to the road and the long overhang of their tails. The long overhang is entirely wrong from a leverage standpoint for a trailer-towing vehicle. And the new belly-crawling models are designed only for smooth paved roads. Many of them even drag bottom coming out of a filling station. To overcome this, some new cars have air suspension systems that will raise the front or back or the whole car a few inches but these systems up to now are not working out too well with trailers.

So if you are going off the pavement, on dirt roads, rough roads, detours and no roads, plus dust, mud and rough going in general the only answer with the automobiles available today is to get a truck. It isn't that the automobile isn't good enough or strong enough. It is just too close to the ground. And there are some fancy pick-ups available, really good looking, and if you are not too fussy, surprisingly comfortable to ride in. Not generally known is the fact that most truck engines are not as powerful as most car engines. On the CARAVAN tours we have more trouble with lack of power in half ton pick-ups than with any automobile. The three quarter ton is far better than the half ton. They have bigger engines and full floating rear axles. If there is a gear shift you must have four speeds, not three. If it has a clutch order the biggest one available.

The G. M. C. truck type hydromatic has given us no trouble. Same is true of Fordomatic. Lots of trailer people like the G. M. C. or Chevrolet "Suburban Carryall" or the International "Travelall". These are station wagon-type bodies of a truck chassis. Insist on four speeds. Others prefer a deluxe cab with a lockable body on the back. The difficulty with these single seat jobs is that you can never take anybody with you even on short trips. To overcome this International has brought out a six passenger pick-up truck with good body lines that I think has a future with trailer people.

But if you are going way out beyond, where the going is really rough, you need four wheel drive. There are four available, the International, Jeep, Chevrolet and Dodge. The Jeep is a Jeep. It does what a Jeep is made to do, really well. But it doesn't double in brass. It will go just anywhere on earth in compound low and four wheel drive. It does an amazing job but like the old Model T it does need fixing quite often. If it is pulling a trailer of its own weight it does real well for speed on the smooth stretches without too many hills. But usually it tows a trailer considerably heavier than it is and when you come to a bit of a hill you have to shift down and then it takes seemingly forever to get up the hill. The famous Dodge Power Wagon although heavier and with much bigger wheels has the same speed problems.

We find that the American construction firms building American roads throughout the world are using four wheel drive Internationals more than anything else. These vehicles operate with a minimum of repairs. All they ask is a grease job and a change of oil occasionally. About all they ever need is a rear wheel bearing but you have to abuse them terribly to make them need that. Of course, they do ride and steer like the truck that they are, but a lot of folks don't mind. They are the best insurance policy that I know of for getting you there regardless of the road or lack of road.

Any four wheel drive vehicle should be equipped with warn hubs on the front wheels which makes it possible to lock out the workings of the front differential when not in four wheel drive. It has been our experience that dual wheels on the rear are of little value, with or without four wheel drive.

As a final shot, there are certain conditions of sand, mud and ice where nothing will take the place of a winch. When you need it you need it badly, but the times are really few and far between. We find a portable winch good enough for those rare occasions.

Wally Byam

About the Pictures

On the cover the caravanners are shown in the highlands of Guatemala waiting while native cattle drivers herd their animals to pasture.

Map at left shows route taken.

Picture at left shows part of caravan waiting to pass customs and Immigration at El Salvador.

On right, a caravanner on part of the Pan American "Highway." Nearly impossible in many stretches, putting cars and trailers to severe test.

Below is a profile of the Pan American Highway with the vertical scale enlarged 100 times to give an idea of the severe gradients encountered.



THERE have been many Wally Byam Caravan "Firsts", but the Central America Caravan of 1958, first to traverse the uncompleted Pan American Highway, will be long remembered as first in dust, first in heat and first in high adventure. In spite of unfavorable conditions, due largely to the fact that most of the road is "paved" only with rocks, gravel and deep dirt, it was a Caravan of thrills, excitement and the fellowship which comes with shared adventure.

From Nogales, Arizona to "end of the road" in Costa Rica and back to Brownsville, Texas we traveled 7,890 miles. The total mileage of Caravan cars and trailers was more than eight times around the equator. The Car-

vanners who made the trip were pioneers in the American tradition and the stories they can tell their grandchildren should be marvelous.

We left Mexico City on the 19th of February, 1958. Up until this time, we had been a part of the Mexican Caravan. There were seventy-four of us, mostly past middle age, with time on our hands and the spirit of adventure in our hearts. We were in thirty-five cars and pickups, towing thirty-four Airstream trailers ranging in length from sixteen to thirty feet.

Over-night stops were made at Puebla, Huajuapán de León, Oaxaca and Tehuantepec, reaching Arriaga after lunch on the fifth day.

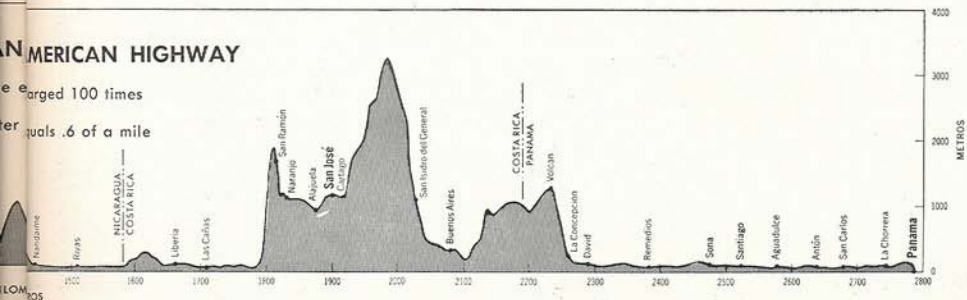
Because of a landslide over the high-

way in western Guatemala, a special train was made up to take us from Arriaga to Tapachula by rail. The crew began to load our equipment onto the flat cars shortly after we arrived in Arriaga with one car and trailer to a flat car.

By the second morning we were all loaded and ready to start on our way; an entire train of cars and Airstream Trailers.

It took about fourteen hours to make the trip over the humid lowlands between the mountains and the ocean to Tapachula, a few miles from the Guatemalan border. By nine o'clock in the morning, February 26, we were starting the long process of passing through Customs.

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A police escort was provided in major cities throughout Central America. In many cases the caravanners were asked to parade because natives had never seen trailers.

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Our first night in Guatemala was spent at a coffee finca, a few miles past the border. This was a beautiful spot, surrounded by tall and stately coconut palms. The green expanse of lawn where we were parked was really the "village green," surrounded by planation homes with the owner's home at one end.

The following day broke with a glorious sunrise and fresh breezes swept down from the mountains that surrounded us, but the road ahead was not so pleasant. The surface was loose dirt filled with hidden rocks, the dust lay inches deep, bridges that spanned the deep dry ravines could hardly be called bridges, and it was torridly hot. The still air held the dust; it never settled as trailer after trailer passed. We choked and wheezed, the engines sputtered but



"No Hay Paso" says this Costa Rican engineer to Wally Byam. Caravanners turned around at this point some 450 miles from Canal Zone. Road will be completed in 1960.

kept going. At three P.M. we had made thirty-five miles. Drivers were tired, back seat drivers cross, and we stopped for the night only to be entertained with music from a nearby juke box until the wee hours of the morning. We were beginning to realize what Wally had meant when he said, "We must have guts."

Morning brought more of the same kind of roads, but the hills were steeper, the rocks bigger and the dust deeper. It was beautiful country but we could not appreciate it because of the dust in the air.

At Retalhulea we reached the black-top highway. After leaving Escuintla we climbed to four thousand feet altitude. Most of us reached our camp on the shores of Lake Amatitlan that evening and the balance came in to camp the following morning.

It was a lovely place to camp; under trees covered with blossoms. We swam in the clear waters of the lake and enjoyed the cool breezes of the high altitude. It's surprising what water, refreshing breezes, good food and a multitude of good friends can do to one's spirits in a short time. We lingered in that delightful camp for more than a week.

Guatemala has a great deal more than dust and heat to offer the tourist. It is a colorful land about the size of Tennessee. Coffee is the main crop, and is grown on large estates. Bananas, cotton and chicle are exported. Guatemala has about a million head of cattle.

The Indians dress in colorful costumes made of hand-woven materials. Each village has its own design and color combination. Many of the designs are inspired by old Maya symbolism. We visited the village of Chichicastenango, where the market, held on Sunday, is world famous. The native religion is a combination of the old pagan rites and Catholic faith, and their rituals amaze



Entrained at Arriaga, Mexico, are 34 Airstream trailers, 70 men and women, 3 children, 4 dogs and 1 parrot. This was the group making the 7,800 mile jaunt.

the tourist.

The next morning we took a motor launch across the lake to Santiago de Atitlan, one of twelve Indian villages named for the twelve Apostles, nestling in the valleys on the lake shore. Women conduct the market, bartering fruits and vegetables for necessities.

On March 7 we broke camp at Lake Amatitlan and caravanned to Guatemala City, where we were met by motorcycle police who escorted us up Seventh Avenue, past the National Palace and down Sixth Avenue, back to where the Pan-American Highway leads out of the city, while hundreds of Guatemalans watched us on parade.

Out of the capital city for fifty miles we had good black-top highway but then our troubles began with many detours around unfinished bridges and finally, it was all detour! For twenty kilometers (12 miles) we were forced to pick our way over humps and bumps, rocks and dust, constantly up-grade.

Flat tires, hot engines, failing fluid-drives and other mechanical ills slowed up the Caravanners.

We crossed the El Salvador border in late afternoon and made the rest of the journey into Santa Ana that evening. The last car and trailer arrived in the night.

El Salvador gave us a hearty welcome. The Tourist Bureau sent representatives to welcome and aid us. All the while we were in their country they were the most gracious of hosts.

El Salvador is the smallest of the countries we visited. It is a lovely land with kind and friendly people and the most thickly populated of the Central American nations.

While camped at Santa Ana many of us drove to a vantage point on Cerro Verde to watch the volcano, Iztacalco, blow

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its ashes and fire to the high heavens. This old faithful volcano is called "The Beacon of the Pacific" or "The lighthouse of El Salvador", because for a century it has been belching smoke and fire. In a hundred years its deposits have formed a cone 6,000 feet high.

El Salvador has beautiful lakes, mountain scenery, volcanos alive and extinct, ocean beaches and ancient ruins. We could have spent months instead of days in this friendly country.

The caravan moved on to the capital city of San Salvador and parked in beautiful Balboa Park, as guests of the city. One of the high lights of our stay in this camp was a day spent on Lake Ilopango. Milton and Martha Knapp took their boat and four of us spent a day boating and swimming at this lake that lies in the crater of an old volcano. The cliffs surrounding the lake are almost perpendicular, except for a few places where roads have been constructed to the shores of the Lake. Tropical growth covers the cliffs. In most places the water is very deep and of a beautiful blue color.

Honduras was the fourth country we were to visit. The Pan-American Highway traverses it along the western side. Here is a mountainous country where ranching is the main occupation. Although the highway grade was almost complete it was yet to be black-topped and was rough. The season was hot and dry. Trees were mostly bare of leaves and the grass was brown.

Our advance men had not found a camping spot for the night and we were about to leave the town of Choluteca when Thomas M. Hartnett from Casper, Wyoming invited us to camp on the hospital grounds where he is missionary. Huge trees surround the building, and by crowding our trailers we managed to camp under these beautiful trees. In two of the trees a flock of buzzards spent the night; in another hundreds of parrakeets roosted.

Under way in the morning we passed a hundred or more teams of oxen pulling two wheeled carts. Every few minutes we would meet or pass a "vaquero" riding a small Spanish horse. The saddle and trappings were elaborately trimmed, and one could not help but admire the spirit of these animals which were descended from horses that Cortez brought to the new world over four hundred years ago. (sic)

Little naked children played around thatched-covered cottages while their mothers carried water in earthen jugs on their heads.

In the afternoon we crossed the Nica-
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raguan border. Here, too, the highway was under construction. Between Somota and Esteli we encountered steep rocky grades. Many of the caravanners had to use two cars to pull one trailer up the hills and then go back and get the other trailer. It was a trying experience at best and several had trouble with engines or tires. That night we camped at a construction camp.

The police led us into the capital city of Managua and lined us in front of the National Palace in the most precise manner I have ever seen. They led us down Avenida Roosevelt. From that point we were taken to a park located on a promontory overlooking Lake Managua, where we parked as guests of the City.

Great trees spread their branches over our camp like an old hen protecting her chickens. It was a delightful place. We could walk to the stone wall that circled the rim of the crater holding the waters of Lake Managua and look deep into the clear blue water.

We went to Granada on the shore of Lake Nicaragua, and at the foot of Mombacho volcano. The city was founded by Hernandez de Cordoba in 1524 and was invaded by both British and French pirates. We visited the fortress-church of San Francisco, where William Walker headquartered while in Granada. He was a filibuster, born and educated in the United States, who tried to take over some of the Central American nations, and was finally executed by Honduran authorities.

We returned by way of Casa Colorado, the area where many of the well-to-do families have their homes. The altitude there is about 3,000 feet and it is much cooler than in the capital. It was a few miles south of there on our return trip from Costa Rica that we were fortunate enough to see a large number of monkeys playing in the trees near the highway. We counted six babies, one large daddy and at least twenty monkeys of other sizes. The mothers held their babies in one arm and swung from branch to branch and tree to tree.

We returned to Massaya Volcano, left the main road and followed a trail across several miles of black, rough lava. We barely had room to drive the pickup between the walls of lava, which was so rough and sharp that we crept along at a snail's pace. Finally the way became so tough we left the vehicle and went on foot to the rim of the crater. Sulphur fumes were stifling when the breeze whipped up the smoke in our direction and we were fortunate that the wind was generally away from us. The treacherous trail and arduous climb

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were justified when we were able to gaze over the rim into the fathomless gaping mouth of the crater. It was a huge dying monster, gasping for breath, rumbling and belching smoke and fumes.

Costa Rica, land of Eternal spring, has an area of 23,000 square miles and population of a little over a million. We crossed the border before lunch hour on the 19th of March, a warm and dusty day. Large herds of cattle chewed their cud in the shade of huge trees, each covering an area one hundred feet in diameter. They looked like huge umbrellas, their lower branches six to ten feet from the ground.

That evening we camped on the athletic field at Liberia. The next morning we began to ascend into the mountains of Mesa Central, passing many coffee fincas. The crop had been harvested and new blossoms were beginning to show, filling the cool evening air with sweet fragrance. Much sugar cane is grown here and we passed several sugar mills.

Costa Rica is very modern except for the gala colored oxcarts drawn by fine, big ox-teams. The cart wheels are constructed of solid hard wood and when the wheels turn they have a singing sound. These carts are decorated with multiple colors in intricate designs. Nowhere but in Costa Rica did we see these beautiful carts. They were used

on all the fincas to transport cane, coffee and bananas.

We were met by the police at the outskirts of San Jose and escorted down the main avenues while friendly Costa Ricans watched in amazement. Many of these people had never before seen a trailer.

We were guests of San Jose and our camp was in the stadium grounds. They furnished us with guards twenty-four hours a day. This may seem unusual but we were such a curiosity that hundreds of folks would have gathered around our trailers at all hours, and even trailerists like a wee bit of private life. Visitors were admitted by request and we made many wonderful friends with the Costa Ricans.

Most of the caravanners made side trips from San Jose to the volcano, Irszu where we could see both oceans; to a coffee finca, where we watched coffee being processed; to a sugar mill where they pressed juice from the stock and boiled syrup; to the Lancaster Orchid Farms, where hundreds of orchids grew; to the gushing spring of Ojo de Agua (Eye of Water) and the train excursion to Port Limon on the East Coast. But the trip to the end of the trail, the last mile of the Panama Highway, was probably the highlight of these side tours. We went from San Jose through the old capital city of Cartago, past the banana plantations and coffee fincas, then ascended the Cordillera (mountain range) de Talamanca and over the pass, through the mountain jungles, where trees bloomed and wild orchids nodded in the clear cool air. The highway descended to the village of San Isidro del General in the lowlands of the Pacific Coast. This, we were told, was the end of the road, but we forded the river and kept going. A guard stopped us but we explained we wanted to go to the end of the road, or at least to the village of Buenos Aires, so he gave us a pass. In a few miles another guard closed the gate and forbade us to go further, but after we showed him the pass he opened the gate and reluctantly let us go on. The highway grade was all built and in good shape but had not been black-topped and the bridges were unfinished.

A few miles further on we crossed a roaring stream over a rather dubious looking bridge and beyond this came to a construction camp, where they closed and locked the gate. We talked in vain to the guard. "No hay paso" with a "I don't mean maybe" look, glistening in his eyes as he shook his head at the "Norte Americanos" who would dare to drive Cadillacs where jeeps fear to tread! There was nothing to do but turn back because we had come to the end of the road.

Etta Payne



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The G. M. C. truck type hydromatic has given us no trouble. Same is true of Fordomatic. Lots of trailer people like the G. M. C. or Chevrolet "Suburban Carryall" or the International "Travelall". These are station wagon-type bodies of a truck chassis. Insist on four speeds. Others prefer a deluxe cab with a lockable body on the back. The difficulty with these single seat jobs is that you can never take anybody with you even on short trips. To overcome this International has brought out a six passenger pick-up truck with good body lines that I think has a future with trailer people.

But if you are going way out beyond, where the going is really rough, you need four wheel drive. There are four available, the International, Jeep, Chevrolet and Dodge. The Jeep is a Jeep. It does what a Jeep is made to do, really well. But it doesn't double in brass. It will go just anywhere on earth in compound low and four wheel drive. It does an amazing job but like the old Model T it does need fixing quite often. If it is pulling a trailer of its own weight it does real well for speed on the smooth stretches without too many hills. But usually it tows a trailer considerably heavier than it is and when you come to a bit of a hill you have to shift down and then it takes seemingly forever to get up the hill. The famous Dodge Power Wagon although heavier and with much bigger wheels has the same speed problems.

We find that the American construction firms building American roads throughout the world are using four wheel drive Internationals more than anything else. These vehicles operate with a minimum of repairs. All they ask is a grease job and a change of oil occasionally. About all they ever need is a rear wheel bearing but you have to abuse them terribly to make them need that. Of course, they do ride and steer like the truck that they are, but a lot of folks don't mind. They are the best insurance policy that I know of for getting you there regardless of the road or lack of road.

Any four wheel drive vehicle should be equipped with warn hubs on the front wheels which makes it possible to lock out the workings of the front differential when not in four wheel drive. It has been our experience that dual wheels on the rear are of little value, with or without four wheel drive.

As a final shot, there are certain conditions of sand, mud and ice where nothing will take the place of a winch. When you need it you need it badly, but the times are really few and far between. We find a portable winch good enough for those rare occasions.

Wally Byam

AIRSTREAM introduces two sensational NEW MODELS

*pioneer travel trailer firm builds new
"caravan-developed" trailer sizes and models*

When one of the oldest and biggest travel trailer companies in the world makes an announcement that it has added two completely new models to its line at the same time, that's news! And, when that company is Airstream, which has a reputation for being first with the latest advancements in the field, the reasons behind the move and the design features of the new models deserve the close attention of every travel trailer owner.

Several Airstream model names have become tremendously familiar over the years (since 1932, in fact)...the Traveler, the Flying Cloud, the Overlander and the Sovereign of the Road...all developed with a definite purpose. The experience of Caravanning, Wally Byam's famous excursions all over the world, the close consultation with much-traveled Airstream owners (some of whom log 25,000 or more miles per year) and the latest discoveries in the fields of metallurgy, synthetics, and industrial design are continually brought to bear on the construction of these featherweight marvels. Nothing goes into an Airstream until it has been thoroughly and exhaustively tested, studied and modified to fill the needs of Airstream's knowledgeable and critical customers. This is as true of a complete new trailer design as it is of a water tap or the rust-proof screens over unobstructed-vision windows.

The 24' Trade Wind and the 28' Ambassador joined the other famous Airstream glamour models only after months of planning, consideration experimentation and engineering. They resulted from a backlog of literally hundreds of requests for certain facilities and from innumerable "bull sessions" on Caravans and in trailer parks where owners (of many makes) expressed well-thought out opinions. As a result, Airstream is, once again, preceding the industry by including an almost unheard-of number of innovations in one model year and in two completely new trailers.

Nothing has been held back. The buyers of the new Trade Wind 24 footer and the Ambassador 28 can be assured that they will have the ultimate in luxury, convenience, handling and towing ease and all Airstream extras wrapped in the sleek all-aluminum package which makes it the center of attraction wherever it is parked anywhere in the world.

The two new models are built to go! Nimble as mountain goats on the highways and byways of four continents, no other trailer comes close to Airstream's record for foreign adventure travel and the Trade Wind and the Ambassador offer that same freedom of movement...the ability to go where you like, stay as long as you please in unmatched comfort. Plus, and it is an important plus, the advantage of Airstream's customer service policy. As an Airstream owner, you have the experience the helpfulness of craftsmen in two factories behind you in addition to a Nation-wide network of franchised authorized dealers. It would be impossible to describe all the luxury benefits in the new Trade Wind and Ambassador. You must see these beauties, learn for yourself what "the last word" really means. Visit your Airstream dealer, ask him to show you the new Trade Wind and the Ambassador, you'll be glad you did!

New Airstream 24' Trade Wind and 28' Ambassador luxury travel trailers incorporate unusual number of added features into regular Airstream design. Color-coordinated interiors, added headroom, more closet and storage area, new bathroom design, more spacious rear end, new full-vision windows, rust-proof screens, astra-dome vents and as many as 19 drawers are a few of the points of interest. Designed to be towed anywhere in the world and travel-tested on four continents, the new Airstreams join an illustrious line of famous trailers.



ATTENTION AIRSTREAM OWNERS!

Plan to Attend the

AIRSTREAM MID-WINTER ROUNDUP KEY LARGO, FLA. JANUARY 9-10-11

Airstreamers, here's one event you won't want to miss — a beautiful spot on fabulous Key Largo with room for over 400 Airstreams and an exciting program planned for you. There'll be great fun for everyone...a drum-beating African Safari with entertainment, costume party, fish fry, barbecue dinner, dancing, plenty to eat and do...see old friends, meet new acquaintances and generally have a wonderful time — you'll be hosted by the Wally Byam Caravan Club.

The Roundup will also serve as a rendezvous for those who plan to go on to the Mexican Caravan. We will head westward along the Gulf toward San Marcos, Texas, to join the main body of the Caravan. This group will be led by an official of the Airstream factory and will have all its parking places arranged in advance.

So, plan to be at the 1959 Mid-Winter Roundup for sure — it will be an experience you'll long remember. Don't delay, plan your reservation now! For reservations and further information write today to:

**MID-WINTER ROUNDUP
AIRSTREAM TRAILERS INC.
JACKSON CENTER, OHIO**

Byam Caravanner Uses New Cleaner

Dean Vandenburg of Wally Byam's Caravanners is shown on the right in the photo being congratulated upon winning a cleaning and brightening wash for his trailer at the recent Palm Springs Trailer Show and Rally in California.

His Airstream trailer was cleaned with a new product, called Elpaco Aluminum Cleaner and Brightener. This product is manu-



WINNER—of cleaning and brightening wash at Palm Springs Trailer Show is congratulated. See story for identification.

factured by The Electric Paint and Varnish Company, manufacturers of Kool-Seal and a complete line of roof repair products.

Others in the picture are Art Costello, president of Airstream Trailer Co.; Bill Rogers, of E. W. Rogers Co., Inc., agents for The Electric Paint & Varnish Co.; and washing the trailer is Frank Pantano of E. W. Rogers Co., Inc.

For further information on the Elpaco Aluminum Cleaner and Brightener, write to E. W. Rogers Co., Inc., 321 E. Washington Blvd., Los Angeles 15, California.

Airstream Folders

Airstream Trailers has recently published five attractive pocket-sized folders to explain to prospective customers the enjoyment to be realized by travel trailering. Each folder is slanted toward particular groups. The titles are: Retirement Travel, Trailer Travel in Mexico and Canada, Week-ending in a Trailer, Vacationing in a Trailer and Hunting and Fishing in a Trailer.

Smartly illustrated, each folder contains hard-selling copy designed to entice these various groups into purchasing an Airstream travel trailer for their special purpose.

The folders are ideal for enclosing with letters to prospects, and there is sufficient space allotted on the back of each folder for the dealer's imprint.

Copies of the folders can be obtained by writing to Airstream Trailers, Inc., 107 Church St., Jackson Center, Ohio, or circling No. 14 on the **READER'S SERVICE CARD**.



SPECIAL AIRSTREAMS TO THAILAND

Four 22' Airstream Trailers with a number of special features were shipped recently to Bangkok, Thailand to be used by engineers working with the Thai government under the International Cooperative Authority. The Airstreams will be used by supervisory personnel of the world wide engineering firm of Daniel, Mann, Johnston and Mendenhall, Los Angeles, while searching for water sources deep in the interior of the country. In addition to being raised—several inches for increased ground clearance, the completely self-contained trailers are equipped with kerosene-burning cook stoves and refrigerators and are fitted with powerful two-way radio equipment. Hazards of the Siamese jungle and rugged country include extremes of heat and dampness and it was felt that the Airstreams would be superior to any semi-permanent camp which could be established and would have the extra advantage of quick mobility.



CARAVANNERS often see sights that lone travelers miss. Above, a tribe of Blackfeet Indians demonstrate native dances at an encampment in Glacier National Park, Mont. Trip is to western Canada.



WALLY BYAM, who founded Airstream Caravan Club, leads major trips himself. Scores of others are conducted yearly by regional branch clubs.