Articulated Bus Receives Enthusiastic Welcome During Introduction to Public

If you turn out a better bus — or at least one with more customer appeal — the public will turn out to appreciate it.

This was the district's experience this month as the new Freeway Train made its debut in a series of public appearances, then went into service on transbay lines.

The experimental, double bus aroused outstanding rider interest and public notice.

Typical comment from passengers included:

"It's real comfortable."  "I think it's tremendous."  "It's really great."

"I like the music, the little extras."

"I like the seats . . . it's a relaxing way to start the day."

Riders were intrigued by the way the bus bends in the middle to go around corners and by the way it "humps" when it goes over bumps.

They enthused over newspaper racks, where latest editions could be purchased; over background music, and over the new view of familiar scenes, presented by high level riding.

The observation lounge, with its twin card tables, particularly was popular. One of the first passengers, a mother with three young daughters, found it handy for toys and snacks.

Thousands of viewers saw the bus on its first day of service as television stations in the East Bay and at Sacramento presented programs featuring the Freeway Train as a new form of transportation — a different concept of public transit that opened the door to high-capacity, more economical, yet more luxurious travel.

Similarly, newspapers ran a number of articles and photographs, giving the 60-foot-long twin bus an extensive introduction.

Twice as many passengers as usual rode the bus during its inaugural service, more than doubling patronage.

(Continued on Page 2)
NEW CONCEPT — Freeway Train riders enjoyed these features (from above, left): view from observation lounge, the bend as twin bus took turn, newspaper racks in middle, and seats for all commuters.

Freeway Train Viewed by Thousands

(Continued from Page 1)

Probably the most constant rider, however, was Patrick McCuton, 14, of 7810 Sanford St., Oakland, who spent most of Easter vacation riding the 77-passenger, "double jointed train."

A real "addict," Patrick particularly liked to ride in the "second joint" to watch the turns. He also liked the "control panel."

"But that door really cracks me up," the boy reported. "The driver presses a little tiny button and it opens!"

While Patrick found the bus "as beautiful as a rocket," others likened it to an airplane and a modern train.

During the two weeks the experimental coach was on public display in East Bay cities and at the Transbay Transit Terminal in San Francisco, some 11,813 residents took a personal look at the double bus.

They commented favorably on the luxury features, especially the padded bucket seats and sponge rubber flooring. They especially welcomed complimentary coffee, served by district personnel, dressed as "stewardesses"—fitting touch for a transit innovation.

The color scheme proved to be a real eyecatcher, with seats in brown and orange, lounge in blending "sunglow."

Escape From Death —

Driver Helps Wife Write First Book

The world has become an incredible background to bus driver K. E. Billingsley.

And a trail marked from Denmark to North Africa, to Italy and to the United States is as familiar to him as the runs he makes on the transbay N Line and on Line 82.

The experiences are his wife's, Chris, but they have become actualities for Billingsley through writing help he has given over the past 4½ years.

Mrs. Billingsley, attractive and determined, has written a book about her trials during World War II: "The Nazis Called Me A Traitor."

She started the laborious job of trying to translate her diary from German to English before she and Billingsley were married in Seattle in 1961.

English to English

Since then, he has worked with her, "putting the English into English and then having it put into English again."

Finally, last month, the book was published by Exposition Publishing Press of New York and is available now at local book stores.

Ahead are movie prospects, other books and a lecture tour, being arranged by the Bureau of National Defense, State Department of Education, which calls for Chris to describe "the history of World War II" at colleges in this country.

The Billingsleys live in an apartment at 9714 Cherry St., Oakland, spending much of their time in a maplined study, where they work on piecing together her perilous teen-age years as a German citizen—sought, imprisoned, escaped, wounded, captured, freed.

Friend of Rommel

A close friend of General Rommel, the famed Desert Fox, and one of the few persons he trusted, Mrs. Billingsley has a tremendous number of documents to support her story. Family mementoes include a photograph of Adolf Hitler, taken in 1929—and his signature, as well as that of Goering.

Her epic begins in Denmark, where she went as a 17-year-old to take a job as a radar operator, two days before the outbreak of war. Arrested by the Nazis and condemned to death, Chris tells in her book of how she escaped, walking to Italy, fleeing again to North Africa. Arrested and wounded there, after she became an underground messenger, she was befriended by Rommel, then deeply involved in a plot to kill Hitler.

Sent by Rommel to Reggio, she had to flee again—this time from both the Nazis and the Allies. Surviving the battle of Monte Cassino, Chris finally reached America in 1947.

She now is working on a follow-up book, covering the years 1945-47—"even more scandalous!" she intimates.
Passenger revenue showed a slight increase during February, reaching a total of $1,018,846—a boost of 2.9 per cent over the same month a year ago.

Increased revenue was attributed to the recent fare increase affecting youngsters and transbay commuters. The number of passengers carried was down 6.6 per cent compared to February last year, with a total of 3,920,829 carried this February. The month experienced seven days of rain and only 12 clear days as compared to 1 rainy day and 22 clear days last year.

Commute book sales totaled $169,988, an increase of 2.5 per cent over sales of $165,815 in February, 1965.

The District operated 1,756,216 miles of service, up 27,979 miles or 1.6 per cent over the miles tallied a year ago. Total income of $1,251,902 was sufficient to cover operational costs—which reached $1,110,914, an increase of $45,353 or 4.3 per cent over a year ago—plus amortization and depreciation. Total income did not, however, provide for full bond debt requirements. Deficit for the month totaled $45,742.

**Service Improvements for South County**

Service improvements inaugurated during the month included:

- First bus service for San Leandro Marina, through extension of Line 55.
- Saturday service for area south of Orchard Ave., Mission Blvd., and Fairway Park through new shuttle, operating to Hayward and Southland.
- Extension of Line 90-92 loop to Calaroa Ave. area, east of Tennyson Road.
- Addition of another bus to morning commute service on transbay Castro Valley Freeway Flier.

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**“WEIGH” OF OPERATIONS — Mrs. Dorothy Kirkby weighs tickets, to aid in computation of riding and revenue.**

The woman with perhaps the most “weighty” job with AC Transit is among veteran workers who will “weigh anchor” shortly for pension projects.

Mrs. Dorothy M. Kirkby, ticket clerk in the treasury department, has the job of weighing all the tickets that trickle into fare boxes. From her busy scale comes the information coupled with token and cash tallies, that gives the passenger count and the passenger revenue for each day.

Mrs. Kirkby, who lives at 3815 Webster St., Oakland, will retire July 1.

A former secretary in her home city of Victoria, B.C., Mrs. Kirkby planned to work only six weeks when she took over a friend’s job in the ticket department at the Transbay Transit Terminal in San Francisco in 1946. Instead, her agreement to work “only a little while” stretched into 20 years.

The same friend suggested that Collicott apply for work at the Key System shops in 1938, after he arrived in this country from England, where he had served his apprenticeship.

Collicott, of 532 Talbot Ave., Albany, worked “on the rails” until the trains went off in 1958, moving then to motor coaches.

A pension also has been approved by Claude L. Masonheimer, 509 Sycamore St., Oakland, bus driver, who went to work in 1946 and drove until illness took him out from behind the wheel.

**ENGINE TO IRON — Retirement will give Richard Collicott more time for his hobby of ornamental ironwork.**

Active in the First Babtist Church in Albany, Collicott found it difficult to borrow candelabra when needed for a wedding or other occasions, so decided to try making one.

“I put together a torch and made one out of scrap. So I’ve been making things since — mostly candelabra and things like that, though I made a porch railing for a friend.”

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I would like to express my appreciation of your new liberal transfer policy. To be able to step off one bus line and, if necessary, transfer back on the same line is a great convenience to me and I am sure to all the bus riding public. I believe that if many of the habitual car users, especially women shoppers, knew how flexible the bus system has become, they would leave their cars home.

Mrs. J. W. Vance
Berkeley

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I would like to tell you how much I enjoyed the ride I had with the woman driver (Mrs. Lenore Williams) on Line 41 . . . her general cheerfulness and pleasant greetings to all passengers, her polite responses to all questions and her seemingly genuine, rather than forced, happiness at all times were very refreshing.

Jennifer Danton
Berkeley

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I’d like to call your attention to M. C. McCormick for his kindness to me. I had left my purse in the phone booth in front of Jenny Lind Hall . . . although he was not the bus driver who had taken me home, when I asked him, he not only took me back to the phone booth to see if it was still there, but he stopped and ran across the street for me . . . gave me 35 cents to get back home without being asked, took me to Berkeley to the end of the line to connect with the last bus back to San Leandro and accompanied me across the street to the bus so I wouldn’t have to be alone on the street late at night . . . he was so kindly concerned about my purse that I hope you get the message to him that my purse was returned.

Mrs. Gladys Childs
San Leandro

* * *

... I am a daily commuter on the 69 Richmond Line . . . I wish to commend your driver (H. B. Hoffman) . . . he operates his bus smoothly and efficiently; he is firm yet kind with the school children; he is patient and courteous with older riders; he never hurries anyone, yet keeps to his schedule; he shows exasperation towards no one. It is a pleasure to ride with such a fine person.

Mrs. Allen C. Clark
Richmond

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Chapter of Transit History Closed as Death Takes Second Oldest Pensioner

A pensioner, whose span of service predated the confusion and changes brought about by the 1906 earthquake, was among transit veterans who have been taken by death.

John A. Heck, 99, died on March 8. He went to work for the late James P. Potter, superintendent of the Key Route, in 1904—a short time after the new train-ferry commute service was put into operation.

He was the second oldest pensioner on the district files, topped only by A. J. Klimax, retired car repairman, who will be 100 years old on May 31.

Mr. Heck was working on a street car in Alameda the morning of the 1906 earthquake and tried to keep his passengers aboard as the "safest place.

He recalled he went right on operating the car during that day—and the ones to follow—maintaining a schedule despite the turmoil.

He could remember, as one of his most exciting moments, the day when a horse and wagon turned in front of him that my purse was returned . . .

Mrs. Gladys Childs
San Leandro

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District Boosted by New Employees

New employees, hired during February and March, included:

**General Office**

- Treasury: Adam R. Lewis, 412 Orange St., Oakland, junior typist clerk
- Accounting: Gail Pacheco, 3728 McClelland St., Oakland, senior accountant clerk.

**Emeryville Division**

Maintenence: Ronald E. Dikes, 4167 Vineyard Ave., Pleasanton, service employee; Lonnie Shelton, 3217 Liese Ave., Oakland, service employee.

Bus Operators: Clarence Jacobs, Jr., 1021 Page St., Berkeley; R. A. Wise, 455 37th St., Oakland; Robert Arrodondo, 322 Dempsey Rd., Milpitas; Victor Wykoff, Jr.

**Oakland**

C. W. Harris, Jr., 1304 East 14th St., Oakland; A. R. Scott, 3307 Pine Valley Rd., Pineola; J. E. Thompson, 12 Lobos St., San Francisco; J. F. DeWatney, 625 Lexington Rd., El Cerrito; C. N. Pyle, 3244 Arkansas St., Oakland; D. R. Hebel, 37653 Glen Moor Dr., Fremont; D. W. Powers, 606-A Castro St., Oakland; D. W. Moore, 2606 Cole St., Oakland; G. B. Hall, 2060 Buena Vista Ave., Alameds; J. W. Caunt, 1523 Lafayette St., Alameda; R. B. Granger, Jr., 3501 San Pablo Ave., Oakland.

**Richmond Division**

Auto Maintenance: Larry Bryant, 1229 Evelyn St., Berkeley, Carl Whicker, 56 Chumalia St., San Leandro, service employees.
At an adjourned regular meeting Mar. 23, the Board of Directors:

- Authorized District personnel, if required, to meet in Washington, D.C. with representatives of U.S. Department of Housing and Rural Development to expedite application for a capital matching fund grant to purchase 30 new buses, on motion of Director Bettencourt.

- Recommended highway program of the Alameda County Highway Advisory Committee for inclusion in the 1967-68 fiscal State highway budget, on motion of Director Warren.

- Authorized Board members to attend regional conference of American Transit Association, on motion of Director Rinehart.

At the regular meeting Apr. 9, the Board of Directors:

- Authorized payment of assessment to City of Emeryville in connection with Powell St. overpass construction, on motion of Director Rinehart.

- Renewed contract with Metro Transit Advertising for five-year period, on motion of Director Copeland.

- Approved revisions in employee job classifications, on motion of Director Copeland.

Gain Forecast in Commercial Bus Advertising

Commercial bus advertising is on the upswing - and even higher revenue is in prospect for AC Transit through plans being developed by Metro Transit Advertising.

E. B. Sorensen, vice president of the advertising firm, told the board of directors that billings for April and May are substantially ahead of last year and research, promotion and sales plans indicate an even greater gain.