Buses back on Broadway

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Public transit rolls again

Striking employees return to work as
Discussions continue on labor contract

AC Transit workers returned to their jobs—and a special “Welcome Back” this month—after a strike closed the property for 19 days.

The walkout ended after the District and Division 192, Amalgamated Transit Union agreed to arbitrate recommendations of a fact-finding committee.

Bus drivers, in the meantime, were given an interim wage increase of 36 cents an hour, bringing their hourly rate to $4.50. Other workers received a corresponding 8.7 percent increase.

The fact finders worked through 424 union proposals and 131 District items before coming up with more than a dozen major issues it felt should be recommended. Disputed items include ultimate wage rates to be paid on the property, cost of living allowance, fringe benefits and working conditions.

The “welcome” was shared jointly by employees and their customers. Banners were hung at each division to carry greetings to returning drivers, mechanics and clerks. At the same time, car cards were posted on each coach, to express a welcome to passengers.

End of the strike was happy news to 200,000 riders, who daily use District buses. People rolled out family automobiles, formed car pools, rode bicycles or walked during the transit shutdown. Traffic jams affected freeways and the San Francisco-Oakland Bay Bridge, pointing up the important role of public transit in avoiding traffic strangulation and air pollution.

Automobile travel on the Bay Bridge increased 10 percent during commute hours, slowing motorists to the point where it took some drivers over two hours to travel the span.

The exclusive bus lane, which bypasses congestion at the bridge toll plaza, was back in operation, giving transbay buses a clear route to the Transbay Transit Terminal in San Francisco.

“First man out” when the buses went back into service was E. G. Courant, 5805 Harmon Ave., Oakland, who also was the first driver to roll without money stock when the Ready Fare plan of riding went into effect two years ago.

Courant took his Line 83 owl run out of Seminary Division at 12:07 a.m. June 20, while television cameras and a still photographer clicked away. A short time later, a bus left Emeryville Division, then Richmond yard. A standing crowd of passengers was aboard the first transbay Line A coach to leave San Francisco terminal at 12:30 a.m.
**Buses to have anti-smog kits**

New AC Transit buses will be equipped with experimental smog control kits and will have more attractive interiors.

In awarding a contract last month for the purchase of 15 new coaches to General Motors Corp., the Board of Directors called for optional equipment to improve transit riding and engine performance.

Along with anti-smog packages, the new buses will have ceiling paneling to the top of standee windows, eliminating the traditional advertising frames.

General Manager Alan L. Bingham noted earlier that advertising revenue would not be jeopardized, since the current fleet of nearly 700 buses already contain racks and much of the space is unsold.

The smog control kits are expected to reduce air pollutants, odor and engine noise.

Five of the new buses will have the complete Environmental Improvement Program package, which includes an improved fuel injector and air filter, a rubber engine mounting to reduce noise and a vertical exhaust stack to help eliminate diesel exhaust odor.

The other 10 buses will have the Environmental Improvement Program kit, less the catalytic muffler.

To help offset expenses for desired improvements, the District agreed to accept a less expensive seat, at no loss of passenger comfort.

Total District expenditure for the GMC coaches, including freight, is $483,989.55, without taxes. Delivery is expected by early November.

The District has an option to buy an additional 15 buses from GMC at a later date.

**Assistant claims manager named**

Robert L. Gettys, 43, has joined AC Transit as assistant claims manager with headquarters at the General Offices.

Gettys, who assumed the newly created position last month, formerly was claims manager for Mission Insurance Co. in San Francisco.

He began his career as an insurance adjuster and later became a regional examiner. In 1967 he was named assistant claims manager for Continental Insurance Group in San Francisco. Two years later he became claims manager for Mission Insurance.

A native of Iowa, Gettys is a Navy veteran and a graduate of Stanford University. He and his wife, Mary Anne, have four children. They live at 5224 989.55, without taxes. Delivery is expected by early November.

The District has an option to buy an additional 15 buses from GMC at a later date.

Robert Gettys

**Survey reveals bus riding pattern**

Buses were carrying 55 percent of people crossing the Bay Bridge during peak commute hours—on 11 percent gain over last year's total—at the time service was interrupted by a strike.

Although an increasing number of commuters switched to public transportation, the bridge handled more cars than ever—with fewer riders per car.

During the 6:30 to 8:30 a.m. peak, the number of car passengers decreased from 20,388 counted a year ago, to 19,309 this year. The number of cars increased, from 14,433 last year, to 15,243 automobiles on the span during the same peak hours this year, a survey made by the Institute of Transportation and Traffic Engineering, University of California, showed.

It takes 476 buses to do the job of transporting 17,997 riders during the period, according to the survey.

Since AC Transit went into operation almost 10 years ago, transbay patronage more than doubled, while car passengers increased 3.5 percent.

**Driver honored for Alert reporting of Fire bomb blaze**

A new bus driver has been given an AC Transit community service citation for saving the Berkeley office of the Alameda County Welfare Department from destruction by a gasoline fire bomb.

The citation was presented to Warren E. Kummer, 28, of 3990 La Colina Rd., El Sobrante, at a meeting of the Board of Directors.

Kummer was at the wheel of a Line 72 bus southbound on San Pablo Ave. in Berkeley shortly after 4 a.m. Friday, May 1, when he spotted "a fire burning pretty good" in the front of the building at 2530 San Pablo.

He immediately radioed the District's central dispatching headquarters and stood by, with his load of seven or eight regular early morning riders, until the fire department arrived minutes later.

Police said someone used a brick to smash a hole in the front window of the office and dropped in two crude firebombs. Only one exploded, apparently seconds before Kummer saw the flames.

The citation was given by the District for Kummer's "outstanding contribution to the betterment of his community and the well-being of his fellow citizens."

He was one of three men rescued from the bay in 1965 when a new Coast Guard boat broke up in heavy seas while en route to Sausalito. They radioed for help and were "down in water to the gunnels," Kummer recalled, when another boat arrived and rescued them.
THE TIMES, THEY ARE A'CHANGIN'

The place? Broadway in downtown Oakland, between 13th and 14th Streets. The times? In the photo above, around 1910, when the horse, automobile and trolley car lived together in relative harmony. The Kelly car passing through the intersection was known to its riders as "the old ladies' comfort," the ultimate in easy boarding for long-skirted females. By 1945-46 (photo at left by Waldemar Sievers), the horses were long gone, skirts were shorter, but streetcars still held sway at the same busy junction. In the photo below, taken shortly after Broadway was restored following the placement of BART in the basement, AC Transit buses share the road with the ever-present automobile and a mini-skirted lass. Today the young lady would have to pick her way around construction work, part of the street beautification program underway on Broadway. (Photos, Harre Demoro collection)

April revenue improves

Business activity was on the upswing during April, with fare box revenue and the number of riders carried showing an increase, compared to the same month a year ago.

Passenger revenue totaled $1,380,153, up $93,306 or 7.25 percent over fare box revenue of $1,286,847, for April, 1969. On East Bay lines, passengers revenue was $738,419, an increase of 3.47 percent compared to year-ago revenue of $713,637. On transbay lines, revenue showed an increase of 11.95 percent, with a total of $641,734, compared to 573,210 collected in April, 1969.

Commute book sales were up 21.2 percent, with a total of $282,788, compared to sales of $233,264 made in the same month a year ago.

The number of passengers carried was 4,715,548, up 2.07 percent over the year-ago riding count of 4,619,912. East Bay riding showed an increase of 2.62 percent, with a total of 3,402,254 compared to last year's total of 3,315,379, carried in April, 1969. Transbay lines carried 1,313,294 passengers, up .67 percent over the 1,301,533 who rode transbay buses in the same month a year ago.

Operations costs during the month were $1,671,683, up $148,310 or 9.74 percent above year-ago expenses of $1,523,373. The District operated 2,139,657 miles of service, an increase of 54,773 miles or 2.63 percent over mileage of 2,084,884 recorded in April, a year ago.

Total income of $1,948,953 was sufficient to cover operational costs, depreciation and bond debt requirements. The transit district nationally showed a decrease in revenue passengers for the month of 4.63 percent.

3 year passenger revenue comparison

![Graph showing 3 year passenger revenue comparison from 1968 to 1970.](image-url)
At an adjourned regular meeting May 27, the Board of Directors:

- Adopted recommendations of Special Bus Evaluation Committee to award contract for purchase of buses to General Motors Corp, at total unit cost of $34,144.67 including taxes, on motion of Director McDonnell. (See story, Pg. 4)
- Adopted resolution authorizing General Manager to contract with GMC for manufacture and delivery of 15 to 30 coaches, on motion of Director McDonnell.
- Adopted advertising budget of $193,436 for forthcoming fiscal year, on motion of Director McDonnell.

Executives named to Research committee

Two chief transit executives from the Bay Area have been named to a new national committee to evaluate research proposals for the entire transit industry.

Alan L. Bingham, AC Transit general manager, and B. R. Stokes, general manager of Bay Area Rapid Transit, will serve on the 12-man advisory board.

The group will provide operating experience and technical ability against which new research proposals may be measured before public funds are committed by the Urban Mass Transportation Administration.

Another California transit executive, Samuel Nelson, general manager of Southern California Rapid Transit, also was named to the board.

Formation of the committee was announced by John Paul Jones, president of the American Transit Association.