

Amtrak Orders Keeping Budd Company Busy

The first of 292 new stainless steel Amtrak coaches are taking shape at the Budd Company's plant on Red Lion Road in Philadelphia. For the moment there are few clues that the massive under frames, standing amidst stacks of ribs, panels and strips of fluted stainless steel, will soon be recognizable as railway cars.

In these early stages the floor frames are still upside down for easier installation of equipment which will be carried under the cars. But Budd Company managers say it will be only a short time before the frames will be flipped over and the side and roof panels will go on cars one, two, three and four.

From then on, until the first car rolls out the other end of the Red Lion plant sometime in April, there will be

no mistaking the distinctive Metroliner design which characterizes these new coaches being built exclusively for Amtrak.

One a Day

By late summer, according to Division General Manager Norman Fesmire, the Red Lion plant will be turning out the Amtrak cars at the average rate of one every working day. With orders currently in force this production rate should continue for almost two years.

Before September, Fesmire added, all three assembly lines in the Red Lion plant will be devoted to Amtrak equipment making it an all-Amtrak plant.

Already, the identification with Budd's newest customer is apparent

around the plant. Amtrak posters fill many of the bulletin boards and "Amtrak #1" or "Amtrak #2" is stenciled or chalked on many of the components and sub assemblies waiting to take their place in the finished coaches.

At the present time about 400 Budd employees are working on Amtrak orders. Within a few weeks this number will grow to about 1,100.

In a faltering economy the substantial orders from Amtrak are good news for Budd and for its suppliers as well. For while some 12,800 parts per Amtrak car will be manufactured by Budd, 30,683 items per Amtrak car will be purchased from outside suppliers.

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Jacksonville CRO Passes Two Million Call Mark

It was a dramatic moment for Amtrak employees when the first telephone call was made to Amtrak's new Central Reservations Office (CRO) in Jacksonville on November 25, 1973, at 6:00 a.m. That call was handled within 10 seconds and, as the hours rolled by, it was obvious that things were running smoothly in the new facility at the Century City office complex.

Employees were rather excited that day and were reminded of the old Steve Allen song, "This Could Be The Start Of Something Big." And it was.

Continuous Growth

The Jacksonville CRO has grown

and responded well to the public's demand for train information and reservations. So well, in fact, that during 1974 the CRO, equipped with the Automatic Reservations and Ticketing System (ARTS), handled over two million calls.

The new CRO replaced the first Amtrak Reservations Office, established on Dec. 16, 1972, in the Seaboard Coast Line (SCL) building. This first Amtrak CRO, equipped with the proverbial "drum" that held paper diagrams, was a consolidation of Miami and Jacksonville reservations functions. Working space was limited and the increasing call volume dictated the need for more spacious

quarters.

At the helm of the CRO is Jack Gordon. Having "always been the manager of the Jacksonville office," Gordon has been instrumental in all the planning, organization, implementation and day-to-day functioning of the facility.

"The exemplary operation of the facility is a credit to Gordon and the fine staff he has assembled," said David L. Struebing, Manager—Reservations in Washington, D.C.

'Cream of Crop'

"When we hired we looked for the cream of the crop and we have them. We looked for people who are motivated to do a good job," Gordon

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The Red Lion plant of the Budd Company is an impressive facility. Built during World War II by the federal government to turn out the stainless-steel RB-1 "Conestoga" cargo plane, it was converted to a rail passenger car facility soon after the final Japanese surrender.

The main assembly area has, under

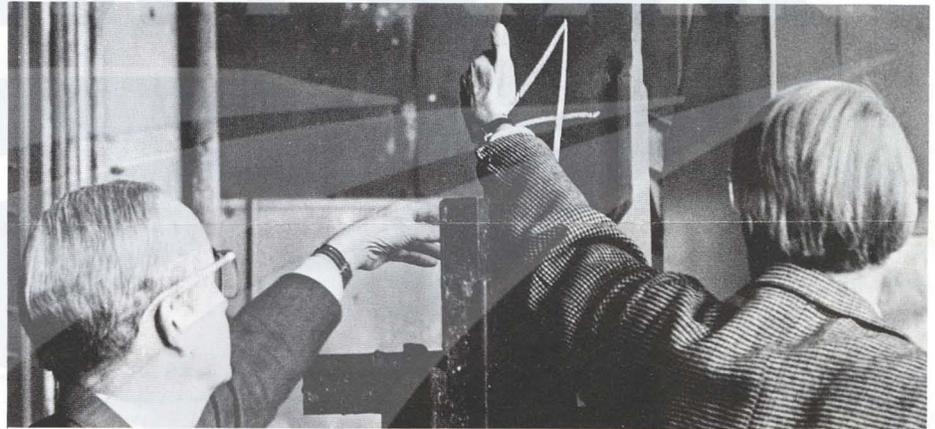


Henry Lowrie picks out a roll of stainless steel destined for use in one of Amtrak's new high-performance coaches.

one roof, an area equivalent to six football fields. It stands on a site of 216 acres of former farmland on the outskirts of Philadelphia.

The list of railroad equipment built at the plant since its post-war conversion in 1946 is impressive. It includes stainless-steel cars for many of the famous "name" trains in the United States—including the Metroliners—as well as self-propelled rail cars, subway cars and mass transit cars for service in many cities in the United States and other countries in the world.

It is only fitting that as this country begins the massive job of rebuilding and modernizing its intercity passenger train system to meet the changing needs of the 1970's and 1980's, the Budd Company's Red Lion plant will play a significant role.



Budd Company Marketing Manager Sam Madeira has a visitor feel the thickness of a collision post; a full two inches to meet new Federal Railroad Administration safety recommendations. The post will be part of Amtrak Car No. 4.



The characteristic fluting and curved roof line are evident here as James McMaster of the Budd Company checks application of a length of paneling to roof members.

(JACKSONVILLE, continued from p. 1)

said.

Gordon has excellent qualifications for his job. In Amtrak's formative days, he was on loan to the company from the Seaboard Coast Line Railroad and was assigned to the "reservations task force." He has had extensive experience in passenger sales and service with the SCL.

Jacksonville Sales Manager Michael B. McElveen said, "We're real proud of the reservations bureau. It's amazing the good job that the

agents do for us. I've been with the railroads for many years and I've never seen anything this good."

Call Count

The office is presently staffed to handle 6,000 calls per day, or 42,000 a week. Actual daily counts vary between five and seven thousand. Like other reservations offices, Jacksonville experiences its peaks and valleys. Before Christmas it handled up to 10,000 calls per day.

"Incidentally, some of these calls are new to Amtrak because reservations for Southern Railway trains have been integrated into the ARTS network. Therefore our agents have become quite familiar with the operation of the Southern Crescent," Gordon said.

Gordon's conclusion in a recent interview fits the congenial atmosphere of the reservations office. He said: "We are very proud of our installation and extend a true Southern invitation to any of you to come and visit us."

Changes In Railroad Retirement Law

Congress has enacted legislation to restructure the railroad retirement system beginning Jan. 1, 1975. The legislation was based on recommendations negotiated by a joint committee of railroad management and labor representatives. That committee was formed at the direction of Congress to propose a plan that would put the railroad retirement system on a sound financial basis. The new law is intended to remove a number of inconsistencies from the previous law and to preserve the existing equities of career railroad employees.

To this end, the Railroad Retirement Act of 1974 represents a completely restructured system and introduces a two-tier type benefit along the lines recommended by a Presidential Commission on Railroad Retirement.

The U.S. Railroad Retirement Board emphasizes that the provisions of the new law are extremely complicated and that it will take some time before the Board is able to implement all of the provisions of the new law. It may be necessary to award new retirement annuities under the

provisions of the previous law for several months after the changeover date and arrange for payment of the increases due some survivors at a later date.

New formulas are provided which over the long term are expected to effect substantial cost savings. The new benefit structure will be in the form of a two-tier type system; the first tier is essentially a social security benefit based on an employee's combined social security and railroad retirement credits.

This benefit will increase automatically at the same time and in the same way as regular social security benefits are increased. The second tier is a staff type annuity based on railroad service only; it also includes a schedule of future cost-of-living increases.

One of the most important changes made in the railroad retirement system effects a gradual phase-out of dual benefits. Under the previous law an annuitant could receive separate railroad and social security benefits on the basis of his respective earnings under the two systems.

However, employees who retired

before the changeover date of Jan. 1, 1975 will still continue to receive at least the same amounts of railroad retirement and social security benefits they were receiving before the changeover. Also, employees retiring after changeover who were fully vested for both railroad retirement and social security benefits before the changeover will receive an additional amount in the tier II portion of their annuity, generally referred to as a "windfall" amount.

There is the possibility of a tax refund for some employees for 1974. Employees who worked for both a railroad and non-railroad employer in the same year may, under certain circumstances, receive refunds of excess social security taxes. Automatic refunds at retirement, or death, may be made if an employee's earnings, taxable under both railroad retirement and social security law, in any year after 1950 and before 1975, exceeded the railroad retirement taxable maximum for that year. For years after 1974, an employee paying excess retirement taxes will have to apply for a refund on his income tax return.

California Whistle Stop Tours

Tour specialists think Amtrak's newest California package vacations are real bell-ringers, as well as, literally, Whistle Stops.

California Whistle Stops is the name of a new combination of tours created and packaged by Pan Universal Tours of Anaheim, using three of Amtrak's scenic California routings.

The Silver Whistle Stop itinerary can be used between San Francisco and San Diego in either direction with

an intermediate Anaheim stop for visits to Disneyland and Knott's Berry Farm. High spots are the 595-mile scenic coastal rides on Amtrak's Coast Starlight and San Diegan. Cost is \$189.90 each, double-occupancy, for the eight-day, seven-night tour including rail fare, hotels (Sheraton Palace in San Francisco, Sheraton Anaheim and Sheraton Half Moon in San Diego), sightseeing and admission to attractions.

Via Yosemite

The Golden Whistle Stop takes the inland California route via Yosemite, using Amtrak's San Joaquin train,

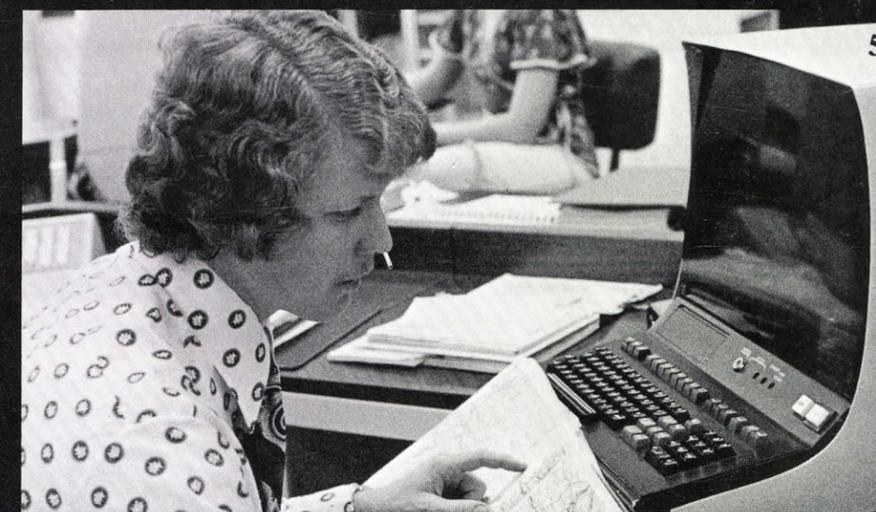
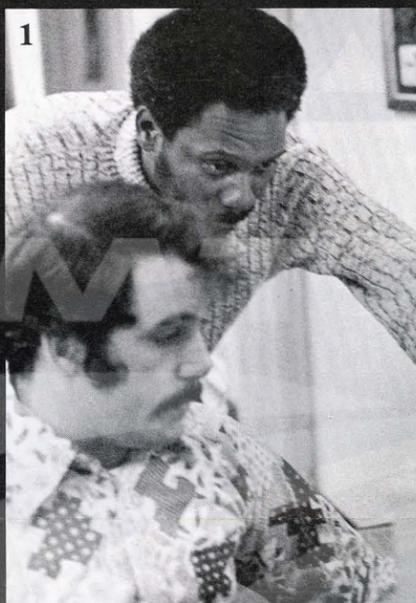
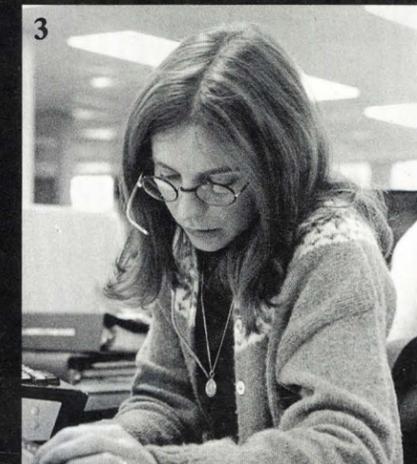
then the San Diegan. This is a ten-day, nine-night tour priced at \$249.00 each, double-occupancy. There are two full days and nights at Yosemite National Park, with the stay at Yosemite Lodge. Like the Silver Whistle Stop, this tour includes Gray Line's Deluxe Tour No. 1 of San Francisco, Disneyland and other Anaheim area attractions and the San Diego Zoo. San Diego hotel for this tour is the Sheraton Harbor Island.

The California Whistle Stops also include three-day, two-night packages of San Francisco (\$43.90 each, double), San Diego (\$40.90) and Anaheim-Disneyland (\$36.90).



Jacksonville's Central Reservation Office — Keeping Lines Open to the Public

(See story on page 1.)



CRO People At Work: 1) Andy Walker, Lead R&I Clerk (standing) with Cecil Earl Miller, R&I Clerk. 2) Neil Turner, Senior Communications Engineer (left), Eldridge Stone, Personnel Supervisor and Jack Gordon, CRO-Manager. 3) Leslie Johnson, R&I Clerk. 4) Helen Robertson, Secretary. 5) Mark Herlong, R&I Clerk.

Airline Executives Take to Amtrak

A delegation of airline executives recently journeyed to a meeting in Laredo without once having to "fasten seat belts" or "observe the no smoking sign during takeoff and landing."

That's because Fred Ford, Manager of the Dallas-Ft. Worth Airport, working with John Miller, Amtrak Sales Manager in Ft. Worth, reserved 50 seats on the Inter-American to Laredo for use by members of the South Central Chapter of the American Association of Airport Executives.

"I went out and bought lap boards for them to play cards on and they had a ball on their way to Laredo. They were excited and they had a good

trip," Miller said.

According to the Ft. Worth Star-Telegram, Ford said Laredo does not receive regular airline service and "many of our members haven't been on a train for years, so we thought this would be something a little bit dif-

ferent for them."

John P. Anderson, Amtrak District Sales Manager in Houston, said, "The group generated about \$1,300 in revenue and it certainly indicates the sales force is out beating all the bushes."



Keeping Track of Amtrak



Safety in Services

A "Safety Rules" booklet has been issued to Amtrak on-board and station services personnel which outlines proper working practices that are to be followed by each services employee. The 30-page booklet covers procedures regarding injuries, conduct on-the-job, type of clothing to be worn, methods of lifting and stacking material, food handling, operating self-propelled equipment and moving baggage carts. The pamphlet is available from Service Supervisors. Each service department employee is required to certify with his signature that he has received a copy of the booklet.

International Sales

Amtrak's "Week of Wheels" brochure has been printed in French and will soon be available to French-Canadians who are prospective Amtrak passengers. The brochures will be distributed to French-Canadian travel agents by Jim Laberge, Montreal Manager of Sales, and will also be available in that city's Canadian

National and Canadian Pacific stations. Additional copies will be stocked in Penn Station, New York, where requests are frequently received for Amtrak information printed in foreign languages. Louise Lassen, Sales Promotion Assistant in Amtrak's Washington headquarters, collaborated on the project with Laberge.

Pentagon Office Milestone

February marks the first anniversary of Amtrak's Rail Travel Center in the Pentagon. In its first 12 months of operation, it has ticketed more than 10,000 travelers and handled several times that number of inquiries both at the counter and by telephone. Joe O. Bellino, Amtrak's Manager of Government and Military Marketing, predicts a substantial increase in 1975.

A rail ticket office had been operated in the Pentagon for more than 20 years by the Pennsylvania Railroad until it was discontinued in 1967. Its reopening was planned by

Amtrak and the Department of Defense in the latter part of 1973. Amtrak's Design Department worked out specifications and the Dept. of Defense arranged for space near the airline and bus ticket offices. The Amtrak office officially opened for business on Feb. 4, 1974.

Mrs. Mae Masters, a veteran of more than 30 years at the Washington Union Terminal Co. and superintendent of reservations there, has been at Amtrak's new Pentagon office from the beginning. Besides official travel, she said a great deal of her ticketing is for leave and other pleasure travel—"a lot of it to Florida right now."

Passriders on Meteor

Restrictions against free and reduced rate travel on the Silver Meteor have been lifted. Business and personal travel documents will be honored for ticketing on the Meteor through April 30, 1975. The 24-hour advance reservations limitation remains in effect for personal travel.

Background: The 'No-show' Problem

In a recent study by Amtrak's Reservations Department, it was learned that 10.4 percent of reserved coach passengers and 11.7 percent of first-class passengers do not board the train after they have made reservations; nor do they call and cancel their reservations.

The no-show problem is critical, especially on trains with a heavy load factor. The uncanceled space goes empty, while other prospective passengers are turned away because the train is reported full.

Surprisingly, the report also showed that between three and five percent of the no-shows had already purchased their tickets. The new ticket envelope clearly states the following:

"If reservation is cancelled less than one-half hour before scheduled departure or is not cancelled, the following service charge is not refunded: 5% of the total ticket price (including accommodations charges), with a minimum of \$5.00 (\$2.50 if the total ticket price is \$10.00 or less).

"If a person goes to the trouble to make a reservation and pick up his ticket, we feel it's common sense that he should call and cancel if his plans change. The passenger has an obligation to cancel his space," said Phil Held, Manager—Central Reservations Control.

Dave Struebing, Manager of Reservations, says there are three ways that Ticket and Reservations Clerks can help reduce the number of no-shows.

First, encourage customers making phone reservations to pick up their tickets as soon as possible. Once they

are ticketed they are subject to the refund penalty if they do not cancel reservations in advance. "The refund penalty will motivate some passengers to remember to cancel if they are not going on their trip," said Struebing.

Secondly, discourage passengers from making double bookings. "If a passenger calls and makes reservations for the same train on two different days, or two different trains on the same day, because he can't decide which day he wants to travel, tell him you are sorry but double bookings are not allowed since it would deprive another passenger of a seat," Struebing said.

"Last, when a passenger picks up his ticket remind him: 'If you change your plans—to ride another train another day or not ride at all—please call us as soon as possible so that we may accommodate another person.'" concluded Struebing.

The penalty for no-shows is nothing new. The railroads had penalties ranging from 25 percent, if cancelled within the 24-hour period before train time, to 50 percent if cancelled after train time. The Interstate Commerce Commission's ex parte 277 dated April 11, 1974 standardized the penalty at five percent of the ticket price or \$5.00, whichever is greater. If the ticket price is under \$10.00, the penalty is \$2.50. The penalty applies only to those persons who actually hold tickets.

Signs announcing the penalty were posted in stations last April when it went into effect. After the new ticket envelopes were printed with the refund policy, the signs were taken down.

Correct Address, Please?

Employees are writing to Amtrak News when they do not receive their twice-a-month copies of the newsletter. For some employees, the Postal Service is forwarding the News from an old address. The newsletter is addressed to you by utilizing a duplicate copy of the master roster on file in the Personnel and Payroll departments. Therefore, if your News is addressed improperly, or if you know someone who is not receiving the News, it is because the Personnel Dept. does not have the correct address. To be sure that you are listed properly, notify the Personnel Dept. of your current address. Note: this is also necessary to ensure that your state and local income taxes are credited to the proper jurisdiction. An improper address on file in Personnel may cause complications for you at income tax time.

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Floridian Takes Winners To Disney World

Amtrak and Walt Disney World have teamed up to produce the biggest single radio promotion ever of Florida travel in the Chicago area. The "Musicradio Game" over WLS Radio encourages listeners to register in a drawing which offers 120 winners an all-expense-paid first-class trip via Amtrak to Orlando and Walt Disney World.

Winners may leave Chicago on April 8, 9, or 10 aboard Amtrak's Floridian. Upon their arrival in Orlando, the winners will receive free hotel accommodations at the Dutch Inn, meals and admission to Walt Disney World. The return trips on the Floridian may be made on April 13, 14 or 15 to Chicago.

"This promotion is the largest that WLS has ever held and from the results of the first month it is an outstanding success," said King Pedlar, Media Specialist in Amtrak's Ad-

vertising Dept. "Through January 28, over 100,000 contest coupons had been received by WLS. The promotion will run to February 23."

The campaign, entitled "Track on Down to Disney World," is being plugged in 4,159 commercials on WLS Radio and in ads in Chicago's newspapers, billboards, television and

regional editions of Time and Sports Illustrated.

A similar campaign is now underway with WFMS Radio in Indianapolis.

Amtrak personnel who are cooperating in the venture include Jim Mariner, Manager—Advertising and Sales, Promotion; Frank E. Rizzuto, Central Regional Sales Manager and his Special Assistant Jack P. Naughton; Robert F. Ringnald, Central Regional Manager Station Services, and Guy Thompson, Manager Stations—Chicago.—*Alice Kal*



"Tracking on Down" to Disney World on Amtrak are Susis O'Hara, "official ambassador of Walt Disney World" (left), Donald Duck, Mickey Mouse and John Landecker, WLS disc jockey.

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