

'What do you mean you don't have my reservation?'

Here's a good traveler's motto: if at first you don't succeed, persist. If that doesn't work, scream bloody murder. The travel industry does not intend to cheat you, but sometimes it promises you prices and services occasionally not delivered. This happens because of human error, laziness, or the antics of a fouled-up computer.

It usually occurs because the employee who meets the public does not have the information necessary to deliver the goods.

What brings me to this point is that some Observer & Eccentric readers have tried, unsuccessfully, to get the Mini-Holiday rates quoted by the Chicago Convention and Tourism Bureau. Several readers phoned the Ritz Carlton Hotel for the rate I listed on this page Feb. 5 for one person for two nights on weekends, which is half the regular rate. They were told that no such rate was available.

Mini-holiday rates are available. If you have a problem at any Chicago hotel I listed, insist on the rate by name or contact Wayne Dunham, director of public relations, Chicago Convention and Tourism Bureau, 332 S. Michigan Ave., Chicago 60604, or telephone him at 1-312-922-3530.

THIS PROBLEM occurs often enough. The trick is to learn how to be assertive in demanding your rights.

TRAVEL LOG of Iris Jones



Last fall, I arrived late and tired at the Holiday Inn in New York City. My reservation was made a week before, confirmed by telephone, and guaranteed. When I arrived, the desk clerk assured me there was no such reservation.

I believe him. In this case, I suspect the computer dropped my name somewhere between the interfaces. I had no intention of going elsewhere. I just kept repeating, much like a scratched record: "I made a reservation and I want a room." I got one.

You don't always win, but at least you know that somebody heard your complaint. That's what happened when I bought tickets, described as "two of the best seats in the house" for the play "Annie" at the Victoria Palace Theater in London last summer.

They were front-row-center in the balcony. I looked great on the seating plan. The hitch was that a double brass rail had been installed in front of the two seats on either side of the center aisle, probably to stop a careless customer from tumbling down the steep steps and over

the edge. I couldn't see over or under the rail.

I didn't win that battle, because the seats were full, but I wrote to the manager and complained. He said that "half a million people had seen 'Annie' from those seats and nobody had complained before."

Which, if true, certainly seems to prove my point.

FROM THE MAILBAG—"One call gets it all." That's the message on a T-shirt being handed out by the Southeast Michigan Travel and Tourist Association, 27777 Franklin Rd., Southfield, which wants to attract your attention to its telephone Snowline.

The Snowline, 357-1663, gives an updated-daily report on snow conditions and winter events in southeast Michigan.

TRAVELER'S TIPS, a brochure printed by the U.S. Government Printing Office, Washington, D.C. 20402, will give you all kinds of information about the kinds of plant and animal diseases you can accidentally import when you bring certain plants and foods across the border.

It can also save you the heartache of carrying Irish shamrocks all the way from the Old Sod, and then having to leave them at the border because the Feds won't let you bring the plants in. Price is 25 cents.

Train trip across Canada a highlight of a lifetime

By IRIS SANDERSON JONES

You are either a train traveler or not. You do or do not enjoy moving out of a cold station, steam on the windows and rails converging ahead as the railway car begins its rough and noisy rock.

Some people are aware only of the stopping and starting, the imperfect heating system in the roomette, where a bed takes every inch of space, the boredom of riding endlessly across lake, prairie and mountain country to the Pacific.

Train people perceive something else. They see the ride as a crossing of uncluttered land, where a solitary moose makes a yard by pushing the snow down with his feet on a lonely stretch of rock-and-tree country north of Lake Superior. Seeing the real countryside as history made it, in clusters of small towns with names like Sioux Look-Out and prairie cities like Winnipeg and Regina. Breathtaking views when the night train starts the wilderness in the Rockies.

If you are a train person, a trip across Canada is one of the travel highlights of a lifetime.

Canada has two major train lines, the Canadian National (CN) and the Canadian Pacific (CP) railways. Both run on parallel lines within 100 miles of the American border from the Atlantic

Ocean to Winnipeg, at the edge of the Great Plains. CP continues on a southern route through the mountain pass beyond Banff and CN turns north through Jasper before the two lines reunite at Vancouver on the Pacific Ocean.

In late 1978, the two train services were merged to form VIA Canada, a rail passenger service. VIA is a crown corporation which reports to the minister of transport in the Canadian federal government system.

VIA manages all customer service from information and reservations to on-board services and scheduling, making government contracts for these services with CN and CP.

The future for the venture holds 50 new coaches, 22 LRC (Light, Rapid, Comfortable) locomotives and a computerized reservation and ticketing system that will plug into Air Canada's reservation system, all by early 1980.

The computerized reservation system, called ReserVIA, will make Canada the first country in the world where a traveler can make airline, train, car rental, hotel and motel reservations from a single computerized source.

THE NEW SYSTEM was designed to eliminate overlapping service. CP and CN pioneered Canada in the 19th century, and have since offered two almost-parallel train routes from Montreal to

Vancouver. A passenger could choose between crossing the Rockies at Banff or Jasper, but otherwise the route was similar.

VIA now runs a daily transcontinental train from Toronto to Vancouver and another daily train from Montreal to Vancouver, with passengers opting to cross the platform at Winnipeg for a choice of routes. VIA will run variously on both CN and CP tracks.

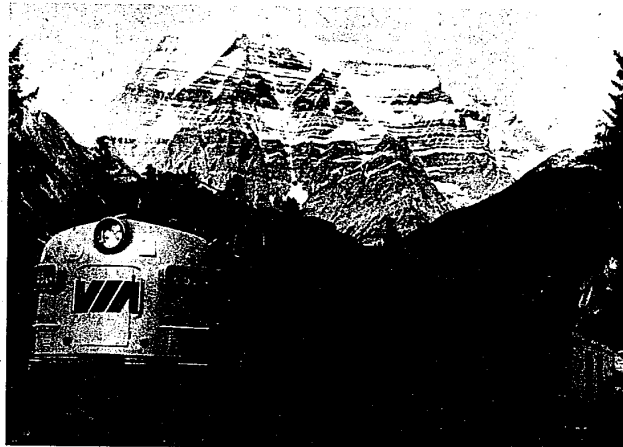
The new Fare-For-All plan includes round-trip rates at 1 1/2 of the one-way price. VIA passes within regions, and one-third off for senior citizens.

The rail corridor which runs from Windsor through Toronto and Montreal to Quebec City moves one-third of its business traffic.

One of the highlights of this run is the Turbo train which speeds from Toronto to Montreal.

Package deals offer round-trip club car passage from Toronto to Montreal with this train with a full-course meal, free parking at stations in Toronto and Montreal and one night's hotel accommodation at a choice of three or four top-notch hotels for \$99 to \$129, depending on the hotel.

Another unusual Canadian train package is called the Shaw Show Train, a 10-day cross-Canada journey complete with on-board performers from the Shaw Festival Company, a separate theater car with stage, piano and seats



VIA Canada train winds its way through the Rockies. (Photo courtesy VIA Canada)

for 50 passengers, and special theater stops at cities along the way.

The wheeled playhouse will run 10 times this year from Toronto to Vancouver for a package cost of about \$1,100 (U.S.) including first-class hotel accommodations and meals.

AMERICAN TRAVELERS often are surprised to learn of major differences

between traveling by train in the United States and Canada. Canadian trains are maintained and upgraded to offer good, reasonably priced service cross-country, so you will not see old train stations looking like broken down mausoleums. Canadian stations are alive and busy with traffic.

The second major difference is geographical. After crossing the American Rockies, you must cross several hun-

dered miles of butte and plains to the Pacific. In Canada, three ranges of glaciated mountains fold for 600 miles from the Rockies to the edge of the sea, running through spectacular mountain scenery for 24 hours.

For information on traveling across Canada by train, contact the Canadian Government Office of Tourism, 1900 First Federal Building, 1001 W. Woodward, Detroit 48226, or phone 963-8686.

Ft. Wayne has group programs

Even though historic Fort Wayne is closed for the winter, its education program continues.

"Yesterday-on-Tour," a "hands-on" living history program, is being offered to schools and community groups throughout the metropolitan area.

The response has been overwhelming, according to William Phenix, curator of military history at the fort.

"Yesterday-on-Tour" has been seen by thousands of school children in the tri-county area. The four participants in the program have traveled to many Detroit schools as well as schools in such suburbs as Royal Oak, Troy, Union Lake, Grosse Pointe, Mt. Clemens, Grosse Ile, Plymouth, Rochester, Warren, Wyandotte, Birmingham, Highland Park, Oxford, and Utica.

"EVERYWHERE THEY have gone they have created a greater interest in

local and national history and Fort Wayne as well," Phenix said.

Billed as a field trip without the cost, labor and expense of leaving school, "Yesterday-on-Tour" combines "Hard-tack and Coffee," last year's outreach program on the Civil War, with "Les Francais a Detroit," which deals with Detroit's 18th-century French period.

As in last year's program, Michael Jones and Nora White of the fort's interpretive staff play the roles of Jacob Ganser, a Civil War soldier, and Lydia Hall, a woman of the 1860s, the two players demonstrate how people lived during that era of our history.

Their presentation includes discussions of Civil War army life, a typical soldier's uniform and equipment, and domestic life during the war (especially women's active contributions to the war effort).

This year two new characters have

been added to the program, Dennis Charbonneau and Jeanne Godfroi, portrayed by Dennis Charbonneau (no need to adopt a French name when one has a perfectly good one already) and Jean LaViolette, both also from the interpretive staff.

Through artifacts and story they describe the life of the adventurous French "habitants" and "coureur du bois" (rover of the woods) in 18th-century Michigan.

"Yesterday-on-Tour" is available to school grades 3-8 and limited adult presentations. Each program lasts approximately 45-60 minutes and is adaptable to shorter lengths. There is a fee that is reduced when more than one presentation is scheduled at one location.

More information is available by calling Fort Wayne at 833-9776.

INSTEAD OF A BURGER IN A BAG, WE GIVE YOU A BIG FARM DINNER.



WE DO IT RIGHT.
OR WE DON'T DO IT.

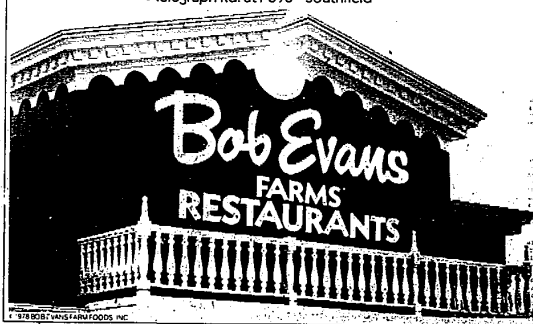
If you're not hungry, a quicky snack will do.

But at Bob Evans, we feed you farm style. Try chicken-n-noodles or our boneless barbecued rib dinner. Fresh, crisp salad with our own Colonial dressing. Steaming, baked biscuits that are crusty outside, fluffy inside. And lots more.

And with every dish, we serve a smile.

Drop by Bob Evans. If all you want is fast food, that's your business. But if you want a good, hearty, sit-down farm dinner, that's our business.

- Eureka Rd. at I-75 - Taylor
- 14 Mile Rd. at I-75 - Madison Heights
- Telegraph Rd. at I-696 - Southfield



1979 Thunderbird
NO DOWN PAYMENT

Power Steering, Power Brakes, Automatic Transmission, Stereo Radio, Tinted Glass, Air Conditioned, Interior Decor, Wide Body Molding, Closed End Lease, \$300.00 refundable deposit plus 4% sales tax, lic. & title. TOTAL PAYMENTS \$292.00

LEASING
\$196.00
Per Month

OFFER GOOD THRU FEB. 28th

Larry Paskov's HARBOR ISLAND SPA
MIAMI BEACH FLORIDA 33131

Reserve Early For March At America's #1 Spa

- MODERATE PRICES
- 2 FREE TENNIS CLINICS WEEKLY
- 2 FREE DISCO LESSONS WEEKLY
- THE BEST AND MOST DELICIOUS MEALS

CALL TOLL FREE 1-800-327-7510