

Shirley Learns Bus Techniques

HOLLYWOOD — There are always adjustments to be made when starting a new series, but Shirley Jones, the star of the ABC Television Network's "The Partridge Family," really had

to shift gears.

"I had to learn to drive a bus," the vivacious Academy Award-winning actress explained, "and it wasn't easy. It has a stick shift and I had never driven anything that wasn't automatic."

In "The Partridge Family," Miss Jones plays a widowed mother who joins her five youngsters' vocal-instrumental group. The family makes an audition tape, the song becomes a hit record and the family is suddenly in show business.

"What follows, of course, is a demand for us to make personal appearances and perform in night clubs. That's where the bus comes in," Miss Jones said. "With such a large group, including our booking agent on some occasions, and all the instruments, we need a bus to get around. And, oh joy, mother gets the job of driving it."

The Partridge youngsters, ranging in age from 16 down to 5, are played by David Cassidy (Miss Jones' stepson in real life), Susan Dey, Danny Bonaduce, Jeremy Gelbwaks and Susan Crough. Dave Madden, a "Laugh-In" alum, plays the family's agent.