

The Hummingbird



(Above) The Louisville & Nashville Railroad's Humming Bird picks up speed leaving Montgomery on its way to the Crescent City in December, 1965 with E7 758 pulling the load. These L&N colors were once called either "Gray Ghost" or "Confederate Gray and Yellow."

Credit: David W. Salter

During World War II, the L&N was making plans to initiate new passenger trains from its northern area to its southernmost points. This meant Cincinnati to New Orleans, via Louisville, Nashville, Birmingham, Montgomery, Flomaton and Mobile, and later via a connection at Bowling Green, Kentucky to Memphis, Tennessee; but with the war going on, it wasn't until 1946 that it could begin.

When the American Car and Foundry in St. Louis delivered the new blue and imitation gold cars, it became the first post-World War II streamlined passenger

train. There were seven cars: five coaches, a lounge, and a dining car. The premise was that the train had to travel light - no heavy baggage; only carrying families and businessmen between Cincinnati and New Orleans through the Birmingham and Nashville routes. The original equipment was part of a 28 car order of 4 train sets of lightweight aluminum cars built by ACF. 14 cars were assigned to the "Hummingbird" and 14 to

the "Georgian." Many of those cars were removed from service in the late 1960's due to

“...it became the first post-World War II streamlined passenger train.”

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