

NATIONAL FORUM PAR 1207

(6 Roomette / 4 Double Bedroom / 6 Open Section Sleeper)



PAR 1207 NATIONAL FORUM ON TRACK 13 AT LAUPT, APRIL 2006

PHOTO BY MARTI ANN DRAPER

History of the National Series Sleepers

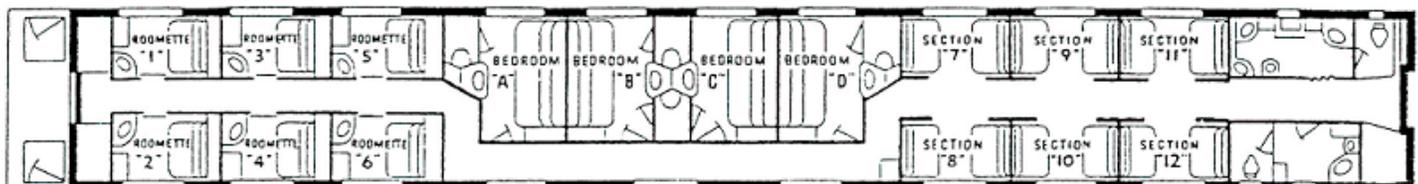
In September 1954 the Union Pacific Railroad placed an order for twelve 6 Roomette 4 double bedroom, 6 open section sleepers. Originally the cars were to have been named after famous hotels in Las Vegas, NV. (e. g. Desert Inn, Sahara, Sands, etc.) Pullman preferred to have all cars of one type named using a series system. Union Pacific accepted this and chose "National" for the name of the series. In November 1954 the Wabash Railroad added three cars to the order for their contribution to the City of St. Louis. The Nationals were the last passenger cars built with open sections. Assignments included such trains as the *City of Portland*, *City of Denver*, and *City of St. Louis*. Numerous changes in the passenger traffic occurred on the UP during the late 1950's and early 1960's. By June 1968, the cars were relegated to secondary service on the *Portland Rose* due to reduction in passenger traffic on the UP and the discontinuance of the *City of St. Louis*. By December 1969, the *Portland Rose* was history and the Nationals were idle. During the 1970-71 ski seasons, the UP Los Angeles passenger office operated numerous ski trains to Sun Valley and special excursion service utilizing the idle Nationals. The first use of the Forum by PRS was in September 1970 its trip to Yellowstone, and in April 1971 Farewell to Salt Lake Route. This was last use of the Forum by Union Pacific. On May 1, 1971 all passenger services were discontinued on the Union Pacific with Amtrak taking over national passenger services.

Ownership of the Forum

Impressed with the cars, PRS bought two of the Nationals. In October 1971, PRS purchased the *National Forum*, and in December 1971, purchased the *National Embassy*. The National Embassy was later traded for a Shasta Daylight coach. Soon after the Forum was painted into the preferred PRS Green and Yellow paint scheme (ala CNW). From 1971 to 1977 the *Forum* was used extensively by PRS in excursion travel across the United States and into Mexico. During this time Amtrak mandated that all private cars running on their trains be painted to match their trains. With this ruling the Forum was repainted into a modified Amtrak scheme. In 1977 after running its last excursion for the year, the Forum laid dormant. By 1985 Golden Spike Rail Tours inquired on using the Forum on an excursion to the 1986 World Exposition on Transportation in Vancouver, BC. The Forum was painted back into Union Pacific colors, and placed back into service. The Forum saw service on a number of excursions. The highlight of this period of excursion activity was the Forum's use behind 3751 on its excursion to Bakersfield in 1991. Needing to meet Amtrak's new requirement for private passenger cars, HEP was installed in 1992. At the end of 1996, the Forum had reached its 40th year of service. AAR and Amtrak regulations require that when a car reaches this age it receive an extensive inspection, known as a PC-2. With the PC-2 completed in 2002 the Forum was once again back out on the road. On August 29, 2003 having just completed two shake down excursions the Forum was derailed in a switching move in Seattle, Washington. The damage was severe enough that the Forum was stored in Seattle until repairs could be made. While stored, Seattle experienced record lows that caused freeze damage to the water system. On August 3, 2004 the Forum finally made its way home. The rest of 2004 and all of 2005 was spent repairing derailment and freeze damage to the car. By the beginning of 2006, the Forum was again certified for Amtrak operations and has been placed back into operation with trips to San Diego and San Luis Obispo on Amtrak's Pacific Surfliner. The Forum is currently the most original example of a National that is running behind Amtrak, and is considered a rolling museum display by the Society.

Current & Future Projects

The vestibule has been stripped of peeling paint and is being prepared for repainting. Future projects include replacement of windows, rebuilding of the beds as needed, repairs to make the air slide doors operational, reupholstering the seats, repairs to the chilled water dispenser and repainting of the exterior of the car.



Floor Plan 4197, and Lot Numbers 6957 (UP) and 6966 (Wabash)