

NE Missouri and SE Iowa
March 29-30th, 2003

The club left Ames at 6am. The route down to Missouri included following the BNSF from Osceola to Albia and the APNC from Albia to Centerville, with no trains to be found. The first Missouri stop was Marceline, the namesake of the BNSF Marceline Sub. Here the club met the EB SW Chief led by Amtrak 195. Without roads that paralleled the tracks, the club proceeded through NE Missouri, making an empty handed stop at La Plata as well as Childress, which had a nice sign on the elevator. In Rutledge (?) BNSF 5348 was found WB. After a few more stops, the trip continued to Keokuk, where the ex-CNW 400 was nowhere to be found, however ex-CNW 4307 was sitting at Pioneer Railcorp. Moving out of Keokuk, the webmaster's controller box was found as well as BNSF 9894 idling outside of a coal facility. Fort Madison provided the best action of the day, with BNSF 4442 picking up some well cars before departing across the river. The BNSF has a nice safety sign on the station. Other traffic included ATSF 905 waiting for its next assignment and BNSF 6340 leading some empty trailers. An all-ATSF powered train passed through as well as a UP run-through. The final stop for the day was Burlington where a Loram track grinder was parked with other assorted power.

Sunday was a better day, with sunny skies and warmer temperatures. The first train of the day was caught at Letts, a manifest led by FURX 8115. Next stop was Muscatine where the club was lucky enough to catch DME 3801, the City of Midland, switching through a residential area. Here is a shot of it entering the neighborhood, a close-up of the cab, and a going away shot. On the way upriver, FURX 7215 was found stopped at a signal, leading a hopper train from KC. The grain train was waiting for the IPSCO train to clear its warrant to Montpelier, which the club watched climb the grade up out of the river valley. On the way to Davenport, the ex-CNW 251 crane was sitting at Black Hawk Fleet on the west edge of town. With nothing waiting at Nahant Yard, the club moved to the Illinois side of the river to take a look at NRE Silvis, home of the old Rock Island Shops. Next stop was Clinton, where a CNW patch UP 3028 was sitting in the yard and ICE 4205 was found working the 914 job (Nahant-Clinton-Nahant). With a heads-up given from our alumni member Clayton Johanson, a UP Business Train, the "Dick Davidson Special" was caught just east of Clarence. The UP wasn't friendly from there on, with sparse traffic from Clinton to Ames. The last train of the trip was a DPU coal train, with freshly painted UP 5947 on the rear. A nice variety of traffic for 2 days.