

Quad Cities Trip
October 20, 2012

Saturday October 20, 2012

This fall, the club decided to take a day trip to the Quad Cities area. The club worked with alumni member Ben Hucker to plan activities in the area. Club members on the trip included Patrick Johnson, Adam Lind, Jacob Hagan, and Joel Poland.

The club departed at 7:00 am in a new ISU Dodge Grand Caravan and headed east on US 30. Having not seen any trains on our travel on US 30, we turned off to go south towards Belle Plaine. There, we were met with crossing gates activating at the Iowa 21 crossing, but no train arrived and the gates went back up. We continued on to Marengo, where we would begin to follow the Iowa Interstate. Just after turning onto US 6, Adam's scanner came alive with communication from IAIS 513, the Rock Island heritage unit. We determined that it was just ahead of us in Homestead, headed east. We watched the tracks ahead of us as we made our way east, but never caught sight of the train before reaching Tiffin, where we made the jump down to I-80. We eventually found our way to Davenport and made our first stop at the DM&E (CP) Nahant Yard, where we met alumni member Ben Hucker. Ben gave us some history of the yard and its lineage from the Milwaukee Road to Soo Line to CP to IMRL to IC&E and finally back to CP. After taking a club photo, we drove down the public road that borders the yard to see what was there. In the yard, we found many locomotives. Among them was a patched Milwaukee Road "bandit". We stopped for a few minutes to watch some switching operations and heard on the radio that a train was departing south out of the yard with scrap steel to go to an industry in Muscatine, so we drove back down the south end of the yard and watched it leave.

From the yard, we followed Ben to Thunder Road Hobbies in Moline, IL. A couple of club members made some purchases there and we left for our next destination. After a quick stop for lunch at Hardee's in Bettendorf, the club arrived at Midwest Trains, a model railroad club in Bettendorf, which Ben is a member of. We were given a tour of the layout and an overview of the operations and then were allowed to operate a few trains for the afternoon.

After finishing at Midwest Trains, the club headed back west, where we would make our last stop of the day to see the Hawkeye Express in Coralville. Being that there was a home Iowa football game that day, the Hawkeye Express was busy shuttling fans to the stadium and we were able to watch it in action. We then had an early supper at Culver's in Coralville and made our way back to US 6 to return to Ames, where we arrived at about 8:00.