

This is a sample cover page from our national bi-monthly newsletter. You, as a member, will receive 6 copies per year. Normally there are 12 or more pages of information. No ads only member's programs and articles.

STOP and check out what's in this month's issue of the NRHS News. Fall foliage excursions by two chapters draw large crowds; Harrisburg Chapter establishes RailCamp endowment; 362 long-time NRHS members honored; and much more.



NRHS News

News for all NRHS members

February 2009

Convention shows rail as vital link

Note – This is the third in a series of articles providing background for the 2009 NRHS convention at Duluth, Minn., August 10-16: "Steam on the Range." The rail industry in the Twin Ports of Duluth, Minn. and Superior, Wis. was shaped by the discovery and exploitation of natural resources, especially iron ore. These raw materials had to be moved to a convenient port so they could be shipped by water to where they were to be used (e.g., the steel mills of Northern Indiana). The NRHS convention will showcase this vital function of railroading.

By CARL JENSEN

As we noted in previous articles, the creation of rail connections followed closely the discovery of the various ore bodies found throughout the northern Minnesota Iron Range. Most were built in the period from 1890 through 1915. Both the Duluth, Missabe & Northern (DM&N) Railway and the Duluth and Iron Range (D&IR) Railroad competed for access to the various mine traffic. This was often a function of the combined ownership of both the railroad and the mining property. The two carriers were the dominant railroads in the area, but not the only ones.

Adding to the railroad mix in the area were several other companies and a number of lines that were chartered but never built. This included the Duluth, Winnipeg & Pacific, absorbed into the Canadian National in 1912. Although this line cut through the heart of the iron region, it was built to reach the Canadian border, which it did. Another line, the Eastern Railway Company of Minnesota, acquired the Duluth & Winnipeg Railroad in 1898 and ultimately became part of the Great Northern Railway. This line was the initial connection for the Duluth, Missabe & Northern to handle its ore traffic to the head of the lake at Superior, Wisconsin.

The two original rail lines built to access the iron region, the D&IR on the eastern side, and the DM&N in the west central side, continued under separate managements even after the formation of the U.S. Steel Corporation in 1901. They built numerous branches and spurs throughout their regions, many of which were torn up when the particular mine they served played out. Both companies built into each

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PHOTO BY DAWN HOLMBERG

HEADING NORTH - Former Soo Line Pacific No. 2719 locomotive is shown in Duluth, the site of the 2009 national convention.