Volume 46, Issue 9
September 2011

the Dispatcher

Central Oklahoma Chapter
of the National Railway Historical Society
Oklahoma Railway Museum Ltd,

NARCOA Affiliate Member

Mr. John Ansell, ORM board member, Operation Life Saver presenter, NRHS director, conductor and engineer passes away

John Donald Ansell, 70 of Midwest City died Monday, August 8, 2011. John was born November 19, 1940 in Fairchance, PA, the son of Joseph Ansell and Alice Moore.

John is survived by his wife of 50 years, Sabra Cherrill Ansell; son, Craig and his wife, Susan and their children, Garrett, Cooper and Stephanie; son, Derek and wife Andrea and their children, Stephanie and husband David Bailey and daughter Aubrey, Jessica and husband Jamin Moses and son Jude, and Caleb; daughter, Sabra Gadberry and husband, Derek and their sons, Ryan and Jason; son, Chad and wife Reagan and their children, Summer, Justin and Tristan; daughter, Carmen Funderburk and husband, David and their children, Cydnie, Megan, Samuel, Lydia and Asher.

John served his country in the United States Air Force, worked for several railroads including Rock Island and Santa Fe, and retired from the City of Midwest City water department..

He was acting National Director for the Oklahoma Railway Historical Society, a volunteer Conductor/Engineer for the Oklahoma Railway Museum and Midland Railway in Kansas. He was awarded Presenter of the Year three times for Operation Life Saver. John was an avid blood donor and donated tissue to LifeShare after his death.

John at the throttle of # 2034

Mr. John Ansell *by Allyn Mills*

It is with deep sorrow and with a great sense of loss that Oklahoma Operation Lifesaver Presenter John Ansell passed away. There is not a more dedicated presenter than John, who typically gave over 100 presentations a year to over two thousand people. Three times he was named Oklahoma Operation Lifesaver Presenter of the Year, more than any other presenter past or present.

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The President's Column

September will be here when you receive this and Thomas will be here in three weeks. We have been preparing for this for a long time and are close to being prepared. If you are volunteering to help with this event please take the required training to help us.

August was tough for me, we lost two longtime members. Bob Read was nearly always at the Oklahoma City Train Show; he was a knowledgeable man and shared with everyone who stopped by. John Ansell was active on our train crews in every capacity from engineer to brakeman. He was always cheerful and happy to show visitors around the museum. I will miss both of them.

Summer has been tough on our equipment. Air conditioners have quit almost as fast as the Mechanical Department can fix them. Currently two of our chair cars have air problems that will be fixed before Thomas. The Car Mover is operating again but still has some leaks. Terry Birchett has been working on it as well as helping on the air conditioning problems.

Thomas the Tank Engine will be here before my next letter. I encourage you to come out during this event and see the Museum at its best.

Stan Hall

Oklahoma Railway Museum, Ltd.

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The Oklahoma Railway Museum, Ltd. is a 501-[C] 3 organization. Donations are tax deductible.

If a donation is made for a specified project, every dollar of that donation goes toward that project.

Day out with Thomas operations are nearing

First week end September 23, 24 and 25

Second week end September 30, Oct 1 and 2

Please volunteer soon for this event.

This event is the primary funding source for the ORM. Your help is needed.

to volunteer for car hosting contact Truman Hefner at: vjtdhef@sbcglobal.net
to volunteer for the Thomas store contact Larry Dodd at: dodd@airosurf.com
to volunteer for one of the many other positions contact Pat Riley at: clockdial@cox.net

Museum Update

by Drake Rice

Work continues in the shop as volunteers restore the GN Chair Car for service during DOWT. The car will use the power from the diner to run the lights and air-conditioning while providing stairs to enter not only the GN car but the diner. The AC unit has been mounted under the car and the duct work in place, now work is being done on the wiring for the AC. New speakers have been installed and will work with the other equipment sound system.

On the exterior of the car, the priming has been done and the finish coat will be applied. Meanwhile the volunteers are continuing to replace the bad window glass in the car. The car as we have said in the past will add an additional 68 seats to the DOWT train; however we are pulling the RI Combine out which reduces 40 seats, so we have net gain of at least 28 seats. The RI car is a six wheel truck and friction bearings which are additional maintenance work. The car will be held in reserve should another car have a problem.

Chair car OKRX 115 AC compressor failed during a normal Saturday run and as a result, a new one has been ordered and will need to be installed prior to DOWT. This requires some modification to the rack under the car which will need to be addressed.

The car mover is in the shop receiving some additional attention. It was running then had a water leak. It is hoped the leak is not a serious problem, but it required the head to be taken back off, which requires a lot of other items to be removed. There is nothing easy about working on the car mover.

As you can see the maintenance crew is staying busy and we appreciate the new volunteers who are helping. If you would like to be part of this group, come out on a Saturday or call Jim Murray at 478-1176. All help is appreciated.

Other work is on going around the grounds. Grass is being cut; weeding and the wind damaged some trees on the museum grounds. Special thanks to those who have been helping in this area. We badly need rain and cooler weather so we can get a burn permit to get rid of the limbs that have been collected over the last year. We also still need to purchase some ties for track maintenance in the areas toward Eckroat but like so many things at the museum, so many needs, but so little money. But in visiting with other around the country, ORM seems to be holding its own due to the efforts of our great volunteers and continued financial support of the members and those coming out to ride the trains.

One last item, we are still trying to get enough money together to put the signals up on NE 36th Street. It would make a lot safer operations when the train goes to NE 36th Street. If you are interested in helping on this project, contact Bob Hussey at 670-3235.

Dispatcher procedure change

Over the last couple of years the cost of mailing and printing have continued to increase, which has impacted the cost of the Dispatcher. Also with all the budget problems with Washington and possible reductions in postal service, ORM has decided it will join most other museum groups in offering the newsletter electronically effective January 2012. ORM will be working on a method for members who do not have internet to be able to receive a copy of the newsletter by mail. We regret that we have reached this point, but unfortunately costs continue to increase which we have no control over.

"If you do have internet, we need to verify your e-mail address so you can receive the newsletter in electronic format. Please send it to Anne Murray at the Oklahoma Railway Museum. If you have questions, please call the museum on Thursday or Friday between 9:00 AM and 4:30 PM."

Mr. John Ansell

by Allyn Mills

John logged in thousands of miles travelling throughout the state to tell people how to drive and walk safely around railroad tracks. Many times he would leave in the early morning hours , travel hundreds of miles to give several presentations and return home late in the afternoon or evening.

He stood ready to help out or step in when someone was needed to give a presentation. John Ansell was my "go to" person when we needed the best of the best to help out with an activity or to give a presentation with high impact. Wherever he went, he was always asked back to give additional presentations – a tribute to the skill and passion with which he gave his presentations. John's spirit of volunteerism was not limited to Operation Lifesaver. He volunteered at the Oklahoma Railway Museum, at his church, and with several other activities. From sunup to sun down, John gave his all to others. He put other's welfare above his own, especially his family. He traveled long distances to be at special events of family members.

Our hearts and prayers go out to his family as they grieve the loss of this great man of God, and a wonderful husband, father, and grandfather. Personally, John was a great friend to me. Just before he died, he inquired and was concerned about a health problem I was having. He told me he hoped I would have a quick recovery. John had the same kind of compassion and concern for everyone he knew.

John Ansell left a legacy of extraordinary compassion, dedication, devotion, skill, expertise, and commitment in both his professional and personal life. Such a person does not come into our life very often. I am a better person for knowing him. It has been my privilege and honor to have known John. I am sure many of you feel the same way. Most agree that "actions speak louder than words." Clearly, John was a man of action who his legacy he left through his actions.

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Memories of John Ansell

Remembering John Ansell; I first met John back in 1989 when I starting going to Watonga and help with the Watonga Chief. John was helpful in teaching me the railroad business due to his vast experience. Then in 1993, he would come to the school yard to work on equipment that was stored there. John Ansell, Neal Baucom, Harry Currie, Bob Hussey, Jim Murray, Roy Thornton and I would show up on a given Saturday and work till noon. I have several pictures of John on the roof of the Rock Island Caboose helping me put down new decking.

John and I were part of the Operation Lifesaver class in September 1995. Since that time I watched his unparalleled efforts to eliminate highway rail grade crossing incidents through his Operation Lifesaver presentations. And last, on Saturday, August 6th, John was the rear brakeman on the museum trains that day. I was the engineer and John checked on me at lunch to see if I needed anything. I can still see him giving the hand signals at the north switch. He had a very smooth rhythm, which was clear and easy to follow. As we left the museum that day, we talked as we walked to our cars and he asked me about my Amtrak trip I was getting ready to take. John convinced me to take the trip and then in John's style, gave me a ton of information, since he always took a grand kid on Amtrak on a certain birthday. I'm sorry he won't get to hear my report since I leave on the 17th. But I know he will be watching and smiling.

Drake Rice

I knew John Ansell for about twelve years . I joined the Oklahoma Railway Museum in 1998 and worked with him on various projects while we were developing the museum. John and I traveled at different times to wherever there was trains going or coming, as with me John was always happiest when we were riding a passenger train or watching an old freight go by or just looking at old steam engines or passenger cars. On one occasion John and I drove to Centerport Texas and rode the TRE , the DART, and the McKinney avenue street car all day long, John will be missed by all his rail fan friends , an empty place in our hearts for him, but a large place in our memories.

Charles Price

Bob Reed, Cimarron Railroad Museum founder passes away

Robert F. "Bob" Read, passed away Sunday, July 24, 2011, in the Drumright Nursing Home at the age of 91 years.

The son of the late Ezra and Bess Thom Read, Bob was born on July 22, 1920 in Cushing, and was raised and educated here, graduate of Cushing High School in the class, 1937. He received a Bachelors Degree from East Central University in 1942, later receiving his Masters from Oklahoma A & M.

He was united in marriage to Mazie Cox and to this union one son, Robert Read, Jr., was born.

Bob's first job was serving as lifeguard at Clearlake. He set pins at the Bowling Alley on Broadway, and joined the Army in 1942 serving with the 103rd Reinforcement Battalion in France during the Battle of the Bulge. He was a school teacher, basketball coach and principal at Schlegel, and also taught, coached and was principal at Hillside School retiring in 1981 as Assistant Superintendent of Cushing Public Schools.

During his employment he opened Cimarron Railroad Museum which was housed in the Yale Santa Fe Depot, later moving it to Cushing. He also helped Mazie with the opening of the Friday Store in 1970.

Bob was a member of the First Christian Church, (Disciples of Christ); a member of the Cushing Masonic Blue Lodge #111 and a 32nd Degree Mason. In 2006 he was inducted to the Oklahoma Historians Hall of Fame.

Bob is survived by many friends, rail fans, former basketball players, students and many loving Sojourn Hospice care staff.

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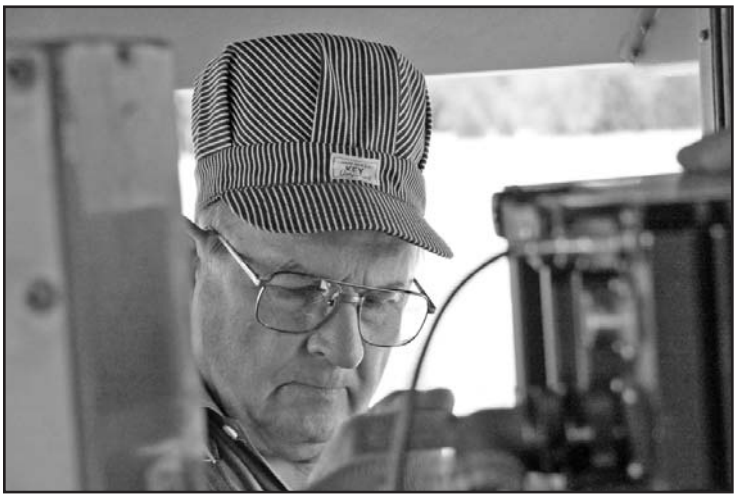
Right: John Ansell on conductor duty making his train inspection.

Left: John Ansell and Charles Price raise the flags on a ride day.



Right: John at the throttle of 2094 waiting for the instruction to proceed from Oakwood Station.

photos by Raymond Woods

Robinson & Walker Avenues, then and now

Above: *Photo taken 17 February 2010 looking southeast toward the Shields Avenue bridge. The entrances to the old loading platform passenger tunnels are still in place.* ***Below:*** *Photo taken 16 July 2011 shows the relocated Union Pacific tracks, I-40 pavement construction and the new Robinson Avenue bridge under construction*

Above: *Photo taken 17 February 2010 looking southwest toward the Walker Ave. underpass. The arrow is pointing to the south railing of the underpass* ***Below:*** *Photo taken 16 July 2011 shows the relocated Union Pacific tracks, I-40 pavement construction and the new Walker Ave. bridge which is now open to traffic.*

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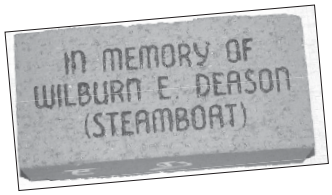
Additional safety measures

Two angles were added to each end of the Frisco and Rock Island Logos recently. Although unlikely they would tip over it was decided to add some additional safety measures. The work was performed by Manhattan Road and Bridge Company. The hole drilling was done by Hilti Corporation to demonstrate a new cordless hammer drill. Thanks to Manhattan Road and Bridge Company and Hilti Corporation.

ORM Depot Store

The Oklahoma Railway Museum, Ltd. (ORM) has items available for both children and adults at the Depot Store. These include baseball caps, polo shirts, t–shirts, lapel pins, and coasters. Funds raised by donations for these items support the Museum projects.

The Depot Store, located inside the Oakwood Depot on the Museum grounds, is open during regular ***Museum hours – 9 am to 4 pm on the first and third Saturday operation days*** of each month April through September. The store is also open for special events.



Order Form – Engraved Platform Bricks

Cost is $50.00 per brick.
Up to a maximum of 4 lines with 16 letters and spaces per line

Purchaser's Name _____ Phone No. (_____) _____

Line 1																
Line 2																
Line 3																
Line 4																

Become an ORM Member

2011 MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION:

☐ $30.00 per year – Individual Membership in the Oklahoma Railway Museum, Ltd. (spouse included)

☐ $25.00 per year – Individual Senior (age 65 and up) (spouse included) and Individual Student (full–time student) Membership in ORM

☐ $36.00 per year – To add National Railway Historical Society (NRHS) Membership (add $5.00 for spouse) (Student Memberships: $16 per year) NRHS can change dues without notice

SEND NRHS DUES TO ORM ADDRESS BELOW, NOT DIRECTLY TO NRHS

☐ $500.00 - Oklahoma Railway Museum Lifetime Membership

Send your application and dues to: **Oklahoma Railway Museum , Ltd.**
3400 NE Grand Boulevard
Oklahoma City, Oklahoma 73111-4417

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Phone _____ Fax _____ Cell Phone_____

E–Mail _____

Engraved Platform Bricks

More than one platform brick can be donated to the Museum and you can make copies of the attached form. Mail completed forms with checks or money orders to: Jim Murray, ORM, 3400 NE Grand Boulevard, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma 73111. If you have any questions, you can e–mail Murray at:

jtmurray@cox.net.

Crosstie Donations

Friends and families of ORM continue to make donations for crossties, equipment and facilities on the Museum property and on the leased track.

If you want to make a donation to purchase a crosstie, a donation of $42.50 will help purchase a new crosstie. You can donate a crosstie in recognition or in memory of someone. All donations should be made out to the Oklahoma Railway Museum Ltd.

Please note on the check what the donation is for, mail to: ORM Ltd., 3400 NE Grand Boulevard, Oklahoma City, 73111

Day Out with Thomas Training Dates Announced

Pat Riley, ORM Thomas Event Coordinator has announce that the Thomas training dates will be on August 9, 11, 16, 18 and September 13 and 15. All training will start at 7:00 PM at the museum. If you are going to help, please come to one of the training activities.

Oklahoma Railway Museum, Ltd.
3400 NE Grand Boulevard
Oklahoma City, OK 73111-4417

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RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

A tremendous opportunity to support your Oklahoma Railway Museum

ORM is a member of the Oklahoma City Community Foundation which is an endowment fund to provide a sustainable source of income annually to support the museum in the future. The museum fund balance was $35,478.03 on December 31, 2010. We received $1350.00 interest income in 2010. Over the years the Foundation has had fund drive promotions to help the museum. This year they are again issuing a challenge to organizations in the Foundation that have less than $50,000 in the fund.

Beginning April 1, they will match donations dollar for dollar up to a matching grant of $5,000.00. This means if members and others donate $5,000 to the ORM Fund, they will provide a $5,000 match and the museum increases its fund by $10,000.00. This is a wonderful opportunity for the museum

The expectations are as follows; 1. Funds must be received between April 1, 2011 and December 31, 2011. Contributions may be in cash, marketable securities or other assets which may be converted to cash. 2. Contribution can come from individuals, foundations or corporations or from the organization itself. The annual distribution made in October is eligible to count toward the match if it is reinvested. 3. A minimum of $1000 must be raised before a match will be made. 4. Matches that are completed by June 30, 2011 will be matched by that date with the total being included in the year-end fund balances. Matches completed after June 30 will be matched in January 2012 following the Challenge deadline.

This is a wonderful way to help the museum in the long term to sustain itself many years into the future. I hope you will give consideration and get to this important program. Remember, all donations are tax deductible. If you have any questions, please visit with Stan Hall 830-5190, Drake Rice 340-5047, Harry Currie 427-5473 or Bob Hussey 670-3235.