

## 2007 ARM CONVENTION

The 2007 Association of Railway Museums Conference took place on October 3-7. This year, Museum Manager John Walker and Director Wayne Monger were appointed to represent the FRRS at this convention.

John and Wayne traveled to Washington, Pennsylvania (near Pittsburg), home of the Pennsylvania Trolley Museum, which was the host organization for this year's convention. While there, our two representatives attended a number of workshops covering several topics of interest for railroad museums and networked with representatives from other museums throughout the country. Upon their return, they made an informative video presentation at the November FRRS Board of Directors Meeting held in Lathrop, California showing museum and other sites they visited during their trip while they presented verbally what they had learned from their attendance at the event. They also presented the Directors with several packets of printed information collected from some of the workshops they attended.

The report presented by Wayne and John indicated that much of the background for workshops they attended as well as personal conversations with other museums' representatives centered on the challenges

being faced by all of us in the business of "heritage tourism" (attracting visitors to sites of historic and/or cultural interest). Throughout our industry, which includes not just other railroad-related sites but museums in general and state parks as well, all are facing decreased visitor numbers and a corresponding drop in revenues/donations. The current state of our economy (with skyrocketing fuel prices a major consideration) and a shift in the demographics of potential visitors were cited as key factors to which these decreases can be attributed.

The conclusion reached through consideration of these issues is that in order to meet the changes occurring in our "target market", we must change what we are presenting to potential visitors, what groups of potential visitors we are presenting our museum to, and the manner in which we present our museum to potential visitors. This will be a significant challenge our leadership will need to meet in the immediate future.

What was learned and subsequently passed on by our two representatives during their attendance at this year's ARM convention will help prepare the Society's leaders in rising to this new challenge. Both John and Wayne did an excellent job as our representatives - a tip of the hat is owed to them for their efforts.

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## DEPARTURES - Nick Perusina

FRRS member Nick Perusina passed away on September 20, 2007, at the age of 84.

Nick was a steam engineer and railroad machinist who served his Machinist apprenticeship in Chicago during the transition from steam to diesel. He learned not only the intricate workings of steam locomotives but also was skilled in diesel service as well. According to his daughter, Lisa Johnson, he taught her much about railroading. She inherited all his steam locomotive theory and repair manuals, books that are treasured reading for her. Railroading was his life and many an hour he

would sit close to switch yards and marvel at the "New Power" the railroads use now.

Nick first came to the museum about 8 years ago with his daughter and enjoyed her turn in the engineer seat as part of the "Run A Locomotive" program under the watchful eye of Norman Holmes. He loved being part of the FRRS and helping keep the history of his cherished profession alive.

The FRRS extends our condolences to Nick's family and friends, as well as our thanks to him for being part of the WP family.