

**Donald W. Chapman**

**April 26, 2017**

February 11, 1927 - April 28, 2017

Obituary

Donald W. Chapman of North Little Rock passed away, April 28, 2017, at the age of 90.

Don began working for the Missouri Pacific Railroad when he was 16 years old and retired from the Union Pacific Railroad after 43 years. After retirement he loved working in his garden and helping his neighbors. He was preceded in death by his parents, Vern and Nona Bethella Chapman and siblings, Lillian Wilson, Floyd Chapman and Harold Chapman.

Don is survived by his wife of 64 years, JoAnn Chapman; daughters, Bernice McGhee and Jeane Steed; four grandchildren, two great-grandchildren; and sister, Alice Thompson.

Visitation will be Tuesday, May 2, from 6:00 to 8:00 p.m. at Griffin Leggett Rest Hills, 7724 Landers Rd, in North Little Rock, AR 72117 (510) 835-3515. Graveside service will be Wednesday, May 3, at 10:00 a.m. at Rest Hills Memorial Park.

In lieu of flowers, memorials may be made to Baptist Health Hospice [www.baptisthealth.foundation@baptist-health.org](mailto:www.baptisthealth.foundation@baptist-health.org) (501-202-1839).

Don was definitely one of a kind! He was the General Roadmaster on the Arkansas Division when I went to McGehee, AR in spring of 1985. He and Ike Reeves (who was Supt of Track) were larger than life. In early spring of 1986, we had run over to Dapco Rail Test Vehicles in Train Order territory so the mandate went out that anytime one of the test vehicles was out on the railroad on Train Order territory, no less than the Gen Roadmaster and an Asst Trainmaster/Trainmaster had to accompany the vehicle to ensure they were properly protecting themselves. I had just lateraled to Van Buren when the Dapco truck showed up and Ron McCoy, who was the Supt of Operations for the Division, tapped me to pair up with Don. We started on Monday morning in Van Buren and finished that Saturday afternoon in North Little Rock. Don would drive up from North Little Rock every morning and pick me and then drop me off that evening at the hotel. When you hi-railed with Don, you picked up all track material that you came across; anything on my side I got and anything on his side, he got. When you came to a tool house,

you stopped and cleaned out the bed of the hi-rail and took off again. You also stopped every morning around 0930 to get a doughnut at the closest town. He spent a lot of time that week teaching me and telling me about the old days from when he was starting out in his career. I will never forget it. By that summer, we went through another reorganization and offered a buyout and he was gone. We would still see him every so often when he was driving back and forth to Kansas to see relatives. He would stop in Van Buren and say hello. He lost quite a bit of weight after he retired as he took up a new hobby of walking and picking up aluminum cans. I've often wondered how he was doing. One thing he was also famous for was he could cuss a blue streak that would put a sailor to shame. I heard the story that one time years ago when he was Roadmaster in Monroe, LA, he was going to be introduced on tv. His daughters were very young at the time and watched the interview. Supposedly, one of them turned to her mother and said "that isn't Daddy; that man isn't cussing!" I'm glad to know that he's at peace.

We will miss you, Don, but never forget you. William Pat Meriwether