

# The Osborne Connection

It's the **SERVICE** that counts

June 2009

## CELEBRATING MORE THAN 65 YEARS IN BUSINESS

### SOME OF OUR PROJECTS FROM THE 80S AND 90S

We continue to celebrate our company's long years of service to our community. Previous newsletters covered company history dating from the 40s. This month, we focus on our jobs from the 80s and 90s.



**The Waterford Office Complex, which covers a large area to the southeast of N.W. 63rd and Pennsylvania in Oklahoma City.**

Some of the most notable jobs from the 80s and early 90s include:

- ... Epworth Villa (1989)
- ... IRS Headquarters (1992)
- ... Leadership Square (1984)
- ... Quail Springs Corporate Park (1986)
- ... Waterford Office Complex (1982)
- ... Presbyterian Health Foundation Research Park Buildings 1, 2 and 3 (ongoing)

Our work isn't always about new construction jobs. At times our customers ask us to take on huge projects in their existing facilities that use much of our time and manpower.

Because of this, we did not take on a lot of new construction jobs in the 1990s. Instead, we kept busy working for Southwestern Bell Telephone Company and Hertz Corporation.

The Southwestern Bell work took us across the state doing dial-to-digital conversions. The Hertz account took us into several states, including Mobile, Alabama, where they built a new call center. Hertz also remodeled the Oklahoma City Data Center and updated their Oklahoma City UPS systems and backup generator power.



**Leadership Square in downtown Oklahoma City.**

### Free Event: Dignity Memorial Vietnam Wall

The Vietnam Veterans Memorial (The Wall) is the most visited National Park Service site in Washington, D.C. It honors the brave men and women who fought in Vietnam and made the ultimate sacrifice for our nation.



You don't have to travel to Washington, D.C., to see "The Wall" firsthand. You can see the Dignity Memorial Vietnam Wall in Piedmont from Thursday, July 2, to Sunday, July 5.

This three-quarter-scale, traveling replica of the memorial will be exhibited 24 hours a day.

**Where:** Stout Field Stadium  
1/4 mile west of South Highway 4  
(Piedmont Road) and Edmond  
Road (N.W. 178th Street)

**"A free people ought not only to be armed and disciplined, but they should have sufficient arms and ammunition to maintain a status of independence from any who might attempt to abuse them, which would include their own government."**

**- George Washington**

# A Beloved Fixture At Osborne Electric

## Doss Thrasher Has Worked at Osborne for Nearly 65 Years

**F**ew businesses can say they've kept an employee for nearly 65 years. Ours can. Doss Thrasher leads our pack of long-time employees with this record.

When Doss was hired, World War II had just ended. Harry Truman was president, and the first helicopter had just been licensed for commercial use. The first bikini bathing suits were being shown at fashion shows in Paris. At Christmastime, the movie "It's a Wonderful Life" premiered. And the Gallup Poll posed the question: "Do you know what television is?"

Even though Doss has worked here so long, Osborne Electric wasn't his first job. One of his first was at Steven's Cleaners before the war, where he worked with John McCharen, Jr., for seven years. Doss later became the top deliverer for The Daily Oklahoman. After the war, he worked for Kobe, Incorporated, a hydraulic pump company for oil wells.

When Doss was working at Kobe, he ran into John again, and John offered him a job. Doss started his tenure at Osborne as a delivery driver and checked in parts when jobs were over.

Since then, he has run the warehouse and also has been an estimator, a project manager and a billing manager. That's just a few of the responsibilities he's held. Doss said he has always appreciated the freedom he's been given to do his job at Osborne.

He said he liked running the warehouse best. He also liked estimating jobs and buying his own material. He always worried about how a job would come out. His son Kirk said if they went over by one locknut, they'd better have a darned good reason for it.

When Doss' wife died in 1977, the company closed for the day in her honor. Doss said that was the first time Osborne was ever closed on a work day.

Not long after that, he developed meningitis and was off work for two or three weeks. Doss said everyone pitched in to help cover his workload, and he never missed a paycheck.

If you want to hear some funny stories from Osborne's past, see Doss. Here's one example: He said his guys were doing an overnight job at a Safeway store at 23<sup>rd</sup> and Eastern. He went by the jobsite on his way home, and the whole crew ended up being locked in by accident. They had to wait until the manager unlocked the door the next day. Doss remembers the foreman, Leroy Ward, ate everything he could get his hands on.

Doss said service was bred into the company culture from the beginning. "We were told that anyone can buy labor and power wire," he said. "Marvin Osborne and John expected us to sell service. They wanted us to serve the customer and each other. That strand has carried through our long history and is the reason Osborne is a strong company today."



## A Few Facts About Doss

Doss was born September 14, 1920, in Britton, Oklahoma. His family moved to Sulphur when times got bad during the depression. After moving back to Oklahoma City, he attended Classen High School through the 11<sup>th</sup> grade but did not graduate. He bought a 1939 Ford convertible and went to work to pay for it.

In 1945, he married Betty Lou Kirkpatrick. They had three children: Kay, Brent and Kirk. He now has five grandchildren and six great-grandchildren. After Betty's death, he never remarried but has had the same girlfriend for more than 30 years.

Doss enjoys woodworking and collecting tools. In 1947, he helped build the house he still lives in. He said because Marvin Osborne was so generous with bonuses, he paid off the house in 1955.

Doss served in the Navy during World War II and was stationed in Norman. He worked on the flight line and serviced airplanes. Back then, they started airplane engines by turning a crank on the outside of the planes.

# REMEMBRANCES OF AN OLD FRIEND

Bill Simpson retired in 1990 after nearly 33 years with Osborne Electric, but he is still thought of around here as the friendly, funny guy who always has a smile and a story.

He started working in our warehouse in 1958 “to learn the difference between a locknut and a bushing,” he said. Over the years, he worked in the warehouse keeping up stock supplies, as a billing clerk, as a dispatcher and taking orders from customers.

Bill says he would work here now if he had the energy and could stay out of the hospitals long enough.

He particularly liked working with Doss Thrasher and John McCharen, Jr., because he learned so much from them. He says he would have gone to hell and back for “Uncle John” and walked both ways.

Bill worked with many of our long-time electricians, including Wimpy Wilmouth, Henry Grinstead, Jack Fleming, Walter Montgomery and Leroy Ward.

He tells a story about electrician Dale Monico who would do the dirtiest job on earth rather than lose an hour of work time.

Bill says Lucille Arwood (Marvin’s first office employee, who worked here for about 30 years) would get on Dale Monico’s case every now and then. He had rent houses and all the money he needed. So he had a habit of not cashing his checks, which messed up Lucille’s bookkeeping. He would carry three or four weeks of them in the front pocket of his overalls.

Bill hails from the Post Oak community in Atoka County. He comes from a family of eight children.

He attended Murray State College, Oklahoma A&M (now Oklahoma State University) and Oklahoma City University.

He married Alice Armstrong in 1950 and raised three children. Now, he enjoys his five grandchildren and four great-grandchildren.



**Bill Simpson, when he was conferred as a 33<sup>o</sup> Scottish Rite Mason on January 13, 2008.**

## BILL’S EXCELLENT ADVENTURE

Bill served in the Navy in “World War Twice.” Aboard a heavy cruiser, he sailed from Philadelphia, Penn., up and down the Atlantic from Maine to Rio De Janeiro; Brazil to Guantanamo Bay, Cuba. Then the ship headed through the Panama Canal into the Pacific to Hawaii, Shanghai, China and San Francisco.

Bill said he had to learn how to walk on solid ground again after his days at sea. From San Francisco, he rode a train for six days to get to Norman to be discharged two days before his 20<sup>th</sup> birthday.

“Man, if I had the energy I had back then, I could replace Obama and fly around the world without Air Force One,” Bill said.



**Left to right: Johnny McCharen, Doss Thrasher, John McCharen, Jr., and Bill Simpson on Bill’s retirement day, June 29, 1990.**

## Our Birthdays

June	
Wes Abla	4
Steve Tipton	5
Maurice Gray	6
Larry Jenkins	7
Eddie Hassmann	17
Randy Vick	21
Mary Holliday	22
Bob Hare	26
July	
Rita Sexton	7
Jed Riley	11
Bryan Elrod	19
August	
Russell Eary	13
Anthony Cyriacks	18
Susan Willingham	19
Derek Howard	23
Timothy Ingram	26

### Take Care of Your Eyes

More than 700,000 Americans injure their eyes at work each year. Don't become part of this statistic. Experts believe that the right eye protection could have reduced the severity or prevented 90 percent of these injuries.

It only takes a tiny sliver of metal, a dust particle or a blow to the eye to do damage. Wear appropriate safety eyewear for your job. Many of those injured each day didn't think they needed eye protection or were wearing eyewear inappropriate for the job.

#### Some Eye Protection Tips

When you wear safety glasses, be sure they fit properly. Keep them clean so you'll be able to see clearly out of them. Impaired vision can affect safety on the job. Also, keep your glasses in a case when you aren't wearing them. Dents and scratches reduce their impact-resistance.

If you wear contact lenses, take particular care to protect your eyes. Contacts aren't designed as protection, and a particle that gets under your lens can scratch your cornea.

## A Look at the Pledge of Allegiance

In 1892, 1923, 1924 and 1954, the American people demonstrated enough concern about the actual words in the Pledge to make some necessary changes. Today many Americans recite it "by rote" with little thought for the words themselves. Please examine these 31 words and think about what they mean.

I Pledge Allegiance	I promise to be faithful and true (promise my loyalty)
to the flag	to the emblem that stands for and represents
of the United States	all 50 states, each of them individual, and individually represented on the flag
of America	yet formed into a UNION of one nation.
and to the Republic	And I also pledge my loyalty to the government that is itself a republic, a form of government where the PEOPLE are sovereign.
for which it stands,	This government also is represented by the flag to which I promise loyalty.
one Nation under God,	These 50 individual states are united as a single republic under the divine providence of God, "our most powerful resource" (according to the words of President Eisenhower)
Indivisible,	and cannot be separated. (This part of the original version of the pledge was written just 50 years after the beginning of the Civil War and demonstrates the unity sought in the years after that divisive period in our history.)
with Liberty	The people of this nation are afforded the freedom to pursue "life, liberty, and happiness"
and Justice	and each person is entitled to be treated justly, fairly, and according to proper law and principle,
for All.	and these principles are afforded to EVERY AMERICAN, regardless of race, religion, color, creed or any other criteria. Just as the flag represents the 50 individual states that cannot be divided or separated, this nation represents millions of people who cannot be separated or divided.

Thus, when you Pledge Allegiance to the United States Flag, you:

- \*Promise your loyalty to the flag itself.
- \*Promise your loyalty to your own and the other 49 States.
- \*Promise your loyalty to the government that unites us all,
- \*Recognize that we are ONE nation under God, and that we cannot or should not be divided or alone,
- \*Understand that the right to liberty and justice belongs to us ALL.