
Crown Jewels Of The Wire (CJOW)¹

CJOW is an organization dedicated to the collectors of historic glass and porcelain insulators used by telegraph, telephone and electric power utilities. Insulators are the "crown jewels of the Wire." What Are Insulators? "Insulators? You mean those glass things on the top of telephone poles? I must have shot at hundreds of those things when I was a kid!" Insulator collectors hear that a lot, as they attempt to explain just what it is that they collect. Hearing it usually makes them cringe, wondering just what rare treasure that person shot off the cross arm those many years ago.



Power Insulator
Courtesy of
Howard Banks

<http://www.crownjewelsofthewire.com/>

1. Hugo Neighborhood. February 24, 2006. *Time Line of Telegraph History in Josephine County*. Interview of Howard Banks, Editor, CJOW, by Mike Walker. Unpublished interview notes, including two page summary article from Banks. Hugo, OR.
2. Hugo Neighborhood. September 3, 2003. *Tunnel No. 9: 1883*. Brochure. Hugo, OR.
3. See CJOW's web site for a comprehensive clarification of CD number for insulators.

Telegraph, Telephone, & Power Lines In Josephine County¹

Collins Line: 1864 In the early 1860's the Western Union Telegraph Company began building a trans-world telegraph line. In 1864, that dream worked its way north through Southern Oregon, one pole at a time.

Oregon & California Railroad: 1883 The first O & C rail was completed to Roseburg from Portland in 1872. The first official train arrived in Grants Pass December 2, 1883, the same year Tunnel No. 9, was completed.² When the railroad was built in the county the Western Union moved its wires to the railroad right-of-way and abandoned the lines through the mountains.

Postal Telegraph Company: 1867 - 1887 In 1881 a new telegraph company was created to compete with Western Union. Lines were built through Josephine County around 1886 - 1887.

AT&T Long Distance Telephone Lines: 1920s - 1950s AT&T built long distance lines through the county in the 1920s. Overhead service continued until the 1950s when it was replaced with buried cable.

Local Phone Service Lines A variety of "local" phone lines were constructed in the county to service farmers, mining communities, and forest service lookouts.

Power Lines The Rogue River Electric Company extended power to the Granite Hill Mine and the Greenback Mine in 1904. The line ran from Gold Ray Dam to Grants Pass, up Granite Hill Road, Winona Road, and over Jack Creek pass to Grave Creek and the Greenback.

Insulators Found In Josephine County

Collins Line CD 736, CD 723, and Wood-Block Rams Horn Insulator.³

Oregon & California Railroad Original insulators - CD 126 & 127 Brookfield "blob tops".

Postal Telegraph Company Original insulators - CD 133 Brookfields, later insulators: CD 145, CD 208, CD 210, CD 154, and CD 153 48-40's.

AT&T Long Distance Telephone Lines CD 152 Hemingrays, CD 154 Hemingrays, and CD 208 Hemingrays.

Local Phone Service Lines Rumored - CD 123 EC&Ms.

Power Lines Various experimental power insulators by Locke company of New York.

Insulator Brochure Series This brochure is number one of several in the "insulator" series numbered 1 through 11. Most importantly, the insulator series is all about Josephine County, Oregon, insulators. The series will be continued with adventures in the field.

1. ***Insulators of Josephine County***
2. Crown Jewels Of The Wire
3. Anatomy Of An Insulator
4. Insulator CD Numbers
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Hugo Neighborhood Association & Historical Society's Mission

This information brochure is one of a series of documents published by the Hugo Neighborhood Association & Historical Society (*Hugo Neighborhood*). It is designed to be shared with neighbors for the purpose of helping protect our rural quality of life by promoting an informed citizenry in decision-making. The *Hugo Neighborhood* is an informal nonprofit charitable and educational organization with a land use and history mission promoting the social welfare of its neighbors.

Land Use & History

The *Hugo Neighborhood's* land use mission is to promote Oregon Statewide Goal 1 — Citizen Involvement, and by preserving, protecting, and enhancing the livability and economic viability of its farms, forests, and rural neighbors. It will act, as requested, as a technical resource assisting neighbors to represent themselves.

Its history mission is to collect, preserve, interpret, and research its local history and to encourage public interest in the history of the Hugo area.

Membership dues are \$10.00 annually and due in January. They are used for paper, ink, envelopes, publications, and mailings.

Hugo Neighborhood

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Insulators of Josephine County



Brochure 1 in Insulator Series



Examples of Josephine County Insulators
Courtesy of Howard Banks

March 19, 2006

by

**Hugo Neighborhood Association &
Historical Society**

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Crown Jewels Of The Wire