
Rogue River Electric Company

Greenback Mine Power Line¹ The original Gold Ray Dam log crib structure was built ca., 1903 - 1904. By the time they finished the dam it had become the Rogue River Electric Company. Among other services, it provided telephone, telegraph, and power to various mines. Upgrades followed in 1939 - 1940 with a concrete dam. The existing fish ladders were built in 1940 when the concrete dam was constructed. Modifications to the fish ladder and counting station were made in 1940 and 1968.

The Rogue River Electric Company extended one of its main lines 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 the pass to Grave Creek and the Greenback. The insulators used were various experimental power insulators produced by the Fred M Locke Company of New York. Fred Morton Locke was a genius and eventually became, "*The Father of Porcelain Insulators*." The line was only used three or four years before the mines gave out. But, the copper lines were left there. This was odd as copper was so expensive it normally was only used for power lines.

The power company eventually acquired the right-of-way to the Greenback Mine. They used the same right-of-way which was a disaster for saving insulators because the new line is high-tension power line and it has all been bulldozed underneath the line. The only place you would find insulators is where the line happened be different from the present right-of-way. The high-tension line was originally placed in the 1940s - 1950s and it has been upgraded several times.

1. Hugo Neighborhood. March 19, 2006. *Crown Jewels of the Wire*. Hugo, OR.

Greenback Mine, Sunny Valley, & Hugo Power Lines

Gold Ray Dam¹ The power plant for Gold Ray Dam ran until the 1970s. Interestingly, the turbines were rope driven. If you worked in that power plant you had to know how to splice rope. They never updated the generator from 1904 to the 1970s.

Howard's Power Insulator Discovery¹ When he started collecting insulators again in 1998 Howard Banks found a piece of a power insulator at the base of a pole about four inches down in the earth. His daughter, Christa, had been using a metal detector, and ping, ping, ping. They found copper wire. Copper? That was power stuff and Howard was really puzzled. The pole was in his way so he moved the pole and his daughter saw some glass. With loving care Howard would glue the pieces of glass back into a Brookfield power insulator glass base.

The glass base insulator had originally had a porcelain top called a gutter top. The pole did not have pins or anything. They just stuck the pole in the ground and stuck the threadless insulator base on the top of the pole. It was a single phase service to little mines.



Brookfield Power Insulator Glass Base

Courtesy of Howard Banks

2. Hugo Neighborhood. August 7, 2000. *Carrel E. Brown's Hugo Memories: 1916 - 2000*. Hugo, OR.

More Information

Sunny Valley¹ There were some old poles in Sunny Valley on a fill slope Howard had seen back in the 1960s. They were ancient looking things on short 13-foot tall skinny poles. Howard thought the poles might have had EC & Ms on them. There were just three poles left straight down this hill.

Hugo Power Line² In 1927 - 1928 Carrol Brown's father and his Uncle Ralph, and other adults in the community, made a deal with the power company to put in a power line from above the Pirzer place on the old stage road. The power poles were 15 - 20 feet tall. They salvaged all the cross irons, copper wire, and other material from an old power line that went south from Grave Creek on the east side of Mt. Sexton to Grants Pass - The Placer Divide line that came down Jack Creek to Winona. They moved the power line materials by horse and wagon to Hugo.

Insulator Brochure Series This brochure is number ten 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
5. Collins Line
6. Oregon & California Railroad
7. Postal Telegraph Company
8. AT&T Long Distance Telephone Lines
9. Local Phone Service Lines
10. **Power Lines**
11. First Insulators of Hugo Neighborhood

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. Make checks to the *Hugo Neighborhood* and send them to our Treasurer.

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Power
Lines



Brochure 10 in Insulator Series



*The White M-2795 Is A Rare Power
Insulator On A Brookfield Glass Base*

March 19, 2006

by

**Hugo Neighborhood Association &
Historical Society**

&

Crown Jewels Of The Wire