
Crown Jewels Of The Wire (CJOW)¹

Crown Jewels of the Wire is 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.



The CJOW magazine is dedicated to the collectors of historic glass and porcelain insulators used by telegraph, telephone and electric power utilities. Its web site includes value finder and subscription information.

CJOW Magazine

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

The National Insulator Association is an international organization of collectors and friends interested in communication and electrical insulators, as well as other artifacts connected with insulators, such as telephone, telegraph, power transmission, railroads, and lightning protection devices.

National Insulator Association

<http://www.nia.org/>

Howard Banks

Howard Banks is a native of Hugo, Oregon. His grand-father, Thomas Morton Banks, bought the Merlin homestead at 1560 Hugo Road in 1940. His grandfather lived there until 1951 when he passed away, the same year Howard was born. Howard was one-year old when his folks moved into the old house in 1952. He attended Merlin Elementary in the old brick building and went through the 5th grade there. He started the 6th grade in 1962 at the brand new Monument Junior High.



*Linda & Howard Banks
With Friend Norbert Tieman: March 2006*
Courtesy of Mike Walker

He became the third editor of *Crown Jewels of the Wire* magazine in January 2003. He and his wife Linda have been married for 24 years. They have two children, David and Christa. Linda is a nurse and Howard works as a corrections deputy for the local sheriff, holding the rank of sergeant.

More Information

Some collecting highlights for Howard in the early days included: attending the first-ever insulator swap meet (at Greg Bickford's home); participating in the first national insulator show in New Castle, Indiana in 1970; and serving as the executive director of the *National Insulator Association* when Ernie Rostock was president in the mid-1970's. His greatest insulator find was locating 25 CD 317 Chambers lightning rod insulators still in use!

By the late 1970's, insulator collecting was placed on the back burner while Howard got married and raised a family. He began actively collecting again in 1997. His interests today include brightly colored CD 162 signals, CD 123 EC&M's and relics from the historic Collins' Overland Telegraph Line, constructed through Josephine County, Oregon in 1864.

Insulator Brochure Series This brochure is number two 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.

Hugo Neighborhood

Email: hugo@jeffnet.org

Web Page: <http://jeffnet.org/~hugo/>

Edited by Howard Banks, Norbert Tieman, & Mike Walker

Howard Banks, Editor
Crown Jewels of the Wire
1560 Hugo Road
Merlin, OR 97532
541-479-8348

Norbert Tieman
5575 Tunnel Loop Road
Grants Pass, Oregon 97526
541-479-6774

Mike Walker, Education Chair
Hugo Neighborhood
3388B Merlin Rd #195
Grants Pass, Oregon 97526
541-471-8271
Email: hugo@jeffnet.org

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Crown Jewels of
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Brochure 2 in Insulator Series



March 19, 2006

by

**Hugo Neighborhood Association &
Historical Society**

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