

Local Josephine County Telephone Service Lines

A variety of “local” phone lines were constructed in Josephine County to service farmers, mining communities, and forest service fire lookouts. These lines often ran tree to tree, and insulators can still be found in trees along the routes.

Forestry Insulators refer to several styles of small donut-shaped porcelain insulators used to suspend telegraph lines through a forest to a fire lookout tower. Most styles are composed of two halves with a large hole in the center. However, the overall shape of this insulator can be hexagonal, round, or oval. Forestry insulators were used extensively from 1910 to about 1940.

Hugo Road Donuts There was a value in selling telephone service to farmers, however, these kind of lines came and went. They did not stay. They was an old telephone line that ran up today’s Hugo Road by the Banks’ home, but by the time Howard Bank’s folks came to Hugo in the 1940s and 1950s there was no phone line there.¹



Round Donut With Wire The line for this type of phone service was usually on porcelain insulators called “donuts” which are hung from a tree with telephone wire running through the hole. You can still find telephone hexagon donut insulators on trees along Hugo Road.

The U. S. Forest Service and the mines also used donut insulators.

CD 123 EC&M’s In Sunny Valley

Grave Creek to Sunny Valley An early line ran along Grave Creek to Sunny Valley through the mining tailings, apparently connecting Leland which was along the railroad to points upstream. When Howard Banks was a kid you could find the poles in the mining tailings in Grave Creek. Little is know about the line except pole remnants could still be seen 30 years ago. This is the line rumored to have used the few CD 123 EC&M’s found in the Sunny Valley area in the 1950s and 1960s.



CD 123.2 Chester

Howard and friends were tracking it down because some of the old timers in Sunny Valley found those CD 123 EC&M’s. They have always been desirable insulators. He suspected that there were viable businesses in the main part of Sunny Valley, but the Southern

Pacific Railroad was located in Leland. Some little telegraph or telephone line connected these two communities.

For many telegraph lines the ground was the “earth” ground. One wire per pole would work as they used the earth as the ground.

1. Hugo Neighborhood. March 19, 2006. *Crown Jewels of the Wire*. Hugo, OR.
2. Hugo Neighborhood. March 16, 2001. *Clarence and Bernice (Brazille) Kolkow’s Memories: 1924 - 2001*. Hugo, OR.

Donuts

Kolkows² In 1928 the Kolkows would travel about a mile north on U. S. 99 to Art Erickson’s Auto Court when they wanted to use a telephone. Art had one of the first phones in the area.



Oak Tree On Hugo Road With Telephone Donut Insulator

Insulator Brochure Series

This brochure is number nine 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

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Local Phone
Service Lines



Brochure 9 in Insulator Series



*Telephone Porcelain Hexagon Donut Insulator:
Hugo Road*

March 19, 2006

by

**Hugo Neighborhood Association &
Historical Society**

&

Crown Jewels Of The Wire