

## Wayne McKy, Hugo Railroad Man: 1951 - 1955

**Hugo Section Gang** In 1951 Wayne went to work for the railroad on the Hugo Section Gang and stayed with it for five years. A group of laborers organized together on one job or under one foreperson: a railroad gang. The Southern Pacific, like every



railroad, has to maintain the line 24/7 - this task falls to the Maintenance-of-Way crew also known as the "Gang", or "Section Gang".

The normal beat of the Hugo Section Gang was from Leland south to Merlin. It was a 40-hour a week mostly day job, but all pick and shovel work (Photo 1).

*Photo 1. Angle Bar, Tie Plate, Spikes, Spike Maul, Shovel, Spike Bar, and Tie Tongs*

The Gang shoveled gravel, raised track, and replaced railroad ties.

One of the all important hand tools of the section gang, the spike driver, seen here with an assortment of rail hardware, spikes, tie plates, clips, and bolts (Photo 3).



*Spikes*

## Southern Pacific Railroad

### *Hugo Section Gang Tools of the Trade*

**Railroad Pickaxe** is a hand tool with a hard head attached perpendicular to the handle.

**Railroad Shovel** Short No. 2 Shovel.

**Spike Bar** Long crowbar used to pull up old, damaged spikes from track.

**Spike Maul or Spike Driver** A sledge hammer, but designed with a longer, slimmer head to specifically seat spikes up against a section of rail (Photo 3).



*Photo 2. Tie Tongs*

**Tie Tongs** Large tool, looking much like ice-tongs, used by workers to drag or carry individual railroad cross ties (Photo 2).

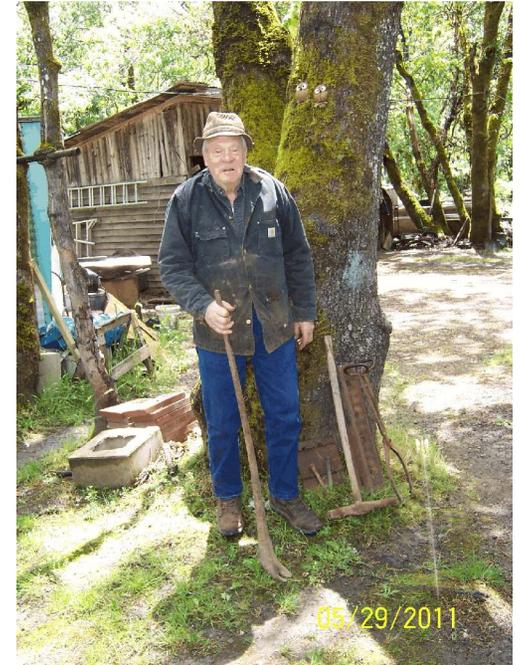
**Torpedo** A railway detonator (called a torpedo in North America) is a device used to make a loud sound as a warning signal train drivers.

**Track Bolt Wrench** is a hand tool (Photo 4) with an enclosed opening that grips the faces of the bolt or nut.



*Photo 3. Spike Maul or Driver*

## Hugo Section Gang Tools



*Photo 3. Wayne McKy With Section Gang Tools: He is holding a spike bar.*

The shovels owned by the railroads are nearly always marked with the company's moniker.

### **More information**

Contact an officer of the *Hugo Neighborhood* on how you can become involved in your community's land use, and/or history projects.



*Photo 4. Track Bolt Wrench*

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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*. We are a nonprofit charitable and educational association composed of a voluntary group of citizens interested in both the land use and history of the Hugo area, which is located in Josephine County, Oregon.

### Land Use & History

Its land use mission is to promote the social welfare of the citizens of the area by working to educate, preserve, protect, and enhance the livability and economic viability of its farms, forests, and rural neighbors.

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

Send us your email address if you want to know what we are doing; email does not cost us money, just time and effort.

*Hugo Neighborhood*

Email: [hugo@jeffnet.org](mailto:hugo@jeffnet.org)

Web Page: <http://www.hugoneighborhood.org/>

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### HNA&HS Officers

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## Section Gang Tools



*Wayne McKy Demonstrating Spike Bar Operations*

June 1, 2011

**Hugo Neighborhood Association &  
Historical Society**

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