



**GREATER CHICAGO
INSULATOR CLUB
NEWSLETTER**
Rick Soller, editor



Volume 21, Number 5
August 2013

National Show Report

I wasn't able to attend this year's 44th National Insulator Convention, Show & Sale in Franklin, Tennessee (near Nashville) but there was a lot of video footage available to view and several club members attended so I was able to learn much about the show nevertheless. The show was held on July 19-21 but the memories are still strong. Show hosts Bill Haley, Ken Roberts, and Steve Roberts did a great job.

Club members Arlen & Tina Rienstra had a full show. Tina was busy selling NIA merchandise at the show and enjoyed getting a lot of people into shirts, sweatshirts, and other stylish insulator-related apparel. Arlen also had a sales table but could be frequently seen checking out the wares on everyone else's tables. Arlen also made the effort to create an award-winning display of Hemingray distribution insulators such as the D-510 (CD 168), the D-512 (CD 230 and CD 230.1), the D-513 (CD 232), the D-514 (CD 238 and 238.1), and the D-990 (CD 137). The display also included Hemingray spools. The NIA Award in the Specialty category was awarded to Arlen at the banquet. A picture of his professional looking layout is shown below.



The club award for the display with the best use of power insulators went to Jeffery Kraemer of Easley, South Carolina for his display titled "Early Carolina Mills and Insulators." The display also received the People's Choice award. The display consisted of whole insulators, insulator pieces, a metal crossarm, a high voltage sign, photographs, and a suspension insulator catalog issued by Ohio Brass. Most of the material in the display was found by Jeffery out in the wild.

Bob Stahr had his whole family there. His son Grant was in at least one video I saw and was holding on to a miniature insulator he got at the show. Bob reported some good luck at the show in terms of buying insulators and being able to resell them at the show for more than he purchased them for. His wife, Stacey, was also at the show. I had a chance to visit briefly with Bob and Marge Frank via a streaming video that one collector had set up at the show. Based on the delay between our conversation on the phone and the image on the streaming video, there was a lag of a couple minutes.

Russ & Marge Frank spent several days traveling to the show, antiquing along the way and made it back to McHenry, Illinois on Sunday night of the show. Russ added several purple insulators to his collection such as an unembossed CEW CD 120.

I heard of a few other club members who were in attendance including Jason Townsend, Riley Armstrong and Colin & Karen Yennie. Riley traveled all the way from South Dakota and the Yennies made the trip from distant Minnesota.

Next year, the show will be in Farmington, New Mexico. I checked on MapQuest.com and found that the location is about 24 hours away from Gurnee, Illinois if driving to the show. If flying, a person would probably need to fly into Albuquerque, New Mexico, rent a car and drive two hours to the show location.

Illinois Bike Path Hunt

by Rick Soller

I had one week this summer when I was neither teaching nor taking a class so I considered that my vacation week. To truly enjoy it, I planned a hunt along the Illinois Bike Path (the former Aurora, Elgin, and Chicago line) to look for old Fred Locke insulators. Since hunts are always more fun with others, I called Bob Stahr to learn if he wanted to go too. He checked his schedule and we eventually settled on Sunday, August 12.

He was returning from his mom's house in Indiana on Sunday morning so we arranged to meet at the Dominick's grocery store off of I-355 at 10:30 a.m. I arrived early, Stacey Stahr showed up next and Bob a few minutes later so he could hand off Grant to Stacey and head to the trail with me.

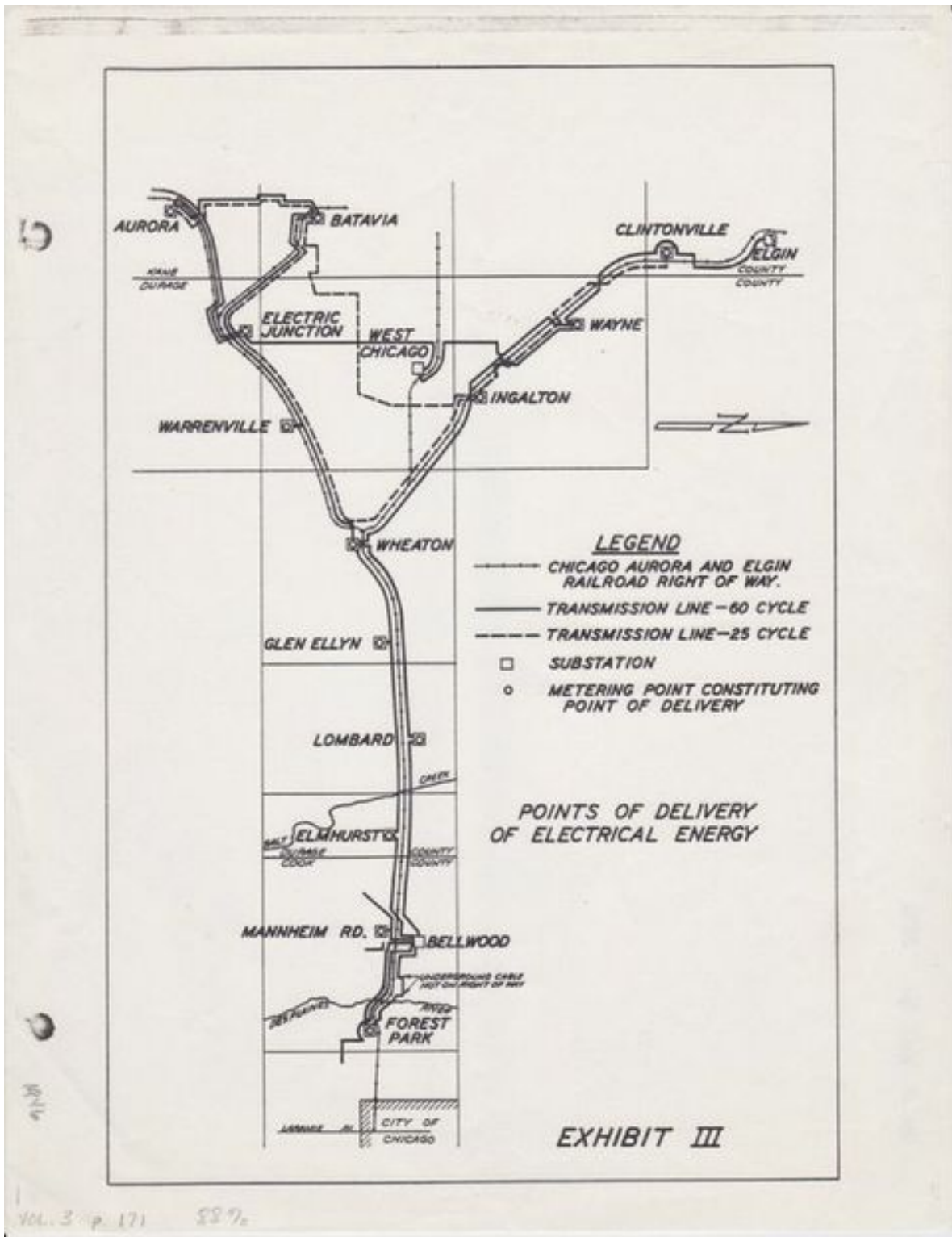
Bob had done some research to find a potential location so led the way. Pictures in old electrical journals identified a good spot that showed where poles were located and that did not have any development on it. He led the way to the spot. A map of the line is on the next page.

We found a nice spot near the trail to park. It was an employee parking lot for a golf course. We took a chance by parking in it thinking there would not be a problem on Sunday with getting towed but, next time, we could easily have parked on the road beside the lot since many golfers appeared to do that by the time we returned from the first part of the hunt.

As we walked to the trail, good luck already shined upon us. Alongside the road was a modern polymer insulator with a pin in it. I also saw some interesting pole tags but decided not to get them since the road was busy with traffic. About a block later, we entered the trail.

The trail was very popular with the public. There were a lot of bicycle riders and the

number increased throughout the day. Most were casual bikers although, early in the morning, I saw a group of 2 dozen serious riders. There were also a few joggers. I estimated someone ran or biked by us every minute.



The pictures in the electrical journal showed the line ran through a dug-out section. Material from the cut was piled up on the sides and the poles were high on the high on one side. Most of the material seemed to be gravel and we later learned that long ago, the glacier ended around here and deposited the gravel, making the area a point of interest for geologists. The hills were much higher than the picture suggested but at least there was a path on top of the hill.



We started hunting on top of the hill. Quickly we found large pole stubs and used those in our search. The first find was a piece of a clear Hemingray-42 that was left behind. After about an hour of hunting, that was still all we had found.

On the trail, we passed going the other direction, several people with trimming tools. At one point, we met a solitary woman with this equipment and talked to her about what she was doing. She was part of the Sierra Club and they conducted frequent work on the trail to remove invasive species, trim brush, and plant endangered plants. We asked if she had ever found any insulators and she suggested we talk to the head of the group. Since we were near the end of the trail section, we headed back with her toward the group.

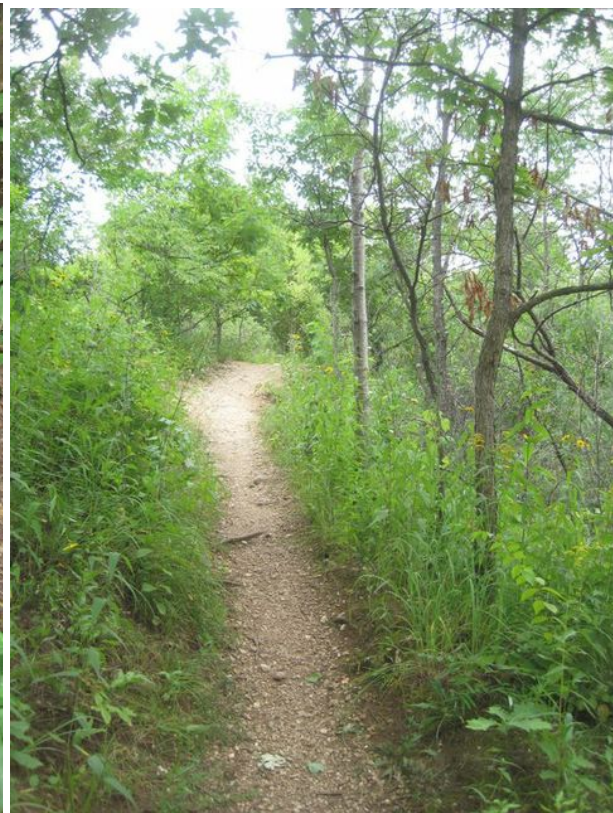
The group leader indicated that he had found pieces that day that he hoped fit the pieces he found in previous trips. He showed us the piece but we quickly recognized it as part of a more modern, 1940s vintage, Thomas multipart. We exchanged business cards and headed to our vehicles to go to lunch.

After lunch, we decided to cover the terrain from the other side of the section and to look at the bottom of the hill. Two pieces of light aqua Fred Locke glass power insulators were discovered as well as 2 golf balls, but little else of interest. We decided to check another section of the line.

On the next section, the track bed was elevated and the poles were in a marshy area. Perhaps in the spring it would be easy to search this section of the line but the brush was thick and the mosquitos were starting to appear. Another golf ball was found and a porcelain strain insulator attached to a long piece of wire anchored to the ground. I would have liked to get the strain even though it was not old since it had an interesting flashover but did not have a bolt cutter to slice through the guy wire.

There was also an unusual, curved metal buried in the ground in one place where a pole once sat. The plate was a support for the pole. I brought home a version of this from another section of the track but this seemed to be a more modern version of the pole support. It took Tom DuBordieu an hour to dig the one in my collection out of the ground and it required some dedication to carry the very heavy thing out of the woods so I imagine at least two people would be needed to do the same with this plate. Below on the left is a picture of the piece and on the right is a shot of the trail on top of the hill.

I was exhausted by the time I got home around 5 p.m. with nothing much to show. At least I avoided poison ivy, sunburn, heat exhaustion, snake bite, pokes in the eye from sticks, a twisted ankle, and mosquito bites so I look forward to more “fun” in the future.



Classified Ads

WANTED: Marked Cook porcelain including pin-types, multiparts, suspensions, Johnny Balls, spools, etc. Let me know what you have. Top dollar paid if I like you. Contact Dan Ling at: AMBERED257@HUGHES.NET.

INSULATORS FOR SALE: Visit <http://www.InsulatorStore.com> for a variety of glass insulators, boxes, cleaning supplies, lighting, and other insulator-related goods. Gift wrapping is available.

PINS FOR SALE: Metal pins with long shanks, bolt, washer, and wood cop on top. All original and in good shape. Over 100 available. Buy as many or as few as you like for only 40 cents each. Build your own line, weld them together in unusual configurations, make an "insulator tree," or buy them to resell. Shipping is extra or pick them up at the Racine swap meet or the Springfield, Ohio show. Rick Soller, COM574@clcIllinois.edu or (847) 782-8602.

Upcoming Shows

August 24, 2013 (Saturday)

**North Western Region Insulator Club Summer Swap
Nisswa, Minnesota**

Colin & Karen Yennie are hosts at their lake home at 1126 Ebert Drive, Nisswa MN. Hours are 9-3 and Colin will be grilling lunch. Bring your own tables if possible-a few may be available. Also bring items for the now famous auction. Call 507-271-3457 or contact Colin at cryennie@hotmail.com for questions or more info.

September 7, 2013 (Saturday)

**13th Annual Greater Chicago Insulator Club "End of Summer" Picnic and Swap Meet
Racine, Wisconsin**

13th Annual GCIC "End of Summer" picnic and swap meet. Show hours are 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. Lunch served at noon. Please let Randy know if you plan to attend so enough food can be prepared. Brats and hot dogs are on the menu this year. Bring items for the Famous Rick Soller Auction if you want or hundreds will be available otherwise. The event will go on rain or shine. It will be held at the home of RANDY WESNER, 434 Blaine Ave., Racine, WI 53405 (262) 633-0756 Email: randysdodge@gmail.com Call or email if you need directions.

Notes

Space constraints prevented a report on the hog roast. If you have some pictures or news about the event, please send them along and we'll add them to the information we have from Alan Statsny.

Assistance writing this newsletter provided by 2 cats, Lexi and Marco, without whose help the newsletter would have been completed much sooner.