

Volume 42 No. 10

OCTOBER 2010

Crown Jewels of the wire

Since 1969



EC&M Report - 25



European Show - 16

IN THIS ISSUE

- 4 Howard's Desktop
- 5 Letters to Editor
- 6 Safety Concerns
- 10 Mid-Ohio Memories

COLOR FEATURES

- 16 European Show
- 20 Lil' Switzerland Swap
- 25 NIA's EC&M Report
- 41 B-Square
- 51 Dixie Jewels

- 54 Classified Ads
- 62 Coming Events

FRONT COVER: The National Insulator Association issues a long-awaited report on "skirt embossed" EC&M's. - Page 25

The 5th International European Insulator Collectors' Swap & Show July, 2010 --- Neckartenzlingen, Germany



By Marianne Gray
Photos by John Reiss

This year's European Insulator Collectors' Meeting was held in Germany, in a charming village called Neckartenzlingen near Stuttgart.

The fifth international European collectors' show, following the first in 2004 Pisa, Italy, the second in Hungary in 2007, third in Dry, France in 2008 and fourth in Detling, Kent, UK in 2009, it was attended by more than 40 collectors from ten different European countries as well as five collectors from the US, Ardie and Mary Clarke and Jim and Lis Bergman and their collector granddaughter, Elisabeth.

Organised by the German collector Ulrich Reiser, it was quite an event!

The theme of this year's Swap and Show was the exclusively European Strippers, white porcelain insulators with coloured stripes which were placed on special electrical lines to indicate their exact function.

For example, one, two and three green stripes were used in Belgium to designate the three phases of alternative current 380 volts. In Germany, the railway companies used wide green stripes to differentiate their wires and during the occupation of France (1940-1944), the German army put aerial lines of telecommunications along the railway tracks, particularly between Nantes and La Rochelle, because of the building of the Atlantic wall against the eventual landing of

Allied armies. These stripes were used to indicate the current carried by the wires (dispatching, omnibus, high frequency, and so on). In Italy, there is a profusion of insulators with stripes of different colours which rather reflect their colourful Latin attitude to things!



After the show and after many insulators had been swapped or given to old and new friends, the afternoon passed watching a fascinating 1920s film of insulator production. Made in 1997 by the German insulator manufacturer Hermsdorf on the occasion of the centennial of the Deltaglocke, the film showed early insulators being manufactured, mainly manually, in 1920.



Ulrich Reiser

A discussion followed about the different attitude to insulator collecting in the US and in Europe, a projection of photos from people on their insulator hunting excursions and a presentation of insulators as seen in old and modern paintings and pieces of art, made by Jean-Pierre Volatron, who had organised the Dry, France meeting.

The meeting carried on into the evening at an open air restaurant nearby with good German beer and Italian food and continued the next morning for a Sunday brunch before all went their separate ways.

Ulrich, who lives in Neckartenzlingen, also took groups of us to his house to see his incredible collection of insulators which covered the walls of his home from floor to ceiling and beyond into the garage. A professor of Printing at Stuttgart University, he had



printed dark green and aqua glass CD470 (N95 from Vegla) gold-inscribed as commemorative insulators to give everybody who attended as a keep-sake, insulators none of us will be swapping soon!

It was a truly unusual show attended by a community of interesting and varied collectors who came from far and wide. It was agreed that the next European gathering would be held in 2012 in the Czech Republic, to be organised by Frantisek Danek.

