surge arrester, the surge arrester may not be reset again into the non-conductive state after the triggering. As a result of the high current level of the current which flows between the first and second electrodes **10**, **20** or in the case of the 3-electrode arrester between the first or second electrodes **10**, **20** and the third electrode **30** of the arrester, excessive heating can occur at the arrester and can result in the arrester being destroyed or even cause a fire.

[0026] In order to prevent the excessive heating of the surge arrester, the latter has a mechanical short-circuiting mechanism in the form of a short-circuiting link **30** for short-circuiting the first and second electrodes **10**, **20** and a retaining element **40** for retaining the short-circuiting link **30**. In the embodiment of a 3-electrode arrester shown in FIGS. **1** and **2**, the short-circuiting link **30** is designed to short-circuit the first electrode **10**, the second electrode **20** and the third electrode **30**. The short-circuiting link **30** is shaped for this purpose in such a way that it is pressed under mechanical stress against the retaining element **40** as long as the temperature of the arrester is below the threshold value. The retaining element **40** is configured in such a way that a temperature below the threshold value of the temperature it keeps the short-circuiting link **30**, which is pressed against the retaining element owing to the mechanical prestress, at a distance from the first and second electrodes **10**, **20**.

[0027] FIG. **3** shows the surge arrester illustrated in FIG. **1** in a longitudinal view after the triggering of the short-circuiting mechanism. FIG. **4** shows a transverse view of the surge arrester in FIG. **3** after the triggering of the short-circuiting mechanism. The retaining element **40** is embodied in such a way that when the threshold value of the temperature is exceeded the retaining element shifts with respect to the short-circuiting link **30** in such a way that the short-circuiting link **30** is released and is pressed against the first and second electrodes owing to the mechanical stress. The short-circuiting link then forms a low-resistance connection between the first and second electrodes. This results in a short-circuit between the first and second electrodes **10**, **20**.

[0028] The short-circuiting link **30** has a bridging region **31** for electrically bridging a distance between the first and second electrodes **10**, **20**. The short-circuiting link **30** and the retaining element **40** can be embodied in such a way that the bridging region **31** of the short-circuiting link is held under mechanical stress by the retaining element **40** at the distance from the first and second electrodes **10**, **20** if the temperature of the arrester is below the threshold value of the temperature.

[0029] The bridging region **31** of the short-circuiting link **30** can have a first end part **311** and a second end part **312** as well as a center part **313** arranged between the first and second end parts **311**, **312**. The first and second end parts **311**, **312** of the bridging region **31** of the short-circuiting link are bent away from the plane in which the center point **313** of the bridging region **31** of the short-circuiting link are arranged bent away from a plane, in which the center part **313** of the bridging region **31** of the short-circuiting link is arranged, and are bent in the direction of the first and second electrodes **10**, **20**. The bridging region **31** contains a low-resistance material, with the result that it short-circuits the distance between the electrodes **10** and **20**.

[0030] According to one possible embodiment of the surge arrester **1**, the retaining element **40** can have a region **41** which bears against the hollow body **50**. The region **41** of the retaining element **40** can bear, for example, along approximately one quarter of the circumference of the hollow body **50**. Furthermore, the retaining element **40** can have a bent region **42** which adjoins the region **41**, is bent away from the surface of the hollow body **50** and is bent toward the bridging region **31** of the short-circuiting link **30**. The retaining element **40** can, moreover, have a supporting region **43** which adjoins the bent region **42** and against which the bridging region **31** of the short-circuiting link **30** rests on the retaining element **40** if the temperature is below the threshold value. The supporting region **43** can have a larger area than the bent region **42**. In another embodiment of the surge arrester, the supporting region **42** can be embodied merely as a prolongation of the bent region **42**.

[0031] According to one possible embodiment, the retaining element **40** can be embodied in such a way that when the threshold value of the temperature is exceeded the bent region **42** and/or at least the supporting region **43** of the retaining element **40** bends with respect to the bridging region **31** of the short-circuiting link **30** in such a way that the bridging region **31** of the short-circuiting link **30** steps off the supporting region **43** of the retaining element **40** and, owing to its mechanical prestress, is pressed against the first and second electrodes **10**, **20**.

[0032] The retaining element **40** can be embodied, for example, as a wire link on the supporting region **43** of which the bridging region **31** of the short-circuiting link rests when the short-circuiting mechanism is deactivated, with the result that the bridging region of the short-circuiting link is arranged at a distance from the first and second electrodes **10**, **20**. The retaining element **40** can contain, for example, a material made of a thermal bimetal. As a result, when the threshold value of the temperature is exceeded, the bending of the retaining element **40** occurs, as a result of which the short-circuiting link is released and the bridging region **31** snaps against the electrodes of the surge arrester as a result of the mechanical prestress of the short-circuiting link without delay.

[0033] According to one possible embodiment of the surge arrester, the short-circuiting link **30** can have a retaining region **32** on which the bridging region **31** of the short-circuiting link is arranged. The retaining region **32** of the short-circuiting link can have a support section **323** which rests on the surface of the hollow body **50**. Furthermore, the retaining region **32** of the short-circuiting link can have an attachment section **324** which is attached to the region **41** of the retaining element **40** which bears on the surface of the hollow body **50**. The short-circuiting link **30** is permanently connected to the retaining element **40** at the attachment section **324**. The short-circuiting link can be welded, for example at the attachment section **324**, to the retaining element, in particular to the region **41** of the retaining element **40** which bears on the hollow body **50**. The short-circuiting link can bear on the hollow body **50** at the attachment section **324**.

[0034] The retaining region **32** of the short-circuiting link can furthermore have an end section **325** on which the bridging region **31** of the short-circuiting link is arranged. The bridging region **31** of the short-circuiting link can be embodied, for example, as a wire or a plate which adjoins the end section **325** of the retaining region **32**. The bridging region **31** of the short-circuiting link can be soldered or welded, for example, to the end section **325** of the retaining region of the short-circuiting link. The bridging region **31** of