

Horry Electric Cooperative, Inc.

www.horryelectric.com

Main Office

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369-2211



(to report power outages only)

369-2212

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Horry Electric Cooperative, Inc., is an equal opportunity provider and employer.

Horry Electric Cooperative, Inc. is a non-profit, member-owned organization providing information and energy-related services on a fair and equitable basis.



A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative

Community Solar

Coming soon, an affordable alternative to installing solar at home

HAVE YOU EVER THOUGHT ABOUT

or checked into the possibility of capturing the energy from the sun



to power your home or business? Maybe you were inspired by seeing solar panels on top of a home or a solar farm in your travels.

We know there are a number of folks out there who have considered solar

as a part of the energy mix for their home, but they've been dissuaded by high costs of installation and maintenance. In fact, we have a list of about 100 members who have inquired about solar and have asked us to let them know when we might be able to offer a solution that will make it easy for them to participate.

We're very close

We built a community solar array on our property across the street from our main office in Conway last month. We expect it to be energized this month. We're getting very close to being able to make Community Solar available to members.

As soon as everything is in place, we'll be letting members know that we've begun accepting subscriptions to purchase a share of the energy that will be produced and distributed through the power grid.

Easy to access and understand

Access to solar energy is going to be easy. In fact, we're going to be doing all of the heavy lifting! Members will be able to participate in Community Solar at a lower cost than installing a solar system on their own. Our plan takes the worry out of construction, maintenance and even zoning restrictions!

Our community solar model is also very easy to understand.

Participating members will be subscribing to blocks of solar power on a monthly basis. One block is equal to an average of 150 kWh's per month and the maximum number of blocks available per member is 5. We have to cap the number of blocks per member so more members will have a chance to participate.

A subscription agreement will need to be completed by each participating member and a one-time, up-front, non-refundable charge of \$100 will be collected for each block subscribed to by the member. Participating members will begin seeing a monthly charge of \$25 per block on their electric bill and a monthly credit based on how much energy is produced by the solar farm. The average is projected to be 150 kWh.

Stay tuned

We're excited about Community Solar. It's a great example of how we continue to look out for our members. We saw the need and figured out a cost-effective, common-sense solution that will work for members who are interested in clean energy that is environmentally friendly. It's truly a win/win for everyone.

Look for additional information in the days and weeks ahead!

James P. "Pat" Howle
Executive Vice President and CEO

High school juniors! Apply now for a free trip to the nation's capital

HEC 2017 Washington Youth Tour

Application/Nomination Form
HIGH SCHOOL JUNIORS ONLY

Name: _____

Date of Birth: _____

Address: _____

Phone Number: _____

HEC Account Number: _____

Social Security Number: _____

Congressional District: _____

Parents'/Guardians' Names: _____

Guidance Counselor: _____

Phone Number: _____

How did you find out about 2017 Youth Tour? _____

Recommended/Approved By: _____

On a separate sheet of paper, please list academic and athletic school activities as well as civic and church activities. All applications must include a summary of the student's activities. All qualified applicants will be required to take a written test and participate in a personal interview. No essays will be accepted. Applications are open to all high school juniors, regardless of class rank or grade point average. Send completed application forms to Toni Gore, Youth Tour Coordinator; Horry Electric Cooperative, Inc.; Post Office Box 119; Conway, SC 29528-0119

APPLICATION DEADLINE IS FRIDAY, FEB. 24

FOUR LOCAL HIGH SCHOOL JUNIORS will represent Horry Electric in the nation's capital June 10-15 on the Washington Youth Tour. They'll see government in action, visit historical sites, learn about co-ops, meet students from the U.S.—and, generally, have a blast! They'll join students from around S.C. on the trip. A \$5,000 scholarship is awarded to one Youth Tour participant. Info packets have been distributed to county schools. The selection process includes a quiz and interview. Nominated students receive study materials well in advance. Grade-point averages are not a consideration. Two alternates are chosen. Applications, available from guidance counselors in January, are also at HorryElectric.com. Details: Call (843) 369-6359 or email toni.gore@horryelectric.com.



2016 WIRE scholarship winner, Katie Turley, says the \$1,500 came in handy when she started at HGTC this fall: "I bought almost all my books with it and some supplies," says the daughter of HEC members Leslie and Robbie Frasure. A Conway High graduate, Katie is a health sciences major at HGTC.



WIRE offers \$1,500 scholarship for local college freshmen

COMMUNITY OUTREACH group Women Involved in Rural Electrification is once again offering a \$1,500 scholarship.

The WIRE scholarship is for co-op members and dependents of members. The award is for one academic year for a freshman entering Coastal Carolina University or Horry-Georgetown Tech in the fall. The recipient will receive \$750 for the first semester; they must have at least a cumulative 2.5 GPR at the end of the semester to receive the other \$750. An essay is also required. Applications must be received by March 1.

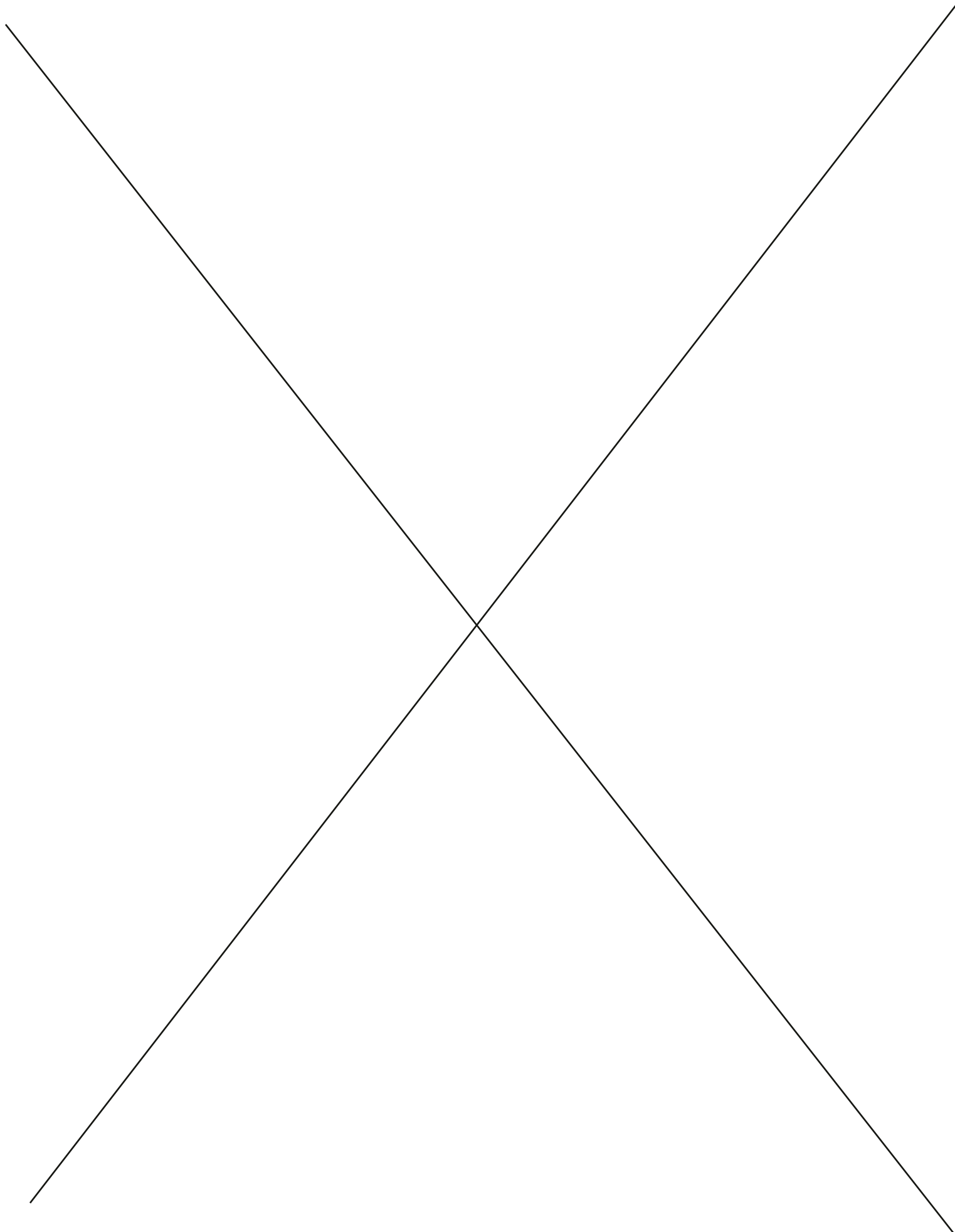
Mail to:

Mrs. Susan Brown
Horry Electric Cooperative, Inc.
P.O. Box 119
Conway SC 29528-0119
Details: 369-6323

Horry Extra

Cutting 'right-a-way' for \$1.50 a day

Closing out our 75th-anniversary celebration, we share the memories of Eugene Johnson, who helped clear the "right-a-way" for early co-op lines. And, showing that "the more things change, the more they stay the same," we share our current right-of-way maintenance schedule. See page 24D.



Weather, and thermostat settings, have greatest impact on your bill

ELECTRIC BILLS vary with the seasons, driven by weather and consumer use patterns.

“Weather is the single biggest driver of power bills,” stresses Eddy Blackburn, marketing analyst at Horry Electric Cooperative. “How much weather affects your bill depends on many factors, including your home’s original construction materials, insulation, air leaks, and HVAC efficiency. Personal comfort plays a role. So does the difference between the thermostat setting inside and temperatures outdoors,” Blackburn says.

“When a house stays at 68 degrees Fahrenheit, but the outdoor temperature drops to near freezing, demand for heating can be significant,” he says. Horry Electric members with heat pumps enjoy some of the most efficient heating, Blackburn notes.

The co-op recommends a relatively constant thermostat setting of 68 degrees during heating season. “Avoid advancing the thermostat more than two degrees at a time. This will cause the auxiliary heat to come on. Auxiliary heat is heat strips that supplement the heat pump,” he says. “They will come on when it gets near or below freezing to provide extra heat, but if you set it up more than two degrees, you can activate the strips when they are not needed.”

Only use the “emergency” heat setting if the heat pump is not working properly. “Basically, this setting turns off the heat pump and makes the unit an electric furnace,” Blackburn notes. “You use two or three times more energy than you would with the regular heat pump setting.” ☺

Energy advisors help spot other issues

Besides the weather, other factors cause your bill to rise. Fortunately for co-op members, HEC’s energy advisors, including Garrett Gasque, can review members’ energy use and help them find ways to save.

“I recently assisted a member who had his water heater turned up to 150 degrees. We lowered the setting to the 120 degrees, which was not only safer but also more energy efficient,” notes Gasque, marketing rep for HEC.

Gasque gives another example: “For those people who have pools, the pumps don’t have to run as much during the winter. I strongly recommend getting a timer. Some higher-end timers come with a thermostat built in, so if the temperature drops below freezing, it will kick on, and you don’t have to worry about plumbing pipes bursting.”

Be sure to check fireplace dampers, he adds, to make sure they’re closed when the fireplace is not in use. Otherwise, he says, some of that nice, heated air you pay for just goes straight up the chimney.

Energy advisors bring website features to life

Horry Electric’s team of energy advisors are always available to speak to civic and church groups.

“We have a lot of useful online tools and information to help members use energy more efficiently,” says Eddy Blackburn, marketing analyst. “We’re getting the word out through *South Carolina Living*, Facebook and HorryElectric.com, but we like to promote them in small group settings, too.”

Garrett Gasque, marketing representative, agrees: “The online tools are great. We just try to bring them to life in our presentations.”

Along with Ricky Lowder, senior marketing representative, Blackburn and Gasque highlight the tools and techniques found at the co-op website under My Home, in the Energy Information and Tools section:

- ▶ The Home Energy Suite, which includes calculators that use data specific to Horry Electric



HEC energy advisors (from left) Ricky Lowder, Eddy Blackburn and Garrett Gasque

- ▶ Home Energy Calculator
- ▶ Appliance Calculator
- ▶ Lighting Calculator
- ▶ Do-it-yourself Residential Energy Audit checklist
- ▶ Operating guide for heat pumps
- ▶ Efficiency programs from Touchstone Energy
- ▶ 101 Low-Cost/No-Cost Energy-Saving Measures

- ▶ Questions To Ask When Replacing Your HVAC
- ▶ Energy Guide for Renters

Lowder notes, “These online tools are easy to use, but, after our presentations, we usually hear that members who put this information to use are rewarded with greater comfort and savings.”

To coordinate a time for HEC’s energy advisors to speak to your civic or church group, contact Toni Gore, public relations and marketing assistant, at (843) 369-2211 or by emailing toni.gore@horryelectric.com.

Early co-op days live on at the house that Olin and Nina built

AS HORRY ELECTRIC wraps up its 75th-anniversary celebration this month, the early days of rural electrification linger on Lake Swamp Road, in the storied Ketchuptown community.

Robert Andrew Atkinson now lives in the home that Nina and Olin Mayberry Gerrald built in 1936, five years before the co-op began serving members on January 7, 1941. Atkinson has lovingly restored the place.

"I tried to leave everything like it was," he says. "It's even got the original lightning rods."

Atkinson's connection to the Gerralds is through his mother, Alice Faye Hill Atkinson, stepdaughter of the Gerralds' "baby boy," Kenneth Gordon Gerrald. Kenny, as everyone knew him, married Alice Faye's mother, Sally Jane Hill Gerrald.

Kenny died in 2004, but he's fondly remembered by Alice Faye

The early co-op meter above, recently restored by HEC's Billy Causey, was the type probably used at the Gerrald home in the 1950s. The receipt below shows that Olin paid \$7.53 for service on June 9, 1947.



Andrew Atkinson at his home in Ketchuptown. The house, circa 1937, is designated as a noteworthy home by the Horry County Historical Society.

and her son, who goes by Andrew. "He was good to me. Mama will tell you: Everywhere he went, I was right behind him," Atkinson says.

Young Andrew loved Kenny's stories about his parents, particularly Nina. "I always liked when he'd tell me about her. She was a hard worker," Atkinson says. After Olin died, Nina kept the farm going. "She saved these places," says Atkinson.

Joy and pain

The short time the Gerralds all lived in the home was bracketed by events of unbridled joy and almost unbearable tragedy. Kenny's older brother, Walter Patrick Gerrald, was born Jan. 23, 1937, the night Nina and Olin moved in.

The house was a step back up for Kenny and Walter's mother, born Zilphia Nina Page on Jan. 11, 1907. She and Olin, born Sept. 9, 1902, had previously lived in a house with a dirt floor. "She had been raised in a nice house," Atkinson notes.

Not that the Gerralds weren't successful: "When he died, he had 20 acres of tobacco. That was a lot of tobacco for a man back in those days. He worked this farm, he worked his brother Buster's farm at the end

of the road, then he worked two or three farms there across the swamp," Atkinson says.

By 1947, co-op power had arrived, as a counter receipt, dated June 9 of that year, for \$7.53 shows. It's one of many keepsakes from that era that Atkinson treasures. He also kept their old smokehouse and the iron dinner bell, although termites got the old wash house. He gave their water trough to the living history farm in Conway.

The trough and the bell are steeped in family lore. Atkinson recounts the



The house's original lightning rods are still on the roof. Inside (right) is a light fixture from the 1950s.

75 YEARS

Horry Electric Cooperative, Inc.

1941-2016

A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative

story of Olin's death: "He died right out yonder in the yard," Atkinson says. "He had a heart attack at the water trough one morning. Uncle Walter found him. He went and got his mama. She hollered to him, 'Ring the bell, ring the bell!' And he rung the bell until help came," Atkinson says. "He said his arms were sore from ringing it." Even today, Walter, who is in a nursing home, tears up at the memory, Atkinson notes.

Soldiering on

Nina didn't give up. She soldiered on, Atkinson says. "She worked like a man," he notes. "She'd go from sunup to sundown."



Nina was even known to blast stumps to clear land. "She kept her dynamite in the pump house," Kenny told him.

Nina had the house remodeled in 1951 or 1952,

finally replacing an old wood stove with an electric model. As Atkinson has refurbished the house, he's kept the original light fixtures from those days. Even the old whole-house fan, a precursor of air conditioning, still works, he notes. "We use it once in a while."

Nina had her sons to help, of course, plus a hired hand—and



Olin and Nina Gerrald's portraits are prominently displayed in the hallway, along with childhood photos of their sons Walter (top) and Kenny.

one other helper: good ol' Willie Wiredhand, the national co-op mascot introduced in the 1950s. She leaned heavily on Willie, who represented "the helping hand on the farm"—co-op power.

"My great-grandma had two packhouses pulling off this house and a stick barn out yonder pulling off this house," Atkinson notes.

Service is much more reliable now, he says, but, thanks to Nina, Atkinson is prepared for emergencies: "I've got two of the original lanterns. When hurricanes come, we always use them."

Time-honored values

He and his mother have kept another rural tradition alive: Caring for loved ones. Alice's mother, Sally Jane Hill Gerrald, helped Kenny take care of Nina in her final year. "My grandma was good to her. When she got down, Granny didn't leave her," he says. Likewise, he and Alice have stayed close to his Uncle Walter.

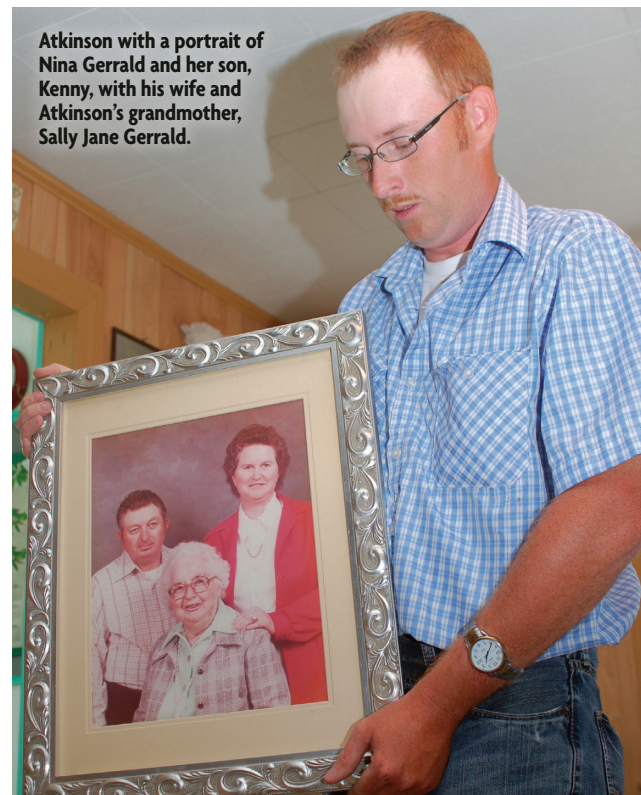
Today, the coming of Interstate 73 promises fresh change to the community. Local farmers no longer gather at the old Ketchuptown corner store to "catch up" on

the news but Atkinson is holding on to his slice of Horry County history.

"Everything from the past is about gone now. There's too many memories in this house to leave it."



Atkinson with a portrait of Nina Gerrald and her son, Kenny, with his wife and Atkinson's grandmother, Sally Jane Gerrald.



Memories of clearing 'right-a-way' for \$1.50 a day, back in 1942

BORN OCTOBER 7, 1923, Eugene Johnson passed away in November 2006. Fortunately, in 1999 he wrote down his memories of Horry Electric Cooperative's early days, three-quarters of a century ago.

Johnson helped clear right of way—which he called “right-a-way”—along some of the co-op's first power lines in western Horry County, where he was raised and lived out his days.

Continuing his tradition of service today are three HEC employees who were related to Johnson: He was Billy Ray Cox's father-in-law, Ashley Johnson's grandfather, and William Lambert's wife's grandfather. He's shown below with grandson Christopher Johnson, a co-op member who now lives in his grandfather's former home on Joyner Swamp Road, along with his wife, Angela.



COURTESY ANGELA JOHNSON

'The whole country was lit up with current in every home'

BY EUGENE JOHNSON

I remember in 1942, I helped clean the right-a-way for the light line. It was during the months of October and November. I helped cleaned the right-a-way from Harold Martin's store to the crossroads at Box Post Office then turned left and went to Mill Swamp School, this is where Midland School is now.

We turned left there and went down the road where Mr. Burroughs Rabon's house is at. When we came to the Cool Springs Road, we turned left and went back to the crossroads at Harold Martin's store, where we started. It was called the

Joyner Swamp Crossroads at that time. We cut the right-a-way down and put it in piles and burnt it down.

They paid us \$1.50 a day; Mr. Ulric Johnson was in charge of the job. He turned our names in and the time we worked into the light office. They sent the money back that they owed us, mine was \$49; I gave mine to Doug Doyle for wiring my daddy's house.

Me and Dock Floyd worked together on the line using a crosscut saw. They worked right on after Christmas but I did not work anymore. World War II was going strong; my daddy decided to plant some Irish potatoes and did not let me work on the light line anymore. I had to get the land ready to plant the taters. He thought it would help us boys from going to the Army. It might have helped some but we both, me and my brother H.L., had to go anyway.

We got lights in 1943 at Thanksgiving. This was one year after I worked on the line and you don't know how proud we was to get them. That was the best thing that had ever happened to poor people. It put the community in lights while we were working around and got back to Joyner Swamp Crossroads.

They brought poles on a truck and dropped them 'side the road. Then they took mules to pull the pole to the place where it would be put in the hole. The holes were dug by hand and the poles were put in the hole by people using nothing but their hands. The wire was pulled down the right-a-way by mules. This was the way it was done until the late '50s. Then they began to get trucks to help do the job. Just look what they have come to now. I am real proud of them.

They lights were brought to all the poor people in South Carolina. That was the best thing that ever happened to the people in the country. If we were to lose the lights now, it would be the worst thing that ever happened to me and you and all the rest of the world.

I am real glad we have the lights and hope that we never lose them. They are my real friend!

Me and H.L. both got drafted into service during World War II. H.L. went one



COURTESY TRACY LAMBERT

Eugene Johnson with his wife, the late Alene H. Johnson. “They were pillars of the community,” says William Lambert, HEC crew foreman. “Everybody thought the world of them.”

year before I did and got wounded. I went one year after he did. I did not get into the fighting. I seen the world over in Japan and the United States. I got back in good health. The whole country was lit up with current in about every home. You can't imagine how proud me and our family was over the electricity. ☺

RIGHT-OF-WAY SCHEDULE FOR FIRST QUARTER 2017

OVERHEAD LINES

Green Sea—From Finklea Crossroads, west on Hwy. 917, east on 917 to Hwy. 9, including Fowler and Clear Pond roads and surrounding areas. Along Mt. Zion Road, Justice Loop and north on and around Hwy. 410 back to and including Fair Bluff Hwy.

Brooksville—Down Hwy. 57, across Hwy. 9 and down to Star Bluff Crossroads, areas in between, including east and west on Hwy. 9.

Hwy. 544—From Myrtle Ridge Drive to West Cox Ferry Road and surrounding areas from West Cox Ferry to Hwy. 501. Also from the waterway to Hwy. 814 and nearby areas, including Roscoe, Peach Tree and Mill Pond roads.

UNDERGROUND LINES

Crews will trim around pad-mount transformers and gear in the Barefoot and Longs areas.

Zoom in on where crews will be working with our new right-of-way map at HorryElectric.com! Look under Quick Links on our home page.