

# Looking Back at 75 Years of

## North Central Electric Cooperative

GENERAL MANAGERS THROUGH THE YEARS



THE FIRST GENERAL MANAGER of North Central Electric Cooperative was Ralph J. "R.J." Williams. During the years Williams was manager, North Central grew from a cooperative distributing electricity from only one substation in eastern Seneca County, to a large rural distribution area serving parts of eight counties from nine substations. His leadership helped the cooperative win a plaque from the State Association of Rural Electric Cooperatives for having the lowest kWh retail rate in Ohio.

A true pioneer in the rural electric movement, Williams devoted his life to bringing low-cost power to the rural people. Williams served as the cooperative's manager from 1937 until his retirement in May 1963.

Henry H. Cook was the second manager of North Central. Cook started his employment with the cooperative in 1943. In 1963, Cook accepted the position of general manager following the retirement of Williams. In the time frame of his employment, he directed and saw the cooperative expand from 2,861 members with 916 miles of line, to 7,070 members and 1,299 miles of energized line.

Robert Daryl Kurtz was employed by North Central in 1960. He was appointed general manager in 1978 and served as manager until January 1985.

In 1978, Kurtz had a power requirement study completed. In 1979 and 1980 work plans were ready to begin construction, and in 1981 and 1982 plans

were in progress. In those years, North Central built 90 plus miles of three-phase line, two new substations — Jackson substation and Republic substation — and the New Washington substation was rebuilt and upgraded at the same site, all at a total cost of approximately \$3 million. North Central now has 11 substations and one metering station.

Kurtz served on many Ohio Rural Electric boards and committees including Buckeye Power, Inc., and as president of the Ohio Manager's Association.

Fred A. Shatzer, Sr., was appointed by the Board of Trustees as general manager in January 1985.

Shatzer began his employment with North Central in July 1981 as a staff assistant manager. Prior to that time, he was with Whitley County Rural Electric Membership Cooperative in Columbia City, Ind., for 12 years. Shatzer served as general manager until 1998.

Markus I. Bryant was appointed by the board of trustees as general manager in January 1998.

As the era of electric deregulation was about to begin, North Central and Lorain-Medina Rural Electric Cooperative of Wellington formed a management and shared services cooperative called FESCO (Federated Energy Services Cooperative). In essence, one management team continues to operate two electric cooperatives, sharing personnel and resources.



Ralph J. Williams  
1937 - 1963

Henry H. Cook  
1963 - 1978



Robert D. Kurtz  
1978 - 1985

Fred A. Schatzer  
1985 - 1998



Markus I. Bryant  
1998 - present