Electricity was nothing new for rural towns in Virginia in the 1930s. An estimated 90 percent of the homes in cities and towns had already gone electric. The convenience offered by electricity, however, did not extend much farther than the town limits. The privately owned utility companies of the day believed that the technical and financial challenges of running lines throughout the countryside were too great for a service that would only have a few customers per mile. As a result, less than eight out of 100 farms in 1934 had electric service.

When Franklin Roosevelt became president in 1933, the country was still reeling from the Great Depression. The new president sought to address the depression with groundbreaking and controversial projects in an attempt to get the national economy going again. One of these projects was the Rural Electrification Administration, created by executive order on May 11, 1935. The REA’s mission was to bring electricity to rural areas. It was believed the new technology would provide new jobs, stimulate manufacturing and help the farmers. A year later, Congress passed the Norris-Rayburn Act, providing $410 million for a 10-year program to bring electricity to rural areas.

The REA was largely a financing agency, making loans available to corporations to construct distribution lines into rural areas. When the utility companies failed to show interest in providing the service to rural areas, rural citizens banded together to form cooperatives to get the job done.

In Mecklenburg, county agent Norman H. Williams, Jr. was credited with being the driving force bringing electricity to rural Southside. With the support and cooperation of leading farmers from around the region, the group organized and requested an official charter from the State Corporation Commission.

In February of 1938, Williams and Jack Smith went to Washington to secure a loan for $129,000 to build 136 miles of line and two substations to serve Mecklenburg, Brunswick, Charlotte and Lunenburg. Before the year was out, 30,000 users.

How Much Things Cost In 1938
- Average cost of new house $3,900.00
- Average wages per year $1,730.00
- Cost of a gallon of gas 10 cents
- Average cost for house rent $27.00 per month
- A loaf of bread 9 cents
- A pound of hamburger meat 13 cents
- Average price for new car $763.00
- Blanket $5.00
- Liptons Noodle Soup 10 cents

Below are some prices for UK guides in Pounds Sterling
- Average house price 545

What events happened In 1938
- New England Hurricane of 1938 (or Great New England Hurricane or Long Island Express)
- Freak Waves at Bondi Beach, Sydney, Australia cause 300 swimmers to be dragged out to sea
- The State of Israel is founded
- Flooding and Landslides in Los Angeles cause 200 deaths
- The first use of an eye dogs occurs
- German troops enter Austria
- Agricultural Adjustment Act passed helping farmers affected by Dust Bowl
- Germany begins its persecution of Jews
- March of Dimes Polio Foundation Created
- A 450 metric ton meteorite struck the earth in an empty field near Chicora, Pennsylvania
- Italy wins the 1938 World Cup in France defeating Hungary