

*A Changing Mill Story: Crafting the Manchester Cotton Mill Narrative through ArcGIS Story Maps*

Presenter Annie Shirley, History major

Mentored by Dr. Ann McCleary

Since the late nineteenth century, the expansive textile industry has dominated the western side of Georgia. Surrounding these numerous mills springing up throughout the region, textile mill employees and owners created communities, as means of ensuring a committed workforce or as a response to a quickly industrializing South. The University of West Georgia Center for Public History manages the West Georgia Textile Heritage Trail, a cultural heritage initiative to interpret and promote the history of these textile mills and their communities. Since the project's genesis, the Textile Heritage Trail team has created numerous interpretive writings in public spaces to spread awareness of the history of these communities. More recently, the Center for Public History and the Department of Geosciences are moving forward with an interdisciplinary approach in using geographical information systems to tell these stories.

My project has focused on incorporating GIS data and other recently discovered sources with interpretive text existing on the Textile Heritage Trail website to tell more complete stories of these textile communities in a more fluid, engaging, and accessible way. Through using ArcGIS Story Maps to interpret the story of the mill community in Manchester, Georgia, I have been working on a model for how these community stories can be told through an interactive and engaging online map. I have relied on both historical documents from the town of Manchester as well as Sanborn Maps showing the community and Davidson's Blue Books detailing the status of the mill and its contents throughout the twentieth century.