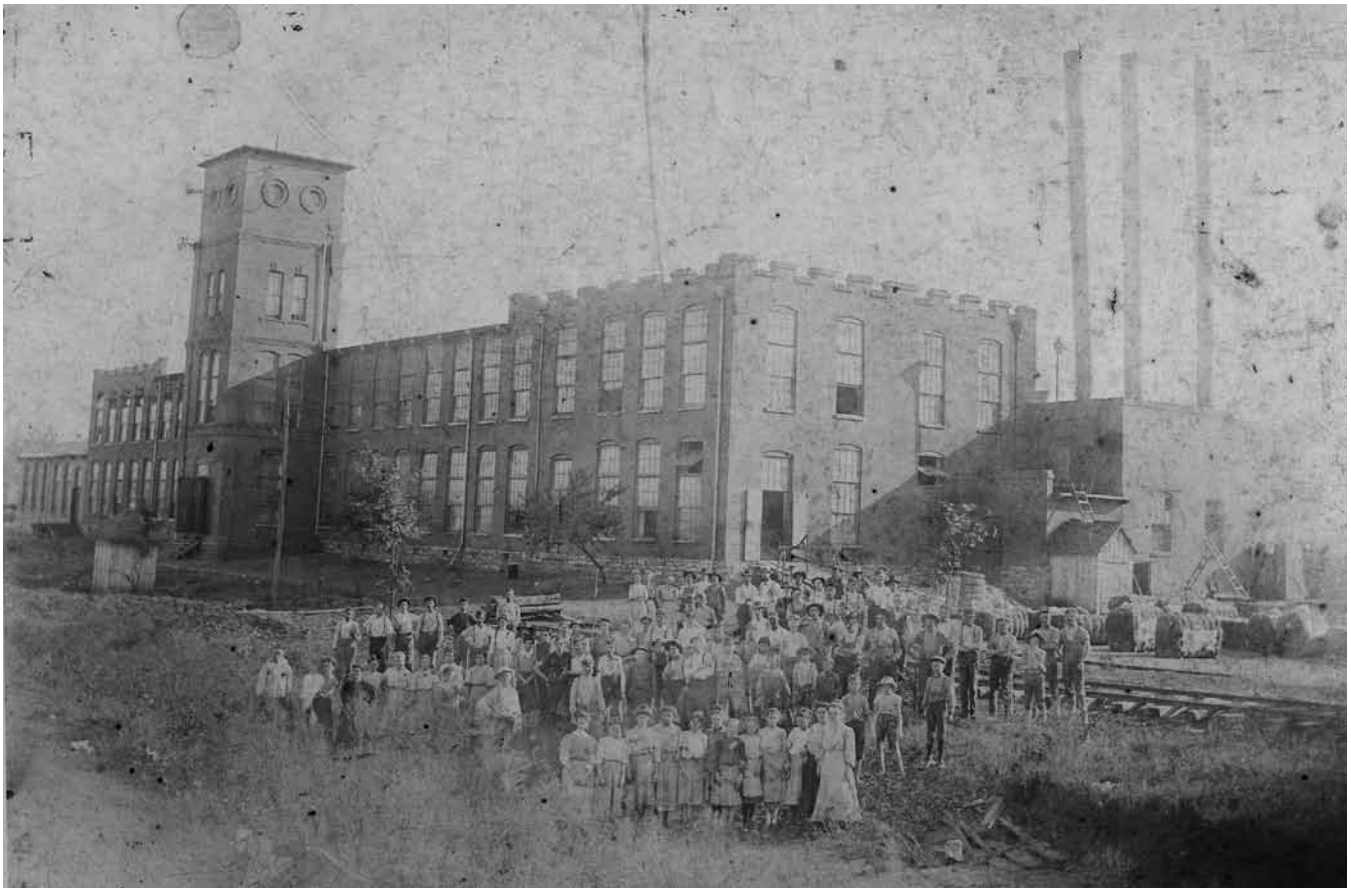


# Jackson County Historical Society News

VOLUME EIGHTEEN, NUMBER TWO

APRIL 2011



*The Jefferson Cotton Mill circa 1907*

The Jackson County Historical Society will meet at Real Deal in Jefferson on April 17, 2011 at 2:30 p.m. Davis Roberts, an employee of Jefferson Mills for 47 years, will present a program on the Jefferson Mills.

*direction: From I85, take US 129 S about 6.6 miles to GA 11 N/Winder Hwy, turn left about 1 mile to Real Deal, 28 Epps street, 30549. Park in the Real Deal parking area.*

*Jackson County Historical Society*

*P.O. Box 1234, Commerce, Georgia 30529*

*(706) 335-5946*

## Newsletter

The Jackson County Historical Society is looking for a few individuals who have an interest in the history and research of Jackson County and the time to find the sources to present this at our meetings and to contribute material for our newsletters. We have many knowledgeable people and resources at our fingertips that can be helpful. Please contact Tina at 706-207-6889 or tina313@mindspring.com, if you would like to be involved.

## Collection

The Historical Society's collection of books, files and research materials are housed in the Heritage Room of the Commerce Public Library. The library has generously provided computers, microfilm readers and copiers and expanding space in their future expansion. We are in need of volunteers to assist researchers and keep the collection organized. If you are available to assist, contact Annabel Seltzer at abseltzer@windstream.net

Dues run from July to July and can be mailed to:

Jackson County Historical Society  
P. O. Box 1234, Commerce, GA 30529:

Individual –\$15, Family –\$25, LIFE members –\$100

## JCHS Officers 2010-2011

President:	Mary Lynn Bell
Vice-President:	Shirley Wilson
Recording Secretary:	Boniface McDaniel
Treasurer:	Tommy Benton
Directors:	James Mathis Ann Jarrett Jerry Legg
Past Presidents:	the late, Joyce Ethridge Ann A. Jarrett the late, Richard Chambers the late, Jean H. Booth Betty Ann Mathis James Mathis Ralph Freeman Carol Tanner Marie Parks Tina Harris Charlotte Mealor Tina Harris
Newsletter Editor:	Tina Harris

Back newsletter issues can be obtained for \$3.00 each plus postage. Some of the past newsletters can be viewed online at:  
[rootsweb.com/~gajackso/](http://rootsweb.com/~gajackso/)



*Children's playground at the Jefferson Mills, circa 1920*

*excerpt from The Early History of Jackson County, by Frary Elrod*

### **The Jefferson Cotton Mills**

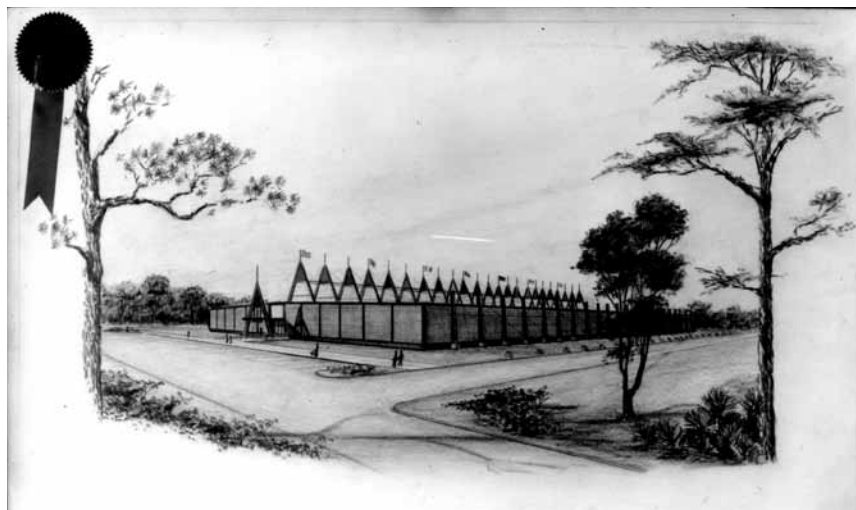
The Jefferson Mills, Inc. is the oldest and largest industry in Jefferson. This industry was chartered on May 31, 1899, as The Jefferson Cotton Mills. The petitioners who obtained the charter were: T. W. Niblack, W. W. Bell, W. I. Pike, N. N. Pendergrass, Frank Roberts, J. N. Holder, James E. Randolph, J. B. Pendergrass and J. C. Turner. During the years the charter has been amended several times to increase the capital stock. On July 20, 1916, a petition for charter was signed by the court to increase the capital stock and to change the name from the Jefferson Cotton Mills to the Jefferson Mills, Inc. The petitioners were: William T. Bryan, Sr., James Y. Carithers, John F. Tibbets, and Morris M. Bryan, Sr., Morris M. Bryan, Sr., became an official of the Jefferson Mills on July 1, 1916, and moved from Athens to Jefferson on October 13, 1916. He became president of the Jefferson Mills on January 17, 1934, and served as president until his death on May 23, 1948. He was succeeded as President by his son Morris M. Bryan, Jr. Another son, Southworth F. Bryan, served as Vice-President and Treasurer from October 1, 1946, until his death in a plane crash on the night of January 4, 1957. Also killed in the same crash were William Ralph Duke; Superintendent of finishing, inspection and packing department and the pilot; William G. Johnson. The

position of Vice-President and Treasurer was filled by Tom M. Bryan, younger son of Morris M. Bryan, Sr. William T. Bryan, Jr., son of another of the 1916 petitioners, was connected with Jefferson Mills from July 22, 1922, until September 1, 1944, when he sold his interest and went into the cotton brokerage business in Jefferson.

The Jefferson Mills showed continuous improvement and growth over the years. It was remodeled, new administrative facilities added, a dye plant constructed, and in 1964 a finishing plant was completed. An excellent quality of cordoroy was manufactured.

A revolutionary new textile manufacturing process was perfected and patented by the staff of the Jefferson Mills. This process reduced the number of steps required to produce cloth from raw cotton from 18 to only six. The machinery for this new addition was housed in an ultra-modern plant and named the Southworth Division of the Jefferson Mills. Operation began in mid-1967.

The Bryan family and the Jefferson Mills have given most generously of their time and money for the betterment of Jefferson and Jackson County. Morris M. Bryan Jr., President of the Jefferson Mills, was a member of the Board of Regents of the University System of Georgia, Chairman of the Jefferson City Board of Education, and held many national offices in the Textile Industry. He devoted much of his time to planning, developing, and financing projects for the benefit of all.



*Southworth division circa 1967*

Jackson County Historical Society

P.O. Box 1234 Commerce, Georgia 30529



*Cobb Street, Jefferson Mill Village circa 1927*