

EMBARGOED MEDIA RELEASE: HOLD UNTIL TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 13, 2011
THE ALABAMA HISTORICAL COMMISSION/THE CAHABA FOUNDATION

Alabama's most famous ghost town—Old Cahawba*, near Selma—is getting a new future because private donors are giving private dollars to protect and develop a state-owned landmark.

At a lively event this week in the House Chamber of Alabama's historic state capitol building, The Cahaba* Foundation presented the Alabama Historical Commission (AHC) with deeds to 10 parcels of land at Alabama's first state capital. The land includes scenic riverfront property and parcels in the archaeologically-rich former town center.

The September 13th presentation was the kickoff for the foundation's *Remember, Reclaim, Restore: The Campaign for Old Cahawba*. This private effort aims to raise a total of \$2 million to purchase all of the historic land still in private ownership at Cahawba.

According to The Cahaba Foundation President and Founder, Daniel J. Meador, "One of the most historic spots in Alabama, this site should be preserved for posterity, and we invite everyone to join us in this effort."

In 2008, private citizens created The Cahaba Foundation to secure private financial support from individuals, corporations and foundations for the state historic park at Old Cahawba, site of Alabama's first state capital.

The Alabama Historical Commission was charged by the Alabama Legislature in 1975 with protecting and interpreting Old Cahawba. The agency has been acquiring land at the site for close to 30 years. By 2008, 35% of the land was still in private ownership.

Alabama Historical Commission Chairman Bill Denson and Executive Director Frank White accepted the deeds. They praised the foundation, its donors, and partners. Other groups assisting in the purchase of land at Old Cahawba include the Archaeological Conservancy, the Cahaba Advisory Commission, the Selma-Dallas County Historical Preservation Society, the Nature Conservancy and Cahawba Concern.

White announced a plan for a visitor complex that includes two historic buildings and a proposed new building that demonstrates current best practices for environmentally responsible design. "It will serve as model for sustainable development throughout the Black Belt," White said.

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* "Cahawba" is the spelling used until around 1850 when many of the inhabitants dropped the "w" from the name. The AHC uses the original spelling; other organizations use the more modern spelling.

For additional details and images go to www.preserveala.org/mediaresources.aspx
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