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## **SHELBY COUNTY'S MONTEVALLO COAL MINE COMPANY STORE ADDED TO ALABAMA REGISTER OF LANDMARKS & HERITAGE**

The Alabama Historical Commission (AHC) recently added the Montevallo Coal Mine Company Store to the Alabama Register of Landmarks & Heritage.

The Alabama Register is a prestigious listing of historic, architectural, and archaeological landmarks. The AHC considers the notable historic properties in this register to be particularly worthy of preservation and appreciation, and therefore deserving of this special recognition.

Montevallo Coal Mine Company Store is listed in the Alabama Register for its commercial history relating to the mine industry. "It is a good example of an early 20<sup>th</sup> century company mining store that retains much of its historic character," said Lee Anne Wofford, Alabama Register Coordinator for the Alabama Historical Commission.

Coal was discovered in the vicinity of Montevallo in the 1830s. By 1850, the Alabama Coal Mine Company was the second largest mine in Alabama. This company changed hands several times and in the 1870s, Truman Aldrich and his brother William Farrington Aldrich both bought interests in what was then called the Montevallo Coal and Transportation Company. Mr. D.A. Thomas purchased the company from the Aldrich brothers in 1925 and changed the name to Montevallo Coal Mine Company. In 1928, Mr. Thomas built this company store. Even after the mine closed in 1942, the store operated until 1944 when it was purchased and used as a mercantile company. This building was the third company store in this vicinity and may be the last mining company store standing in the state.

In 1989, the building became the Aldrich Coal Mine Museum and opened to the public. The museum contains pictures, displays, and artifacts of the Aldrich mining community and the city of Montevallo. The museum also features a local black history room and a simulated coal mine.

The Alabama Historical Commission administers the Alabama Register program, which gives the public a simple way to bring recognition to historic properties.

The Alabama Register officially recognizes and honors buildings, sites, structures, objects, and historic districts that are at least 40 years old.

The Alabama Register designation is honorary and carries no restrictions on property and offers no financial incentives.

*To protect, preserve, and interpret Alabama's historic places is the mission of the **Alabama Historical Commission**, the **State Historic Preservation Office**.*

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