

**Media Release**  
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**Former School Brings Silas Community Together**

**SILAS ELEMENTARY SCHOOL ADDED TO ALABAMA REGISTER**

The Alabama Historical Commission added the Silas Elementary School to the Alabama Register of Landmarks and Heritage in June.

The handsome red brick building provided educational opportunities for southern Choctaw County families from 1936 until 2002. Today it is a center of community life in Silas, a small town of 452 people.

Beautifully restored in 2009, it houses the town hall and library and hosts dozens of community events. According to Mayor Shirley Mixon Perry, the restoration was a community-wide effort with people donating time and funds to clean and paint the building and to refinish the wooden floors.

"It's beautiful and it's our history." Perry said, "people have given photographs, books, and even a bell from the Silas Methodist Church which closed in 2002."

The town plans to ring the bell for the first time in a decade at the December 4th Christmas tree lighting, according to Mayor Perry.

The New Deal era placed great emphasis on school buildings, and many of Alabama's historic schools date from that time. Schools in communities like Silas made education attainable for rural families.

Few people had cars, and roads were few and frequently impassible. Many students boarded with local families within walking distance of the school. Some rural families with means built homes in town so their children could go to school. The Silas School served southern Choctaw County, while a school in Butler served the northern half.

The Alabama Register is a prestigious listing of historic, architectural, and archaeological landmarks. These selected Alabama landmarks are worthy of both recognition and preservation. Listing on the state register is an honorary designation imposing no benefits or restrictions on property owners.

For additional information on the other programs offered by the Alabama Historical Commission, visit:  
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*The Alabama Historical Commission **protects, preserves, and interprets Alabama's historic places** and is the State Historic Preservation Office.*

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