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NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: MARCH 7, 2013

(Release #2012/13 – 254)

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Springhill School Opens for Educational Use



HOUSTON COUNTY, GA – The Houston County Board of Education and Perry Area Historical Society held a program to announce the opening of Springhill School on March 6. A ribbon cutting culminated the program in which Superintendent Dr. Robin Hines shared the school’s history. Ellie Loudermilk, President of the Historical Society, also gave an overview of the restoration and introduced supporters. Entertainment was provided by Morningside Elementary under the direction of music teacher Paula Jo Powell.

Dr. Hines opened the program with the following remarks: “This building has a very interesting history, and I want to tell you its story. Springhill School first opened 108 years ago in 1905 as a one-room schoolhouse. It became a two-room school house when a partition was added sometime after 1915. The building was used as a school until 1925 when it closed with the opening of Perry Consolidated Schools, which now houses our central office. Several years after its closing, Springhill was sold to a former student, and it served as their family home until 1980. It found a new purpose when it was sold to the Rehoboth Baptist Association and became the first home of the newly constituted Rehoboth Baptist Church. In 2008, Springhill was given to the Perry Historical Society.”

MORE

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According to the *1915 Educational Survey of Houston County, Georgia*, the one-room schoolhouse was originally built three miles north of Perry. It was valued at \$700 in 1915 with annual maintenance costs of \$400. In 1915 the school had one teacher, Miss Laura Talton, who taught six different grades to 28 students.

Fast forward to July 29, 2009 - on that day, Springhill was relocated to the site of the legendary 1926 Perry Panther gym. This came about after Loudermilk presented a proposal to the Board of Education in September 2008 to relocate Springhill. The Perry Area Historical Society, the Board of Education and many community sponsors worked diligently to bring this project to fruition.

During the program to announce the opening, Loudermilk told the crowd about the four-and-a-half year project and introduced major supporters. Margie Daniel and Doris Wicks, family members of the former owners, were recognized. Platinum sponsors who contributed at least \$1,000 were: Parrish Construction Group, JMA Architects, Perry Area Historical Society, Flint Energies, Georgia Power, Cherokee Brick, Myers Construction Company, Balvaunuca Club, Dr. and Mrs. William Jerles, Perry High School Class of 1955 and Bill and Ellie Loudermilk. Gold sponsors include: the Sogadera Club, Kiwanis, Beltista Club, Akikta Club, Leadership Perry 2010, Laura Anderson, Randall and Terre Walker, Paul Bulloch and Matthew Arthur. Many volunteered their time and energy, to include: Perry Volunteer Outreach, Brad Pope, Charles Parker, Floyd Gregory, David Loudermilk, Dave Corson, Paul Musick, Ken Minor, Dave McMahan, Will McMahan, Phil Smith, Jeremy Bennett, Lou Heath, Kurt Eckman and employees of the Houston County Board of Education.

Others contributed furnishings: a slate board from a one-room school in Ohio—Lori Caldwell; vintage desks—Bridget Howard, Jim Lewis, and Randy Lanier; 42 chairs for seating—CVB; wood stove from a one-room school in Warm Springs—Paul Bulloch; paint—Sherwin Williams; and lumber—Charles Parker, Dave McMahan, Phil Gentry, Bill Loudermilk and Tolleson Lumber Company.

“Many have asked how the Historical Society plans to use the building,” said Loudermilk. “It is only proper and fitting that a school should be used for educational activities. In the short term we have been approached about Student of the Quarter award ceremonies, class reunions of area schools, musical performances and storytelling. In the long term only God knows the future.”

Springhill will be managed by the Historical Society and all events must be scheduled. To request use of the building, please call the Perry Museum at 478-224-4442. Springhill is located on Beckham Circle in Perry, behind the Herman Ragin Center at the Board of Education central office.

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