

FOREWORD

The making of history is not always a story of grace and grandeur but a dynamic story of people as they come together to create a life and future for their families. *Bobby Joe and his wife Diane (Brandenberg) Seales* have published **Alabaster & Siluria: The Early Years ~ A Pictorial History** to tell this story. It offers more than a peek into the past; it's a chance to linger there. As you enjoy these photographs you will better understand how Alabaster and Siluria were special places with a unique history.

The book is divided into seven chapters and it is entirely fitting that the first chapter titled "VIEWS AND STREET SCENES" includes photographs of Buck Creek Cotton Mills, which played a pivotal role in the area's early recorded history and Main Street scenes of Alabaster in the early formative years.

The second chapter "COMMERCE AND INDUSTRIES" demonstrates how commerce was important to the forming of small business. This chapter shows the power of labor to grow and harvest crops, mine stone from quarries, manufacture of textiles from a cotton mill, build homes, churches and communities.

Photographs in "THE 1953 DISASTER" and "THE REBUILDING" chapters illustrates the resilience, resolve and determination of the people of the mill village to find a way to overcome tragedy and rebuild their lives and community.

The chapters "SCHOOLS AND EDUCATION" and "COMMUNITIES" captures life as it was long ago with a collection of photographs of schools, classes, teams, parades and

community events.

The final chapter is on "PUBLIC SERVICE" and demonstrates how people came together to work together with determination to improve the quality of life for everyone.

All in all, the book is a remarkable collection of photographs — many of which over the years were obtained from Fred F. Phillips and Frances (Nabors) Duke Wilson. Thank you to the many others that provided heirloom photographs and documents to enhance the efforts of this publication, to preserve the history, memories and precious moments of an almost forgotten past, people and places; we appreciate your generosity. Our appreciation would not be complete without mentioning the support from the City of Alabaster, Alabaster City Schools and Shelby County Legislative Delegation.

Try as we may, it is very difficult to accurately recreate history; however, we have discovered that "history never written is soon forgotten" and "a picture is worth a thousand words." We are proud to have played a part in making this keepsake book available.

Bobby Joe Seales
Alabama Bicentennial Ambassador