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Marceline, Missouri's Coke Wall Mural Restoration Has Begun

May 3, 2023, Marceline, Missouri - The Downtown Marceline Foundation is happy to announce that work has begun on the restoration of the Coke Wall mural in Walt Disney's hometown of Marceline, Missouri. The work is expected to be completed by the end of May, culminating with a visit from Disney fans attending a June 3rd event in town. Progress photos will be available on the Downtown Marceline Foundation website, as well as opportunities for Coca-Cola and Disney fans to donate to the project.

The 'Coke Wall Mural' was a discovery made in 2002 when an apartment building annex burned down. In 1919 Albert Zurcher added-on to his jewelry store, covering up the large Coca-Cola sign that Walt Disney saw as a kid when he would come into town. When the charred debris from the fire was removed, the 'lost' Coke advertisement was revealed. In November 2015 the faded painting was restored. Within a few years, the century-old brick-faces began 'popping off' and taking paint with them. That damage is now being repaired, and the Coca-Cola ad will again be a vibrant reminder of the past.

"When the Coke Wall Mural was first revived, it was a natural backdrop for everything from wedding announcements, to prom photos, to road trip pics. But as pieces of the wall began falling off, its luster didn't attract as many locals or visitors to Marceline," said Downtown Marceline Foundation President Michael Olinger. "It was hard to miss when you first drove into Main Street. That's one reason we're happy to bring it back to life."

Part of the Zurcher Building was sold in 2022, which also happened to be the section with the mural. During the real estate sale, a clause was added to the contract that gave control of the exterior wall to the Foundation, so that they could maintain the painting in future years. That time has come.

The Downtown Marceline Foundation Board of Directors chose Ashley's Finest Painting Services to repair the damaged brick, prepare the wall for painting, and to repaint the mural exactly as it was before. Larry Ashley is a former paint chemistry student at Sherwin-Williams, and has done other paint and building restoration projects in recent years. He's also a proud citizen of Marceline, moving here in 2018.

The work needed to start after the cold weather subsided, but they wanted to get it ready for summer visitors to Marceline. The town is host to the Walt Disney Hometown Museum which draws many Disney fans during good weather, as well as the large number of Missourians who travel to Marceline for the annual Marceline Train Show, Marceline Car Show, and Crafts in the Park events in May, and the Wine & Art Stroll in August, which closes down Main Street USA for the better part of a day. "The Coca-Cola wall is eye-catching and adds a great sense of history to our town," said Marceline City Manager Richard Hoon. "With so many tourists and locals who visit Main Street, it will be nice to see it refreshed."

Some of the funds for the mural restoration have come from the various events and programs the Downtown Marceline Foundation has organized, but as with most small nonprofit organizations, there's still a shortfall. They are actively looking for restoration grants and donations to help cover the cost of the work. Donations can be made on their website, or by sending checks to their office on Main Street USA. Marceline, Missouri - Small Town America, Perfectly Imagined.

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