

News Release

City of Danville, Virginia
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City helps dedicate Tobacco Heritage Mural

Honors tobacco growers, families, laborers, warehouse owners, processors and auctioneers who made Danville the “World’s Best Tobacco Market”

Danville city officials joined other area leaders and citizens Friday morning in dedicating the Tobacco Heritage Mural painted on the side of 308 Craghead St. and visible from the River District’s busiest intersection at Main and Craghead streets.

Mayor John Gilstrap called the mural a unique gift to the city that is reflective of Danville’s rich history of tobacco production, marketing and manufacturing.

“Nearly 225 years ago, the General Assembly authorized construction of a tobacco warehouse at Wynne’s Falls,” Gilstrap said. “This warehouse marked the start of the town of Danville. By the start of the Civil War, Danville had developed a bright leaf market for the surrounding area. This market would not only become Virginia’s largest for bright leaf tobacco, but it also would be known as the ‘World’s Best Tobacco Market.’”

Gilstrap thanked JTI Leaf Services and all others who donated money to commission the mural. The mural is the third in the River District, joining the transportation and “Wreck of the Old 97” murals.

“The three murals that are in place now enliven previously blank walls, and they provide a scenic history lesson for our residents and our visitors,” Gilstrap said. “We look forward to the River District Association commissioning additional murals throughout the River District.”

Jerry Amburn, chairman of the mural committee for the association, said the next mural to be commissioned will be one honoring Danville native Wendell Scott, who was the first African-American race car driver in NASCAR and the first to win a race in NASCAR’s highest level.

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