



Our Town, Our Theatre

REVIVING A LANDMARK: THE DAW THEATRE RETURNS

Located in Tappahannock's historic district, The DAW Theatre opened in 1939 and quickly became a cultural hub, offering films, live performances, and community events. After surviving a major fire in 1949 and undergoing a full renovation in 1982, it served the community until closing in the late 1990s after showing *Titanic*. Though gutted for a planned revival, the theatre sat dormant—until now.

A new vision is bringing The DAW Theatre back to life, blending its Art Deco charm with modern amenities.

152 PRINCE STREET
TAPPAHANNOCK, VA 22560

THEDAWFOUNDATION.ORG

HELP US LIGHT UP THE STAGE

This is more than a renovation. It's a revival. The goal: to reopen as a vibrant venue for movies, live theatre, and entertainment, honoring its legacy while inspiring a new generation.





A Brief History of The DAW Theatre & The DAW Foundation

- **February 1939** - Grand Opening: The DAW Theatre originally opened. The opening film was "Kentucky." The Theatre was named for its owners E.M. Doar, H.S. Atkinson, and R.B. Wallace.
- **1940s** - A Stage for More Than Movies: While programming in a small-town theater was never easy, The DAW went above and beyond. It brought in the latest films soon after release, hosted live performances, and served the community with events like fashion shows, health screenings, and women's club meetings. In the 1940s, stage shows, and vaudeville acts were especially popular, adding to the theater's vibrant offerings.
- **August 27, 1949 - Fire, Resilience, and Renewal:** Tragedy struck on August 27, 1949, when a fire—believed to have started during a live radio performance—nearly destroyed the theater.
- **November 16, 1949:** But the community rallied, and The DAW was rebuilt and reopened in just under three months, welcoming audiences back.
- **1950s - Cool Comfort:** In the 1950s, air conditioning was added—a luxury at the time—and proudly advertised in local newspapers.
- **1970s - Big Premieres:** The DAW continued to evolve, and in the 1970s, it made history again as the first small-town theater in Virginia to screen "The Godfather" and "Jaws."
- **1982:** After a full renovation in 1982, The DAW served as Tappahannock's go-to movie theater until the late 1990s.
- **1990s:** The DAW's doors were shut permanently following the showing of "Titanic."
- **Today:** The DAW Foundation is breathing new life into this beloved landmark. With community support and a vision for the future, the theater is being restored—not just as a building, but as a beacon of culture, creativity, and connection for generations to come.

Ways to Give to the DAW Theatre

Help Raise the Curtain— One Stage at A TIME

A new campaign has launched to guide our community through the exciting journey of restoring the DAW Theatre. With a clear roadmap and visual updates, supporters can see exactly what's been done and what's still ahead. Transparency is at the heart of this effort—every dollar donated is used purposefully to move the project forward.

Donors can choose one of **FOUR WAYS** to donate to the DAW Theatre.

Choose a specific stage or project, give a personalized gift, or contribute to the "Keeping the Lights On" Annual Fund, helping ensure the theatre's future shines bright.

A. OUR TOWN, OUR THEATRE CAMPAIGN. Help us raise the curtain, one stage at time.

B. "KEEPING THE LIGHTS ON" ANNUAL FUND

C. PLEDGE YOUR SUPPORT to the DAW Theater.

D. PERSONALIZED WAYS TO GIVE. immortalize a loved one or a business by giving a personalized and permanent gift that will forever remain at The DAW. *Details on the back!*

JOIN US!

BE PART OF THE STORY.
HELP US BRING THE DAW
THEATRE BACK!

A. OUR TOWN, OUR THEATRE CAMPAIGN

STAGE 1: Feasibility Study

COST \$50K

Completed!

A professional study confirmed what our community hoped: restoring the DAW Theatre is both possible and sustainable. It laid out the theatre's potential for economic impact, cultural value, and long-term success—giving us the green light to move forward.

STAGE 2: Façade & Marquee Restoration

COST \$30K

Completed!

The theatre's face has been renewed! The exterior façade is restored, and a new glowing marquee now lights up Main Street. This visible transformation signaled the DAW's revival to the community and built excitement for what's ahead.

STAGE 3: Historic Designation

COST \$15K

Completed!

The DAW is now officially recognized by the National Park Service on the National Register of Historic Places and the Virginia Register of Historic Places—the only commercial building in Essex County with this honor. Beyond prestige, this designation opens access to significant funding in state and federal tax credits.

STAGE 4: Getting Ready for the Spotlight

TOTAL COST \$3.3M

In Progress

Now it's time for our community to step up and make a difference! We're working to raise \$1M locally to show that residents truly believe in this project. Hitting this goal will unlock additional funding from state and federal programs, including historic tax credits and grants — multiplying the impact of every \$1 we raise. Lights, Camera, ACTION! Renovations, the heavy lifting begins—restoring the DAW from the inside out:

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| • Architecture, Engineering, & Tax Consulting | Cost \$335K |
| • Demo & General Construction | Cost \$679K |
| • HVAC, Plumbing, Electrical, Fire | Cost \$1.1M |
| • Finishing, Furniture & Equipment | Cost \$1.1M |

STAGE 5: Grand Opening Celebrations!



B. “KEEPING THE LIGHTS ON” ANNUAL FUND

By donating to the Annual Fund, supporters play a vital role in sustaining the day-to-day operations of The DAW Theatre. Unlike capital campaigns that focus on major renovations, the Annual Fund supports ongoing needs such as staffing, utilities, programming, maintenance, and community outreach. These contributions are especially important for nonprofit organizations, helping ensure stability and flexibility throughout the year.

C. PLEDGING YOUR SUPPORT

Establishing Long-term Support. Many donors prefer to dedicate their donations to good causes for the long haul. By pledging they can spend less but pay over time while making a large difference to the DAW.

Participating in Matching Gift Programs. Matching gift programs pledge to match contributions by employees or members through the corporation or another entity. By putting the money out there, they encourage people to give relatively more if they pledge at that level and they know that their gift is going to double or get matched.

Supporting a Cause Through Installments. For example, donors may commit to paying \$1,000 over a year in monthly payments, rather than a lump sum upfront. They can plan their finances better, and still give meaningful support to the nonprofit.

D. PERSONALIZED WAYS TO GIVE

Immortalize your business or a person

The DAW invites the community, businesses, and supporters to contribute to the transformation of this historic landmark, with eight unique ways to donate—offering flexibility and accessibility for all levels of giving.



TAKE YOUR SEAT..... **Cost \$5K**

Honor a family member, loved one, colleague or friend with an engraved brass plaque on a state-of-the-art theatre seat.



DATE NIGHT **Cost \$10K**

Profess your love by honoring your sweetheart by getting your names embossed on a brass plaque on a beautiful loveseat in the first or second row of the balcony.



NAME IN LIGHTS..... **Cost \$25K**

Ever imagined your name shining in a place that matters? With your generous donation to the restoration of The DAW Theatre, your name can be proudly displayed on our beautifully illuminated WALL OF FAME in the newly restored lobby.



INTERMISSION..... **Cost \$50K**

If you're looking for a "starring roll" at The DAW Theatre, this is your chance! Receive your name on a plaque in both the men's and women's, a spot where everyone is willing to wait in line. **ONLY ONE AVAILABLE**



SNACK TIME **Cost \$50K**

Get your popcorn! Peanuts! Candy! What's a show without your name on it? Your name will be embossed on a plaque behind the counter. This one is a "sweet" deal! **ONLY ONE AVAILABLE!**



GET YOUR TICKETS..... **Cost \$50K**

Everyone needs a ticket to get into The DAW Theatre, which means everyone will see your name on a brass engraved plaque hanging over the ticket booth. **ONLY ONE AVAILABLE**



SHOWING NOW **Cost \$50K**

Play a commanding role whenever a movie, musical act, play or entertainer takes the state at The DAW Theatre. Your name will be displayed on a plaque over one of the two display cases under the theatre's marquee. **ONLY TWO AVAILABLE**



LEADING STAR **Cost \$100K**

As a Leading Star in the restoration of The DAW Theatre, your name will be forever embossed in the Hollywood Walk-of-Fame-style star on our new sidewalk of Fame just outside the theatre doors.

The DAW Theatre Foundation is a 501(c)3 non-profit organization. Your contributions will enable us to support our mission and reopen The DAW Theatre. Thanks to The DAW Theatre Feasibility Study prepared by Gerdorn Management Group, LLC, The DAW Theatre Foundation has a roadmap to guide the construction, revitalization, development of programming and launch of a renewed theatre operation.



For more information, contact The DAW Theatre Foundation at theDAWTheatre@gmail.com