

ELKIN, N.C. — After a four-year restoration, The Reeves Theater in downtown Elkin is now open as a music venue and cafe. The theater's grand reopening occurred in late December.

Live Americana music is the venue's primary focus with reserved seating for 252 people. Concerts take place Friday and Saturday evenings, and future plans include Thursday shows.

The Reeves originally opened in downtown Elkin as a 700-seat movie theater in 1941. The stately art deco theater evolved into the Elk Twin and operated until 1994, at which point it was shuttered for nearly a quarter century and fell into disrepair.

Hope arrived in 2013 when a new set of owners — Debbie Carson, Chris Groner and Erik Dahlager — purchased the property from the Tri-County Citizens Foundation.

"It was a landmark that had sat empty for so long," Carson says. "It was a shame to see this central structure in downtown Elkin vacant. We had toyed around with the idea of a music venue, so when we heard it was going to be for sale, we jumped on it."

The restored Reeves Theater grabs attention on Elkin's West Main Street. A new vertical sign harkens back to the theater's art deco beginnings and pairs well with the original curved, blue panels that were refurbished and reinstalled on the brick exterior.

Inside, the original tile floor welcomes visitors into the lobby cafe, which includes bistro tables and a bar serving local wine and beer. Chef Leanna Freeman, a Surry County native, oversees the farm-to-table cafe that is open Monday through Saturday.

When the current owners purchased The Reeves, little remained of the interior. A hole in the concrete floor marked where the stage once stood. They built a new stage with a state-of-the-art performance surface made of recycled rubber. Dahlager constructed the stage front and theater boxes using stucco on concrete block. The material reflects the curvature of the original design.

Wide aisles and a gentle sloping floor provide comfort for all guests and accessibility for those with limited mobility. The theater also has the ability to show movies and host private events.

"It's been fun to see it take shape," Carson says. "We hope it will be a catalyst for activity and economic development on this end of Main Street."

For more about The Reeves Theater, including tickets to upcoming shows and a cafe menu, go to www.reevestheater.com or call (336) 258-8240.

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