

SANDUSKY — Traditionally, rock beats paper.

But — thanks to a restoration project that honors Sandusky's rich manufacturing history — in this case, cardboard paper triumphs over masonry rock.

Ongoing repair work at downtown's Chesapeake Lofts involves uncovering a previously obstructed sign, spelling out "The Hinde & Dauch Paper Co.," on the building's apex looking out toward West Shoreline Drive.

Mike Meyer, a lofts resident and a condominium owners association representative, provided some additional details:

Why now: "The Shoreline Drive construction project, (an \$8.8 million street overhaul project, which included) the burial of the overhead utility lines, has provided access and the opportunity to restore the deteriorating upper wall of the Shoreline Drive facade of the Chesapeake Lofts building. The upper parapet wall also includes the original 100-year-old owner signage 'Hinde and Dauch Paper Co.' and other decorative features."

How it happened: "The project involves removal of a latex foam, which was installed in the 1990s to prevent deterioration of the building facade, followed by repair of masonry joints and restoration of the original signage and decorative features."

When it occurred: "Work on this project started on April 28 and is expected to be completed by the end of this month, in time for the opening of the new Shoreline Drive."

What it means: "We are pleased to report that the project is going well. This project will result in a significant enhancement to the appearance and structural integrity of an important historic property."

The project's cost, about \$32,000, received an \$8,000 subsidy coming from a city grant. Tom Horsman, the city's assistant planner, who oversaw and backed this grant application, loves the new retro look. "The Chesapeake Lofts building is one of the most notable, historic landmarks in downtown Sandusky," Horsman said. "Although just a small piece of the overall project, the restoration of the old Hinde & Dauch Paper Co. nameplate on the building reveals a piece of history that had been covered up for decades," he added. "It's a nice homage to a company that played an important role in the history of Sandusky"

History lesson: The Hinde & Dauch Paper Co.

The massive three-story brown brick building to the west of the Jackson Street Pier is now the Chesapeake Lofts, home to luxury condominiums offering a splendid view of Sandusky Bay.

In its previous life, a portion of the building housed shops and the famous Norman Hall. Later it was a manufacturing facility for corrugated paper boxes and other products.

In 1886, first-generation local farmers James J. Hinde and Jacob J. Dauch saw an opportunity to enter the paper-making business when a customer for their baled straw went bankrupt.

The Hinde and Dauch Paper Co., which no longer exists, rented the building in 1897. The building and neighboring buildings were incorporated into a five-story building, ending its days as a performance hall.

Hinde proved to be an excellent businessperson, developing a process to manufacture corrugated cardboard packaging materials. At the time, companies faced a major challenge in shipping more fragile goods. Hinde's new packaging helped to solve this problem.

The company grew quickly and became very successful.

Hinde left the company in 1910 to pursue other interests, but Dauch continued to run the company and, in 1918, centralized the company's manufacturing in the building you see here today.

Dauch died unexpectedly on Aug. 16, 1918, in an automobile accident. The land east of the building was sold by his heirs to the city of Sandusky and today is the location of the Jackson Street Pier.

In 1953, Hinde and Dauch merged with the West Virginia Pulp and Paper Co. to form the Westvaco Corp. The new company operated the facility until 1981 when it was eventually closed and was ultimately donated to the city of Sandusky. Source: Erie County, Ohio, History

