

Pioneer Award

**ED HELMSTEAD
2024**



Ed Helmstead is Louisville's own sign painter. Ed's signs can be found up and down Main and Front Streets and throughout Louisville, enhancing the special feeling of the downtown area. His work can be seen on the Louisville Grain Elevator, Moxie Bread, the Louisville Historical Museum, and many other restaurants and businesses.

Ed was born in Brooklyn and grew up in New Jersey. He didn't particularly like art in high school although he managed to win first prize in his school's art show with what he now says was a hurried-up piece of work. While Ed never had any formal art training and insists he is not an artist, art is perhaps the best word to describe the unique skills he brings to his efforts.

Using both old time techniques and more modern technology, Ed works to create original signs that grab attention and convey within 2-3 seconds the nature of the subject's business. His signs incorporate plain lettering that pops, sometimes with a colorful background, as well as wood carving, gold leaf and frosted crystal. Ed's original signs are denoted by a small "Eddidit" signature along with the date.

Ed Helmstead's artful eye and hand-painted touch has contributed to the character of the downtown Louisville area for which we can all be thankful.