

Superman History

Metropolis, a small town located on the Ohio River at the southern tip of Illinois, was founded in 1838. It is the only Metropolis listed in the postal zip code directory.

In the early 1970s, Robert Westerfield moved to Metropolis from Owenboro, Ky. and was surprised that the town did not have a formal association with Superman. Mr. Westerfield (now deceased) was the creative force behind the movement to officially adopt Superman as the town's famous son.

Officially declared by Illinois House of Representatives Resolution Number 572, Metropolis, Illinois became the Hometown of Superman on June 9, 1972. The Metropolis News local newspaper changed its name to the Metropolis Planet. Investors were solicited, funds were raised and the "Amazing World of Superman" museum was built in 1973. Due to a gasoline shortage, the lengthy delay in the completion of Interstate 24 and other factors, the museum was closed one year later. The Superman association was abandoned until 1979 when the first Superman movie made its debut. That is when the idea for the Superman Celebration was born.

The Superman Celebration started similar to many small-town festivals - except that this one included a mock bank robbery and Superman appeared to save the day. Another unique element was that a special postal stamp cancellation became available only in Metropolis, IL 62960. These events have continued over the years, and the Celebration has grown to include many more events such as the Super Dog contest, Super Hero costume contests, strong man competitions, Little Miss Supergirl pageant and many more.

In 1986, a small group of people raised approximately \$1000 to have a seven-foot fiberglass Superman built and placed on Superman Square. A "funeral" service was held at this statue when Superman died in the comic book series. But thankfully, Superman returned to life on the comic book pages and remains a life-force for tourism in Metropolis. In 1991 alone, the guest register at the Metropolis Chamber of Commerce included signatures representing 35 states as well as Canada, Norway, Australia, Ireland, England and Scotland. Then in 1993, over \$100,000 was raised and a 15-foot bronze Superman Statue was unveiled.

Superman fans from all over the world flock to Metropolis each June for the annual Superman Celebration. Curious visitors stop by year round to see the statue, the Super Museum, the Metropolis Planet and other unique sites. Plans are underway to build a Lois Lane statue very soon. Noel Neil portrayed Lois Lane in television and movies and is a regular celebrity guest of the celebration. Comic book artists as well as actors and actresses connected with Superman film and television visit the small "Metropolis" (population 6,500) each year.

[Click here for more information about the Superman Celebration.](#)