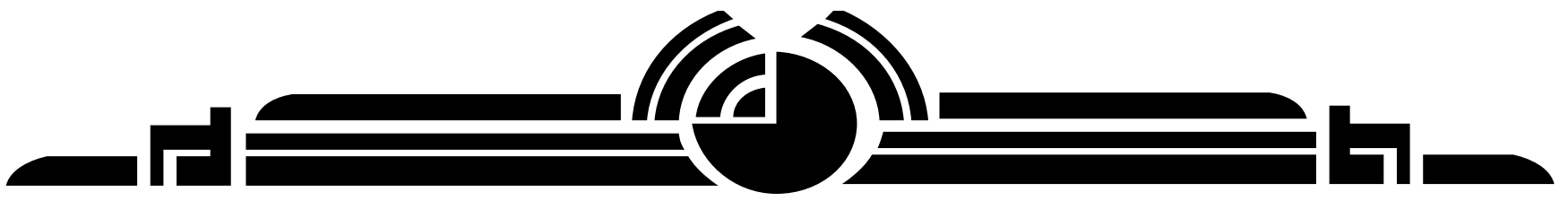


# Squirrel Hill Historical Society



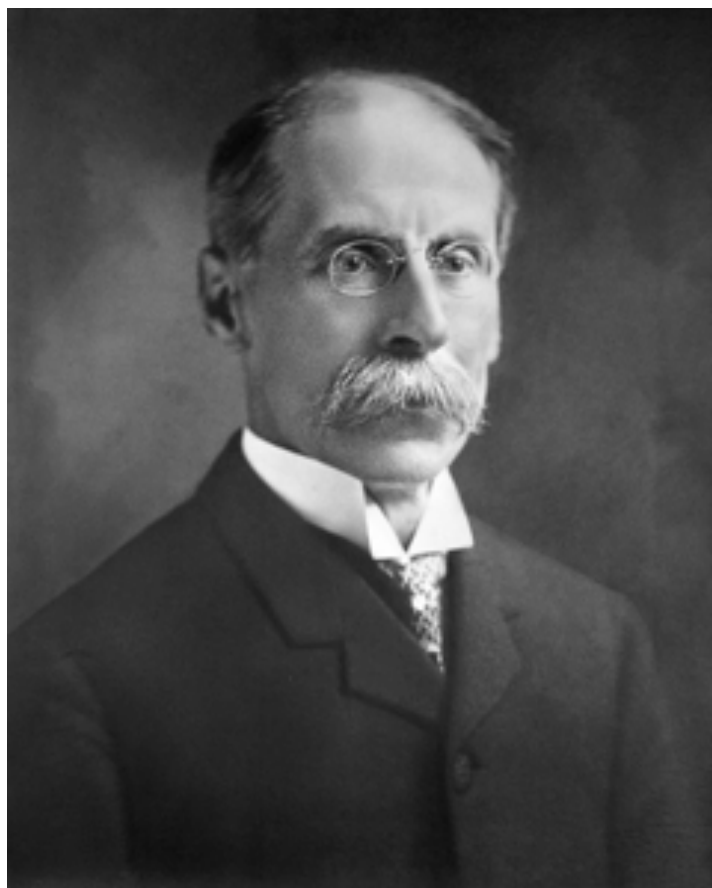
## Pittsburgh's Mayors from Squirrel Hill



March 18, 2016, marks the Bicentennial of the signing of the City of Pittsburgh incorporation papers, which gave citizens voting rights, created a mechanism for self-governance, and gave Pittsburgh legal standing with the United States. Since then, Pittsburgh has had 60 mayors. This display features Pittsburgh's four mayors from Squirrel Hill—all Democrats.

The Pittsburgh Bicentennial is a yearlong celebration of the official 200th anniversary of the incorporation of Pittsburgh as a city, giving citizens the right to vote and the opportunity for self-governance. Mayor William Peduto formed the Pittsburgh Bicentennial Commission to recognize and celebrate the anniversary with unique and collaborative partnerships. Over 200 organizations, companies, nonprofits and individuals are participating in the yearlong celebration. For more information log onto [www.PGH200.com](http://www.PGH200.com) or contact Holly Bulvony at 412-471- 4160.

# George Wilkins Guthrie: Mayors Ran in His Family



The 42nd mayor, and the first to live in Squirrel Hill, was **George W. Guthrie** (1848–1917), who was elected in 1906 and served until 1909. He lived on an estate named Overbridge along Woodland Road. Guthrie possessed an impressive political pedigree. His father, **John B. Guthrie**, was Pittsburgh’s 18th mayor, serving from 1851 to 1853. His mother, Catherine Murray Guthrie, was the daughter of **Magnus**

**M. Murray**, who served as Pittsburgh’s fourth mayor from 1828-1830 and its sixth mayor from 1831-1832.

Guthrie was born in Pittsburgh and graduated from the Western University of Pennsylvania, which later became the University of Pittsburgh. In 1866 he obtained his law degree from Columbian (later George Washington) University in Washington, D.C. He became a member of the bar in both Washington and Allegheny County and moved back to Pittsburgh to practice law.

In addition to practicing law, Guthrie held many other positions, including vice-president and trustee of Dollar Savings Bank, trustee of the University of Pittsburgh, board member of the Pittsburgh Chamber of Commerce, and board member of the Kingsley House Association. He was one of the original incorporators of Children’s Hospital.

The information on the Pittsburgh mayors from Squirrel Hill was provided by Squirrel Hill researcher and SHHS member Wayne Bossinger, whose intensively researched articles appear regularly in the SHHS Newsletter, which goes out to SHHS members every month. Layout and additional information was provided by Helen Wilson.

# More About Mayor Guthrie

**George Guthrie** came into office as a Democratic “reform” mayor, determined to eliminate the widespread government corruption that existed at that time. People who knew Guthrie described him as a man of “very great honesty and integrity” and a “champion of decency” who “stood resolutely” for “clean politics.” U.S. Attorney E. Lowry Humes said he never met anyone “who adhered more tenaciously to his ideals than George W. Guthrie.”

Guthrie’s election in 1906 was described by the Post-Gazette as a vicious battle “between the political bosses of all parties, the millionaires and big corporations on one side and the good citizens of all parties on the other.” After Guthrie was elected, the Post-Gazette expressed its approval in an editorial titled “A City Redeemed.”

Once in office, Guthrie lived up to his reputation by refusing to make deals and by treating employees fairly regardless of their political affiliations. He also pushed for election reform at the state level. One of his accomplishments while in office was helping craft legislation leading to the merger of the City of Pittsburgh and Allegheny City. The merger was highly controversial at the time. If time in office would have permitted, he would have gone much further, since he advocated merging most of the municipalities in Allegheny County into the City of Pittsburgh.

Guthrie is also credited with significantly reducing a typhoid fever epidemic that had plagued the city for over 30 years. After creating a committee of experts to study the problem, he implemented a citywide water filtration system to reduce transmission of the disease.

After his term ended, he was appointed as United States Ambassador to Japan by President Woodrow Wilson. One official said that “no ambassador was more genuinely liked by the people of the government to which he was accredited than was Ambassador Guthrie by the Japanese.”

Guthrie died in 1917 in Tokyo, Japan, and was buried in Allegheny Cemetery.



George Guthrie in Japan, 1915



# Richard S. Caliguiri: Master Conciliator

**Richard S. Caliguiri** (1931–1988) was the 55th mayor of the City of Pittsburgh, serving from 1977-1988. He grew up in Greenfield, the son of a milkman, and graduated from Taylor Allderdice High School in 1950. He began to work for the city in 1956 as a laborer in the Parks Department. After working his way up to supervisor, he became an assistant executive secretary to Mayor Joseph Barr in 1968 and then was appointed as director of the Parks Department in 1969. The next year he was appointed to fill a vacancy on City Council. In 1971, when the Democratic Party endorsed another candidate for the full term, he made the decision to run as an independent candidate and won.



After being elected president of City Council on March 14, 1977, he automatically became interim mayor on April 11, 1977, when then-mayor Pete Flaherty left to become the U.S. Deputy Attorney General in President Jimmy Carter’s administration. In the 1977 mayoral election, Caliguiri again did not get the endorsement but ran again as an independent candidate and won. He was re-elected in 1981 and 1985 as the Democratic Party candidate. Many will remember the large banner in front of the family home along a curve on Beechwood Boulevard that proclaimed that this was “Caliguiri Country.” Indeed it was. He had broad support in the neighborhood, and his low-key, nonconfrontational style made him one of Pittsburgh’s most popular mayors ever.

The period when Caliguiri served was a difficult one for the city. The region was undergoing a painful economic downturn, with widespread factory closings, loss of downtown corporate headquarters, soaring unemployment and huge population loss. With little control over the factors causing the downturn, Caliguiri used every tool available to rally the city. He was known as a “master conciliator” who worked to bring people and resources together to achieve his goals. This required creative planning due to the financial realities of the time.

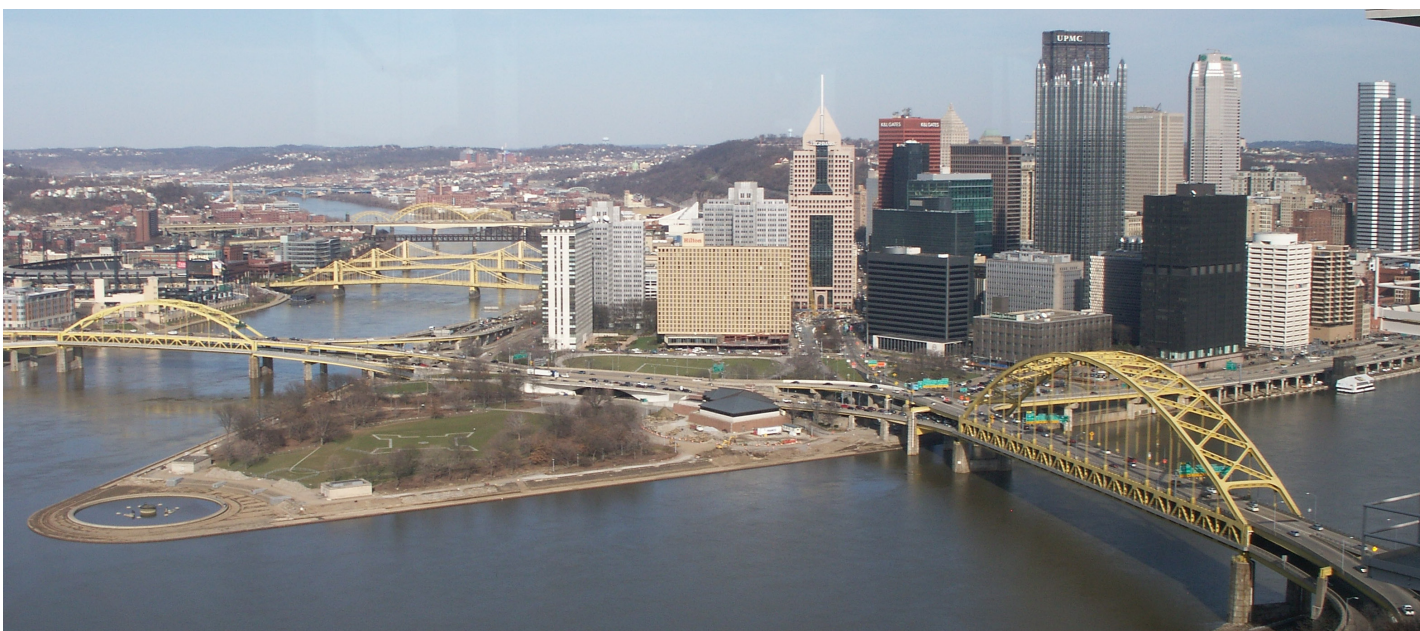
# More About Mayor Caliguiri

Caliguiri's greatest accomplishment was "Renaissance II," an urban renewal effort that dramatically reshaped the downtown skyline, transformed by the addition of One Oxford Center, PPG Place, One Mellon Center, Fifth Avenue Place, the Vista International Hotel, Liberty Center and the CNG Tower.

Mayor Caliguiri is also credited with keeping the Pittsburgh Pirates from leaving the city. In 1984, the John Galbraith family put the team up for sale. After initial efforts to find an owner failed, Caliguiri put together a public-private partnership that raised \$45 million to buy the team. He developed a plan to sell Three Rivers Stadium to a private investor to raise about half that amount but later issued bonds to cover the city's share of the cost.

Caliguiri helped create Strategy 21, a series of economic incentives that helped convert the J.&L mill site along Second Avenue into a technology center. He was also behind the creation of a cultural district downtown, redevelopment of Station Square and the city's annual Great Race. All of the hard work paid off in February 1985 when the city was ranked as America's #1 most livable city in Rand McNally's *Places Rated Almanac*. In 1987, Caliguiri was named one of the county's 20 best mayors by *U.S. News and World Report* magazine.

Then, later in 1987, Caliguiri was diagnosed with amyloidosis, a rare, incurable disease where the body deposits a protein called amyloid in the heart and other vital organs. He continued to work a full schedule as mayor while undergoing medical treatments. He died on May 6, 1988—after putting in a full day in the office—and was buried in Calvary Cemetery in Hazelwood. As a tribute to his popularity and accomplishments, a statue of him was placed on the steps of the City-County Building in 1990.





# Pittsburgh's Bicentennial



this logo was seen a lot around town in 2016. It is the logo for Pittsburgh's Bicentennial. "Wait a minute," you might be thinking, "didn't Pittsburgh celebrated its bicentennial a few years ago?" Yes, but that was a different bicentennial. The city has had several to celebrate.

Pittsburgh was named in **1758** by General John Forbes when his army captured Fort Duquesne from the French.

In **1794**, the first civilian government was formed, and Pittsburgh became a borough with a Chief Burgess elected by the council.

Pittsburgh was incorporated as a city on **March 18, 1816**. The first of its mayors was Ebenezer Denny, and there have been 59 more, with Bill Peduto being the 60th.

A yearlong celebration with a number of events was scheduled to commemorate this major milestone in the city's history. One of the biggest took place on Saturday, July 9, when the city honored the descendants of all of Pittsburgh's mayors. Families and descendants of the mayors were invited to take part in the event. The role that each mayor played in the advancement of Pittsburgh was acknowledged, and a parade and fireworks capped off Pittsburgh's mayoral festivities.

# Sophie Masloff: First Woman to be Mayor

As president of City Council, **Sophie Masloff** (1917–2014) became Pittsburgh's 56th mayor on an interim basis following Richard Caliguiri's death in 1988. Born in Pittsburgh's Hill District to Jennie and Louis Friedman, two Jewish immigrants from Romania, she was the first woman to become mayor of the city, serving from 1988-1994.



Life was not always easy for Masloff. Her father died when she was only three years old, and she was raised by her mother, who spoke only Yiddish her entire life, and who had to work in a factory rolling cigars to support the family. In her own words, she was “a survivor.”

After graduating from Fifth Avenue High School in 1935, Masloff began doing volunteer work for the Democratic Party. Soon she began working for the County Commissioner's office and from there moved to the Court of Common Pleas, where she worked for more than 30 years as a tipstaff, investigator and assistant chief clerk.

Following the resignation of city councilperson Amy Ballinger in 1976, Sophie was nominated by the Democratic executive committee to fill the seat and easily won in a special election. One of her first tasks was serving as chairwoman of a committee to bring cable television to the city. She won reelection to council in 1977, 1981 and 1985. During that time, she and her husband lived on Beechwood Boulevard in Greenfield until moving to Maxon Towers in Squirrel Hill in 1986.

In early 1988, her fellow council members elected her president of Pittsburgh city council. At that time it was known that Mayor Caliguiri was suffering from an incurable disease, and if he died in office, the president of council would automatically become mayor.

# More About Mayor Masloff

Sophie Masloff was sworn into office after Mayor Caliguiri died on May 6, 1988. At first intimidated by the office she inherited, she did as she had done in the past and rose to the occasion, surprising many with the quality of her work and her toughness. She had the savvy to surround herself with skilled advisors and set out to do what was best for the city, as she had always done. Described as a kind, honest and straightforward person, her grandmotherly image instantly appealed to residents and nonresidents alike. Known for her malapropisms and raspy voice, she skillfully played along with the inevitable jokes.

Some surmised that at age 70 Masloff would be a caretaker mayor and not seek the position permanently. They were wrong. Masloff ran for and was elected mayor in 1989. Much of her term was spent dealing with the city's ongoing economic problems. Costs were cut through privatizing assets like Phipps Conservatory, the National Aviary, the Pittsburgh Zoo and the Schenley Park Golf Course.

Masloff also raised eyebrows by suggesting that the Pittsburgh Pirates and Pittsburgh Steelers should have separate stadiums, but she had the last laugh when her vision was actually carried out a number of years later. In honor of her 90th birthday, a street near PNC Park was named Sophie Masloff Way in 2007.

Sophie died on August 17, 2014, at the age of 96 and was buried in New Light Cemetery in Etna.



2008



# Bob O'Connor: The People's Mayor



**Bob O'Connor** (1944–2006), the city's 58th mayor, was born in Greenfield and graduated from Taylor Allderdice High School in 1962. After graduation he took a job at the Jones & Laughlin steel mill on the South Side, where he worked for six years. Seeing little long-term future there, he accepted an offer to help manage a Roy Rogers restaurant owned by his in-laws. The family added several more stores before selling them to Beaver

County businessman Lou Pappan in 1972. Pappan retained O'Connor to manage his growing business and proved to be a very influential figure in his professional development. He provided the support and training O'Connor needed to excel, eventually promoting him to executive vice-president overseeing 18 locations.

After more than 20 years in the food industry, O'Connor saw a new opportunity in 1991. The incumbent District 5 councilperson, Michael Coyne, was vacating the position to run for Allegheny County Prothonotary, leaving the seat up for grabs. Mobilizing a small army of volunteers, O'Connor swept to victory in a four-way race.

Following the victory, O'Connor began a tradition by standing along a key entrance into his district holding a large sign that said "Thank you." Cars tooted and blew their horns as he made eye contact, waved and smiled at the drivers and passengers. It was a heartfelt thank you.

# More About Mayor O'Connor

Bob O'Connor was re-elected to Pittsburgh city council in 1995 and 1999 and served four years as its president. After running unsuccessfully for mayor in the Democratic primary against Tom Murphy in 1997 and 2001, he ran again in 2005 and won. He was sworn in as mayor on January 3, 2006. More so than any other recent mayor, O'Connor immersed himself in the local community at the grassroots level. During his frequent walks through the neighborhoods, he stopped to talk to and listen to all types of residents. It did not matter if they were business owners, blue- or white-collar workers, retirees, unemployed people, students or those from any other walk of life. They had his ear, and he acted on their concerns. In particular, he recognized the importance of youth development and had long been active in local baseball, soccer and other sports leagues, either as a coach or avid supporter. Many called him "The People's Mayor."

O'Connor had little tolerance for bureaucracy and would intervene directly with city staff if he sensed an unnecessary delay. One of his early initiatives was the "Redd-Up Pittsburgh" program, an effort to clean up blight in the neighborhoods. A division was set up and equipped in Public Works to act as a "strike team" to target specific problems, coordinating its efforts with neighborhood volunteers or other departments. The intent was to respond as quickly as possible to counter the perception of the city being a slow-to-respond bureaucracy.

Unfortunately, O'Connor did not have time to carry out many of his plans. After just seven months in office, he was diagnosed with primary central nervous system lymphoma, a type of brain cancer. He died on September 1, 2006, at the age of 61 and was buried in Calvary Cemetery in Hazelwood.

O'Connor was a long-time resident on Phillips Avenue, where he lived with his wife, Judy Levine O'Connor. They raised three children: Heidy, Terry (a Roman Catholic priest), and Corey, who is currently the city councilperson representing District 5, which includes Squirrel Hill, his father's old position. In 2007, the Schenley Park golf course was renamed the "Bob O'Connor Golf Course at Schenley Park" in his honor.





# What About Mayor Murray?

Some books and articles about Pittsburgh's street names claim Murray Avenue is named for the fourth and sixth mayor of Pittsburgh, **Magnus Murray**. Was it? Murray was mayor from 1828-30 and from 1831-32, long before Squirrel Hill became part of Pittsburgh in 1868. And Murray Avenue itself didn't exist until the late 1800s, when electric trolleys came to Squirrel Hill.

At that time Pittsburgh was developing rapidly because of the trolleys, and new roads were being constructed everywhere. The city acknowledged its debt to the statesmen, soldiers, politicians, judges, early settlers and other noted figures who had helped the city develop by naming streets after them. All four of Pittsburgh's first mayors have streets named for them.

Magnus Murray's son, James Murray, had an estate in the northern part of Squirrel Hill called Murray Hill, which gave Murray Hill Avenue its name. This connection is probably why the name Murray Avenue was given to one of Squirrel Hill's main roads.

**Magnus M. Murray** was born in Philadelphia in 1787. He enrolled in the University of Pennsylvania at the age of 12, graduated at 15 and received a master's degree three years later.

Murray was elected mayor in 1828. As mayor, he supported public improvements and humane causes. Shortly after he took office, the city completed its first waterworks, but Murray opposed a move to construct underground sewers for fear they would freeze and become useless in winter. Murray also promoted better trade relations with Philadelphia after the western end of the Pennsylvania Canal was completed. Under his leadership, Pittsburgh provided free smallpox vaccinations for the poor.

Murray died in 1838 at the age of 50.

