

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

by Andrew E. Masich
President & CEO



Pittsburgh Bicentennial

On November 25, 1758, while observing the smoldering ruins of Fort Duquesne, George Washington and General John Forbes looked out over the Forks of the Ohio. As the two men surveyed the strategic location at the confluence of three rivers, Washington turned to Forbes: "What are we going to call this place?" Forbes thought for a minute and then replied in his Scottish brogue, "Pittsburgh!," pronounced like Edinburgh, in honor of British Secretary of State William Pitt.

The pre-Colonial outpost grew until, nearly 60 years after Washington and Forbes' visit, the City of Pittsburgh officially incorporated in 1816.

Over the next 200 years, the city rebounded from the Great Fire of 1845; had its "h" removed by the Geographic Names Board in 1890, then added back in 1911 after residents protested; worked day and night to become the "Arsenal of the Union" during the Civil War and the "Arsenal of Democracy" during WWII; then rolled up its sleeves to clean the city during Renaissance I. The city evolved from a leader in glass, iron, aluminum, and steel to reinvent itself as the home of world-class education, medicine, technology, and culture.

To help celebrate 200 years of innovation, a can-do spirit, and future-focused thinking, Mayor Bill Peduto asked me to serve as

chairman of the recently launched Pittsburgh Bicentennial Commission (1816-2016).

Comprised of leaders from more than 200 local organizations, the Pittsburgh Bicentennial offers an opportunity for the city and region to celebrate all that makes Pittsburgh extraordinary and visionary, while connecting the past and the future. The Bicentennial provides an opportunity to share what is best about our city and welcome visitors from around the world who are interested in visiting, living, playing, and working here.



Andy Masich and current Pittsburgh Mayor Bill Peduto collaborated to save artifacts after the closing of the Macy's (former Kaufmann's) department store.
Photo by Rachellynn Schoon.



Hundreds of events will take place in 2016, including an Incorporation Day celebration in March, a Bicentennial Bash at the Point and the History Center in July, and a special Light Up Night in November, as Pittsburgh hosts hundreds of leaders from throughout the world for the National League of Cities conference.

Pittsburgh will also shine the spotlight on its more than 600 bridges as we bridge the past and the future of America's "Most Livable City."