Records of the Mayor Tom Murphy Administration

The collections of the Library & Archives are filled with many curious and fascinating books, documents, and photographs. Given that fact, it is often a bit of a dilemma to decide what “treasure” to feature in this column. Many of us have the tendency to define our treasures as the “old stuff,” materials that have become darkened with age and were created generations ago by people who are now gone. But as I think of “treasures” in our collections, the “old stuff” isn’t always what comes to mind.

The guides to the Records of Mayor Murphy Administration have recently been completed, and they contain treasures that will be tapped by researchers for years to come. From 1994–2006, Murphy guided the City of Pittsburgh through a period of community redevelopment, reinvestment, and planning. The records include a broad picture of the many functions of the mayor’s office, everything from daily correspondence and budget creation to special event permits and neighborhood planning. Many important projects, such as the construction of the rails-to-trails, PNC Park, Heinz Field, and the “new” David L. Lawrence Convention Center, were all planned and completed.
during his tenure. These projects have helped change how Pittsburgh is viewed nationally and internationally. Evidence of Murphy’s interest in community organizing and the creation of recreational opportunities in the city are reflected throughout the records in reports, correspondence, and policy documents, which are the basis for many of today’s “greening up” activities in Pittsburgh.

Funding to process and preserve the records of the mayor’s office was provided through an Archives and Records Management Grant from the Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission.

The Library and Archives collects materials related to the history and culture of Western Pennsylvania. The Reading Room, located on the sixth floor of the Heinz History Center, is open Wednesday through Saturday, 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Researchers may wish to visit the Historic Pittsburgh website at http://digital.library.pitt.edu/pittsburgh/ for many useful tools related our collections or search our new catalog site available at www.heinzhistorycenter.org/.

Many Murphy administration projects helped shape Pittsburgh’s role as a “green” city.