



City of Pittsburgh

510 City-County Building
414 Grant Street
Pittsburgh, PA 15219

Text File

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Committee: City Council

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WHEREAS, Stephen Foster is one of Pittsburgh's most celebrated native sons, widely recognized as the father of American music, credited with composing nearly 300 songs, including two official state songs - "My Old Kentucky Home," of Kentucky, and "Old Folks at Home," of Florida, in addition to notable pieces of the Great American Songbook like "Oh! Susanna," "Camptown Races," and "Beautiful Dreamer"; and

WHEREAS, Foster was born on July 4th, 1826 in the Foster family home located at 3600 Penn Avenue, the son of William Barclay Foster, who is credited with planning and developing the community of Lawrenceville, where Foster spent his childhood years; and

WHEREAS, Foster's first song, "Open They Lattice Love," was published in 1844 when Foster was only eighteen years old; and

WHEREAS, Foster spent his early 20's as a bookkeeper, but, after quitting his job in 1850 to pursue writing music fulltime, he established himself as America's first professional songwriter within a year, writing much of his best-known work between 1850 and 1855; and

WHEREAS, many of Foster's songs helped to classify him as an early abolitionist due to his sensitive and empowering portrayal of African Americans in many of his works; and

WHEREAS, Stephen Foster passed away on January 13th, 1864 at the age of 37 as the result of complications due to a fall, after which his remains were brought home to Pittsburgh, where large crowds of people paid their respects to the Father of American Songwriting at Downtown's Trinity Cathedral, where his funeral procession began, ending at his final resting place in the Foster family plot in Section 21 of Lawrenceville's Allegheny Cemetery; and

WHEREAS, even after 150 years, Stephen Foster's grave remains one of Allegheny Cemetery's most visited burial sites, serving as an essential site of pilgrimage for those dedicated to the history of American music; and

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Council of the City of Pittsburgh does hereby commemorate the 150 year anniversary of Stephen Foster's death, further recognizing the rich cultural contributions of one of Lawrenceville's most famous residents; and

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Council of the City of Pittsburgh does hereby declare January 13th, 2014 "**Stephen Foster Day**" in the City of Pittsburgh.