

## Hazelwood History



The site of Pittsburgh's first parklet at Elizabeth and Gloster Streets, which opened in July 1949. In 1869 the City of Pittsburgh annexed Hazelwood as the 23rd Ward. Various industries including iron and steel, railroading, boatbuilding, and river trade provided numerous jobs in this area. In the 1870s Braddock's Field, which connected Hazelwood to the Point in Pittsburgh, was paved and renamed Second Avenue. At its peak in the 1880s the first street car line came through the area. Because of its easy access into the City of Pittsburgh, Second Avenue soon became the main street of Hazelwood. Some of the first buildings still stand, such as the Nixon Building at the corner of Second and Flowers Avenues. Harness shops and blacksmith shops lined the busy thoroughfare.



Hazelwood's named is derived from the hazelnut trees which once covered this area near the Monongahela River. In 1784 John Wood, a prosperous lawyer, built an estate in this area called "Hazel Hill." This name was eventually changed to Hazelwood. In 1861 Mr. B.F. Jones, of the Pittsburgh and Connellsville Railroad and later of Jones and Laughlin, built the first tracks through this area.



Hazelwood School was located at 5000 Second Avenue in the Hazelwood section of Pittsburgh. The school was built in 1872 shortly after the area was annexed to the City of Pittsburgh as the old 23 Ward, and was closed on July 1, 1938.



Gladstone School, located on the corner of Hazelwood Avenue and Gladstone Street, was dedicated on May 7, 1915. The school, designed by architect O.M. Topp, replaced the nearby Hazelwood Elementary School. In 1923 an addition to the structure was completed that included several new classrooms and an auditorium that could accommodate approximately four hundred students. In 1926 a new building was built that was connected to the original structure which contained fourteen classrooms, two playrooms, a swimming pool, and two gymnasiums. Gladstone School is the only building in the entire Pittsburgh public school system that began as an elementary school, changed to a junior high school in 1923, served as a

senior high school in 1958, and became a middle school in 1976.



Burgwin Elementary School, located at 5401 Glenwood Avenue in the Hazelwood and part of the Greenfield section of Pittsburgh, was named for the Burgwin Family and for the first principle at the school. The school opened in 1939 and was still open in 2003.

<http://www.post-gazette.com/stories/opinion/perspectives/first-person-rooted-in-hazelwood-481847/>

**BYLINE:** SYLVIA GODA, Munhall

**SECTION:** EDITORIAL; LETTERS TO THE EDITOR; Pg. B-6

**LENGTH:** 219 words

I read the nostalgic article "Rooted in Hazelwood" (April 21 First Person) and felt a sense of pride. I was one of the group who played tag on the slide at Burgwin playground "until the sun went down."

The article brought back bittersweet memories. I remember a time when there were two grocery stores and eight independent grocers in the town. I remember when there were five drugstores, a five-and-ten and movie theaters.

There hasn't been too much publicity about the positive things in Hazelwood. One person, one generation younger, admitted that it was hard to believe that Hazelwood was ever like it was described in this article. But I experienced it. My friends and I walked to the streetcar stop; it didn't matter what time it was. We walked all over the town, up to the library, to the post office, to the pool, to the grocery store. It was such a simple time.

When I occasionally drive through Hazelwood now, I see that homes on most streets are well-maintained. There's still a sense of pride that's obvious. I am proud of my roots and do what I can to keep in touch with the numerous friends I made in the 50-plus years I lived there.

It seems there is some improvement evident on Second Avenue. Wouldn't it be nice if our politicians contributed time and ideas to restoring a town that has so much history?

[http://www.clpgh.org/exhibit/neighborhoods/hazelwood/haze\\_n4.html](http://www.clpgh.org/exhibit/neighborhoods/hazelwood/haze_n4.html)