

Remember? . . . Danny Conklin Home from Vietnam

Flags decorated almost every home on South Green Road. Even little ones fluttered in the breeze on tree lawns dotting the street in red, white, and blue. Mom, Dad, and friend Pat Thomas waited in front of the Conklin home in eager anticipation. Danny Conklin was coming home!

The occasion was special but bittersweet. Thirteen months earlier, the flag at city hall had waved at half-mast for another Conklin, Danny's brother, Tom. He had died at Quang Tin, the first soldier from South Euclid killed in the Vietnam War.

Petty Officer Thomas Arthur Conklin attended Brush High School and enlisted in the Navy on October 17, 1963. He spent a year as a medic in Philadelphia Naval Hospital and then was sent to Vietnam where he spent 14 months. He came home in October of 1966 and volunteered to go back to Vietnam where they needed medics. He trained at Camp Pendleton, California, and became attached to the Marines. He left home on January 5, 1967.

He wrote home stating that nine out of ten men sent to Vietnam don't come back. His words were

prophetic. On May 26, 1967, while trying to aid a wounded Marine during heavy enemy fire, Tom Conklin was killed. He was only twenty years old.

Pfc. Dan Conklin, a Marine, was at Camp Pendleton awaiting shipping to Vietnam when he received the news of the death of his only brother. They had planned on meeting in Vietnam. Instead, Danny made the identification and escorted his brother's body home.

Danny Conklin, age 19, could have stayed out of combat duty since he was the sole surviving son. He couldn't live with himself and opted to volunteer. He was shipped to Con Thien in the demilitarized zone.

He was almost killed. A concussion grenade landed Danny in the hospital for a month. He would be coming home for a two-week visit before completing his hitch at Camp Pendleton.

City police escorted the honored guest, Danny Conklin, home to a joyous welcome.

A footnote: Arthur Conklin, Tom and Dan's father was a special policeman for the city of South Euclid.

Council passed an ordinance providing for the sale of unneeded land in Quarry Park to the Great Lakes Manufacturing Division of the General Metals Corporation at 4223 Monticello Boulevard for an expanded parking lot.

Parking had also been an on-going issue for the Mayfield Road "downtown" business district. When the state repaved Mayfield



Road, six lanes were whittled down to five with a center two-way left turn lane. When the state began the project in 1966, it had stipulated that all parking on Mayfield Road be banned. After merchants' complaints, the city had convinced the state to temporarily lift the ban until adequate off-street parking could be found. Accidents, though, had increased where the two lanes of traffic on each side had to squeeze into one to avoid the parked cars. Council passed an ordinance prohibiting parking in front of the stores, to become effective in January, 1969.

A proposal to build a new freeway system through the eastern suburbs also stirred up a heated debate. The Hillcrest Mayors Association endorsed a Highland Heights Council resolution proposing that the controversial

I-290 (Clark Freeway) go through Shaker Heights as recommended by the County Engineer. They intended to fight against the extension of the Heights Freeway through seven area suburbs, including South Euclid.

The Seven County Transportation Land Use Study (SCOTS) recommended re-routing the crescent-shaped northern corridor of I-290 through the north end of Cleveland Heights and the Hillcrest communities in order to bypass Shaker Heights and preserve Shaker Lakes. The planned 14-mile long freeway was to skirt the north edge of Cleveland Heights, go through South Euclid, Richmond Heights, and Highland Heights. The plan was promoted as being beneficial to regional shopping centers like Cedar Center, Severance Center, and Richmond Mall. It would have cut through residential and industrial properties.

Preserving land was on the minds of residents and businesses when "Project Pride," the city's annual clean-up campaign, was in force. Target areas for improvement included vacant lots, parking lots, streets, sidewalks, tree lawns, tree trimming, repair of homes and garages, and the razing of old and condemned buildings. The fire department joined in the campaign by making safety inspections of residences to make people aware of the hazards in their homes. Because of these efforts, the city received a Distinguished Achievement Award at the National Cleanest Town Conference.

The Fox Cedar Center Theater opened with a premiere of Walt Disney's comedy-thriller, *Never a Dull Moment*. The Memorial Synagogue won approval to build on Warrensville Center Road at Harwood Road. Residents of the Ammon-Parkside area were to have their

septic systems replaced with sewers, the last section of the city to comply.

Carnivals and fireworks caused sparks to fly at council meetings. Complaints about noise and the safety of fireworks were discussed. At the 1967 Home Days, fireworks, sponsored by the Lions Club, had drawn over 15,000 people to Bexley Park. The fire chief, however, wanted to ban all fireworks and Councilwoman Ruth Bogart asked for an ordinance banning all fireworks in the city. At the time, fireworks were set off by private individuals, not the city fire department, and were deemed unsafe. Fireworks were, thus, not a part of 1968's Home Days celebration. In lieu of fireworks, local businessmen donated door prizes.

Mayor Urban suffered a heart attack while at his full-time job, as General Manager of the Northern Ohio Food Terminal. He ended up spending 40 days in the hospital. Due to his health and a desire to retire after 32 years of public life, he said that he might not seek re-election in 1969.



1969

Top Films: *Midnight Cowboy*, *Butch Cassidy and the Sundance Kid*

Deaths: President Dwight D. Eisenhower, Boris Karloff

Major Events:

- * "The Eagle Has Landed" - Neil Armstrong, age 38, became the first man to walk on the moon. Both he and Col. Edwin E. Aldrin, Jr. landed the lunar module on the moon's surface. Images were transmitted on television to 600 million viewers.
- * Woodstock took place on a 600-acre farm. Over 400,000 gathered to hear Jimi Hendrix, Jefferson Airplane, The Who, and Janis Joplin.
- * Senator Edward M. Kennedy pleaded guilty to leaving the scene of an accident at Chappaquiddick.
- * Cultist Charles Manson caused "helter skelter" in the murder of actress Sharon Tate and others.
- * The My Lai Massacre occurred.
- * Mayor Carl Stokes was re-elected in Cleveland.
- * The Palace Theater, the last operating movie house on Playhouse Square in Cleveland, closed.
- * A burning oil slick on the Cuyahoga River in Cleveland made national headlines.
- * Euclid Beach Amusement Park closed.

What's Hot: John Lennon and Yoko Ono

The year 1969 carried forth the dilemmas of the previous year.

Parking in the business district, on both sides of Mayfield Road, was banned and the ban was enforced. Merchants complained by taking out newspaper ads appealing to customers to support their need for on-the-street parking. They even formed a group called the "Anti-Slum League of South Euclid," fearing a massive loss of business due to the parking ban and competition from Severance Center and Richmond Mall. Police cited the parking ban as the reason for a 20% decline in traffic accidents. To ease tensions, council looked into the feasibility of a new parking lot at the northeast corner of Mayfield and Green roads.

The May-Green fence controversy continued. The Smith family placed conditions on a promise to tear down the fence separating their parking lot from Maymore's. They asked for rezoning of more of their rear lot to general business so that a grocery and a drugstore (possibly a Kroger and a Super-X) could be built. Their plans were for the construction of the stores, additional parking spaces, and the demolition of a paint store and a house sitting in the middle of the lot. They promised to remove the fence when construction began. Their plan was met with opposition.

Locations for the new post office were still being considered. Mayor Urban proposed the construction of a new post office on city-owned property located in the front of Victory Park School. The War Memorial, constructed so it could be moved, would have been relocated to city-owned property on Anderson Road. The proposal would have also provided parking for the troubled May-Green business district merchants.

The I-290 freeway was still in the news. The Northeast Ohio Area Coordinating Agency (NOACA) committee voted to recommend the southern corridor route of the I-290 freeway, threatening the Shaker Lakes but bypassing the Hillcrest neighborhoods. The County Engineer, though, was confident that he would win his fight to use both the north and south corridors for freeways through the eastern suburbs.

Residents continued to be vocal about commercial development, opposing a plan to rezone lots on Ruple Road and Greenvale from office buildings to manufacturing. The zoning, though, was approved for a builder to construct a building to house offices, trucks, and equipment for his construction firm.

On another development front, Rainbow Hospital announced that in two years it would be closing its 100-bed convalescent hospital for children located on Green Road. Patients would be transferred to the new Rainbow Babies and Childrens Hospital, under construction in University Hospitals' medical center. The 14-acre site would be put up for sale.

Other important issues faced the city. South Euclid's broken-down incinerator was phased out. All refuse would be hauled to the East Cleveland transfer station where it would be taken to a landfill. Residents no longer had to separate burnable and non-burnable refuse. Backyard rubbish pickup was replaced by curbside pickup.

Flooding was still a concern after "the worst deluge in 15 years" occurred. The mayor said that in the past 15 years the city had spent about \$1 million on sewer improvements but that millions more would be needed. Overhead plumbing and sump pumps were recom-

mended, with the city having a special fund to take care of the outside work.

Council passed an ordinance banning carnivals, fairs, or festivals within 1,000 feet of buildings if the events included "mechanical amusement devices."

On a related matter, council passed an ordinance forbidding anyone to sell or have in his possession a "toy pistol or gun, slingshot, pea shooter, squib, rocket, or firecracker, Roman candle, fire balloon, or any other kind of fireworks or materials for pyrotechnic display."

Major crime in the city increased during the year, mostly due to two burglary gangs that struck homes and businesses. The perpetrators, one juvenile and one adult gang, were apprehended. Vandalism at the city parks and pools was also on the upswing.

The police department stopped using the county-wide teletype system in favor of the "lightning fast" computer. The new computer terminal in the dispatcher's area received information through the Law Enforcement Automated Data System (LEADS); the main computer was in Columbus. Requested information on a suspect was now at a policeman's fingertips.

Juvenile Court widely expanded the jurisdiction of its Mayfield Road office by serving 19 communities in the Heights-Hillcrest area. In the Municipal Court, Judge Klein established a psychological testing service to try to determine why an offender breaks the law and how he/she can best be rehabilitated. The judge planned to pass out sentences, fines, and lectures accordingly in select cases.

To educate children, a new South Euclid-Lyndhurst Safety Town for pre-schoolers opened at Memorial Junior High. The program was established by six citizen volunteers to teach children about traffic safety. Civic groups pledged \$2,500 to pay for miniature buildings, a real traffic light, and other equipment. Thirty volunteer high school students were the instructors with 296 children enrolled.

African-American students majoring in education were being recruited for teaching positions in the South Euclid-Lyndhurst School System. This search was part of a national pilot program to expand opportunities and enhance race relations. The search was not successful and the League of Women Voters asked the school board to "try harder."

The school district also celebrated its first June Festival. More than 500 paintings and other art and craft items were exhibited at Brush High School. A series of short plays, concerts, and lecture-demonstrations were presented.

The annual Kiwanis Ox-Roast and White Elephant Sale, benefiting youth projects, had a large turnout.

A new decade, the 1970's, was welcomed. As the city of South Euclid forged ahead, so did the issues confronting it. Schools, recreation, and civic projects were in the news.

The South Euclid-Lyndhurst School System placed a 9.5 mill school levy on the ballot. Spearheaded by a realtor (Vincent Aveni of Hilltop Realty) and a banker (Richard Braucher of Central National Bank), with the help of the "Support our Schools Committee,"

1970

Top Films: *Patton, M*A*S*H, Woodstock*

Deaths: Jimi Hendrix, Janis Joplin, President Gamal Abdel Nasser of Egypt

Major Events:

- * At Kent State University, student dissent over the American invasion of Cambodia exploded as four unarmed students were killed by Ohio National Guardsmen.
- * The first "Earth Day" was designated by environmentalists.
- * The first "jumbo jet," a Boeing 747, entered transatlantic service.
- * The city of Cleveland's population fell while Cuyahoga County's population increased.
- * The Cleveland Cavaliers basketball team was organized.

What's Hot: psychotechnology, encounter groups, sensitivity training, radical chic, Mickey Mouse watches, quadrophonic sound, safety tops on medicine vials, a woman jockey in the Kentucky Derby, The Who

the effort proved successful. The funds generated were to provide for the continuation of school programs and for expected teacher salary increases. It also would allow for additional librarians, music and art teachers, physical education, and more personnel in the counseling, audio-visual, and social work areas. In addition, the monies could provide for more vocational education programs, videotape equipment, and in-service training for school personnel.

Other funding, \$250 grants-in-aid, were awarded by the South Euclid-Lyndhurst Kiwanis Club to district high school graduates who wanted to further their education in a vocational program.

The South Euclid-Lyndhurst School Board was offered a deal for the property on which Victory Park School was located. Developers wanted the property for a shopping center. They offered to swap the school's 5.9-acre parcel just off Mayfield at Victory Drive for a piece of property, slightly smaller, on South Belvoir Boulevard north of Mayfield. A new Victory Park School could be built on the property. A change in zoning would have been required.

Ward 2 Councilman Arnold D'Amico felt that the school board was inappropriate in wanting to "bargain away" city land, in his ward, without council's knowledge. Due to residents' opposition, the school board ended up rejecting the developer's offer. Instead, the board decided to favor the renovation of the present school.

The School Plant Renovation Program was to involve the extensive remodeling of the two oldest schools in the system: Richmond and Victory Park Elementary schools. Improvements to other schools were to include stages to be constructed in the gyms at Memorial and Greenview Junior High Schools and a swimming pool at Brush High School.

Recreation opportunities were also on the minds of council. The city wanted to acquire land at the southeast corner of Monticello and Belvoir Boulevards for development of a new recreation facility. The city wanted to construct an ice-skating rink, picnic area, shelter house, and baseball diamonds at the site. The city of Cleveland Heights owned the land, though it had previously been the site of

an old South Euclid quarry before being sold at a tax auction. Cleveland Heights was using the land as a dump.

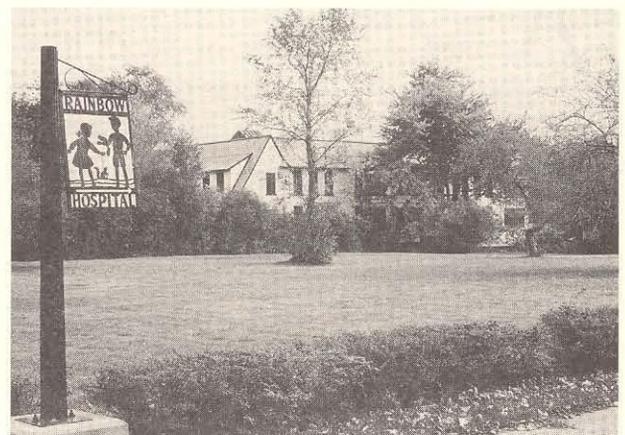
South Euclid's Council approved legislation to apply to the Ohio Department of Natural Resources for matching funds to acquire that site and a five-acre tract behind properties at the northeast corner of South Green Road and Glenridge Road for recreation.

Relating to recreation, South Euclid and Lyndhurst decided to implement a reciprocal agreement for use of each community's pools on a trial basis.

On the development front, the post office was investigating acquisition of one or two properties on South Green Road for the location of a new facility. An earlier attempt to acquire properties at the Maymore Shopping Center and at Palermo Brothers Nursery did not materialize.

Though the postal service organizes purchase plans, it does not purchase the land itself. Private developers buy the land and erect the building which is then leased for a long term by the post office.

The 14.5-acre Rainbow Hospital property had been placed on the market for \$1 million. The property included the main hospital,



nurses' home, a school for 40 children, a caretaker's house, and a garage. Proceeds from the sale were to be used to finance new rehabilitation facilities for children at the new Rainbow Babies and Childrens Hospital. The city approved the hiring of appraisers to check the feasibility of purchasing the property for a new police station, recreation center, geriatric center, or post office.

Citing the recent bombing of the Shaker Heights Police Department, South Euclid Police Chief William Van Veghel renewed his plea for a new, secure police building. His original request had been made in 1963.

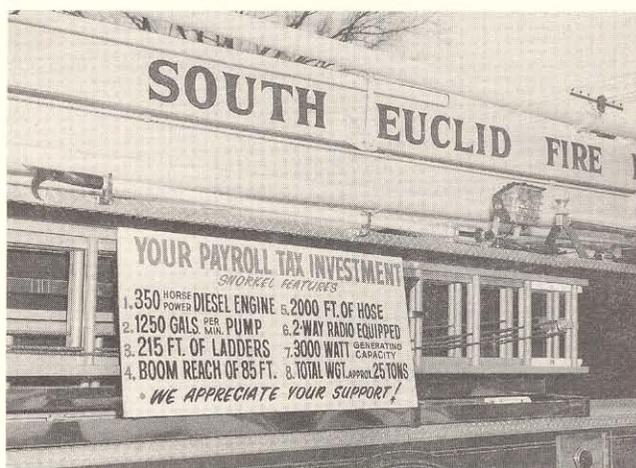
Ohio Governor James A. Rhodes had stopped the I-290 project through eastern Cuyahoga County. Instead, a suggestion by Cleveland Mayor Carl Stokes was recommended. The suggested route would link the I-90 stub built at E. 55th Street with I-80 in Garfield Heights. This would provide for an east-west superhighway and the \$100 million allocated by the federal government for I-290 would now remain in the county.

Juveniles in the city were causing problems by running extortion rackets and beating children near the footbridge leading from Professor Road to Memorial Junior High and Brush High. Two special meetings were held to address this problem. A "get tough cooperative program" was established involving parents, neighbors, educators, and the police.

Not all juveniles were problems. Brush High School senior Todd Gross had urged the city to begin a newspaper recycling program. He formed a group, Students League Opposing Pollution (S.L.O.P.). He even appealed to Congress for federal funds to implement the program in the city. Hence, South Euclid began a newspaper recycling program.

Fun was still to be had in South Euclid. The third-annual Baseball Day was held in August in Bexley Park. Highlights included all-day stage entertainment and games for the children. This celebration had replaced Home Days.

For the 15th year, the annual inter-city swim meet was held at Quarry Pool. The South Euclid team swamped Lyndhurst.



1971

Top Film: *The French Connection*

Deaths: Margaret Bourke-White, Louis "Satchmo" Armstrong

Major Events:

- * *All in the Family* made its television debut.
- * Disney World opened in Florida.
- * The *New York Times* printed "The Pentagon Papers," top-secret papers about America's involvement in the Vietnam War.
- * The 26th Amendment to the Constitution was ratified, granting 18-year olds the right to vote.
- * Attica Prison revolt.
- * The first pocket calculator was introduced.
- * *Jesus Christ Superstar* opened on Broadway.

What's Hot: "hot pants" fashion craze

Mayor George Urban decided not to seek re-election in 1971. He threw his support to councilman, attorney Ronald Peltz. Peltz was midway through his first four-year term on council. Also entering the race for mayor was councilman Arnold D'Amico, an accountant, also midway through his first four-year term. He was endorsed by the South Euclid Democratic Club and *The Sun Messenger*. The South Euclid Citizens' Committee endorsed Peltz.

The election was termed a "free for all." William T. Kirby, Vice President of Flynn-

Mylott Funeral Homes, and insurance man, Thomas W. Lippitt, also entered the mayoral race.

In the November election, the mayoral race was so close that a run-off election was assured between Arnold D'Amico and Ronald Peltz. A run-off election was required by the city charter, when none of the candidates received better than a 50% majority of the votes. This was a first for South Euclid.

In the special December election, Arnold C. D'Amico won, becoming the city's first new mayor in 24 years.

There was more happening in the city than just an election. When a new regional library was constructed on Wilson Mills Road in Mayfield Village, panic set in at South Euclid's branch. Protests occurred over the transfer of two-thirds of South Euclid's book collection to the new library. Though the South Euclid-Lyndhurst branch was to be redecorated, many feared it's demise. Council even introduced a proposal to change classification of the land on which the library sits to insure that the county library system would not be encouraged to sell the land at some future time. The Board of Trustees of the Cuyahoga County Regional Library assured South Euclid that they had no intention of selling the property.

The location of the new post office was close to being determined. Options on property at South Green Road and Ardenale were to expire in October. The South Euclid Planning Commission rejected a proposal to rezone the land on South Green Road for the new post office from residential to commercial. Council was unanimously in favor of the site but considered a new post office location, also on South Green Road, across from St. Gregory the Great Church and next to the Methodist Church.

Rainbow Babies and Childrens Hospital opened its new \$15,900,000 facility. This marked the end of Rainbow Hospital in South Euclid. About 145 infants and children were transferred to the new location. Demolition of the old hospital would take several weeks. University Hospitals' trustees and a group of physicians proposed that the old site become an ambulatory care health center for diagnostic tests and short-term treatment. South Euclid Council had expressed an interest in the property until their appraisers said that the land was worth \$750,000. The selling price had been reduced to \$900,000.

A \$30,000 grant from the U.S. Department of the Interior of Outdoor Recreation to the City of South Euclid was announced by Congressman Charles Vanik. The city was to provide matching funds. This money was to be used for the expansion of Quarry Park through the purchase of the land from Cleveland Heights. Negotiations were still underway.

In other news, the once-periled Victory Park School celebrated its 50th anniversary. PTA, school, and city officials held special events to recognize this milestone. Carnival activities, rides in a horse-drawn "school bus" of 1860, a band for dancing, a make-up booth, cake-walk, games, and contests were held. Door prizes were awarded.

The new year, 1972, also marked a new beginning for South Euclid under the leadership of its new mayor, Arnold C. D'Amico.

One of the first things Mayor D'Amico did was to set up an independent governmental study commission to study city operations. He indicated an interest in streamlining opera-

1972

Top Film: *The Godfather*

Deaths: J. Edgar Hoover, President Harry S. Truman

Major Events:

- * President Richard Nixon made a historic visit to Red China.
- * NASA received \$5.5 billion to develop and build the first reusable space shuttle.
- * President Richard Nixon was re-elected in a landslide victory over George McGovern.
- * Watergate break-in occurred at Democratic National Committee offices.
- * President Richard Nixon and Russian General Secretary Leonid Brezhnev held a summit in Washington.
- * Mark Spitz won seven gold medals in swimming at the Olympic Games in Munich, West Germany.
- * Massacre at the Olympics in Munich, West Germany.
- * Ralph J. Perk was elected mayor of Cleveland.
- * The Northeast Ohio Regional Sewer District was formed.

What's Hot: chess, swimming

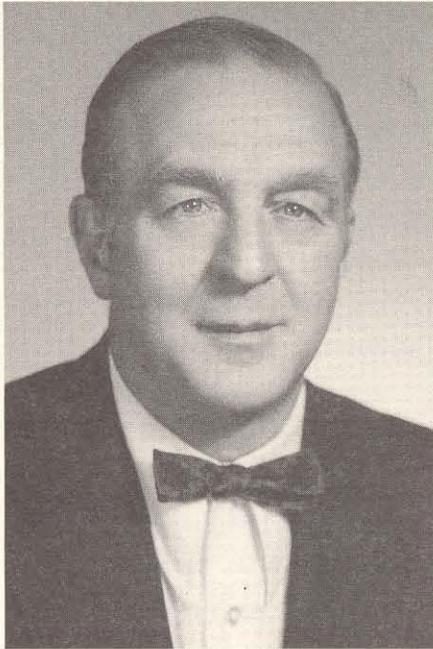
tions of the city and possible reorganization of some departments.

Melvin W. Waldschmidt resigned his position as Executive Director of South Euclid. The mayor named Walter D. Pasquale to serve

Arnold C. D'Amico

Mayor, The City Of South Euclid

1972 - 1992



Arnold C. D'Amico was born on September 3, 1923, in Warren, Ohio. During World War II, he served in the Army, assigned to the Aleutian Islands and the Burma-India-China Theater. After, he attended and graduated from Kent State University with a degree in Business Administration. He worked for Aetna Insurance, the Office of Price Stabilization in Washington, and as an auditor for the Air Force.

From 1956 to 1968, he worked for Hough Bakeries. In 1968 he became Comptroller of Menorah Park Center for the Aging in Beachwood.

In 1969, D'Amico was elected to South Euclid City Council. Prior to his election, he had served on the Planning Commission. In 1972, he was elected Mayor of South Euclid. He became the city's first full-time mayor in 1976.

He is credited with many "firsts" in the city. Under his direction, the position of service director was established, an office on aging begun, a paramedic program and 911 emergency program implemented, and private refuse service contracted. He also proposed construction of a city community center.

D'Amico was very active in politics and in the community. He was past-president of the Cuyahoga County Mayors Association. He was past chairman and treasurer of the Regional Income Tax Authority

(RITA). He also served on the Cuyahoga County Planning Commission and on the Ohio Municipal League. Locally, he served on the Board of Advisors of Notre Dame College of Ohio. He was a member of American Legion Heights-Hillcrest Post 104, of Little Italy Retirees, and Italian Sons and Daughters of America.

He was a "quiet and unassuming man." Though he was said to have had a stern demeanor, he was known for his sense of humor. He was also an avid golfer and sports enthusiast.

In 1991, he decided not to seek re-election for personal and family reasons.

On August 2, 1996, Arnold D'Amico died of complications of diabetes after heart bypass surgery at University Hospitals. He was 72. Memorial services were held at St. Gregory the Great Catholic Church. His survivors include wife, Mary, and two daughters, Ann Marie and Elaine.

The legacy of Mayor D'Amico lives on. The South Euclid Community Center was rededicated the Arnold C. D'Amico South Euclid Community Center on November 3, 1996.

as acting executive director while a search for a new director was underway.

Changes in the city administration had been made, but some development projects lingered on. The infamous chain-link fence

dividing the May-Green and Maymore shopping centers finally came down. Councilman Lawrence Tucker negotiated the winning deal with the Smith family. The Smith family purchased the entire shopping center with the exception of Cleveland Trust Company and