



City of Philadelphia

City Council
Chief Clerk's Office
402 City Hall
Philadelphia, PA 19107

Legislation Text

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Honoring the legacy of the Joseph Fox Bookshop located on Sansom Street upon its closure after over seventy years in business and recognizing its many contributions to the literary culture of Philadelphia.

WHEREAS, The founder of the store, Joseph Fox, began selling books from the basement of 1724 Sansom Street in 1951; and

WHEREAS, Joseph, despite never having graduated from high school, was known for his deep passion for reading and books which he shared with the world through a carefully curated selection specializing in architecture, design and art; and

WHEREAS, Prior to opening the Bookshop, Joseph Fox served in World War Two in Guam. He brought his love of reading with him - helping to open a library there during his time in the service; and

WHEREAS, He married his wife Madeline in 1940. Madeline especially prided herself on her creation and design of the children's section of the store; and

WHEREAS, Notable figures in the Philadelphia art and design scene took notice of Joseph's taste and special inventory. Prominent authors and architects were known to frequent the Bookshop and exchange ideas; and

WHEREAS, The Foxes had two sons. Michael Fox ran the bookstore until and after his father's passing in 1998; and

WHEREAS, Michael officially took the reins at Joseph Fox in 1990, four years after his father purchased the building. Despite competition from big box book retailers and online stores, Michael kept the Bookshop a popular destination for Philadelphians looking for an off the beaten path feel with intimate service and lots of character; and

WHEREAS, The Joseph Fox Bookshop continued to hold author events and coordinated presentations with the Free Library. The store remains one of the most well-regarded independent bookshops in Philadelphia and the region; and

WHEREAS, In January of 2022, Michael Fox and his wife Judi announced the upcoming closure of the Joseph Fox Bookshop. The City will miss their presence and the vibrancy their shop brings to Center City. Michael and Judi plan to retire and continue their lifelong love of reading full time; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, THAT THE CITY COUNCIL OF PHILADELPHIA, Does hereby honor the legacy of the Joseph Fox Bookshop located on Sansom Street upon its closure after over seventy years in business and recognize its many contributions to the literary culture of Philadelphia.