

EDWARD DANIEL BERGIN, JR.

"Fortunately, the future is ours to write. Divided by personal interests there is nothing we can accomplish. United by our love for Waterbury and our determination that our city endure and prosper, there is nothing we cannot accomplish."

— Edward D. Bergin Jr., January 1, 1992

Waterbury has a long history of influential politicians, but none more so than Edward Daniel Bergin Jr., the only seven-term mayor in city history.

Born in Waterbury on July 14, 1943, to Edward D. Bergin Sr. and Mary (Jones), he entered the world of politics at a tender age. His father was a four-term mayor from 1955-57, 1959-63 and from 1969 until 1971 (when he died in office). Edward Jr. was called Mike from his earliest days and he and his eight brothers and sisters learned politics from their father every night sitting around the dining room table.

He attended Driggs School, graduated from Sacred Heart High School in 1961 and later from St. Michael's College in Vermont and the School of Mortuary Science in Cincinnati. He worked for a time as a convalescent home administrator and in the family business, the Bergin Funeral Home. The funeral home was established 1873 by Bergin's great-grandfather, Martin Bergin, and catered to Waterbury's rapidly growing Irish population.

Mike Bergin's first mayoral victory was in 1975. When he took office on January 1, 1976 the city was faced with an \$11 million deficit on a \$56 million budget.

"I was raised that if there was something wrong and that changes were needed, don't wait around for someone else to do it," Bergin said.

Bergin cut programs and services, increased taxes and kept the city from financial ruin. By the time he was voted out of office in 1985, the city, like most of the country, had recovered.

Re-elected in 1991 Bergin embarked on a massive project, one he believes to be his most enduring legacy - the demolition and clean-up of the old Scovill Manufacturing site and the development of the Brass Mill Center. The mall project has altered the core of the city landscape.

He was voted out of office in 1995 and returned to work at the family funeral home. He is married to the former Jo-Ann Mulholland and has two sons, Michael and Patrick.

For an entire generation in Waterbury the Bergin name was synonymous with mayor. All told, the father and son presided over the city of Waterbury for 22 years.

