

From: Matthew Rooney <M.F.I.P.P.A. Sec 14(1)>

Sent: Friday, November 17, 2023 3:12 PM

To: clerks <clerks@oshawa.ca>

Subject: proposal for bridge renaming

Hello there,

My name is Matthew Rooney, and I am an artist, curator, and music writer living in South Oshawa.

I am writing today to suggest for Oshawa's 100th birthday that the city finally recognize two of its most influential local artists by naming the bridge that connects the main section Joseph Kolodzie Oshawa Creek Bike Path to Valley Drive and Ritson Road South after Oshawa-born musicians Mars Bonfire (aka Dennis Edmonton) and his late brother Jerry Edmonton.

Edmonton severed as the drummer for the hard rock act Steppenwolf from 1967 to 1972 and 1974 to 1976, scoring seven top 40 hits in America and twelve in Canada. among those hits was the song "Born to be Wild" penned by Bonfire.

"Born to be Wild" not only reached the top of the Canadian charts and #2 in America but was also included on Rolling Stone's Top 500 Songs (ranked #130 on 2004 edition) and inducted into the Rock N Roll Hall of Fame. It is considered an anthem of North American counterculture and a vital part of heavy metal history (the term heavy metal originates with it).

Bonfire and Edmonton's influence on music is vast and their links to Oshawa are very strong.

Not only were they born in Oshawa, but they lived here and fostered their talent in the city. As members of the local rock group The Sparrows, the brothers played various shows in and around what is now the GTA including Oshawa's Jubilee Pavilion, a venue run by their father. The Sparrows also gave them another pair of top 10 singles in Canada.

Edmonton passed in 1993 in a car accident in California after retiring from Steppenwolf in 1976 and he was nominated for the Rock N Roll Hall of Fame in 2017 as a member of the Steppenwolf. Since his retirement and passing, he's widely been regarded as one of rock's most underrated drummers and his work has been sampled by the likes of Grandmaster Flash, Michael Stipe, and Daft Punk.

Bonfire enjoyed a respectable career as a singer and songwriter working with the likes of Sandy Nelson to Kim Fowley while "Born to Be Wild" has been covered hundreds of times including by Rock N Roll Hall of Famers Link Ray, Wilson Pickett, Ozzy Osbourne, and The Ventures. In 2015, Bonfire was awarded the Cultural Impact Award by SOCAN at the 2015 SOCAN Awards in Toronto for the song "Born to be Wild".

The bridge on the Joseph Kolodzie Oshawa Creek Bike Path is idea, not only its proximity to the Jubilee Pavilion but because it is near the beginning (from the south) of the trail and serves as a kind of gateway to the “wild”. The “Mars Bonfire and Jerry Edmonton Bridge” is a very fitting name for such a location.

Oshawa is an interesting place and using the cities 100th birthday to recognize an important and influential figure from arts, especially one who played a massive role in the early history of a popular genre of music, would be a great way to encourage civic pride, especially as the music he influenced is what’s blasted over the airwaves by our local radio station 94.9 The Rock.

In addition, Bonfire, who is still with us, has suggested he will come to the city next year for the Convergence Music & Arts Festival.

Kind regards and thank you

Matthew Rooney

<M.F.I.P.P.A. Sec 14(1)>

<M.F.I.P.P.A. Sec 14(1)>