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## Outrage as Belfast murder pub named after icon Ronnie Drew

Thursday, 5 March 2009

The family of Robert McCartney reacted with fury yesterday after the Belfast pub where their brother was murdered by IRA members was renamed after Dubliners legend Ronnie Drew.

And last night, the son of the late singer Phelim Drew said he was concerned his pacifist father's name was being associated with a place where such a barbaric murder had taken place.

Magennis's Bar, a stone's throw from the republican Markets area, is now called Ronnie Drews, after the singer who died last August.

A large picture of Mr Drew has been etched on one window and another of the five-member group on another.

Robert McCartney's sister Paula said: "It is obvious what they are doing, they are trying to whitewash the past.

"But as far as Belfast is concerned, changing the name is not going to do anything -- the stigma has well and truly stuck." However, she said tourists should know they could be drinking next to a murderer.

Despite a lengthy trial, no-one has been brought to justice for the murder.

Ms McCartney added: "The bar didn't murder Robert, it was the people in it and the people need to change, not the name of the bar."

Phelim Drew said he and his sister Clíodhna were not consulted about the name change and he had already spoken to his solicitor. But he said he was not going to jump to any knee-jerk reaction.

"We would be obviously extremely sensitive to the feelings of the McCartney family and want them to know very clearly that we were not involved in the naming of the pub after our dad."

The bar has changed hands several times since Mr McCartney was murdered outside after a row with IRA members inside. The new owner was not available for comment yesterday.

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"she said tourists should know they could be drinking next to a murderer." - doesnt the same go for any bar in Belfast.

Posted by Roger | 05.03.09, 10:41 GMT

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apparently it used to do a great pint of the black stuff, but I for one will never darken its door to find out.

Posted by Neill | 05.03.09, 10:28 GMT

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I'm with the new owner, why wouldn't you want to white up such a horrific past lest it become some kind of morbid tourist attraction. I just hope none of the same crowd hang around it.

Posted by Damien | 05.03.09, 10:07 GMT

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With respect, I think the family are lashing out and directing their anger in the wrong direction. The bars owner / management never had anything to do with the murder. The bar has since changed ownership.

The new owners should be allowed to get on and run the business without nonsense like this.

I understand that the family want justice, but how does this complaint bring that any closer?

Posted by Richard | 05.03.09, 09:41 GMT

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Yes, as much as I sympathise with the McCartney's they can hardly expect this bar to be razed to the ground simply on the basis that their brother was murdered there. It's under new ownership by a very well respected Belfast publican and he's trying to turn the place into a decent bar and a decent business for himself. Robert's murderer(s) have the choice to drink in any bar in Belfast so shall we close them all down to stop this??

Posted by *Liam* | 05.03.09, 09:27 GMT

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What on earth is a Belfast publican naming his pub after a great musical Dubliner with absolutley no connection to Belfast whatsoever that I have ever heard of...? just seems totally incongruous

Posted by *robin* | 05.03.09, 09:25 GMT

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JK "the people in this bar are the people her brother chose to drink with"

...which led to his violent death and their unfortunate silence.

Be careful who you drink with.

Posted by *mickey* | 05.03.09, 09:24 GMT

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With respect to the McCartneys why should they have any say in how this business runs.the people in this bar are the people her brother chose to drink with

Posted by *JK* | 05.03.09, 08:25 GMT

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Another Belfast Telegraph story about absolutely nothing.

Posted by cecil | 05.03.09, 06:36 GMT

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