

From: [Web NoReply](#)
To: [City Council](#)
Subject: Email - Request to Speak - Kristin Enns-Kavanagh - Renaming John A MacDonald Road - CK 6310-1
Date: Sunday, June 20, 2021 9:16:29 PM

--- Replies to this email will go to [REDACTED] ---

Submitted on Sunday, June 20, 2021 - 21:16

Submitted by user: Anonymous

Submitted values are:

Date Sunday, June 20, 2021

To His Worship the Mayor and Members of City Council

First Name Kristin

Last Name Enns-Kavanagh

Phone Number [REDACTED]

Email [REDACTED]

Address [REDACTED] Robin Crescent

City Saskatoon

Province Saskatchewan

Postal Code S7L [REDACTED]

Name of the organization or agency you are representing (if applicable) Saskatchewan History and Folklore Society

Subject Councillor D. Kirton - Renaming of John A. Macdonald Road (CK 6310-1)

Meeting (if known) PUBLIC AGENDA GOVERNANCE AND PRIORITIES COMMITTEE

June 21, 2021

Comments

We would like to speak and will make comments as follows:

As a provincial heritage organization that has existed since 1957, the Saskatchewan History & Folklore Society is pleased to speak in support of this motion from our perspectives on history and public commemoration. We would like to take a few moments to comment on the historical legacy of white supremacy as championed by John A. Macdonald. We also want to put to rest the notion that making changes to commemorative spaces is “erasing history.”

Allow us to begin with recognizing that, over our lifespan, the SHFS has shared history in ways that we now know support colonialism, systemic racism, and ultimately, white supremacy. We are holding ourselves accountable to do better today, which includes making real changes in how our organization works, and the history we promote. We see this as an opportunity for us as a City to work together to do the same.

Public commemorations are artifacts of history, but not history itself. However, they do matter because (in the case of street names, at least) they reflect the aspirations of a community – what we want to celebrate and who we aspire to be.

As many scholars and researchers have pointed out, John A. Macdonald worked to ensure European dominance through the genocide of Indigenous peoples, but also through Asian exclusion, such as by enacting the Chinese Immigration Act.

So, we can recognize that John A. Macdonald is significant to history, and this has been more than adequately documented elsewhere, but we can also understand why we don’t want to celebrate him in a public commemoration, and we don’t aspire to be like him.

Commemorations also matter because they influence who feels welcome in public spaces. It is

important that everyone in a community sees their experiences reflected in art, monuments, and street names. This is not only about increasing representations of Indigenous experience in City public spaces, however. Removing an uncritical celebration of someone who represents an ongoing legacy of harm is good for everyone, Indigenous and non-Indigenous alike. Thank you for hearing our comments.

Attachments

The results of this submission may be viewed at:

