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ALLSTON BRIGHTON

## Allston readies for Aerosmith's special street concert

Posted by Matt Rocheleau November 3, 2012 03:22 PM

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(Matt Rocheleau for Boston.com)

The apartment building at 1325 Commonwealth Ave. where Aerosmith got its start.

By Matt Rocheleau, Town Correspondent

Allston businesses and fans are readying for the return of Aerosmith to the neighborhood.

The legendary rock group will stage a [free concert Monday afternoon](#) in front of their old apartment building at 1325 Commonwealth Ave., returning to where they got their start, a neighborhood now comprised almost entirely of residents who weren't even born when the musicians lived there.

About 87 percent of Allston, including a large number of college students, was born after the band moved out of the building 40 years ago following a two-year stay, according to census data. The band released nine multi-platinum and gold albums before more than half of today's Allston was born.

Still, the western slice of Boston known as Allston Rock City – in part due to Aerosmith's successful beginnings there – was buzzing Friday afternoon, just a

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few hours after band members leaked their special concert plans.

“Personally, I’m so excited,” said Alana Olsen, director of Allston Village Main Streets. “I’ll absolutely be there – with feathers in my hair and all kinds of scarves on.”

The nonprofit helps local businesses in partnership with the city. She said the organization is working to notify business owners about the event, its traffic and parking restrictions and the large crowds expected to descend on the neighborhood.

“We’re really excited that Aerosmith is so proud of the time they spent living here in our community and we’re happy they want to celebrate that period of their time in Allston with this concert,” she said. “Allston is a community that has a rich history of artists and residents living here and it’s great that we’ll be getting recognition for that on a larger scale.”

Standing outside of the band’s former Allston apartment building, Kevin Lehrer, 37, said he and fellow real estate company owner Earl N. Henry III co-own all of the 21 apartments, except for one in the basement. A subsidiary owned by Henry, who did not respond to requests for comment, purchased the 20 units in Aug. 2011 for \$4.2 million, according to state land records.

Lehrer said the event taking place Monday has been planned secretly for about three years. A spokeswoman for the city said Boston officials had known about plans for the plaque dedication for some time, but not about the concert plans until more recently.

Lehrer said that the band members are believed to have lived in either unit No. 31 or 41. They moved there in September of 1970 and moved two years later. There is an Aerosmith logo painted on a wall in the basement, but he said no one knows who painted it or when.

Sam Ferrara, who lived in the building for two years before moving out in September, said he had seen that logo painted on the basement wall.

“I had a lot of great experiences there that I won’t forget,” said the 27-year-old, who now lives in Lower Allston, plays the piano and is finishing up his studies in music business at Berklee College of Music.

He recalled how Aerosmith fans wearing band T-shirts would show up every so often to take photos of the apartment building.

Ferrara said when he first moved into the building, much of his experience was similar to accounts band members have written about in an [autobiography](#).

(To read highlights from the autobiography, [click here](#).)

“... bands were always playing, people always kept their doors open, there were a lot of parties, I had friends on every floor,” he said. “The police were always there telling people to be quiet. It was a pretty wild building.”

But Ferrara said that about one year ago, when the new ownership took over nearly the entire building, rules were enforced more strictly.

Lehrer walked around 1325 Commonwealth Ave. Friday afternoon as workers made touch-up repairs to the property, something he said will be going on all weekend. He said the band members will be welcome to go into their old building and unit on Monday if they'd like.

“You've got to love Aerosmith,” he said. “They are Boston. You can't not listen to them.”

The band is expected to play at noon on Nov. 5 on a mobile stage atop a trailer, according to Dorothy Joyce, a spokeswoman for Mayor Thomas M. Menino. A plaque will also be unveiled and dedicated there, during an event that is expected to run for about one hour, she said.

Publicists for the band did not immediately respond to requests for comment Friday.

Radio station 97.7/107.3 WAAF said it is helping to host the event. A spokeswoman for the station confirmed the show will be free, but declined to comment further.

The [city will close](#) a surrounding stretch of the busy avenue, along with similar traffic and parking restrictions on abutting streets. The MBTA will suspend service on part of the B branch of the Green Line, which runs along Commonwealth Avenue.

(To read more about related traffic and parking bans, [click here.](#))

Local businesses were also hastily making preparations Friday for the famed band's arrival.

Two Boston radio stations, 100.7 WZLX and MIXX 104.1, plan to broadcast live Monday morning and afternoon from the Joshua Tree bar and restaurant across the street, according to Chris Rucker, a promotions manager for WZLX.

"We'll be taking over this place," he said inside the bar on Friday, adding that radio station officials "have known for some time," about the concert. He declined to say for how long.

The establishment plans to open early Monday for the event and will serve Aerosmith-themed food consisting of "menu favorites with a rock 'n' roll twist," said Ashley Parsons, the bar's events coordinator.

Michael Hynes' family has owned an auto body shop on Redford Street, across from where the concert is planned, for the past five decades.

He said he has asked his brother's band to play outside of his shop Monday to set a festive mood for the main event. Hynes also hopes to have a banner made in time that will read: "Hynes Auto Body welcomes Aerosmith back to Allston."

"I'm 51 and this brings you back to when you were a kid to some extent," Hynes said Friday. "I'm still very much a fan."

The Brighton native said the area has changed since the members of Aerosmith lived here in the early 70s.

"There's a lot of stuff going on where properties are being more well-kept," he said. "The whole Allston-Brighton area is coming to a new level. It's nice to see."

Hynes, who now lives in Medfield, said he's been to at least 20 Aerosmith concerts, including one this past summer in Boston. There he said he met Steven Tyler and Tom Hamilton, "which was on my bucket list."

He plans to see the band on its December tour stop in Fort Lauderdale, Fla. Hynes said he'll bring his wife and two sons, Mike Jr., who is 28, and Kyle, who

is 17.

“It’s pretty good when your kids like the same music as you,” he said.

Steve Sherman, 75, has lived in the same Allston apartment for the past 37 years, about one block away from the band’s former home.

“This is wild,” he said, “I’ve never heard of anything like this in my life.”

He said he has to work Monday and won’t attend, “But I’d love to be here just to watch it all go down.”

Bruce Percelay is the chairman and founder of The Mount Vernon Company, which owns and runs several apartment buildings in Allston across the street from where the concert is planned.

He said he’s a fan of Aerosmith, saw the band perform “a long time ago” and plans to attend Monday.

“This is recognition of the fact that the Allston neighborhood is a cool place to be,” he said, “It’s one more reason to be in Allston.

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