



Canadian Irish Studies Foundation

FUNDAMENTALS

NEWSLETTER FOR FRIENDS OF IRISH STUDIES

\$725,000 FROM FOUNDATION SUPPORTS NEW PROFESSOR

The Canadian Irish Studies Foundation (CISF) has funded a new position in Irish literature at Concordia's School of Irish Studies with a gift of \$725,000. The CISF's donation to the Campaign for Concordia: Next-Gen Now continues the long-standing tradition — dating back to 1991 — of Montreal's Irish community partnering with the university to develop Irish Studies as a multidisciplinary area of academic teaching and research. The CISF has emerged as one of Concordia's largest benefactors, donating approximately \$13 million in student support and faculty development since its inception.



"I am very pleased that the foundation can continue to work with Concordia to ensure that the School of Irish Studies is on a solid footing and can continue to consolidate its national and international profile."

– Pamela McGovern, chair, Canadian Irish Studies Foundation

KEELAN HARKIN APPOINTED PROFESSOR IN IRISH LITERATURE

The School of Irish Studies welcomed **Keelan Harkin** as its permanent specialist in Irish literary studies in August 2022. A native of London, Ontario, Harkin received degrees from the University of Western Ontario and McMaster University prior to completing a PhD at McGill University. Harkin taught at Concordia on a temporary basis for three years before spending a year at Trinity College Dublin on a postdoctoral fellowship.

The School's principal, Gearóid Ó hAllmhuráin, says he is delighted to welcome Harkin back to the university and looks forward to working with him to develop Irish literary studies at the School. Harkin's area of expertise is modern and contemporary fiction, with a special interest in such writers as James Joyce, Flann O'Brien, Elizabeth Bowen, Seán O'Faoláin, Kate O'Brien, Dorothy Macardle, Colm Tóibín, Anne Enright and Emma Donoghue.



"I am very excited and grateful to be able to return to Concordia in a full-time capacity."

– Keelan Harkin

"I know I will be amongst an excellent and welcoming group of colleagues in the School of Irish Studies," says Harkin, "and the students at Concordia are such a joy to teach — they are always very engaged, creative and enthusiastic in their work, and they always enrich my own approach to the study of Irish literature."

Harkin's book-length study, *Imagined Constitutions: Citizenship and the Irish Novel*, will be published by Cork University Press next year. In the current academic year, Harkin is teaching Highlights of Irish Literature, The Irish Short Story and The Irish Literary Revival.



THE FOUNDATION'S CHAIR AND TRUSTEES WISH ALL OUR SUPPORTERS A HAPPY CHRISTMAS AND GOOD LUCK IN 2023!

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PETER O'BRIEN VISITING SCHOLAR AT CONCORDIA



After a two-year hiatus, the School of Irish Studies welcomed **Eóin Flannery** as its annual Peter O'Brien Visiting Scholar for the fall 2022 term. A specialist in contemporary Irish literature at the University of Limerick, Flannery taught two courses and gave a public lecture during his visit to Concordia.

Flannery is the 18th Peter O'Brien Scholar, a visiting professorship made possible thanks to a partnership between Concordia and the Canadian Irish Studies Foundation (CISF). The position was created with financial support from Concordia Chancellor Emeritus David O'Brien, BA 62, in recognition of his brother Peter's work in helping to set up and serve as the inaugural chair of the CISF. Flannery holds a BA and MA from the National University of Ireland, Galway, and a PhD from the University of Limerick. He has published more than 60 scholarly articles and book chapters, and is the author of five books.

RECIPIENT OF PRESTIGIOUS FELLOWSHIP ARRIVES AT CONCORDIA

After a two-year delay, **Margaret Brehony** — who was awarded a Marie-Sklodowska-Curie Individual Global Fellowship by the European Commission — has begun her research at the School of Irish Studies. This fellowship is among Europe's most competitive and well-respected grants and supports researchers to work abroad and make international connections. While at the School, Brehony, who was previously affiliated with University College Cork, will conduct research on the Irish diaspora in the Caribbean.

"When people think of destinations for the Irish diaspora, the Caribbean is probably not the first area that comes to mind," says Brehony. "And yet, Irish expats did indeed settle there. Research on Irish migration in the Hispanic world of the Americas is a growing field of Irish Studies. But work on Irish migration to Latin America tends to overlook Cuba and the Hispanic Caribbean."



"My project moves beyond the established focus to address a major gap in research on Irish settlement in Spanish colonial Cuba."

— Margaret Brehony

Brehony will spend two years of her fellowship at the School of Irish Studies under the supervision of Gearóid Ó hAllmhuráin, the school's principal and professor, followed by a year at the University of Galway in Ireland. Brehony's project examines the interrelated processes of Irish migration in the Atlantic world and white colonization strategies in the expanding slave society of 19th-century Cuba.

"To explore the compelling history of Irish immigration to Cuba from 1818 to 1850, I'll be looking at the colonial records of the Council for White Population and other unexamined sources in the Cuban archives," Brehony explains. "My approach is multidisciplinary, and it will produce the first monograph-length study of Irish settlement in Cuba, accompanied by an open-access digital archive of unique sources."

CANADIAN IRISH STUDIES FOUNDATION FUNDAMENTALS

Executive editor: Michael Kenneally

Editor: Marta Samuel

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CONCORDIA PHD STUDENT AWARDED JOHN AND PAT HUME FOUNDATION FELLOWSHIP



Eimear Rosato, a PhD student in Concordia's School of Irish Studies and the Department of History, is the inaugural recipient of the John and Pat Hume Foundation Scholarship. Co-sponsored

by the John and Pat Hume Foundation and the American Conference of Irish Studies (ACIS), the fellowship was awarded at the ACIS National Conference this year.

The ACIS fellowship committee found Rosato's work on the views of the Ceasefire Generation on the Troubles "to be promising and exciting in the new ground it will break. Its clear alignment with the Hume Foundation's message and goals will foster and encourage further research and

initiatives on behalf of cross-community dialogue, and the broader aims of sustainable peace, reconciliation and support for human rights."

Working with her thesis advisor Gavin Foster, professor of Irish Studies, Rosato examines the intergenerational nature of the Troubles through the lenses of memory and reconciliation within North Belfast. Her research unpacks how memory is passed down, as well as the impact it has on the young second or third generations who grew up around the time of the Good Friday Agreement. By focusing on aspects of stories, education practices, sports and music, Rosato's research looks into the role that specific landscapes and place play in memory.



After graduating with great distinction from Irish Studies at Concordia, **Miles Murphy**, BA 22, enrolled in a master's in Irish Studies at Queen's University Belfast in September. As a mature

student, Murphy first joined Concordia's undergraduate program to pursue his passion to broaden and deepen his understanding of his heritage and culture.

Despite ongoing pandemic disruptions, completing a degree in Irish Studies was the fulfillment of a lifelong dream — one that Murphy says would not have been possible without the support of the Canadian Irish Studies Foundation.

"The administration, academic staff and leadership in the School of Irish Studies exceeded my expectations and created an environment in which I could not only succeed, but flourish," he says.

Murphy was the recipient of several scholarships, including the Brian O'Neill Gallery Tuition Award. He also received the Gus O'Gorman and Ireland Canada University Foundation (ICUF) Scholarship, which supported his Irish-language studies in Ireland. In addition to scholarships, Murphy was awarded the distinction of Arts and Science Scholar — presented to students who have a GPA in the top one per cent of their department — for two years and was on the dean's list from 2018 to 2022.

As he pursues his master's at Queen's, Murphy has received support from Montreal's Irish Protestant Benevolent Society and the Mary McNeill Scholarship in Irish Studies from Queen's. His thesis will explore the famine in Ulster, with a focus on the shared suffering and contested ideologies of a national tragedy.

RESEARCH NEWS FROM SCHOOL PROFESSORS



MÁIRTÍN COILFÉIR

Assistant professor Máirtín Coilféir was awarded a \$43,962 grant from the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council for his project, “Indigenous and International: Tracing Irish-Language Literature Across the Globe,” which will examine how Irish, as a minoritized language, has taken on the cultures of the wider world through literary translation. The larger implications of Coilféir’s ambitious case study are how Indigenous cultures can break free from geographical and linguistic traditions and absorb global culture on their own terms. Coilféir was additionally awarded the Keough-Naughton Institute Library Research Award by the University of Notre Dame, facilitating a visit to the Irish-language holdings at Notre Dame libraries, which are central to his research.

Related to Coilféir’s project is the Indigenous Language and National Literature in Ireland course that he will teach at the School as of January 2023. A version of this course was offered in 2022 and, as Coilféir reports, “The students were brilliant in their contribution and in opening up new queries of investigation.” Coilféir presented a paper in March on a translation of a work by Montreal’s Frank Packard at the Société Française d’Études Irlandaises (SOFEIR) conference in Orléans, France, and in September, presented further research on the same text at An Chomhdháil ar Litríocht agus ar Chultúr na Gaeilge — the conference for Irish-language literature and culture — at the University of Galway.



GEARÓID Ó HALLMHURÁIN

In January, Pascale Sicotte, dean of the Faculty of Arts and Science, announced the appointment of Gearóid Ó hAllmhuráin — professor of anthropology, ethnomusicology and cultural history — to a three-year term as principal of the School of Irish Studies, replacing Michael Kenneally, who is currently on sabbatical and will retire at the end of the year.

Following the COVID-19 lockdown, Ó hAllmhuráin promoted *Lost Children of the Carricks*, a documentary film he wrote and directed, which follows the traumatic story of an Irish shipwreck off Quebec’s Gaspé coast during the Great Famine. The film was screened in April at Ethnografilm Paris and the Irish Film Festival Ottawa, and in June a director’s screening was presented at an Irish Studies conference at Université de la Sorbonne in Paris. Ó hAllmhuráin also delivered a keynote lecture at the conference, titled “From Beethoven to Broadway: The Soft Power of Irish World Music.”

Finally, as part of the Trílangue ensemble, Ó hAllmhuráin, along with Irish Studies lecturer Kate Bevan-Baker, PhD 18, GrCert 19, and Martine Billette, Quebecois pianist and dancer, performed at the prestigious Willie Clancy Summer School in Miltown Malbay, County Clare.



JANE MCGAUGHEY

Jane McGaughey, Johnson Chair of Quebec and Canadian Irish Studies, was the guest speaker at the Montreal St. Patrick's Society luncheon in March. She was recently awarded an Insight Grant from the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council for her project, "Mothers in the Time of Cholera: Motherhood, Migration and Pandemics in the Canadian Colonial Medical System, 1817–1867." Over the summer, McGaughey conducted her research at the British Library as one of its visiting fellows in Canadian studies. In September, she launched *The Irish in Canada* podcast, a series of short weekly episodes exploring the histories and legacies of Irish immigrants and their descendants in Canada. The podcast can be heard at theirishincanadapodcast.ca.



GAVIN FOSTER

To commemorate the 100th anniversary of the Irish Civil War, Gavin Foster, associate professor of Irish history, has been active in numerous projects and events marking this pivotal moment in modern Irish history. In May, he delivered the Marianna O'Gallagher Memorial Lecture at the Canadian Association for Irish Studies annual conference. Foster was also a key participant in the National Civil War conference hosted by University College Cork (UCC) in June. More than 130 scholars from around the world presented their research at the prestigious gathering, which included an address by Irish Taoiseach Micheál Martin.

Foster additionally wrote a piece for the *Irish Examiner*, which was featured in a special conference supplement. He recorded two short videos on civil-war themes for RTÉ, Ireland's national broadcasting network, and contributed two essays to an online collaboration between RTÉ, UCC, the *Atlas of the Irish Revolution* and the Government of Ireland. He also recorded a podcast interview for Mick Clifford's popular Irish-history podcast series by the *Irish Examiner*, and filmed an interview for Conviction Politics: The Convict Routes of Australian Democracy, an Australian Research Council-funded digital history project.

Following the UCC conference, Foster delivered a keynote presentation to the Ulster University graduate student conference on commemorating the revolution. His work was cited by Ireland's president, Michael D. Higgins, in Machnamh 100, his series of seminars reflecting on the traumatic events leading to Irish independence. Finally, Foster published a piece in the edited volume *Ireland 1922: Independence, Partition, Civil War*, which was officially launched by An Taoiseach at Dublin's historic Royal Irish Academy.



EMER O'TOOLE

An article co-authored by associate professor Emer O'Toole, along with Daniel O'Gorman, titled "My Country Has Been Imagined Enough: The Great Game, Neo-Imperialism, and Gender" was published in 2021 by Bloomsday (London) in *Theatres of War: Contemporary Perspectives*, and edited by Lauri Scheyer. O'Toole presented another academic paper at Towards Transitional Justice: Recognition, Truth-telling and Institutional Abuse in Ireland — a conference held at Boston College. Her paper has now been published as part of the conference proceedings in a special double issue of *Éire-Ireland*.

O'Toole's book, *Contemporary Irish Theatre: Activist Aesthetics*, will be published by Routledge (London) in 2023.

STUDENTS TRAVEL TO IRELAND — FINALLY!



After a two-year wait, several Irish Studies students spent part of the past summer in Ireland, taking courses, conducting research and deepening their learning experience. Read about their experiences below.

Dean Farrell

“I am deeply grateful to the Concordia School of Irish Studies and the Canadian Irish Studies Foundation for making it possible for me to travel to Ireland to conduct research essential to my doctoral work. I also worked closely with An Dr Seán Mac Risteaird, a professor at Dublin City’s University Fiontar agus Scoil na Gaeilge, who is a member of my doctoral committee. This research visit marked an important step towards completing my PhD in Irish Studies at Concordia, and I greatly appreciate the generosity of all the donors who made this research visit possible.”

Lily MacLean, BA 22

“My time at school in the Gaeltacht in the West of Ireland was a profound experience. My grasp of the Irish language increased significantly and I was able to learn from so many wonderful singers, storytellers and people who made my time in An Ceathrú Rua so rich. I had the opportunity to work on my Irish singing skills nearly every day, which will be of great value as I begin my MA on this subject at the School of Irish Studies. I am so grateful to the Canadian Irish Studies Foundation for all the support I received during my years as an undergraduate, and especially for this memorable trip to the Irish Gaeltacht. A piece of my heart will always be in Connemara.”

Samara O’Gorman

“The opportunity to study the Irish language in the Gaeltacht of An Cheathrú Rua was a dream realized, and the culmination of the extraordinary learning experience of my degree in Irish Studies at Concordia. The language and landscape sparked something so visceral in me that, along with my new appreciation of Irish culture and art, these experiences have helped me understand my identity in a new way and will shape my future studies. Míle buíochas to the Canadian Irish Studies Foundation, the School of Irish Studies and the Ireland Canada University Foundation. I feel I have found a home in the Irish language, which has the saying ‘Ar scáth a chéile a mhaireann na Daoine’ (We live in each other’s shelter).”



From left: Irish Studies students Lily MacLean, Luke Wilkinson and Samara O’Gorman.

BOOK DONATIONS CREATE SIGNIFICANT RESOURCE AT CONCORDIA



For more than 15 years, the Canadian Irish Studies Foundation has helped the Concordia Library to build up its Irish book holdings, creating an important learning tool for the hundreds of students who annually enrol in Irish courses. In addition, over the years several distinguished Irish Studies scholars — most notably professors **Ann Saddlemyer**, LLD 00, **Maurice Elliott**, **Finn Gallagher** and **James Noonan** — as well as Irish community members, have donated books to the School of Irish Studies library, building a collection that now constitutes an in-depth resource for teaching and research.

Recent donations by **Patrick Rowley**, former professor **Susan Cahill** and professors **Michael** and **Rhona Richman Kenneally** have added significantly to the holdings in the School's Father Thomas McEntee Reading Room. The overall collection is strong on 20th-century Ireland, especially the Irish Literary Revival, Ireland at mid-century, and the politics and culture of contemporary Ireland, north and south. Some extremely rare and valuable texts — first editions of works by William Butler Yeats and Lady Gregory, signed copies by such contemporary writers as Seamus Heaney, Brian Moore, Anne Enright, Colm Tóibín and Eavan Boland, and incidental historical volumes from the 19th century are now housed at Concordia's Irish Studies Rare Book Collection on Loyola Campus. Most books, however, are located in the McEntee Reading Room and amount to some 5,000 titles.

The **Patrick Rowley** collection includes important works on Northern Ireland and various aspects of the Troubles, and recent biographies of key figures such as Wolfe Tone, Éamon de Valera, Terence O'Neill, Jonathan Swift and Oscar Wilde. It also includes important editions of the writings of Patrick

Kavanagh, Brendan Behan and Bernard MacLaverty, among others. Rowley also donated a trove of CDs of Irish music, with a strong emphasis on the musical traditions of Northern Ireland. When added to the existing materials on Irish music — vinyl recordings, CDs, videos and historical tapes — the School now has a comprehensive archival resource of contemporary and historical Irish music.

Upon her departure from Concordia, **Susan Cahill** donated her collection of Irish literary studies books, a sharply focused selection of primary and critical works dealing with contemporary Irish literature and culture, Irish children's literature and contemporary Irish fiction — particularly women's writing — as well as a small selection of rare novels by early-20th-century Irish women writers of children's literature.

A donation from **Michael** and **Rhona Richman Kenneally** comprises an extensive book collection with a strong emphasis on Irish literature, history and materiality studies, and includes several first editions and signed copies of works by contemporary Irish writers. Amounting to approximately 1,200 books, these texts have added depth and diversity to the overall holdings.

The Irish book resources now available at Concordia have already begun to spark interest from researchers in Irish Studies, in Canada and abroad, and reinforce the reputation of the university as an international centre for the academic study of Ireland's history and culture.

FINANCIAL SUPPORT SUSTAINS STUDENTS IN CHALLENGING TIMES

The ongoing generosity of its many donors has allowed the Canadian Irish Studies Foundation to provide vital financial assistance to both undergraduate and graduate students during the pandemic. Despite the challenges of social isolation, online teaching and lack of work, many Irish Studies students were able to continue because of CISF support. In the past year, the following funds were awarded:

Undergraduate scholarships and bursaries

13 students \$33,800

Brian O'Neill Gallery Tuition Awards

30 students \$41,700

Graduate scholarships and awards

5 students \$56,950

Total student support.....\$132,450

THANK YOU!

"The Canadian Irish Studies Foundation remains deeply grateful for the generosity of many donors. We are counting on your continued support so that we can fulfill our mission of helping students to achieve their goals."

– Pamela McGovern, chair, Canadian Irish Studies Foundation



IRISH STUDIES WINTER 2023 COURSES

- The Irish in Montreal
- 'What's That Tune?' A Music Appreciation Course in Irish Traditional Music
- Contemporary Irish Theatre
- Irish Traditional Music in Canada: A Cultural History
- The Irish in Latin America
- Indigenous Language and National Literature in Ireland
- The Irish Literary Revival
- Irish Women in Quebec
- The Irish Short Story
- Intercultural Ireland: Film, Theatre and TV
- Early Ireland (10,000 BCE to 1014)
- Rebellions in Ireland and the Canadas

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We appreciate your support to help our students. Thank you!



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