



Canadian Irish Studies Foundation

FUNDAMENTALS

NEWSLETTER FOR FRIENDS OF IRISH STUDIES



NEW CHAIR APPOINTED

Patrick Shea takes over from Pamela McGovern

PLUS: TWO NEW TRUSTEES ELECTED • SPOTLIGHT ON RESEARCH



THE FOUNDATION'S CHAIR AND TRUSTEES WISH ALL OUR SUPPORTERS A HAPPY CHRISTMAS AND GOOD LUCK IN 2025!

Latest news

A message from the new CISF chair



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It is with great pride that I took on the role of chair of the Canadian Irish Studies Foundation earlier this year. I follow in the very big shoes of outgoing chair Pamela McGovern, whose outstanding leadership of CISF has been pivotal in the continued growth and success of Irish Studies at Concordia.

Pamela's tireless commitment and passion for the preservation and promotion of Irish heritage through education have left an indelible mark on both the CISF and the School of Irish Studies. On behalf of the entire CISF board, I thank her for her hard work, vision and invaluable contribution.

My personal connection to the Irish story runs very deep — all 32 of my great-great-grandparents were born in Ireland. My ancestors emigrated to Canada between the early 1820s to the 1860s in search of a better life. And my personal connection to the CISF runs very long. In the late 1990s, while I was studying law at McGill, I was the first (and only) employee of the CISF while it was in its initial capital campaign mode.

I had the wonderful opportunity to work very closely with Brian Gallery, Michael Kenneally and Peter O'Brien for two years. These connections, and my broader professional, philanthropic and personal ties to the Irish community of Montreal, make this new role especially meaningful.

As we look to the future, the support of individuals and organizations across Canada continues to be vital in ensuring the growth and sustainability of the School of Irish Studies. I invite you to reflect on the profound impact of your generosity in preserving our shared history and culture, and I hope you will consider supporting our efforts to expand Irish Studies at Concordia.

Together, we can ensure that this rich cultural legacy continues to thrive for generations to come.

Go raibh maith agaibh,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Patrick M. Shea".

Patrick M. Shea

Chair, Canadian Irish Studies Foundation

CANADIAN IRISH STUDIES FOUNDATION FUNDAMENTALS

Executive editor: Marion Mulvenna

Editor: Ian Harrison

Designer: Trevor Browne



Canadian Irish Studies Foundation news

Two new trustees join CISF board

The CISF was recently pleased to welcome two exceptional individuals to its board of trustees: Désirée McGraw, BA 93, and Mark Mulrone. Their experience and commitment to community engagement will bring invaluable perspectives to the Foundation's mission of supporting Irish Studies at Concordia.



Désirée McGraw

Member of the National Assembly for Notre-Dame-de-Grâce and a proud Concordia alumna, Désirée brings a rich background in public policy, international relations and environmental advocacy. She has held leadership roles at Pearson College, the Jeanne Sauvé Foundation and the Climate Reality Project. Désirée, her husband Christopher Marilley, and their three sons, Jack, Michael and Kevin, are committed to community service. Named one of Canada's most influential women, she has advised Canadian delegations at major international environmental summits.



Mark Mulrone

Mark serves as vice-chairman and head of Financial Institutions and Sponsors at Scotiabank. He is active on several not-for-profit boards, such as the Boost Child and Youth Advocacy Centre Fundraising Board and the BlackNorth Initiative, both located in Toronto. Additionally, he chairs the Advisory Board of the Brian Mulrone Institute of Government and is involved with the Centre hospitalier de l'Université de Montréal in Montreal. Mark and his wife, Vanessa, have five children.



New award for undergraduate students



The Beverley Taugher Rozek Award for Irish Studies has been established through a generous \$50,000 bequest from a pillar of Montreal's Irish community, Beverley Rozek. Managed by Sharon

Malone, a long-time CISF donor and Rozek's goddaughter, the award will provide select new undergraduate students with \$5,000 in support.

Rozek was the first female member and secretary of the St. Patrick's Society of Montreal. She was also a director of Saint Patrick's Square in Côte St. Luc and a long-time warden of Saint Patrick's Basilica in Montreal. Her volunteer work included being a board member of Loyola College Alumni and a guide at Château Ramezay. This legacy gift is the result of Rozek's wish to encourage students to take pride in their Irish heritage.

New Ambassador of Ireland to Canada



John Concannon, the newly appointed Ambassador of Ireland to Canada, was sworn in at Rideau Hall in Ottawa on October 9. During a subsequent two-day visit to Montreal, Ambassador Concannon met with leaders of the local Irish community

and toured the School of Irish Studies. He was joined by current and future principals **Gearóid Ó hAllmhuráin** and **Gavin Foster** in the Father Thomas McEntee Reading Room for discussions about the future of Irish Studies at Concordia. We extend our best regards to **Eamonn McKee**, who completed his four-year mandate as ambassador this past summer.

Faculty research news

The School of Irish Studies comprises seven full-time faculty members teaching 23 courses to 900 students over the 2024-25 academic year. Read about some of their recent research below.



After serving two years as principal, **Gearóid Ó hAllmhuráin** took a six-month sabbatical to conduct research on Irish soundscapes in rural France. While in France, he was based at Université Rennes 2, where he held La Chaire internationale en humanités et sciences sociales.

In Brittany, he worked with musicians in Lorient, Saint-Suliac, Saint-Malo and Arzon. He also presented his documentary *Lost Children of the Carricks* at the ACE: Anglophonie: Communautés et Écritures research forum; directed recitals at Le Pont Supérieur: Pôle d'enseignement supérieur spectacle vivant Bretagne; and gave illustrated lectures in French on "Gaëls d'Amérique du Nord: Aperçu de la diaspora" at Le département de Breton-Celtique.

Ó hAllmhuráin contributed to a documentary on the history of Irish music in France produced by L'Association pour le Promotion de la Culture Irlandaise en France, performed with Franco-Irish ensembles in Bourgogne, Haute-Garonne and Midi-Pyrénées, and completed his sabbatical in Al-Andalus, Spain, where he studied Irish mercantile history in Cádiz.

Following his return, his student **Lily MacLean** graduated with a master's degree based on her fieldwork on Irish sean nós singing in Gaeltacht na nDéise, Waterford. Ó hAllmhuráin's former student, film editor **Stephen Baxter**, was accepted into the prestigious MBA program at INSEAD in Fontainebleau, France. This achievement marks a significant milestone in Ó hAllmhuráin's career as an academic mentor. He will complete his tenure as principal of the School of Irish Studies in June 2025.



Jane McGaughey, the **Johnson Chair of Quebec and Canadian Irish Studies**, is currently writing a monograph about Mary Boyd, an Irish-Quebecer maid whose tragic death at the Provincial Lunatic Asylum caused a public scandal in 1868. Listen to her podcast about Mary here: theirishinacanadapodcast.ca/season-2-episode-6-the-body-of-mary-boyd.

Earlier this year, McGaughey won a research grant from the Quebec English-Speaking Communities Research Network to study the reactions of the province's anglophones to the legacies of Governor Sir Guy Carleton from County Tyrone and his implementation of the Quebec Act in 1774. Her work will be presented as an online public lecture in February 2025. You can register for this free event here: concordia.ca/cuevents/artsci/scpa/quescren/2025/02/06/legacies-quebec-act.html.



Gavin Foster was on sabbatical in fall 2023 but returned in January 2024 to teach and serve as interim principal of the School. During his time off, he worked on his next book on Irish Civil War and revolutionary legacies. In the last year, he gave an online talk on County Kerry's experience during

the revolution for the Irish American Cultural Institute and published two substantial peer-reviewed articles: one for a special Irish Civil War-themed issue of *Éire-Ireland*, and the other for "New Histories of the Irish Revolution," a special issue of *Contemporary European History*. He also reported that in the spring, his PhD student **Eimear Rosato** successfully defended her doctoral thesis on intergenerational memory of the Northern Irish Troubles.



Máirtín Coilféir is now in the final year of his Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council-funded project on literary translation called “Indigenous and International: Tracing Irish-Language Literature Across the Globe.” He travelled to Dublin with PhD student **Dean Farrell** for work

in the National Archive, and presented research findings at the Galway Conference for Irish Studies and the Canadian Association of Irish Studies Conference. This year, he published two book chapters on the Canadian dimensions of Irish translation, an article on the Australian Irish-language author Colin Ryan and an essay on dirt and disease in the writing of Seán Ó Ríordáin. His poem “Iomramh” was chosen for National Poetry Day in Ireland, displayed on the country’s trains for the summer.



Katie Young ran a new course titled “Cultural Geographies of the Irish Night” and received funding from the Experiential Learning Grant for students to design an event for Montreal’s Nuit Blanche (see right). Over the summer, she received funding from Concordia’s Open Textbook Grants to design

The Making of the Irish Landscape, the first university textbook exploring Irish cultural geography. This project was supported by Irish Studies student **Alexia Velenosi**.

This June, Young presented her research exploring music and night space in Irish pubs at the American Conference for Irish Studies in Limerick, based on a forthcoming chapter in *The Irish Pub: Invention and Re-invention*. As co-principal investigator on the European Research Council-funded project titled “Beyond Opposition,” she worked with Kath Browne, geography professor at University College Dublin, co-publishing a methodological paper on Facebook recruitment with the *International Journal of Social Research Methodology*. Through this project, two postdoctoral researchers — Imogen Flower and Rine Vieth — joined the School of Irish Studies.



Keelan Harkin maintained a busy research and writing schedule over the past year. In spring 2024, he published a peer-reviewed article on the Cold War dimensions of William Trevor’s short story “The Ballroom of Romance” in *Review of Irish Studies in Europe*. In August, he submitted the manuscript for his

forthcoming first book, *Citizenship and the Irish Novel: Imagined Constitutions*, currently under review. In the forthcoming year, Harkin will continue teaching a wide array of Irish literature and is excited to introduce a new course titled “The Literature of Northern Ireland” in winter 2025.



Emer O’Toole delivered the **Ann Saddlemyer Lecture** on November 15 (see below). O’Toole also published a short story, “Manic Gnome Dream Girl,” in the horror journal *Grim and Gilded*. Another, “The Other Órla,” was shortlisted for the €5,000 Francis McManus Short

Story Prize. All 10 shortlisted entries were published on rte.ie/culture in mid-November and featured on RTÉ Radio 1’s Late Date. An awards ceremony for the McManus Prize was held on Friday, November 29, at the Pavilion Theatre in Dún Laoghaire, County Dublin.

Recent events

Irish Studies enlivens Nuit Blanche 2024

In February, the School of Irish Studies participated in Montreal’s Nuit Blanche, transforming the Father Thomas McEntee Reading Room into an immersive experience. Led by faculty member **Katie Young**, students from her “Cultural Geographies of the Irish Night” course presented creative projects examining Irish nightlife from varied perspectives. More than 200 members of the public attended.

Acclaimed author visits Concordia

The School of Irish Studies partnered with Concordia’s Writers Read series to host **Lisa McInerney** in March. The Irish author offered a public reading, a discussion with assistant professor **Keelan Harkin** as well as a Q&A, providing insight into contemporary Irish literature. McInerney also led workshops for students, enriching their engagement with Irish literary themes. The program was made possible through financial support from the CISF.

Ann Saddlemyer public lecture

Emer O’Toole, associate professor of Irish Performance Studies, delivered the Ann Saddlemyer Lecture on November 15. Her “She Beast – A Performance Lecture” drew a full audience to the Father Thomas McEntee Reading Room, continuing the legacy of scholarly engagement inspired by Saddlemyer, who donated her extensive book collection to the School of Irish Studies.



Students in Ireland

Thanks to support from the CISF and the Ireland Canada University Foundation, five students — three undergraduate students on language-immersion scholarships and two graduate students on research trips — had the opportunity to study in Ireland this past summer.



“This experience has not only deepened my understanding of the Irish language and culture, but also enriched my studies. I explored the rich tapestry of Ireland’s heritage and formed connections that will last a lifetime. This journey has truly transformed my academic and personal outlook, and I’m truly grateful to have had the opportunity. I extend my sincere thanks to the donors of the Gus O’Gorman Scholarship.”

– **Katherine Diamond**, recipient of the **Gus O’Gorman Scholarship** and double major in Irish Studies and Honours in Public History.



“Thanks to the Ireland Canada University Foundation, Concordia’s School of Irish Studies and the Canadian Irish Studies Foundation, I travelled to Ireland for the first time. I visited unique historical sites like Brú na Bóinne (Newgrange), medieval castles and Trinity College Dublin. The highlight was the warmth and culture I experienced while in An Cheathrú Rua for three weeks, where I continued my Irish-language studies.”

– **Declan Murphy**, major in Irish Studies



“I cannot thank the Ireland Canada University Foundation, the Canadian Irish Studies Foundation and Concordia’s School of Irish Studies enough for the chance to immerse myself in the language,

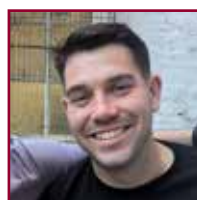
music, natural beauty and hospitality of An Cheathrú Rua. This experience will stay with me forever. I gained knowledge relevant to my degree, made beautiful friendships and discovered a newfound passion for the Irish language. Go raibh maith agaibh!”

– **Isabel Saldanha**, double major in Irish Studies and Psychology



“Thanks to generous support from the Irish Protestant Benevolent Society, I conducted research for my MA thesis on Irish country house architecture in Ireland this summer. My trip included research at the Public Record Office of Northern Ireland in Belfast, visits to beautiful manors and in-depth work at the Irish Architectural Archive in Dublin. I also presented my findings at the Canadian Association of Irish Studies conference in Galway.”

– **Simone Donders**, master’s student and recipient of the **Irish Protestant Benevolent Society Summer Research Scholarship**



“I am grateful to the Canadian Irish Studies Foundation for its generous support throughout my PhD. This summer, I had the pleasure of delivering a paper at the Canadian Association for Irish Studies conference in Galway on Seán Ó Curraoin, a poet in the Irish language. I also assisted Máirtín Coilféir with his research in the National Archives of Ireland on his project “Indigenous and International: Tracing Irish-Language Literature Across the Globe (1922-1960).” During my stay, I utilized many libraries that housed invaluable Irish-language reference materials to further my studies.”

– **Dean Farrell**, PhD student

Other news



LEFT TO RIGHT: **COLIN BONNELL** (PHD STUDENT), **LILY MACLEAN** (MA STUDENT), **GISELLE GONZALEZ** (PHD STUDENT), **SIMONE DONDEERS** (MA STUDENT), **VICTORIA KELLY** (MA STUDENT), **JANE MCGAUGHEY**, **KAYLA FANNING** (PHD STUDENT), **MÁIRTÍN COILFÉIR**, **DEAN FARRELL** (PHD STUDENT). NOT PICTURED: **KEELAN HARKIN**.

CAIS 2024 in Galway

This past June, the Canadian Association for Irish Studies (CAIS) hosted its annual conference in Galway, bringing together scholars, students and enthusiasts from Canada, the United States of America, Ireland and beyond.

With a commitment to fostering the study of Irish culture in Canada for over 30 years, CAIS serves as a vital platform for scholars to exchange ideas, present research and discuss current issues in Irish studies. The Galway conference was particularly special, coinciding with the 25th anniversary of the establishment of the Centre of Irish Studies at the University of Galway. This milestone underscores the Centre's international reputation as a hub of interdisciplinary research and teaching, particularly in literature and music studies.

The conference's theme, "Irish Ages: Time and the Anthropocene," invited participants to explore the intricate relationships between human development and the environment, a topic of pressing relevance today. Several School of Irish Studies faculty and graduate students attended the conference, each presenting papers on their research.



Graduate student wins prestigious prize

Notably, **Lily MacLean** was recognized for her outstanding work, receiving the Joseph McGann Memorial Award for the best paper presented by a graduate student at the conference. This award highlights the importance of fostering young scholars within the community, an initiative that aligns perfectly with CAIS's mission.

As CAIS continues to promote Irish culture, the Galway conference served as a wonderful reminder of the vibrant community of scholars dedicated to this cause. Participants returned home with enriched perspectives, new contacts and a strengthened sense of community among Irish Studies programs globally.

Essential support for our students

Thanks to the ongoing generosity of our donors, the CISF continues to provide critical financial assistance that alleviates financial burdens and rewards academic excellence for both undergraduate and graduate students at the School of Irish Studies. In the past year, funding was allocated as follows:

Undergraduate scholarships and bursaries

12 students \$22,500

Brian O'Neill Gallery Tuition Awards

25 students \$51,000

Graduate scholarships and awards

5 students \$22,200

Total student support.....\$95,700



School of Irish Studies course list

Fall 2024

- "Introduction to Irish Studies"
- "Highlights of Irish Literature"
- "The Irish in Canada"
- "History of Ireland"
- "Celtic Christianity"
- "Irish Mythology and Folklore"
- "Independent Ireland from Civil War to the Celtic Tiger"
- "Classics of Irish Theatre"
- "The Making of the Irish Landscape"
- "Irish Film Studies"
- "Irish Short Story Tradition"
- "Introduction to Spoken Irish" (full-year course)

Winter 2025

- "The Irish in Montreal"
- "Research Methods in Irish Studies"
- "Sexualities in the Irish Diaspora"
- "Troubles in Northern Ireland"
- "Irish Cultural Traditions in Quebec"
- "Irish Traditional Music in Canada: A Cultural History"
- "Literature of Northern Ireland"
- "The Gaelic Literature of Ireland"
- "Contemporary Irish Literature"
- "Irish Horror"
- "Irish Performance Studies"

HEARTFELT THANKS!

"The students at the School of Irish Studies extend their sincere appreciation to all of our generous donors. Your ongoing support is vital in empowering them to achieve their aspirations and realize their full potential."

– Patrick M. Shea, chair, Canadian Irish Studies Foundation

Celebrate all things garnet and gold as Concordia University marks its 50th anniversary from June 2024 to June 2025! concordia.ca/50th

We appreciate your support to help our students. Thank you!
To make your gift online, please visit concordia.ca/cisf.



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