



# Canadian Irish Studies Foundation

# FUNDAMENTALS

NEWSLETTER FOR FRIENDS OF IRISH STUDIES



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## CANADIAN IRISH STUDIES FOUNDATION WELCOMES PAMELA McGOVERN AS CHAIR



From left: Brian O'Neill Gallery, outgoing chair, Pamela McGovern, newly appointed chair, Michael Kenneally, principal, School of Canadian Irish Studies and Concordia President Alan Shepard

The Canadian Irish Studies Foundation marked a major turning point in its history at the recent meeting of its trustees. After almost two decades of loyal service to the foundation, Brian O'Neill Gallery, BA 57, LLD 10, stepped down as chair, passing on the torch to Pamela McGovern.

Concordia President Alan Shepard took a moment during the meeting to express deep appreciation on behalf of the university for all Brian O'Neill Gallery has done to advance Irish studies.

In her words of acceptance, Pamela McGovern also thanked Brian O'Neill Gallery for the role he has played in the foundation and beyond.

"No one in recent memory has had such a profound and lasting impact on the Irish community. His accomplishments are now enshrined at Concordia in the School of Canadian Irish Studies, which has made its presence felt in Canada and far beyond."

A lawyer by profession, McGovern has served as a trustee for three years and played an important role in several of the foundation's activities. Before becoming a trustee, she was intimately familiar with Irish studies at Concordia through her daughter

Dominique Lefebvre, BFA 08, who graduated with a minor in Canadian Irish Studies.

McGovern holds a bachelor's degree in political science from McGill University and a degree in civil law from the University of Ottawa. She is senior counsel at Aust Legal in Montreal. Previously, she was general counsel and principal director of legal affairs at Hydro-Québec.

"Together, with the trustees, I hope to move the foundation forward and work in a co-operative manner, as we continue to provide financial support so that Canadian Irish studies can grow and thrive," said McGovern.

"We hope to call on the wider community for support as we attempt to raise the profile of Irish studies at Concordia. For the Irish community and Concordia, the school is a jewel in the crown of the university and our job is to facilitate its further growth and consolidation."



Pamela McGovern

In closing, McGovern spoke of the strong support Concordia has provided the School of Canadian Irish Studies over the years and thanked all trustees for their continued engagement with the foundation.



## WORDS OF THANKS TO BRIAN O'NEILL GALLERY, BA 57, LLD 10, FORMER CHAIR, CANADIAN IRISH STUDIES FOUNDATION

*"No words of appreciation can encompass the extraordinary role Brian O'Neill Gallery has played in helping to launch and sustain Irish studies at Concordia. Rarely do we see the kind of single-minded dedication, passion and abiding commitment he demonstrated over the years.*

*In helping to establish the School of Canadian Irish Studies — the only separate academic department dedicated to this area of study at a Canadian university — Mr. Gallery created a legacy that will not only endure at Concordia but will also remain a permanent source of pride and inspiration to the Irish community in Montreal and throughout Canada.*

*Most importantly, the programs offered by the school will continue to benefit successive generations of students.*

*He helped put Concordia on the map as the only university in North America offering a degree that focuses on the history and culture of Ireland, and the story of the Irish abroad.*

*Mr. Gallery leaves the Canadian Irish Studies Foundation in exceptional condition, with sound financial resources in place to fund Irish studies as well as a dedicated team of officers who are enthusiastic about the future and eager to follow in the path he blazed.*



*Brian, thank you for the wonderful experience of turning our original dream into the vibrant reality of the School of Canadian Irish Studies."*

*— Michael Kenneally, principal, School of Canadian Irish Studies*



*"Brian O'Neill Gallery's leadership over the past two decades has made a very significant difference to the field of Irish studies and our students and faculty at the university. His work with the Canadian Irish Studies Foundation has propelled Concordia's Irish studies programs to the forefront in North America and probably in the world in terms of creating new opportunities, celebrating the past and creating the future. The Concordia community is truly grateful for his dedication."*

*— Concordia President Alan Shepard*

## INNISFAIL SOCIAL AND SPORTS CLUB REACHES OUT TO STUDENTS IN NEED



*Rose Quinn (right), president, Innisfail Social and Sports Club, presents a cheque of \$1,500 to Rhona Richman Kenneally, professor, Design and Computation Arts, Concordia, and Michael Kenneally, principal, School of Canadian Irish Studies, towards the club's bursary fund.*

Montreal's Innisfail Social and Sports Club reaffirmed its commitment to student bursaries with a new donation of \$1,500, adding to the club's contribution of \$15,000 in 2012.

Bursaries serve as an important lifeline to help students stay the course in their studies. Unlike scholarships and academic awards, they benefit students with the greatest financial need.

Pamela McGovern, chair of the Canadian Irish Studies Foundation, expressed her appreciation to the members of the Innisfail Social and Sports Club for their gesture.

"It is very heartening to see grassroots support for Irish studies from Montreal's Irish community, and we are very grateful," said McGovern.

All contributions to the Innisfail Bursary Fund are invested, with only the interest disbursed to students. This guarantees continued support for students in future years.



## LAUNCH OF THE BRIAN O'NEILL GALLERY SCHOLARSHIP FUND

### New fund supporting students named in honour of foundation's past leader

To mark Brian O'Neill Gallery's retirement as foundation chair and recognize his achievements, the Canadian Irish Studies Foundation has established a fund in his honour. The Brian O'Neill Gallery Scholarship Fund will provide approximately \$50,000 annually for students of Irish studies who demonstrate high academic commitment and success.

In thanking trustees during their meeting, Michael Kenneally, principal of the School of Canadian Irish Studies, emphasized that this generous gesture would free many students from the need to work, often on a full-time basis, while pursuing their degrees.

"Such support can make the difference between an individual being an excellent rather than a very good student. And in the competitive environment of today's workplace, it is vitally important that students begin their careers equipped with the very best education possible," says Kenneally.

The Brian O'Neill Gallery Scholarship Fund will be a game changer not only for the students who benefit directly, but also for the overall development of Irish studies.

"I thank all the donors for their generosity and the trustees of the foundation for their vision in recognizing an extraordinary individual in this permanent manner," says Kenneally.



*From left: former prime minister of Canada Paul Martin; Concordia President Alan Shepard; Janice O'Born, chairman, the Printing House Charitable Office; Brian O'Neill Gallery, former chair, Canadian Irish Studies Foundation. They are seen at a CISF fundraising luncheon organized by trustee Matt Tedford and held at the Bay St. offices of KPMG in Toronto on May 27.*

The work of Brian O'Neill Gallery over the last several years and of the trustees of the Canadian Irish Studies Foundation has ensured the future of the School of Canadian Irish Studies. The first Brian O'Neill Gallery Scholarships will be awarded this academic year.

## IRENE MULRONEY SCHOLARSHIP PROPELS BRIGHT YOUNG MINDS

The Rt. Hon. Brian Mulroney has made a new donation to the fund supporting the Irene Mulroney Scholarship in Canadian Irish Studies.

The \$5,000 commitment will bring the fund to almost \$120,000, allowing an annual scholarship of \$6,000 to be awarded this academic year.

Pamela McGovern, chair of the Canadian Irish Studies Foundation, expressed her thanks for the former Canadian prime minister's abiding commitment to build the fund honouring his late mother.

"Mr. Mulroney's generosity ensures a significant scholarship can be awarded annually to a leading student in Irish studies," says McGovern.

Through Brian Mulroney's loyal support over the last years, the Irene Mulroney Scholarship is now one of the most prestigious scholarships currently available to students in Irish studies.

### IRISH STUDIES COURSES AT CONCORDIA — WINTER 2016

The Global Irish

Rebellions in Ireland (1798) and the Canadas (1837)

Irish and Jewish Identities: National and International Dimensions

James Joyce

The Irish Literary Revival

Contemporary Irish Theatre

Irish Performance Studies

Celtic Christianity (online course)

As always, some of these courses can be audited by members of the public, at the discretion of the professor. For further information, please contact the School of Canadian Irish Studies at 514-848-2423, ext. 8711, or [cdnirish.concordia.ca](http://cdnirish.concordia.ca).

# HOW IRISH STUDIES TRANSFORMED MY ACADEMIC EXPERIENCE

By Lauren Maloney

I was ready to give up on university until I met Susan Cahill, assistant professor at the School of Canadian Irish Studies. As an undergraduate student who had already spent two ineffectual years at another university, I felt incapable and frustrated.

Last year, I registered for Professor Cahill's course Highlights of Irish Literature. It was my first Irish studies course and it changed my views on academia. I was never a student who received top marks. Somehow, courses that seemed interesting on paper fell short in the classroom and left me overwhelmed and unmotivated. My courses in Irish studies at Concordia, however, truly changed the way I saw myself in the university setting. Professor Cahill's enthusiasm and knowledge captivated me and I responded to the passion and excitement she generated in the classroom.

My positive experience in Professor Cahill's class led me to enrol in the major in Irish Studies. When I met with the assistant to the principal, Matina Skalkogiannis, for advising, I was immediately touched by her friendliness and support.

I am now in my final undergraduate year at Concordia and I am completely enthralled by the range of courses in Irish studies, from history to film, theatre and performance.

I boast to my friends and family about the dedicated and passionate professors in Irish studies. Without fail, Professor Cahill manages to connect literature to the world I live in. Professor Emer O'Toole has given me fascinating insight into social politicization through performativity. In Professor Jane McGaughy's classes on the history of the Irish in Canada, I am continually impressed by her wit, scholarship and charisma.



Susan Cahill, assistant professor, School of Canadian Irish Studies, with Lauren Maloney, student majoring in Irish studies

Irish studies has motivated me to excel and now my grades reflect my new positive outlook on school and my future career. I have been stimulated by the variety of courses available in Irish studies and the professionalism and encouragement of the professors in the school.

From being discouraged and lacking motivation, I have been transformed into an inspired and dedicated student, who has just been awarded one of the new merit-based financial awards to cover fees.

My plan now is to further my education as a graduate student next year and continue my voyage of learning, training and self-discovery. Irish studies has had a profound effect on my education, success and outlook on what is possible in an academic setting. I am truly grateful to the professors and staff at the school and am excited to continue my involvement after completing my BA.

## The Canadian Irish Studies Foundation counts on your support to help students



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**Canadian Irish Studies Foundation**

1455 De Maisonneuve Blvd. W., H 1001

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Phone: 514-848-2424, ext. 8711

[cisf.concordia.ca](http://cisf.concordia.ca)

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