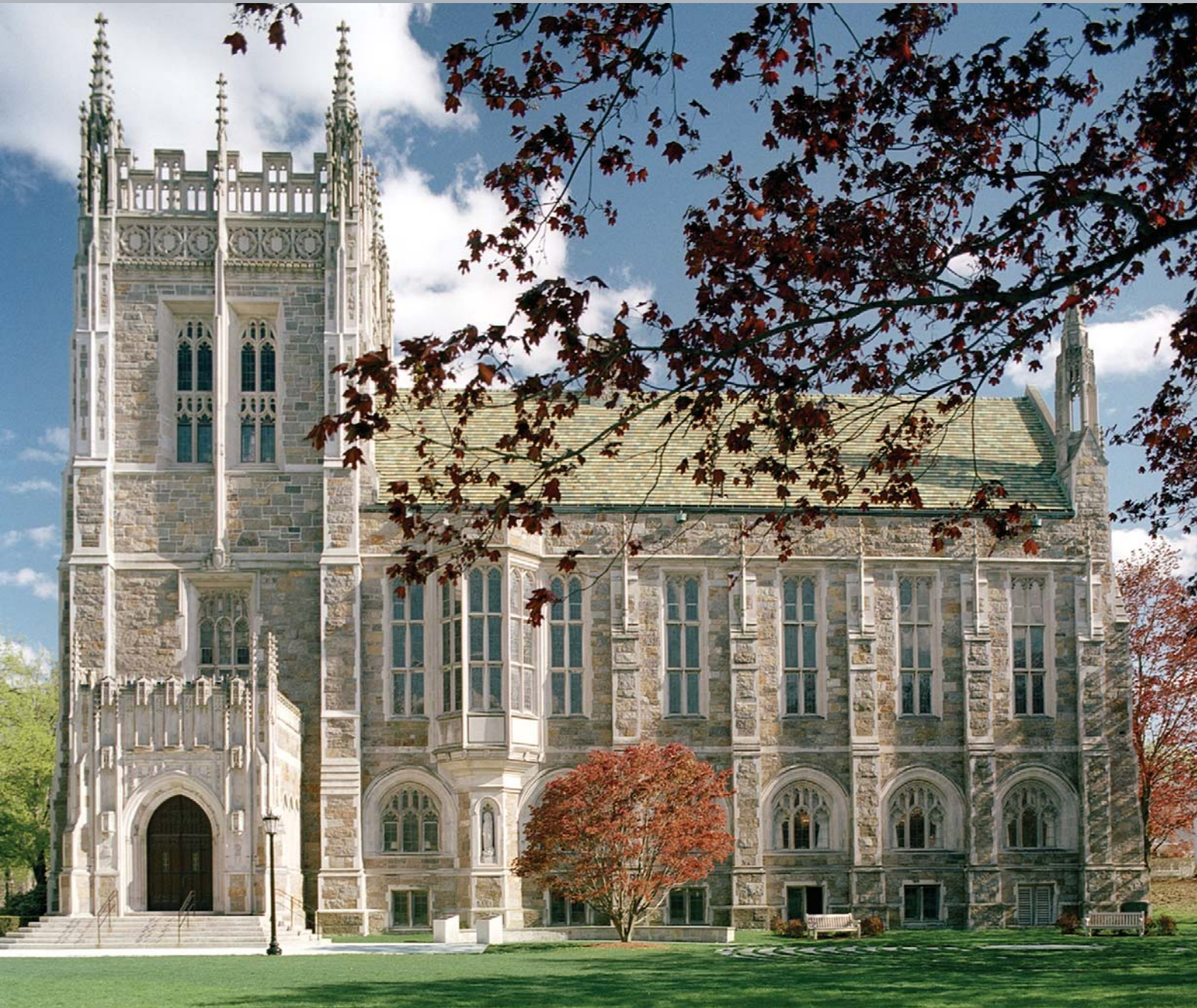


BOSTON COLLEGE

Guardian of Irish Culture



*While Boston College values and celebrates its growing diversity,
it remains ever mindful of its Irish roots.*

by Turlough McConnell



Clearly, the time is right for a flourishing of Irish studies at Boston College.

Overleaf: The Honorable John J. Burns Library, Boston College, home of the largest, most comprehensive collection of Irish research materials in the Western Hemisphere. All photography by Gary Gilbert, Boston College.

Boston College, located in Chestnut Hill, Massachusetts, has long been a leading center of Irish studies. Since its founding on the South End of Boston in 1863, Boston College has been recognized for its original mission to educate the local children of Irish immigrants. Indeed, the Irish connection has always been a hallmark of Boston College—represented in the number of present and former students of Irish ancestry, as well as in the treasures of Ireland’s culture in its libraries and archives. Today, the University stands in the limelight of national attention for its interdisciplinary programs in Irish studies. Its Center for Irish Programs, under the direction of University Professor Thomas Hachey, brings together all of Boston College’s Irish initiatives, with oversight responsibility for the Irish Studies Programs, the Irish Institute, the Burns Library Irish Collections and the Centre for Irish Programs-Dublin. The Irish Studies program at Boston College is ranked among the nation’s finest, and there is great excitement to be found in its classrooms. In addition to being able to select from among a wide range of Irish-related courses on the Chestnut Hill campus, BC students have the opportunity to study abroad at

any of Ireland’s great universities. The Center for Irish Programs regularly sponsors prominent Irish speakers, including Nobel laureates Seamus Heaney and John Hume. It also sponsors a concert series, the Gaelic Roots Music, Song, Dance, Workshop and Lecture Series. The Irish Institute, headed by Dr. Niamh Lynch, hosts officials and policymakers from Ireland and Northern Ireland for professional development programs in areas such as government, non-profit, business, and education. The John J. Burns Library houses the largest, most comprehensive collection of Irish research materials in the Western Hemisphere, and annually hosts a distinguished visiting scholar in the field of Irish studies to make use of its rich resources and to offer a course in Irish Studies in the Burns Library. In addition to the resources at Burns, the O’Neill Library, the University’s main library, also boasts a major collection of Irish materials, including extensive microfilm sets and database offerings. The McMullen Museum of Art at Boston College has hosted several major exhibitions of Irish paintings, including “America’s Eye: Irish Painting from the Collection of Brian P. Burns,” and “Eire | Land.”



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1. Samuel Beckett Centennial Exhibition, Burns Library, 2006
 2. Mick Moloney, Burns Visiting Scholar, performing in Burns Library
 3. 9/11 Memorial Labyrinth at the entrance to the Burns Library

More recently, the Center for Irish Programs opened a Dublin branch on St. Stephen's Green. Led by Academic Director Mike Cronin, D. Phil, the Centre for Irish Programmes-Dublin further establishes Boston College as the preeminent American university in Ireland and underscores the relationship between the University and the land of its founding fathers. The Dublin Centre serves as a focal point for the University's work in Ireland, the UK and throughout Europe. It operates on a multi-disciplinary basis and is open to all BC departments, faculty, students and alumni who work, study or travel in Ireland. Thomas E. Hachey, University Professor of History and Executive Director of the Centers in Boston and Dublin, is Chairman of the Board of Boston College Ireland, Ltd.

Boston College's rise to national renown in the field of Irish studies is, in a sense, the reward for the college's assuming the role of guardian of the Irish way. An immigrant from County Fermanagh in Ulster, John McElroy, S.J. is credited with the school's establishment by purchasing the land and contracting for the buildings that housed the original Boston College. Though the school's development was



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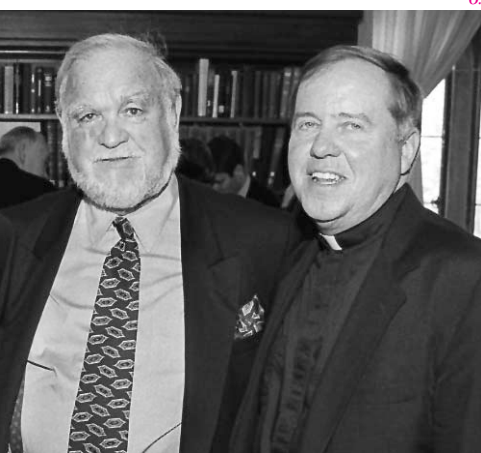
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- 4. *Presentation of Yeats Manuscripts to Boston College. (from left,) Fr. J. Donald Monan, S.J., former President, now Chancellor, Boston College; Anne Yeats, daughter of William Butler Yeats; Robert K. O'Neill, Burns Librarian; Grainne Yeats, wife of Michael Yeats, the son of William Butler Yeats.*
- 5. *(from left,) Thomas Hachey, University Professor and Executive Director, Center for Irish Programs, Garret FitzGerald, former Taoiseach (Prime Minister) of Ireland, Steven Tolman, Massachusetts State Senator, Robert K. O'Neill, Burns Librarian*
- 6. *The late Congressman Joseph Moakley and Rev. William P. Leahy, S.J., President.*
- 7. *Dr. Margaret MacCurtain, Burns Visiting Scholar, 1992-93.*
- 8. *Burns Visiting Scholar, poet Nuala Ni Dhomhnaill*

supported by prominent people of all nationalities, Boston College has maintained a special intellectual and social connection with Ireland. Over the years, academic interest in the University's Irish tradition has been motivated by individuals, often pursued by dedicated efforts of lone scholars or groups serving the local Irish community. A 1969 report by the Eire Society of Boston identified the school's many links to Boston's Irish, noting the "twenty to twenty-four of its presidents who have borne Irish names." The current president, William Patrick Leahy, S.J., now in his eleventh year at the helm, has reaffirmed the University's commitment to its Irish heritage, while guiding Boston College to a position of national and international prominence. Some 29,000 students have applied to Boston College for just 2,250 openings in the class of 2011. With a faculty of eminent scholars noted for their multiple contributions to the arts and sciences, to law, business, education, public service, nursing and social work, Boston College now ranks among the elite institutions in the country, recently listed by *Newsweek* magazine among the "New Ivies." As one of 28 Jesuit colleges and universities in the United States, Boston College is now the fourth-largest private university in New England and ranked among the top 40 American universities by *U.S. News and World Report*. The renaissance in Irish studies builds on this reputation for academic distinction, which is fostered by a supportive infrastructure.

Efforts by Boston College to support the school's Irish connection have always been ambitious, if sometimes short of funds. The present program, which is now flourishing, has precedents in Irish studies courses and programs that were offered at Boston College in years past. Martin Harney, S.J., who taught European civilization for 46 years, also taught a course in Irish history from 1961 until 1975. In 1939, John Murphy, S.J. established a Department of Gaelic Studies that lasted until 1951, when administrative responsibilities forced him to step down. Francis Sweeney, S.J., in his role as Director of the University's prestigious Humanities Series for five decades, brought to Boston College many of Ireland's greatest contemporary writers, including Padraic Colum, Sean O'Faolain, Richard Murphy and Seamus Heaney.

Since its creation in 1978, the University's Irish Studies Program has become increasingly

popular and dynamic, and represents a serious commitment on the part of Boston College leadership to the academic exploration of Irish culture and society. It is the first and today one of the leading Irish studies programs in the nation. Students who wish to pursue Irish studies at Boston College can avail themselves of rich interdisciplinary course offerings in art history, history, literature, music, dance, political science and the Irish language.

The enthusiasm for Irish studies at Boston College is due in large part to its two founders, the late Adele Dalsimer, and Kevin O'Neill, professor of English and history respectively. Their work is being ably carried on by Professors Marjorie Howes and Robert Savage, current co-directors of Irish Studies, and their colleagues Professors Thomas Hachey, Kevin O'Neill, Philip O'Leary, Seamus Connolly, Joseph Nugent, Kevin Kenny, Ann Morrison Spinney, Nancy Netzer, James Smith, Vera Kreilkamp, Ruth-Ann Harris, Daniel Sweeney, S.J., Robert O'Neill, Thomas Garvin, Jimmy Noonan, Meaghan Allen and Laurel Martin. The course offerings in Irish studies have uncommon depth; this spring, 17 courses are being offered, in subjects as varied as the modern Irish language, gender trouble in Irish culture, Irish women emigrants, Irish dance, the tin whistle and the politics of Northern Ireland.

More than fifty years ago Special Collections was founded at Boston College by University Librarian Father Terence Connolly, whose aim was to give Boston College's libraries a firm foundation in scholarship. He enlisted and received the aid of alumnus Judge John J. Burns who became one of the two distinguished first patrons. In memory of his father, Brian P. Burns founded the Honorable John J. Burns Library of Rare Books and Special Collections at Boston College in 1986 and endowed the University's Irish collection—the largest archive of its kind in the Western Hemisphere. With his brother, John J. Burns, Jr., he also established major endowed books funds that provide for significant additions to the Burns Library's holdings. In addition, Brian P. Burns personally made a special challenge grant available that enabled the library to acquire the most comprehensive group of W.B. Yeats manuscripts outside of Ireland. Michael Yeats, the poet's son, commented that "...the Burns Library is an ideal repository for these manuscripts, in view of the long tradition of excellence in Boston College in the field of Irish studies."



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- 9. 17th century Flemish tapestry at entrance to Burns Library donated by Hearst Foundation in honor of Judge John J. Burns and in memory of William Randolph Hearst.
- 10. Irish Studies co-founders Professor Adele Dalsimer (left) and Professor Kevin O'Neill (right) with Dr. Nancy Netzer, Director of the McMullen Museum of Art.



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11. Presentation of Joseph Coolidge Shaw Medal to Brian P. Burns. (from left,) Dr. Robert K. O'Neill, Burns Librarian; Eileen Burns; Brian P. Burns; Dr. Cutberto Garza, Provost; Jerome Yavarkovsky, University Librarian.

12. Co-directors of Irish Studies, Professors Robert Savage (History) and Marjorie Howes (English).

The Irish Collection at the Burns Library has gone a long way toward earning Irish studies its reputation. Under the direction of Dr. Robert K. O'Neill, the library houses 200,000 books, 15,000,000 manuscripts, and impressive holdings of artifacts, maps, paintings and photographs. The Burns Library has achieved international recognition in several areas of research, most notably: Irish studies; British Catholic Authors; Jesuitana; Caribbeana; and Congressional Archives. In recent years, the Burns Library has arranged for a number of major acquisitions, including several important collections relating to Nobel laureate Samuel Beckett; the papers of Irish poets Nuala Ni Dhomhnaill, Gerald Dawe and John Deane; the Samuel Freedman Collection of G.B. Shaw; the papers of Thomas Clarke, the first signer of the 1916 Proclamation, and of his wife Kathleen, the first woman Lord Mayor of Dublin; the 5,000-volume library of Trinity College Professor T.W. Moody; the Bobbie Hanvey Photographic Archive of Northern Ireland; the Frederick M. Manning Collection of John McCormack; the Graham Greene Library and Archive; and the papers of British writers Anthony Rhodes and Alfred Noyes, to name but a few.

In addition to documenting the history and literature of Ireland, the Burns Library has developed one of the foremost Irish music archives in an American university setting. The archive was founded in 1990 by the Music Department, the Irish Studies Program, and the John J. Burns Library, in collaboration with visiting ethnomusicology professor Dr. Mícheál Ó Súilleabháin. Inspired by the work of the Irish Traditional Music Archive in Dublin, the Irish Music

Archives of the John J. Burns Library seeks to preserve and promote Irish traditional music in America. The Irish Music Center works closely with Séamus Connolly, Sullivan Artist in Residence in Irish Music, and the Center for Irish Programs to document the cultural contributions of Irish and Scottish traditional musicians in America. The Center's archives include commercial and field recordings, videorecordings, sheet music, manuscripts, photographs, memorabilia, and books about music. Among its holdings is one of the world's largest collections pertaining to Irish tenor John McCormack.

The close ties between the Irish Studies Program and the Burns Library Irish Collection came to full expression with the establishment of the Burns Library Visiting Scholar in Irish Studies, a visiting faculty position endowed by a gift of the Burns Foundation. Each academic year, the Burns Library welcomes a distinguished scholar, writer or artist who has made significant contributions to Irish cultural and intellectual life. Since its inauguration in Academic Year 1991-92, eighteen distinguished Irish and British scholars have held the Burns Chair, including two former directors of the National Library of Ireland, Alf MacLochlainn and Patricia Donlon; historians Margaret MacCurtain, Kevin Whelan, T. Alvin Jackson, Peter Gray and Maria Luddy; political scientists Paul Bew and Thomas Garvin; medievalists Timothy O'Neill and Bernard Meehan; literary critics and editors Maurice Harmon and Margaret Kelleher; Irish language specialists and poets Sean O'Tuama, Nuala Ni Dhomhnaill, Brendán Ó Buachalla, and Gerald Dawe; and musician and musicologist Mick Moloney.



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**From the Irish Art Collection
of Brian P. Burns**

- 13. Paul Henry
In the Kingdom of Kerry (Irish, c. 1936-1937)
oil on panel/H: 19 1/2 in. W: 21 3/4 in.
- 14. F.J. Davis
The State Ballroom, St. Patrick's Hall, Dublin Castle (Irish, c. 1845)
oil on wood/H: 37 1/2 in. W: 51 1/2 in.
- 15. Walter Frederick Osborne
Study from Nature (Irish, 1859-1903)
oil on canvas/H: 15 in. W: 9 3/4 in.
- 16. Jack Butler Yeats
Misty Morning (Irish, 1871-1957)
oil on canvas/H: 9 in. W: 14 in.
- 17. Roderic O'Conor
Romeo and Juliet (Irish, c. 1898-1900)
oil on canvas/H: 25 1/2 in. W: 21 1/4 in.



In March-April 2007, the Burns Library will lend an impressive array of its Irish treasures to the Phoenix Art Museum in support of an exhibition of Irish paintings from the Brian P. Burns Collection. This exhibit marks the third time that the Burns Library has lent treasures to institutions outside Boston to complement the exhibit of Irish paintings from the private collection of the Library's founder. Previous collaborative exhibits were organized in 1997 at the Yale Center for British Art in New Haven, Connecticut, and in 2000 at the Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts in Washington, D.C. These outreach efforts underscore the Library's and the University's efforts to heighten awareness across America of Ireland's rich cultural heritage and the role that Boston College plays as "guardian of Irish culture."

An Exhibition of Treasures

from the
John J. Burns Library, Boston College

And Irish Paintings
From the Collection of Brian P. Burns

At The Phoenix Art Museum

MARCH-APRIL 2007



JOHN J. BURNS LIBRARY OF RARE BOOKS AND SPECIAL COLLECTIONS

A selection of rare Irish books and original literary manuscripts from the Burns Library's renowned Irish Collection will be exhibited at the Phoenix Art Museum in spring 2007 in connection with the exhibition of Irish paintings from the private collection of philanthropist Brian P. Burns. The exhibit will include selected books, letters and manuscripts by W.B. Yeats, Jack Yeats, Samuel Beckett, George Bernard Shaw, Seamus Heaney, Flann O'Brien and Nuala Ni Dhomhnaill.

The Burns Library's Irish Collection is part of the Center for Irish Programs at Boston College, which also includes the University's acclaimed Irish Studies Program and Irish Institute. The Burns Library is especially pleased to cooperate with the Phoenix Irish Cultural Center in its efforts to celebrate and promote Ireland's cultural heritage and to build a library in Phoenix dedicated to this purpose.

The **Brian P. Burns Irish Art Collection** includes well over 100 paintings from the mid-19th to mid-20th century, reflecting the history, culture and identity of the Irish and their art. The Collection was shown first in 1996 at the McMullen Museum of Art, Boston College, then to great acclaim at Dublin's Hugh Lane Municipal Gallery of Modern Art and at the Yale Center for British Art in 1997 before inaugurating a new gallery at The John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts in Washington, D.C. to mark the Kennedy Center's "Island: Arts from Ireland Festival" in May 2000.

"Brian Burns came to appreciate the wonderful talents of Ireland's visual artists long before they were recognized by the international art community. He began collecting these works more than 30 years ago; his enthusiasm and love for each painting has continued unabated."

— **Jean Kennedy Smith, Former U.S. Ambassador to Ireland**