



After spending years in disrepair, The John Boyle O'Reilly Memorial Statue has been awarded two grants totaling over \$80,000 to cover conservation costs.

The statue, near the intersection of Fenway and Boylston Streets, was created in 1896 by Daniel Chester French. The artwork honors the life and influence of John Boyle O'Reilly who was an Irish activist, journalist, and poet who actively fought against the prejudice that Irish Immigrants, African Americans, Native Americans and other groups faced during his lifetime.

According to an audit conducted by the city's conservator, Daedalus, Inc., the statue, which is a part of the City of Boston's public art collection has been visibly in need of maintenance since 2003.

Due to the status of the memorial, the Fenway Civic Association (FCA) has been actively advocating and fundraising for the conservation of the statue. In August of 2021 they were granted a Fenway Park Demonstration fund grant. The city recently matched the grant and awarded the FCA with \$40,500 to complete the conservation work, as part of their 'adopt a statue funding.'

The FCA released a statement regarding the statue's conservation efforts, "FCA is extremely grateful for the support surrounding the repair and conservation of this important monument. Not only does this project remind us of the significant work and contributions of John Boyle O'Reilly, but it gives attention due to one of Daniel Chester French's most captivating allegorical works. We hope to improve access to the monument in our next efforts."

The conservation work will be completed by Daedalus, Inc. The treatment plan involves the cleaning of the bust of accretions, degraded coatings, and corrosion products. It will be re- patinated to approximate the original 1896 coloration.

A protective coating will be applied to the surface to help to slow the rate of decay caused by exposure to urban outdoor environments.

The statue's missing elements will also be replaced, and the granite and iron surfaces will be refurbished.

The memorial is just one of several monuments which have been 'adopted' by the city as a part of its conservation campaign. According to Christina McGeehan, communications director for the City of Boston, "This is part of a larger effort to conserve existing artworks throughout the city."

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