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AMAZING ADVENTURES IN IRISH HISTORY

NEW SCHOLAR IS EMERALD ISLE EXPERT KERBY MILLER

by [Jim Hanchett](#) | February 9, 2024

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Students interested in the history of Ireland will soon have the opportunity to learn from a renowned expert. Dr. Kerby Miller is the new Scholar in Residence in History and he brings vast knowledge of Ireland's history and its diaspora (immigration) to campus.

"At Christopher Newport, Dr. Miller will enrich our University by continuing his scholarly pursuits, by meeting with our students, and through periodic public talks for the entire community," said History Department Chair Dr. Andrew J. Falk.

The first of his talks, "The Travels of Timothy: The Amazing Adventures and Woeful Escapades of a Young Irishman in North and South America, 1920-1924," is scheduled for Tuesday, Feb. 27, from 3 - 5 p.m. at the Tribble Library Theatre, followed by a reception sponsored by the Department of History. James Quinn (alias Tim O'Brien), was a young Irish Catholic who in 1920 fled personal and political "troubles" in his native Belfast. His travels took him from the Amazon Jungle to Havana, Cuba, with many colorful stops along the way. He sought fame and fortune in Jazz Age America, and worked in Hollywood with Charlie Chaplin before he was arrested, convicted, and subsequently vanished. Miller will demonstrate how Quinn's letters during his travels reveal the broader contexts of Irish immigration and mobility as well as the political, economic, and cultural forces in the Americas at the time.

After earning a PhD from the University of California at Berkeley, Miller was an award-winning endowed professor of history at the University of Missouri. He retired in 2015 and moved to Hampton Roads in 2023. Miller has received numerous scholarly prizes and awards. He was a finalist for the Pulitzer Prize in History and received the Curti

Award from the Organization of American Historians.

His book, "Emigrants and Exiles: Ireland and the Irish Exodus to North America" (Oxford University Press), is a landmark text in the field and a standard text in university classrooms. Miller has received grants from the National Endowment for the Humanities, the Guggenheim Foundation, and the American Council of Learned Societies, among others. Given his reputation among historians, he also has held appointments at New York University, Queen's University of Belfast, and the University of Galway.
