Center for Irish Research & Teaching Receives Large Grant

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Director of the Center for Irish Research & Teaching, Howard Keeley, Ph.D., received a $35,000 grant from the Irish State Department for the Wexford-Savannah Axis Heritage project.

The Wexford-Savannah Axis Heritage project centers around a significant but under-researched transatlantic migration pathway. In the mid-nineteenth century, a direct maritime link opened between Wexford, a county in Southeastern Ireland, and the port city of Savannah, Ga. According to one estimate, by 1860 over 56% of Savannah’s Irish-born population was from Wexford. These and other Irish immigrants became leaders in business, trade unionism, healthcare, education, and politics in Savannah and is one of the main reasons that the city now hosts the second largest St. Patrick’s Day festival in North America.

The grant will assist with establishing a high-quality online presence for the Wexford-Savannah Axis Heritage project and allow Keeley and the student-researchers associated with the Center to continue and deepen their research.

The project is a unique collaboration between Georgia Southern University’s Center for Irish Research & Teaching and the Georgia Historical Society, as well as two Irish partners: the School of Humanities at Waterford Institute of Technology and the John F. Kennedy Trust.

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