



CITY OF KEARNEY **PRESS RELEASE** ***For Immediate Release***

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Author and UNK History Professor James Rohrer presents at Kearney Public Library

University of Nebraska at Kearney Professor James Rohrer will discuss his new book, “*Young Mackay: The Roots of His Ministry in Taiwan*” during an event Wednesday, April 20 at 7:00 p.m. at Kearney Public Library, 2020 First Ave.

Dr. Rohrer will present *The Many Worlds of George Leslie Mackay: Victorian Missionary, Intercultural Bridge, “Son-in-Law of Taiwan,” Symbol of Taiwanese Nationalism*. Largely forgotten today in his Canadian homeland, and unknown to most of the world, Presbyterian missionary George Leslie Mackay (1844-1901) is a national icon in Taiwan, where he is commemorated on postage stamps, quoted in political speeches, honored in Memorial Concerts by the Taipei Symphony and brought to life on stage by the National Opera in the musical “The Black-Bearded Bible Man.” Christians, who make up approximately 8% of Taiwan’s population, regard him as a patron saint and Presbyterians (the largest Church on the island) are in 2022 celebrating the sesquicentennial of his arrival in Taiwan with much fanfare. Remarkably, however, there has been little historical scholarship about him. Who was Mackay and what was his impact upon Taiwanese history? How did a shy Scots-Canadian farm boy become transformed into a symbol of Taiwanese nationalism for many who dream of Taiwanese Independence?

Dr. James Rohrer is Professor of History at UNK, where he teaches courses on Early America, American Religious History, and History of Religions. He attended Kent State University (BA), The Ohio State University (MA, PhD) and the University of Dubuque Theological Seminary (M.Div), and has taught History and Religious Studies for many years at various colleges and universities in the United States. From 1993-1998 he taught History of Christianity at Yushan College and Seminary in Taiwan, a school that serves the indigenous tribal communities of the island. He has published numerous books and essays on American religious history and Christianity in Taiwan, and his book *Young Mackay: The Roots of His Ministry in Taiwan* has recently been released in Taiwan in conjunction with the Mackay Sesquicentennial Observances. This program is free and open to the public.

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