**HARRINGTON PARK HISTORICAL SOCIETY**

**PRESS RELEASE**

The Harrington Park Historical Society begins its ten lecture series for 2024-2025 on Monday, September 9, 2024 with their guest speaker, Francesca Costa, presenting “Skunk Hollow: History of a 19th Century Community of Free African-Americans.” Ms. Costa, a full time public historian at the Palisades Interstate Park, graduated from Gettysburg College in 2019. She continued to work there as she earned her graduate degree from the University of Edinburgh. In addition to her responsibilities at the Park, she frequently lectures to various civic organizations, schools, and historic societies.

Throughout most of the nineteenth century, a small community of free blacks existed along the New York/New Jersey state line about a mile south of Palisades. Known as Skunk Hollow, it was settled by former slaves and their descendents 60 years before slavery was abolished in New Jersey. The first known deed was to Jack Earnest, a former slave, who, on January 1, 1806, paid $87.50 for five acres and 30 square rods; in 1822 he purchased another six acres.

The public is invited to attend at no cost. The meeting will start 7:30 P.M. at the public Library, 10 Herring Street, Harrington Park.

Immediately following the presentation, there will be a meet and greet along with light refreshments.

For more information go to [www.harringtonparkhistoricalsociety.com](http://www.harringtonparkhistoricalsociety.com), or call Gerri Gibney at 201 768-2615.

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8/5/24