NEW Podcast Episode
Research Behind the Association’s New Initiative:
“Slavery in the President’s Neighborhood”

March 26, 2020 (Washington, D.C.) – The White House Historical Association explores the topic of “Slavery in the President’s Neighborhood,” its new research initiative, in this month’s podcast episode. Association President Stewart McLaurin speaks to historians Dr. Matthew Costello, Dr. Lindsay Chervinsky, and Lina Mann about their groundbreaking research to tell the stories of the enslaved individuals who built, worked at, and lived in or near the White House.

Listen to this episode: “Researching Slavery in the President’s Neighborhood.”

“When we approach White House history, we need to hear the voices of everyone, not just presidents, first ladies, but the enslaved people, the stewards, the butlers, the maids, the coachman,” said Dr. Matthew Costello. “There’s a wide variety of experiences that are only going to add to our understanding and deepen our breadth of American history and White House history.”

 “[With this research], we built an index of all the enslaved people that we discovered. Right now we have 307 names and that is absolutely an incomplete number... We created a 3-D interactive tour of the Decatur House slave quarters and that was such an important part of this project because it gives a visual to what the lived experience would have been like for people in the President’s Neighborhood.”

In this episode, historians Chervinsky, Costello and Mann provide anecdotes including accounts about the first baby born in the White House: an enslaved child named Asnet who died shortly after birth. They also talk about the processes involved in researching such a difficult topic, which often has little primary source evidence.
Research into enslaved people at the White House for “Slavery in the President’s Neighborhood” is ongoing and new articles and assets are added regularly. To learn more visit www.whitehousehistory.org/spn/introduction.

The 1600 Sessions
In this podcast series, White House Historical Association President Stewart McLaurin interviews luminaries, historians, and eyewitnesses to history about America’s most famous residence and office—the White House. Each episode includes a prominent guest or guests to discuss varying facets of White House history, including insights from former staff and many other topical issues.

*The 1600 Sessions* is available on iTunes, Spotify, Google Play, and Stitcher. To hear the full episode, visit The1600Sessions.org.

For media inquiries, please contact press@whha.org.

About The White House Historical Association
First Lady Jacqueline Kennedy envisioned a restored White House that conveyed a sense of history through its decorative and fine arts. In 1961, the White House Historical Association was established to support her vision to preserve and share the Executive Mansion’s legacy for generations to come. Supported entirely by private resources, the Association’s mission is to assist in the preservation of the state and public rooms, fund acquisitions for the White House permanent collection, and educate the public on the history of the White House. Since its founding, the White House Historical Association has contributed more than $50 million in fulfillment of its mission. To learn more about the White House Historical Association, please visit www.whitehousehistory.org.

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