



Southold Historical Museum PRESS RELEASE

For Immediate release

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Southold, NY

Southold Historical Museum's Winter Lecture Series sponsored by NOFO Real Estate Continues

Southold Historical Museum's 2023 Winter Lecture Series, "Local Farming Through the Years," sponsored by NOFO Real Estate continues in March with a talk by Mark Torres. This third lecture in the series titled "Dust for Blood: Long Island Labor Camps" will be held on March 4, 2023 at 12pm at Southold Town Recreation Center at 970 Peconic Lane, Peconic, NY 11958. The guest speaker, Mark Torres, will share the history of the labor camps that sustained the potato farming industry on Long Island.

Potatoes were once one of the most abundant and lucrative crops on Long Island. Yet very little has been written about the manual labor needed to facilitate this thriving industry. This portion of the Winter Lecture Series at the Southold Historical Museum explores the history of the migratory labor system utilized for potato farming during the first half of the 20th century on the eastern end of Long Island. Topics to be discussed include the wide variety of structures used as labor camps, the adverse physical and psychological impacts on the lives of the workers at these camps, corrupt recruiting practices and chronic workplace and economic exploitation, efforts by outspoken critics to improve the lives of migrant workers, and factors that led to the ultimate decline of this labor system and the potato industry as a whole.

Mark Torres is the author of *Long Island Migrant Labor Camps: Dust for Blood* (The History Press, 2021). He has also authored two fictional crime novels and a labor union related children's book. Torres is also a labor and employment attorney who tirelessly represents thousands of unionized workers and their family members in the tri-state area and an adjunct assistant professor of labor studies at Hofstra University. Torres earned his law degree from the Fordham University School of Law in 2008 and an undergraduate degree in history from New York University in 2003.

Deanna Witte-Walker, Southold Historical Museum's executive director, stated, "Local labor camps were a significant part of the farming industry in the mid-1900s, yet the story is not widely known. We are grateful that Mark Torres has done the research and is sharing this often under-represented history."

The Winter Lecture Series is presented free and open to the public. Programs such as these support the mission of Southold Historical Museum to promote interest in and education about our local history. The Museum is thankful to the community for its support and especially to NOFO Real Estate for their sponsorship of the "Local Farming through the Years" Winter Lecture Series.

For more information on this event or any other museum programs, please call (631) 765-5500 or email info@southoldhistorical.org.