



For Immediate Release

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**What:** 2017 Newell D. Goff Lecture: "Food at the Nation's History Museum" with Susan Evans McClure

**When:** Wednesday, April 19, 6pm [FREE EVENT]

**Where:** The Rhode Island Historical Society Aldrich House, 110 Benevolent St., Providence, R.I.



## Smithsonian Food History Programs Director to Speak at RIHS Goff Lecture

*Free Talk: Evans McClure on "Seeing Yourself in America's Past, Present, & Future"*

(PROVIDENCE, R.I.) – Can we use beer as a way to track immigration trends? Or a recipe card to examine agricultural development? What are the most significant advances in the evolution of cookware? **Susan Evans McClure**, Director of Food History Programs at the Smithsonian Institution's National Museum of American History, will address questions like these at the Rhode Island Historical Society's 2017 Newell D. Goff Lecture, a free event taking place at the Aldrich House in Providence on Wednesday, April 19, 6pm. A reception will follow.

During “Food at the Nation’s History Museum: Seeing Yourself in America’s Past, Present, & Future,” Evans McClure will discuss her approach to programming, stories, and interactive exhibits, as well as her thoughts on the future of the National Museum of American History’s work. She will also offer insight into the connections between the history of food and larger themes in American culture.

Evans McClure’s work made headlines in 2016 when the National Museum of American History sought to hire a “Beer Historian” as part of its American brewing history initiative. As she wrote in a blog post at the time, “While we love experiencing history firsthand, the position is not about drinking on the job – it’s about going beyond the glass.” The beer historian focuses on how the industry has interwoven with the nation’s history, including immigration, Prohibition, and economic innovation.

Evans McClure’s previous projects have included the Smithsonian Food History Weekend, which hosted roundtables on the latest issues in food systems, as well as a restaurant initiative that found chefs preparing meals inspired by Julia Child. She also curates exhibits for the National Museum of American History’s kitchen, offering cooking demonstrations, exhibits, and discussion panels. She has previously written on an array of topics, including the celebration of Thanksgiving at military bases, the apple industry in Washington State, and the Smithsonian’s collection of unique historical cookware.

“As a Smithsonian Affiliate, we’re honored and excited to welcome Susan Evans McClure as our next speaker in the Goff Lecture series. She has worked tirelessly to offer fresh and relevant programming, which is a mission we share in making Rhode Island history accessible to a broader audience,” said RIHS Executive Director **C. Morgan Grefe**. “What’s more, with state’s emergence as a culinary hot spot and popular dining destination, as well as our own focus on foodways for events and initiatives this year, the timing is just right for a collaboration.”

Evans McClure’s talk is presented as part of Relishing Rhode Island, the RIHS’s 2017 programming theme.

The Newell D. Goff Lecture and reception is free and open to the public, with advance registration at <https://goo.gl/forms/sAHa6C4X4bxq0bT42> or by calling (401) 331-8575 x360.

Last year’s Goff Lecture featured Dr. **Jeffrey E. Post**, Curator-in-Charge of the Mineral Collection at the Smithsonian National Museum of Natural History, who discussed the Hope Diamond.

#### **About the Rhode Island Historical Society**

Founded in 1822, the RIHS is the fourth-oldest historical society in the United States and is Rhode Island’s largest and oldest historical organization, as well as its only Smithsonian Affiliate. In Providence, the RIHS owns and operates the John Brown House Museum, a designated National Historic Landmark, built in 1788; the Aldrich House, built in 1822 and used for administration and public programs; and the Mary Elizabeth Robinson Research Center, where archival, book and image collections are housed. In Woonsocket, the RIHS manages the Museum of Work and Culture, a community museum examining the industrial history of northern Rhode Island and of the workers and settlers, especially French-Canadians, who made it one of the state’s most distinctive areas.

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