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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Rhode Island's Shellfish Heritage: An Ecological History

A January 26th talk with Sarah Schumann, a Newport Eats Event

Newport, RI – The Newport Historical Society's current programming initiative *Newport Eats* focuses on food and foodways. Keeping to this popular topic, the Society is pleased to host author Sarah Schumann for the **January 26th, 2017** talk *Rhode Island's Shellfish Heritage: An Ecological History*.

The shellfish in Narragansett Bay and Rhode Island's salt ponds have provided people with sustenance for over 2,000 years. Over time, shellfish have gained cultural significance, with their harvest becoming a family tradition and their shells offered as tokens of appreciation and represented as works of art. Schumann's book covers the history of Rhode Island's iconic oysters, quahogs and the well-known and lesser-known species in between, which she will highlight during her talk. She will offer the perspectives of those who catch, grow and sell shellfish, as well as of those who produce wampum, sculpture and books with shellfish — particularly quahogs — as their medium or inspiration.

A fish worker, fisher (wo)man, writer and advocate, Sarah Schumann's fisheries activities take her from the waters of Narragansett Bay, where she fishes for conchs, quahogs, oysters and razor clams to Bristol Bay, Alaska, where she works as a salmon cannery machinist for three months each summer. Her advocacy activities include developing a climate change adaptation blueprint with Rhode Island's fishing industry and coordinating the activities of a small nonprofit, Eating with the Ecosystem, that aims to design and promote a "place-based approach to sustainable seafood". She worked with the Coastal Resources Center, R.I. Sea Grant, and URI's Coastal Institute to write her book *Rhode Island's Shellfish Heritage: An Ecological History* (2015).

Rhode Island's Shellfish Heritage takes place at 5:30pm at the NHS Resource Center, 82 Touro Street, Newport, RI. General admission costs \$5 per person, \$1 for Newport Historical Society members along with active duty and retired military. Reservations suggested as space is limited; please RSVP online at NewportHistory.org or call 401-841-8770.

About the Newport Historical Society

Since 1854, the Newport Historical Society has collected and preserved the artifacts, photographs, documents, publications, and genealogical records that relate to the history of Newport County, to make these materials readily available for both research and enjoyment, and to act as a resource center for the education of the public about the history of Newport County, so that knowledge of the past may contribute to a fuller understanding of the present. For more information please visit www.NewportHistory.org.

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