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Editor's Note

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Editor's Note

Fifty Washington Square is the address of an imposing Neo-Renaissance building occupying a prominent position diagonally across from the Colony House at the head of Washington Square, in the heart of old colonial Newport. Since 1989, it has also been Newport's low-income Single Room Occupancy housing and homeless shelter. Many are unfamiliar with the numerous arts programs that flourished at Fifty Washington Square during the early 1990s. In this issue of *Newport History*, Jan Shapin details these activities and illustrates them with many previously unpublished images from the archives of the Community Development Training Institute (CDTI), one of the founding organizations of the building. The Newport Historical Society recently acquired this archival collection with support from a grant by the Rhode Island Council for the Humanities (RICH). Jan Shapin was the Director of CDTI from 1982 to 2000. Since 1997, she has also been a Commissioner for the Newport Housing Authority. Her educational background includes a BA (1965) in History from Reed College in Portland, Oregon, and graduate studies in Economic History at the University of Wisconsin at Madison from 1965 to 1966.

Ms. Shapin has a great passion for writing, and she has been an author and playwright since 1978. She studied playwriting from 1978 to 1980 at Catholic University in Washington, D.C., and attended the Sewanee Writers' Conference (1993) and Bread Loaf Writers' Conference (1997). Her publications include the novel *A Snug Life Somewhere*, published in 2006, and plays produced by the Colonial Theatre in Westerly, Rhode Island, the Rhode Island Playwrights Theatre in Providence, and the Charlotte Repertory Theatre in Charlotte, North Carolina. Her play *Ambassadors of God*, about the Catholic Worker Movement's call to address the problems of homelessness during the Depression, was first produced as a staged reading in 1999 by the Newport Historical Society with funding from RICH.

The Naval Historical Collection, housed in the library of the Naval War College at Newport, is the main repository for documents relating to the naval history of Narragansett Bay. Dr. Evelyn M. Cherpak, Head of the Naval Historical Collection since 1974, provides a comprehensive breakdown of the contents of the collection, with illustrations drawn from the collection and the files of the Naval War College Museum. Dr. Cherpak earned her Ph.D. in 1973 from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, an M.A. in 1965 from the University of Pennsylvania, and a B.A. in 1963 from Connecticut College. For the last sixteen years, she has been conducting an oral history program on World War II WAVES, naval officers, and enlisted men.