

# Students Document History

Somers Historical Society and Somers High School collaborate to create local Covid-19 archive.

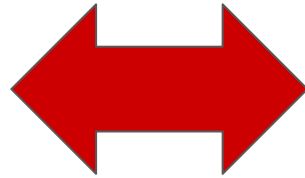


*Somers Historical Society*



# Genesis/goals of project:

SHS Library Media Specialist (*Christine Drysdale*) saw opportunity to teach students about primary sources through creation of them.



Somers Historical Society (*Grace Zimmermann*) was looking for ways to reach into the community--especially the schools--to build local archive to document Covid-19 pandemic.



# Our Collection Process:

- Modified questionnaire from APHNYS (Association of Public Historians of NY State) for high school student audience using Microsoft Forms
- Discussed privacy concerns
  - ◆ Chose SHS Librarian as collection authority
  - ◆ Sought approvals from Assistant Superintendent for Learning & Collections Committee of Somers Historical Society
  - ◆ Collected only first name and grade of students.
- SHS Librarian built a web page as immediate repository for artifacts
- Somers Historical Society created link from its website to SHS Library page and other social media platforms



Image source:

<https://articles.bplans.com/how-to-write-a-business-plan-use-this-checklist-to-keep-yours>

# Successes so far:

- Project expanded districtwide to 4 schools
- Raised students' awareness of role/value of:
  - ◆ primary sources
  - ◆ school librarians
  - ◆ local historians/repositories.
- Received local media coverage.
- Built new relationships between Somers Historical Society, Somers High School Library & Somers Central School District
- Contributed local student/academic observations to permanent archives of Somers Historical Society for its' Covid-19 Pandemic Collection.
- <https://www.somersschools.org/Page/12498>

The screenshot shows the Somers High School Library website. The header includes navigation links for Home, Our School, Academics, Student Services, Student Life, and Families. The main content area is titled "SHS Documents History During Covid-19" and features a "Primary Sources" graphic with an eye icon and a speech bubble. The graphic text reads: "Primary Sources: Primary sources are records of events created as they occurred or recorded by eyewitnesses. They Come in many formats." Below the graphic is a list of student names and grades who have contributed to the collection, including Adrianna Grade 12, Ailbhe Grade 11, Aiden Grade 11, Barbara (faculty), Cole Grade 11, Dahlia Grade 10, Daniel Grade 12, David Grade 12, Diana Grade 10, Elynn Grade 10, Emerson Grade 12, Holly Grade 12, Juliet Grade 10, Margaret Grade 10, Megan Grade 10, Nick Grade 11, Peyton Grade 11, Robert Grade 10, and Robert Grade 11. A sidebar on the left lists library resources such as Home, Our Stories: SHS Documents History During Covid-19, Find books in our library, Books from other libraries, E-Book Access, Databases, Class Resources, and Writing and Research Resources.



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We are working to create a more streamlined website later this year.

In compliance with the Town of Somers' Rules of Privacy, historical artifacts pertaining to the Covid-19 Pandemic, the offices & galleries of Somers Historical Society are temporarily closed to the Somers Historical Society. Town Meetings, exhibits, educational events. Although we may still be sending you in person for exhibits, we may receive messages by email and social media. email: [society@somersetny.org](mailto:society@somersetny.org)



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see Somers history in pop culture through links below, or visit past episodes of our virtual series



2020-2021 Virtual Series

Episode 1: The

Episode 2: The

Episode 3: The

Episode 4: The

Episode 5: The

Episode 6: The

Episode 7: The

Episode 8: The

Episode 9: The

Episode 10: The

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Episode 38: The

Episode 39: The

Episode 40: The

See the Town of Somers Memorial Day Commemoration ceremony we helped organize on YouTube.

Check back here for details for a similar ceremony for the 4th of July.

### The Covid-19 Pandemic Archive Collection Project

In partnership with Somers Historical Society, the Somers High School Library is helping document these historic times by collecting primary sources from students to be contributed to the Society's newly created Covid-19 Pandemic Archive.

Here is one of the first student contributions to the archive.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=020rCfA0oA0&list=PL8u5y2q1b>

The project will be expanding throughout the Somers Central School District and Somers community-at-large over the coming weeks.

# Next steps:

- Continue to seek more responses from students.
- **Create teacher/faculty questionnaire.** Build related projects with interns, scouts. **Collect end-of-academic year artifacts (graduation).**
- Plan formal presentation of contribution to Society's Covid-19 Pandemic Archive & some type of exhibition in fall (*tentative Oct. -- National Archive Month.*)
- **Society compile all submissions, digitize those not already done, for archives and consideration of submission to NY Heritage collections.**

## Lessons learned:

- Importance of frequent promotion:  
Ongoing communication directly to students and through weekly principal newsletter.
- Teachers wanted to be involved but didn't have time due to curriculum demands.
  - ◆ Need to find way to connect to curriculum/classes to increase student participation.
- Multiple challenges when quickly pivoting to online formats: Need to seek students/educators/individuals dedicated to collecting and/or creating digitally to maximize collecting.

