

# Somerset County 4-H Archive of New Jersey

## Collection Policy

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## Mission Statement

The Somerset County 4-H Archive's mission is to preserve, collect, and provide access to records and documentary materials created by and related to Somerset County 4-H of New Jersey as a whole.

## User Community

The user community includes 4-H members and their families, leaders, volunteers, agents, and association members. Local community members and researchers may also use our records. An appointment to access and use the physical records is required.

## Background

The Somerset County 4-H Archive came into existence in 2020 due to the Pandemic when one volunteer, Betty Sommerville, had time to start the task of evaluating and arranging the various collections of records within the 4-H center. She focuses solely on the print photographic records. In 2021 a second volunteer, Julia Meier, joined to evaluate and arrange the 35mm slide records, along with other visual and audio formats. Today, both volunteers are working towards making this archive accessible to its user community and its future potential users.

## History of the Collections

Somerset County 4-H history goes back to 1917 when New Jersey's Cooperative Extension Service opened a county office in Somerville. Somerset County got its first 4-H Agent, Robert R. Windeler in 1938 and shortly afterwards within the 1940s started to have annual county fairs initiated by the Dairy clubs. It wasn't until 1948 the first official Somerset County 4-H Fair at the Far Hills Fairgrounds happened. In 1961 the county purchased the land of what is the current fairgrounds. In 1962 the Somerset County Fair moved to the current fairgrounds on Milltown Road in Bridgewater, known as the North Branch Fairgrounds. By 1964 Somerset County 4-H purchased property diagonal from the fairgrounds to build their 4-H center. In 1969 the Prep

program, for 4-H members K-3rd grade, was launched. By 1970 the 4-H center was built and opened its doors for the various 4-H clubs and events to use. The center was officially finished in 1973 and dedicated in 1974. Today the building is still in use and the Somerset County 4-H happens annually every year at the North Branch Fairgrounds. The only exception was during the COVID-19 Pandemic that the 2020 and 2021 fairs were turned to a virtual setting.

## Collecting Policy

### Rationale

The preservation of Somerset County 4-H's history is the primary driving force behind the criteria for selecting materials.

### Scope of collecting

We collect materials that cover the scope of the Somerset County 4-H of New Jersey and all entities within Somerset County 4-H in relation to 4-H.

### Format & Types of Materials

We collect a wide range of formats and types of materials. Within our archive, we have various types of photographs, video and sound recordings, physical objects, and 4-H year books. We do not keep organizational records such as membership registration, financial papers, or any institutional records created by the Somerset County 4-H association or its office. Currently, we will only accept materials in formats that the archive can provide access to. We will not accept any material that we cannot access the information it holds, unless there are extenuating circumstances determined by the archival volunteer staff.

### Collecting Methods

This archive will not purchase any documentary materials, it will only accept donations and gifts of documentary materials for the foreseeable future. This is due to the restriction of funding and the scope of the archive. The archive will look to its 4-H user community to donate new documentary materials to the archive.

**11/20/2021 Note: As of the foreseeable future the archive will not be collecting any new items due to the fact it is still in its early organization stages.**

## Subject areas

These are general subject areas that our collections cover. This is in no way an extensive list, just general guidelines. Please see the finding aids of the various collections to see the exact subjects that this archive covers.

- Somerset County 4-H fair
- Somerset County 4-H clubs and their events
- Somerset County events
- State level 4-H events that Somerset County members attended
- National level 4-H events that Somerset County members attended
- International level 4-H events that Somerset County members attended
- Events that relate to Somerset County 4-H or its members
- 4-H Camp
- 4-H Promotional material that has a connection or relates to Somerset County 4-H
- Ted Blum Somerset County 4-H Center
- Somerset County 4-H staff and volunteers

## Retention

We will keep no more than two copies of an item within the same medium or not more than three copies in different mediums. In total, we should not have more than three copies total regardless of the medium within the collection of one item.

- Ex. For one photograph we would keep the original negative, a physical copy of the photo, and a digital copy.

*Note: the backup files of the archive's digital files do not count towards this total.*

## Exclusions

This archive holds the right to refuse materials based on condition and content as well as if it's a duplicate of a record within the archive. If any material is beyond the scope of this archive, it will not be accepted. We will not accept any materials with restrictions on access or use. Materials will not be accepted if the donor's legal ownership of them is uncertain. Any photocopies of original materials are generally not accepted; however, some exceptions can be made. This is up to archive volunteer staff's judgment.

## Donation and Gift Policy

The Somerset County 4-H Archive will accept donations both in materials and funds. Any donation and gift will become the property of this archive and may be retained or disposed of

as the archival volunteer staff sees fit based on the archive's collecting policy. The final say in the acceptance of a gift or donation will be determined by the head archival volunteer.

It is not guaranteed that every donation and gift will be accepted. A donation or gift may be rejected due to but not limited to:

- Outside the scope of the archive
- Irrelevant
- Duplicate of materials already within the collection
- Cannot be preserved by the limited resources of the archive
- Poor condition
- Inaccurate
- Legal ownership is in question
- Restriction of use

Donated material will not be appraised by archival volunteer staff. The appraisal of donated material for tax purposes is the responsibility of the donor. Donors who wish for a receipt for the materials given will be provided a Receipt for Materials Donated Form.

## Deaccessioning Policy

This Archive retains the right to dispose of any item that does not fit within the collection or duplicate as the archive sees fit.

- A. If an item does not fit within the scope of this archive and holds possible value to another institution or person, it will be offered to said institution/ person. If it is declined and no other institution or person would like the item it is discarded.
- B. If the item is a duplicate and in good shape, it will be treated just like an item which does not fit within the collection. It will be offered to other institutions or people who have an interest. If it is declined, then it is discarded.
- C. If an item is in unsavable shape, or a duplicate, or an item that does not fit within the collection that is slotted for discarding, it will be recycled depending on the material in which it is made from.
  - a. If items contain any personal information, it is blacked out or shredded before recycling.

## Resource Sharing

At this time the archive is not sharing its collections with other institutions unless upon special request and is up to the judgment of the archival volunteer staff. However, this archive is exploring sharing resources and partnerships with Rutgers University and the Somerset County Library System of New Jersey.

## References

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