

# COVID-19 Collection

## A Finding Aid



Vitale Park in Lakeville (town of Livonia) taped off, 2020 | By Lindsey Meys

**Livingston County Historian's Office**

5 Murray Hill Dr.

Mt. Morris, NY 14510

May 2023

Prepared by Holly C. Watson, Livingston County Historian

## I. Collection Summary

<b>Title</b>	COVID-19 Collection
<b>Collection No.</b>	C198
<b>Extent</b>	362 digital files
<b>Date Range</b>	2020-2023
<b>Abstract</b>	<p>Compiled by the Livingston County Historian's Office beginning in March 2020 and continuing as material is collected, this collection documents the impact of the coronavirus pandemic on Livingston County businesses, government operations, and residents. The scope includes Livingston County and its towns with references to national and international news for context. The collection focuses on Livingston County's response and includes reference materials, a timeline of county government actions and occurrences, emails, photographs, and resident experience narratives.</p>
<b>Languages</b>	English.
<b>Access and Restrictions</b>	<p>The collection may be accessible by advance request and permission from the Livingston County Historian's Office. Any use of the material in print or online publications must be cited as follows: "Courtesy of Livingston County Historian's Office, New York." Additionally, all physical documents should be handled with care.</p> <p>To arrange to conduct research with the documents in the collection, contact the Livingston County Historian by mail at: 5 Murray Hill Drive, Mount Morris, NY, by phone at (585) 243-7955, or by e-mail at <a href="mailto:Historian@livingstoncountyny.gov">Historian@livingstoncountyny.gov</a>.</p>
<b>Copyright</b>	<p>Some materials may be subject to copyright. Researchers are required to seek written permission from the copyright holder to reproduce and/or publish materials under copyright.</p>

## II. Background Information

Coronavirus disease (COVID-19) is an infectious disease caused by the SARS-CoV-2 virus. The novel coronavirus was initially reported in Wuhan, China, in late 2019 and rapidly spread across the world, deeply impacting life and health, industry, and supply chains. As of 2023, though the World Health Organization (WHO) has declared the emergency phase over, the outbreak is still considered a pandemic.

In Livingston County, the pandemic did not directly affect most residents or government until mid-March 2020. In quick succession, the WHO's declaration of pandemic on March 11, 2020, was followed by a national state of emergency declaration on March 13 and a local state of emergency declaration by Livingston County on March 14. On Monday, March 16, 2020, the Livingston County Emergency Operations Center (EOC) at Hamptons Corners, Groveland, was activated at Level 1 in order to centralize and coordinate the county's emergency response. In the following days and weeks, schools, restaurants, and churches were closed, and large gatherings were cancelled. Among the factors of loosened restrictions over the rest of the year and into 2021 were community and political pushback and fatigue, the availability of vaccinations, less severe viral variants, and improved medical treatments. There is no question that the COVID-19 pandemic, especially during 2020-2021, affected most people in at least some ways, and communities are still recognizing those impacts, be they personal or structural.

The materials in this collection, which are primarily digital, were compiled by the Livingston County Historian's Office as the events of the COVID-19 pandemic unfurled, particularly in 2020, but continuing into early 2023. Former County Historian Amie Alden mainly collected news articles and emails sent to internal county officials. Deputy County Historian Holly Watson was temporarily reassigned from March 16-26, 2020, to observe operations at the Livingston County EOC, collecting information about the county's emergency response and assisting with internal communications. Much of the collection, especially notes about Livingston County's governmental response, was obtained during this time and through Watson's work.

After the immediate emergency period and as remote work was recognized as a way to slow the spread of the virus, Holly Watson was no longer working directly with county officials, but continued collecting information from county email, news, and the community to document the ongoing and evolving impact of the pandemic. In early April 2020, the County Historian's Office launched a project to collect narratives, photographs, and other information from the Livingston County community to help document the impact of the pandemic. There were several submissions of short narratives as well as photographs and other documentation.

By spring 2023, media attention about COVID-19 was very scarce and Livingston County in general acted as though the pandemic was over. The Livingston County Department of Health continues to maintain information online and supports related public health initiatives. For the average resident of Livingston County, life has gone back to normal or close to it.

### III. Contents List

- File 1** Anita and Jim Whitehead (Geneseo) Collection, 2020-2022 (72 items)
- File 2** Articles from newspapers, 2020-2021 (9 items)
- File 3** COVID-19 Documentation Project, Livingston County Historian (14 items)
- File 4** Emails, 2020-2022 (Livingston County internal emails) (55 items)
- File 5** Livingston County Emergency Orders, 2020 (15 items)
- File 6** Documents relating to local business, 2020-2021 (5 items)
- File 7** Photographs, 2020-2021 (55 items)
- File 8** Livingston County press releases, 2020-2022 (30 items)
- File 9** Documents relating to county, state, regional response and statistics, 2020-2023 (25 items)
- File 10** WSGU Radio scripts and digital recordings, March-May 2020 (76 items)

### IV. Related Materials

#### Livingston County Historian's Office, Mt. Morris

- Reference materials relating to COVID-19 not included in above collection, 2020-2023
- *Livingston County News* and *Genesee Valley Penny Saver* (Livingston and Dansville-Wayland editions), 2020-2023, in digital form