

19. Job's Ferry Marker

This location was named for John Somers' 11th child. In 1695 John Somers was granted permission to join Greate Egg Harbor and Cape May County by means of a ferry across the Great Egg Harbor Bay near this location. A flat boat with tiller and oar ferried people and merchandise. A single crossing cost 12 pence per person.

20. Kennedy Park / High Banks Park and Bluff

This park was acquired by the city in 1938 from the Scull family. From its coastal bluff, one of two in New Jersey, the park offers a panoramic view of the Great Egg Harbor River, part of the National Wild and Scenic River System, and the Great Egg Harbor Bay.

21. Steelman Cemetery

This small cemetery adjacent to Grace Lutheran Church is the burying ground for members of the Steelman family who died in the 1800s.

Bay Front Historic District

The Bay Front Historic District, established in 1989, is listed on both the National and State Register of Historic Places. This District is a large, cohesive collection of cottages from the period of 1890-1935, a time when seaside cottages (and time to use them) became available to those who could not previously afford them. *Contributing Structure* bronze plaques identify many of these homes and businesses. The District runs from Goll to Decatur Avenue, and from the properties behind Shore Road to the Great Egg Harbor Bay. (Note: Not all homeowners wanted to display the plaque.)

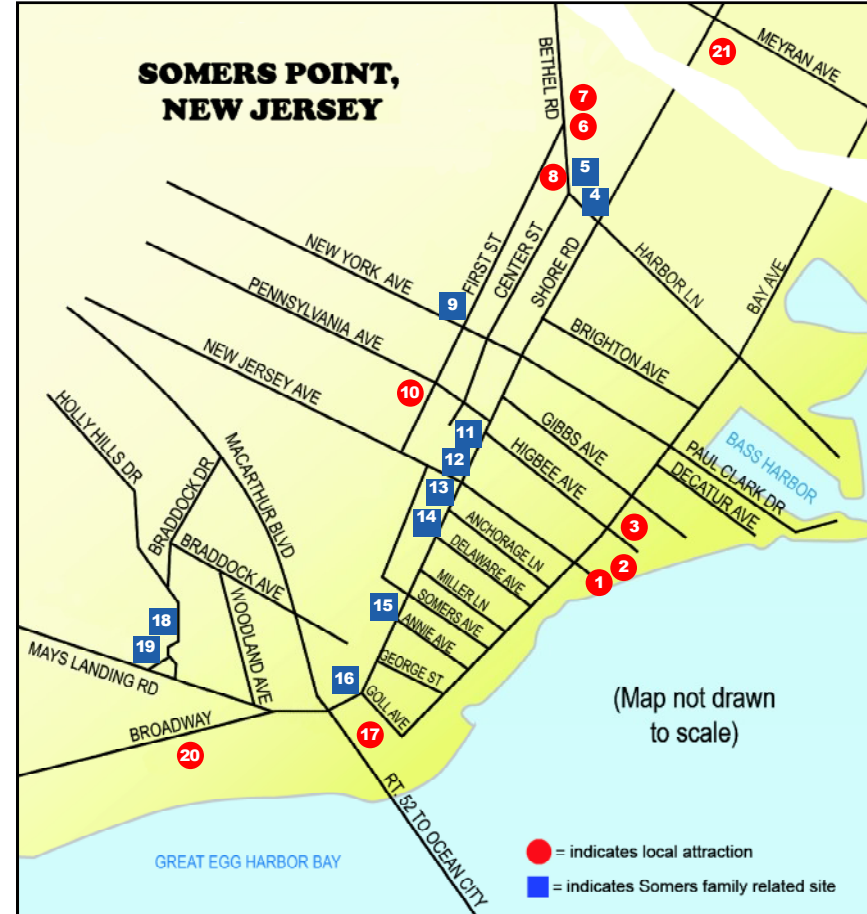
Shore Road Historic District

The Shore Road Historic District was established in 1989 as a local district. It is approximately one mile long, extending from 528 Shore Road to the Somers Mansion. It is a mix of commercial, residential, religious, and institutional buildings that reflect Gothic Revival, Colonial, Queen Anne, Colonial Revival, Foursquare, and Bungalow styles. Shore Road connects all the way up to Absecon, and was once an Indian path and later a horse and wagon track. The Suburban Line Trolley also ran along Shore Road at one time. Approximately 50 buildings are part of this local district.

Note:

The Somers Point Bike Path follows alongside First Street.

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A Short History of Somers Point

Somers Point was originally settled by John Somers, an Englishman and practicing Quaker, who bought the land from Thomas Budd. Early names for the area were Somerset Plantation, Somers Ferry, and Somers Plantation, named after the first settlers in 1693. The land purchased originally covered all of Somers Point, part of Linwood, into Egg Harbor Township, and Ocean City. In the early years it was part of Gloucester County until a portion became Atlantic County in 1837.

The name Somers Point was adopted in 1750. It was a seafaring town and sloops, schooners, and barges were built in the many shipyards located along the Greate Egg Harbor Bay, Greate Egg Harbor River, and Patcong Creek. The Sooy Boatworks was located on Shore Road, and the completed ships were rolled on logs down Shore Road to Delaware Avenue, and then down to the Bay. Shipbuilding and life along the waterways was a very important part of life in early Somers Point.

HISTORIC SOMERS POINT, NEW JERSEY



WALK, BIKE or DRIVE

*See It All In
Somers Point!*



history starts here!

Guide to Historic Tour of Somers Point

1. War of 1812 Marker

The plaque is dedicated to the 117 men who served as volunteers in the War of 1812. A sand fort was erected near here as a defense against enemy ships. The fort disappeared in the 1880s as Bay Avenue became developed.

2. William Morrow Beach

Life along the waterways has always been important to our history. The beach once had a bulkhead and floating dock. It is named for William Morrow, beloved police chief, "The Man Who Made a Difference". Summer beach concerts and children's events are held here.

3. Gateway Playhouse

The Gateway was built circa 1912 and first used as a warehouse. *The Seaside*, a silent picture theatre, followed prior to talkies. In the 1950s live theatre with stars and a stock company was very active. The 1960s and early 1970s saw a return to motion pictures, and then another return to live theatre with the South Jersey Regional Theatre and the Gateway Theatre "Broadway by the Bay". The building is currently undergoing major renovations and plans to open soon.

4. Birthplace of Master Commandant Richard Somers, USN

Marker shows the birthplace of Richard Somers—born 1778, died 1804. Numerous memorials were given in honor of Master Commandant Somers, including the honor of having seven ships named USS Somers, and a monument at the US Naval Academy at Annapolis, MD.

5. Site of Colonel Richard Somers Tavern and Homestead, circa 1771, later called the Deborah Jane Somers Anderson House

Col. Richard Somers was prominent in the Revolutionary War, engaging in privateering, holding interest in several schooners and active in the militia. The present home served as an inn and tavern, and was later the home of Deborah Jane Somers Anderson, daughter of Richard L. Somers. Go inside to see where the old structure connects with the new by means of a glass atrium. County and city historical plaque.

6. Submarine Veterans Memorial

The memorial was dedicated in 2013 in honor of those who have served and given their lives aboard US submarines.

7. Roberts-Johnson VFW Post 2189

The Post was established in 1931 in honor of George W. Roberts and George W. Johnson, Jr., both from Somers Point and who died in World War I.

8. Patriot Park

Established in 2002, this small park honors those who have served and died in military service. Many donated bricks with names line the walkway. Veteran ceremonies are held here.

9. Colonel Richard Somers Family Burial Plot / New York Avenue School

Original gravestones of the Col. Richard Somers family, circa 1790, are in the south wall. The monument in the center of the plot, erected in 1850, is dedicated to Master Commandant Richard Somers, USN, who died September 4, 1804, in the Battle of Tripoli. New York Avenue School, built in 1914, replaced a small wooden schoolhouse adjacent to the burial plot. It is used today as Administration Offices, and Pre-K and K classes.

10. Clark-Eliason American Legion Post 352

The Post was established in 1946 in honor of Paul Clark and Edmund Eliason, Jr., both from Somers Point, who died in World War II.

11. Somers Point Historical Museum (745 Shore Road - next to City Hall)

This building, originally the West Jersey Baptist Church, was built in 1886 on land donated by Jesse Somers. The one-story frame structure is Colonial-style architecture, with a small belfry and plain glass windows. It now serves as the local historical museum. Hours vary: call (609) 927-2900. County and city historical plaque.

12. Richard Somers Memorial Building (City Hall) / Richard Somers Display in Council Chambers

This 1985 building houses municipal offices and police headquarters. In the council chambers is a permanent photo exhibit from the US Naval Archives honoring Richard Somers, naval hero.

13. Somers Point Branch of the Atlantic County Library System / Old City Hall / Memorial Plaques

Somers Point incorporated in 1886, with George Anderson as the first mayor. In 1902 it became a city, with Enoch Higbee

serving as mayor. The Italianate-style building was built in 1906, and reopened as a library in 2001. Memorial plaques honoring those that served and died in World War I and those who died in World War II are seen at the front doorway of this building, located along Shore Road.

14. Richard Somers Monument and Memorial Park

The monument dedicated to Barbary War hero Richard Somers, who died in the explosion of the *Intrepid* in Tripoli, Libya, was dedicated in 2013. The bronze bust duplicates a bust from Somers, New York, sculpted by Luigi Badia.

15. Atlantic County Historical Society (907 Shore Road)

The Atlantic County Historical Society has been preserving the history of Atlantic County and southern New Jersey since 1913. Volunteer staff is available to assist visiting researchers and genealogists in the library, which is the largest repository of historical and genealogical documents in the county. Free guided tours are offered in the museum, where more than 20,000 pieces of local history are waiting to be discovered. Library and museum hours are Wednesday - Saturday, 10 AM to 3:30 PM. (609) 927-5218.

16. Historic Somers Mansion

Built between 1720 and 1726 by Richard Somers, son of John Somers, the first area settler, it is Atlantic County's oldest house. It is listed on the State and National Registers of Historic Places and the Historic American Buildings Survey. Owned by the State of New Jersey. Call for hours: (609) 927-2212.

17. Rt. 52 Causeway Walkway & Fishing Piers

Cross Shore Road near the front steps of Somers Mansion and meander under the new bridge along the pedestrian and bike path all the way to Ocean City. View the Great Egg Harbor Bay, fishing piers, and Information Center. Several original bridge pieces have been preserved at the foot of the bridge in Somers Point and in Ocean City.

18. Somers Family Cemetery

The headstones in the small family plot mark the graves of early members of the Somers family through the 1800s. The large monument marks the resting place of Richard L. Somers and his wives.