

Allister MacDougall, history buff, will be 90 on Saturday

By GORDON B. SEAVEY

WESTFORD - The town's best known senior citizen in all probability, Allister F. MacDougall, will be 90 on Saturday.

A native of Westford, born July 18, 1891, he has never lost touch with his home town and its people.

He has had a distinguished career in the field of agriculture, and has been an active member on many town committees and

holds membership in several outstanding local and state organizations.

Allister MacDougall is a prolific writer. His many newspaper stories, particularly in recent years, have brought back memories to many of the older townspeople. To the younger set, his writings and talks have been an educational treat, maintaining Westford's historical past.

Long active in the Westford

Historical Society, he was the first chairman of the Bicentennial Committee. He engineered the erection of a new flagpole on the common to replace the wooden one that had flown the flag since Civil War days, but was destroyed in 1975 by vandals.

Honoring the men and women who served from the Center area in World War II, he participated in the placement of a bronze tab-

let on a granite boulder on the library lawn.

Hale and hearty, in spite of his living two decades beyond the proverbial "threescore years and ten" (Psalm 90), all summer he has worked in his sizeable garden before driving to the post office for his morning mail.

Then with his wife, Edna, they are off to some visitation, a day trip or a meeting with old friends for lunch. He now admits, how-

ever, that night driving is troublesome.

Old School Ties

His long interest in Westford Academy stems from the time he was graduated from the 1792 school with the Class of 1909 until today. His class started with ten pupils, ended with four. He is a past president of the Board of Trustees.

At graduation exercises last month, representing the trustees, he presented some \$12,000 in scholarships, another \$7,000 to purchase equipment, and finally, as a close friend and admirer of the Alvan Fisher family, he announced a substantial gift for scholarships in their name left by the late Frederic A. Fisher.

His rescue of historical pieces has been remarkable. He located the original Academy bell in a Littleton garden; it is now a show piece in the new Academy building on Patten Road. Allister urged the trustees to purchase the triangle section of land at the head of the common, site of the

original building, for a memorial park. He unearthed the door step, over which scores of youngsters crossed from 1794 to 1895 to receive a solid secondary education. Suitably engraved, it has returned to its original spot.

Allister MacDougall initiated the renovation of that building, now in a new location, eight years ago with the idea that it at some period might become a town museum. The project is still alive.

With his Academy days over, Mac was urged by Rev. Charles Marshall to attend college. He was told that in spite of limited funds, he "could make it if he tried hard enough." He did.

The country boy from the little town of Westford chose the state-operated Massachusetts Agricultural College at Amherst (now University of Massachusetts) where the tuition was low and where he could prepare and cook his own meals to help on expenses. He was graduated with

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