

Tadmuck Club began a tradition of Westford women's organizations

By GORDON B. SEAVEY
Sun Correspondent

WESTFORD - Reaching toward its 80th birthday, the venerable Tadmuck Club, Westford's oldest social body exclusively for women, still survives through monthly meetings although its membership has dwindled to a couple of dozen tenacious souls.

Founded 78 years ago as a reading club, meeting at neighbors' homes and for larger programs at the Old Meetinghouse or Fletcher Library, the Tadmuck Club still brings a small group together for inspiring programs, a bit of whist afterwards, followed by refreshments.

The organization takes its name from the old Indian word "Tadmuck," the meaning of which has been long lost, but used in Westford vocabulary for over a couple of centuries.

Founder of the Tadmuck Club was Sarah W. Loker, descendant of an old Yankee family, who old-timers remember as a charming, genteel woman who participated in many social and religious events in town. Her "command post" was her home at 4 Lincoln St., facing the town common.

The club meets on the second Tuesday of each month, except during the winter. Its headquarters, since 1932, has been the original Center Elementary School on Boston Road, built 110 years ago and now taken over by the town, possibly for a drop-in center for the elderly.

This sturdy, two-story structure has changed very little, either inside or out, over the years.

Prior to its purchase as a clubhouse, the building was owned by an area military unit, Troop F, First Squadron Cavalry, Massachusetts - later re-named the Spalding Light Cavalry Association.

This group kept Civil War memorabilia on display and used the facility for meetings, with members com-

ing from Chelmsford, Carlisle and Westford.

Special functions were held in the town hall, and a clay pigeon shoot was held each fall at the rear of Westford Academy, now the Roudenbush Community Center.

Ada Price is the current president of the Tadmuck Club, with Lillian Scott as its secretary.

With the formation of the Junior Women's Club in 1976, the younger women of the community were attracted to this organization. Unlike the Tadmuck Club, this group meets monthly, but not in the summer.

This new women's group functions as a civic organization, and is interested in public affairs, family life, the arts, and education. It works closely with the Roudenbush and the Lions Club with its glaucoma prevention program; and encouraged formation of a SADD (Students Against Drunk Driving) program at Westford Academy.

To support its community projects, the 75-member group manages to raise between \$5,000 and \$8,000 annually.

Paula Eldridge is president of the Junior Women's Club, with Ginger Doucette in charge of membership, and Pat Stefanowicz serving as secretary. The club meets in the First Parish Church hall.



Tadmuck founder

Miss Sarah W. Loker, founder and first president of the Tadmuck Club, posed for this old photo at the top of Prospect Hill beside a water tank which served the Hildreth estate.

Anti-drunk funds

STATE HOUSE - The Dukakis administration yesterday announced anti-drunk-driving state grants to 32 communities including Tewksbury and Concord.

The two Greater Lowell towns will receive \$3,000 each in state aid for the purchase of breathalyzer machines. Each community must match the

grant with \$800 in local money.

Public Safety Secretary Charles Barry also announced roughly \$60,000 in grants for eight communities to plan drunk-driving enforcement programs.

Two months ago, Acton received \$7,500 for such a program to include local drunk-driving roadblocks.