

Tree-planting ceremony honors 200 years of Westford Academy

WESTFORD — Students at Abbot Middle School observed the founding of Westford Academy 200 years ago by dedicating the planting of a Littleleaf Linden tree on the site of the original Academy building at the head of Westford Common this past Tuesday.

Students offered appropriate speeches and the school band performed. On hand were principal Deborah Alexander, former Supt. of Schools Lloyd Blanchard and current Supt. of Schools John Crisafulli.

Five mothers who have planted and

cared for flowers on the school grounds the past several years — Wendy Sheridan, Joan Kane, Joyce Cutler, Marjorie Clear and Kathy Phinney — were also in attendance.

Donated by Laughton's Garden Center, the Linden tree has small, yellowish-white fragrant blossoms in early July; the heart-shaped leaves turn bright yellow in autumn. Tolerant to salt, it will replace a tree which died several years ago. The actual planting was done by "Chris" Barrett and a town highway crew.

The building which now houses Abbot

Middle School was constructed in 1955 to be the third Westford Academy. Upon completion, high schoolers were moved from what is now the Roudenbush Community Center. That year, the Academy graduated 50 seniors, an all-time high.

Abbot boasts of having the original gold-covered weathervane which was atop the original building, now the Westford Museum. The present Academy on Patten Road purports to have a steeple bell cast by Paul Revere, at least in his foundry.

— BY GORDON SEAVEY