

Guest appearances



Staff photos by Ann Ringwood

LPGA Hall of Famer and native Westford girl Pat Bradley makes a half-time appearance at the Ayer-Westford Academy Thanksgiving game (above). Vice Principal Ralph Drinkwater is one of many presenters to offer Bradley a memento of the occasion. She is touched by the plaque he has given her, representing the 1964-65 Volleyball team that she captained. In photo above left, the Academy Alumni Band provides some unique musical accompaniment for the half-time festivities.



Westford Academy has celebrated its anniversaries with grand parties

By Gordon B. Seavey
Contributing Writer

Birthday parties for the Academy, its students and the townspeople have been very special occasions. The celebration for its 100th anniversary was centered around the Common. Across the street stood the original Academy building resplendent in tri-color bunting and over the portico a sign wore the inscription "1792 - Westford Academy - 1892" in gilt letters. Homes throughout the town were also decorated with flags and bunting.

A special train from Boston, stopping at Lowell, brought at least 100 celebrators. By noon, the newly-formed Alumni Association had held its second meeting, old grads had exchanged greetings and everyone was ready for the parade from the town hall to a large tent on the Common, led by grand marshal Sherman H. Fletcher, for lunch. Speeches lasted until five.

It was a day for orations, and according to the *Lowell Weekly Journal* which printed the speeches in great detail, a fine time was held by all. The address by ex-governor John D. Long, an earlier preceptor, filled two columns of type in the report as did a poem by Rev. Edward A. Horton. Harvard College, which has furnished most of the preceptors, was represented by President Charles W. Elliot. This was a great honor, for he was a world renowned educator.

The celebration resumed in the evening with a grand ball in the town hall, which had been especially decorated with flowers and lace curtains.

Elaborate plans had been made for the 150th anniversary celebration of the school by co-chairman Herbert E. Fletcher and George A. Drew and committee. With our entrance into World War II, the function was cancelled.

The Academy and its many friends had a gala day April 18, 1967, to observe the 175th anniversary of the

school's organization. A parade featuring floats, bands, marching units and antique cars formed on Hildreth Street to march around the Common and on to the Academy's third building, erected in 1955 on Depot Street. It is now the Abbot Middle School.

One of the many features of the parade was the newly-formed Minutemen which held a flag raising ceremony on the Common, firing their old muskets. Other attractions were the antique fire engine rejuvenated by the Forge Village volunteer firefighters, several horse clubs and a fleet of antique cars.

U.S. Senator Leverett Saltonstall, who had just retired after 40 years in the Senate, was the principal speaker at the evening banquet. The 17-person committee on arrangements was headed by Principal Peter Perry and Allister F. MacDougall.

Gordon Seavey, an Academy graduate and a trustee for 54 years, is honorary chairman of the 200th anniversary committee.