

Vane is perverse

By Gordon Seavey

Staff Contributor

What gale winds for nearly two centuries failed to do, lesser winds of the past month have put the historical weathervane askew atop the steeple of the Abbot Middle School. As all good weathervanes are supposed to do, point in a straight line and head into the wind, today the tail of Abbot's might be pointing in a northerly direction while the rest of the arrow has its sights on the west.

It is just tough luck that the vane waited until now to change course, because in mid-summer steeple jacks painted the cupola and also the weathervane and any irregularity could have been adjusted right n the spot.

Now school maintenance people are scratching their heads as how to inspect and correct the errant vane. The fire department was called to have their extension ladders put a man into the sky to untangle the flag at the top of the flag pole. To reach the much higher steeple is a different project.

This weathervane is of particular historical interest to the town. It is the original weathervane placed on the first Westford Academy erected at the head of The Common in 1794. It is believed that it was wrought in Paul Revere's foundry as was the original steeple bell.

When the current Abbot Middle School was built in 1955 for use as the third home of Westford Academy, this weathervane was most suitable to blend in with the colonial architecture. It was given to the town in memory of Private First Class Hasbrouck Fletcher by his mother, Mrs. Priscilla Kennard Chapin.

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