

By GORDON B. SEAVEY

WESTFORD — A colorful souvenir of Westford's 250th anniversary celebration, a ceramic plaque, is now ready for distribution.

It is a companion piece to the successful tile made for the Bicentennial in overall design, but is done in four instead of three colors on white.

The sketches, done by Ann Bleckstein of Screencraft in West Yarmouth, depict five popular scenes covering the 250 years of local history.

Starting with the old meetinghouse (1795) at the Common, the next scene is the bell tower of the Abbot Worsted Company (1855) at Forge Village. The wording here is "From this bell tower the curfew rang at eventide for 101 years."

Chronologically comes the town seal, showing the town hall erected in the autumn of 1870 at a cost of \$8,000.

The fourth landmark is the J. V. Fletcher Library donated in 1895 by a former resident of

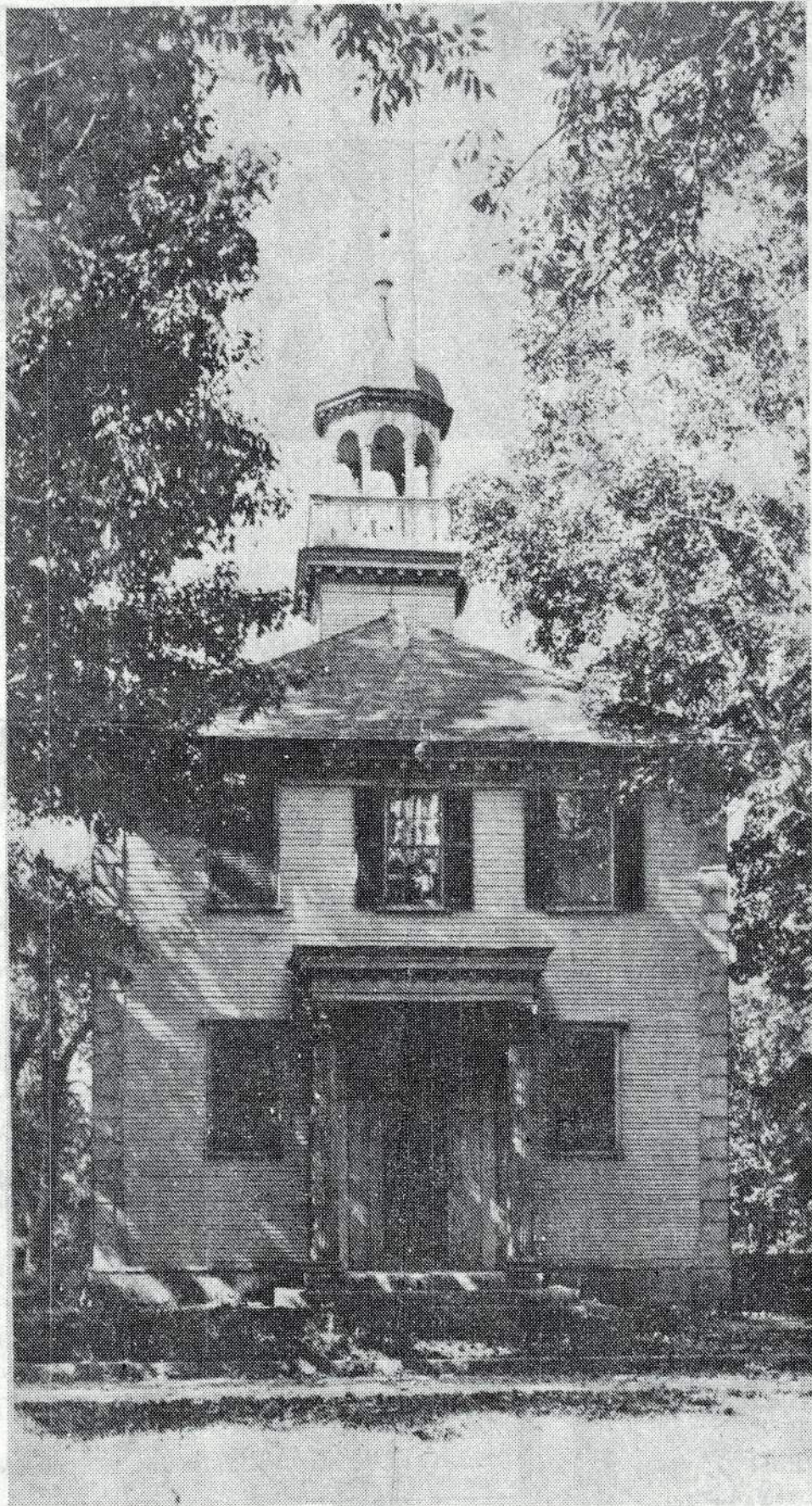
that name who had made a small fortune in the Faneuil Hall market. The old Spanish cannon with a cone of iron balls, as they sit at the apex of the Common in front of the library, depicts the Spanish War era.

The fifth landmark is the \$5 million Westford Academy complex, showing the facade of the building on Patten Road. This was erected in 1972, the fourth building and in the fourth location since the founding of the school in 1792. The current enrollment is approximately one thousand pupils.

Wording on the plaque states that Westford was incorporated September 23, 1729, as the 28th town in Middlesex County and that it is now "noted for fruit, granite, foods, machinery and printing."

Screencraft has been making custom-designed plaques for 27 years, which are distributed all

continued on page 11



The final days for the completion of the Academy building arrived in the Spring of 1794. In April of that year, it was decided that the Academy be painted with a shade or two of green deeper than Chelmsford Meeting House. (From the WESTFORD RECOLLECTIONS Series)

## Westford Recollections

# 26

5/31/79

by June W. Kennedy

Westford Academy was started in 1792. By individual subscription, the town appropriation of 120 pounds, and volunteer work, 918 pounds were raised. Articles of agreement and subscription were drawn up and signed by fifty-four persons. At the head of the list stand the names of Zaccheus Wright and John Abbot. The subscribers met and organized a board of trustees. The proprietors, as they were called, appointed a committee to secure an act of incorporation, select a building site and prepare the academic curriculum.

The story has been told that the only proof that Levi Hedge came to Westford as the first preceptor was the record of his trip from Concord:

Westford, Aug. 7, 1792

To cash paid Mr. Wheler for his hors & chas that Mr. Hedge rode up from Concord in - L 0-6-8. To taking the hors and chase back to Concord - L 0-2-4. Note that this ledger was just prior to the period that money changed from pounds, shillings and pence, to dollars and cents.

Thirty-seven students were accepted the first year the Academy opened. Of that number twenty-eight were boys and nine were girls. With the exception of one student from Littleton, all students were from Westford. By 1793 its reputation must have been good, for that year thirty-seven boys and seventeen girls attended. Besides those from Westford, there were two students each from Chelmsford, Bedford, Littleton, Dunstable and Woburn, and one each from Billerica, Concord, Boston, and Hollis and Pelham, N.H. Students attending the Academy boarded at various houses including the three story brick-end house at 24 Main St.

The subjects taught were: English, Latin and Greek languages, handwriting, arithmetic, and the art of public speaking. If desired, instruction in practical geometry, logic, geography and music were included. Eligibility for attendance

was available to students of any nationality, age or sex provided that the pupil was able "to read from the Bible readily, without spelling." Because the Academy was not erected in 1792, it seems logical to conclude that the Meeting House may have accommodated the large number of students those first two years.

The land on which the building was first located was purchased in 1793. The Academy was built facing the Common, on the site now marked by the original front step and flanked by two granite benches. It was built by volunteers. Most of them had no education themselves, but wanted it for their children and their children's children. If they didn't have the money themselves, they gave a cartload of sand or logs, a days work, or volunteered to take their oxen over to Tyngsboro to bring back a load of supplies. Much time and material went into the building. The actual records for its construction were found in an attic in Harvard in 1967 and kindly returned to Westford. The old folded and worn receipts, as recorded in Allister MacDougall's "More Yesterdays of Westford Academy," make interesting reading:

"To a Journey to Andover to take dimentions of Andover Academy which served for the outlines for building ours - L 0-6-8. Feb. 1793 - Paid for 1 stove for the Academy 4-4-0. 250 feet of timber for the octigon -1-10-0. Dr. for 1 day fetching glass -0-7-0-. Dr. for 850 squares of glass -17-0-0. For one barrel cider for raising -0-12-0. To two days carting sand and the pillars -0-18-0. For a bell -14-15-0. To bringing said Bell from Boston -0-6-0. To Levi 3 days making mortar -0-15-0. To Amoziah with the team to carry water -0-9-0. Meser Pike & 6 oxen - 1 day -0-10-6. Half a day hauling timber - Halls -0-2-0. One day waiting on the Cooper and gitin the rope to Raise the Cupolow -0-5-0. To 26 bushes of hare -0-13-0. To 154 Feet good white pine boards -0-6-9. To a lock for the front Door -0-3-0."

continued on page 2

### JACK & JILL PRE-SCHOOL

245 Main St., W. Chelmsford  
Pre-School classes 9 am - 11:30 am

Day Care 7 am - 4 pm

Tel: 251-4344

Mrs. Richard L. Monahan, Director  
Sept. Registrations now being accepted  
OUR 25TH YEAR

The Beacon Publishing Co.  
Presents

blossoms

Fashion Show

Date: June 11, 1979

Time: 8:00 P.M.

Place: Alphonse's Powdermill  
Powdermill Road, Maynard, Mass.

GET YOUR TICKETS  
NOW

Quantities Limited

For Reservations  
please contact  
Arvilla Fox at  
263-3761

Just three easy steps  
for sparkling  
blue pool  
water.

Bio-Guard

1 Stingy Stick Chlorine cartridges kill bacteria all day, every day. Designed for slow, effective release in plastic skimmers, Bio-Guard Floaters and MA Chlorinators.

2 Burn-Out oxidizes organic swimmer wastes that won't filter out. Kills resistant bacteria and rechlorinates the stabilizer. Restores your pool water to a beautiful sparkling blue.

3 Back-Up Algicide - Inhibitor prevents algae growth. Should your chlorine become exhausted due to heavy rain showers or heavy pool use, safeguard your pool with Back-Up until chlorine builds up again. Effective at high temperatures when algae growth is most likely.

Bio-Guard's 3-step pool protection. The winning combination for sparkling blue pool water.

Aquatech  
Pool & Patio Shoppe

Rt. 110 - Chelmsford, Mass.  
256-7533 - 256-2820