

BRIDGEWATER, 1822

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BRIDGEWATER ACADEMY BUILDING

Former Site of Bridgewater High School

Currently Part of Bridgewater Town Hall Complex

Bridgewater Academy was established in 1799 by the Commonwealth of Massachusetts “for the purpose of promoting piety, religion and morality, and for the education of youth in such languages and in search of the liberal arts and services, as the Trustees hereinafter shall direct.” While originally located north of its present site, a new building was built in 1822 on the south end of Central Square, on land donated by the heirs of Major Issac Lazell.

In 1875, after 75 years as a private academy, the Trustees suspended operations “due to lack of sufficient patronage” and leased the property to the Town of Bridgewater who maintained the property as its high school until 1952. The Trustees presented a deed for the property to the Town of Bridgewater, also in 1952.

The former Bridgewater Academy is now part of the Bridgewater Town Hall complex which houses several town departments. It remains a signature building in the town’s center, a reminder of the role that small private academies played in education throughout Massachusetts during that era.

Compliments of Register of Deeds John R. Buckley, Jr.

and Robert B. Wood

Bridgewater Historical Commission

From the “Plymouth County Registry of Deeds Notable Land Records Collection”