

## **Mary Alden**

### **By Autumn Alden**

In the summer of 1958, Mary Alden and her husband moved to East Bridgewater with six school-aged children and one toddler. She soon opened a daycare out of her home and cared for neighborhood children.

When her oldest was in college, Mary was able to continue her teaching degree. In fact, she graduated from Bridgewater Teachers College with her daughter Patricia.

Mary then dedicated herself to the children of East Bridgewater. She taught junior high math until her retirement in 1985. When the EB Middle School was remodeled, Mary's name was submitted as the person for which the building should be named. The Mary M. Alden Middle School does have a nice ring to it, doesn't it? Of course, it didn't work out that way. On Central Street, you'll find the Gordon M. Mitchell Middle School instead. But Mary would have been pleased that her friend Gordon Mitchell has legacy honored in such a way.

During her time as a teacher, she was instrumental in putting a teacher's union in place. To this day, East Bridgewater Public Schools gives an annual scholarship in her name, funded by union members' dues.

After her retirement, Mary continued serving the town of East Bridgewater. She and a few friends were instrumental in founding a Senior Center and Council on Aging. This was established as the old Nurses' House between the Police Station and the Central School. With a lot of volunteer work and the help of her carpenter son, this building was made handicapped accessible for the first time ever.

Mary volunteered for everything she could, anything to help others. She even volunteered for Meals on Wheels though she didn't have a driver's license! She made home-cooked meals and managed to get transportation to deliver the meals to those that were in need. And this was long before the days of Uber and Lyft!

Mary passed away in 1995 at the age of 74. But I know she is looking down, with a smile on her face, at the East Bridgewater Community Center knowing that her vision has been realized. Mary left a legacy that won't soon be forgotten by the many that knew her and whose lives were impacted by her kindness and generosity.

And for the days that the Town of East Bridgewater celebrates its Bicentennial, I know that Mary celebrates with us, a community that she lived her life serving.