



The Pine Street Oak

Madison

One of the oldest trees in Madison is a white oak that dominates its corner lot at 602 Pine Street on Madison's south side.

The pleasant old neighborhood, beautified by stately oaks and elms and featuring streets named Spruce and Cedar as well as Pine, was first entered at the land office in 1836. It was platted August 8, 1890. Called Wingra Village, because Wingra Creek forms one boundary, it used to be considered a suburban location. The first inhabitants represented a diverse variety of ethnic groups, and many well-known Madison names were once listed in its directory. They include Henry Turville and Frank Custer, Madison's historian extraordinaire who is honored by his own

tree, the Custer Ash, planted in James Madison Park by the Daughters of the American Revolution (DAR) on Arbor Day, 1979. The certificate cites him for "making Madison history come alive."

In the late 1970s, R. Bruce Allison was called to stop a neighbor from felling a nearby tree that would have crashed directly across several limbs of the venerable Pine Street Oak.

At that time the house on the huge white oak's lot had been occupied by the same family for over 50 years. They had a love and concern for the tree's well-being as if it were a neighbor and friend. The family's generosity of spirit was well expressed when they tied a long yellow ribbon around the oak's trunk in celebration of the return of the U.S. hostages from Iran in January 1981.

Sources: Frank Custer
Mrs. Duane K. Smith