

CRYPTOMERIA (Japanese Cedar)

Cryptomeria japonica

Evergreen. Cryptomeria is a native of Japan and China. It is commonly called Japanese cedar, even though the tree is not related to cedars. In Japan, it is known as Sugi and it grows to heights of 230' with trunk diameters of 13'. It is commonly planted around temples and shrines. The wood, scented and reddish-pink in color, is lightweight but strong, waterproof and resistant to decay. It is favored in Japan for all types of construction work as well as interior paneling. There are over 50 cultivars. In North America, it grows to heights of 30'-50'. It has a narrow crown with finer drooping branches. The bark is red-brown, soft, fibrous, fissured, and peels in vertical strips on old trees. The leaves are needle-like, long, soft and spirally set. The fruit is a rounded brown cone. The cone is globular, ripening in one season. The most unique feature of this tree's appearance is its poodle dog clipped foliage. In North America, this tree is planted for its ornamental attractiveness.

There are 4 Cryptomeria at Baber Cemetery. Two tall, full bodied Cryptomeria are on Mt. Laurel Avenue - one is to the east of the chapel and the second is to the west, down the hill from the chapel. Two more slightly shorter and slimmer Cryptomeria are situated on either side of the Zerbey monolith memorial on the east side of Baber Avenue. The Cryptomeria is dark green from spring to fall; but takes on a red or bronze-brown color in winter.

