

WHITE OAK

Quercus alba

In the Silva world, White Oak is the king of kings. There is no other tree species that has so much mass and spread. The mighty branches of mature Oaks depart the trunk nearly at right angles and form a natural cathedral of greenery. White Oaks provide beauty year round. When leaves unfold in spring, the new growth is vivid red which gradually turns pink and eventually silvery whitish green. As autumn draws in, the foliage turns a rich winy color. As they wither in their final state, they cling to their branches all winter. Medium to large trees are often 80' tall. Their leaves are short stalked, tapered at the base, deeply cut into two to four lobes on each side. The male flowers are yellow-green, drooping catkins with the female inconspicuous, borne separately on the same plant in late spring. The fruit is an acorn with a shallow roughened cup. The bark on young trees is pale ashy gray and in strips that peel from one side. The bark on older trees form long peeling ridges or small blocks. The wood of White Oak is widely used in the manufacturing of furniture. Much of the interior woodwork in the chapel is White Oak that was cut in the early history of our country.



The oldest trees growing in the cemetery are the White Oaks. Except for one Oak on Valley Road near the carriage house, all the White Oaks are very near the chapel. Two are directly across from the chapel entrance on Baber Ave., and three are near the cross section of Baber Ave. and Mt. Laurel Ave. Two dead oaks had to be removed in 2011, and 1 large dead oak, guarding the burial site of John Pott, the founder of Pottsville, and his family members, was removed in 2012. In the fall of 2014, another large dead Oak was cut down where 13th St. would intersect the property. One of the Oaks across from the chapel has a spongy fungi rot and will, at some future date, have to be removed.

