

Our Oldest Oaks as a Living Heritage: A Quarter Century Update

By: R. Bruce Allison, Dane County Tree Board Member

In 1976, as part of the state celebration of the American Revolution Bicentennial, a survey was conducted to locate oaks within an eight mile radius of the state capitol that were at least 200 years old. Walter Scott, former assistant to the secretary of the State Department of Natural Resources, conducted the survey. Walter was very familiar with heritage trees, having maintained the records of big trees in the state since 1941.



I came to Walter in 1978 for help with researching two books I authored, WISCONSIN'S CHAMPION TREES (Wisconsin Books, 1980) and WISCONSIN'S FAMOUS AND HISTORIC TREES (Wisconsin Books, 1982). At that time he gave me a copy of the newspaper article describing his Bicentennial Survey and the list of 443 oaks that qualified (The Capital Times, August 11, 1976). Using annual growth ring studies of local oaks, he determined that Bicentennial white or bur oaks needed a trunk circumference measured at 4.5 feet above ground level of at least 10 feet, and pin, black, and red oaks needed a trunk circumference of 11 feet. Walter died in 1993. I kept his list of Bicentennial trees and now, in 2001, a quarter of a century later, revisited those venerable old oaks to determine which were still with us. This time I used new technology, the satellite-based Global Positioning System and the Dane County Geographic Information System, including high resolution map-like aerial photography, to give each tree a permanent longitude and latitude address. This will make it easier for future heritage tree surveyors to locate these links to our past. Hopefully such surveys as this will also encourage appreciation and good stewardship of these and other living heritage trees.

The list of trees includes Walter's original address and identification number (B meaning bur, W meaning white and P meaning in the pin-black-red family and the number following represents ranking by size within those three categories). The trunk circumference in 1976 is listed first, followed by my new measurement. ANF means address not found, TNF means tree not found and gone means I am confident it is dead. The last two columns are the latitude and longitude location. You can view the list of trees by clicking the link below.

Many people helped me on this project. I especially wish to thank Diane Danielsen and Fred Lausly of the Dane County Land Information Office; Tom Krull, chairman of the Dane County Tree Board; William Kramer and Michael Weston for field assistance; Kathleen McCormick, Marek Dudra and James Gage for technical assistance and Katie Maloney for web page creation.

ID	ADDRESS	CITY	ZIP	1976	2001
B096	Brandt Rd. 3666 (Hwy AB) 150 ft W of house	McFarland	53568 10 8"	13 5 5"	gone
B054	Brandt Rd. 3666 in W. pasture 200 yds from road	McFarland	53568 11 2 5"	13 5 5"	gone
W012	Burma Rd. 4709	McFarland	53568 11 6 5"	TNF	gone
W061	Burma Rd. 4709 (front yard)	McFarland	53568 11 9"	TNF	gone
B031	Elvehjem Rd. E edge McFarland between Elvehjem Rd. and RR tracks	McFarland	53568 11 9"	TNF	gone
B154	Elvehjem Rd. 3508	McFarland	53568 10 3"	12 9"	gone
B193	Exchange St. 5923	McFarland	53568 11 3"	11 3"	gone
W045	Hidden Farm Rd. W side of highway in	McFarland	53568 10 7"	12 5"	gone
P048	Hwy AB near corner with Siggelkow Rd in crop field 200 ft from Hwy AB	McFarland	53568 11 4"	14 4"	gone
B020	Hwy B 4256	McFarland	53568 12 4"	13 3"	gone
B052	Hwy B 4256	McFarland	53568 11 3"	14 3"	gone
B099	Hwy B 4256	McFarland	53568 10 8"	11 11 5"	gone
B119	Hwy B 4256	McFarland	53568 10 6 5"	11 11"	gone
B155	Hwy B 4256	McFarland	53568 10 3"	11 9 5"	gone
B181	Hwy B 4256	McFarland	53568 10 0 5"	11 4"	gone
B005	Hwy B 4351 (near house)	McFarland	53568 13 5"	14 5"	gone
B166	Hwy B 4569	McFarland	53568 10 2"	11 2 5"	gone
B082	Hwy MN 3323	McFarland	53568 10 9"	gone	gone
W046	Hwy MN 3323	McFarland	53568 10 6"	12 10"	gone
B174	Keenan Rd 2335 (N side of house)	McFarland	53568 10 1"	11 8"	gone
B098	Keenan Rd. 2335 (rear yard)	McFarland	53568 10 8"	12 10"	gone
B118	Keenan Rd. 2336 (rear yard)	McFarland	53568 10 6 5"	11 2 5"	gone
B191	Keenan Rd. 2385 (in front)	McFarland	53568 10 7"	11 2 5"	gone
B137	Keenan Rd. 2386 (in pasture behind barn)	McFarland	53568 11 5"	12 3 5"	gone
B029	Mahoney Rd. 2268 (Landerud Rd.)	McFarland	53568 10 9"	ANF	gone
B023	Mahoney Rd. and Tower Rd Farm pasture NW corner	McFarland	53568 12 1 5"	TNF	gone
B026	Maple Drive 2716	McFarland	53568 11 1"	13 7 5"	gone
B179	Maple Drive 2716	McFarland	53568 10 0 5"	11 10"	gone
P037	3119 Waconia Lane	Middleton	53562 11 6"	gone	gone
W053	4509 Fox Bluff Lane woodlot N of	Middleton	53562 10 3"	gone	gone
B048	4633 Evergreen Rd.	Middleton	53562 11 3"	12 10 5"	gone
B164	5000 Pheasant Branch Rd. E edge of Hwy near	Middleton	53562 10 2"	gone	gone
B087	Aurora St in field at S end of	Middleton	53562 10 8"	gone	gone
B144	Aurora St. in field at S end of	Middleton	53562 10 4"	gone	gone
B050	Hwy 12/14 Beltline (3/4 mile west of Middleton turnoff) in crop field 100 yds west of	Middleton	53562 11 1"	TNF	gone
P050	Tiedeman's Pond N side of behind 7223 South St.	Middleton	53562 11 3"	13 1 5"	gone
P043	Tiedeman's Pond NW side of near Pond View St.	Middleton	53562 11 4"	gone	gone
P054	Tiedeman's Pond On E side of Gammon Rd.	Middleton	53562 11 2 5"	gone	gone
B032	2307 Whites Oak Trail across from (near CTH B)	Oregon	53575 11 9"	13 1"	gone
B058	4662 CTH B	Oregon	53575 11 2"	12 8"	gone
B204	5539 Whalen Rd. (behind house)	Oregon	53575 11 5"	TNF	gone
B216	5774 Adams Rd. (100 yds N of barn)	Oregon	53575 10 7"	TNF	gone
B201	5774 Adams Rd. (behind barn)	Oregon	53575 12 2"	14 7"	gone
B203	5774 Adams Rd. (behind barn)	Oregon	53575 11 10"	TNF	gone
W073	5774 Adams Rd. (in pasture 150 yards N of house)	Oregon	53575 15 9"	TNF	gone
B278	Byrne Rd. and C&NW RR track NW corner of (on road edge)	Oregon	53575 10 6 5"	11 5 5"	gone
B236	Byrne Rd just N of on hill 100 yds E of Hwy 14	Oregon	53575 12 7"	14 4"	gone
B056	Oregon Rd. 2674 (CTH MM)	Fitchburg?	53575 11 2"	gone	gone
B013	Oregon Rd 2402 (CTH MM)	Madison	53575 12 6 5"	14 10"	gone
B124	Oregon Rd 2402 (CTH MM)	Madison	53575 10 6"	12 6 5"	gone
B189	Oregon Rd. 2402 (CTH MM)	Madison	53575 10 7"	10 10"	gone
B028	Oregon Rd. 2674 (CTH MM)	Fitchburg?	53575 11 10"	13 1 5"	gone
B134	Oregon Rd. 2674 (CTH MM)	Fitchburg?	53575 10 5"	gone	gone
B151	Oregon Rd. 2674 (CTH MM)	Fitchburg?	53575 10 3"	11 10"	gone
B233	Oregon Rd. 2682 (CTH MM) 200 yds E in woodlot	Fitchburg?	53575 12 11"	gone	gone
B292	Oregon Rd. 2682 (CTH MM) 200 yds E in woodlot	Fitchburg?	53575 10 1"	11 6 5"	gone
B269	Oregon Rd. 2682 (CTH MM) approx. 300 yds E in crop field	Fitchburg?	53575 10 8"	TNF	gone
B244	Oregon Rd. 2692 (CTH MM)	Fitchburg?	53575 12 1"	13 6"	gone
B253	Oregon Rd. 2692 (CTH MM)	Fitchburg?	53575 11 4"	12 2"	gone
B260	Oregon Rd. 2692 (CTH MM)	Fitchburg?	53575 11 2"	TNF	gone
B263	Oregon Rd. 2692 (CTH MM) (NW corner near road)	Fitchburg?	53575 10 10"	TNF	gone
B264	Oregon Rd. 2692 (CTH MM) (SW corner near road)	Fitchburg?	53575 10 10"	TNF	gone
B282	Oregon Rd. 2700 (CTH MM)	Fitchburg?	53575 10 3 5"	ANF	gone
B291	Oregon Rd. 2700 (CTH MM)	Fitchburg?	53575 10 1"	ANF	gone
B286	Oregon Rd. 2700 (CTH MM) (in woodlot beside house)	Fitchburg?	53575 10 3"	ANF	gone
B285	Oregon Rd. 2700 (CTH MM) (near road)	Fitchburg?	53575 10 3"	ANF	gone
B229	Oregon Rd. 2722 (CTH MM)	Fitchburg?	53575 13 2"	14 6 5"	gone
B113	Oregon Rd. 2840 (CTH MM)	Madison	53575 10 7"	11 7 5"	gone
B010	Oregon Rd. 2846 (CTH MM)	Madison	53575 12 10 5"	14 6"	gone
B116	Oregon Rd. 2846 (CTH MM)	Madison	53575 10 6 5"	12 2 5"	gone
B172	Oregon Rd. 2854 (CTH MM)	Madison	53575 10 1"	gone	gone
B152	Oregon Rd. 2927 (CTH MM)	Madison	53575 10 3"	ANF	gone
B163	Oregon Rd. 2927 (CTH MM)	Madison	53575 10 2"	ANF	gone
B003	Oregon Rd. 2927 (CTH MM) in crop field 100 yds opposite	Madison	53575 14 0 5"	ANF	gone
B076	Oregon Rd. 2927 (Hwy MM) in crop field 100 yds opposite	Madison	53575 10 9"	ANF	gone
B093	Oregon Rd. 2927 (Hwy MM) in crop field 100 yds opposite	Madison	53575 10 8"	ANF	gone
B153	Oregon Rd. 2927 (Hwy MM) in crop field 100 yds opposite	Madison	53575 10 3"	ANF	gone
B170	Oregon Rd. 2927 (Hwy MM) in crop field 100 yds opposite	Madison	53575 10 1"	ANF	gone
B069	Oregon Rd. 2927 (Hwy MM) in crop field 100 yds opposite	Madison	53575 10 11"	ANF	gone
B261	4887 Wakanda Dr. (between tennis courts and Lake Mendota)	Westport	53597 11 0 5"	TNF	gone
B234	5429 CTH Q on W side of road 2/10 mile N of Hwy K	Waunakee	53597 12 9"	13 8"	gone
B004	5799 Hwy 113 just N of Kennedy Dr.	Waunakee	53597 13 10"	TNF	gone
B220	5867 CTH K [5869]	Westport	53597 10 6"	11 11"	gone
B226	5867 CTH K [5869]	Westport	53597 12 4 5"	15"	gone
B018	5916 Oncken Rd.	Waunakee	53597 10 2 5"	11 6"	gone
B160	5916 Oncken Rd.	Waunakee	53597 10 1"	11 9 5"	gone
B225	5942 CTH K	Waunakee	53597 10 6 5"	11 10"	gone
B277	5958 W Rner Rd. (at house E end of Cherokee Valley Pass)	Waunakee	53597 11 1"	12 10"	gone
B210	6285 CTH K 3/10 mile W of Jct with Hwy K	Westport	53597 11 11"	14 11"	gone
B077	CTH M & Mary Lake Rd farm field 200 yds S of Jct.	Waunakee	53597 10 9"	13 10"	gone
P038	End of private lane along W side Yahara River near shore of Lake Mendota	Waunakee	53597 11 5 5"	gone	gone
B237	Hwy 113 and River Rd. [W River Rd.] in crop field 200 yds W	Waunakee	53597 12 6"	13 3"	gone
W013	Mansfield Rd. E side of 1/10 mile S of CTH M	Waunakee	53597 11 5 5"	TNF	gone
B180	River Rd. 100 yds W of and 2/10 mile S of Gilkeson Rd. [5711]	Waunakee	53597 10 0 5"	11 11"	gone
W006	S side of CTH M just E of Mansfield Rd.	Waunakee	53597 12 5 5"	13 4 7" (?)	gone
W028	S side of CTH M just E of Mansfield Rd.	Waunakee	53597 11"	TNF	gone
W032	S side of CTH M just E of Mansfield Rd.	Waunakee	53597 10 11"	TNF	gone
W039	S side of CTH M just E of Mansfield Rd.	Waunakee	53597 10 9"	TNF	gone
W063	S side of CTH M just E of Mansfield Rd.	Waunakee	53597 10 1"	TNF	gone
B207	Savannah just NE of 5942 CTH K	Westport	53597 11 2 5"	TNF	gone
B208	Savannah just NE of 5942 CTH K	Westport	53597 11 2"	TNF	gone
B215	Savannah just NE of 5942 CTH K	Westport	53597 10 8"	TNF	gone
W015	E Gorham St. & N. Bready	Madison	53703 11 3 5"	13"	gone
P022	E Johnson St. 1343	Madison	53703 11 11 5"	14 5 5"	gone
B150	E Washington Ave. South side entrance to State Capitol	Madison	53703 10 1"	gone	gone
W069	E Dayton St. 1316	Madison	53703 10 1"	gone	gone
W064	E Gorham St. 810	Madison	53703 10 1"	gone	gone
B038	Langdon St. 211	Madison	53703 11 6"	gone	gone
W014	N Baldwin St. 223	Madison	53703 11 4 5"	13 5 5"	gone
P035	Orton Park at Spaight and S. Few Sts.	Madison	53703 11 7"	13 11"	gone
B089	S Henry St. 315 across from	Madison	53703 10 8"	12 0 5"	gone
P062	Spaight St. 1021 (Lake Monona side, Immanuel Lutheran Church)	Madison	53703 11"	13 11"	gone
B156	Bultman Rd. 4810	Madison	53704 10 3"	ANF	gone
B074	Bultman Rd. 4908 (100 yds. E. of road)	Madison	53704 10 10"	ANF	gone
P036	Burrow's Park on Sherman Ave. and Lake Mendota	Madison	53704 11 6"	13 11"	gone
P039	Butternut Rd. 816	Maple Bluff	53704 11 5"	gone	gone
P011	Cambridge Rd. 81	Maple Bluff	53704 12 4"	14 2"	gone
P021	Cambridge Rd. 81	Maple Bluff	53704 12	gone	gone
W067	Cherokee Country Club (2/10ths mile from road entrance) - 5000 N. Sherman Ave	Madison	53704 10"	gone	gone
P061	Cherokee Country Club 200 yds NE	Madison	53704 11"	gone	gone
B185	Cherokee Country Club grounds on north edge	Madison	53704 10"	12"	gone
B173	Commercial Ave. 1800 Liberty Trucking property	Madison	53704 10 1"	12 1 5"	gone
B028	E Washington Ave. 4104 just E of	Madison	53704 11 9"	gone	gone
P023	Fuller Ct. 32	Maple Bluff	53704 11 8"	14 6"	gone
P010	Green Ave. 4218 on roadside	Maple Bluff	53704 12 5"	gone	gone
B046	Hwy 51 E side near Messerschmidt Rd. (Red Barn Antiques)	Madison	53704 11 4"	TNF	gone
B071	Hwy 51 E side near Messerschmidt Rd. (Red Barn Antiques)	Madison	53704 10 10 5"	TNF	gone
B122	Hwy 51 E side near Messerschmidt Rd. (Red Barn Antiques)	Madison	53704 10 6"	TNF	gone
B102	I-90/94 E side on Hanson Road farm, 200 yds from road	Madison	53704 10 7 5"	TNF	gone
B112	I-90/94 E side on Hanson Road farm, 200 yds from road	Madison	53704 10 7"	TNF	gone
B127	I-90/94 E side on Hanson Road farm, 200 yds from road	Madison	53704 10 6"	TNF	gone
B136	I-90/94 E side on Hanson Road farm, 200 yds from road	Madison	53704 10 5"	TNF	gone
B165	I-90/94 E side on Hanson Road farm, 200 yds from road	Madison	53704 10 2"	TNF	gone
B007	I-90/94 near E edge farm house yard on Hanson Rd	Madison	53704 13 3"	TNF	gone
W004	Lakewood Blvd. 233	Maple Bluff	53704 12 7"	ANF	gone
P015	Magdeline Dr. 809	Maple Bluff	53704 12 3"	13 9 5"	gone
B304	Mayer Ave. 4110 (side yard)	Madison?	53704 10 1"	ANF	gone
B045	Melrose St. 1710	Madison	53704 11 4"	13 5"	gone
P001	Mendota Hospital Grounds near Eagle Effigy Mound	Madison	53704 16 1"	18 7"	gone
W018	Mendota Hospital Grounds (at West Parking Lot)	Madison	53704 11 2 5"	12 9"	gone
W008	Mendota Hospital Grounds (SW road to Gov. Island)	Madison	53704 12 2"	13 11"	gone
W. not list	Mendota Hospital Grounds by Recreation Hall	Madison	53704 1"	12 9"	gone
P006	Mendota Hospital Grounds near entrance Gov Island	Madison	53704 13 6 5"	gone	gone
P008	Mendota Hospital Grounds near entrance Gov Island	Madison	53704 12 8"	14 1 5"	gone
P014	Mendota Hospital Grounds near entrance Gov Island	Madison	53704 12 3"	14 9"	gone
P016	Mendota Hospital Grounds near entrance Gov Island	Madison	53704 12 2"	13 7 5"	gone
P052	Mendota Hospital Grounds near entrance Gov Island	Madison	53704 11 3"	13 3 5"	gone
P002	Mendota Hospital Grounds near entrance Gov Island (by Recreation Hall)	Madison	53704 14 7"	16 10"	gone
P009	Mendota Hospital Grounds northern section (near Urban House)	Madison	53704 12 6"	14 2"	gone
P027	Mendota Hospital Grounds on Gov Island	Madison	53704 11 8"	gone	gone
P056	N Sherman Ave. 1026 behind	Madison	53704 11 2"	13 1"	gone
P057	Olinch Park at Oakridge and Atwood Ave.	Madison	53704 11 1"	13 4 5"	gone
W058	Ruskin St. 1133	Madison	53704 10 2"	12 1 5"	gone
W001	Westport Rd. E edge just N of Green Ave.	Madison	53704 13 11 5"	TNF	gone
P029	Woodland Circle 324	Maple Bluff	53704 11 8"	14 8"	gone
B105	Baker Ave. & Camelot Dr. public greenway between (E of University Ave.)	Madison	53705 10 7"	TNF	gone
P026	Baker Ave. 1720	Madison	53705 11 9"	gone	gone
B076	Barlow St. 2839	Madison	53705 10 9"	12 8"	gone
W050	Blackhawk Country Club (100 ft S of Lake Mendota Dr. near Bear Mounds)	Madison	53705 10 4"	12"	gone
B043	Blackhawk Country Club (Tee 11)	Madison	53705 11 4 5"	12 11 5"	gone
P051	Calvary Cemetery near W edge and Monroe St. [??]	Madison	53705 11 3"	gone	gone
W016	Calvary Cemetery, within 100 yds of Speedway Rd.	Madison	53705 11 3"	gone	gone
W049	Calvary Cemetery, within 100 yds of Speedway Rd.	Madison	53705 10 4 5"	gone	gone
P031	Chadbourne Ave. 2025	Madison	53705 11 7 5"	13 6"	gone
B147	Chadbourne Ave. 2117	Madison	53705 10 4"	11 10 5"	gone
W066	Forest Hill Cemetery (Plot 17)	Madison	53705 10 0 5"	11"	gone
W009	Forest Hill Cemetery (behind Mausoleum)	Madison	53705 11 8"	gone	gone
W034	Forest Hill Cemetery (behind Mausoleum)	Madison	53705		