



OSIRIS SHRINERS

BE APART OF HISTORY

Three hundred years that's the estimated age provided by expert arborists of the huge Sycamore tree that stood on the property of Monument Place, at the corner of Kruger Street and National Road in Wheeling. Sadly, the experts found extensive problems with the tree, including large sections of the trunk and major branches were hollow. The Shrine was advised to cut the tree down to avoid any potential danger.

If we reflect on the life of this tree, we can imagine what it has "witnessed" during its long lifetime. The American Colonies were growing, under King George I of England, when the tree was just a sapling. Only Native Americans populated the local area until the Zanes arrived some 50 years later. By then, the tree was already mature

It would have witnessed attacks and the destruction of Fort Shepherd, which around the time of the American Revolution stood where Monument Place is now. And it would have provided welcome shade for the slaves who later worked on the Shepherd plantation or at its water^w powered mill along the creek. It would also have witnessed the construction of the grand stone house in 1798 and visits there by nationally known politicians and other luminaries. The arrival of the National Road and the nearby stone arch bridge came twenty years after the house, when the tree would have been 100 years old. Tens of thousands of wagons would have passed by the tree as westward-bound settlers used the National Road to travel from the more populated eastern parts of the country to the expanding west.

The tree would have been about 150 years old when Civil War soldiers would have passed by on their way to battle. And mourners might have rested under the tree as they paid their respects to the property's owner, Lydia Boggs Shepherd Cruger, who died there in 1867 at the age of 101 (and whose second husband's name was assigned — though misspelled — to the street that now passes in front of the tree.

When the tree was about 200 years old, World War soldiers may have paused by the tree as they entered Wheeling for transport beyond, some stopping closer to Wheeling at the Stamm House for rest. And the more modern U.S. Route 40, which generally followed the original National Road route, brought modern automobiles and nearby commercial enterprises to the area.

When it was announced that the tree was to be cut down numerous Elm Grove residents shared their disappointment noting that they had grown up with the tree always there. It was part of their lives.

When Gene Sligar, who had the task of removing the tree, remarked that the best testimony to a tree is to leave part of it standing, ideas of how to mark its importance in history began to form. We wanted to satisfy the community and educate passersby of the significance of the tree and the grounds on which it stood and at the same time make them aware of what Osiris Shriners do for children in need specialized medical care.

It was decided to place brick walkways leading to the base of the tree, and add benches made of some of the wood making a park-like setting. A bronze plaque imprinted with information will be placed in the area as well.

4x 8 personalized bricks will make up the walkways. To share in memorializing the "Witness Tree" we will be selling personalized bricks for \$100 each, Below is the necessary form for ordering a brick(s).

OSIRIS SHRINE

ORDER FORM

PERSONALIZED BRICK(S) TO BE PLACED AT "WITNESS TREE"

Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone No. _____

The brick will be imprinted with three lines of up to 15 characters each (including spaces). Please print with capital letters the name and/or message you would like on each brick.

Brick #1

1																	
2																	
3																	

Brick #2

1																	
2																	
3																	

Brick #3

1																	
2																	
3																	

No. of bricks ordered _____ x \$100 each = \$ _____

Make check payable to "Osiris Shrine" and attach to this order form. Mail form and check to the Osiris Shrine Center, P. O Box 2048 Wheeling, WV 26003.