

An Outstanding Neighborhood Tree Along Skippack Pike

BY CAROL KALOS, WISSAHICKON VALLEY HISTORICAL SOCIETY PRESIDENT

With April and the beginning of spring, we search the trees for little hints of green leaves, the future canopy that will shade us throughout the summer. One of those trees stands at the corner of Skippack Pike and Wentz Road (at the yellow flower shop). We have each passed this lovely tree thousands of times, but few of us appreciate its importance.

Standing old and grand, Whitpain Township's Shade Tree Commission recognizes it as a "Heritage Tree," meaning it "defines the history and character of our unique and special community." The Commission describes the tree as an Ash (*Fraxinus americana*) with a 12-foot circumference!

Whitpain Township's residents are proud of their trees. According to the township's website, the National Arbor Day Foundation has designated the township as a Tree City USA community every year since 1994. This is a national

recognition for communities that effectively manage their public tree resources. Since 1999, the township has annually received the Foundation's Growth Award, the next level of recognition that Tree City USA communities can achieve. In 2009, after earning the Growth Award for ten consecutive years, the Arbor Day Foundation has recognized the township as a Sterling Community, its highest level of recognition. Only a handful of other Pennsylvania communities have ever earned this distinction."

Carol Kalos is president of the Wissahickon Valley Historical Society. Its museum at the 1895 School is open by appointment: info@WValleyHS.org The building appears on the National Register of Historic Places.

