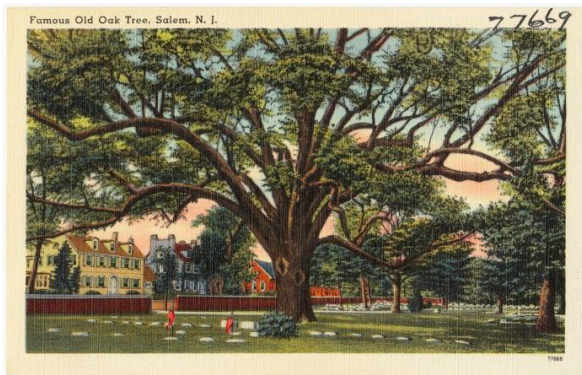


# The Demise and Rebirth *of the* Historic Salem Oak Tree



For more than 500 years, the Salem Oak stood in the historic city of Salem until it toppled to the ground on June 6, 2019. This iconic White Oak had been one of New Jersey's most treasured trees, both for its size, longevity, and history.

One of the state's largest White Oaks, it stood in the Salem Friends burial ground, with a height of 100 feet, a trunk circumference of 22 feet, and a crown width of 104 feet. This majestic tree survived far beyond the typical White Oak lifespan of 200 to 300 years.



*Postcard drawing of Salem Oak, 1930's*

## **Witness to New Jersey History**

The Salem Oak was the sole survivor of the forest that stood in 1675 when Quaker John Fenwick arrived and founded Salem. According to legend, Fenwick met with the Lenni Lenape Native Americans under the oak to sign a peace treaty. A marker at the site commemorates the event.

## **Rebirth**

Only months before the Salem Oak fell, foresters in the DEP Forest Service's Big and Heritage Tree Conservation program collected acorns from under the ancient tree. Hundreds of seedlings sprouted and flourished at the Forest Service nursery in Jackson Township and were distributed upon request to municipalities throughout the state. One of those seedlings was planted in Lambertville in April of this year by the city's Shade Tree Commission.

Mayor Andrew Nowick assisted with the planting of Lambertville's heritage seedling on the grounds of the historic Holcombe House on the city's newly acquired Closson tract. General George Washington made the 1733 stone house his headquarters before the battle of Monmouth in 1778.