

# Pin Oak

*Quercus palustris*

I chose the Pin Oak as my Tree-of-the-Month tree after I came across a photo of one being planted at the corner of 54th and Duncan Streets in Lawrenceville in 1951.



A Pin Oak being planted at the corner of 54th and Duncan Streets. The 1951 photo is from the Library and Archives Division, Sen. John Heinz History Center. The present-day photo was taken by Molly.

I drove by the site to see if the Pin Oak was still standing and much to my dismay the tree was gone. I can only imagine how beautiful that 50-year-old Pin Oak would be today standing in the middle of the playground, offering shade to all the children. Many of our trees have been cut down in the last 40 years, giving way to fields of asphalt. As you can see from the current photo, not only is the Pin Oak gone but all of the street trees in the background are gone as well.

Today Lawrenceville is a neighborhood of regrowth, with technology, healthcare, retail, dining, art and many other wonderful things including trees! With our partners' help – TreeVitalize, Friends of the Pittsburgh Urban Forest, Lawrenceville United, Lawrenceville Corporation and the City of Pittsburgh – in the last year we planted many new neighborhood street trees, including 18 trees on Fisk Street, 4 trees in Arsenal Park, 11 trees at the Pittsburgh Brewing Company and 36 trees on Butler and surrounding streets. We also have 115 pending tree requests that we're working hard to satisfy.

The TreeVitalize program, through which 20,000 trees will be planted in Pittsburgh and Allegheny County by 2012, was unveiled on Fisk Street, which also hosted the first of 250 trees planted to celebrate Pittsburgh's 250th Anniversary.

We have a lot to celebrate in Lawrenceville including our tree program. Maybe someday we can replant a Pin Oak at 54th and Duncan just like we had in the past! For now, we can see live Pin Oaks on 40th Street towards Penn Avenue and in the garden across from the church on 37th street.

- Molly Stephany

Pin Oaks are native to eastern North America and are one of the most popular ornamental trees in the United States. Their name may come from their small slender twigs, but it may also be related to their historical use as hardwood pins in building construction. They are large-sized deciduous tree that grow to be 60-70 ft. tall, with a trunk diameter of up to 3 ft. They are relatively short-lived trees compared to other oaks, but they still have an average lifespan of 90-120 years. The bark of a Pin Oak was used by some Native American tribes to make a drink for treating intestinal pain.

**Tree-of-the-Month** is published by *Lawrenceville Tree Tenders*, an all-volunteer organization with a mission to maintain existing street trees, educate residents and re-forest the neighborhood. Technical review is provided by Matt Erb, with Friends of the Pittsburgh Urban Forest. Editing and layout is provided by Christine Brill.



## Get Involved!

Sign up for upcoming **Tree Tender Courses** at <[www.pittsburghforest.org](http://www.pittsburghforest.org)>.

*Lawrenceville Tree Tenders* meet on the first Wednesday of every month to discuss current projects, including a tree park, a street tree master plan and tree care days. E-mail <[lvreetenders@gmail.com](mailto:lvreetenders@gmail.com)> with comments or for more information. Tree-of-the-Month nominations are also welcome.

*Trees of the Eastern and Central United States and Canada*, by W. M. Harlow (1942) was referenced for tree facts. <[www.hort.uconn.edu](http://www.hort.uconn.edu)> and <[www.discoverscience.rutgers.edu](http://www.discoverscience.rutgers.edu)> supplied the detail images above.

