

## THE MASTER GARDENERS' HISTORIC TREE NURSERY

The **MASTER GARDENERS**, together with the **UNION COUNTY SHADE TREE ADVISORY BOARD**, have taken the responsibility for growing historic tree seedlings until they are of sufficient size to plant out in the open. These seedlings were started at the Cranford Campus of **UNION COUNTY COLLEGE** as part of a larger preservation project.

Our little nursery, in the Watchung Reservation, holds the following seedlings:

10 Joyce Kilmer White Oak (*Quercus Alba*)

The White Oak that inspired Joyce Kilmer's poem "Trees" died in 1963 at an age of 165 years. Several seedlings of that tree were established on Rutgers University's Cook College campus. These are the "grandchildren" of the original.

10 Liberty Hall Catalpa (*Catalpa speciosa*)

Liberty Hall, the home of new Jersey's first governor, William Livingston, is now open as a museum. A very old Catalpa tree, probably planted when the house was built in Union, N.J. in the 1770s, graces the front yard.

10 Greenwich Tea-Burning Monument Ginkgo (*Biloba*)

On the night of December 22, 1774, American patriots held a "tea party" in Greenwich, N.J. burning the cargo of English tea recently unloaded from the brig, *Greyhound*. In 1908, a monument to the tea burning heroes was erected at the site and Ginkgo trees were planted around it.

3 Clinton, N.J. Sycamore (*Platanus Occidentialis*)

The quaint and historic town of Clinton, N.J. is home to a huge American Sycamore (American Plane Tree or Buttonwood). It grows on the bank of the South Branch of the Raritan River, near the town's Old Red Mill. It may be the largest tree in New Jersey, but this cannot be verified. The tree is embedded in a retaining wall along the river, and it is impossible to measure the trunk's circumference accurately.

1 Timothy Ball Black Walnut (*Juglens Nigra*)

This tree grows in front of the Ball home in Maplewood, N.J. It was here that George Washington hitched his horse to a ring on the tree while visiting relatives both before and after the Battle of Springfield. The tree also served as the dividing line between the Presbyterian congregations of Orange to the north and Springfield to the south.