



Elm Leaves

2004 Spring Issue

From the Founder . . .

Recent Publicity on Princeton Elm

I was surprised to read in a recent New York Times article that the current propagator of the Princeton Elm is willing to claim heritage from a parent tree in a Princeton cemetery which is heavily infected with Dutch Elm Disease. (See accompanying photo) This tree has lost about 60% of its branches. It is likely to be removed entirely before the end of the year.



"Mortally wounded" Princeton Elm

In the same article, he cites a row of Elms on nearby Washington Road, claiming a DNA similarity. We contacted Princeton University Buildings and Grounds Superintendent, Jim Consolloy, who advised that a number of these trees have been lost to DED since planting in the 30's. Losses have been replaced by American Liberty Elms in most cases.

These rather nebulous claims for resistance underscore the need for data,

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Landscape architects favor "Grow-to-Order" plan for American Liberty Elms

Landscape architects are always in search of trees in sizes that will give their projects the desired look and a head start in growing toward maturity. Short, twig-like trees won't do it. But it can be a problem to find the right sizes and quantities when planting time approaches.

Now, landscape architects can specify disease-resistant American Liberty Elms in their designs and ask Elm Research Institute to reserve and grow these trees for planting at a future date. It's ERI's new Grow-to-Order plan.

Design elements that could be fulfilled only with American elms were not an option for planners for decades after Dutch elm disease began its sweep through the United States in the 1930's. Since the 1984 introduction of the pure-bred American Liberty Elm, the species has again become a design choice.

Landscape professionals are enthusiastic

"Grow-to-Order allows them to specify American Liberty Elms for their projects and ask us to grow the trees that will bring their designs to life," says John P. Hansel, institute founder. "What we've been hearing is, they're glad to be able to bring elms back to the American scene, but they typically want to spec trees that are already two to four inch caliper."

An elm with a trunk caliper of four inches would be about 20 feet tall. In the past, ERI did not always have enough large sized trees on hand to meet planners' needs. With the new Grow-to-Order plan, we are now growing elms to fill advance orders for the fall of 2004 (elms that will be 14 to 18 feet tall, up to 3 inch calp.) And in 2005 (elms 20-24 feet tall, up to 4 inch calp.) In 2006 and 2007 respectively, Grow-to-Order will be able to provide 26 foot and 32 foot elms, up to 6 inch caliper.



Liberty Elms in Searsport, ME

Since most large scale projects are planned in advance, with an average timeline of two to three years from concept to installation, the Grow-to-Order plan works well for both planners and ERI. Landscape architects placing advance orders now are saving up to 36%, compared to prices of ERI's current stock of large elms. ERI also benefits from knowing how many trees to reserve and how much space to allot to them while they grow.

Elizabeth Thompson, landscape architect in Amherst, Mass., said "I'm thrilled that you're doing what you're doing and you're getting the word out for people to be able to reincorporate them in plantings. It's a pretty remarkable plant that I'd really welcome back."

She describes the Grow-to-Order plan as "a nice opportunity. A lot of times projects are a year or two in the making.

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Anniversary elm programs taking root all over the land!

Celebrating 150th anniversaries

Here at ERI we've seen many traditional anniversaries of town foundings marked with the planting of American Liberty Elms. Two cities celebrated their 150th anniversaries last spring, under our prior anniversary program.



Anniversary Elm planted by Erie County, NY Legislator Barry A. Weinstein and Evan Reed

In Nashua, N.H., Leadership Greater Nashua (LGN) and its school partner, Broad Street Elementary School, welcomed 11 six- to eight-foot Liberty Elms. One tree was raffled, and the others were sponsored by donations from individuals, businesses, and LGN. These trees were planted in public places, such as the Nashua Police Department, Nashua Children's Home, and Elm Street Junior High School. An elm at Deschenes Oval was dedicated to American soldiers who fought in the war in Iraq, and a celebration marked another planting at Greeley Park in June.

The organizers also found sponsors for 20 small nursery elms, and those trees will be raised by fourth, fifth and sixth graders in Broad Street's Project Achievement class. LGN member and teacher Sandy Mulcahy initiated the idea of "re-elm-ing" Nashua and brought the kids into the project.

"The real spirit of this is getting the kids involved," Sandy told a columnist at the Nashua Telegraph. "The whole school has been supportive, the Project Achievement students jumped right into it."

In Concord, N.H., St. Paul's School came up with the idea of planting 150 trees in honor of the city's 150th anniversary. The school and Concord Tree Volunteers shared the cost of starting a nursery that would supply trees for permanent sites in a few years. Environmental volunteers from several local groups pitched in to plant and care for the young trees, including 25 Liberty Elms. During a cleanup day at Rollins Park, volunteers planted an eight-foot Liberty Elm in honor of the sesquicentennial.

Many other places have chosen to plant Liberty Elms in honor of anniversaries, among them, Englewood, Colo.; Coventry, Conn.; Litchfield, Ill.; Morton, Ill.; Monticello, N.Y.; and Erie County, N.Y.

Other elm connections

It isn't always a town that wants to celebrate an anniversary by planting elms. To commemorate the 75th anniversary of the Elfun Society, its Milwaukee chapter planted 75 Liberty Elms in the Waukesha area last April.

An Elfun chapter in Underhill, Vt. also started an elm project. The Elfun Society is a global volunteer organization of General Electric employees and retirees "committed to improving our communities, our company, and our lives through volunteerism, leadership, and camaraderie." Elfun (from the words "Electrical Funds") was founded in 1928 at a meeting on Association Island in Lake Ontario. A famous elm tree on the island became the symbol of the Society and appears on its letterheads and banners.

Feeling inspired?

We'll be glad to work with your community, your business, your group, in our new 5 Year Anniversary Pledge Campaign. Remember, you don't have to be celebrating an anniversary to sign up. There's no end to the different ways this plan can be used to bring disease-resistant American Liberty Elms to the streets of the town where you live. Contact us and let us know your ideas!

The 5-Year Anniversary Elm Pledge Campaign is ready to roll!

You don't need an anniversary to participate

This easy-to-do plan will bring in local donations to pay for a minimum of ten 10-foot disease-resistant American Liberty Elms a year, for five years. The math is easy, but the effect is great. Over that time, an impressive total of 50 or more elms will arrive to be planted in chosen locations!

Also, in the first year, we donate one 10-foot elm, to be dedicated during an anniversary celebration or other special event and a plaque with a customized inscription. The plantings are financed by local pledges, but ERI happily shoulders most of the fund raising work.

- ✓ We send a press release to local media
- ✓ We do the record keeping
- ✓ We provide a pledge kit
- ✓ We even send thank you notes to tree sponsors!

There's minimal effort involved, mostly in distributing pledge forms, accepting checks, and sending them to us with tree orders.

This great plan is open to any entity or group. Towns, neighborhoods, colleges and universities, corporations, service clubs and others can sign up and get started with community beautification and restoration of classic elms.

For more information or to request a pledge kit, contact ERI at **800-367-3567.**

A young man's legacy for the future

His Eagle Scout project lives on as his American Liberty Elms grow tall

At age 14, Ian Burns' vision of the future included elms. It was 1985. As a Boy Scout nearing Scouting's highest rank, Eagle, he was ready to choose a community service project to benefit his hometown of Franklin, N.H. His grandfather, Douglas Kimball, heard about the new disease-resistant Ameri-



**Ian Burns, Eagle Scout
circa 1985**

can Liberty Elm, propagated by the nonprofit Elm Research Institute (ERI). The institute was inviting Boy Scouts to plant these trees. "He thought it would be a wonderful project for Ian," says Burns' mother, Lynne Burns. He was among the first Scouts to respond to ERI's invitation, and he visited the institute in southern New Hampshire to see the trees and ask questions.

He looked at historical photos of Franklin that showed streets lined with stately American elms, but those trees were now gone, claimed by Dutch elm disease. He was inspired. "I wanted to bring that back a little bit to Franklin," he said in an interview when he was 20. "That's what prompted me to start the project." Eagle Scout projects require detailed written plans.

Replanting Daniel Webster's birthplace with Liberty Elms

The first part of Burns' plan was to restore three elms to the birthplace of Daniel Webster, statesman and orator, who was born in 1782. The site is now a state park in Franklin. The original elms, one of them known to have been planted by Webster's father in 1765, had succumbed to the disease. The state had replaced them with maples. Burns found an old photo of the birthplace. "I was impressed with it," he said "The two elm trees in front created an arch and shaded the entire homestead."

When his project was approved by Scout leaders and the state, foresters moved the maples and planted three American Liberty Elms, four to six feet tall. An Eagle candidate's Scout troop lends support to his project, and Burn's troop unearthed an old path at the site. The troop also helped him establish a nursery of small elms near his family's home.

Six years later, when he was in college at Keene State in Keene, N.H., the three elms at the Daniel Webster birthplace were around 25 feet tall. His nursery trees traveled outward, going beyond Franklin to communities throughout the Northeast, and each elm grew upward, 20 feet, 30 feet, and on. They're growing still.

Ian Burns' Eagle Scout project is especially meaningful to his family, friends, and others who have his trees, because they lost him on March 16, 1997. He died in a skiing accident at age 25. After he earned his Eagle rank, Burns continued to tend, raise, and deliver elms through his high school and college years. People

bought elms from ERI, and he raised them in his nursery and delivered them to buyers.

His father, Bill Burns, who was the troop's Scoutmaster, helped him deliver trees. Six of his elms went to Utica, N.Y., three of the trees are planted in front of the Fountain Elms building at Munson Williams Proctor Arts Institute. Another tree went to Cape Cod, Mass., and others even farther.

At the beginning of his project, the 14-year-old was featured in New Hampshire Profiles magazine. The article caught the eye of a woman in Reston, Va., because her grandsons were Eagle Scouts. She requested an elm to plant at the nursing home where she lived. After that article appeared, Lynne Burns says, "The phone kept ringing."

Burns donated elms to Franklin, five to his high school, three to the public



Mr. & Mrs Burns Nov. 2003



Ian & Bill Burns Oct. 1994

Daniel Webster's birthplace, Franklin, NH

library, one to the Unitarian Church where his troop met. "I figured it would be appropriate to give a little back to them," he said. One now grows at his grandfather's Victorian house in Franklin, on Elm Street. He saw his elms thriving and achieving the classic American elm shape, "that umbrella configuration," as he described it.

(Ian Burn's legacy: continued on p. 6)

Burns remembered

(continued from p.3)

The staff at Elm Research Institute remember Ian Burns as a dear friend. They knew him as a Scout, and for several years during and after college, he was an employee and a spokesperson for the special elms. "We always let people know that planting these long-lived elms provides a legacy for future generations," says John P. Hansel, ERI founder. "Ian's elms are his gift to the future. They're an enduring reminder of his vision and his dedication."

In Greensboro, N.C., an American Liberty Elm was dedicated to Burns in 1997, in the city's Bicentennial Garden. He had spoken in that city on behalf of ERI in 1995, when Greensboro established the nation's first Liberty Tree Memorial, an American Liberty Elm planted to commemorate the country's founding and its freedoms.

"Ian was a really special person," says Gary Brown, who met Burns during the 1995 event. "I enjoyed his company, and he helped me plant two American Liberty Elms at my home." Brown has cosponsored one of the largest Boy Scout elm projects in the country, numbering thousands of trees.

Burns honored

Others have honored Burns. In spring 2003, Boy Scouts in Burke, Va., held a ceremony in his memory while tending an American Liberty Elm that had been planted in 1996 at a school. Pat Crepeau, an ERI member who has encouraged elm planting in Burke, said, "People are thinking about Ian even though they didn't know him."

"He helped lead the way for Scouts in planting American Liberty Elms and restoring elms to their towns," says John Hansel, Founder of ERI.

LEAVE A LIVING LEGACY

What better legacy than a long-lived (200-300 years) American Liberty Elm? Your gift to future generations will become a part of your family's heritage... imagine your great-great-grandchildren playing in the shade of the elms which *you* planted!

Just call us at 800-367-3567 to assure your place in the future.

Architects specify "Grow-to-Order" Liberty Elms

(continued from p. 1)

It takes so long to develop and implement a plan, it's a really nice advantage to be able to order ahead, especially with the discount."

Megan Moffroid and Kirsten Seibert of Broadleaf Landscape Architecture, Waitsfield, Vt., used Liberty Elms in street plantings a few years ago, by having

The Liberty does well in harsh environments, in not-so-perfect urban air conditions, and along streets where winter road salt is another challenge.

(Related article on page 4)

The Liberty Elm, during its research phase, showed superior resistance to disease fungus inoculations in eight successive years. Now the tree has had 20 years of "street testing," growing in com-



A few of the thousands of "Grow-to-Order" American Liberty Elms on Elm Research's new 32 acre "ELM FARM"

local Boy Scouts raise the trees from small nursery stock, under ERI's Johnny Elmseed Regional Nursery project.

The Grow-to-Order plan will work for them, Moffroid says. "Knowing we can order the trees ahead of time, that would be a huge benefit. We've most wanted to use them as street trees to bring back that full elm look. Often those are public projects, often funded by the state, and they require a three-inch caliper, which is a pretty good sized tree."

The Liberty Elm has qualities Moffroid appreciates. "The elm has such a recognizable shape and form in the landscape. Where we live in Vermont, our historic landscape is one of our most valuable assets. In the old photos of the towns, you see the elms lining the roads and creating that canopy over the road.

"They're good as street trees because they have that shape where they don't get wide until the top. The branching doesn't interfere with wires and structures as much as some other species."

munities where Dutch elm disease is present. This "the ultimate field test." Losses among the over 250,000 trees distributed have been less than 1 per cent.

American Liberty Elms, with their classic American elm form, lend themselves to many landscape designs, including elm-lined drives, elm groves, and specimen elms in choice locations. As the elms mature, they raise their wide canopies to heights that afford clear views of the architectural details of buildings.

Having elms as a landscape element again, designers can continue the tradition of Fredrick Law Olmsted, who included American elms in his plans for the U.S. Capitol grounds, many parks, and other projects

PRESENTATION PACKAGES

ERI provides presentation packages to landscape architects and other designers, including information on the American Liberty Elm and forms for requesting quotes on the sizes of trees they require. For more information, phone ERI at 800-367-3567.

Princeton Elms?

(continued from p. 1)

hard facts, starting with genetics, and continuing with careful registration and field-testing. The Princeton Elm was apparently propagated by William Flemer, Sr. of Princeton Nurseries. According to Flemer Jr., his father kept "no records," except to say some seed was collected from a survivor. (Seed? Not cloned? What of the other parent? It may have already succumbed to DED.)

As years went by thousands of Princeton Elms were propagated, but they were never claimed to be resistant until recently. These trees were not registered, so no record of losses were kept. Although many survived, a large percentage have been lost to DED. We know, because before we developed the American Liberty Elm, we purchased and distributed thousands of Princeton Elm seedlings. Mr. Flemer, Sr. never claimed they were resistant. We offered them to our members to keep the memory of this great species alive until a resistant cultivar could be developed.

In 1984 we reached that goal with the introduction of the American Liberty Elm, the first cloned cultivar with genetic resistance. We registered that first clone and the thousands which followed, and have monitored their survival rate over 20 years of field-testing. Our research indicated that we could hope for a survival rate of 90%. The present rate of 98.5% far exceeds that goal.

We cannot afford another round of devastating losses to DED. The public would surely give up on this great species once and for all. Therefore, all propagators should be held to the same standards.

We challenge the USDA to establish these basic standards for all cultivars claiming resistance.

1. Provide a scientifically acceptable cloning procedure and license propagators to use it.
2. Prohibit propagation by pollination.
3. Require registration of all cloned individuals.
4. Require records to substantiate resistance by documenting losses.
5. Require each tree to carry a warranty against DED.

John P. Hansel, Founder

Liberty Elms can take what cities dish out

Urban settings perfect for tough Liberty Elms

Cities can be harsh environments for trees, but American Liberty Elms are up to the challenge. Less than pristine air quality? Liberty Elms can thrive when air quality is not ideal. Street salt in winter? Liberty Elms ignore it. Drought? They'd prefer watering, but if it isn't always there, a street-size Liberty can get through a dry period. (Newly established street trees and pot-planted trees in nursery situations do need consistent watering.)



Whether they're planted beside streets or along medians, at outdoor malls or parking lots, Liberty Elms can take what urban environments dish out.

Some comments from people who work with city landscapes

East Lansing, Mich.

This city's Liberty Tree Memorial elm and other American Liberty Elms were planted in 1998, all on a boulevard.

"This is a state highway and one of the main thoroughfares into town," says Angela Mabin, public service administrator, "an area that was once graced with elms. The median is a difficult space. The trees get heavy traffic and road salt, and they've done quite well." East Lansing has another memorial elm in Glencairn Park. "It's one of the largest American Liberty Elms in the city, about 25 to 30 feet tall."

Newton, Mass.

Sal Salipante, landscape architect with New England Development, says his work includes mall design, which he describes as a harsh environment with a lot of paving, where trees may not get the best care. "I have a palette, plants I've tested over the years," he says. Now he's adding Liberty Elms, because he's aware that "a lot of towns have put in these elms, and they're doing quite well."

Waitsfield, Vt.

Here's another reason to put Liberty Elms into a design for the city. Megan Moffroid of Broadleaf Landscape Architecture says, "They're good as street trees because they have that shape where they don't get wide until the top. The branching doesn't interfere with wires and structures as much as some other species of trees."



Five-Year Anniversary Elm Plan

All cities can use our Five-Year Anniversary Elm Plan, whether a city anniversary is in the future or not. Consider it for Arbor Day, Memorial Day, or a local celebration, or use it as an integral part of the city's own master tree planting plan.

Our five-year plan brings a city 50 American Liberty elms, ten feet tall, over a five-year period. In the first year, we donate another ten-foot elm and a custom engraved plaque, to be used in a ceremony marking the beginning of the plantings.

The cost is \$2,500 a year (total \$12,500).

More information on the 5-Year Anniversary Elm program can be found on page 2 of this issue. Or, contact ERI for the details, and get started on your city's five-year plan right away!

ERI municipal members!

We need to hear from you! Tell us about your city's Liberty Elms, their size and condition. Tracking their progress is important to our research.

Thanks!

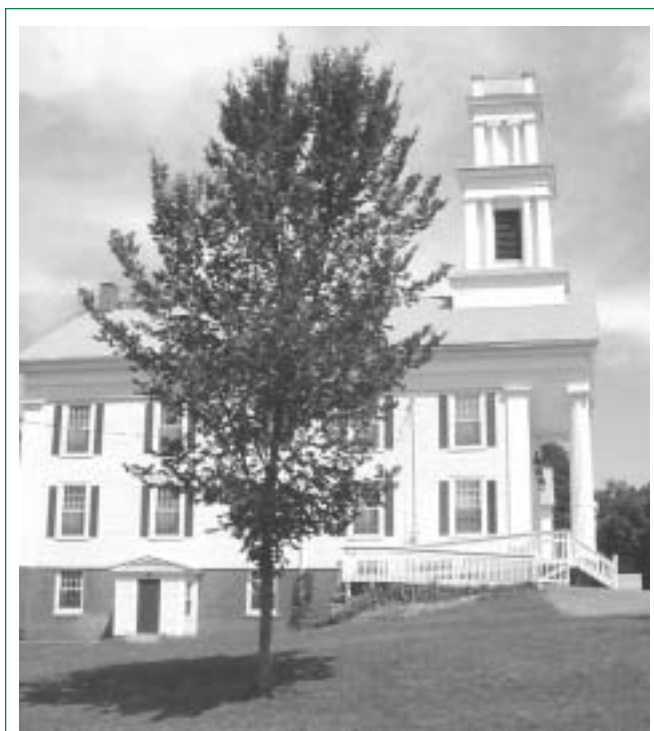
Elm legacies come of age for New England towns

Haven't we been saying American Liberty Elms planted today will be a legacy for future generations? But let's visit two towns where the influence of new elms has reached deeply into these communities in just a few years.

PLYMOUTH, CONNECTICUT

"We have old postcard pictures showing Main Street lined with elms," says Jerry Milne, a state forester. "They've been replaced with telephone poles." A sad tale, but a familiar one in New England after Dutch elm disease took its toll. Plymouth's Town Green was once covered with elms, Milne says.

He has a cheerier update, because elms returned to Plymouth in 1989, when the Terryville Women's Club sponsored 100 American Liberty Elms. (Terryville is a section of Plymouth). Milne knows where some of the trees are today.



**Plymouth's Congregational Church
graced by American Liberty Elms**

Three are on Plymouth's Town Green, in front of the Plymouth Congregational Church. Another is at Veterans Memorial Park in Terryville.

"They're doing great!" he says. "They're probably 25 to 30 feet high, with trunks six inches in diameter. They're healthy, with dark green leaves. They look fine." At this point, the branches are spreading, "starting to develop the upside-down feather duster look," also known as the classic American elm shape.

The Plymouth Conservation Commission distributed the rest of the trees. Because they were taken away by residents, there isn't any way to know exactly where most of them are,

so a search is on. The Bristol (Conn.) Press ran a story in September asking elm owners to contact ERI. These trees that went so deeply into the area are on our "wanted" list, because we'd like to know their locations and how they're doing. Local newspapers ran ERI's "Are you on the Wanted List" press release. Liberty Elms owners are calling in to report on their trees and receive a brass tag to identify the tree as an American Liberty Elm.

BROOKFIELD, VERMONT

At Mark Hackett's restored farmhouse in Brookfield, a row of 25 American Liberty Elms grows along East Street. At more than 18 feet tall, they attract attention and comments such as, "I'd like to do that at my place."

In front of Mark's house are two more Liberty Elms, around 30 feet tall. "I have pictures of the house in the 1930's, and it had beautiful American elms all around it," he says. "I have pictures of it in the 1950's, and every single one of them was gone."

His quest for elms began as he restored the house. He says he thought, "I really need to get elms around there, because that's how that house was presented before."

Mark's vision went beyond his farm when he bought his first 100 small Liberty Elms in 1996. In a couple of years, they were ready for residents of Brookfield and other towns. Mark planted two at a park where the only floating bridge in Vermont crosses Sunset Lake.

Last fall, Mark and a neighbor split the cost of another 48 small Liberty Elms; his neighbor wants to extend that row of elms along East Street. Mark intends to donate 10 trees to the Brookfield Community Partnership, to be sold to raise funds for the restoration of the old Town Hall.

He says Brookfield has a lot of maples that are reaching the end of their lives, so he believes this rural town is ready for more elms. "We have 60 miles of roads that the town maintains. Most of them are dirt, kind of winding. I just love trees, and I think the elms should be everywhere. They were, a hundred years ago."

Will he continue to bring elms to Brookfield? "I would do it again, as long as ERI wants to have elms available for people. I think it's great."

NEED A BRASS TAG?

Help us track the survival rate of American Liberty Elms... make sure all your trees have the I.D. tag attached.
Call 800-367-3567 for details.