

The Territorial Oak

Whitewater

A huge old bur oak tree, from which early surveyors platted the village of Whitewater, has been adopted as the symbol of that city. It is pictured on the official city stationery and also appears in the famous Whitewater mural located at Whitewater and Center Streets. On February 17, 1981, the Whitewater City Council nominated the Territorial Oak for consideration as a historic tree.

The handsome old tree, which stands on the corner of Franklin and Main Streets, graces a home that once belonged to Rosetha Trippe, one of Whitewater's earliest settlers. Rosetha came from New York state with her husband, Dr. James Trippe, in 1836. Dr. Trippe proceeded to build the first grist mill on Whitewater Creek. As the only one in the vicinity, the mill was patronized by farmers from a large area, contributing substantially to the prosperity of the fledgling city.

The Trippe's first home, in which Rosetha entertained all visitors to the area, was a log cabin near the mill site. It was not until much later, after Dr. Trippe died, that Rosetha moved into a house built on the corner lot shaded by the Territorial Oak.

Sources: Mr. and Mrs. Alfred Kolmos, Whitewater
Quinn C. Smet, Whitewater



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Roland P. Schlieve (1981)