

Winter 2008

Farewell Old Friend

Mardi Mileham
Linfield College

Follow this and additional works at: https://digitalcommons.linfield.edu/linfield_magazine

Recommended Citation

Mileham, Mardi (2008) "Farewell Old Friend," *Linfield Magazine*: Vol. 4 : No. 3 , Article 7.
Available at: https://digitalcommons.linfield.edu/linfield_magazine/vol4/iss3/7

This article is brought to you for free via open access, courtesy of DigitalCommons@Linfield. For more information, please contact digitalcommons@linfield.edu.

Farewell old friend





Old Oak collapses Jan. 8



It went down with a mighty crash. No warning, just a huge bang on Tuesday, Jan. 8, at 1:30 p.m., that shook Pioneer residents and echoed throughout the college.

The crash brought people from across campus. Word spread over land lines and cell phones, Internet and email: “The Old Oak fell.” No other explanation was needed. Although the tree had been in decline for many years, its collapse was a shock. Just one month before, it withstood nearly gale-force winds. And on Jan. 8, winds were calm, although rain was falling.

For most, it was like losing an old friend, a member of the family. Older than the college, and even McMinnville, the Old Oak had been the silent guardian, standing stately over generations of Native Americans, early pioneers, McMinnville residents and college students. Brides and May Queens celebrated under those majestic branches. It provided a solemn and peaceful site for memorial services. Thousands of students passed by it on graduation day. The senior bench featured a parting message from graduating classes for 60 years – the whimsical Dr. Seuss title painted by the class of 2007 proved a little prophetic, a little ironic: *Oh, the places you’ll go*.

A committee made up of faculty, staff and students will make recommendations regarding the Oak Grove and use of the wood from the Old Oak to President Thomas L. Hellie later this spring. Although its passing leaves a gap, its spirit will live on and the oak will remain a part of Linfield – a fitting symbol as the college celebrates its 150th anniversary.

– Mardi Mileham