

OAK NEWS & NOTES

The Newsletter of the International Oak Society
Winter 2001

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NEW ARBORETUM OPENS

Taltree Arboretum and Gardens, Valparaiso, Indiana, is pleased to announce that their arboretum was officially opened on Saturday 6 October 2001. The primary woody plant collection genus at Taltree is *Quercus*. This young collection consists of 7+ species growing naturally on site with over 70 additional species propagated from seed obtained through the Oak Society Seed Exchange. We invite all Oak Society members to visit Taltree any time they are in the area.

James E. Hitz, Director, Taltree Arboretum and Gardens, 71 N 500 W, Valparaiso, IN 46385, (219) 462-0025.

NEW OAK PUBLICATION AVAILABLE

The Library Fellows of the National Museum of Women in the Arts announce the publication of *Quercus Psalter*, a limited edition artist's book by Sue Ann Robinson. A contemporary meditation on the oak tree, *Quercus psalter* is a sixteen-page accordion-fold bookwork printed on both sides with text, drawings and photographs exploring in images and prose the relationship between humanity and the oak. The title refers to the genus for "oak," the latinized version of the Celtic for "fine tree." Mythology, oak facts, and anecdotes about oaks are mixed with drawings and photographs in the enchanting form of the bookwork which opens out, accordion fashion, to represent a tranquil oak grove. Original photographs of Black oaks and Engelmann oaks by the artist in Pine Cove and the Santa Rosa Ecological Preserve, CA.

Contact the National Museum of Women in the Arts at (202) 783-7994 or (202) 783-7364. FAX (202) 393-3235 to order *Quercus Psalter* or contact their Store at 1-800-222-7270.

Oak Open Days in Spain, 2001



ABOVE: International Oak Society members and hosts during Oak Open Days in Spain at the Finca Coto del Rey, near Jerez de los Caballeros.

For the fortunate International Oak Society members who journeyed to Spain for the 3 days of October 26-28, good times were certainly served in hefty portions. Francisco Vazquez Pardo and his research associates hosted a hectic schedule of pre-dawn awakenings, long scenic rides, vigorous oak-viewing stops, unpredictable lunch stops, interesting talks and presentations, and post-sunset returns to the hotel rooms. Participants were well-sated by bedtime, in mind and body.

The first day of the tour began in Badajoz, in the South of Spain. Traveling west into Portugal, the party had their first look at the shrubby *Quercus lusitanica* growing in sandy soils beneath a forest of *Q. suber*. Then, westward to the rugged, precipitous coast south of Lisbon, in Arrabida Natural Park. Here amid limestone rock and dense shrubby thickets of the highest ridges were *Q. coccifera* in company with a wide variety of Mediterranean companion plants such as *Pistacia*, *Olea*, *Phillyrea*, *Arbutus*, and others. On the lower slopes and ravines we encountered the rare and newly described *Q. rivas-martinezii*. Back to the east and Badajoz, Spain we visited the Institute of Agrarian Research in Badajoz Province, where our hosts worked. Plantations of *Q. rotundifolia*, *Q. suber*,

Q. faginea spp. *broteroi*, *Q. faginea*, *Q. coccifera*, *Q. robur*, and various hybrids were inspected. The propagation house at the research station held seedlings of many North American oak species growing vigorously. Oak presentations by Francisco and his research staff followed a surprising spread of 'appetizers' at the station, and a seed exchange back at the hotel finished the day.

During Day 2, the tour proceeded south of Badajoz into the "Dehesa"—a savannah-like forest of oak where *Q. rotundifolia* dominates and *Q. suber* is an associate species. We enjoyed a morning hike into this managed forest, which covers many thousands of hectares in southern Spain, and which is an important agricultural link to the production of pork. This was the "Montanera", or time of acorn maturation, and we saw and tasted first-hand how the sweet acorns of *Q. rotundifolia* fatten up ranging bands of black Iberian pigs that are turned out amid these vast forests to produce a most highly prized type of ham. Here among the pigs and oaks the group was also treated to a single presumed hybrid of *Q. rotundifolia* and *Q. suber*, and then a hefty lunch of gourmet sausages

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("Spain 2001" continued from front page)

and other Spanish fare. After being herded back onto the bus, we gazed along a winding route southward amid oak-studded hills, miles of stone fences and ancient hilltop watchtowers. A quick stop at a southern population of *Q. pyrenaica* in the Tentudia mountains, and then on to hotel at the southern Iberian Peninsula of coastal Spain. More oak-related presentations at the hotel then complimented the day's end, before we retired to Oceanside rooms with a soothing breeze.

The 3rd and final day started with a visit to a nearby 'champion' Olive tree, over 1,000 years old, and a walk in the Doñana National Park amid a few old and especially large-fruited *Q. suber*. Then, ascending into the hills of Alcornocales Natural Park in Cadiz Province, we saw many miles of *Q. suber* forests flanking the mountainsides as we stopped for inspections of *Q. canariensis*, *Q. faginea* ssp. *broteroi*, *Q. faginea* ssp. *alpestris*, and *Q. lusitanica*. After a pleasant lunch break under the oaks, we descended the mountains to Seville, where some of the group disembarked and bid farewell, and others rode onward to Badajoz, arriving in the night to their hotel.

The Northern Spain Tour:

A small party of International Oak Society members (4 of us) also partook of a tour to the north of Spain, offered by Francisco and his expert research staff, October 20-24. Traveling at a pace which was brisk at the least, this tour was a special treat for the riders and a grueling chore for the drivers. Nevertheless, all participants sought and found plenty of 'oak sights' along the route.

During Day 1, traveling from Madrid northeast past Zaragoza, we got our first look at *Q. rotundifolia*, *Q. coccifera*, and *Q. faginea* near Guadalajara, and *Q. ilex* and *Q. x cerruoides* near Santa Maria. A loop north into the

Pyrenees mountains took us by two excellent old and huge specimens of *Q. petraea* and *Q. faginea* at the San Juan del la Peña Monastery, north of Jaca.

Day 2 included a return to the high Pyrenees, amid rushing rivers, gorges, aspens, rocks, and meadows. Oak stops along the way afforded acorn-gathering and photographic opportunities. Afterwards, the group journeyed west and north to the vicinity of the coast for a visit to the splendid arboretum El Jardin Botanico De Iturraran. There a collection of oaks from many parts of the world is being assembled, with at least 150 types having been planted out on the grounds. After wandering and inspecting many of these young oaks, the group was ushered by twilight back to the bus for a long ride to our Bed and Breakfast in Cantabria Province.

Day 3 started with a ride into the high mountains of Cantabria, passing *Q. ilex* forests on rocky slopes and gorge walls and *Q. suber* along sunny slopes. Ultimately we reached *Quercus-Fagus-Castanea* forests, where we got our first glimpse of *Q. pyrenaica*. Descending the mountains to the south into Leon Province, the road dropped steeply in the rainy afternoon hours, where we searched for a recently named *Quercus* species amid *Q. pyrenaica* and *Q. faginea* woodlands, only succeeding in a chilly drenching of our clothes. A long ride in the comfort of the vehicles to Salamanca allowed for a drying-out.

On Day 4, after heading out of Salamanca toward Badajoz, the group was routed past the largest *Q. pyrenaica* known to our Spanish guides. This was a giant specimen on a grazed mountainside, itself wide-crowned but surrounded by other examples of this species that were also impressive. Another treat near Badajoz was the largest known specimen of *Q. rotundifolia*, called the "Encina La Terrona" — with a trunk 7.6 m in circumference.

The members of the International Oak Society that were carted about and treated to such an excellent tour thank their Spanish hosts, especially Francisco M. Vazquez Pardo, Enrique Balbuena Gutierrez, Esperanza Doncel Perez, Soledad Ramos Maqueda, and Juan Pozo. Amid various other assistants, the guidance and hospitality of Angel Josemaria, Beatriz Isabel, and Ana Belen Lucas Pimienta is also acknowledged.

— Ron Lance

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INFORMAL OAKS OPEN DAY AT SIR HAROLD HILLIER GARDENS AND ARBORETUM

An informal Open Day was held at the Sir Harold Hillier Gardens and Arboretum near Winchester, Hampshire UK, on Saturday 20th, October 2001, for members and their friends—who we hope will become members! We were fortunate in having a warm, sunny autumn day on which to see some of the oaks in this large National Collection.

The day began with an exchange and sale of young trees. Afterwards the party of 35 enthusiasts was led by Allen Coombes who, with his abundant knowledge of oaks, has been responsible for adding many species to the collection originally started by Sir Harold. As we toured the arboretum, it became clear that the oak collection is extensive, haphazardly distributed, and frequently either unlabelled or, accordingly to Allen, mislabeled. Without Allen's leadership we would not have found half the collection on our own. The morning

was spent looking at some of the more mature trees in the 180 acre arboretum; those we noted particularly were *Quercus fabri*, *Q. x bushii* (*Q. velutina* x *Q. marilandica*) and *Q. 'Pondaim'* with its huge leaves—a hybrid between *Q. pontica* and *Q. dentata* raised at Trompenberg Arboretum. Some of us had a taste of *Lithocarpus edulis* (!) before our buffet lunch, at which we had the opportunity to see a display of specimens from the Herbarium kindly prepared by Dorothy Holley and Eric Clements. In the afternoon we crossed the road where we saw many newly introduced trees, particularly those from Mexico. For members who stayed the course, we ended the day admiring the magnificent *Quercus rhysophylla*.

This was a most enjoyable, interesting and informative day. Thank you, Allen, for leading the tour.

—Jo Earle and Barry Denyer-Green

ACORNS FOR AMERICA—Share the Excitement!

Each fall, as the acorns ripen, I get very excited about the trees that I'll grow. I typically pick up several thousand more acorns than I could possibly plant, but each acorn represents so much potential. How could I walk past and not pick them up?

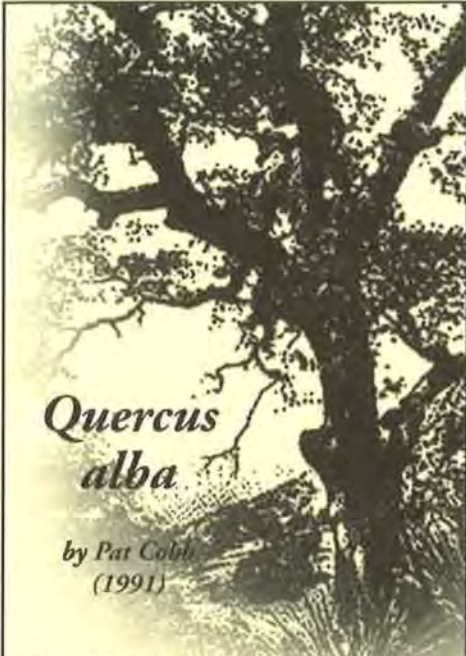
The answer lies in sharing and community involvement. We can help lots of people plant their own acorns, and grow their own oak trees. As members of the International Oak Society, we are all fortunate to have a higher level understanding of the Oaks. By sharing our excitement and knowledge about oaks, we can each leave a legacy and make a long-term environmental difference.

I developed a simple hands-on program called "Acorns for America" that has been very successful in my city. It is a fun, educational project that can have a huge environmental impact. With your assistance, classes, groups, churches, and clubs can grow their own trees. This is a practical, low-cost urban re-forestation tool.

Visit this website, for detailed information: http://www.geocities.com/acorns_for_america. Take a bucket of germinating acorns to several schools or groups, and hold an "Acorns for America" day. A positive, fresh project is always welcomed! Call your local newspaper let them cover the event...this project makes a great story!

Most importantly, share the excitement and teach others. In order to re-forest our earth with Oaks, we need lots of help. The best time to plant a tree was 20 years ago...the second best time is now.

—Janet McCormick, Urban ReLeaf,
janetm@dynasty.net

Quercus alba

by Pat Cobb
(1991)

*The white oak's gnarled branches
Stretch to reach the sky.
Its bark is fissured and platy.
Its leaves are rust red with the coming of fall.*

*The oak has watched the decades go by,
The summers and winters pass,
It watched the squirrels bury its acorns,
And proudly looks on as its saplings grow.*

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Next International Oak Society Conference Set for 2003

You probably do not have a calendar or diary for 2003 yet but, if you are intending to travel anywhere that year, then please reserve September for our Fourth Triennial Conference. In January 2001, a Committee was established to plan the events and we would welcome any comments you may have on our plans, as they progress.

We already have the venue booked, in a brand new facility at King Alfred's College, Winchester, complete with on-site accommodation for 120 and a Hall which will seat 180. For those who do not already know it, Winchester is a small, intimate old city in southern England, dating back to Roman times and also boasting connections with King Arthur; you can very easily walk around it in an hour or two, though there are one or two hills to climb, and it has one of England's finest cathedrals.

The talks and discussions at the Conference will occupy two complete days, Saturday the 13th and Sunday the 14th of September, and the 15th will be spent at the Hillier Gardens and Arboretum, some 15 miles away; the General Members Meeting will also be held there. The Conference Dinner will be held on the Sunday evening.

We are at present sketching out the various sessions but we already have a promise of participation by the UK National Maritime Museum whose staff have some fascinating material on the historical use of oak in ships. As to the more academic subjects, we are in negotiation with the Forestry Institute of Oxford University and have short-listed a number of other speakers from both in and outside the UK.

Work is under way on planning two tours, one to the Netherlands and Belgium immediately before the Conference, and the other to sites in the south and west of England, immediately following it. Those attending the pre-Conference field trip will meet in Schiphol or Utrecht on the evening of Tuesday 9 September. There will then be two and a half days of visits, ending at the cross channel ferry, and another coach will pick you up on the UK side and take you to Winchester on Friday evening.

The post-Conference field trip will start on the morning of Tuesday 16 September and is planned to include visits to Kew Gardens, Westonbirt Arboretum, and several sites in the south west of England. It is planned to terminate at the Hillier Gardens and Arboretum or at Heathrow Airport, as desired, on Saturday 20 September.

It is too early to give confident estimates on costs but, for the 12th to the 16th, we have negotiated inclusive terms with King Alfred's College for accommodation, all meals, and the conference facilities. It should be noted that all rooms at the College are single. For those who require doubles or twin, we will endeavour to obtain suitable terms from hotels and Guest Houses within easy reach of the College, but living-in will clearly be the most practical solution, as well as being cheaper for participants overall, as we will have to apportion a share of the conference costs to anyone living out.

Tour costs and other charges will be dependent on the level of sponsorship achieved. A generous donation from one of our members

in the United States has already set the wheels in motion, and we have since received other offers from two UK members; support has also been promised by the UK Forestry Commission. You can rest assured that your Committee will be working to increase sponsorship, in particular from public bodies, but any generosity from other Society members will be more than welcome! With their permission, the names of all sponsors will be added to the notepaper.

I have posted the E-mail address for Dorothy and myself on the International Oak Society web site and it is also in the latest Directory, but please feel free to respond to any member of the 2003 Conference Planning Committee who are listed below:

Allen Coombes	Chairman
James Harris	Vice Chairman & Programme Sub-Committee
Dorothy Holley	Secretary of the Society
Ron Holley	Conference Secretary
Bill Legge-Bourke	Treasurer
Eike Jablonski	European Tour Organiser
Phil Morton	UK Tour Organiser
Jo Earle	Programme Sub-Committee
Richard Earle	
Co-opted:	
Piers Trehane	Lead Member, Programme Sub-Committee
Simon Milne	Director, Sir Harold Hillier Gardens & Arboretum

An update on plans and preparations will be included in future Newsletters. Until the next issue....

*Best wishes,
Ron Holley*

New Oak Disease

Has anyone else in central Illinois or elsewhere begun to notice the dying shingle oaks (*Quercus imbricaria* Michx.) in Sangamon and Menard Counties? The disease superficially resembles oak wilt, and apparently some district foresters and arborists have dismissed it as that because oak wilt is so common. (This is analogous to blaming poison ivy for every skin irritation). But I have observed the disease closely during the past

three years, and I suspected it was different. The progress of the symptoms did not match oak wilt exactly, nor did the length of time the trees take to die. In addition, the infection centers so prevalent with root-transmitted diseases like oak wilt have not been observed.

Still, I had cultures taken to isolate oak wilt, just in case. They were negative. My next fear was that the California Sudden Oak

Death disease (*Phytophthora ramorum*) had found its way to Illinois. Then Nancy Pataky of the University of Illinois plant clinic and pathologist R. Jay Stipes of Virginia Tech recommended having a lab in Indiana run an ELISA test for the bacterial leaf scorch (BLS) agent *Xylella fastidiosa*. The test came back positive. BLS is spread by leafhopper insects, not by sap beetles and root grafts as is oak wilt. While both diseases are fatal to oaks in

Chihuahuan Desert Oak Exploration Trip—August 2001



ABOVE: A group shot taken in New Mexico at a grove of Mexican blue oak (*Q. oblongifolia*) at the northern edge of the range of the species.

"Make sure that your tent is snake proof and scorpion proof" was the slightly alarming last email from Michael Melendrez, just prior to our flights to Albuquerque. The name of the city means "redolent of oaks", and New Mexico is a haven for oak buffs. The company of 15 people from the US and Europe, informally organized to conduct a trial run for a field trip to accompany the 2006 Triennial meeting, gradually assembled and were generously hosted in overnight accommodation by the Los Lunas Rotary Club. The use of four wheel drive trucks were also donated by the Rotary, and we were accompanied by a very able pair of minders and provisioners, as we set off to see oaks in the Chihuahuan Desert.

This huge area, once a vast sea, is surrounded by impressive brooding mountains, but alleviated by the most beautiful canyons that have micro climates which enable a wide

range of trees to grow. We were there during monsoon season and had our fair share of torrential rain and vivid thunder and lightning storms. We drove SE to The Monzano and White Mountains where gambel oaks (*Q. gambelii*) abound, and then to Sierra Blanca Peak. In the Lincoln County cemetery we saw the remaining trees of the fabled *Q. x fendleri*, before moving on to the Capitan Mountains to look at *Q. muhlenbergii* growing in association with *Pinus strobiformis* and *P. ponderosa*.

In the Guadalupe Mountains of west Texas at the superb McKittrick Canyon we discovered a rich vein of oaks including *Q. pungens*, *Q. muhlenbergii*, *Q. mohriana* and *Q. grisea*. In this enchanting canyon were also Alligator Junipers—*Juniperus deppeana*—as well as *Prunus serotina* and bigtooth maples (*Acer grandidentum*). Then we drove back to New Mexico and the Organ mountains with

occasional glimpses of *Q. turbinella*, but common sightings of *Q. x undulata*. We were slightly disappointed at the lack of acorns on *Q. hypoleucoides*, but delighted at the abundance of *Q. rugosa* acorns at Whitewater Canyon as we walked through the very well maintained Catwalk. The warden gave us ample warning of diamond back snakes and their propensity to bite rather more at this particular time of year since they were molting their skins. We were told that the skin covers the eye when they molt; being unable to see very well they will strike at anything moving that appears to threaten them. Previously, when collecting acorns under the nation's champion *Q. emoryi* tree, my hand had come to within six inches of a rather testy black scorpion.

Acting on Michael's advice, acorns from the trip were sown immediately on return and I can report good germination from several species. In our relatively overcast skies of Europe, however, I think that lack of light may act to inhibit good growth of the New Mexico oaks, but several of us will persevere. We also hope to determine the parentage of several of the species we saw since it was difficult for our resident experts to agree on the name of specific oaks—not surprisingly given their predilection to hybridise. (The oaks, not the resident experts).

This was a great trip, full of incident, warm friendships and marvelous oaks. Some of the group even documented new national champions for *Q. grisea*, *Q. mohriana* and *Q. emoryi*! Michael, thank you for the time and energy you gave to organizing the trip—it was a real privilege to be there. I hope to return.

—John Gammon

the Lobatae (red oak) section, the treatment recommendations are not the same. No trenching is needed to separate diseased trees from healthy ones, and no removal of apparently healthy trees surrounding those with BLS is useful.

I would welcome any feedback from members regarding their experiences with BLS in other areas.

—Guy Sternberg
strhlfrst@aol.com

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In Memorium

Dr. Yuri Leonardovich Menitzky, Russian Oak Society member, died on September 5, 2001 at the age of 64. He suffered a heart attack during a collecting trip to the Northern Caucasus.

Yuri was born in Leningrad in 1937, where he also graduated from the University in 1960. He was a postgraduate student at the Komarov Botanical Institute, where he became a member of the staff in 1966. His Ph.D. dissertation, titled *Oaks of the Caucasus*, was published in 1971. Since Yuri was also a mathematician in addition to a botanist, he used several biometrical-statistical methods for his taxonomic work.

His main botanical work was devoted to the genus *Quercus*. Yuri regularly made field excursions all over the former Soviet Union, collecting an immense amount of herbarium material, which he sent in large wooden boxes back to his institute. The Caucasus remained one of his favorite places to work, as he loved the region and its flora very much. He could speak and read the Georgian language, and traveled widely through remote Caucasian regions with his ISH-500 motor bike. His wife, Dr. Tamara Nikitichina Popova, who also worked at the Komarov Institute, accompanied Yuri on most of his field travels. They have two daughters, Olga and Anna.

In 1982 his work *Review of the genus Quercus of Eurasia* was published, and two years later (1984) his main work *Oaks of Asia* came out, where for the first time since Camus' *Les chênes*, a general treatment of Asian oak species was given. This work is still the main reference for many Asian oaks, and today is the most useful publication for oak taxonomists worldwide, not only because of the detailed descriptions, but also because of the exact line drawings of nearly all Asian oaks. Because it is printed in Russian, this work was widely unknown to the public in the West until the mid 1990's.

In *Oaks of Asia* Yuri used his biometrical methods to develop a broader species concept than was generally accepted in Russia at that time, as the botanical species concept was much narrower according to the Komarov School. So his concept generated controversy within Russian botanists. For *Oaks of Asia* Yuri was awarded the Komarov prize of the Academy of Science of the USSR. Other publications of Yuri that addressed oaks were *Flora Iranica*

(1971) and *Flora Europaea Orientalis* (to be published in 2003).

In addition to oaks, Yuri Menitzky was interested in a large number of other plant species, with a special interest in *Lamiaceae*, especially *Thymus*. He also prepared descriptions of several genera for the *Flora of the European Part of the USSR* (1978) and for the *Flora of Armenia* (1987). Another woody family, the *Salicaceae*, was described in *Plants of Central Asia* (1989). Recently he prepared material for the *Critical Synopsis of the Caucasian Flora*; he developed a system of regions and wrote descriptions of about 30 families, including *Aceraceae*, *Betulaceae*, *Lamiaceae*, *Salicaceae* and others. Since 1987 he was the deputy chief editor of the *Botanichesky Zhurnal* and supervised a number of Ph.D. dissertations.

His interests went beyond botany and included mathematics and electronics. He built his own radio and had contact with radio amateurs all over the world. He could listen to news from outside the communist countries, and did not hide his political opinions—both sometimes caused him problems with the political leaders of that time.

With Yuri Menitzky we lose a great oak taxonomist, who had not only extensive knowledge of the material he was working with in the herbaria, but also had extensive field experience. After his main work became more widely available in the West and he began to be recognized throughout the world, plans were made to translate his publications into English. He became a member of the Oak Society and was on the proposed speaker list for the 2003 International Oak Society Conference in England. His main work *Oaks of Asia*, which is very much sought after by Quercophiles, will not lose its value and will keep its author, Y.L. Menitzky, and his knowledge and enthusiasm for oaks, in our minds.

— Eike Jablonski

I wish to thank Mr. Dmitry Geltman, Komarov Institute, St. Petersburg, Russia, and Prof. Dr. P.A. Schmidt, University of Dresden, Germany, for their kind help in providing additional information about Yuri Menitzky. Yuri's main works on oaks including *Oaks of Asia* are still available on line at <http://www.pensoft.com>.

To All Our Friends Abroad: Thanks!

Oak Society directors and members in the US have been receiving many messages of concern and consolation from other members around the world regarding the tragedy of what is becoming known as 911 day. "911" is a US telephone code for emergencies, and the senseless attack which took place on the 9th month, 11th day certainly ranks among the most tragic of emergencies we have ever faced.

We deeply appreciate the support coming from so many other countries. We realize that this was an attack against us all—against civilization. Such acts have taken place elsewhere before, although not with this degree of death and destruction. This time it occurred in the US, but it could happen anywhere. The entire world has been affected, and shares our loss. On behalf of all American members, thank you all for your friendship and solidarity during this troubled time.

— Guy Sternberg