



FOREWORD

Of Oak and Vine

Six months have already passed since the 7th International Oak Society Conference that drew together over 90 IOS members, recent and long-standing, to gather in the majestic city of Bordeaux and share their interest in oaks.

The city and its region are better known for *Vitis vinifera* L. and its estimated 10,000 cultivars (only a few are cultivated in the area, the noble ‘Cabernet Sauvignon’ and ‘Merlot’ being the most famous) than for the genus *Quercus*. Quite appropriately, the Conference Gala Dinner was held in a charming wine estate, the Château Carbonnieux in Léognan.

Oak and wine, however, have long been associated and one of the novelties of this conference, namely the field trips, illustrated this association. Our first field trip to the Tonnellerie Nadalié, a local cooperage, taught us all about making the *barriques bordelaises*, the casks made of French or American oak that, we learned, differ in the way the wood is sawed.

The second field trip was organized by Dr. Antoine Kremer, a fascinating half-day visit to the Institut national de la recherche agronomique (INRA) at Pierroton. The International Oak Society is indebted to Antoine Kremer for this as well as for agreeing to host the 7th International Oak Society Conference in the name of INRA and for his keynote presentation on the evolution of European oaks. It is also to him that we owe the original idea for the conference venue at the University of Bordeaux’s Espace Agora du Haut Carré.

I also record here the Society’s sincere thanks to Thierry Lamant, Conference Chair, Béatrice Chassé, the Society’s President and Shaun Haddock, our new Tour Director, for all the work they did to get the conference and tours off the ground, assemble a diverse group of speakers who delivered presentations ranging from botany and horticulture to culture and history, and make the conference a real success. I extend our thanks to the numerous contributors — members and speakers alike — who collected acorns in different parts of the world for the legendary IOS seed exchange. And finally we are

indebted to our generous donors. Donations indeed covered about 60% of the cost of this event. Without them, the IOS would not be able to organize the triennial conference.

Memorable and enjoyable Pre- and Post-Conference Tours were also on the program. I can personally report on the Post-Conference Tour. Among other stopovers, it took us to four remarkable oak collections of the greater Southwest of France. The first two of these gardens were the Arboretum de Chocha in Ustaritz, created by Michel Duhart, and the Jardín Botánico de Iturraran, actually located in Spain, very close to the French border and Saint-Jean-de-Luz (which is why I write the “greater Southwest”) with its magnificent woody plant collections assembled by Francisco Garin. These two gardens and their wonderful oak collections make you feel like moving to this region, with its mild climate and good rainfall to create a garden. From the Basque country, we moved north to Saint-Sardos to visit the Arboretum de la Bergerette, the oak collection established over the past twenty years by Shaun Haddock. Shaun has written about la Bergerette in *International Oaks*, Issue No. 23, 2012. Despite what he wrote about the difficulties encountered over the years, I can testify that, notwithstanding voles, rabbits, leaf-miners, hurricanes and drought, the collection at la Bergerette is a great oak collection and the garden is well laid out, allowing space for the trees to grow. Shaun and partner, Anke Mattern also treated us to a lunch that we will long remember. The fourth garden was the young and excellent collection of Béatrice Chassé and her husband, Gérard Lionet in the north of Dordogne, the Arboretum des Pouyouleix. Planted on 25 ha, the arboretum contains almost exclusively wild-collected accessions and is already a French National Collection for oaks.

I was told that the Pre-Conference Tour organized and led by Thierry Lamant was equally successful. Its starting point was the Jardin des Plantes and the Muséum national d’Histoire naturelle in Paris, where Aimée Camus spent so much time. Béatrice Chassé paid a warm homage to Aimée Camus during the conference in a passionate and vivid presentation. The tour reports in these *Proceedings* detail these tours.

Finally, our next triennial conference, in 2015, will take place at The Morton Arboretum, in Illinois. Andrew Hipp and Kunso Kim volunteered to organize the conference. I sincerely hope that this return to the origins of the Society will attract even more members than the 2012 conference.

I would like to say one last word about Bordeaux. Some IOS members know that I have a passion for the early history of the American Republic. Pauillac is one of the most famous *appellations* of Bordeaux, home to Château Lafite-Rothschild, Château Latour and Château Mouton-Rotschild. It is also a pleasant small town with a harbor. And it is from here that, on the 25th of March 1777, the Marquis de Lafayette sailed to North America on a ship named Victoire.



A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Charles".

Charles Snyers d’Attenhoven
Vice-President