

Notes from the President

Dear Members of the International Oak Society,

I am glad to present the current issue of our society's yearbook, "International Oaks," to you. This is already the 16th volume, with a wealth of interesting information about our favorite plant, the oak. Without members writing about oaks or oak-related issues, this publication would not be possible. I would like to express my gratitude to all contributors of this current issue, and hope that you will continue to share your knowledge and your experiences with oaks in future issues of "International Oaks."

This issue contains a lot of diverse information about oaks. You will read about historical oaks in Belgium and Germany; about the sometimes-confusing hybridization within the genus *Quercus*; about oak forests in Illinois and the Himalayas; about the difficulty to determine the age of an oak, and a report about the Oak Open Days in France. Finally, a photo gallery of *Q. macrocarpa* gives us a good idea of the habit of this majestic oak.

I am sure you will enjoy reading. We also owe many thanks to the tremendous work of Ron Lance, Doug McCreary and Guy Sternberg, who did all the work connected with this publication. In fact, "International Oaks" is a continuous link between the Oak Society members worldwide; especially for those who could not afford to join one of the events we had the past year. Two very successful meetings in Europe took place. I was fortunate enough to attend both of them. In England, Joe Earle organized a one-day "Oak Open Day" at one of our member's collections, in the garden of The Lord Michael Heseltine. Some 65 oak enthusiasts gathered together to see a marvellous oak collection. Later in the year, Thierry Lamant called for a four-day tour to visit French gardens and arboreta, and about 35 members attended. Thanks to Joe and Thierry for all their input in organizing these meetings. I know that many of our members do like these meetings as much as I do. It is not only to see the collections and to see new oaks. It is also the feeling of being part of a world community, or, as many members do express, of being part of a family. And, of course, the traditional plant swap or seed exchange always will add more oak treasures to your collection. I hope that many of you will have the opportunity to attend one of our next events. One of them is scheduled for September this year in Southern England. I also like to encourage more members in other regions to find time and energy in organizing a similar event. For sure there are interesting oak stands or collections in your region which will be of interest to other members too.

Also, our next Triennial Conference is approaching, in November 2006, in Texas, U.S.A. Make plans already that you will be able to attend, as for sure it will be another invaluable event. The Oak Society's website will keep you informed about this upcoming International Oak Conference and other meetings.

With the help of all members and their contributions, the International Oak Society supports work on oaks and oak-related subjects. Members of the International Oak Society take part in conferences and workshops, where the latest research about SOD and other oak diseases is told. You will find the latest information about SOD at our web page. Also, the IOS could sponsor Chinese students to attend an Oak Conference. I personally hope that we as a Society become more involved in the conservation and protection of oak forests worldwide.

Writing these lines, I am just thinking of all the acorns I just planted a few days ago. Without the Oak Society and its members, I would never have the chance testing oaks from all around the world in our Luxemburgish climate. I would have never gotten the idea of trying to grow oak species from regions such as Mexico or Southern China! Sometimes it surprises me to find out that certain oak species do grow vigorously here despite the meaning of many books I consulted before planting. This is one more example of a benefit you may have from being a member of the International Oak Society!

Eike Jablonski
President
International Oak Society