



Libraries through the lens

Burgundy School of Business Learning Center, Dijon, France.

LIBRARIES through the lens this month takes us to the wine-growing region of Burgundy, in France.

Photographer and librarian Thomas Guignard explains: “During the last 30 years of the 19th century, Europe’s vineyards were devastated by Phylloxera, an insect unwittingly imported from North America. A series of methods to combat the parasite were eventually found, including grafting naturally resistant American cultivars, but implementing them took time, resources and effort. Among the hardest hit areas was the Burgundy region in France, which had a long wine growing tradition and whose population depended heavily on the crop.

“To help its economy recover, the Dijon chamber of commerce petitioned for the opening of an *École Supérieure de Commerce*, following a model that was being implemented across the country. In 1898, the school opened in a building provided by former Dijon university professor and first director of the business school Léon Gadeault.

“The Burgundy wine economy recovered and the Dijon business school expanded its offerings to other economic branches but kept its focus on wine production. Today, it is still a centre of excellence on this topic. Its learning centre reflects the school’s mix of tradition and modernism. First built by

Bougeault-Walgenwitz-Seturec in 1996 as the campus’ entrance lobby, the glass structure proudly preserves the school’s original 1880s facade. The entrance was subsequently moved further south and the lobby was transformed by Hervé Renault in 2017 to welcome the learning centre.

“The bright and airy library space is flanked to the south by two open mezzanines with book shelves and working spaces, while meeting rooms, training rooms, labs and offices face the opposite side. The space is carefully furnished with areas focused on different work and relaxation modes, and is very popular with students.”