

LETTER FROM OUR PRESIDENT

July 2017

Dear Franconians,

Now that it's summer again we've been able to get down to seriously summery things, like the traditional June gathering at the "Berg" organized by Teresa. My informants assured me that a good crowd of cheerful Franconians enjoyed each other's company in perfect weather. I would have liked to be with you, but on that day I was showing the city of Nuremberg to visiting tourists, thinking all the while that the Berg would have been the cooler choice.

Similarly, the excursion down to Ingolstadt to visit the Medical History Museum was also blessed with sunshine. Here we were given a talk on potentially lethal plants by a well-informed pharmacist, who let it be known which famous people met their untimely ends after munching a leaf too many (or was it a berry?) of some beautiful but rather vicious plant. Fascinating stuff. Like much else in life, it's all about doing things in moderation. Take the hemlock: one minute, at the right dose, a painkiller, even an aphrodisiac, the next a killer.

In the summer we also have our "Under the Oak Tree" gatherings, which are usually well-attended, cheerful affairs. That was certainly the case on 2nd June. While I'm on the subject, may I remind you all of the 7th July Stammtisch evening where, after, I hope, eating outside in the evening sun, we are being treated to a highly-recommended slide show of "Landscapes in Germany through the Seasons". And for those of you who are around in August, come to our Stammtisch "Under the Oak Tree" and enjoy the company of fellow Franconians.

May I return, though, to May, which was a very active month! On May Day we participated in the Erlanger Rädli, organized by Sangeeta and Bridget and other hard-working Franconians, who collected signatures of families who might be interested in joining us. To learn more about the Rädli, I refer you to the relevant article in this Newsletter (page 4).

The Stammtisch in May, of course, featured our Treasurer, Sieghard, sharing with us his love of Russia and, in particular, his fascination with St. Petersburg. It was truly a well-prepared, amusing and much appreciated talk. Well done to him.

On 20th May the Dinner Club met in the Hexenhäusle, charmingly located on the castle walls in Nuremberg. We had a little tour of the Vestnertor area and the Burgfreieung before we got down to the business of eating. It wasn't too well attended perhaps, but it was in Nuremberg after all, which, I suppose, requires a longer journey time. Actually the bus and tram connections, recently much improved, aren't really an excuse. It's all a question of "mind over matter".

We had a summer walk scheduled for 18th June, which had to be cancelled, but in fact very few people had phoned to say they would like to come. It's going to be rescheduled for July, surely a good month for walking along a shaded path or two? And remember what Shakespeare said about the summer, it doesn't last for that long! "And summer's lease hath all too short a date" suggests to me that we have to make the most of the warm weather while we can.

One very sad event that has happened since our last Newsletter is the death of one of our most active and helpful members, namely Eric Bach, who passed away on 29th May at the age of 85. He had been ill for a considerable time and, towards the end, his enjoyment of life appears, through his illness, to have dwindled to a minimum. A small group of us visited him a few weeks before he died and found him surrounded by some of his family, which, I'm sure, cheered him immensely. It was Eric, incidentally, who asked me on a couple of occasions whether I would like to be the next President of the Society. I felt understandably honoured, and that is why I shall remember him with some affection, as will many others.

To end, let us look forward to the next few months and the events that we would love you to attend. On 23rd July we will be in Kosbach enjoying the Fischerei Jazz Festival and the so-called "Fischerstechen" at 2 p.m. for

3 pm. It's a Dinner Club Evening and thanks go to Teresa for organizing it. We also have an excursion to Coburg (9th September) to look forward to. It's being organized by Valerie, our Secretary, and I can only ask you to give her your full support. I also need a few more members to sign up for the Thuringia trip (14th and 15th October) and to make their payments as soon as possible.

And please don't forget a very special Stammtisch evening on 1st September when Dr. Stenger will talk about his experiences in Syria working for "Doctors without Borders". This year we donated to this highly-praised charity and asked if someone with direct experience working in a foreign location could possibly come and address us. Please come and please tell your friends about it.

So, till you receive another Newsletter, may you all have a wonderful, and wonderfully safe, summer. Take care,

Frank Gillard