

LETTER FROM OUR PRESIDENT

November 2018

Dear Franconians,

We had a committee meeting last night (22.10) where, to my horror, I discovered I had only a day or two to conjure up the “President’s Letter” for this, the November Newsletter. Well, here it is!

Fresh in my mind, of course, is still our last night’s October Committee Meeting, where we always discuss and evaluate our various activities and, in particular, our “*Stammtische*”. In September I gave an illustrated talk on the two Nuremberg cemeteries, Rochus and St. John’s, surely a fascinating subject for anyone interested in local history, while the talk in October was about a disturbing feature of our modern age: the high incidence of depression and especially how it affects young people. Claudia Gliemann, our presenter and highly acclaimed author, did a fine job, I thought, presenting this troubling theme. The next *Stammtisch* is a cheerful sing-along, and the one after that is all about Irish poetry and literature. Both events will be accompanied by excellent Christmas bazaars organized by our newly-formed handicrafts group. Much praise to them.

Since our last Newsletter, we have had a couple of walks – many thanks must go to Mairi – and dinner clubs – likewise to Teresa. It’s not always easy to get people to come along, but both “events” are great ways to engage in an interesting chat while lubricating your English or someone else’s.

It is sometimes said that the autumn is a fine season to move on to a better world. To take one’s leave when the leaves turn golden and fall magically to the ground is rather beautiful. This past month we said goodbye to Eli, a remarkable man, who served many years on our committee, who provided our Newsletter readers with countless jokes, who gave many a talk at many a *Stammtisch*. We remember him with respect.

Perhaps it is appropriate then that we are visiting St. John’s cemetery on **Friday 23rd November**. It’s the time of year when Christians remember their ancestors – All Hallows’ Eve (Halloween), All Saints’ Day (All Hallows’) and All Souls’ Day. Other cultures and religions, of course, have their own special festivals of remembrance - ‘*Pitri-Paksha*’ for Hindus, the *Qingming* festival, the so-called “Tomb-Sweeping Day”, for the Chinese. For the Jews, *Yom Kippur*, this year on 19th September, comes to mind. Here in Nuremberg, though, in November, it would be nice to have a good crowd strolling through the cemetery looking for objects (epitaphs, names etc.) of interest. If you want to join us, send me an email. The graves will be lovingly decorated, make no mistake.

By the time you read this, our one-day excursion to Bayreuth, organized by our secretary Valerie, will have come and gone. It’s going to be (will have been) a great day. At our committee meeting we also talked about future excursions, such as one to the Lake Constance area, in the summer of 2019. Planning will begin soon and we hope you will enroll as quickly as possible. And do let us know what other activities would appeal to you, especially ones that might appeal to younger friends and relatives. Rejuvenation – making ourselves “young again” – is of paramount importance!!! It’s up to all of you to do your bit so that the next anniversary dinner – don’t forget that our 35th anniversary celebration is scheduled for **18th May 2019** at “Oberle” just outside of Erlangen – will be a huge success like all the others.

Let me finish with Christmas thoughts, hardly surprising as our supermarkets are already stocked with reindeer and other Xmas paraphernalia. On no account forget our Potluck Supper on **15th December**. It’s a must. It’s about the true spirit of Christmas.

Till then, enjoy the autumn colours before the first blizzards of winter descend, as they surely will. Wrap up warmly and tread carefully. And from me and all our hard-working committee may we wish you a very exciting Christmas season and all the very best for the year ahead.

Frank Gillard