

LETTER FROM OUR PRESIDENT

March 2019

Dear Franconians,

Shakespeare once penned: "A sad tale's best for winter". As usual the bard had a point. The power of light on our psyche is a proven fact and as soon as we let more light into our lives, the better we feel about ourselves and others. The more we want happier tales, not sad ones. So that is what I am wishing you all: "a light-filled spring".

In the last Newsletter I thanked so many people for their contributions towards the success of the Franconian Society, but I forgot the person who has helped us so much with our website, David Griffiths, who created it and maintains it. He is our "behind-the-scenes" person, but he does an essential job and is truly deserving of our thanks.

The sub-committee that volunteered to organize our anniversary dinner (see article on page 4) drove out to Kosbach to visit the Fischerei Oberle in early February and was impressed both by the attention we received and the attractive ambience of the location. The price of a ticket, we can now reveal, will be very reasonable. For the €40 you will receive a welcoming drink, excellent food (a three-course meal) served at the table, great music, informative and amusing addresses (our main speaker is Dr. Haberkamm, the well-known Franconian dialect expert who talked to us some time ago), while our other guest is our Bürgermeisterin Dr. Elisabeth Preuss, representing the city of Erlangen as well as some English sketches performed by members of The Pretenders. So please, if you haven't done so already, go ahead and enter 18th May in your calendar.

The highlight of the beginning of the year was undoubtedly the February Stammtisch talk given by Dr. Daniel Gossel on President Trump, entitled **#MAGA!?? Lessons from the first two years of the Trump Presidency**. Many were in attendance when he came to us last year to explain BREXIT, an excellent talk, and this time he set a new attendance record of 56! And everyone agreed that it was again a superb performance – well-balanced, well-crafted and insightful. He has very kindly offered to make his speech and slides available to those unable to attend. If you are interested in receiving a copy, please contact me at: president@franconian-society.de

On the subject of talks I have the pleasure to announce that we will be co-hosting Dr Sibylle Erle, Reader in English Literature at the Bishop Grosseteste University, Lincoln, on Friday 10th May. We'll stick to our usual time of 8.15 p.m. Dr. Erle's subject will be the famous British poet William Blake (of "Jerusalem" fame). We have been asked by our member Bill Blundell, President of the *Deutsch-Britische Gesellschaft* ("DBG"), to be co-hosts, as the Caritas-Pirckheimer House in Nuremberg is simply not available on that evening. We are, of course, very pleased to help out. My one concern, however, is that we try to respect the speaker by not eating while she is speaking. We have asked the staff at the Turnerbund to serve as quickly and quietly as possible, which obviously means that, if you want to eat beforehand, you should come a little earlier. I'm aware that this "coming earlier" idea doesn't always work out, but at least we can try.

If you haven't read about our Petition for Marwa, the Syrian girl waiting for a visa for herself and her father so that she can travel to Boston for her skin surgery, then allow me to give you the link to the Petition site. We need as many signatures as possible. We are doing our best to help, but your support is also much appreciated. The story is a tragic one and with everyone's help we might just, just, achieve something. Please send the petition to all your friends.

<https://www.change.org/p/us-state-department-approve-us-visa-for-marwa-s-medical-treatment>

Liz Nicholson will be telling us about her work in the Erlangen Integrations- und Ausländerbeirat at some point in the future. She is the lady who has taken a very personal interest in Marwa and can best fill us in on the progress made towards obtaining the visas required.

Please don't forget our next Stammtisch on 1st March, which will be a Pub Quiz organized by Yvonne. These are always good fun so come along and join in.

Our hard-working Teresa will be in the States visiting her folks pretty soon, which is why I am writing this Letter now. She thoroughly deserves her break (27.02 until 25.04) and we hope it proves to be a wonderful holiday for her.

Teresa is the organizer of our dinner-club events, which seem to be growing in popularity. Quite a few came to Wabene on 24th January and an even larger number attended La Petite France on 16th February. While she is in America, Valerie will take over the organizing of the Dinner Club so make sure you note down dates and venues. It's a great way to practise your English!

Our trip to the Jewish Museum in Fürth also seemed to be a hit, requiring two groups to be formed, one with an English-speaking guide, the other with a German guide. There are lots of museums in the area and there will be more trips like this as the year goes on, the *Trachtenmuseum* in Neunhof being a definite and the relatively new Ludwig Erhard Zentrum in Fürth also a strong possibility.

And one last reminder: Our AGM will be on Friday 5th April. Please make a point of coming. We want to hear your ideas for an even better Franconian Society!

Frank Gillard