

LETTER FROM OUR PRESIDENT

November 2020

Dear Franconians,

It's not the most exciting of months, November, grey and gloomy a lot of the time; nor is it exactly abrim with fun events, apart from the rather cat-frightening Guy Fawkes Night. Altogether, a bit underwhelming. The trees are madly shedding leaves, but their stunning colours – red and gold and bright yellow – probably impressed us more in "Golden October"; now that November's arrived, we're more concerned about carting them off to the local dump (garden refuse centre). It's garden lock-down time again.

And of course, it's corona lock-down time, too. Or it sometimes feels like it.

But it's not all gloom and doom, because deep down we know better times are coming. Vaccines are being trialled, there will be light at the end of the tunnel someday soon. And perhaps we have learnt the lesson that, if we are cautious, we have nothing to fear.

Perhaps November isn't that bad after all. Watching children in the park running through the autumn leaves, jumping up and down in puddles of water, having fun. And older folk taking dogs for a walk, often being pulled along by their canine bundles of energy, enjoying the crispness in the air. There's so much to be thankful for, even when we have to wear a face mask to go shopping, even when we have to postpone the hugs and embraces we would normally bestow on our friends. Even when the Franconian Society has to slow down a little and practise patience.

Talking about patience, Ingeborg has been waiting for so long for her garage to be emptied of books, and now it has been - finally. A few of us met in early October with cardboard boxes and cleared the garage, and then drove the books to the Nuremberg Lebenshilfe (Fahrradstr.), to be sorted and used to raise money for its many worthwhile activities. The idea for this came from Mike Gibson, so many thanks should go to him for his very sensible idea. And a myriad thanks should go to Ingeborg for allowing us to (mis-)use her garage year after year as a depository of discarded books. That act of generosity, of course, allowed us to raise thousands and thousands of Deutschmarks and Euros for our charity pot. And I think a word (and more) of thanks should go to Becky and Yvonne for organising our book sales. However, there is no need to worry that book auctions are a thing of the past. The two ladies have set aside a good number of decent-looking books that can be auctioned in the months to come.

A few other busy bees should be mentioned, most notably Hannah and Uschi, but also some other handicrafts experts such as Mairi and others. Faced with the problem that owing to the pandemic there might be little opportunity this year to have a Christmas bazaar, Uschi thought of other ways to sell their seasonal products, namely online. How this will be done is explained in a separate article in this Newsletter edition but allow me to say just how professionally the ladies have set about this task. I wish them huge success and would ask you all to reward them by looking at our website where the photos have been posted and to order generously. We are very proud of our charity work, and the handicrafts group make a substantial contribution to this, for which we are all extremely grateful.

The disruption caused by the pandemic is pretty substantial, one element of this being the postponement of our AGM. Sieghard researched the legal consequences of this and learnt that we can indeed wait until the new year and hopefully safer times in which to hold our meeting. We'll keep you informed. Despite everything, though, we did manage to have a very good Pub Quiz organized by Yvonne, and a small group of Franconians came with

me on a walkabout through the Old Town of Nuremberg, which ended with a hot beverage and cake near the Henkersteg.

However, with so many things not taking place it has crossed a number of minds that a Christmas Special Edition might be a thought worth considering. I've been told that many of you enjoyed reading the Special Editions, and if that were really so, then a publication just before the Christmas break would be quite sensible. Please let me and the board know what you think.

Here's wishing you a lovely late autumn and early winter. With the daffodils and crocuses safely planted, all will be fine come the New Year. Take care, stay safe, keep in contact... and go and find some nice puddles.



Frank

Please note:

*As indicated in my letter, the board and committee of the Franconian Society have decided that, in the interest of the health of our members, **all activities will be cancelled until the New Year**. We are planning a Christmas Special Edition and would like to refer you again to the on-line gift shop organized by our handicrafts group. Just go to our website to find it.*

Please keep safe. Please remain duly cautious. Please stay in contact, should you have any questions. This awful time will surely come to an end in the foreseeable future.

Frank Gillard, Bridget Ineichen, Ingeborg Lötterle and the members of our committee.