

## LETTER FROM OUR PRESIDENT March 2021



The Year of the Ox to the snow in Kraftshof

Dear Members,

With our Society still lingering in lockdown, it's very difficult to know what I should write about. I could easily waffle on about the 50 or so Eskimo-Inuit words for snow, the Chinese New Year – the year of the Ox began today - or notable anniversaries to be remembered in March. Did you know that the first international rugby football match, England v. Scotland, was played 150 years ago in Edinburgh on 27th March 1871? As a keen follower of rugby union, I can report that the Scots were justly victorious over the English last weekend in the opening game of the Six Nations Championship. That should bring a smile to our several Scottish members. Or that exactly 75 years ago Winston Churchill used the phrase "Iron Curtain" in his speech at Westminster College, Missouri, on 5th March 1946? Being a mere 74 myself, I can't claim to remember the occasion, but its Nawalny implications are very much in our minds this frosty 2021.

Yes, there is plenty I could write about. Today is February 12<sup>th</sup> and outside I can see a brilliant blue sky and a dazzling sun, and a sub-zero village sparkling under a liberal covering of frozen snow, and I feel elated. There isn't a virus or a variant of a virus anywhere in sight, a good job as I still haven't been offered a job. Were I in England, it would be a different story, I could taunt! But I must remain apolitical, so I'll wait patiently for the call from the Nuremberg vaccination centre.

With virtually nothing happening in the Society, there is, arguably, virtually nothing to report. I am sure that the handicrafts group has been quietly active, which is good news. I can also divulge that I was invited by the Deutsch-Indische Gesellschaft in Nuremberg to send a greeting on the occasion of India's Republic Day on 26 January. It was good of the Nuremberg D-I Society to remember us and I was more than pleased to respond to their invitation. You may not recall, but on 15 August 1947, India received its independence from Britain. King George VI, however, remained its head until the Constitution of India came into force in 1950, 71 years ago. As the world's largest democracy our Indian friends have every reason to be proud. And we have our long-standing member Sundaram Iyer to thank for our current bond of friendship with the Nuremberg society.

And speaking of long-standing members, may I draw your attention to Ruprecht Kamlah who, on the occasion of his recent eightieth birthday, has given to the Friedrich-Alexander University here in Erlangen his significant collection of "Deutsch-Römer" (a designation for the many German artists of the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries who spent long periods of time living and painting in Rome and its environs). This is indeed a very generous donation and would be worthy of a visit should an exhibition be organised in the coming months. In all events, our warmest congratulations go to Ruprecht.

Other Society news revolves around the information that we need not be concerned if we didn't have an Annual General Meeting during the last year. The German Bundestag has created a law, to be in effect until 31.12.2021, with the title of the "Covid-19-Abmilderungsgesetz", or, in English, The Act on the mitigation of the consequences of the Covid-19 pandemic in the areas of insolvency, civil and criminal procedure law". It specifically states, among a host of other regulations, that governing boards of societies can remain in place and operative until there is an AGM without the need to alter

the statutes of the society. This is reassuring, but I do promise that, as soon as it is feasible, our postponed AGM will take place with the traditional gathering of society members.

And on that positive piece of information, may I wish you all a pleasant winter's end and an even pleasanter start to spring. Stay cheerful and safe, assured in the belief that this dreadful period is now coming to an end. Well, perhaps not that quickly, but the light at the end of the tunnel is slowly coming into view.

Frank Gillard

P.S.: Some of us have decided to put together another, presumably final Special Edition, which should appear in late March. If you would like to contribute an article, a humorous tale, some poetry that caught your eye, etc. etc., please let us know, but do bear in mind that the theme is Spring and Easter.