

LETTER FROM OUR PRESIDENT

November 2023

Dear Franconians,

I've just been out in the garden to rake up some very colourful, autumnal leaves and when I finally uncovered the lawn it dawned on me that I still had a few daffodil bulbs to plant out. That is what gardening is all about. Keeping up with the seasons, dead-heading the roses, harvesting grapes and apples, and planning for a spring day in 5 months' time when the bulbs will have done their duty and grown into a fresh display of flowers worthy of Wordsworth.

Actually, the garden was a bit of a mess a couple of weeks ago. My wife and I, new and proud grandparents, had been to England for five weeks and the weeds hadn't heeded my plea that they go slow for a bit. C'est la vie. Our trip was well worth it, though, and Bridget and Valerie held the fort while I semi-vacationed. My huge thanks go to the two of them.



And here is a smiling grandson Theodore, fresh to the world.

While I was away, we had a Stammtisch evening on "Cockney English" with Andrew Stockman, which I'm sure was very amusing. Andrew also had a tidy number of people for his walk to the Kosbach Altar, a prehistoric site dating back to the 6-5th century BCE. I'm convinced he did an excellent job presenting this important discovery from the late Hallstein period, finds from which are in the municipal museum in Erlangen. While on the subject of walks, I am planning on visiting the historic Rochus cemetery in Nuremberg on 19th

November (see separate article). Send me an email if you would like to come along.

Please note in your diaries that Valerie is currently arranging a walking tour of Forchheim and its Christmas market, which will be on either the 5th or the 7th of December. We'll send you the final details by email as soon as possible.

There was a change of plan for the October Stammtisch. Valerie and Bridget decided to offer an evening of poetry, which was much enjoyed by all present. A number of people brought along a selection of their favourite poems (English and German), which were read to a receptive audience.

The next Stammtisch will be reflections on Franconia and its various dialects with the local author, Helmut Haberkamm.



Dr. Haberkamm is a familiar face to our Society, and we are very much looking forward to the evening. So, make sure you come and bring along friends who might be interested.

The Dinner Club was also active, thanks, in particular, to Bridget, who liaised with the restaurants selected, in Teresa's absence. The excellent restaurant "Ritter St Georg" in Bruck, with its German cuisine was the venue in October, while September saw the Dinner Club dining at the Greek restaurant "Ipiros" in Erlangen.

Let me turn now to a number of important dates that you will want to add to your diaries. Our Potluck Supper evening has been scheduled for December 8th. For such an event to be a success the organisers need to know, of course, what everyone is bringing along. It would be unfortunate if everyone brought a quiche or a salade niçoise or a selection of cheeses. So, at the next Stammtisch evening, we'd like to ask those who wish to come to let us know what they intend to bring. Of course, if you can't make it to the next Stammtisch, please

let us know, nonetheless, if you are coming to the Potluck Supper and what you will be bringing.

Our AGM has been scheduled for April 12th, 2024. Please remember that we will be choosing our new president on that day, so your vote is massively important.

Finally, let me turn to our anniversary dinner on Saturday, June 15th, a very special event which the committee has been thinking about for a long time. The idea was mooted that we hold it in Simmelsdorf, one of the ancestral homes of the von Tucher family.



Tucherschloss in Simmelsdorf

This would have been an appealing, but rather expensive option, not least because of the logistical problems involved. Becky has very kindly suggested we take a summer trip out in that direction at a different date. So, our thoughts turned back to the Turnerbund, which has over so many years kindly hosted our society. Incidentally, several of our members have used it for their own special occasions and have been very happy with their choice. It seems an obvious venue and we'll have small teams of committee members overseeing the buffet dishes on offer and the entertainment provided.

At our last committee meeting Valerie announced how much money had been collected to mark the sad death of Günter Strattner a few months ago. I'm sure Günter would have been delighted to learn that altogether €1,889,05 was received. In close consultation with his wife, a number of charitable organisations have been selected as recipients of donations.

Well, before my letter becomes too long, allow me to mention again that we have an interesting and varied programme of events on the near horizon and beyond (see our Newsletter calendar and our website). And allow me to wish

you all a wonderful and safe pre-Christmas season, and, of course, in the name of the Board and Committee a VERY HAPPY CHRISTMAS in a couple of months' time. I know that our handicrafts group has been very busy, and that we'll have the opportunity to admire their work on the evening of the November Stammtisch. All the proceeds from their sales go into our "charity donation fund". We are proud to have them in our midst. Which, by association, leads me to a final thought. Would you have guessed that by sending out our Newsletter by email we are now saving each year something to the order of €700, which would formerly have been spent on postage stamps and printing. What a great boost for our charity work!

Frank Gillard