

## Letter from the President September 2024

Dear Franconians,

The opening paragraph of the President's Letter in the July edition of our Newsletter reflected the discontent many of us felt in June and July that the warm, sunny days we associate with summer had not yet come to stay, and that rain and lower temperatures were keeping us inside for much of the time. Now, as I write this President's Letter for the September edition, the thermometer in the garden has just topped 34°C: summer has truly come with a vengeance this August and, for many of us, it is too hot during the day to do much more than stay indoors and put all strenuous activities on hold, only venturing out in the late afternoon and evening when the temperature has dropped a little. In the cooler and wetter months of June and most of July, though, it was easier for some of us to accept that we were confined to the house for a number of hours each day, as during that period television treated us to two major sporting events: the European Football Championships in June, where the football enthusiasts amongst us could witness several exciting matches of a high standard, and the Summer Olympics in Paris from the end of July to mid-August, where we could enjoy cheering on our various national teams to victory. And our teams did us proud!

So what has been happening in the Franconian Society this July and August? After a wet start to the day, the weather was clement enough on the evening of the first Friday in July to enable 10 of us to sit under the Oak Tree at Turnerbund and enjoy each other's company for a couple of hours. With the very much better weather in August, the Stammtisch saw a turn-out of 23 people who filled two tables under the Oak Tree – again, a relaxed and happy evening, combined with a mini book sale which brought in 40 euros for our charity box. Many thanks here to Becky and Teresa for organizing this sale, something which will be repeated as an auction at the Stammtisch in September and October.

Our Dinner Clubs have been happy, successful events, too. July saw 12 of us at the Jazz festival organized by the Oberle family in Kosbach and which took place in the grounds around the fish restaurant. Although the grounds were packed, we had good seats reasonably close to the jazz band, so that we could enjoy their music as much as we did the food on offer at Oberle's. 10 people turned up to the Dinner Club in August, which this time took place at Hana, an Erlangen restaurant which offered Syrian and Lebanese food – a 'first' for some of the people who joined us there. Our table was set under a spreading oak tree, where we enjoyed the balmy evening and the excellent cuisine. Many thanks, Teresa, for choosing two such first-class restaurants as Dinner Club venues.

And what does the Franconian Society have to offer in the coming months? Our Board and Committee have already met twice since the AGM in May and put

## Letter from the President September 2024

together a programme for the rest of this year and for the first part of 2025. In September, I will be giving a talk on The Pre-Raphaelites, a group of artists who rebelled against the rules laid down by the Royal Academy in London, with the aim of revolutionizing British art in the mid-19th century. In October, we have been lucky enough to get Professor Heiner Bielefeld to come and talk to us about 'The future of democracy in the face of growing autocracy' – what subject could be more topical than this? – and in November, Dr Helmut Haberkamm, a popular speaker at our Stammtisch evenings, will be talking about aspects of the Franconian dialect. These promise to be interesting evenings, so please put a 'Save the date' note in your diary!

As far as Dinner Club events are concerned, Teresa has some delicious ideas up her sleeve (see page 3 for details). And, of course, the Dinner Club year will end with the Christmas Potluck Supper in December, always a highlight of Franconian Society events.

While on the subject of restaurants, we chose an Asian restaurant in Spardorf in July where we could treat our two former Committee members, Yvonne and Carl, and their partners, to a meal as a way of thanking them for many years of loyal and valuable service to the Franconian Society. We will miss you both very much on the Committee but know we haven't lost you as members of the Franconian Society.

We are planning one more walk this year before the autumn sets in and the ground becomes too slippery, and we will also offer a day trip to Höchststadt a.d. Aisch and nearby Lonnerstadt on 12th October (see page 3 for further details). Please read on and also look at our website for information about these events.

So now all it remains for me to do is to send you my best wishes for the rest of this summer; may it be a pleasant and relaxing period, wherever you spend it. It also looks as if the coming days are going to be hot again, so please don't forget to drink enough! Take care – and, in the name of the Board and Committee, we look forward very much to seeing you again in the late summer. Let me leave you with a poem about late summer by the British poet, Phil Soar:

**Late Summer**  
Don't drift on alone  
Through fields of conflict and despair  
Watch the pleasant pastures



**Letter from the President**  
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Come to life when you are there.  
Sit long enough in peacefulness  
And you will see how great  
The world of nature compensates  
When summer is too late.

Bridget Ineichen