

## LETTER FROM OUR PRESIDENT

### July 2025

*Dear Franconians,*

It is 11 p.m. on a Monday evening. As I settle down with a cup of coffee to write the President's Letter for the July edition of the Franconian, the last barrel of beer is about to be buried at the Erich Keller and the final strains of Lilli Marleen, sung by the thousands of visitors present at the *Berg* this evening, will mark the end of the 270<sup>th</sup> Erlangen *Bergkirchweih*. This year, it was an event which, by all accounts, was a happy family festival and also one where the young people celebrated wildly, but peacefully. On the Saturday after the very full Whitsun weekend, 22 of our members braved the colossal heat of over 30°C and met at Fleischmannsgarten – a green oasis of comparative peace and quiet in the midst of the noise and crowds at the *Kirchweih* – to enjoy a meal, a drink and some good conversation. As a Stammtisch evening is not possible in early June because the parking situation around Turnerbund is extremely difficult when the *Kirchweih* is on, this visit to a beer garden during the day is part of our fairly new concept where a Stammtisch and a Dinner Club event, or a walk/outing and a Dinner Club event, will sometimes be combined if we find it sensible to do so.

May, though, saw a Stammtisch evening at Turnerbund, on which Mairi Barkei gave us a long-promised and very interesting talk on "Wildflowers in the Bush at the End of the World". Her photography – done on a trip up the west coast of Australia last year – was absolutely superb and her knowledge of the flora and fauna of this part of the world comprehensive. Thank you, Mairi, for putting so much time and effort into giving us such an informative presentation, which was enjoyed and appreciated by all those present. May also saw a Dinner Club event which took us out of Erlangen to Fürth, where the historical restaurant, the Grüner Baum, is well known for its excellent food. Many thanks, Teresa, for organizing this event.

Summer now seems to be here to stay and that means a quieter period in the Franconian Society, as many of our members are away on holiday in July and August. In these two months, there will be no programme as such at our Stammtisch evenings, but on the first Friday in each of these two months we will meet "Under the Oak Tree" at Turnerbund, giving you the opportunity to enjoy what will hopefully be a balmy summer's evening and to chat to other members of our Society over supper. If you are not away in July or August, let me also remind you of the guided tour around Zirndorf in August, conducted by Frank and combined with a Dinner Club event, organized by Teresa. There is also a Dinner Club evening in July, this time at "Fischküche Reck" in Oberndorf near Möhrendorf. Please look at the relevant articles in this Newsletter to get more information about these events. From September

onwards, there will be a Stammtisch programme for the remaining four months of this year, details of which will be in the September and November Newsletters.

With the current world situation, and an uncertain future ahead of us, this summer is not as carefree as many previous summers have been. Nevertheless, I wish you all a time during which you can unwind with family and with friends – on holiday, or on day or weekend trips, in your own garden, by the sea or in the mountains – where you can switch off for a bit and recharge your batteries with the energy we all need to face the months ahead. I remember so well the first word Leo XIV spoke when he appeared on the balcony of the Vatican as successor to Pope Francis – and that was “peace”. Let us hope that, over the summer, enough bridge builders can be found who are willing and able to mediate between the warring nations in order to achieve peace in the world which we all long for so dearly.

Take care and have a safe and relaxing summer. With every good wish to you all,

***Bridget Ineichen***