

## LETTER FROM OUR PRESIDENT

March 2026

*Dear Franconians,*

What a lovely surprise to go out into the garden this morning and find that the first crocuses had not only pushed their way up through the earth, but had now opened in the rays of the morning sun to bring bright, shining colours into what has been a pretty bleak winter so far. Despite the conflicts between different nations, which are casting a shadow across the world at the moment, spring flowers with their bright and cheerful colours are one reminder that our world can be a beautiful place to live in and that fresh beginnings, such as winter turning into spring, give us hope that these fresh beginnings are possible in the relationship between nations, too.



Unfortunately, the winter weather forced us to cancel both the January

Stammtisch and the Dinner Cub event, but later in the month, they were combined in a memorial lunch at Turnerbund's restaurant 'Zur Eiche' where – through tributes, pictures and the exchange of anecdotes – we were able to remember Dr Ingeborg Lötterle and all she had done for the Franconian Society throughout the many years she was a member. And at the concert in the



Matthäuskirche in Erlangen in late January, which a number of our members attended despite the deep snow, we were able to say our final goodbyes to Ingeborg while listening to the moving music of Fauré's Requiem, beautifully performed by the church organist Susanne Hartwich-Düfel and her church choir.

*Joachim and Erika, Ingeborg's son and daughter*

February saw the first Stammtisch event of 2026, when Walter Kunzi talked about "Sahara Trekking" – something he had done through part of the Sahara Desert several years ago. His talk was fascinating and his photography excellent, but unfortunately the turnout to listen to his talk was very poor – something that was not only extremely disappointing for the speaker himself, but also for the Board and Committee. But for those who did come, it was an evening well spent and our thanks go to Walter for putting this talk together for us. In the middle of the month, a group of us met for a very enjoyable brunch/lunch at Café Brasil in Erlangen and then February was rounded off with a guided tour through the GNM's current and very interesting exhibition, "Nürnberg Global", which concentrates on Nuremberg's international trading relations between 1300 and 1600. This guided tour was given for our members by Frank Gillard; thank you very much, Frank, for giving them such an interesting and informative tour.

So what can we look forward to in the next two months? At the Stammtisch evening on 6<sup>th</sup> March, Dr Elisabeth Preuß will be giving a talk on "Refugium Erlangen e.V.", a project which aims to provide financial help to refugees, and those disadvantaged socially, so that they can rent affordable accommodation. Dr Preuß has always been a welcome speaker at our events and we hope that as many of you as possible will come to listen to her talk on a project in which she is closely involved. Don't forget that the Stammtisch will start at the earlier time of 5.30 p.m., when we can order and then enjoy a meal together, after which the talk will start at 7.30 p.m. A Dinner Club brunch has also been planned for 21<sup>st</sup> March at La Lune Café on Erlangen's High Street (see the article about this event on page 4 of the Newsletter).

Finally, I come to our Annual General Meeting at Turnerbund on 10<sup>th</sup> April, at which I hope a large number of you will be present. We will use this opportunity to review the past year of the Franconian Society – in a short outline supported by some of the pictures taken at our various events. The AGM will also serve as a forum for you to put forward suggestions for the future running of the Franconian Society and to let the Board and Committee know what kind of events you would like to have in the coming year. It will also give the Board and Committee the opportunity to explain what the future challenges are for a Society like ours and, through discussion with you as members, to come up with solutions as to how we can best face up to, and deal with, these challenges. And because this is an election year, I hope you will consider carefully whether you would perhaps like to play an active role in the running of the Franconian Society and stand for election as a Committee member. If this is the case, please let one of the Society's Board members know as soon as possible.

Invitations to the AGM will be going out on 10<sup>th</sup> March, so please put Friday, 10<sup>th</sup> April, Turnerbund at 5.30 p.m. into your diaries and I look forward very much to seeing you then. Until then, take care.

*With every good wish for the coming weeks,*

***Bridget Ineichen***