

## Letter from our President

### November 2024

*Dear Franconians,*

Do you love autumn as much as I do – the “season of mists and mellow fruitfulness” as the 19<sup>th</sup>-century British poet, John Keats, called it in his well-known “Ode To Autumn”? Driving through towns, or walking through the countryside, we have been confronted this year with a riot of colours which seem to have been particularly beautiful. But as we notice that the leaves are now falling from the trees thick and fast, and that it is getting darker much earlier than it did a fortnight ago, we gradually realize, too, that 2024 is slowly drawing to a close. And I ask myself where the year has gone to – and so quickly! It seems like only yesterday that I was making New Year’s resolutions for 2024 and how many of those resolutions did I keep, I wonder, or how much did I achieve of everything I intended to do? The feeling that time passes much faster now than when we were younger, and that there is never enough time for everything we plan to pack into a year, is certainly one which affects most of us when we are older, but when we look back over a year which is ending, and reflect on it, we can mostly say that it was a year well spent and be grateful for what we have, in fact, achieved over the twelve months.



Looking back over 2024 in the Franconian Society, we can certainly say that it was a successful year, a year well spent in many respects. In addition to our regular events such as a Games Evening organized by Becky and Yvonne, a Pub Quiz kindly done at very short notice by Yvonne, two evenings Under the Oak Tree, with a book sale for



*Dechsendorfer Weiher*

charity organized by Becky and Teresa, a walk around Dechsendorfer Weiher led by Frank, and some very good Dinner Club events organized by Teresa, we have also had three very informative and interesting talks this year: a talk on his tour to India given by Frank, one on ‘The Pre-Raphaelites, rebels of the Royal

Academy’ by Bridget and, most recently, a talk on ‘The future of democracy in the face of growing autocracy’ by Professor Heiner Bielefeldt – a talk which couldn’t have been more relevant in today’s troubled times. And last but not least, we had an AGM, where a new Board and Committee were elected to take responsibility for running the Franconian Society in the coming years and, most importantly, we celebrated the 40<sup>th</sup>

Anniversary of the founding of our Franconian Society. Now, if all those events are not something to be proud of!

So, what can we look forward to for the remainder of the year? Unfortunately, the November Newsletter will be sent out after our Stammtisch on 8<sup>th</sup> November, when Dr Haberkamm was due to talk to us on an aspect of the Franconian dialect. As this date was no longer possible for him, his talk has now been postponed until May of next year. So when you read your copy of the Newsletter, you will have already been entertained by a group of Franconian Society members who jumped into the breach for 8<sup>th</sup> November and prepared an evening of poetry and music, based on the theme of autumn and winter and involving Horst, Andrew and Eileen, who were responsible for the music and singing, and Valerie, who chose and read the poetry. The framework to the evening was our Advent and Christmas bazaar run by our Handicrafts Group, where the beautiful things which Uschi, Hanne, Marie Luise and Mairi have been making all year were on sale, the proceeds of which will be donated to various charities. I am certain that this enjoyable evening was well attended by many of you who came to support both the Handicrafts Group and our group of members who organized the music and the poetry reading.

In keeping with our aim to provide a programme for those of you who prefer not to go out after dark in the winter, the next four Dinner Clubs (November, December and the first two months of next year), including our Christmas Potluck, will be lunchtime affairs. Please look at page 3 for details of these events. I will also be offering a varied programme of afternoon events from January to April, details of which I will send out by mail to you a fortnight in advance of each activity.

...Several days have gone by since I started writing this President's Letter and we have now reached the day we have been waiting for and talking about for months: the day on which America could make a historic decision to elect the first female President of the United States. So armed with a pot of hot coffee, I am now going to settle down in front of the television and hopefully stay awake throughout the night to watch the results of the voting as they come in. Whatever the outcome of the election, it will be one which affects not only America, but the rest of the world, too.

Take great care, enjoy the remainder of this year – and I look forward to seeing you again very soon.

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