

LETTER FROM OUR PRESIDENT

Dear Franconians,

This year's rather erratic summer, with alternating periods of rain and sun, of cool weather and then temperatures which topped 35°C on some days, is gradually drawing to a close and we are now approaching the beautiful part of the year which John Keats referred to in his poem *To Autumn* as "the season of mists and mellow fruitfulness". I hope you have all had an enjoyable summer, wherever and however you spent it, with the opportunity to relax and recharge your batteries for the months ahead. My summer was largely spent in hospital and then at rehab after a second knee replacement and so now I am really looking forward to walking in the woods again and enjoying the riot of colours that autumn has to offer us. Am I glad that we only have two knees and that there is no danger of a third operation!

The summer months in the Franconian Society are always quieter than usual, as many of our members are away on holiday at this time. For this reason, July and August saw just four activities for our members. In both of these months a Stammtisch evening "Under the Oak Tree" took place, although



the Stammtisch in August was on an evening which was too wet for us to sit outside. The tables were swimming in water and yet more rain was forecast for the late evening. Nevertheless, 22 members turned up to enjoy a relaxed evening meal and good conversation in our room at the back of the restaurant. Teresa also organized a Dinner Club event in each of these months: in July at Fischküche Reck near Möhrendorf, in August at the Indian restaurant Tandoori in Zirndorf. Frank combined this Dinner Club meal with a visit to the town museum and its large display of items relating to the 30 Years' War. Afterwards, those willing, walked up to the tower built at the site of Wallenstein's encampment. Many thanks to you both for organizing these events.

As from September, we return to our usual Stammtisch evenings with a programme – often a talk – after the evening meal. In September, I will be giving a talk about "The Old and the New: St Paul's and Coventry – my two favourite English Cathedrals." I hope as many of you as possible



will come along to hear about the history of these two interesting cathedrals, have a chance to enjoy some of the beautiful architecture of these buildings and also hear a little of the music sung by St. Paul's excellent choir.

October sees the long-awaited return visit by Dr Helmut Haberkamm, who will be giving the Franconian Society a special treat by talking in English about his newly published book "*Der Baron im Blauen Haus*". This deals with the life of General de Kalb, born in Hüttendorf, who played a key role during the American Revolution. Please note that his talk will be on 10th October, the second Friday in the month, as the 3rd October is a public holiday. Dr Haberkamm is a popular visitor to our Society, so I hope there will be a very good turnout on that evening to welcome back this outside speaker.

At the November Stammtisch, Valerie and I will be talking about "The Cultural Reaction in Great Britain to the Industrial Revolution". This Stammtisch evening will be combined with the Handicrafts Group's Christmas Bazaar, an extra incentive to come on that evening to support our dedicated group of ladies and boost the donations we give to charitable causes.

And December marks one of the highlights of the Franconian Society year: our Christmas Potluck Supper, now returned by popular vote to being an evening, rather than an afternoon function. Look for more news about this event in the November Newsletter. For news about Dinner Clubs during the next three months, look at articles in this current Newsletter.

Before I close this President's Letter, I would just like to pass on good wishes from Burgunda Brauer to all those in the Franconian Society who remember her from the time she was a member (2022 to the end of 2023). She now lives in Australia, but was back last week for a month's visit to Germany, a week of which she spent with Mairi in Uttenreuth. She misses us and the friendship we offered her and wanted to meet as many of those as possible who still remember her. The invitation to meet up in Turnerbund last Saturday came a little too late, I think, and only three of us were able to make it on that evening. She asked me to let you know she still thinks of us, and the enjoyable time she had with us all, and sends the Franconian Society and all its members her very best wishes for the future.

Now all that remains for me to do is to wish you the very best for the months ahead and to say in the name of the Board and Committee how much we are looking forward to seeing you at our functions after the summer break. As autumn approaches, I hope you can look back on months well spent so far, and look forward to the next few months in which – like the fruitfulness of trees in autumn – international endeavours to achieve peace for our world will also bear fruits.

Take care. *With every good wish,*

Bridget Ineichen

To Autumn
by John Keats (1751-1821)

*Season of mists and mellow fruitfulness,
Close bosom-friend of the maturing sun;
Conspiring with him how to load and bless
With fruit the vines that round the thatch-eves run;
To bend with apples the moss'd cottage-trees,
And fill all fruit with ripeness to the core;
To swell the gourd, and plump the hazel shells
With a sweet kernel; to set budding more,
And still more, later flowers for the bees,
Until they think warm days will never cease,
For summer has o'er-brimm'd their clammy cells.*

*Who hath not seen thee oft amid thy store?
Sometimes whoever seeks abroad may find
Thee sitting careless on a granary floor,
Thy hair soft-lifted by the winnowing wind;
Or on a half-reap'd furrow sound asleep,
Drowsed with the fume of poppies, while thy hook
Spares the next swath and all its twined flowers:
And sometimes like a gleaner thou dost keep
Steady thy laden head across a brook;
Or by a cider-press, with patient look,
Thou watchest the last oozyings, hours by hours.*

*Where are the songs of Spring? Ay, where are they?
Think not of them, thou hast thy music too,—
While barred clouds bloom the soft-dying day,
And touch the stubble-plains with rosy hue;
Then in a wailful choir the small gnats mourn
Among the river shallows, borne aloft
Or sinking as the light wind lives or dies;
And full-grown lambs loud bleat from hilly bourn;
Hedge-crickets sing; and now with treble soft
The redbreast whistles from a garden-croft,
And gathering swallows twitter in the skies.*