

Friends of the Norwich Museums

**Report to the Norwich Area Museums Committee,
Tuesday, 8th September 2020 at 2.00 p.m.**

We are very pleased to announce that the FNM have voted for a new Chairman, Charles Bingham Newland, who began his tenure in May, during the period of lockdown. Charles has a great deal of experience as an art expert and has huge enthusiasm for our Museums. We can now go forward into our next century in a spirit of optimism and confidence with Charles at the helm.

The FNM has been continuing to plan for their Centenary year in 2021. Not surprisingly, in this most difficult year, we have experienced one or two setbacks in our forward planning. The Family Trail, which would have taken place at Strangers' Hall and the Museum of Norwich (formerly The Bridewell) has been shelved. The Covid virus is still a major factor when dealing with paper and cardboard to be handled by children, and the Committee sadly concluded that it would be best not to proceed with the plans in these uncertain times.

However, other events are going ahead. At the invitation of Lord Cholmondely, Patron of the Friends of the Norwich Museums, we are holding a buffet luncheon at Houghton Hall, hosted by Lord Cholmondely, to which all Friends of the Norwich Museums will be invited. This will be a ticketed event.

In its Centenary Year, the FNM is proud to be sponsoring the forthcoming exhibition of the work of John Crome at the Castle Museum. This major exhibition will celebrate the Bicentenary of John Crome, considered to be the founding father of the Norwich School of Painters. The exhibition will run from April to September 2021 and promises to be a huge attraction to visitors from Norfolk and much further afield as well. The staff at the Castle Museum will be promoting this magnificent exhibition both locally, nationally and internationally, and FNM will be pleased to join the NMS in these initiatives.

During 2021 the FNM 100 Committee will do our best to promote ourselves and so gain more members. We are very aware that our demographic is on the elderly side and we are looking for new members from all age ranges. The newly retired are very welcome as it is likely that they will have some more time to spend helping to promote our Museums. It is hoped that we will have a presence at The Forum during the HODS weekend in 2021, talking to the public about the FNM, and explaining the role we play in promoting the Norwich Museums and helping in the purchase of important objects and art works for the collections.

Felicity Devonshire
FNM Council Representative