

Dear Members

I'm very afraid I can't see whether we will ever have face to face meetings again. There was some optimism with the relaxation of restrictions but now we are back we were earlier in the year.

The Committee and Convenors are having an online meeting in about three weeks which will be a chance to discuss how we can move forward. If anybody has any ideas as to how to move forward then please let me know.

However there are lots of programmes on art on TV. The TV companies are searching their archives and are finding some very interesting programmes. Many have been on BBC Four but now Sky Arts has become a free television channel the choice has increased and *The Sky Artist of the Year Series* both *Portrait* and *Landscape* were in the most popular art programmes in 2019 in spite of having to subscribe to Sky to see it. But other channels are showing art programmes e.g. *Great Paintings of the World with Andrew Marr* was on Channel 5!

BBC's *Fake or Fortune?* was also one the most popular art programmes in 2019 and a few days ago I watched an episode on BBC Four which had been originally shown five years ago, in which the detectives Fiona Bruce and Philip Mould have to determine whether three Lowry paintings were genuine or forgeries. They found that when Lowry said "I am a simple man, and I use simple materials: ivory black, vermilion, Prussian blue, yellow ochre, flake white and no medium," it was not true and he had used other paints. This meant that a number of Lowry paintings that had been decided as forgeries were actually genuine and worth a lot of money.

I hope that having had to stay in your home gives you time to read Pete and I's book *Charles Willis – Biography of a Royal Portrait Painter* by Roger Stanyon and Peter Norton. Pete became interested in my grandfather's work at least five years ago and suggested that Charles Willis should be better known and that the way to do was to write a book. The result is a 148-page hard-backed book with 135 full colour illustrations!

The book has been well received with an excellent whole page article in the Teesdale Mercury (copy attached) and a brilliant review by Annie Clouston in the September Forum e-newsletter. If you are interested in buying a copy which will cost you £15, then please contact me at rogerwstanyon@gmail.com or Pete at ppeterjnorton@aol.com or at the Teesdale Mercury Shop, 24 Market Place, Barnard Castle.

Best wishes

Roger