



[back to Home Page](#)

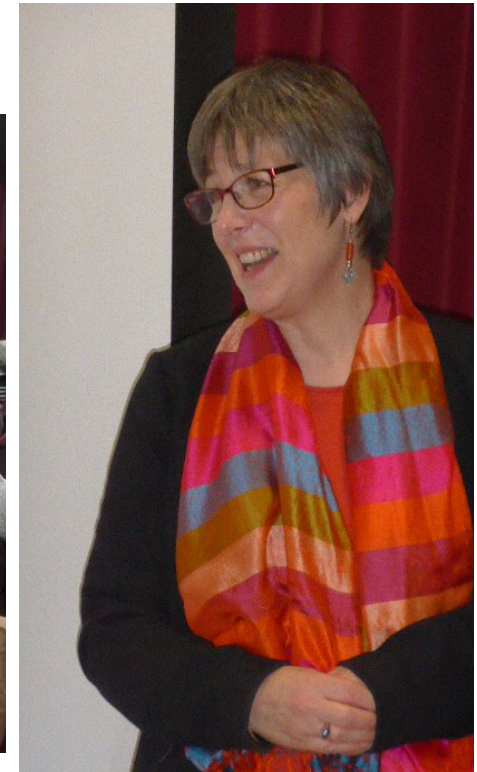
## **The Friends of Dame Laura Knight Society, Malvern & Colwall Branch**

**On Friday 8th March, Alison Bevan, Director of the RWA,  
shared her love of Dod Procter's work with the society.**



Heather welcomes our guest speaker Alison Bevan

Alison chose wonderful examples of Dod's work which illustrated her talent as an artist and explained how Dod's extensive travels and her friends in the Newlyn Art Colony influenced her work.



Alison Bevan

"A sculptural painter and a stylish woman, yet somewhat of an enigma" - this was how Alison Bevan described Dod Procter in the fascinating talk she gave us at Colwall on 8th March. Though a close friend of Laura Knight and a fellow Academician the two women led very different lives and achieved different kinds of artistic recognition.

By 1907 when Dod Shaw aged 15 arrived to study at Stanhope Forbe's Newlyn School of Art, Laura and Harold Knight, established artists, were already settled there. Alison described how Dod's painting skills grew under the tutelage of Elizabeth Armstrong, a gifted artist who later married SF. Reports of the day described Dod as a beautiful, headstrong girl who revelled in the social life of the Colony and the alternative

lifestyle, adoring the limelight.

Ernest Procter, then a prize pupil, met Dod at the School. Soon they were 'stepping out', they went together to Paris to study in the ateliers and married in Newlyn in 1912. Both gave their art priority sharing the same studios and later, with Harold Harvey, setting up their own School of Art, a successor to SF's. Ernest's own style of painting portraits and landscapes initially influenced his wife's work. After a spell in Oakhill, Lamorna they settled in 'North Corner' a cottage in Newlyn which became the focal point for local artists. There Dod's garden demonstrated her passion for flowers, the subject of much of her later work.

Models were typically shared with other artists and Eileen Mayo was a favourite of both Dod and Laura. Alison used paintings of Eileen by each to demonstrate the differences in their treatment. Dod went on in the 20's to specialise in portraits of pubescent women and young girls. It was in 1927 when her painting of a favourite model Cissie Barnes, 'Morning', was bought by the Daily Mail and given to the nation that Dod first became nationally recognised.

Dod and Ernest developed a love of travel after their first assignment in 1919 to paint a palace in Rangoon. Both produced fine portraits of native people and Dod in particular depicted their sculptural bodies with translucent skin. During the 30s impressionism and post impressionism influence her style of painting.

Alison showed us how in 1935 the devastating effect of Ernest's sudden death can be seen on Dod's Selfportrait. Frequently dogged by financial worries she continued however to travel, her work inspired by local landscapes, vegetation and people. Aristeia Garstin, fellow artist, was a frequent travel companion when Dod later visited the Caribbean, America and Canada.

In 1947 after several 'knock backs' she became a full Royal Academician, ten years after Laura. In spite of continued fame Dod restricted the focus of her work to beautifully crafted floral subjects and landscapes, close to home. In the last 2 decades of her life Dod gradually became more socially isolated.

She spent the remainder of her life in Newlyn, a frequent visitor to the 'Tolcarne Arms'. Alison concluded that Dod died alone in Cornwall in 1972, a sad and lonely woman.

Her work thereafter has remained largely unrecognised and undervalued. What Alison Bevan's talk demonstrated with splendid examples of her earlier work was that Dod Procter's reappraisal is long overdue.

*- Heather Whatley, vice chair, April 2019*

~~~~~  
See below some of the work by Dod Procter, illustrated in Alison's talk.



Morning (1926) Dod Procter



Comparing Dod Procter and Laura Knight's work of children  
Young Roman by Dod and A girl washes her hands by Laura



Self portrait (1892)



In a strange land (1919) Dod Procter



Some of Dod Proctr's work as screen posters



Rosemary welcoming new members



Alison discussing Dad's work displayed on our screens



Time to go - end of the evening -  
committee members saying farewell to Alison

We would like to thank Alison yet again, for a splendid talk.