

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

17th October 2015: 'Laura Knight at War and Peace' a talk by Timothy Wilcox.



Those of us who were present on the 23rd of October at our 'Autumn in Malvern' event were treated to a disquisition of fine quality. Timothy Wilcox, art historian, brought a scholar's eye to the work of Dame Laura Knight and shared with us, using a detailed, almost forensic, approach to a familiar work – Penzance Fair - a new way of looking at her work.

He explained how the eye-line of 'figures in a landscape' and the





treatment given to them, told much more about the feelings of the painter than the image itself, and how, in this picture, superficially the record of a happy occasion, was illustrated her questioning anxiety of the events of the 1st. World War.

This analytical approach was applied to many of the now very familiar pieces of her work and brought, for his listeners, anew, and informed way of looking. Tim Wilcox sees the paintings of







this era as a commentary on the feelings of both Harold and Laura. Many show only women, alone or in pairs, gazing out of the picture and depicting the loneliness and separation which war brings.

'The Cornish Coast, (1917) showed not only Laura's grasp of the past but a foretaste of what was to come. 'One standing, in short skirt and cropped hair, eyes focused on the shoreline, the other, seated, hugging her long skirt about her knees.' The nature of this pin-point analysis brought a deeper insight to the life and work of Laura Knight. We look forward to his return visit.

*Gwyn Klee*  
(Vice chair and  
Treasurer)

