

# THIRTY YEARS ON, MEET A 'LOCAL'

ALTON's first woman mayor is getting down to business.

Miss Pam Bradford, whose quiet dependability and involvement in the community are well known, will not be springing surprises; more importantly, Alton Town Council's unfinished business will keep her valuably occupied.

Maintenance and restoration of public facilities of the town that she so enjoys will be high priority. "The council's responsibilities are serious business — and I hope to be able to attend to that and get pleasure from the rest," she said, referring to her varied duties as mayor.

Miss Bradford took over the office earlier this month from Mr. Cecil Smith, a man whose name and face are widely known. But in the 30 years that she has been here, her circle of friends and acquaintances has been wide.

Her father arrived in the 50s to take over The White Horse. Subsequently she has worked for 22 years as administrative officer at Amery Hill School (formerly Alton County Secondary), and there have been many community-based involvements — running a youth group at the Methodist Church on Sundays, briefly working as secretary of Age Concern — and running the bar at the Alton Community Centre, when it opened in 1975!

That seemed an obvious role for one with her background. And she did it for four or five years.

She first stood for election to the urban district council simply because she felt that there should be more women represented. "I suppose I thought there should be more there to put a lady's point of view — nothing more sinister than that!"

After twice standing unsuccessfully as an Independent, it was third time lucky, this time (unopposed) as a Conservative.

Three years later the UDC was wound up under the local government reorganisation, and in 1976 she took a complete break from local politics. Miss Bradford returned to the town council in 1983.

She is looking forward to her year ahead and must feel that — in more ways than one — she has arrived. Looking back to those days in her father's pub, she recalls customers saying, "You've got to live in Alton for 30 years before you can call yourself a local".

"I have been here exactly 30 years last February. Perhaps there is something in it." She would appear to be a pretty likely candidate.

J.B.



Town Mayor Miss Pam Bradford and art society chairman Mr. Pat Edwards discuss one of the exhibits.

## Alton Art Society stage a praiseworthy show

THE 55th annual exhibition of the Alton Art Society was opened at the Assembly Rooms on Monday with praise for the artists.

Town Mayor Miss Pam Bradford declared the exhibition open and said that she felt privileged to be asked to do so, because she was not an artist. She said she found the results of people putting pen to paper and brush to canvas "breathtaking".

"I hope that during the week quite a few people like me, who are not artists, will come along

and find another world which they didn't know existed."

The society's president for the past 40 years, Lady Charlotte Bonham-Carter, was also present and had good things to say about the exhibits, especially the schools' section.

She said: "Most people active with their brush and paint look at scenery, people and things, and transfer them on to paper in a most fascinating way."

Lady Bonham-Carter said she always buys one or two of the exhibits and has a large collection of members' work. Turning to the displays of

children's pictures, she said: "I would like to buy the whole lot. The younger the child, the more amazing is the way they see things."

The exhibition will run until tomorrow (Saturday) and is being held, as usual, in conjunction with the annual photographic exhibition of Alton Camera Club.

Visitors have got the chance to decide which artist will win the Exhibit of the Year Award, by filling in the voting slip which accompanies the catalogue. The prize will be awarded on Saturday evening.

55<sup>TH</sup> ANNUAL EXHIBITION. 1986.