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# Hawick News

AND SCOTTISH BORDER CHRONICLE

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## HISTORY MADE WITH HAWICK'S FIRST LADY PROVOST

In a historic break with tradition, Hawick gained its first Lady Provost this week when Councillor Myra Turnbull was appointed the town's civic figurehead. The post was vacated following Provost Jake Irvine's defeat in Thursday's District Council elections.

The momentous decision was taken at the Honorary Provost's Council meeting in the Council Chambers on Monday night when the only other challenger for the position was Regional Councillor George Turnbull who was proposed by new District Councillor Oliver Angus but withdrew from the race after failing to get a seconder.

Mrs Turnbull was successfully proposed by Regional Councillors John

Scott and Marshall Douglas and, in moving her appointment, Mr Scott said irrespective of what some people expressed, Hawick was not and never had been a bastion of male chauvinism. Although they rightly guarded their traditions, there was nothing in their historic past which prevented appointing a Lady Provost.

"Being Honorary Provost of Hawick is not just about attending the Hut and Common-Riding festivities — duties which can be undertaken by the Senior Bailie — but it is about being an ambassador and figurehead of the town every day of the year. No doubt some members of the establishment in Hawick will frown upon a Lady Provost but we all saw what the electorate

thought of the establishment at Thursday's elections."

Mr Scott said they should never again have a situation where the chairman of either the District or Regional Council was also Provost as that led to divided loyalties and only alienated other towns and the landward areas. Mrs Turnbull had all the qualities a Provost required and also gained the highest majority among Hawick District Councillors at last week's election. If a woman could head Edinburgh District Council and the Government, Hawick could also let some fresh air into the Council Chamber by appointing a lady civic leader. "We need someone with time, energy and personality to give total com-

mitment to the Provostship and that is something Myra has."

Mrs Turnbull said she was delighted and honoured to have been chosen as Hawick's first Lady Provost and would do everything in her power to carry out the duties required of her. She wanted to convey her thanks and gratitude to everyone who had supported her. "To those who thought it could never or should not happen, I trust I can count on their loyalty and support in the weeks ahead. A new chapter is being written in the history books of Hawick and I'm proud of the honour you have bestowed on me."

After the meeting, the new Provost conceded she would be unable to attend some of the traditional

Common - Riding gatherings such as the Hut and Smokers but said she would still be involved in many significant events like the Colour-Bussing and Overseas Night.

### Senior Bailie

New District Councillor Ted Atter was appointed Senior Bailie and will represent the Provost at several events including the Callants' Club congratulatory smoker in the Town Hall tonight (Friday). Supporting Common-Riding, Bailies appointed on Monday night were Councillors Bill Douglas, Jamie Batten and George Turnbull. The last-named was also appointed Honorary Provost's Council secretary following the resignation of ex-Councillor Robin Campbell.



Provost Myra Turnbull.