

ANGIE JONES

I first became involved in Motor Sport back in the early 1970's when I met my husband Steve. He was then very involved in the local Wakefield & District Motor Sport Club, so it was inevitable I would be introduced to something that has become a very large part of our lives for nearly 47 years.



I had never done any marshalling or anything remotely like it so it did come as a bit of a culture shock, when I found myself out at unearthly hours of the night running time controls, on the Calderford Trophy Rally which was a Motoring News Championship event and took place towards the end of July every year, or out on stages marshalling on the RAC or Mintex Rally usually in freezing cold weather in November and February. However, the bug stayed with me.

In the late 1980's we became members of the Pre-War Austin Seven Club and bought our first Austin, a 1933 Box Saloon. We took part in non-competitive car runs and also started going to their car trials and soon our own trials car was being built. We competed in Pre-War car trials for a number of years until a trip to the Lakeland Trial one wet November and it was decided to move up a gear and enter VSCC events; these looked great fun with an element of road miles as well. There was no looking back. Our first VSCC trial was a Lakeland Trial in 1999, Steve tended to compete with our youngest daughter who didn't seem to mind being tossed around over rugged terrain, covered in mud and also like a go herself but marshalling for me was just as good. By now we had an Austin Seven Chummy as well so we also competed (not very successfully) in VSCC Navigation Rallies.



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However good things don't last for ever and our daughter had to retire from bouncing once she discovered she was pregnant so I was given the job of bouncing. A number of hair-raising moments and an upside episode didn't put me off and we enjoyed all the trials for many years. A nasty fall in 2009 resulting in a fractured coccyx put pay to my bouncing days, so it was marshalling from then on for me. At that time I don't recall there being many women Hill Chiefs, but over the years we have certainly made our mark and most trials now have women at the helm of hills.



A very wet Drumhouse 2005



Navigating with Malcolm Parker Northern Rally 2012

I marshalled for many years as part of the late DHO and Gilly's team on the Exmoor, and Herefordshire Trial. DHO was Hill Chief but it was great how Gilly kept everyone in check and organised, I learned so much for them both, and was so honoured following the sad and sudden death of DHO to be asked if I would be Hill Chief for the Hills they ran on the Herefordshire trial, something I still do to this day.

I really enjoy my marshalling duties, in what ever discipline, but particularly Hill Chief on trials, I love having a well organised team that can get the job done.



Receiving the Don Grose Award 2015



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Over the past few decades there have been many "Firsts" for women, not all in motor sport, a few are:

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- First British female Prime Minister in 1979.
- 2014 Scotland's First Minister was its first ever female.
- 2015 Ellen McCarthy became the first fastest female to solo navigate the globe in a yacht.
- Helen Sharman became the first British woman in space and the first to visit the Mir Space Station
- Kamala Harris became the first US African/American woman to become Vice President

But for me five women have recently inspired me to believe that anything is possible if you want it to be:

The Talisker Whiskey Challenge a race across the Atlantic, 3,000 miles from La Gomera in the Canaries to St. John's Harbour in Antigua is one of the world's toughest races. On 20th December 2015 The Yorkshire Rows, four working mothers with young families, set off on this challenge, taking a bit longer than they expected but they crossed the finishing line on February 27th 2016. They became the oldest team of women ever to row the Atlantic - a first.

Their achievements inspired to take part in the 2017 London Moonwalk, a 26.5 walk around London overnight, wearing a highly decorated bra, raising money for Breast Cancer. If they could row 3,000 miles surely I could walk 26.5 miles, and I did. I did it a second time in 2019 on both occasions accompanied by VSCC lady friends.



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This year a young 21 year old left La Gomera on the same journey, rowing solo she will become the youngest person every to row the Atlantic another first for women. Maybe it's because these five women all come for Yorkshire but I have nothing but admiration for them all, they are so inspiring in today's world.

We have many great women in our own VSCC; most of my friends are VSCC women. We had the first ever women President back in 2019, now we have the first woman Club Secretary in the history of the Club. Our Deputy Chief Marshals are both women and many of our marshals in the paddock and start-line areas as well as trials hill are women.

Many of our Club's great racing drivers are women, taking on the men at what was a male dominated sport for years. The bit between their teeth and pedal to the floor, you hardly recognise them out of their overalls!! Jo Blakeney Edwards, Sue Darbyshire, Barbara Lerigo, and over the past few years Class 1, where Steve competes in another of our Austin Sevens, has seen a growing number of women, Julia Wolsenthorne, Claire Moody, Vicki Sly, Sarah Foster, Fabienne and Tiziana Mutschler all ready to make one in for the girls!!

It is great we have so many women competing now in all disciplines, especially Sprints, Hill Climb and Racing, I am inspired by them all, but not something I would want to have a go at.

Now offer me the chance to row the Atlantic.....!

