

CARRIE BEDFORD

I have been involved in motorsport since the late 1970s initially as a BRDC pit marshal. The camaraderie was great, we were all there to do a job, to work as a team and we got on with it, there was no space for discrimination. We were also privileged to marshal abroad at meetings like the 24 Hours, World Touring Cars and Formula One at Spa in Belgium and I have many very happy memories of those times as well as enduring friendships. I think that experience also affected my working life as I approached jobs with the same attitude - in spite of being asked by an elderly gentleman on one occasion in the early 1980s when working for East Midlands Electricity, 'Why are you doing a man's job?' which rather surprised me.

I enjoyed marshalling but wanted to try something different while still being actively involved in the sport - so I then began timekeeping. It was a fascinating time, timekeepers came from a wide swathe of backgrounds and careers and we worked on equal terms - ability not gender was key. An additional bonus was being involved during the interesting period when timing equipment developed from hand-operated stopwatches with timing to 1/10ths of a second, when you also had to calculate the lap times for each car you were timing with the commentator breathing down your neck as it was the only way to know who was on pole.



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Gradually equipment was developed leading to the introduction of transponders and sophisticated computers able to produce accurate times to 1/1000ths of a second and to relay those times live around the world. During this period I timed races from the Silverstone Race School to Formula One!

In 2014 I was fortunate to join the Vintage Sports Car Club as temporary Assistant Competitions Secretary while Gemma Price, a great achiever and inspiration, was fully involved with the 80th Anniversary events. This temporary role led to a permanent position in a similar role at the Historic Sports Car Club where I remained for just under five years, but was delighted to discover there was an opportunity to return to the same role at the VSCC in 2020 and I'm now happily back 'home'.

Motorsport has enabled me to develop a career, travel the world, meet a wide variety of people and make enduring, lifelong friendships - on an equal footing.

