

# ROSE ADAMS

## When Did I Become A Member?

In October 1968 I moved to Worcester to work as a hospital biochemist. I knew no-one in Worcester so joined a local club. At the first meeting I attended, Jim Adams was giving a talk on vintage cars. A few of us went for a drink afterwards. Jim offered me a lift in the dicky seat of his Alvis (1930 Silver Eagle) which I thought was great until I got out and found that my new llama coat had oil on it! Nearly the end of a beautiful relationship before it had even started! A few months later we started dating, and after a whirlwind courtship got married. It didn't take long to realise that marshalling for the VSCC was a big part of Jim's life and I'd better join or become a VSCC widow! So I became a member in early 1970.



A 'selfie' at Curborough 2019

**Early marshalling experiences** My first marshalling experience was the Measham rally in January 1969. Jim was the lead marshal at the first timing point of the rally. There was a lot of snow, the roads were icy and our post was at the bottom of a hill. I probably don't need to say that we had to push most cars to get them started again! After our duties were complete, we arrived at the Long Mynd hotel before dawn and it was magical to see sunrise over the snowy hills. In subsequent years we were part of the organising team, choosing the route and doing the publicity visits. The next event I marshalled at was April Silverstone. Tony Bird was competition secretary then and didn't approve of women on the circuit. So I signed on marshalls with Angela Cherrett in a hut that no longer exists. Mind you, Silverstone was very different then anyway. In those early days Jim & I joined the Cherretts and David Franklin at a hotel in Towcester for dinner the night before the event and then went to the circuit to sleep in the control tower along with other equally financially stretched marshals such as the Luscott Evans brothers and the Wrights.



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April & July Silverstone events became an important part of our VSCC calendar. Jim marshalled on the circuit initially and eventually became chief marshal, and then clerk of the course. I remember with fondness, in the early days, picnic lunches with the Wrights, David Payne, the Cherretts, Val Schouller and Red Daniels, complete with copious wine!

The other circuits we marshalled at in those early days were Thruxton, Llandow or Pembrey, Oulton Park, and Donnington I think, and a tent was our usual accommodation.

I well remember the first meeting at Cadwell Park, I think in the early 80s? I loved the circuit and it remains my favourite to this day! In those early days, at lunchtime, we were invited up to the top floor of the control tower, where the manager of the circuit gave those of us working there, sandwiches and cake! For Cadwell Park weekend, we always met up with other marshals the night before, often at The Splash or an Indian restaurant, for an evening meal before returning to a hotel in Louth (we were less financially stretched by then!). My main job for the club at race meetings in the early days was signing on marshals and then working in the office producing results etc.

## Marshalling Experiences Evolved

When Tony Bird retired, women were allowed to get out of the office and onto the circuit where we were allowed to operate the telephones. I enjoyed this very much, unless it was raining (posts didn't always have cover in those days!). I'd always fancied having a go at judging so I joined the team and after a few years became the first female chief judge, a role I had for several years, until the then Competition Secretary asked if I would take on the role of telephones in the control tower at Silverstone and other race meetings where the local organisers didn't have their own staff. I was happy to work the telephones up to 2015 when Jim died but then could no longer face being in the control room without him there as well.



Steward at Prescott 2015 Photo: David Grounds



Our 1930 Silver Eagle Alvis at home





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## Other Speed Events

Prescott was another event I was introduced to in my first year with the club. At that time it was a Saturday afternoon and all day Sunday event. Of course I wasn't allowed on the hill so signed on marshals and posted results! Eventually I was able to marshal as a telephone operator on the hill with Jim. When Jim took over as hill controller I decided I'd like to have a go at start line marshalling and Marjory Prest and I became the first female start line marshals under the direction of Hector Chappell!

Another job I undertook, at some point at all of the hill climbs and sprints was to join the team manning the telephone in the control huts. I think my favourite hill climb has to be Wiscombe, amongst other reasons because we always made it a mini break! But the main reason is that after we bought my Morgan car in 1984, we used it as the course car and I had the role of assistant clerk of the course. I used to get really good times but then I probably had the most practice! Its a good job I managed not the stuff the car into the gate or banks though!



At the Marshals Dinner 2015 when Jim and I presented the Dan England Award to Lucy Bickerstaffe

Photo: David Grounds



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## Non-Speed Events

The only rally that Jim and I marshalled at was the Measham, but Jim loved hill climbs and hoped that one day he would be able to compete at one in his 1923 Bullnose Morris. We attended many hill climbs, occasionally as spectators but more often than not on a hill control or with Jim as steward with Alan Cherrett. We especially loved the Welsh!

In the early years of my VSCC membership, the Midland Section of the club had full responsibility for running the Measham, Curborough and Madresfield Driving Tests. Jim and I were heavily involved with Madresfield, living so local. When the Luscott Evans brothers retired from leading the group, I took over as Secretary of the meeting with Jim as Clerk of the Course, Mike Rushton as Chief Marshal and Bob Watt in charge of results. As the club office had no involvement with organising the event, we had full responsibility including negotiating the hire cost of the drive at Madresfield Court and all other necessary costs. We were a great team, working together for 15 years from 1982 to 1997. Subsequently I was very honoured to be made an honorary member of the club for my Madresfield work. Our 3 nephews on Jim's side also enjoyed Madresfield. Once they were old enough they used to marshal on Test 2 (slow/fast) running alongside the cars to check no brakes were being used! Our middle nephew Dan England became really interested in marshalling and would have continued going with Jim to events had it not been for his untimely death aged 23. It was in his memory that we endowed the Dan England young marshal award first awarded in 2002. As you may have noticed, I have done most jobs at club events, both speed and non-speed. After Jim's death in 2015 I had to decide whether to continue marshalling or not, and if so, in what capacity. Realising how important the VSCC had been in my life with Jim, and the many friends we had made, I had no hesitation in offering to steward at Prescott when Colin Prest said Gemma Price was looking for someone. It seemed a natural progression after all. So, I now steward at speed events (another first for the ladies!) and very much enjoy it.



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## Other Activities

In 1976 the International FIVA rally was held in Harrogate. Marshals were sought and Jim and I volunteered. We were mainly involved with helping in HQ, particularly on results. On the last but one day, the overall final results were calculated and the organisers realised that the weightings for the various events were wrong. So volunteers were called for and the team of Alan and Angela Cherrett and ourselves worked until 5am! That was an event I'll never forget, but very enjoyable nevertheless!

Club anniversaries were another way we were involved in marshalling, especially when the event was located at the Three Counties Showground at Malvern. We volunteered to be part of the organising team at the Golden Jubilee in 1984. Jim led a small team organising the driving tests and I was heavily involved in organising the ball. It was a great week long event! Another enjoyable & sociable part was camping at the Three Counties Showground.



Taken by me at Wiscombe 2014 - my Morgan ready to close the hill as a course car

## Marshals Dinners

The club has always rewarded its marshals for their volunteering by inviting them to an annual dinner. This has been in all sorts of locations over the years, but did you know that in the early years the dinners were for men only and the ladies received a 50p Boots voucher!

However, for a few years the ladies had their own dinner, before we all joined up together. (I'll write about the ladies only dinners another time). The marshals dinners have always been something we looked forward to, are great occasions for catching up with friends and, of course, it is nice to be recognised for the work we do.

In conclusion I have great memories of the many years I've marshalled for the VSCC and good, lasting friendships have resulted, too numerous to name. Recalling these memories whilst writing this article has made me realise just how important a role the VSCC has played in my life!

