

## Andy Tippett - Driver Profile



*My First Car Xmas 1957*

I have no idea where my enduring love of cars and driving has originated from, as my Dad hated driving and my Mum was always very risk aware - hence any form of motorsport or fast cars were to be avoided at all costs.

Back in 1957 at just over two years old, I was given a TriAng Ariel pedal car for Christmas. I LOVED it and drove it all the time. Over a couple of years I started to wear it out, resulting in my Dad having to turn the rear wheels on the axles due to me wearing the tyres out on the power stroke of the pedals. This was the start of my continuing pursuit of all things cars.

Prior to being able to drive on the road legally, I contrived to hang out with older cousins who were motorsport orientated (albeit around motorbikes), and one had a Mini Cooper 'S' that I got to try out on private drives and then at Oulton Park.

Having left home in 1972 to serve an apprenticeship at RAE Farnborough, the yearning to drive fast was growing, and fortunately the Apprentice Association came up trumps with a 2T Villiers powered kart. Although far from competitive, it was a great way to learn practical handling and basic car control.

After passing my driving test, my first car was a Mk1 Cortina which I purchased from my Dad. Originally a 1200 Deluxe, after a couple of months I had upgraded it to a 1500 GT engine with GT discs on the front and some anti tramp bars on the back axle. It was around this time that I decided to try my hand at a spot of road rallying. Unfortunately, although the Cortina was a really great first car, it was a bit big for road rallying. So, after a lot of working on cars at the weekends for colleagues, plus a car-parking 'enterprise' at Henley Regatta, I managed to purchase a rally-prepared Mini Cooper 'S'. Having joined Farnborough & District Motor Club, I competed in 12-car rallies and also Motoring News rounds such as August Moon (many starting from Hartford Motors in Oxford, with halfway at the garage in Northleach, which is sadly no longer there).



*My Mk1 Cortina & Mini Cooper S - Farnborough 1975*



My rallying career continued until I bought a house, having moved to Kidlington to work at Oxford University. To help with the finances, I reluctantly had to trade in the Cooper 'S'. (However, it was exchanged for a Mk 1 Lotus Cortina, so all was not lost!)

Driving competitively took a back seat for a few years, after meeting Mags, getting married, and addressing other priorities. Nonetheless, a continuing succession of 'high

*August Moon Rally 1976*

performance' cars still played a major role in our lives, and Mags likes to remind me of the occasion when, on embarking on a trip to visit my parents in Chester, we left home in a blue Ford Capri 3000 GTX (complete with cat in a cage), diverted to Gloucester, conducted an exchange, and continued our journey in a yellow Mk 1 Mexico!

During these 'quiet' years, I reshelled an accident damaged 'X' pack RS2000 (and managed to convince my wife that the safest place to store the bumper during the rebuild was our bedroom!). I also bought another Mk 1 Lotus Cortina, which we fully restored then showed for several years, winning the Best Mk 1 Lotus at the national meeting on two occasions.



*The first Mk1 Lotus*



*The significantly damaged RS200 X-Pack I reshelled*



*The Tour of Mull in the early eighties.*

From 1981-1985, I did some co-driving on stage rallies, having great fun competing in Autosport and BTRDA rounds all over the country, including the Isle of Mull, Kielder, and all over mid-Wales.

In 2003, I identified hillclimbing as another possible outlet for my competitive instincts, and attended Shelsley and Prescott for a couple of years, chatting to loads of drivers to get a feel for what was involved. My original intention was to compete in a Caterham / Westfield, but due to the difficulties of getting entries with such a popular car, I returned to my 'classic' roots and ended up purchasing a Russell Alexis, which I totally rebuilt, and until 2018 competed in with some success, twice winning the Paul Matty /



*1968 Russell Alexis*



*1969 Brabham BT30x-1*

Aldon Automotive championship outright.

As most of you know, I have now moved on to a Brabham BT30X-1 Buick. This single-seater is absolutely fantastic to drive, with far more potential than its aged driver. 2018 was spent testing both the car and driver on all the various tracks, and I am now looking forward to starting to push the boundaries a little more in 2019.

So the story continues.....