

Ian 'Tiny' Lewis

(November 1924 - September 2014)



The Bath & Bristol Area Centre was recently informed of the passing of Rootes works driver Ian 'Tiny' Lewis on the 14th September 2014, aged 89.

Lewis owned and ran Time Garage, Bedminster Down, Bristol from where his racing and rallying career started, entering events at local motor club level, rallies, sprints, trials, etc with his prepared cars. He then progressed into more national and international events, initially driving a Standard Ten and then a Standard Pennant, both registered 'TL 5', a number he carried with him on quite a few cars. Robin Turvey co-drove, both later together again driving a Sunbeam Talbot on the 1954 Criterium des Alpes, also the 1955 Monte Carlo Rally.

Lewis entered the first of his Tulip Rallies in 1957 for his club, the Bristol Motor Cycle and Light Car Club (BMCLCC) as it was then called, in his Standard Ten, partnered by Tony Nash (another local man who later went on to works rides for BMC) finishing 71st overall.

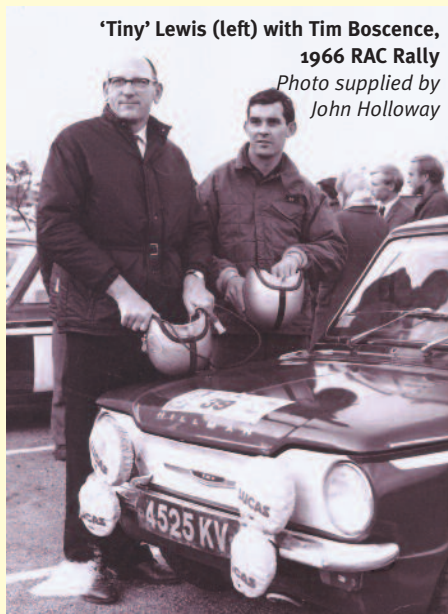
In 1958 he started to rally a Triumph Herald with a little works support competing in the 1959 Alpine Rally resulting in a Coupe des Alpes, also in the 1960 RAC International Rally which for the first time included loose and tarmac stages, again with a Triumph Herald (wearing 'TL 5'), this time with Triumph works support, winning his class for them.

He was then noticed by the Rootes Competition Department and taken on as a works driver, pushing along the company's Sunbeam Rapiers, Tigers – and of course Imps – at great speed resulting in very good rewards at international events in the UK and mainland Europe, the Scottish rally being one example where 'Tiny' finished second overall from a very strong entry list on rough forestry tracks, proving the Imp to be a very effective rally car.

My own personal memories are of competing against him on a few local Tavern Club trials, 'Tiny' blitzing the whole field including me, myself driving an early 1963 slightly modified Imp, 'Tiny' driving a works Imp that seemed to be on 'permanent loan'; it may possibly have been the red work's car now owned by John Day, 7742 KV, it certainly was the same colour. Club member Bob Mapstone also recalls him as having X-ray eyes having been overtaken by him very rapidly in very thick fog on the A38. Great Days.

Heading photo supplied by Richard Sozanski.
From RAC Rally Guide 1963

John Holloway



'Tiny' Lewis (left) with Tim Boscence,
1966 RAC Rally

Photo supplied by
John Holloway



"There must be a better way to pick tulips..." Photos supplied by John Holloway



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Press Release

IMPS CAPTURE TOP TULIP HONOURS

Rosemary Smith's Outright Victory

Hillman Imps, driven by Rosemary Smith and I.D. 'Tiny' Lewis, have captured top honours for Britain in the 1,900 miles International Tulip Rally in which they have finished 1st and 2nd overall.

Rosemary Smith, the 26-year-old Dublin dress designer is the overall winner, and she becomes one of the very few women drivers to win a top international event outright in competition with the cream of European rally crews.

She finished fractionally ahead of her team-mate 'Tiny' Lewis who was driving the second works-entered Hillman Imp in this Spring event, which blizzards in the Jura mountains virtually turned into a replica of the Monte Carlo Rally.

At one stage snow was falling at the rate of a foot an hour on the Col de Faucille - and only 47 of the 157 starters managed to reach the finishing point at Noordwijk in Holland within the time limit.

Rosemary, who was partnered by Valerie Domleo, achieved her victory in one of the smallest cars entered in the rally. She also added the Coupe des Dames to the Ladies' Award which she won only two weeks ago in the Circuit of Ireland International Rally. In addition, she and 'Tiny' Lewis were 1st and 2nd overall in the G.T. category and 1st and 2nd in their class (850 - 1150 c.c. G.T. cars).

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Rosemary, who designs her own motoring clothes, joined the Rootes Group rally team three years ago and has emerged as one of the world's top women drivers. Among her other achievements she has twice won the Coupe des Dames in the Tour de France and was runner-up, also in an Imp, to Pat Moss in this year's exceptionally tough Monte Carlo Rally. She lists her other hobbies as golf, water-skiing, horse riding, go-karting and bowling.

I.D. 'Tiny' Lewis, whose broad 6' 3" figure is a familiar sight in the Imps works team, was partnered by David Pollard from Bradford and only fractional markings separated them from the top awards.

A spokesman for the Rootes Group said today, "Rosemary and 'Tiny' have given the Imp a first class birthday present as it enters its third year of production.

"Their fine performance in their Imps has won more international honours for British engineering and will undoubtedly provide a great fillip to our Spring sales drive, especially in the important European markets."

30th April, 1965.