

TYRE TRACKS

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By Caroline Lake From Caroline's Cars

I have been fascinated by cars ever since I can remember and as a teenager was more likely to be found reading What Car? than Smash Hits or Just Seventeen. I learned to drive in my mother's 1965 Land Rover which was affectionately known as Nellie. She had no synchro-mesh on the first two gears and did 0-60 only when going down hill, but it was great fun!

My parents kindly gave me my first car, a Triumph Dolomite 1850HL, which needed minor restoration. With Dad's help, we got her back on the road and she was christened Dolly. (Not very original I know!) Despite breaking down on a monthly basis and being the most unreliable car I have ever owned, she is still my favourite. I spent many happy hours on the driveway with spanners, wet and dry paper and aerosols, patching her up.

When Dolly finally died, I was heartbroken and extremely poor! I scraped together £200

and armed with this I purchased a Yellow Lada Riva, which I called Banana. The butt of many jokes, a total embarrassment to my brother (when desperate enough to need a lift, he would hide under the dash in fear of being seen) and bizarrely the claimant of my first speeding fine, Banana was very slow and rather like a tank to drive but she was amazingly reliable and is still fondly remembered.

Since working in the garage trade I have been fortunate enough to work on, and in some cases own, some amazing cars. My favourite of these is the RX-7, which is the only car I have owned more than one of. My current RX-7 is called Rupert and he is truly awesome!

Now that I have realised my dream and

have my own garage, I'm in car heaven! I have a number of classic car customers and getting to work on Triumphs again is a great thrill. I plan to buy and restore another Dolomite, the Sprint version this time. She will be called Dorothy and will



hopefully be more reliable than Dolly was. But whatever happens, she will be a much loved replacement for her sadly deceased sister.

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