

got lost in heavy fog off Yorkshire”.

After the death of Sir Max in 1985 Lady Aitken decided to retire but not until after one last season. In 1988, she put on a crash helmet, race suit and goggles once more to drive her Phantom 18 in Guernsey in early September. “The first race went well enough but during the second I took a severe knock after hitting an especially high wave. The local doctor’s prognosis was three cracked ribs and he prescribed strong pain killers and some rest.” Two days later she was back in her boat, using a cushion from the hotel to protect the bruising. She finished the series in fourth place, earning entry into the history books in the process. As president of the British Powerboat Racing Club Lady Aitken continues to keep her finger firmly on the pulse of current powerboat racing.

### Shelley Jory

“I was travelling around the States and happened to be in Florida when the Key West World Championship races were run,” recalled Shelley. “I had no idea what I was watching, all I knew was that Don Johnson and Kurt Russell were both taking part. I loved it.”

Four years later Shelley’s boyfriend of the time Peter Berrow built and rigged a 25-foot Revenger Mediterranee as a fast pleasure boat. “I had no opportunity to drive it - he just wanted me as the blonde bimbo sitting in the back,” she says.

The stepping-stone that set Shelley on her way came when Peter decided he wanted to race. Shelley became his team manager, organising everything from race entries to logistics and sponsorship. It was to prove valuable experience that would serve her well, later.

In 2001 Shelley bought her own race boat, a rather dishevelled 21-foot Bat Boat, which she used to compete in the 1.3 litre Class that year. “It was all I could afford at the time. It was second hand and needed a complete refurbishment. But I was able to form an all-girl team and we did quite well, finishing third in the British Nationals”.

Then, in 2002 she stepped up a wrung and competed in the 2 Litre World Championships, where Shelley was invited

to navigate for ex Royal Marine, Chris Bryan, in Cape Town, South Africa. “We finished third and took the bronze medal,” adds Shelley. “It was invaluable experience although as navigator you don’t actually get to drive the boat.”

In 2003 Shelley got her first proper drive in a new V24 racer with a single Volvo V8 engine. She became the first woman ever to win the Three-Hour Endurance Race on Lake Windermere, setting three new records in her class, as well as finishing second in the British National Championships with her navigator and race engineer, Gavin Brown.

In 2004 Shelley was asked to lead the first all-girl team in the British Honda Powerboat Series in which she finished third, going on to take the Three-Hour Endurance Race on Lake Windermere for the second year running.

For 2005 season Shelley took on a new partner, Libby Keir. “She was a novice to the sport,” says Shelley, “but in January we started a tough training programme and this really paid dividends in our performance during the year”. Competing in the Honda 225 Formula 4-Stroke British Championship in the first race of the season the pair enjoyed their first win. However, the championship season went to the wire and the final round produced two spectacular wins to give Shelley her first ever British Championship title.

Two further seasons in the Championship saw the girls consistently on the podium

Wheels are made to be turned, throttles are made to be pushed. There’s no reason why the hand should not belong to a woman

### OTHER WOMEN CONTENDERS . . .

**Sarah Donohue - racer, stunt woman and fitness guru, Sarah is also a bit of a celebrity, making TV appearances on *SAS Are You Tough Enough?* and *Come Dine With Me* . . .**

**Jackie Hunt - This pocket rocket is the original balls out racer, with Championship success in Formula 1 RIBs and V24.**

**Lynsay Crellin - daughter of the Championship-winning Zapcat racer, Kevin Crellin, Lynsay is still young enough to enjoy similar success in the Thundercat arena, with plenty of podium finishes already under her belt.**

**Lisa Barsby - multiple World Champion PW superstar (and tester of PWs for SB&RIB - see page 21 and be impressed).**

resulting in an unbeaten record. It didn’t go un-noticed by Honda, who included her in their ‘Hondamentalist’ TV ad campaign.

In 2008 Shelley again made history by being the first women to compete in the Evolution class of Powerboat P1. With partner, Nigel Hook, she competed in a 38-foot Mercury-Powered Skater. “In the first race of the season one of the legendary Italian competitors came up to me and said, ‘You can really drive a powerboat’. It was a wonderful complement, particularly coming from a foreign driver,” says Shelley with a grin. ■

### SHELLEY JORY

**Shelley Jory came to prominence as the champion of the high-profile Honda Formula Four-Stroke Series. She twice won the three-hour endurance race on Lake Windermere before making history by being the first women to compete in the Evolution Class of P1, finishing the World Championships in sixth place.**



The boats might change but there are strong parallels to be drawn between the women who race them