

Wesley Pegdon Rides Again!

It takes all sorts, doesn't it? You've only got to do a bit of people watching to realise that! I mean, take my mother-in-law. Please? The day I took delivery of my first (and so far, only) TVR, I drove down to her house, with beloved - her daughter. Now it might be quite obvious that my beloved is my mother-in-law's daughter, but you need to fully embrace that to really understand what she said to me when she saw the car. Her opening sentence was "It's very nice. What you need now is a leggy blond to go with it!" My beloved's face was a picture! She's dark haired and not really "leggy"!

Actually, I love my mother-in-law - she's the only person I know who loves doing crosswords, and when she struggles, she's quite happy to place two letters into the same square to make a word fit! As I said, it takes all sorts.

I saw this again last October. As two thirds of a million people flocked to the NEC, 20 minutes from where I live, to see the latest T350C and the new Tuscan derivatives, I headed out to a totally different exhibition in Dusseldorf - still mostly four wheels - but with maximum speeds under 10 rather than over 200 mph! The "vehicles" in question were wheelchairs, scootas, wheeled commodes etc. for people with disabilities - the industry that I am involved in. Standing on the booth gave me a great chance to "people watch", and the person who had the worst case I had ever seen of "Bad Taste Dress Syndrome" (a disability that you sometimes see in this country) - walked past.

This 40-something guy had dyed his swept back hair jet black, and had then redyed a feather shaped piece over his right eye in pure white! He wore a fluorescent green checked jacket, green trousers, had a wafer thin moustache, and smelt like a tart's boudoir! And to make matters worse he had white socks on with black rubberised shoes! Talk about a "wacko jacko"!

What this made me think about was how it takes all sorts to make up the mass of TVR owners. Basically, I think TVR drivers (and possibly other drivers of other marques as well) are divided up into several categories as follows:

- The "Washers and Polishers" who wash/polish more than drive
- The "Spoodlers" who add every conceivable extra (often the grown up "go faster stripe brigade")
- The "Boy Racers" who must overtake everything in sight (more often seen with back to front baseball caps in Vauxhall Nova's these days)
- The "Protectors" who refuse to park within 50 metres of another vehicle, in case theirs gets a mark on it
- The "Clever Trevors" who can rebuild or repair anything from a bicycle to a jet fighter (and often do!)
- The "Idiots" who clearly know very little about anything (I'm in that group!).

You can divide TVR drivers other ways. There's the "Roof Up Boys" who rarely remove the lid and the "Wind in the Hair Johnny's" who can't even remember where the roof panel is! Then there's the out and out "Power Posers" (the faster it goes round corners and the harder the ride the better – they're the ones with the passengers with strange expressions on their faces) and the "Tourers" who prefer a little more comfort and refinement in their TVR.

Of course, like any club, you can always divide the members up into the people who get involved and the people who don't. I'm sure you could think up lots of other ways to categorise TVR drivers (answers please, on a postcard, to...).

But what's all this to do with Wesley Pegdon, and for that matter, who is Wesley Pegdon? Well, he's the character in "Last of the Summer Wine" who always wore overalls and a flat cap, and spent most of his life either in his wooden garage, "messaging with motors", or standing on newspaper "mats" in the kitchen, whilst his wife (played by Thora Hird) remonstrated with him. Well, I've met the real life Wesley Pegdon - he lives in the North Midlands - and is what I would call "a true eccentric".

I was with beloved at a friend's new abode, having the customary tour of their new homestead, when I looked out of the bathroom window over next door's "yard" and spotted the rear end of a couple of sports cars.

"What's he got next door?" I idly asked our host, "it looks like he's got some sports cars!"

"Oh, lots of things," she replied, "actually, you should meet him - he's into cars - I'm sure he'd be interested in your TVR" (which was parked outside). Immediately I'm interested. Any opportunity to show off the S2 is grabbed (naturally!).

So she whisked me to their front door (which was oddly on the side of the house), and in response to her knocking, a lady appeared who I suspect was the Thora Hird of this particular household.

"My friend is interested in your husband's cars," announced my host, whilst, in practice, as I could now see that these sports cars were in fact 4 rusting, flat tyred TR7's, the truth was that I wanted to show off the Tiv!

The lady of the house seemed totally unimpressed, but shouted down to her husband that "there was a fella here who wanted to buy you cars"! This 70 something, overall and flat cap clad man appeared from one of the many sheds, and called back, "Aye lad! Come on down!" in a broad Yorkshire accent.

Well, I have to admit that was harder than it looked. It was difficult to see more than 3 feet of tarmac without an engine or car covering it. Noticing my hesitancy, "Wesley" continued, "climb over trailer lad, put arse on t' bonnet of t' blue car, and slide across!"

Once in the same vague area of this amazing person I confessed that I didn't really want to buy any of his cars - I was just curious as to what he had got - especially the TR7's.

"Well lad," he continued (it's marvellous when someone still calls you lad at our age isn't it?!), "you can have four Triumphs if you want them!"

I asked why he had them and he admitted that he was going to make one or two good ones out of the four, but had never got round to it! Whilst he spoke to me he continued to repaint a rather old and tired looking Jeep.

"Is this your latest project?" I casually asked, thinking he was even more like Wesley Pegdon who was also always working on his Land Rover.

"No lad!" he replied, "my latest project is that...." at which he pointed to a pair of bright orange plastic chairs, that you would normally see in a church hall, that had had their metal legs cut off, and had then been welded side by side to what can only be described as a pair of shortened RSJ's. It looked like nothing I had ever seen before - in fact it looked like nothing at all!

"What is it?" I asked innocently enough.

"It's a plane, lad!" he replied!

"Really?" I said, trying to work out whether to feel sorry for this deluded character or make a quick run for it! "Sorry to be pedantic," I continued, "but shouldn't a plane have wings?"

"Aye lad," said Wesley, "they're in next shed - have a look!" So I did! I must admit they were definitely wing-shaped - but hardly came up to Boeing standard - in fact - I'm not sure they even came up to Airfix standard!

"Is this thing going to fly?" I asked, hoping he would not offer me a ride on it!

"Aye lad!" he said again, "it will as soon as I've taken engine off t' lawn mower, and stuck it on back!"

I thought changing the subject back to cars might be the best option! I asked him why he didn't just carry on with his car projects. (I'm sure they would have been a great deal safer!) It transpired he was bored with cars - he then admitted (casual like) that he had 2 E-types (one convertible), both in concours condition, an XK150, several old Austins, a Lagonda, a Jensen Interceptor and several other vehicles that he had either "done up" or collected over the years, and that were all stored at his brother's farm! At this point I began to wonder whether he was serious (or real, for that matter), but as he continued to list the cars he had, he mentioned an old Austin Ruby in the opposite shed, and said to go and have a look. I did - and it was there - and in extremely good condition.

So, I thought it was time I mentioned my TVR. I told him that I was a TVR man, and I had an S2 outside. Did he want to see it? Nope! Was he even interested? Nope!

Oh well! It takes all sorts!

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