

Year end approaches!

Well, it's December again, and naturally our thoughts turn to Christmas and the New Year, but unlike last year, I don't intend to suggest alternative Christmas presents for fellow TVR nuts.

Why? Well, in case you didn't get it (or weren't in the club or didn't bother to read it - shame on you!) - last year's alternative suggestions, like the blow up blond bombshell passenger for lonely TVR males, the rear window sticker for the Tiv that says "My other car's a Mondeo" and the elasticated syrup - for follically challenged drivers, were all fictional - they were made up - they were not real!

Yet despite this, at least one Sprint reader called the club office to find out where he could purchase one of them!! You sad lot!

So this year, as the festive season approaches, I wouldn't dare to try that trick again. Instead I will take the opportunity to look back over the year. In fact, the reason I decided to do this was that as I was having my annual clear out of all the paper rubbish one collects (you know - tax returns, bills and "You are a lucky winner!" paraphernalia - which all builds up nicely to stop the dust settling!) and I came across 10 TVR New Years Resolutions I wrote on the eve of 2003. So before I threw the envelope away (like all good things it was written on the back of one), I stopped to consider what goals I had set myself and how I had fared:

1. **Drive the TVR more** - failed - even though the weather was excellent - and not for the want of trying - but whenever we got a great weekend, I had to carry more than one passenger, and my 80 year old Dad just refused point blank to lie in the boot!
2. **Avoid speed humps** - failed - well you can't - can you! Well, I suppose you can, but you'd never get more than 3 miles away from home! In fact there are more humps around our area than on a camel train!
3. **Avoid Car Parks** - failed - although I have tried - much to my beloved's frustration! I really don't know why but every time we go to the town centre she insists we park the car! Crazy!
4. **Learn about mechanics** - failed - dismally - although I do now know how to open the bonnet, so I suppose that is a start! But after 50 years of ungrasped opportunities to lie under a vehicle and have dirty oil dripping on my head, I'm not really likely to start now, so I'm not sure why I included that one!
5. **Stop worrying about car getting wet** - failed - I don't want my pride and joy getting soaked. Not sure why - it IS only a car (there you are - I've said it! It was worth the cost of the therapy!) Having said that, I did get caught in the rain on the M5 with the lid off - fortunately the traffic kept moving, so I didn't get chance to jump out and throw myself over the bonnet to protect it!
6. **Start a replacement S2 fund** - sort of failed - I did start, with a tidy four figure sum - £12.95 - but then just couldn't be bothered to wait any more and bought the Griff instead (and emptied the savings fund!). I think I deserve half a mark for this one!

7. **Top speed the TVR** - failed - and now need to go even faster, as the Griff has got nearly 30 mph more at the top end than the S2.
8. **Get photo in Picture This/front cover** - failed - though I have tried! 37 films of portrait shots of the Griff PROVE I've tried! The local photo processing shop is convinced I'm an anorak!!
9. **Write a sensible article for Sprint!** - failed - well I would wouldn't I - I mean, can you imagine ME writing a sensible article?!
10. **Allow at least one of our dogs to ride in the TVR with me** - failed! I've always been impressed when I see people with their canine friends sharing the enjoyment of a Tiv - like Roger Shakespeare and his very large furry friend. The dog sits behind the seats of Roger's immaculate V8S, on a large piece of foam, which is covered in deep claw marks. I assumed it was so that when he wanted to have a scratch of the floor, which so many dogs do, it wouldn't damage the carpet.

"Not at all," explained Roger, "the claw marks are where he holds on when I go round corners!"

I really did think seriously about achieving this last resolution. But as I thought about it I was struck with two unresolvable problems. The first was that our dogs are really not easily controlled, and if the lid was off - so would they be! So they could only come with me with the top on.

Now the other problem with our dogs is that 4 of them are Whippets, and Whippets rarely sit, they only lie down. And when they lie down, they fart! Always and without fail - and very quietly! Then they look at you with great big eyes as if to say, "What me?" The thought of quadruplicate doggie odours in such a confined space six inches from my left nostril really caused me to abandon this idea!

So, not a very successful year in terms on last year's new years resolutions. I scored a half out of 10, which was slightly better than what I used to achieve in school tests!

But it has been a great year for me. Bought the Griff, attended Gang on the Green, Griff Growl, NEC Classic Car Show, had problems with the battery, the alarm and...well, you always have some problems with a TVR don't you? Don't you? I do! Indeed I was always told that the reason most TVR's have twin exhausts is so you can keep both hands warm whilst you are pushing it!

So as we approach the end of 2003 and prepare to step in the unknown of 2004, I wonder what is in store for all of us TVR owners?

Of course one way to find out is to check the "stars". You know, the ones that say:

"At the start of the new year, while the Sun is passing by Uranus, the most sensitive area of your chart, you would be best to try and remain passive and sit on any bright plans you have. You may want to keep the intensity of this solar event behind you, and, when

they stop watering, keep your eyes focused on the road ahead. Avoid products that break down easily, traveling slowly and yellow boxes. Lucky petrol is four star replacement, and lucky accessory is a pair of jump leads."

You don't actually believe this stuff, do you?

The other thing that happens at the start of a new year, or course, is the annual series of general predictions for the 12 months ahead. You know the sort of thing - more speed traps, more speed humps and higher petrol prices.

Well, based on the last 12 months I would also add traffic calming measures on the M4 (not required on the M25 or M6 - the traffic itself does that!), a new law demanding planning permission to start up any vehicle that emits in excess of 17 decibels, and the introduction of 15 mph speed limits on 50% of urban roads. However, I do expect the proposed law requiring a man with a red flag to walk in front of the vehicle, to be thrown out - at least for the time being!

I can also predict that I still won't be able to afford a new Tuscan - not unless I win the lottery or the pools, and based on the fact that I don't do either, there's not much hope of that! However, I do have one scheme left - you see I've had this brilliant idea how we can ALL afford whatever TVR we like....

If you think about it, there are some 7,000 members in the club. If we all sent in £5 a month, (cash only please!), it would create an income of £35,000 a month. Then each month, one lucky member's name is drawn out of a hat, and they would have that much to spend on any TVR they liked.

Now I'm not sure whether this would work, so I thought we could try it just for one month, to find out whether it was a success. As I wouldn't expect anyone to do anything that I wasn't prepared to, I have already put my £5 to one side, and volunteered to be the first recipient. It's a risky business, but someone has to do it! The rest of you can try your luck after. I know it will take 583 years and 4 months to ensure everyone gets their new TVR - but isn't a good thing worth waiting for?!

So, with my fiver already secured, if the other 6,999 of you could send your £5's I would be very grateful (and truly surprised). Please send them to me, care of the Home for the Slightly Bemused...

Oh and have a great and meaningful Christmas and a splendid and peaceful New Year.

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