



PLAYTIME WITH PERTWEE

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Jon Pertwee, for four years *Dr. Who* in a BBC time-machine, moves to ITV on Monday to "doctor" *Whodunnit?* for a new series of this find-the-felon detective game . . .



INGEBORG, Jon Pertwee's German-born wife, has a recurrent dream: that she and husband Jon are on holiday, idling beneath a palm tree . . . RELAXING.

But Pertwee, who admits that the extremely overworked *Dr. Who* is merely an extension of his real-life character, finds unwinding tricky.

"Relaxation," he says, "is riding a motorbike, a bit of water skiing, or a nice burn-up in the jet-boat. My wife thinks I'm demented." Above, he is scuba diving in the Mediterranean.

Not, adds Pertwee, that he doesn't share, on occasion, his wife's hankering after peace at the last. It's just that when he actually gets to it — when, for instance, he finally reaches his villa in Ibiza, where he is pictured with Ingeborg — everything blows.

A familiar demon leaps within him, a demon which has driven Pertwee over the years to all kinds of athletic and mechanical excesses. First, there was the craze for motorbikes, which started when Pertwee was 15 and ended (temporarily) when Pertwee drove his first bike, on its first journey, into a stone wall.

Later there were racing cars, succeeded by go-karts, *continued on page 4*



THE DAY HE ALMOST DIED CHASING A WORLD SPEED RECORD

continued/followed by a return of the bicycle, both motor and push.

The climax, perhaps, has been reached with the advent of the Whomobile, the space-age supercar Pertwee used in the *Dr. Who* series. Fans will be familiar with the machine, which looks like a mismatch between a speedboat and a benevolent shark.

More surprising, perhaps, is the news that Pertwee will be taking it over for his private use now that the series has finished. Already, says Pertwee, it has been used for the odd shopping jaunt around Barnes, in Surrey, where the Pertwees live with daughter Daniel, who is 13, and son Sean, nine. Pertwee says that other road-users, when they see the Whomobile, almost run into each other.

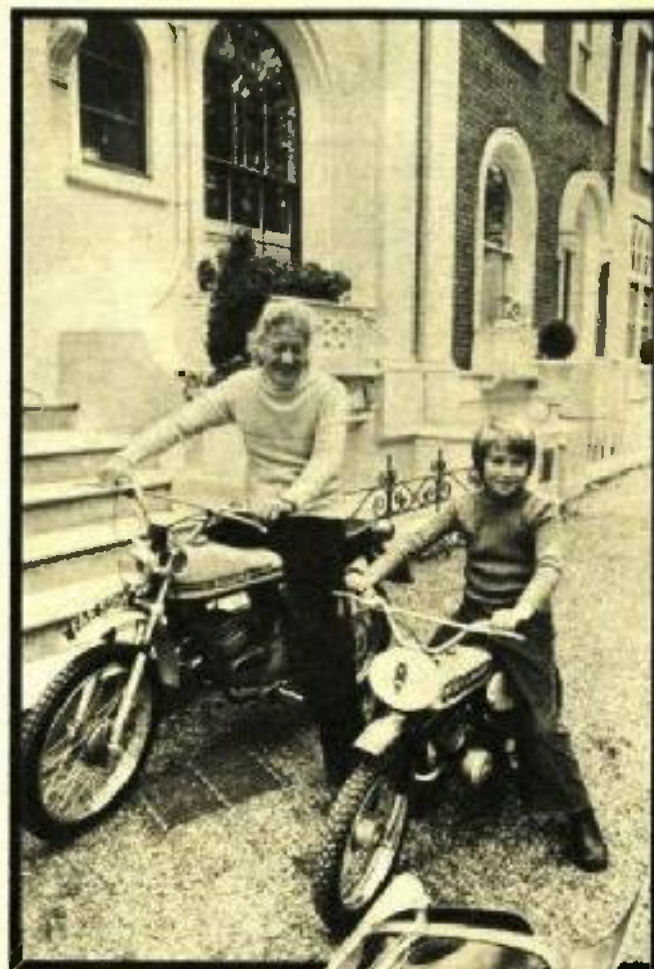
His a funny bloke, all right. Even off-duty that air of mystery is maintained. Hooked nose and noble eyes, tattooed forearm, bracelet at the wrist; an amalgam of the Count of Monte Cristo and Dan Dare. But the clincher is the hair—streaming back in a veritable Niagara of waves and ringlets. It contributes above all to Pertwee's characteristic air of surprise. There is, one feels, an awful lot going on up there.

There's an awful lot going on generally. Some inner recess of Pertwee's mind, it seems, is in an advanced state of starvation, and he has almost manic cravings for sun, speed and the vicarious power that gadgets can bestow.

Pertwee's London home bursts with gadgets. Apart from the odd Whomobile and motorbike there are adding machines, rowing machines, rumours of an electronic treasure-hunting machine for tropical beaches, and an automatic fruit-crusher in the kitchen. Pertwee, it seems, needs to be astonishing and the gadgets are useful props to this end.

But Pertwee's adventurous, gadget-strewn existence involves predictable occupational hazards. Pertwee recalls an awkward moment a few years ago in Australia.

"I was with some friends, water skiing on the Hawkesbury River near Sydney," said Pertwee, "and I seem to remember that most of the people involved had been having a very good lunch and were well smashed. The pilot of a shark-spotting plane was there, complete with plane, and



Like father, like son... Nine-year-old Sean, on his junior motor-cycle, set for zoom-off with dad, Jon Pertwee, who will "doctor" *Whodunnit?* on Mondays. Right, the Whomobile.



someone suggested I try for the world water ski speed record—rowed by the plane.

"So we put eight ropes on and the pilot muttered something about it being all right as long as we avoided thermals, and off we went.

"We got up to about 60m.p.h. and then we came to a bend in the river where the pilot hit a thermal and the plane went straight up in the air. This presented a problem: did I let go and risk breaking every bone in my body or did I hang on, take off,

follow the pilot over the bank and try a water ski touch-down on land?

"I chose the river, let go and bounced along for about a mile. To my considerable surprise I survived."

To say the least, Pertwee seems to be trying hard to live up to something or someone: and it is pretty obvious that someone is his writer father, the late Roland Pertwee.

"He was an overpowering man. He had so many talents. As well as his acting and writing abilities, he knew all sorts of quaint, unexpected

things. For instance, he was a great fly-fisherman and he invented his own kind of imitation fly, which is still sold commercially.

"I admired him intensely, but he was a lousy father. Rotten. He seemed to find it terribly difficult to show love.

"I will always remember the night of my first professional performance in rep in Brighton. My father had promised to be there and when I looked through the curtains before the performance there he was in the fifth row. 'He'll be round after the performance,' I told my friends. But he never came, and the others said he couldn't have been there.

"But I had seen him. So the next day I rang him up and asked him why he didn't come round. He said, 'I'm terribly sorry, I was too busy, I couldn't get there.' But I had seen him...

"Yet he would work at being a father in his own strange way. One day, my brother and myself were due to go fishing and we understood the tackle would be waiting for us in a fishing hut by the river. When we arrived there was none, but by using our imaginations a bit, we were able to improvise tackle from things lying around the hut—bits of cane, twine, etcetera.

"Then, later, it dawned on me that my father had carefully left everything necessary to build tackle in the hut. It was a planned exercise in initiative."

With all that to live up to no wonder Pertwee is a busy man. And perhaps it's less of a surprise that the Pertwee his wife knows is quite different from his public persona.

"All actors are schizophrenic," she says, "but maybe Jon is more than most. For an audience or for people he doesn't know very well he'll still act the buccaner. But his real love is his home and his children. Unlike some people in the theatre he doesn't feel the need to chase around keeping up with the theatrical Joneses and he spends quite a lot of time just watching the telly.

"But Ibiza is the place where he really relaxes. He goes into a sort of coma when we've been there for a while. He often falls asleep over his soup."

Which sounds, incidentally, rather different from Jon Pertwee's description of relaxation in Ibiza. Maybe Ingeborg's dream of contentment under the palm tree is less remote than Pertwee knows.



Two methods of relaxing in the Jon Pertwee style—both on and in the Mediterranean, off the coast of Ibiza, Spain... Above, in his jet-propelled speedboat (which he used in the *Dr. Who* series on BBC) and, below, on a scuba-diving jaunt with the latest underwater hunting equipment

