

The Tommy Cooper of salesmanship

So, we took our friend to a fairly muted version of the normal Cheddar car boot market and incidentally recorded the rather anxious bleating of sheep who had been separated from their lambs.

They have recently put up the price for cars from £1 to £2 so maybe some people will be put off coming but after some months I think they will get used to it.

Now look, I don't use the name of Tommy Cooper lightly, but I have to say that Gary Devies who has been working for 20 years at Cheddar car boot sale is a master of his art. To go near to his large refrigerated lorry is to court danger. Initially, people stand about 20 m away and listen. That is stage one. Stage two is when they move forward, slightly curious and realising what a great value the offers comprise. Stage three, the final stage, is when they move closer to the action to within about 2 or 3 m, keen to make an offer. They are caught like a fly in a spiders web. The salesman knows this and allows the process take its inexorable course.

I can only give a touch of his talent by showing you this video.

.After all this time, he even knows who is going to put up their hand and bid, as in an auction, even before they've done it. In an exquisitely choreographed presentation he exchanges gay banter with the public with mock insults on his own staff. He offers £20 worth of really good meat "someone take this off me please" interspersed by sudden £5 and £10 bargain offers. Below you can see what I bought for £10 which consists of 14 very generous pork chops, total weight 2.4 kg, which will keep me going for the next couple of weeks at least. Freezer here

