

Squeeze Play

(GLENN TILBROOK
Gets In The RV)

When Amy Pickard heard that her friend, former Squeeze singer/guitarist Glenn Tilbrook, was planning a solo tour of the United States in an RV, she immediately wanted to make a documentary.

"It seemed crazy to me, because when people think of RVs, they think of senior citizens, retirees or trailer-court white trash," says the 37-year-old Pickard, a Los Angeles-based indie filmmaker who grew up in Dayton, Ohio. "And Glenn is none of these things. He is so quintessentially English, it just seemed like such a fish-out-of-water thing to me, especially when I envisioned him at KOA campgrounds."

Tilbrook's RV adventures can be seen in the endearing *Glenn Tilbrook: One For The Road* DVD; the film has also been shown on VH1 Classic. This up-close-and-personal documentary follows Tilbrook on his first solo tour of America in his beloved, though un dependable, home on wheels. As the salesperson says of Tilbrook's newly purchased CruiseMaster, "Things always go wrong with RVs." Indeed, 30 minutes after Tilbrook drives the beast off the lot, it conks out. This is just one of the minor inconveniences that befell Tilbrook and his entourage: girlfriend/business manager Suzanne Hunt, Pickard and a camera operator. Through it all, Tilbrook remains terminally upbeat and good-natured.

"I wish I had some showbiz tantrums on film that I



could use to bribe him," says Pickard. "That was one of the things that shocked me: He was so easygoing. I think it comes from a lifetime of touring with other people: crews and band members who you might not like but have to get along with in tight quarters. There was never a time when he needed to be alone to go create. It's not Nick Drake in an Airstream."

Aside from on-the-road detours, which include Tilbrook's first-ever foray into a Target store, the film captures him as a dedicated singer/songwriter who loves playing to his adoring fans. *One For The Road* features acoustic performances of Squeeze favorites including "Tempted," "Black Coffee in Bed" and "Pulling Mussels

(From The Shell)."

Although Pickard only chronicles Tilbrook's first U.S. trip in the RV, he eventually logged 32,000 miles over nearly five years of various tours in the CruiseMaster, not to mention 27 stops at repair shops. (The RV died for good in the summer of 2004.)

"America is a wonderfully diverse country," says Tilbrook. "Touring like I used to—large tour bus, hotel, plane—you exist in a bubble and don't get to see much of the country and your surroundings. But with the RV, I'm able to stay in lovely campgrounds and cook my own meals and experience the country in a different way. It's fantastic. I can't imagine going back to the old way of touring, and I wouldn't want to."

Pickard, a Squeeze fan for more than 20 years who interviewed the band for her Dayton public-access TV show in 1991, thinks there are lessons to be learned from *One For The Road*, which consumed her for nearly five years. "The message of the film is to do what you love, love what you do," she says. "People might look at Glenn and think he's not successful because he's not selling out Madison Square Garden or on the charts. But if you see the film and see the connection he has with the audience and that he absolutely loves what he's doing, how many of us wouldn't give anything to be Glenn, performing songs you have created?"

—John Elssasser