

May 2006



# Call Sign

From the home of Dial-a-Cab International

*Inside this issue...*

Brian Rice at City Hall again!

A final goodbye to Metrocab?

'Going home' with Keith Cain!

Licensed PH shock – Nearly half are rule breakers!

DaC driver's recovery from cancer

Driver's nose cut off in horrific attack

Arbitration election CVs

*What is this DaC driver doing in the pits at Brands Hatch?*



*The man who keeps LTI in business!  
Martin buys new cab number 34...*





# NASH'S NUMBERS

By Alan Nash (A95)

Continuing from the March '06 issue featuring pubs. I have now expanded and combined the list into pubs and wine bars. This month W1. Also, see the bottom of this page for some useful information

Pubs & wine bars in W1	Pubs & wine bars in W1	Pubs & wine bars in W1
Ain'T Nothin But, 20 Kingly St	Frank's Bar, 54 Curzon St	Polka, 58 Poland St
All Bar One, 7 Paddington St	French House, 49 Dean St	Pontefract Castle, Wigmore St
All Bar One, 36-38, Dean St	Friendly Society, 79 Wardour St	Prince of Wales Feathers, 8 Warren St
All Bar One, 5 Picton Place	George, 55 Great Portland St	Prince Regent, 71 Marylebone High St
All Bar One, 289 Regent St	George, 1 D'Arblay St	Punchbowl, 41 Farm St
All Bar One, 7 Paddington St	George & Dragon, 151 Cleveland St	Queens Head, 15 Denman St
Anda Lucia, 139 Whitfield St	Glasshouse Stores, 55 Brewer St	Red, 5 Kingly St
Angel in the Fields, 37 Thayer St	Goat Tavern, 3 Stafford St	Red Lion, 14 Kingly St
Apollo, 28 Paddington St	Golden Eagle, 59 Marylebone Lane	Red Rock Central, 12 Swallow St
Argyll Arms, 18 Argyll St	Golden Lion, 51 Dean St	Revolution, 2 St. Annes Court
Backdoor, 21 Old Burlington St	Goodge Bar, 62 Goodge St	Rising Sun, 46 Tottenham Court Rd
Balls Bros Ltd, 34 Brook St	Grafton Arms, 72 Grafton Way	Rose & Crown, 2 Old Park Lane
Bar Logic, 5 Argyll St	Ha Ha Bar, 43 Gt Titchfield St	Running Footman, 5 Charles St
Bar Room 1 Soho, 32, Gerrard St	Henry's Cafe Bar, 80 Piccadilly	Running Horse, 50 Davies St
Bar Saaqi, 21-22 Poland St	Hog in the Pound, 28 South Molton St	Rupert Street Cafe Bar, 50 Rupert St
Bar Soho, 25, Old Compton St	Hope, 15 Tottenham St	Samuel Pepy's, 29 Clarges St
Barley Mow, 8 Dorset St	Intima Ltd, 102 Wardour St	Shakespeare's Head, 29, Gt Marlborough St
Bath House, 96 Dean St	Jack Horner, 235 Tottenham Ct Rd	Shampers Wine Bar, 4, Kingly St
Beehive, 126 Crawford St	Jewel Bar, 4 Glasshouse St	Shaston Arms, 4 Ganton St
Beehive, 7 Homer St	Kettners, 29 Romilly St	Shochu Lounge, 37 Charlotte St
Ben Crouch Tavern, 77a Wells St	King & Queen, 1, Foley St	Slug & Lettuce, 19 Hanover St
Black Lion & French Horn, 5 Pollen St	Kings Arms, 23 Poland St	Slug & Lettuce, 80 Wardour St
Blue Posts, 81 Newman St	Kings Head, 13 Westmoreland St	Social, 5 Little Portland St
Blue Posts, 18 Kingly St	Lab Bar, 12 Old Compton St	Soho, 12 Greek St
Blue Posts Pub, 28 Rupert St	Lamb & Flag, 24, James St	Southside Bar, 125 Cleveland St
Bok Bar, 56 Blandford St	Lees Bag, 4 Great Portland St	Spice of Life, 3 Romilly St
Bradleys Spanish Bar, 42 Hanway St	Loop, 19, Dering St	St. James's Tavern, 45 Great Windmill St
Bricklayers Arms, 31 Gresse St	Low Life, 34a Paddington St	Stags Head, 102 New Cavendish St
Carpenters Arms, 12 Seymour Place	Lupo, 50, Dean St	Stout Filler, 56 Blandford St
Carpenters Arms, Whitfield St	Marquis of Granby, 2 Rathbone St	Studio Lounge, Waterstone's, Piccadilly
Champion, 12 Wells St	Masons Arms, 58 Devonshire St	Suga Suga, 187 Wardour St
Clachan, 34 Kingly St	Masons Arms, 38 Maddox St	Three Tuns, 1 Portman Mews South
Clarence, 4 Dover St	Mayfair Bar, Barclay St	Toucan Guinness Bar, 94 Wimpole St
Coach & Horses, 1 Gt Marlborough St	Mortimer, 37 Berners St	Tower Tavern, 21 Clipstone St
Cock Tavern, 27 Great Portland St	Mortimer Arms, 174 Tottenham Ct Rd	Tudor Rose, 44 Blandford St
Comptons of Soho, 53 Old Compton St	N2o, 187 Wardour St	Two Floors, 3 Kingly St
Crown & Sceptre, 26 Foley St	Nellie Dean, 89 Dean St	Village, 81 Wardour St
De Hems Dutch, 11 Macclesfield St	Newman Arms, 2 3 Rathbone St	Wargrave Arms, 42 Brendon St
Devonshire Arms, 17 Denman St	Old Coffee House, 49 Beak St	Waxy O'Connors, 14 Rupert St
Duke of Wellington, 94a Crawford St	Olivers Wine Bar, 41 Mount St	White Horse, 16 Newburgh St
Duke of York, 8 Dering St	O'Neill's, 7 Shepherd St	Windsor Castle, 27 Crawford Place
Dusk, 79 Marylebone High St	O'Neill's Irish Bar, 4 Conway St	Woodstock, 11 Woodstock St
Edge, 11, Soho Square	O'Neill's Irish Bar, 33 Wardour St	Yorkshire Grey, 46 Langham St
Endurance, 90 Berwick St	Pillars of Hercules, 7 Greek St	
Fitzroy Tavern, 16 Charlotte St	Player, 8 Broadwick St	

## What's On at ExCel

Event	Type	Date
Business Startup	Public/Trade	05-05-06 to 06-05-06
Health and Beauty Training Show	Public/Trade	20-05-06 to 21-05-06
ACPO-APA Conference & Policing Exhibition	Trade	23-05-06 to 25-05-06
London MCM Expo	Public	27-05-06 to 28-05-06

*I am embarking on a Nash Numbers 'useful information' document. It will only be available by email and whilst not yet ready, email me now with the following; Name, Call Sign and Badge number to [nashsnumbers1tiscali.co.uk](mailto:nashsnumbers1tiscali.co.uk) and I'll send it when ready*



# from the editor's desk

## Freedom of choice?

Those DaC drivers that come to the office on a regular basis to use the loo or have a coffee, will know that Driver's Reception always has a choice of freebie mags to take away with you. Some, like Taxi Globe, Taxi Talk, Taxicab News or Cab Driver are reasonably free of any ties linking them to opposing organisations. Others such as Taxi, Cab Trade News, The Badge or London Taxi Times are not quite so free. Taxi is the mouthpiece of the LTDA – which is a shareholder in our competitor, ComCab. CTN is the mouthpiece for the T&G and has often gone into print about Dial-a-Cab – and not always in our favour. In fact, during the demutualisation debate, it advised our drivers to vote against the Board's recommendation. London Taxi Times is a front for the Radio Taxi Group (formerly Mountview) and could hardly be called non-prejudiced when it comes to reporting on radio matters. The Badge represents the views of the London Cab Drivers Club and has never been afraid to have a dig at DaC. But Dial-a-Cab is happy to allow all of them to be placed in our reception. And in the view of **Call Sign**, that is how it should be.

Now let's cross over the 'pond' to Chicago and look at **The Chicago Dispatcher**. Call Sign is sent a copy of each issue and a very interesting insight into the problems faced by cabbies in the windy city it provides.

However, one taxi organisation in Chicago – Yellow Cabs – has banned the paper from their reception. The company say that it will not be available on their premises "for the foreseeable future."

So why did the company's majority owner, Michael Levine, ban the Dispatcher? His answer was that because he wasn't currently advertising in the publication, he claimed that it wouldn't make good business sense to allow cab newspapers to be made available at his garage when they carried ads from his competitors.

The decision also came close on the heels of the Chicago Dispatcher Editor asking Mr Levine to confirm or deny a rumour concerning pensions at his operation. The rumour was denied, but was soon followed by the banning order.

I banned a letter from the last issue of **Call Sign** because I considered it to be unsuitable and based on unsubstantiated rumours. The driver concerned was unhappy and went to see a solicitor, who in turn sent me a letter telling me that I had to publish everything. I disagreed because I am the Editor and I decide what gets published and what doesn't. Solicitors do not edit **Call Sign** – even if this particular one's name does seem to crop up quite regularly.

The letter was the first for several years that I hadn't published, but that does not detract from the fact that the duty of an editor is to edit. But that is a million miles from The Chicago Dispatcher being banned.

## Fuel prices...

Perhaps it's just me, but why do I get the



feeling that we are being ripped off by the fuel companies? I know that the cost of a barrel of Brent Sea Crude is heading through the \$75 mark and that across other international markets, the price is on an equally upward spiral. But I just have this niggling feeling that we are being charged far more than should be necessary.

US problems with Iran is suggested as the reason, but is Iran that big an oil producer? And since when was Nigeria such a big player? No, I don't think so...

If you go back to last September, prices pushed up to the verge of £1 a litre, coincidentally stopping at the 99.9p mark everywhere! Now they are there again – yet last year's roar is this year's whimper.

This isn't the first time I've written about this. It always seems that the fuel companies put up the price steeply, wait for us to get used to the idea, then reduce the overpriced commodity to allow us a feeling of success and then put it back up in small steps.

The result? You guessed it! We're back up to the 99.9 mark with the only difference being that public pressure on the fuel companies has eased even though just 6 months ago, we wanted to string them all up! They pull the same stroke time after time and always get away with it because they know there is nothing that we can do about it.

One driver even sent me a website where they were talking about boycotting one fuel company at a time to see whether that would force the cost of fuel down. The answer is that of course it would if we did it, but we all know that most drivers would still go to the forecourt that suited them. So the idea – which comes up every year – would never work.

Perhaps it's about time that we asked the Mayor to represent us to Her Majesty's Government and for us to not pay fuel duty? Impossible? Possibly – but worth a try. After all, the Mayor is constantly telling us how important we are – that's when he isn't kicking us in the teeth...

## To golf or not to golf!

For the second time in under a year, **Call Sign** has sent drivers on a wild goose chase by sponsoring them in various golf compe-

titions. Ray Scott (T34) and Dave Spencer (V89) were the two involved this time and were looking forward to playing for this magazine at the world famous Belfry course – home of the Ryder Cup.

Sadly, and just like last time, at the last minute the organisers pulled the plug leaving me with golfers – but nowhere for them to play!

My apologies to both Ray and Dave, but this has confirmed my thoughts that the only competitions I now feel safe sponsoring are those with cab trade affiliations such as the DaC Open or the LTFUC event. And in future, unless I get a cast-iron guarantee that an event is taking place, then I will be leaving it alone...

## SGS and overhauls

Hopefully, you will all have read the reports on SGS and the system they will be employing when they take over from the PCO in passing cabs at the end of the year. As **Call Sign** wasn't invited, I cannot give you a personal view, however, I did speak to one garage proprietor who told me that without doubt, if the second mid-term check on taxis goes ahead, it would definitely cost us more. He also added that most garages would be travelling much further to whichever passing station they will be using, because in the majority of cases, they will be further away and more time-consuming to get to than where the PCO is. And guess who's gonna pay for that? Bingo...!

## Wayne's 45K

I read with interest a recent **Evening Standard** article (20 April) on who earns what. I don't know licensed taxi driver **Wayne Lock**, but he apparently told the paper that he earns £45,000 a year. That made him 3K better off than University Professor Paul Gregg and 12K richer than Junior Doctor Simon Williams. Sadly, though, Wayne finds himself £595K worse off than Radio 1 DJ Chris Moyles. Wayne may now have to work his 5 days off each week if he wants to catch up to Mr Moyles. You win some and you lose some...!

## Good news and bad news?

Depending on which way you view life, I have some good / bad / indifferent news to give you. This was my last **Call Sign** as Editor, next month is June so there is no issue and I have just been presented with a new 3-year contract, so I shall be back in July!

For those of you going away, have a great time. Call Sign's email address (see below) will still be working to take your letters or stories and my successor – me – will see you in July...

Alan Fisher  
callsignmag@aol.com

# Reflections Of The Chairman

## Dial-a-Cab on the move?

I mentioned in my last Chairman's report that we had made an offer for a much larger, well equipped building to carry this Society forward into the future. This building is in the vicinity of our current office, Brunswick House.

I said that I would keep you informed of our progress and the following will seem very familiar to some as it appears that what occurred is fairly normal practise - although not something that Dial-a-Cab would usually become involved with.

So to bring you up to date; we made an offer that was below the asking price. The Vendor came back to us with a price that was also below the original asking price, but still in excess of our offer, so we increased our offer slightly. However, the Vendor was intransigent and insisted on his new price - which we then agreed to bearing in mind that it was still below the original asking price.

Consequently, the BoM believed that the deal was done, only to be informed a few days later that there were another two interested parties. We were not impressed as we believed the deal had been done, even though nothing had been signed at that stage. We were then informed that they were going to hold a 'Best Bid' auction, which means that the three parties involved would put forward three new bids (higher of course) and the party that made the highest bid would secure the property.

The Agents were told in no uncertain terms that we were not going to become involved with that scenario and would not be increasing our bid. Needless to say, our bid was not the highest. So at the time of writing, we have not been successful with our bid for the new building. That, of course, does not mean that we will not get it eventually, as something could happen regarding negotiations that transpire between the two parties. I don't know why, but I am still dismayed at the way some people do business - it is not the Dial-a-Cab way.

## A Visit to City Hall...

I believe that it will be reported on elsewhere in the magazine, but I'd like to write briefly regarding a meeting I had with two of the Mayor's advisers. The main thrust of the meeting was concerning the consultation document regarding signage. The two advisers are both very experienced people - Anni Marjoram and Mark Watts - and were both very sympathetic to our argument. I just hope they have as much influence on the Mayor's decision as I believe that they have.

Anni Marjoram is the Mayor's adviser on women's affairs (hmmm...) in London and there is no doubt in my mind that safety for females is at the top of her agenda - and rightly so. It was obvious to her how dangerous exterior signage could be, especially to those that would adopt bogus signage as a fraudulent sign of authenticity.

To those of you that are unaware of Anni



Marjoram's credentials, then all I can say is that it is far, far better to have her on your side than against you! She makes a great ally, but not too good as an adversary!

The meeting also gave me the opportunity to discuss the very serious situation regarding the issuing of parking tickets to our members and once again, they were very sympathetic. They both realised that the direction in which things were going would be a restriction on our trade. There is no doubt they both have a great deal of influence on TfL, however, it remains to be seen as to how they deal with individual boroughs.

I believe the meeting was probably one of the most encouraging and productive that I have ever attended at City Hall and I just hope my optimism is justified. It is also very encouraging to see that all our trade organisations are taking the matter of parking tickets very seriously, as there is little doubt it is

an infringement upon our trade.

## Licensed driver numbers

Just to keep you informed regarding our numbers - that is the number of licensed taxi drivers in London for the year 2004/5. I have little comment to make on the subject other than relay the facts to you.

It appears yet again that our numbers fell last year; there were 589 new green badge licences issued, whilst 508 were surrendered and another 135 assumed to have retired, resulting in a net loss of 54 drivers.

Not that many, you may say, but this keeps happening year after year and the number of applicants on Knowledge appearances also fell by 12% to 1323. It is up to you to decide whether or not a shrinking industry is in our best interests!

## Increased run-ins

We intend increasing run-ins on the 1 May 2006 from £3.80 to £4.20. At the time of writing, I have written to all customers advising them of the above. However, as you can imagine some clients are under contract and consequently you could be advised that the new run-ins will not apply to a handful of clients - although I am optimistic that most will accept the new terms.

While on the topic of fares, I'm pleased to tell you that the new fixed prices at the HoC have been implemented. They are now much more attractive and I'm sure that will reflect in the service provided by our members.

**Brian Rice, Chairman  
Dial-a-Cab**

## THINKING OF HOLIDAYING IN FLORIDA?

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**For further details and a virtual tour, please visit [www.cubberleyvilla.com](http://www.cubberleyvilla.com).**

*Please note that for all bookings made through Call Sign, quote that as a reference when making your booking and you can deduct 15% from the advertised price!*

*The villa is situated just 20 minutes from all major parks and shopping areas. The villa sleeps a maximum of 10 people and the cost advertised is per week and not per person*

On his seemingly never-ending quest to stop London private hire vehicles gaining signage on their vehicles other than a name board and PCO / TfL roundel licence in the front and back windcreens, Dial-a-Cab Chairman **Brian Rice** recently made yet another trip to City Hall. On this occasion, he spoke to Mayor Livingstone's chief advisor, **Mark Watts** and to **Anni**

# Brian Rice Meets Mark Watts and Anni Marjoram

## *As the signage battle hots up...!*

**Marjoram**, head of the Women's Transport Advisory Committee and spokesperson for Woman's Affairs in London.

Brian told Call Sign: **"It was an excellent meeting and both understood our position. Mark Watts has been in the position for some time now and agreed that signage on private hire would probably be for commercial branding purposes rather than any other reason."**

Mr Rice also said that Anni Marjoram's interest was connected to her position as the spokesperson for women's affairs and her department is constantly involved in consultation on women's priorities for transport in London and the signage issue was an important one to her.

She told Brian that since the licensing of private hire in London, not one case of rape or sexual assault had been reported in a licensed private hire vehicle to which the Chairman asked why, if that were the case, would anyone want to change it? He explained that the proposals would create an image that any car with signage must be genuine.

**"That,"** explained the Chairman, **"would not be true and should signage be allowed back onto PH vehicles, then all the good work achieved would be undone."** He added that Anni Marjoram seemed supportive of that statement.



Anni Marjoram

Brian then explained about the problems in cities such as Lincoln, Birmingham and Coventry - all of which had big problems following the easing of signage restrictions.

**"It was another good meeting,"** Brian told Call Sign, **"where they both seemed to understand our point of view."**

## And parking tickets...

Whilst there, Brian Rice took the opportunity of explaining to both Mark Watts and Anni Marjoram about the cost to DaC drivers and Dial-a-Cab itself following the CCTV crackdown on waiting in many parts of London.

**"They sounded extremely supportive even when the person taking the minutes pointed out that some camera shots seemed to show drivers sitting in their cabs reading the paper! I explained that those drivers had probably made contact and were just waiting for the passenger to arrive from their office and were probably passing the time by reading the paper!"**

Brian finished by telling Call Sign that this was probably one of the best meetings he'd had so far as City Hall was concerned and that he was hopeful something useful would emerge.

## Manganese Bronze Unaudited Interim Results

**Manganese Bronze Holdings PLC, parent company of cab manufacturer LTI Vehicles, has announced its unaudited interim results for the six months up to 31 January 2006.**

During the six-month period, MBH saw their pre-tax profit double to £1 million on turnover - which in turn was reduced from £41.3million to £39.1million. It was achieved through the sale of 1,106 new taxis as against 1,104 in the equivalent period in 2005.

According to MBH Chief Executive, Ian Pickering, the company saw a small fall in exports, but the £2.2million reduction in turnover was caused mainly by lower sales of used vehicles at the company's main dealerships. However, the sale of new cabs has picked up since the end of the six-month period with UK taxi sales up from 414 to 421.

The report also said that the company had been hit by the world increase in the cost of steel together with higher prices for gas (used both to heat the production line and in the paint shop), but that these extra costs

had not so far been passed on to customers and at this stage, according to Company Chairman Tim Melville-Ross, there was no intention to do so.

Mr Melville-Ross also announced the date for completion of the new M&O building in Brewery Road for November and tied it in with "the Euro IV compliant vehicle" - something the trade has anticipated following the implementation of the new emissions regulation for London as of July this year.

Cash received from the £4.2 million sale of the old components property in Ipswich was not received until the second half and is not included in the figures.

The interim dividend went up from 1p to 2p. Trading in the shares saw a total of 53,000 changing hands in just six deals.



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# Jery's World



Driver 1: "I heard that Dial-a-Cab wuz movin' to Bradford?"

Driver 2: "Naaah! I 'eard dat we sold out to Mountview and was bein' sent to Nairobi!"

Driver 1: "I'll ask my mates on the Internet, they'll know cos I fink they are DaC advisors!"

## Metrocab waves goodbye as the bailiffs go in...

Friday 3 March surely saw the curtain come down finally on any chance that the **Metrocab** had of returning to mainstream cab manufacturing. On that fateful day, the Runcorn Bailiff company of Crellins walked into what had been Metrocab's premises at Darwell Park in Tamworth and took back anything of value on behalf of the landlord.

It was in April 2004 that amidst a fanfare, the new company handed over their first TTT since reforming following Metrocab's administration 14 months earlier with a loss of 100 jobs.

The restructured company had told **Call Sign** that they were looking to build 5 cabs a week.

A **Dial-a-Cab** TTT with a '55' plate and some modifications was spotted on the Finsbury Square rank several times and seemed to suggest that perhaps Metrocab were serious. Sadly that does not look to be

the case.

DaC driver and avowed Metrocab user, **Keith White (A16)** told **Call Sign** that he was very disappointed to hear the news.

**"The TTT is undoubtedly the best taxi ever produced for the London market. I will now just have to keep my current cab for ever!"**

The original Metrocab was launched in the 1980s with a Ford diesel engine while the TTT Metrocab had a Toyota drivetrain. Before entering administration for the first time, Metrocab at their peak were producing up to 100 vehicles a month. Now it seems certain that the Metrocab has gone forever because who in their right mind would contemplate spending such a large sum of money with a company having such a poor record...?



The Metrocab TTT - now gone forever

## GROSVENOR HOUSE RANK BACK TO NORMAL!

### Taxi rank on Park Street to open 5 May...

Grosvenor House, the "Grande Dame" of Park Lane, is currently undergoing a multi-million pound refurbishment programme. The first opening will be the forecourt and lobby area on Friday 5 May 2006. From 6am, guests will once again be able to arrive in style using the main entrance to Grosvenor House, located on Park Street, W1. **The taxi rank will consequently be in service from this time.** The full completion of the restoration is due in 2008, with staggered openings planned in stages over the next 12-18 months.

Grosvenor House is the preferred venue for numerous high profile events, including the BAFTA's, the Grosvenor House Arts & Antiques Fair and the British Book Awards to name but a few. Over 100,000 room guests are received every year to the hotel with an additional 300,000 attending events in The Great Room.

## TAXI AIR CONDITIONING

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Home Counties

**Dial-a-Cab 10 - Higham Spartacus 0**

After knocking 8 past Higham Juniors the previous week, DaC totally ran riot against their A team, Higham Spartacus, smashing 10 – including a Terri Bailey hat trick – past their helpless goalkeeper who must have wished that he had stayed at home! DaC took an early lead when pressure from Tony Luna forced a penalty. Wayne Gruby stepped up and slotted the ball calmly to the keeper's bottom right corner to give DaC the advantage. When Higham Spartacus tried to pile on the pressure to grab an equaliser, no one could have guessed the misery they were about to face! The few chances they created were easily dealt with by DaC's goalkeeper, Chad Gomez, who was equal to anything the opposition threw at him. Then Luna struck again, even though he was being "muscle" into the corner of the pitch by two of the opposition's defenders, but somehow he managed to get an impressive strike through into the bottom right corner of the net.

The boys in blue put away another two before half time to make it 4 - 0.

The second half began much as the first had finished - with DaC dominating play and scoring a further 6 more times!

Steve Carruthers scored two in the second half, the best being a superb long range shot set up by James Quigley, who won the ball in the middle, played it onto Gruby who then left it for Carruthers to latch onto. It flew into the opposition's top right corner and left their keeper wondering where the ball had come from!

Bailey's three plus goals from Ambrose and Quigley helped complete the rout that sent Dial-a-Cab to the top of the Southwark Early Evening League ...

**Team. Gomez, Quigley (1), Gruby (3), Luna (1), Bailey (3), Carruthers (2), Ambrose (1) and Theobalds.**

## LTFUC OFF TO SOUTHEND - WOULD YOU LIKE TO HELP?

Wednesday 12 July 2006 is the date of our annual outing to Southend-on-Sea and we need drivers to help make this a wonderful day out.

Please come and help us give 300 'special needs' children a fun-packed day by the sea. As well as giving a great deal of pleasure to so many kids, we promise you will have a brilliant day out yourself.

For more information, please contact our drivers' liaison, Susan Angel on 07958 280 881.

A briefing meeting will be held before the outing on Tuesday 4 July – details from Sue.

**WITHOUT YOU – THERE ARE NO OUTINGS!**

London Taxidriers' Fund for Underprivileged Children  
[www.ltfuc.org.uk](http://www.ltfuc.org.uk)

"None walks so tall as he who stoops to help a child..."

Raymond Levy (LTFUC PR)



# DaC's Footballers Go From Heaven...



## ...STRAIGHT TO HELL!

### Dial-a-Cab 1 - Bullsheat 7

After scoring 10 in the previous week's match and going to the top of the league with a 100% record, DaC were brought back to earth by the impressive Bullsheat. Dial-a-Cab started poorly, seemed to lack energy and were given a lesson in how to play aggressive, positive football. The Bullsheat team must have thought that Christmas had come early as they were given almost free rein with almost non-existent DaC marking.

We were 2 down within 5 minutes of the start after a lack of commitment and poor defending allowed Bullsheat space to shoot on sight. Chad Gomez attempted to keep us in the game by producing a string of good saves, one where the opposition curled the ball around a retreating Steve Carruthers and Gomez had to dive full stretch to his left, tipping the ball onto the post.

DaC eventually found some consistency in their play and managed to test the Bullsheat

goalkeeper, forcing him to produce some decent saves and indeed, when Wayne Gruby grabbed what turned out to be just a consolation goal, there were hopes that DaC might realise that they were in a match and step up their work rate. But any chances we did have were wasted with Bullsheat showing the difference between men and boys. Let's hope that the team learn from this and realise that you don't win matches just by turning up...

**Team: Gomez, Gruby (1), Carruthers, Luna, Bailey and Ambrose.**

Then on Wednesday 19 April, DaC bounced back to pip the unbeaten table-topping DNV by 2 – 1. Just a few more good results and a championship could be on the way...?

### SOUTHWARK EARLY EVENING LEAGUE

Team	P	W	D	L	F	A	GD	Pts
Dynamo DNV	6	4	1	1	19	12	7	13
The B-Team	6	4	0	2	27	14	13	12
Dial-a-Cab	6	4	0	2	26	15	11	12
Bullsheat	6	3	1	2	23	14	9	10
Higham Juniors	6	2	0	4	10	21	-11	6
Deloitte FC	5	1	0	4	11	18	-7	3
Higham Spartacus	5	1	0	4	8	39	-22	3

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# CALL CENTRE CHAT

## Development of the 'going home' facility...

Since the implementation of **Code 3** following the proposal at the AGM, the Board felt that we should look towards developing a *going home* facility that would benefit all members and attempt to stop the need for propositions that changed the operation backwards - and then forward again. We looked at the *going home* facility to be just that - a facility to help a member get their last trip of the day to take them home.

We decided to look at using a part of the old *going home* facility together with the new one and came up with the following:

**The Code 3 going home procedure can now only be engaged once a driver has been signed on for 8 hours and within those hours, he/she must have completed 3 credit rides. A driver will then be allowed to continuously reject trips for one hour. Once a trip is accepted, completed or if after the hour no trip has been accepted, the system will sign the terminal off for 6 hours.**

A driver can book into any zone except EC5 and E140 to engage the **Code 3** facility. To help drivers obtain work from the busy zones of EC5 and E140, we have included in the facility the opportunity to BID for trips in EC5 and E140. If a driver BIDS EC5 or E140, only trips that go to their home zone or one of its back up zones will be offered. Contrary to popular belief, the system will not give preference to a driver on a **Code 3** over another driver.

If a driver accepts a trip and is unfortunate enough to be scrubbed, then the time from accepting to being scrubbed will be given back. For example, if after engaging **Code 3** a trip is accepted after 10 minutes and it takes another 10 minutes before a scrub is given, when the queue position is given back, it will still leave 50 minutes of time remaining to accept another trip.

The above has been installed on the V6 dispatch system and is now operational. I would like to thank **Debbie Carter** for her swift response to making the changes.

However, even with the new changes already made, we have asked for a few more enhancements to the *going home* facility that will hopefully make it beneficial to all. These are:

**After the trip has been completed or after one hour and no trip having been taken, instead of being Signed Off, a driver is only Booked Off. By doing this, the system will allow the map, street hail credit card and charge card facilities to still be used.**

One observation I have already witnessed is drivers signing on for a few



hours before they actually start work and book in. This is not playing the game - to quote a phrase - and if it continues, it will leave the Board no alternative but to review the working parameters - possibly to reduce the number of hours you have to have been signed on for and increase the number of credit rides to be taken. It will only take a minority to spoil it for the majority.

## Roller Bonds

When I was Treasurer of the Society

some many years ago, I introduced the method of allowing Roller Bonds to be made up to £1,000 so that we could pay them back sooner. We continue to operate this system, but the issue has arisen on a couple of occasions recently where the money left during the evening or through the night has not found its way to Driver Services despite drivers being insistent that they placed the money in the letter box in the Driver's Reception. We have made every effort to investigate the reasons why this has happened, but unfortunately we have not been able to come up with any explanation. The Board have always made good to the driver, but it leaves a question mark over the integrity of our staff and drivers.

In future, if you need to make your Roller Bond money up, this can only be done during office hours (9am till 5pm). No money must be left in Brunswick House outside these hours and if you chose to ignore this, then the Board can take no responsibility for any loss.

**Keith Cain**

**Driver Operations /  
Call Centre Manager**

**As the PCO pass the TomTom Go300, a warning...**

## SATNAV THIEVES ON THE LOOKOUT FOR TAXIS?

The **TomTom GO 300** satellite navigation device has been given approval by the PCO for use in licensed taxis. Linked to that, a Dial-a-Cab driver has asked **Call Sign** to alert drivers to a possible trend in opportunist SatNav thieves operating in the Camden Road / Parkhurst Road area.

While driving along Camden Road towards Parkhurst Road with 2 passengers in the back of his cab and the traffic at a crawl - even though it was around midnight - the driver noticed several youths walking alongside the traffic acting suspiciously. One of the youths came up to the driver's side of the taxi and made a grab for his SatNav! The driver grabbed the youth and the SatNav and a struggle ensued for about 20 metres or so at 10 mph.

Finally, the youth wriggled free and ran off. He was about 16 or 17 years old and white, while his accomplices were about the same age and black.

So drivers with SatNavs - or mobile phones for that matter - should be on their guard in this particular neighbourhood...



**The TomTom GO300 is now passed by the PCO make sure it remains yours...**



DaC driver **Paul Jenner (L19)** recently pointed out something to **Call Sign** that we hadn't noticed. In the December issue, we carried an article regarding a night out with the **Cab Enforcement** Section (TOCU) – more commonly known as the anti-tout squad.

We had been invited to accompany them while they looked for any signs of PH touting. The only request they made of us was for no flash photography. However, even without using a flash, the photography was clear enough for Paul to spot in one of the published photos that a car which had been stopped, had the **PCO/TfL** licence round in the back window. Paul wrote to Call Sign:

**"I noticed that in the rear screen was one of the PCO's Mickey Mouse licence discs. Is there any chance of a follow-up to see what happened to this miscreant and while you are at it, can you ask the PCO how many 'Licensed' minicab drivers have been reported for unlawfully plying for hire?"**

With Mayor Livingstone's 'know what you're getting into' campaign being of a fairly high profile, Paul suggested that the PCO would probably say that such data is either not recorded or was unavailable. However, Call Sign's experience with the PCO is that they do try to help with genuine queries.

But first, we checked with the Cab Enforcement Section and the driver Paul was referring to wasn't arrested, so it is unknown as to exactly what he was stopped for. In all fairness, he may have been just warned or possibly was really looking for his passenger. However, a representative of the tout squad told Call Sign after we showed them Paul's letter, that while they disclose to the PCO every conviction for taxi touting, they don't actually keep a record of those that are licensed.

But to give Call Sign some idea of the situation, of the 4 they had arrested over a recent



The photo in which Paul Jenner spotted the PCO/TfL roundel inset pic: Paul Jenner

two-night period, 3 were licensed or were driving licensed cars!

We then asked **Roy Ellis**, Head of the PCO, about the number of touts that had been in trouble with the PCO? He told us:

**"About 56% of touts to date have not been known to the PCO (ie they were not licensees or permit holders). About 44%, therefore, were known to us. Licensees and temporary permit holders can expect to**

**have their licence suspended for one month, but each case is considered on its merits and there are variations on this guideline. Sentencing by the courts is obviously variable, depending on the surrounding circumstances and what, if any, other offences are reported at the same time. Action known to us ranges from disqualifications of between 7 days and 18 months, points on licences, cautions and conditional discharge."**

What the above means is that almost half of all Private Hire drivers who are licensed, get into trouble for flouting the conditions of their licences. Certainly a very worrying series of events and one that shows how important **Brian Rice's** campaign to not allow PH cars to use signage is.

**Alan Fisher**

## Taxi Drivers Charity Football Match

**Sunday, 14<sup>th</sup> May 2006**

**East London Stadium (Mile End Park), Rhodeswell Road E14**

### The Seyhan Ali Memorial Cup

**Home Team: Fairway Vets**

-V-

**Away Team: Chelsea Diamond Vets**

**Generously sponsored by: Call Sign Magazine**

*Seyhan Ali was at the tender age of 14 when his brave battle with cancer finally came to an end in January 2005. Seyhan's father, Emin, has worked at M & H Taxis (known as Mehmet's) in Chapman St E1 for over 20 years and when a regular driver at the garage, (Stephen Powell), heard of Emin and his wife Sener's tragedy, he decided to raise money for cancer related charities by means of a football match in memory of Seyhan.*

*Stephen's team are mainly cab drivers and are appropriately named 'Fairway Vets'. All proceeds from the match will be divided between **Cancer Research UK** and **Make a Wish Foundation UK**.*

*Seyhan was very brave throughout his treatment and right to the end, Seyhan talked about helping people and often wished that a better treatment had been found for his illness. Seyhan and his family planned to raise as much money as they could for these causes when he was better. Sadly Seyhan never lived to see his wish - to help others in the same situation. Seyhan is dearly missed by his parents, brothers, family and friends. By helping to raise money for these charities you will be helping to ease the pain in the lives of other children with this life-threatening illness and hopefully make their wishes come true.*

**Donations are welcomed on the day or directly to [www.make-a-wish.org.uk](http://www.make-a-wish.org.uk) or [www.cancerresearchuk.org](http://www.cancerresearchuk.org)**

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Following several DaC terminal messages, a sudden proliferation of '2-T(onne) limit' signs and a police swoop on the south side of the bridge, it became obvious that licensed taxis had suddenly been banned from using **Albert Bridge** and that offenders would now receive tickets (for an as-yet undisclosed sum). **Call Sign** made a few enquiries...

According to the *Driver's Handbook*, the weight of the latest TXII is 5550 old style pounds, which equals just under 2.48 tons. So there can be no argument that we are over the 2-tonne limit (1000kg = 1tonne). If this weight restriction is going to be strictly adhered to, then it will mean that those going from South Kensington to Battersea and beyond by taxi will have to use an alternative bridge (Chelsea or Battersea), whilst private hire will still be able to use Albert Bridge. The minicab firm by the South Ken rank will no doubt be opening up bottles of R.Whites!

Albert Bridge is undoubtedly London's most picturesque bridge and after sunset, it livens up a rather dull section of the embankment. Following an increase in traffic, an 1864 Act of Parliament authorised the construction of a bridge in the area and after being beset with problems, it finally opened 9 years later. A further 5 years on and the *Metropolitan Board of Works* purchased both Albert and Battersea bridges and then in 1884, Sir Joseph Bazalgette strengthened and modernised Albert Bridge and incorporated a 5-ton weight limit on vehicles. For the following 60 years, the bridge was well maintained with few problems.

Following the end of World War II, Albert Bridge was deemed too weak to bear the increased weight of modern day traffic. When the old LCC announced that they intended to demolish Albert Bridge, poet Sir John Betjeman – whose main interest was in preserving old Victorian buildings and structures – led a huge outcry from fellow Chelsea conservationists. Between them, they overcame the town planners and the bridge was saved. As a result, Albert Bridge is the only central London bridge never to have been replaced – probably the reason we are in the current situation.

In 1973, two concrete piers were constructed under the main span to give the bridge added support, a new lighter deck was laid and the weight limit reduced to 2-tonnes. However, this is the first time since 5 March 1997 that the authorities have tried to ban taxis. On that occasion, representations from trade organisations – including **Dial-a-Cab** – managed to get fixed penalties overruled for those caught using Albert Bridge and an assurance that we could continue to use the bridge although the 2-tonne limit would not be changed.

But now, in 2006, a spokesperson at **Kensington and Chelsea Engineer's Department** – who are responsible for the bridge – told **Call Sign** that no vehicle over 2-tonnes "including passengers" will be able to use the bridge until such time as the Government or some other agency can provide the money needed to strengthen the bridge once again.

He went on to add: **"We have had structural engineers looking at the bridge and it is undoubtedly getting weaker. We did not want to ban taxis and understand the problems it could cause, but we have a responsibility to safeguard the bridge and that is why the 2-tonne limit is now being enforced - even though it has been in place since the 1970s. Even emergency vehicles such as fire engines**

# Taxis Banned From Using Albert Bridge!



**or ambulances will not be able to use Albert Bridge any more."**

We asked about the possibility of increasing the minimum weight to 2.5tonnes or to keep it at 2-tonnes "except for taxis?"

**"We are not picking on taxis,"** said the spokesperson, **"but our advice is that traffic over 2-tonnes in weight on a regular basis will cause even more problems."**

We asked LTI about the weight of previous vehicles and they were extremely helpful. However, their investigations showed that although the gross weight of the **Fairway** was indeed lighter – different engine and smaller doors etc – it still weighed over 2-tonnes. The **TX1** weight then increased with the **TXII** show-

ing a further increase.

And those with a Metrocab are no luckier – the fibreglass taxi weighing around the same as the TXII.

Perhaps the trade organisations will be able to either persuade the Government that Albert Bridge is an important crossing point because of the heavy numbers crossing between Chelsea and Battersea and put the money needed in for repairs, or just persuade K&C that we need access. But **Call Sign** fears that will only be possible if we finance our own structural examination – and that will not come cheap. The late Sir John Betjeman was a regular user of taxis. He would have been horrified at this latest development...

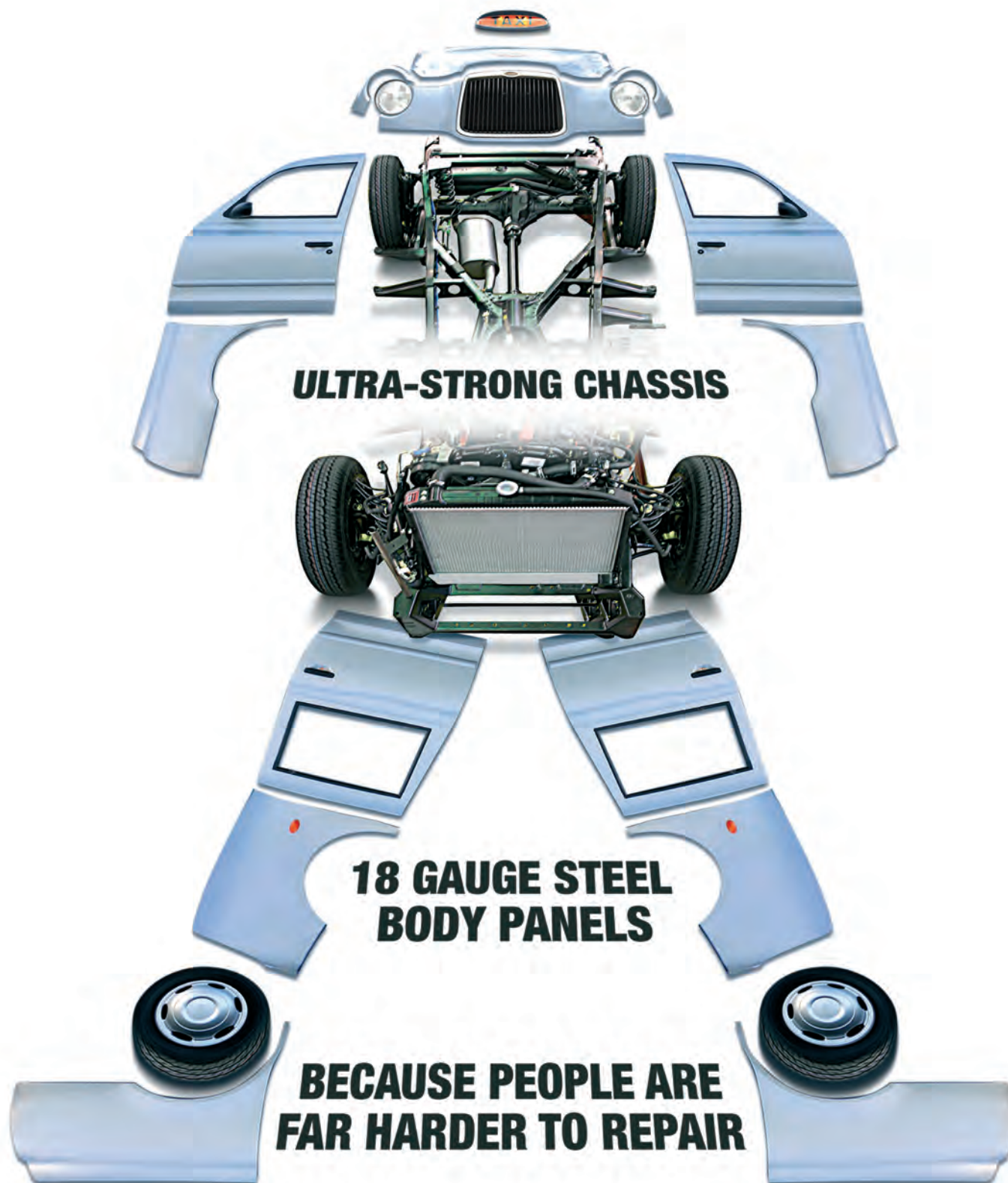
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# The DaC Driver and a Finnish Sign!

In late March, the Novotel London West – Hammersmith to us – saw a meeting between an international disability group (Disability Capital) and London Regional Transport.

One of the main speakers was someone who had come to London from Helsinki, Finland, especially to attend the meeting and give a talk on the transport system for the disabled in his homeland.

However, Call Sign's interest involves his arrival in the UK. He told his story to someone who specialises in signing for the deaf, Anna Constantinou. Anna has written for Call Sign in the past on problems that the deaf and hard-of-hearing come up against and passed this story over to us.

Whilst en route from the airport in a *Dial-a-Cab* taxi, the driver was chatting away to his Finnish passenger but obviously hadn't realised that his passenger was unable to hear him. As they neared the Novotel, they hit an horrendous traffic hold-up. By then, the driver had realised that his passenger was deaf, pulled over to the kerb, got out of the taxi and into the back to converse with his Finnish deaf customer. In his own way, the DaC driver was gesturing to him that it would be quicker walking - or taking a helicopter - but that he would also be just as happy to take him to the door!

The Finnish guest obviously appreciated the cab driver's advice and having just a travel bag, took his initial advice and walked the last part. Prior to the meeting, he told his story to Anna Constantinou and couldn't get over the delicate thoughtfulness of the driver. His view? London taxi drivers are the best!

As for Ms Constantinou, she told *Call Sign* of the problems of "signing" at a meeting with foreign guests.

"I have 'signed' for many meetings, but this one was slightly different. The signer nearest the platform signed in Finnish. Next to her was a signing translator who signed from Finnish into English and I then took his translation and signed to those that needed it. But believe me, there was almost as much talk about the DaC driver's kindness as there was about disability!"

***If you were that driver, please contact Call Sign...***



A British Sign Language (BSL) interpreter signing to a hearing impaired person

Ex-DaC driver Bob Woodford writes a regular column for Call Sign from his new home at Languedoc in France...

## Call Sign En La Belle France



### Beware rogue Estate Agents!

Having just watched a Channel 4 programme (I receive it via satellite) featuring an unfortunate woman who purchased a property in France only to find hidden beams riddled with termites, I can tell you that it does happen!

One of our American property owners has fallen victim to the old one-two thanks to an estate agent who has the termite inspection company 'in his pocket' to help push through a sale. After 3 years, we have got to know the agents to do business with and those happy to rip folk off. Mr Faro, in Pennsylvania, could face several years of legal wrangling now while his house could well collapse. All his summer bookings have already had to be switched to alternative venues. Mr Faro himself is prepared to stay at his own bug-friendly holiday home in May, despite my warnings of termites falling into his beard or even worse - biting his cobblers! Believe me, he won't stay there long!

We here at **South of France Lets** are compiling hard luck stories like this in an effort to warn property searchers that there are some dreadful types out here looking for victims. The same agent has sold 3 other properties, assuring buyers each time that they could build a terrace by lifting the roof off. But it all turns sour when they ask the local Town Hall for planning permission.

**Thinking of buying? Looking for a holiday home or retirement home? Let us 'mark your card' now that we know the ropes! Check out our websites and see what's on offer... [www.househuntingpropertysouthfrance.com](http://www.househuntingpropertysouthfrance.com) or [www.southoffrancelets.com](http://www.southoffrancelets.com)**

**Cordialement...**

**Bob Woodford (Ex-P49)**

**Saint Genies de Fontedit, Languedoc, France**

### Call Sign

**May 2006**

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## Joy riding

Recently a few of your London cabs have been introduced into taxi service in a few cities here in the USA. Whether they become the "replacement" for the old Check Marathon remains to be seen. Since Checker went out of business in the early 1980s none of the American manufacturers has come up with anything quite so functional as the old Checker for use as a taxi cab.

Checker had some limitations. I felt the air conditioner left much to be desired. We used to joke and call the air conditioning "4 and 40" - meaning all four windows open and drive forty miles an hour.

In the early 80s we had three Standard

## LTI Employees Raise £1000 For NSPCC



LTI employees recently participated in a golf tournament and raised £1000 for the *National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children* (NSPCC), having supported this charity on a regular basis throughout the 3-year life of the tournament. Response from staff and suppliers was extremely positive.

A total of 12 teams of four played in this year's competition with each paying an entry fee. The event was also supported by suppliers with sponsorship and prizes. It was open to all staff and took place at Staverton Park, Daventry, which has a challenging 18-hole golf course and driving range.

Margaret Hitchins of LTI Vehicles commented:

**"We are delighted to once again raise another four figure sum for the NSPCC to support their invaluable work with children at risk."**

The photo shows Lydia Warrillow (centre) of the NSPCC receiving the cheque from Margaret Hitchins and Rita Patel of LTI Vehicles.

Wendell White drives a taxi in Denver, Colorado. He is also a regular on-line reader and writes the occasional column for Call Sign...

# OUT & ABOUT IN DENVER



Poodles, and had entries in a local dog show. I was driving them to our groomer/handler so they could be bathed, clipped and prepared for showing that week-end. As the dogs were accustomed, the bitch was in the front seat with me and the two males were in the back seat - all three next to the open windows. We sat for a red light when a car stopped alongside us and I overheard the woman remark to the driver, "Look at those dogs in that taxi cab!"

I turned and said to her, "The dogs really enjoy riding and the lady who owns them has me take them for a two or three hour drive several times a week."

Fortunately the light turned green and I was able to drive away before I broke out laughing at the astonished and disgusted look on the lady's face at such an extravagance.

## "Not in my cab, you won't!"

Previously I mentioned the air conditioning for the old Checker cabs not being too effective. Open windows was a better solution.

One warm afternoon this young black lady was going across town to one of Denver's suburbs - a rather long ride. We were waiting at a stop light when I turned and asked if she'd mind if I had a cigarette.

"Go for it," she consented.

I thanked her and lit up. Long after I'd discarded the butt of the cigarette, we were waiting at another stop light.

"Driver," she asked, "Is it ok if I smoke in your cab?"

Turning to look in her face, I replied, "Not in my cab, you don't!"

Her eyes were wide open, her mouth dropped, and I could just imagine her cussing me out mentally and wanting to mention she had consented to my smoking. Then when I broke out laughing she realised I was joking. The incident made her a regular customer who called me frequently for taxi trips.

Wendell White

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**Contact Andy (P32) on 07904 091278 or 07932 960350**

That is exactly what **Brian Tredler (D79)** is and has to be. Having been diagnosed with Myeloma, a type of bone marrow cancer, he was determined to improve his chances of surviving the disease by remaining 'totally focussed' throughout the long course of treatment.

Brian takes up the story:

**"It all started with, quite literally, a chip on my shoulder after a ski-ing accident in January 2004,"** he told Call Sign. **"The Austrian consultant was not happy with the way things had gone and told me to seek specialist help immediately upon my return to the UK, where a blood test revealed I had Myeloma, cancer of the blood cells. This is where there are too many white cells, which then eat away at the red cells."**

Brian continued: **"I was quickly referred to a specialist unit at the Whittington Hospital and underwent heavy doses of chemotherapy lasting four months. During the chemo, every strand of hair on your body falls out leaving you looking and feeling like a plucked chicken,"** he laughed recalling the memory that was far from pleasant at the time!

**"I also needed a stem-cell transplant to sort out my red cells. This was done at the UCH in Gower Street and under an arrangement with the nearby Grafton Hotel called 'ambulatory care stay', I attended the hospital daily for blood to be taken and cryogenically stored until I was fit enough to have the transplant. The first course was unsuccessful, so I returned to the UCH and underwent the whole procedure again,"** he mused.

Brian described in graphic detail how his blood was withdrawn from one arm and the treated blood returned to his body through the other. The daily checks on his blood and chemo levels were monitored on what he referred to as his 'Walkman' machine. As he moved around attached to the medical marvel, passers-by would ask if he was 'wired for sound' - a reference to the 1980's Cliff Richard hit.

**"There were times of great physical pain, times when I felt really ill and unable to eat or drink,"** he told us. **"My immune system was at its weakest and I had round-the-clock nursing. When your immune system is at 5%, there is a good chance that you could die,"** he added, **"but slowly my immunity built up with high protein drinks and milk-shakes."**

Brian told Call Sign how his steady improvement raised his physical and mental elation and how he was advised by nursing staff to remain 'totally focussed' on a dream, something to look forward to when his treatment was completed.

**"I do not wish to sound selfish, but my achievable goal was to survive and ski again and that's what kept me going. Even my family came second in that equation,"** he recalled. Brian did quickly admit though

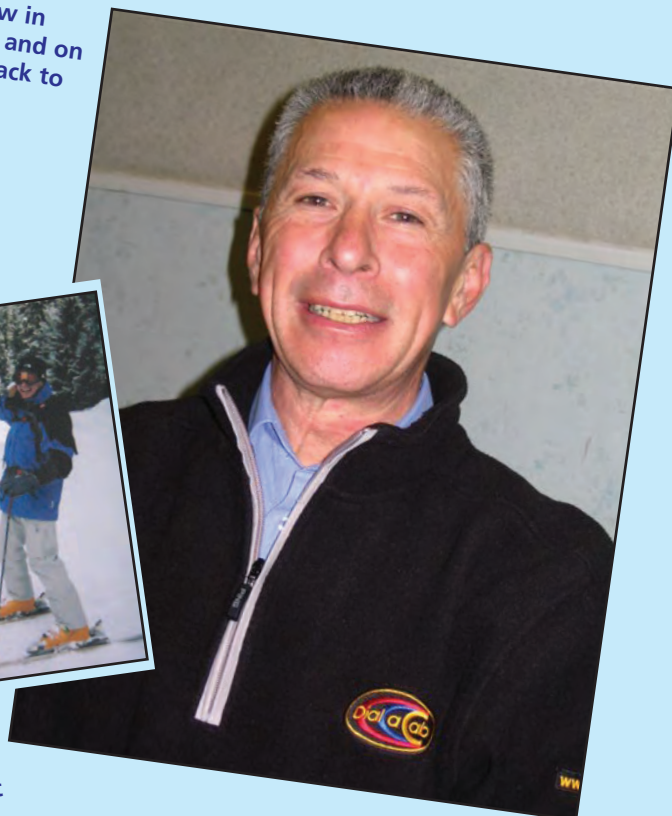
***When you are told that you have a life-threatening illness, it needs a response that is going to give every chance of survival. This is how DaC driver Brian Tredler survived Myeloma...***

# TOTALLY FOCUSSED!

Brian now in remission and on his way back to normality



Back on the ski slopes that he set as his target



that wife Frankie and children Daniel, Nicky and Rachel had been great supporters, as had his close friends.

**"I would also like to acknowledge the efforts of Professor Parker at the Whittington and my medical team at the**

**UCH for all their help."** said Brian. **"I've been on Dial-a-Cab for 28 years and now look forward to many more,"** he said with a broad grin!

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## Don't Miss the Private Hire and Taxi Exhibition!

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Ricoch Arena, Phoenix Way, Foleshill, Coventry**



Every issue of Call Sign takes a look back at ODRTS history through the pages of the magazines of the time with a...

# Dial-a-Cab Flashback

Flashback  
1997

This month's Flashback goes back to Christmas 1997, a time when few DaC drivers were on the Internet and Call Sign's Vince Chin set up only the world's second taxi chat list...

From Call Sign,  
December 1997

## WELCOME TO DISCUSS!

On Wednesday 12<sup>th</sup> November 1997, I created the UK's first taxicab discussion forum / list on the Internet. It's also a first for any taxi trade in Europe. Worldwide only the Americans have beaten us! I'll give a brief introduction on how it will operate...

A discussion list operates by email. When you subscribe to a discussion list, your email address is added to all the other subscribers. To actually take part in a discussion, you

send an email to [discuss@taxicab.co.uk](mailto:discuss@taxicab.co.uk). Everyone who is subscribed will then receive that email. This all happens instantaneously, so if you're sitting at home in front of the PC, you could have a live, open discussion with like-minded taxi drivers. Taxicab.co.uk's very first thread of discussion was - surprise, surprise - Dial-a-Cab's flotation.

What I'm trying to attempt in this discussion list, is to unite the trade by giving all trade organisations the ability to talk under an impartial moderator. Naive maybe, but I had to try it. Since I belong to no organisation other than the Company of Hackney Carriage Drivers, I feel I'm in the ideal position to moderate the list. When I say moderate, I don't mean restricting individuals opinions, I mean coming into a discussion when it seems to be getting out of control or when someone is being flamed (verbal abuse, swearing etc). Other than that, I'll stay well away from the content...

## Jaw rather than war?

We all know that in this trade of ours, we're

constantly at each other throats, maybe creating this discussion list will encourage more Jaw-Jaw rather than War-War - as Winston Churchill famously said. There is no cost involved in subscribing, it is provided totally free of charge to our trade, but to subscribe you must fulfil certain requirements.

These mandatory requirements are that you must not be related in any way or form to the Private Hire industry or to unlicensed minicabs. You must also be one of the following: A Knowledge boy or girl, a Licensed Hackney Carriage driver, a Taxi manufacturer or a Taxi trade supplier of goods/services.

So if you know anyone that fits these requirements, please tell them to visit our taxicab website and to subscribe.

Vince Chin  
Call Sign online

# Want Help With Your Parking Ticket?

Most Dial-a-Cab drivers know that if presented with a PCN whilst on a DaC trip, the fine will be paid should the *appeal* fail. But what if you get caught when out shopping with your wife?

DaC driver **David Baker (S07)** has told **Call Sign** of a very interesting website that provides assistance should you find yourself in that situation.

The site is at **[www.appealnow.com](http://www.appealnow.com)** and according to David, it takes a bit of navigating around to find what you want but **[appealnow.com](http://www.appealnow.com)** have discovered that all Westminster parking tickets that were issued within a certain period are illegal because they do not comply with one of the Road Traffic Acts.

**"It is just a technicality,"** said David, **"but a valid one nonetheless. They should have a date of issue as well as a date of offence on both the ticket and the tear off slip, however some Westminster PCNs do not and that makes them void."**

There is a one-off fee of £7.95, but for that, the site guides you through the whole appeal process in minutes to help you in your challenge against the ticket. They are not always successful, but do have an excellent success rate.

According to the website, local authorities are increasingly using the fixed penalty and parking ticket system to raise money. Gone are the days, they claim, when parking tickets were used to keep the traffic flowing - they are now a major money-spinner and with that commercialism comes the increasing likelihood that a parking ticket is issued unfairly, incorrectly or illegally.

Barrie Segal, **[AppealNow.com](http://www.appealnow.com)**'s founder and an acknowledged authority on parking tickets in the UK, estimates that as many as 5 million parking tickets per annum could be illegal and unenforceable.

More people than ever before are lodging appeals (appeals are 30% up year-on-year in London alone) and 63% of all appeals are upheld by the parking adjudicator and the chances are that your parking ticket can be appealed.

That's **[www.appealnow.com](http://www.appealnow.com)**. Write it down now...





# Selling DaC with Lydia

How time flies! It's hard to believe that it has been over four years since I joined this fine establishment and almost as long since I have been writing for **Call Sign**. Looking back at the reports I've written, it's amazing to see how things have changed in this industry and no doubt, will continue to do so... Having our best month in the history of the company back in November 2005, I can report that March was hot on its heels - which tells us what a very busy time it has been. I was delighted to see that we have advertised for new drivers, given the new accounts that have recently come on board and the ones we will be announcing shortly - just watch this space! As Sales Manager for Dial-a-Cab, I believe this to be a very exciting time for us and I would like to thank all drivers for their continued support.

I know you are aware how hard Natalie and I work to develop accounts from cold calling to going live, it can be a very laborious task and I, like you, would not suffer losing an account over service very easily! But as Natalie often remarks - just as does BT - they always come back!

There have been many promises made to our customers by other companies and more often than not, it becomes clear that they are empty ones. It's one thing to talk the talk, but quite another to actually walk the walk! Unlike many companies, we do not make empty promises and it does not surprise us to see the demise of some companies and partnerships over the past four years.

## Minding our business...

I reported back in 2004 about *minding our business*. I asked you not to discuss any new accounts and to treat our business with respect and care. When we win new business, we must be mindful that this is a sensitive area.

The tagging of new accounts for a one-month period has worked extremely well and has been supported whole-heartedly by all you wonderful DaC drivers. I have also made reference in the past to how crucial and important it is to remember that we operate in

the service industry. This is again a time to remember how important covering account work is to our business.

The market place has continued to be very competitive, however with the decisions and initiatives that we have made, we've been able to stay ahead of our competitors. We realise we have learnt many valuable lessons during that period, lessons our competitors will still have to learn for themselves, but we must stay ahead of those competitors and support our business. I would ask you all to continue to maintain the highest level of service.

I believe that the next few years will incorporate the *survival of the fittest*. If we were competing in the Olympics right now, we would be coming away with Gold medals. We must sustain that standard and stay ahead of the race. And between us all, that is exactly what we will do...

*See you soon...*

**Lydia Foulkes**  
DaC Sales Manager

## Emissions D-Day Draws Near

***It seems that the new emission regulations brought in by PCO / TfL under guidance from the Mayor's office are beyond the point of no return. If that is the case, then the following are the dates that you should remember:***

### Phase 1

All pre-Euro or Euro 1 taxis (except for Metrocabs) will be required to meet the **Euro 3** emission standard when presented for passing from **1 July 2006**. That applies to all LTI taxis first registered prior to **16 September 1998**...

### Phase 2

All Euro 2 taxis (except for Metrocabs) will be required to meet the Euro 3 emission standard when presented for passing from **1 July 2007**. That applies to all LTI taxis first registered between **16 September 1998** and **1 February 2002**...

### Metrocabs

You will have read in the **March Call Sign** that there had not yet been any solutions for Metrocabs that had been adequately tested or approved in time for the commencement of Phase 1 of the strategy. A revised timetable for the **Metrocab only** has been agreed. This means that as of **1 July 2007**, any Metrocab that is of pre-Euro, Euro 1 or Euro 2 standard will, when presented for its annual licensing inspection, be required to have either PCO / EST approved emissions reduction equipment fitted or an approved conversion to run on alternative fuels as a requirement of licensing. It is expected that a choice of new technology will be available to Metrocab owners by that time.

**No taxi of any type will be licensed after 30 June 2008 unless it is Euro 3 emission level or better.**



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**Call Sign** has received an horrific report from Dial-a-Cab driver, Brian Dust (B25), concerning an attack in Camden on a friend of his, former DaC driver Gary Tisshaw.

Gary was driving along Camden High Street towards Chalk Farm station with a passenger on board. As he reached Camden Lock, a man walked into the road. Gary – who was on DaC for 7 years – continues the story:

**“As I got closer to him, he went further into the middle of the road so I had to go round him. As I did so, he hit the cab. I pulled up a few yards past him and as soon as I did, there were three men around the cab. The one who was in the middle of the road was on the driver’s side and trying to open my door, which I always have locked. Then another appeared and stood by my window - which was half open. The two men began arguing with me and kept trying to open my door. They wanted me to get out and sort this out with them, something I refused to do.”**

Gary continued: **“This went on for a few minutes. I then decided to pull away as it was getting nasty, my passenger was getting scared and I feared for my safety. As I started to pull away, the man who had been standing in the road put his hand through the win-**

# ***Horrific Attack on former DaC Driver***



**Now Gary has to undergo plastic surgery after his nose was almost severed in the attack**

**dow and I thought he had punched me on the nose. As I passed the railway bridge, I felt a burning feeling across my face, it was then that I realised that I had been cut across my face. My nose**












**had been cut mid-way up and was hanging off and my right cheek had been cut. I pulled up by the petrol station and my passenger took over, getting out the back of the cab to help me and calling the emergency services.**

**We waited for what seemed ages before anyone turned up, but after a few more calls to them, the police were first on the scene. Soon after, the ambulance turned up by which time I had lost almost three pints of blood. I was told by the police that the three men had been arrested. I was then taken to the Royal Free Hospital where I spent three days.”**

Gary now faces extensive plastic surgery to rebuild my nose. If you saw the attack or remember three black youths arguing with a taxi driver, please contact Kentish Town police.

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**David Marks spotted the article in Motor Cycle News**

Dial-a-Cab driver **David Marks (R22)** has showed Call Sign a remarkable article taken from cycling monthly, **Motor Cycle News (MCN)**. If true, this could have a huge impact on any speeding offences and, according to the article, help to get any charges dropped via a legal technicality.

Whilst there is the probability of a High Court appeal to block this loophole, MCN claims that police forces throughout the UK are currently dropping cases when this technicality is used.

What is apparently happening is that following the receipt of the Notice of Intended Prosecution (NIP), those accused of speeding are replying with a specially worded response. This is because when someone is questioned regarding any offence – be it in person or via a form – they should first receive a formal caution and a camera can give no caution.

Even if the police were to visit any “offenders” home, it would then be too late as only statements given after that time would be eligible in court and a caution would allow the accused to remain silent.

According to MCN, after receiving the NIP, you will be asked who was driving the vehicle. If you agree that you were the person, you fill out the form and add “see attached letter,” which you should return with the NIP. The letter, designed by road traffic lawyer Robert Dobson, complies with the road traffic act (section 172) by identifying the driver. It is called the PACE Witness Statement. Because no caution was given, even though the receiver of the NIP is admitting being the driver, that statement cannot then be used against them.

If true, many taxi drivers could owe their licenses to Motor Cycle News, to whom we are grateful for this information. If any DaC driver uses the above letter, please let **Call Sign** know the outcome...

# Can This Loophole Save Your Licence?

**The Letter to return with the NIP:**

*Insert police reference no here*

*Insert your registration number here*

**Dear Chief Constable**

Further to the above notice of intended prosecution, I confirm that the following individual was driving the above vehicle at the time of the alleged motoring offence:

*(Insert all of the details asked for on the NIP here, including name, address, date of birth and driver number).*

As this statement is provided under threat of criminal penalty (Funka v France) and as I have not received the caution required by paragraph 10.1 of PACE Code C (Mawdesley, the Chief Constable of Cheshire (2004) 1 ALL E.R.58), I make this statement on the express understanding that it shall not be used or disclosed in any proceedings of whatever nature against myself.

**Yours sincerely**

*Insert signature here*

*Insert your name in print here*

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# LTFUC DONATE SPECIAL BOAT FOR AHOY CENTRE

The London Taxidriver's Fund for Underprivileged Children held the official launch of a specially equipped boat for disabled young people that the Fund have donated to the **Adventure Help and Opportunities for Youth (Ahoy)** centre on Wednesday 12th April. The cost to the Fund was in excess of £11,000.

Ahoy had originally made a grant application to the LTFUC for £1,282 in order that they could purchase some specific equipment for disabled people to use in their crafts on the River Thames. The equipment enables people with even the most severe physical disabilities to sail.

**Ray Levy**, the LTFUC press officer told *Call Sign* that they were very impressed with what they found out about Ahoy and decided to fund the cost of a new complete and specially equipped boat.

**"We are pleased to say that our official logo is on the mast of the boat,"** said Ray.

The Fund's Hon Chairman **David Lessman (D19)** and several committee members attended the launch. Mandy Corcoran, Development Manager at the Centre thanked the Fund, saying how much pleasure the boat would give the children. Also in attendance was Councillor Pauline Morrison, Chair of Social Inclusion Select Committee of Lewisham Council, who praised the work the Fund does.

The main aim of Ahoy is to ensure that the centre is open to everyone and in particular focuses on the young, disadvantaged and those with disabilities. They particularly try to include disadvantaged young and disabled people in their programmes. Learning how to sail and becoming part of a club can help build self-esteem and confidence in those young people that are at risk.

As usual, the charity makes us all proud to be cab drivers...



Part of the LTFUC Committee that presented the boat AHOY; the DaC trio of (L-R) Gerry Dunn (S84) Sim Yiannikaris (E53) and David Lessman (D19)

## Time Out...

### LONDON FOR LONDONERS

**Time Out London for Londoners** (Ebury Press £12.99) is the ultimate guide to the capital that tourists don't see. Borough by borough, it gives you an honest, straight-forward assessment of what life is like as a Londoner and contains everything you'll need to know about your neighbourhood, your borough, your city.

**London for Londoners** tells it like it is. Written by resident experts who know the city inside out and presented in Time Out's customary frank style, this guide offers the very best writing and cutting-edge information for those who live in the capital.

Sarah Guy, the series editor, told *Call Sign*:

**"Despite what some people may assume, Londoners feel a real sense of identity with their own neighbourhood. We tell it like it is for the thousands of people who are happy to make London their home."**

**Time Out London for Londoners** has the edge when it comes to finding out about the different London boroughs and their intricacies; the people who live there; the hippest haunts and the dingy dives; the places to eat, drink, shop and play; the borough's hidden treasures and the little irritations.

Each borough chapter includes summaries of the areas highs and lows; the local's point of view; stats including crime, housing stock, population breakdown and council tax; the pick of the restaurants, bars, pubs, cafes and shops; school low-down and a parent's view; what the agents say and property prices; transport information, parks and open spaces; arts, music and sport facilities; PLUS full-colour maps and hundreds of essential phone numbers and websites!

From Redbridge to Richmond, this is an indispensable guide like no other. **Time Out London for Londoners** is the essential handbook for anyone who lives - or wants to live - in London...



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# DaC Driver's Son Takes Flag at Brands Hatch!

Kevin Molyneux (B20) probably doesn't know it, but he has one of the most famous call signs on Dial-a-Cab – the one formerly used by the late Johnny Saunders. But one thing Kevin does know is that he is rightly proud of his son Tom's achievement in the world of PGAC Motorsport.

Tom's most recent success was at Brands Hatch. Thirty-three cars lined up on the grid with Tom in the front row having qualified as second fastest. From the beginning, Tom went straight into the lead and kept it until an accident on lap two caused the race to be halted. Following the restart, Tom retook the lead and won by ten lengths.

This is Tom Molyneux's second year in the **Yokohama 750** motor club stock hatch championship and dad Kevin travels with him to most of major race circuits throughout the summer. The championship is for 1600 hatchbacks, Fiestas and Saxos etc.

Following Tom's great win at Brands Hatch, Kevin told *Call Sign*:

**"He did really well. Even though the stoppage caused some irritation, it was plain to see that from the restart there was only going to be one winner – and that was Tom! Mind you,"** Kevin continued, **"he gets all the excitement and I get all the spanner work!"**

Tom has been involved in Motorsport for four years, but it seems to have been in his blood for much longer. At the age of fifteen, he competed in Ford's Rally Academy Championship and followed that with a year in Autograss before moving into Stockhatch – which is where he is now.

**"It's really good fun,"** said Kevin, **"but only if you don't mind sleeping in the back of a van!"**

And how does Kevin drive his taxi after watching his son being successful at Brands Hatch?

**"The PCO weren't sure about the big number 23 I wanted on the side of the cab, but said a definite 'no' to me wearing a crash helmet in case it put passengers off!"**



Tom contemplates how he wants the race to go



Dad Kevin giving last minute instructions



Ready to go - and on his way to a win.  
Photos courtesy Jamie Rose



It was Friday 31 March and former staff member Tracy Morland was having a small leaving party at the pub next door to Brunswick House (see elsewhere in this issue).

Among those saying goodbye was DaC Chairman, Brian Rice, who presented her with a bouquet of flowers.

Nothing unusual in that, but when Brian left the Three Crowns to make his regular trip to Waterloo around 2 hours later than usual, he first had to go back to his Brunswick House office to collect his briefcase.

He entered the building, said hello to Francis, the new guard who had just began his shift and pushed the door to the canteen that leads to the rest of the building. The only problem came when Brian pushed the door, but the guard would not release the catch.

"Can I go through, please," said Brian politely.

"No, you can't just walk in here," replied the guard. "Who are you," he said, "I don't know you?"

According to a witness, Brian looked rather stunned. He looked for his pass but couldn't find it as no one over the past 10 years had ever asked him who

# DaC Security Guard To Brian Rice:

**"Who are you? You can't come in here...!"**



Francis, DaC evening security guard

he was!

"If you do not have a pass, then you cannot come into this building," said Francis exercising his authority.

Brian's only hope was that Francis would accept his business card that shows his name and position under the DaC logo. Fortunately for the Chairman's blushes, he did. Was the Chairman irritated?

"Not in the slightest," Brian told Call Sign the following day, "I'm delighted to know that we have a security guard who takes the position seriously. He was doing his job exactly as he should have been. He isn't usually working when I leave, so why should he have known me."

Call Sign spoke to Francis who, although slightly embarrassed, said that if he doesn't know the person and they don't have a pass, he will not let them through.

"I take my position seriously," he said.

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TW8	CAMBERFIELD TAXIS
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HA8	EDGWARE CAB COMPANY
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EN3	- Enfield Taxis	020 8804 5241
TW8	- Camberfield Taxis	020 8568 9643
SS7	- Just Taxis	012 6879 5895
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# Arbitrators Election

**The following CVs were received for inclusion in Call Sign by the closing date of Tuesday 18 April. They have been published as much as possible in the format they were sent and are displayed in alphabetical order. Voting forms will be posted shortly. There are 4 vacancies...**

## Stuart Benjamin (B10)

My name is Stuart Benjamin (B10). I first joined ODRTS (Lords) in 1971 as D96. I rejoined Dial-a-Cab in 1989 and at this time I am a fully paid up member. To this date, I have never been before a Complaints Committee.

I seek election to become an Arbitrator because I strongly feel the present system is too severe. I am a firm believer in the suspended sentence system and financial punishment ie fines being donated to cab trade charities rather than the present system in most cases. I also believe that giving a person a second chance will make them a more responsible person, especially if they have served the company well in the past.

Thank you for taking the time to read this.

**Stuart Benjamin**

## Grant Davis (L39)

My name is Grant Davis. I have been a cab driver for some 16 years of which 10 have been on Dial-a-Cab. In addition, I have been a member of the LCDC for 15 years and have served on that committee for 5 years.

I see my future as a Licensed Taxi Driver with Dial-a-Cab. I want to make sure it remains a successful mutual Society that is the envy of the taxi trade. And a part of that success comes from maintaining professional standards of conduct. I want to play my part in the Society, and believe I have the experience, the commitment and the independence of mind to make a real contribution as an Arbitrator.

**Grant Davis**

## Patricia Ann Graves (L53)

I grew up in Bloomsbury, therefore have a passion for London and all its traditions. When I first left school, I worked in investment accounts in the City until getting married. I then spent the next ten years of my life bringing up my family of four. When my children became more independent, I wished to re-train and get back into the workplace. I chose to become a black cab driver for two reasons; firstly, it would give me flexibility to work and keep a close eye on family matters and also because I both knew and loved London.

I have been a licensed taxi driver for the past sixteen years and have thoroughly enjoyed it; for the past fourteen years I have been with Dial-a-Cab. Working as a taxi driver has brought me to many different places, people and situations. I have not only worked as a driver, but also worked as a teacher at Knowledge Point, a job which I took very seriously and which has given me a lot of skills

including patience, working as a team and the ability to listen to people as well as talk. I feel that my time of teaching was a great success, as in fact two of my past pupils have since become examiners at the PCO.

At present, I also work as a Marshal, usually at Deutsche Bank in the evenings. This work obviously brings me back into touch with my peer group once again, helping me to gain insight into developing strategies to deal with any problems and difficulties, also using initiative and at times, working under pressure.

I presently belong to the Worshipful Company of Hackney Carriage Drivers and am also a Livery Woman of the Company. I think that this, and all of the above, displays both my commitment and passion about our trade and how it is represented. I feel that not only my experience of work, but also my people skills and sense of fairness would contribute greatly to the position of Arbitrator and I would welcome the opportunity to work successfully in this capacity for the benefit of both Dial-a-Cab and also its members.

**Patricia Ann Graves**

## Alan Green (E52)

My name is Alan Green (E52) and I am standing for election as an Arbitrator. I have been on Dial-a-Cab for 34 years now and I care passionately about our Society and the professional image we project to our clients at all times, an image envied by others in our industry. I have served on numerous Complaints Meetings and have always striven to be fair, firm, honest and consistent in my judgements. I have always conferred fully with my fellow panellists to bring about a result that can be seen to have achieved justice for all parties. That is, the complainant feels the matter has been dealt with properly and the defendant (driver) feels that they too have been treated with fairness and respect.

In my time at DaC, I have not had any complaints lodged against me, but I understand how easy it is to fall foul of the very high standards we have set ourselves and so, if elected, I look forward to serving as an Arbitrator with both impartiality and common sense while maintaining the good name of Dial-a-Cab that we have all worked so hard

for over the years.

Fellow subscribers, I seek your vote.

**Alan Green**

## Melvin Green (E55)

My name is Melvin Green (E55). I am aged 59 and have been a full-time taxi driver for 33 years, of which 31 have been on Dial-a-Cab. I believe that this experience will make me a suitable Arbitrator for the Society.

**Melvin Green**

## Barry Groner (V30)

Why you should vote for me as an Arbitrator? I have been with Dial-a-Cab for over five years during which time I have served the role as a New Driver Trainer. This position was given to me by the current Board of management. I had served a similar position with one of our competitor's circuits. The position there also extended to problem-solving and Marshalling at one of their prestigious clients during the bedding-in period of their new GPS system. A situation I handled well...

Since working at Dial-a-Cab, I have watched our V6 Data Dispatch systems redevelop. I have been used as a guinea pig, testing each upgrade before it went live. This is the correct procedure to adopt.

Our system is very complex. It is amazing how much information is stored on a driver during their active signed-on period, so much so that I, as a driver with so much system knowledge, have to abide by the rules even more than most.

All new subscribers that are trained by me, receive a full guided tour of our Data Despatch system and are made aware of its tracking capabilities. I have been reliably informed by our in house Trainer, Darren, that since these methods have been adopted, the number of complaints involving new drivers are well down. This is pleasantly reassuring.

I would therefore like you the membership, to consider me as one of your choices so that I can assist the already current sitting Arbitration panel make decisions that continue to benefit the Society.

**Barry Groner**

*(continued on page 23)*

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## Arbitrators Election

(continued from p22)

### Michael Harris (F79)

My name is Michael Harris (F79) and next January I will have been on ODRTS for 30 years continuously. I would like to be considered for the position of Arbitrator as I feel that having been a Marshal for something like 8 or 9 years, I have had a lot of experience in dealing with many of the daily problems that our members face.

I think that I have always been fair and even-handed when marshalling at late 'shouts' at stations or the many and varied Xmas events, including Battersea Park - plus, of course, the regular marshalling at Morgan Stanley etc.

I think that all of this experience would enable me to make a fair and reasoned decision at any time that Arbitrators would be needed to make a judgement.

For those who may support me in my application, many thanks.

**Michael Harris**

### David Jeferies (K37)

I have been a licensed London Taxi Driver for 37 years, of which 23 years have been as a member of ODRTS (Dial-a-Cab). During that time, I worked in the Control Room for 2 years dispatching on Friday evenings.

I have during the past 6 years been involved with the Credit Union, first in a supervisory capacity and then as a Board member. I left the Credit Union during 2004 and have recently returned again in a supervisory capacity.

My reasons for applying for the position of Arbitrator are a keen interest in our Society and its members. During my years as a cab driver, I have encountered numerous situations and feel that this experience, along with maturity, will make me an honest and fair person to hold such a position.

**David Jeferies**

### Pat Keefe (G01)

Let me introduce myself. My name is Pat Keefe, call sign Grey One. I have been driving a cab full-time since the summer of 1971, joined ODRTS at Shirland Road W9 in the following year of 1972 and have remained with this circuit unbroken to this day. So I'm of the old school who can remember the days of voice despatch and the camaraderie that went with such halcyon days.

If voted in, I have the experience and judgement to be as fair and as neutral as possible. It's easy to say our rules are set in stone, I don't believe that for one moment. One has to use discretion where you have a conflict when a passenger has upset you or visa versa.

In cabbage, everyone seems all too ready to believe a passenger's complaint against you. They have the PCO, the police and Ken Livingstone all too willing to believe them. They must be right, they're the public! You're only the cab driver, the minions at their service. I for one - although you should never say never - would find it hard to go against a cab driver's word or against a single passenger's word without a third party to back them up. Lets face it, they can't do it in a court of law, so why can they do it to you and me? Our word should be treated

just as truthful and honourable as the public we drive around.

I hope we don't have to cross paths in any official capacity.

Thanks for listening...

**Pat Keefe**

### Laurence

### Kelvin (W88)

I have been a member of Dial-a-Cab since 1978, or "Lords" as it was known in those days. I must have struck lucky first time and have never felt any need to try another circuit since the volume and quality of work has been consistently high. The efficiency and helpfulness of all the staff should be recognised and must be partly due to the leadership and recruitment policy of the Board members.

I have sat on the Complaints Committee when requested about five times over the last six years. This is an important part of our organisation as it gives drivers, who own and ultimately choose the way the Society is run, the reassurance to see that Board members do not pick unfairly on any individual. I have always tried to listen and weigh up the evidence and consider what would be in the best interests of Dial-a-Cab. Often this has meant suspending or even expelling a member; not an easy role, but unfortunately necessary at times when actions by some drivers harm the reputation of Dial-a-Cab or are against the interest of other members. It is because we have this system in place that our Society is seen to be the fairest one in London.

If chosen as an arbitrator, I will try to maintain the standards that have been built up over the last 50 years.

**Laurence Kelvin**

### David Lessman (D19)

I have been licensed as a taxi driver for well

over 30 years and have been on radio for most of that period. I have subscribed to Dial-a-Cab since May 1995 and was very honoured to be allocated the call sign of D19, the previous holder being past-Chairman Jack Taylor. I have previously sat on the Complaints Committee, although I have never appeared before it.

I joined the committee of the London Taxidriers' Fund for Underprivileged Children in 1985 and after serving as Treasurer for 10 years, I took the Chair from 1998 till 2001. I am currently serving a second term of office as Chairman. I have taken the title 'London Taxi Driver of the Year' on three occasions and I am a Freeman of both the City of London and the Worshipful Company of Hackney Carriage Drivers.

I believe my standing within the trade is good and that I am worthy of being a fair judge of my fellow subscribers, should the need arise.

**David Lessman**

### Ronnie Marlow (L81)

\* I joined Dial-a-Cab in 1985, 1 year after obtaining my licence.

\* I have been a Dial-a-Cab Marshal for 5 years, representing the Society at many prestigious events.

\* I have served on the Complaints Committee on several occasions over the last 6 years.

\* I have been and I am currently testing our new age radio equipment, including the touch screen and GPS systems.

\* In a voluntary capacity, I have experience in charring committees in the field of welfare/pastoral care.

\* My experience working with the Board of management and you, my co-Dial-a-Cab subscribers, gives me the ideal insight into the Society in order for me to serve as an arbitrator.

**Ronnie Marlow**

(continued on page 24)

# The Cock Inn Stock

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SKY  
TV

Sunday  
Carvery

Come to our lovely Essex village and try the menu  
from our award winning chef  
Vic is a former Dial-a-cab driver

## Arbitrators Election

(continued from p23)

### Sid Nathan (K88)

I would like to be an arbitrator for Dial-a-Cab. I have been on the circuit since its Lords days - over 37 years - and have always been a keen radio man. I have never been put on complaint, however I have sat on the Complaints Committee many times and I know all the procedures. I have the ability to look at a complaint from both sides and many drivers know that I am a fair person as I speak from my heart - especially at AGMs.

If you give me your support, I will endeavour to do my best and promise to be fair to both sides as I have a lot of experience and am always for the driver.

**Sid Nathan**

### John Rothery (F65)

#### Skills profile:

Taxi driver for 38 years.

Dial a Cab subscriber for over 35 years.

Worked both day and night shift.

Qualified as City of London and Blue Badge Tourist guide.

Experienced in all aspects of the Taxi trade.

#### Work history:

Chairman of London Taxi Guides Ltd. demonstrating objectivity and fairness.

Member of London Taxi Guides Ltd responsible for Sales.

Developed marketing strategy for the company. Dealt with all aspects of the day-to-day operation of the company.

Why I would be suitable for this post. As a DaC subscriber for over 35 years with an unblemished record, I have been fortunate to develop my knowledge of and experience of the standards of behaviour and service expected by our members.

As a member of London Taxi Guides Ltd, my role allowed me a valuable insight into the day-to-day operational challenges within a company.

I feel that I have the personal qualities that would enable me to make clear, informed and reasoned judgements based on the expectations and standards of behaviour that the society has worked so hard to build.

Thank you for taking the time to consider my application.

**John Rothery**

### Dave Willett (T27)

I would like to be considered as an Arbitrator.

I am married and have 3 children of 22, 16 and 13. I have been a cab driver for 23 years and on the Dial-a-Cab circuit for 15 years.

My main interest is football and I coach my youngest son's team. I have also completed many courses in coaching and am currently doing the 'A' Licence and training to be an Educator so that I can put youngsters through their coaching badges at weekends.

I am fair, open-minded and a good listener. I am fully aware and understand the stresses, strains, highs and lows of being a cab driver.

**Dave Willett**

# PARKING AT THE CENTRAL OFFICE OF INFORMATION

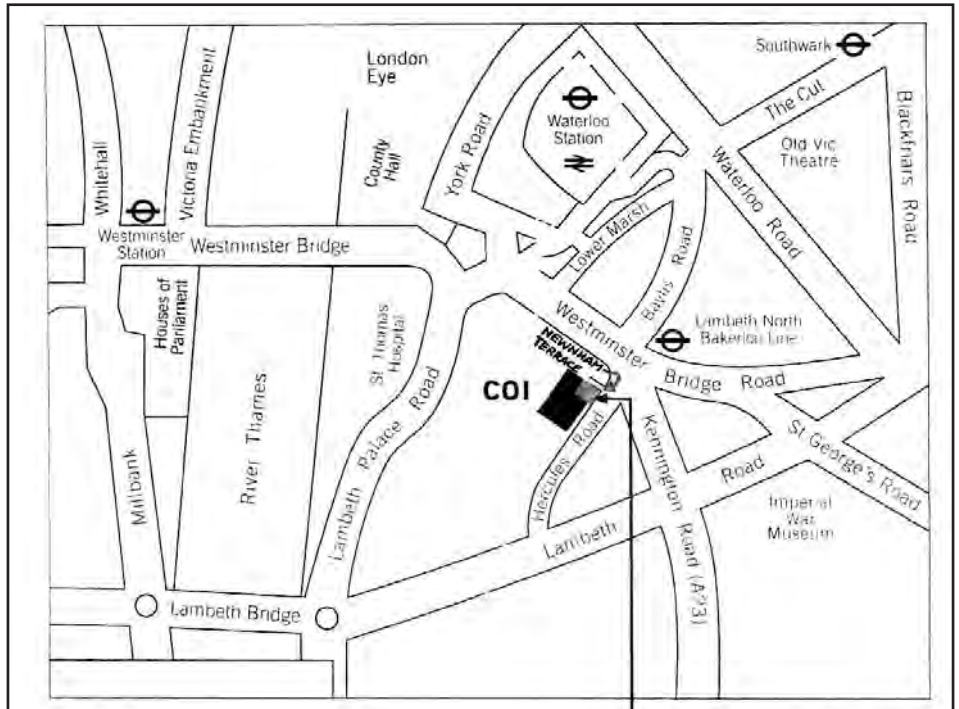
As all DaC drivers realise by now, we are getting hit with numerous parking tickets. However, we have liaised with one client in the Lambeth area to decide on a new pick-up point in an attempt to avoid problems for our drivers.

In future, anyone picking up from the Central Office of Information in Hercules Road, SE1 should go round the corner to Newnam Terrace and ask for the passenger at the security guard entrance.

This is a temporary arrangement to see if the new system works. These new instructions will be given on V6 for this particular account.

**Warren Smith**

**DaC Financial Accountant**



## DAC CUT-PRICE TRIPS WITH...



*You can join the hundreds of Dial-a-Cab drivers who have already taken advantage of the concessionary fares Eurostar are offering us. Whether you fancy a trip to the wonderful French City of Culture, Lille, want to sample the magic of Paris or travel back in time to wander through historic Brussels, you can get there on the incredible 186mph Eurostar.*

*You can take family and friends with you, but the DaC driver must be in the party. Booking forms are available only from the DaC Driver's Reception...*

**The prices? An amazing £49 return standard class - or if you would like a bit of luxury, £99 return first class!**

***The magic of Dial-a-Cab and Eurostar together...***



## Bradley meets Sir Bob!

Sitting on a rank and dreaming of David Beckham lifting the World Cup, I was disturbed from my ultimate vision by **Bradley Freeman (W98)**. "Oi, Russ," he shouted, "I'm just off to pick up **Bobby Robson** from *Motcombs*!" Still stirring from my dream and wiping the sleep from my eyes (in my dream we beat the Brazilians 3-0 in a one-sided final with ex-hammers Joe Cole, Frank Lampard and Rio Ferdinand scoring the goals - well we can't win the World Cup unless the boys from 'The Academy' score), I asked Bradley to acquire an exclusive interview from Sir Bob about all things football. Bradley roared off with his newly appointed role of assistant **Call Sign** reporter / cab driver, to burn Sir Bob's ears while en route to Kings Cross station. It wasn't long before my phone rang and Bradley told me what the ex-England supremo had to say.

Sir Bob was attending a memorial lunch meeting in aid of *The Bobby Moore Fund*, which raises money for research into bowel cancer. Other ex-England stars attending the lunch were **Terry Venables** and **Paul Gascoigne**. I got the feeling that as Bradley is a passionate Spurs fan, he probably wishes he had picked up one of the other two!

Anyway, Sir Bob said he was still in love with the beautiful game - even after all these years - and is enjoying his current involvement with the Irish FA assisting Steve Staunton. Sir Bob, who took England to the semi-final of the World Cup in Italia '90, spoke of the pressure in the game at the highest level. He also thought that his Newcastle successor manager, Graeme Souness, was a tremendous player but not up to the standards to become a like-wise manager! Sir Bob then turned the tables on Bradley and asked him about the cab game and how Dial-a-Cab operated! Bradley, never short of a word or two, duly gave DaC a great sales talk - watch your job, Lydia! Sir Bob was also delighted that his fare was on account and looked relieved to arrive at Kings Cross station following his spur-of-the-moment interview!

This gave me an opportunity to quiz Bradley on an extremely touchy subject - his thoughts on his north London neighbours - dare I say the name - Arsenal! Amongst other adjectives that Bradley used and that the Editor - also a Spurs fan - may echo but not print, I can only say that Bradley could never bring himself to believe that 'they' - he means Arsenal of course - can win the Champions League!

"I can live with West Ham getting 3 points off of us at the end of the season," he said, "but for 'them' to win the biggest trophy in world domestic football? Well £%\$&\*(^&^..!" Prizes for the correct answer to decipher what Bradley said are in next month's **Call Sign**!

After Arsenal's tremendous victories over Real Madrid and Juventus and the sensational semi-final win over Villarreal - including Jens Lehmann's last minute penalty save - the engraver of that magnificent trophy can start to look for the letter 'A'. Many drivers who follow the Gunners have already booked their tickets to Paris for what should be a cracker of a final.

But what if Arsenal DO win the Champions League and Spurs DO finish fourth in the Premiership resulting in Spurs missing out on a Champions League place next season?

More true football/taxi tales from the pen of DaC's Driver/West Ham fan Russ...

# Russell's Hall of Footie



Bradley...Bradley! Don't drive over Tower Bridge, you'll be doing more than 20mph...

## Chelsea's Cheshire cat!

Having a problem with the terminal in my cab - makes a change from putting petrol in - required me to make a trip to N7 and catch up with old friend and Board member, **Allan Evans**. No one likes to go to Roman Way at the best of times, but seeing as it was the day after Allan's Chelsea had thrashed my woeful hammers, it was an exceptionally hard trip to make! Allan, with the smile of the proverbial Cheshire cat, assured me that Chelsea's performance was their best for some time. I think he was trying to make me feel better, but it still hurt going 1-

0 up against the Champions-elect, then to see them lose a player, yet end up getting beat 4-1! Football is exciting, exhilarating and electrifying, but in this case for me it was like going to the dentist - a truly awful experience.

## Charity football match

In this **Call Sign**, you'll see details of a football match in aid of **Cancer Research UK** and the **Make a Wish Foundation UK**. The match is dedicated to Seyhan Ali who was just 14 when in January 2005, his brave battle with cancer finally came to an end. Seyhan's father, Emin, has worked at M&H Taxis (known as Mehmet's) in Chapman St E1 for over 20 years. Please come along to support a great cause and seeing as I'm donning my boots again, please no barracking! Many DaC drivers use Mehmet's including Colin Jenkins (Y22), Mark Sherlock (W41), Jane Jacobs (J59) and Sal Raja (S46J) and they all speak highly of it. I have also used Mehmet's occasionally and Emin and the other staff are always friendly and willing to help you out if in a spot of bother. Come along to the match on Sunday 14 May and support a very worthy cause...

## Russell Hall (G44)

Send your footie tales to Russell at [rwball@russthehammer.fsnet.co.uk](mailto:rwball@russthehammer.fsnet.co.uk) or look out for his cab when you are out and about, reg J111 RUS. He loves a footie chat...

## DISCOUNTED HOLIDAYS FOR DIAL-A-CAB DRIVERS!

**Call Sign's** South of France-based London cabbie, **Bob Woodford**, is offering to waive the booking fee to any Licensed Taxi Driver who books a holiday in 2006 with his lettings agency.

'**South of France Lets**' is the product of him being responsible for looking after keys to properties of all descriptions owned by the British and Irish on the Mediterranean coast.

Bob told **Call Sign**: "The work involved in providing property care has now come full circle. I got together with a neighbour, **Graham Peckham**, who has IT skills and between us we have come up with a comprehensive website comprising of anything from **Luxury Villas with pools/tennis courts to simple Bed & Breakfast properties**. The sun-kissed region of **Languedoc** has **100 kilometers of coastline with endless sandy beaches, oceans of vineyards and some stunning mountain scenery just beyond the plain.**"

You can check out their website on: [www.southoffrancelets.com](http://www.southoffrancelets.com). Ryanair fly direct to four airports in close proximity. If you fancy a break from the Kipper Season and looking for somewhere warm for a short interlude, phone or email Bob now...

Tel/Fax +33 467 28 1602: Mobile +33 683 301 310  
Email [robert.woodford@tiscali.fr](mailto:robert.woodford@tiscali.fr)

Views on life as seen through the eyes of David Kupler (Y74) at...

# Kupkake's Korner



## Cab washers of the world unite!

My cab's in the car wash  
I like my cab clean,  
watching the washers  
as they make it gleam...

But I sometimes wonder  
about them  
Just what brought them here,  
Away from their homeland  
And their love ones oh so dear...

They come here from Poland  
from Africa and from France.  
for the pavements of gold  
Just to seek their chance...

But to end up in a car wash  
soaked to the bone,  
washing our taxis  
with water and foam?

Is this what they dreamed of  
when making all their plans?  
When saving their money  
In their far-off lands?

Did they think they'd get rich quick  
On London's streets,  
did they think of hardship...  
despair and defeat?

Do they call home to tell of  
their new way of life?  
Do they lie to their parents...  
Maybe their sister or their wife?

But they're sending back money  
as fast as they're paid,  
Now my cab is clean and ready...  
And I just drive away.

**Kopyright Kupkake2006**

# DAC SAYS GOODBYE AS TRACY MOVES ON

The Three Crowns pub next door to Brunswick House was packed with Dial-a-Cab staff, all there to say goodbye to Tracy Morland who was leaving DaC after 12 years.

Tracy started as a call taker before moving to the DaC Help Desk and then dropping three floors to our IT department.

A smiling Tracy told Call Sign: "It was a lovely evening. I have made so many friends at Dial-a-Cab and hopefully will still stay in touch with many of them. The flowers from Brian Rice were also a lovely surprise."

Good luck for the future, Tracy...



Brian Rice presents Tracy with a bouquet at her leaving party

**In a world where technology moves at an astounding pace, DaC Network Administrator Jonathen Winterburn takes an occasional look at the latest gadgets...**

## John Asks Whats New?



Sophisticated technology designed to prevent coach and lorry drivers falling asleep at the wheel is being tested on vehicles across Europe. Around 500 people are acting as guinea pigs for the project, known as **Sensation**, which is intended to minimise the risks of fatigue.

The Department for Transport is monitoring the experiment, which is being conducted by experts across the European Union. It comes amid mounting concern about the dangers of driver fatigue. Although the technology is initially being considered for lorry and long-distance coach drivers, it could be made available for other motorists – and that, of course, includes taxi drivers.

Currently estimated as costing just over £2,000, the technology uses an array of sensors to check how alert the driver is.

"They are non-obtrusive," said Villy Portouli, a mechanical engineer with the Hellenic Institute of Transport



in Thessaloniki, Greece.

A small camera monitors a driver's eye movements, looking out for repeated blinking, which can be evidence of tiredness. The driver's seat is lined with a material that monitors changes in body temperature. Other sensors can be fitted to the finger and ear. All are designed to spot tell-tale signs of fatigue. If there is evidence that the driver is about to fall asleep, the equipment makes a loud beep to alert him.

**Jonathen Winterburn**  
DaC Network Administrator



Call Sign is taking yet another group of drivers to the LTI factory in Coventry. This latest group are going later this month and a report will appear in the July issue because, as usual, Call Sign has next month (June) off. This latest group will be led by **Stewart Lewis (D20)** and he will also be taking a list of questions that Call Sign readers have sent in regarding the TXII.

As this mag has already sent forty or so drivers to the Holyfield Road facility, we had assumed that demand would lessen – we were wrong! So to all the drivers who tried, but failed to get through when the one-off message went out at 5.45 on March 31, we're sorry. We ended up with 48 missed calls and 22 texts from drivers wanting to make the trip and it would have been a days work telling everybody that didn't make it.

For those who are going, Call Sign will as usual pay all the train fares thanks to the kind assistance from Virgin Trains and your lunches will be provided by LTI. You just have to make your own way to Euston! The itinerary will include a tour of the factory plus a question and answer session.

The following drivers – the first to get through - will be on the trip and accompany **Stewart Lewis: Pat Graves (L53), Mark Tiller (K90), Laurie Bartlett (L84), Gary Wood (M32), Adam McGann (J09) Richard Jordan (G83), Eugene Portanier (T45) and Bernie Silver (G08).**

If any of the above names are incorrectly spelt, please accept our apologies. We will also try to get answers to all questions sent in by drivers...

# Call Sign off to LTI Again!



Stewart (centre) with a previous group

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# Driver Operations

**Hello Ladies and Gents,**

## Signals improvement

Now that the traditionally quiet Easter period has been and gone, I am sure work figures are heading back up to normal levels. I hope that you have noticed an improvement in signals over the past month or so. The channel that was relocated with a new base station (channel 8) is now working very efficiently and it now shows the lowest error rate of all. Coverage in the city areas has certainly benefited.

As you know, the next step will be to replace all the old base stations with new, state-of-the-art units. Eight new BSC's are on order and are due to be delivered very shortly and as soon as they arrive, we will re-equip every ariel site. I am confident you will notice further improvements.

Another visit from Jim Moore (RMSI) is planned for the end of May and testing and enhancements will be carried out to further add to the progress that has already been made. The Board of Management will do everything in its power to nail the problem.

## EC5 and E140 non-physical ranks

By now, I am sure you are all aware that **EC5** and **E140** are both operating as non-physical ranks. They are both working well, but are being strictly monitored to make sure that the booking-in procedures are correctly followed. Please remember that EC5 is within 15 minutes and to book in to E140, you must be within the security perimeter of Cabot Square. There is no Marshal at EC5, but if the system is abused the system will be reviewed. So please play the game.

## Going home...

To further improve the Code 3 (Going Home facility), the Board of Management have decided to implement a number of enhancements to the dispatch system. There will be an information sheet explaining the changes, which we are confident will assist the coverage and benefit both members and clients alike. See **Keith Cain's** report for further information...

## Changing meters?

Please remember that if you change the meter in your taxi to a different supplier or even another model from the existing company, it is

almost certain that the meter interface will also need changing. It is not a long job, but it would otherwise prevent the system reading the meter and may also affect the printer. It could also lead to you being put on complaint.

## Marshalling

It is important that you make contact with the Marshal at all times, especially at Deutsche Bank and Morgan Stanley. If you have a name that is slightly obscure, please write down both christian and surname on the name board. That will help prevent any confusion and greatly assist the Marshal and client locate the correct taxi.

With the summer season now fast approaching, I am sure that there will be many events that will require your help. Some events are already in the diary and I have mentioned on many occasions that without your help, these events would fail. We are without doubt the market leaders in this field; with your assistance we will stay there.

*Finally can I remind you that I spend time both at Roman Way and at Brunswick House. If you need to contact me please ring me on 0207 607 6403 or 0207 251 0581.*

**Allan Evans**

**Allane@Dialacab.co.uk**

**DaC driver John Edwardes (H05) takes a quick look back at the weather situation in 1549 and compares it to that of today...**



## Ye Olde Flashback

### A Date with Weather

*The spring, the summer, the chiding autumn, angry winter, change  
Their wanted liveries and amazed world, by their increase, now knows not which is which*

These lines from Shakespeare's *Midsummer Night's Dream* were probably inspired by the very unseasonably wet and cold summer of 1549. The summer months saw many English fields under water for weeks and in many places crops could not be gathered in.

Yet just two years earlier, the 1547 summer was so dry that the Thames in London could be crossed on horseback. Further north, the River Trent almost dried up completely in the drought...

**From ye Olde Call Sign, May 1549**

London's Mayor, Mr Kenneth Deadstone, hath stated that these terrible weather conditions are undoubtedly due to global warming in addition to global colding, which hath been caused by, in his knowledgeable mind, the number of Hackney coachmen's horses exploding rear ends – which doth therefore polluteth the world air. He therefore intendeth that all these horses shall be fitted with rear end catalytic confarters and that each coachman will be charged the sum of five shillings per week to cover ye cost of these confarters.

Forsooketh thee not, for London's coachmen are up in arms and legs at these punitive charges and hath threatened to withdraw their labour. The Mayor hath laughed at this and in his usually friendly fashion, hath pointed out that this would be an impossible action for the coachmen to taketh. For they, unlike his own self whose salary is ye caste iron, would not be in a position to be able to afford to go on strike and if they did, it would be very short lived. Many coachmen, though they hath not voiced it, hopeth that so would he be...

**Willie S**



## Peerages

With the recent furore over loans or donations, I thought I'd try my hand at all this and see what was on offer. After all, who wouldn't like to be Lord of somewhere? Off I went with money jangling in my pockets and high hopes of what could be a surreal world. First, as a cab driver, I went to the radio circuits and asked to whom I should give my brown envelope - as in years gone by, rumour suggested that this was a good way to get some roaders. At all of them I was shown the front door in no uncertain terms.

Next stop were those few hotels around the capital that I had read about in trade magazines. On arrival, I was told to make contact with the concierge, whereupon I was given a price list for various destinations. As most good journalists do, I made my excuses and left!

At the banks, they want your money and custom, but you get little in return. In fact, if you don't pay them, they get worse than the mustachios of the Mafia of old, putting you out of house and home in double-quick time.

And so on to the political parties. The Greens offered a pair of wellies and sandals to match, both made of the latest high tech plastic as they want to save the planet and re-use anything that can be recycled. The Lib Dems were not sure which way to turn when asked a question, while the Tories only wanted cash for questions. The bigger the question, the bigger the envelope! As for New Labour, I was offered a peership but as I only had 50p left it turned out to be at Southend Pier. Anyone for a trip on the Golden Hind...!

## Budget

In his giveaway budget in March, Mr Brown (Prudence to his friends) did indeed give much away. Now he is about to sell off even more of Britain's assets - including British Energy and the Tote. No doubt this will bring in millions and help to pay off the money he will be borrowing. While telling the country to tighten its belt on personal spending, he will borrow upwards of £36billion in the coming year. If the government were a private company, it would have gone into liquidation years ago.

He was left a huge amount of money in the treasury chest by the previous administration, but like all good magicians, he soon made it disappear. Not by smoke and mirrors, but on the ailing and failing health service - which takes £96billion per annum and social security which eats up £151billion per annum. He has mortgaged not only our working lives, but probably also that of our children and grandchildren. Just how much pain the working man can stand remains to be seen, but with hospitals closing wards and sacking doctors and nurses, don't expect a bed to recuperate in.

## And speaking of Gordon...

I had believed that Gordon Brown was the Chancellor of our Exchequer, but now he

**From the front seat of his TXII these are...**



## The Views of a Grumpy Old Man

seems to be the Minister for International Development as well. On a recent junket to Africa, he pledged £8.5billion towards the education of children in that continent. This is our tax money that he has pledged in his quest to make poverty history. With our education system leaving much to be desired and our ailing health service in freefall, surely our money could have been spent here? Many children in the UK when leaving school cannot string two words together to make a sentence. And unless a machine tells them how much, they cannot give change and get flummoxed when offered the odd money ie if £10.56 is the total and you offer a £20 note and the odd 56p, this confuses them greatly. Not just that, but where did the surplus money come from that he is so eager to give away?

We've seen time and time again, aid going to third world countries only for it to be siphoned off by the hierarchy of said country or squandered on large cars and private planes while those to whom it was pledged

remain in avid squalor and poverty. Only time will tell...

## Money well spent?

With the Dome still costing us money, it stands unused in Greenwich and is still just as much an eyesore now as ever. Now we have Wembleygate - another fiasco in the making. Costing in excess of 3 times the original budget and well past its opening date, I look forward to the 2012 Olympics with apprehension. The computer projections make it look great, but that is a virtual world and not the real one. On our new council tax bills - for those living in Ken's world - we are already paying for them. With just 6 years to go, I cannot see the event even commencing on time. Dubai, bidding for the 2018 games, has already started building - not planning - arenas and stadiums for the event. Maybe with a bit of spin and re-branding, we can hold them post-2012 - perhaps in 2014! Again, only time will tell...

## Pigeons

Although Ken has outlawed the feeding of pigeons in Trafalgar Square, it is not illegal to feed them on the north perimeter outside the National Gallery. Now, together with Westminster council, he wants to stop this area being used as well. Tourists still flock (no pun intended) to this area of London and I'm sure we all have our memories and photos of the area. I think the better idea would be to stop feeding Ken...!

## The 'two Jags' affair!

So now we know why Labour's deputy leader, John Prescott, has two Jags. Following the Daily Mirror's exposure of his affair with his secretary, it was one Jag for her and one Jag for her!

**Chas Kissin (P99J)**

## Dial-a Cab Credit Union

*Ever needed money quickly but were anxious about 'variable' bank interest rates?*

Well wonder no more! If you are a subscriber, journeyman or member of staff at Dial-a-Cab then you qualify to join the

### DIAL-A-CAB CREDIT UNION.

Further more, any member of your family residing at your address also qualifies for membership!

Then, providing you are over 18, have been a member for over three months and have established regular savings, then you can borrow up to three times your total savings with a first-time maximum loan of £2000 or twice your savings total.

### The cost?

Just 1% per month on the outstanding balance (or APR of 12.68%).

There are now even lower rates for loans above £6000.

You can pay your loan back early should you wish.

All savings and loans carry free life insurance.

AND you usually get an annual dividend on your savings.

### The question is: Can you afford NOT to be in it...?

*The DAC CREDIT UNION is a member of ABCUL, which in turn is a member of the WORLD COUNCIL OF CREDIT UNIONS*

# Looking for New Taxi Number 34!

## With cab 33 up for sale...!

**Call Sign** does not accept ads from drivers wanting to sell their old cabs. That isn't because we don't want to help, but purely because we come out monthly and as such, anyone advertising their cab in this mag could possibly expect calls for up to a month after publication – and that could seriously aggravate some who just want a peaceful life with no hassle, especially when they have already sold the droshky!

However, we are making an exception on this occasion because **Martin Freeborn (C67)** is now selling his cab for the 33<sup>rd</sup> time and is about to buy taxi number 34 from **Mann & Overton**! Martin keeps his TXII taxis for just 12 months before selling them and buying a replacement. He has a regular buyer for every other year, but this year is an in-between one so it is going up for sale.

The cab is fitted for **Dial-a-Cab**, is a Nightfire Red *Gold* model, currently has 20,000 miles on the clock and will be available from 24 October. All Martin's taxis are well looked after! This one has reversing sensors, DAB radio and a driver's window deflector plus the usual *Gold* features.

Any driver who is seriously interested can call Martin on 020 8922 0547 (evenings). The first driver to give a deposit will secure the October sale.

If you are unlucky, then Martin's next in-between sale will be in 2008!



Martin with his 33<sup>rd</sup> new cab.  
He is now looking for number 34

# ADVANCED STOP LINES

## Priority for cyclists?

The PCO has informed **Call Sign** that they have been advised there is to be increased enforcement of the regulations regarding Advanced Stop Lines (ASLs). The City of London Police have produced a leaflet setting out the ASL regulations and copies of this leaflet are available from PCO's reception. The following summarises the leaflet...

\* Advanced stop lines are a set of transverse white lines placed at certain junctions, which are controlled by automatic traffic lights. They have been created to allow a safe haven (Advanced Stop Box) for cyclists at the head of a queue of traffic waiting for the traffic lights to change to green.

\* Cyclists are required to enter this advanced stop box by the prescribed cycle lane.

\* When a vehicle approaches an advanced stop line system and the traffic lights at the junction change from green to amber, the vehicle must stop before the first stop line, ie the first line a vehicle crosses on the approach to the traffic lights. Only if the vehicle is either on the first stop line or so close to the stop line that it would be unsafe to stop prior to it, may the vehicle cross the first stop line, but it must stop before the second stop line.

\* If drivers fail to obey the advanced stop line and traffic light regulations, they are liable to a fine and their licence being endorsed.



# LOW COST LITERARY FEAST AT

WWW.MYBOOK  
YOURBOOK.CO.UK



**Call Sign** has been contacted by **mybookyourbook.co.uk** to explain to our drivers and staff just what their online library facility is all about.

This co-operative online library is for the exchange and re-cycling of paperback books and already has thousands of books in its catalogue that are obtainable for just the cost of a stamped, self-addressed envelope.

The site, unlike some book sharing schemes, does not rely on the chance finding of books, nor is there a need to provide a matching swap when you find a book you want to read. The ability to order envelopes at a low cost price through the site also means big savings on packaging too.

To join **mybookyourbook.co.uk**, members must simply submit details of 10 paperbacks they own and pay a sign-up fee. They then have access to the library and can start requesting books from other members via the easy to use automated emailing system. Once received and after a reading period has elapsed, each book stays on the member's "bookshelf" until another member requests it and sends a stamped addressed envelope so that it can be despatched.

One user of **mybookyourbook.co.uk** is DaC's Network Administrator, **Jonathen Winterburn**. He has been using the facility since its launch in 2005. He told **Call Sign**:

**"Mybookyourbook.co.uk is a non-profit company and the low membership fee covers hosting and other such costs. This is a great community to join if you're a book-lover."**

**Call Sign** has been sent a number of bookmarks advertising the website. These are available in the Driver's Reception on a first-come, first served basis.

**Call Sign readers are also offered a discounted first year's membership fee of £6.99 (normally £8.95) simply by using the code DAC7441 when signing up. Happy reading!**



# Kibble's Camera!



One of the hobbies of Dial-a-Cab driver **Bill Kibble (K86)** is "now and then" photography. In this series, Bill has taken photos of places and buildings that have an original version somewhere in the public domain...

**This month: Looking at Curzon Street from Park Lane – 1899 and 2006**



Curzon St from Park Lane in 1899



Curzon St now

## Complaints Results



A Complaints meeting was heard on 12 April 2006 with an Appeals meeting on 21 April 2006. The results are below...

*Rep = Reprimand... Susp = Suspension...*

Name/call sign	Nature of Complaint	Sentence
Darren Graham (S82)	Booking into zones he could not reach in the allocated time and putting meter on to fool the computer: <b>Rule 14</b>	<b>1 wk susp</b>
Darren Graham (S82)	Booking into zones he could not reach in the allocated time and putting his meter on to fool the computer: <b>Rule 14</b>	<b>2 wks susp</b>
Darren Graham (S82)	Accepted a credit card ride and then asked dispatcher to recover as printer was not working correctly: <b>Rules 3, 5</b>	<b>1 wk susp (3) Rep (5)</b>
Robert McMullan (P12)	Booking into outer zones incorrectly and accepting a trip: <b>Rule 14</b>	<b>1 wk susp</b>
Robert McMullan (P12)	Booking into Heathrow incorrectly: <b>Rule 14</b>	<b>1 wk susp</b>
Robert McMullan (P12)	Booking into Heathrow incorrectly: <b>Rules 5, 14</b>	<b>1 wk susp</b>
Robert McMullan (P12)	Booking into Heathrow and WW99 incorrectly: <b>Rules 5, 14</b>	<b>1 wk susp</b>
Paul Warwick (E95)	Booking into outer zone when not within its boundary: <b>Rules 5, 14</b>	<b>1 wk susp</b>
Paul Warwick (E95)	Booking into Heathrow incorrectly: <b>Rules 5, 14</b>	<b>1 wk susp</b>
Paul Warwick (E95)	Booking into Heathrow incorrectly: <b>Rules 5, 14</b>	<b>1 wk susp</b>
Paul Warwick (E95)	Booking into outer zone when not within its boundary: <b>Rules 5, 14</b>	<b>1 wk susp</b>
Paul Samuels (T85)	Not updating personal details with ODRTS. Took one month before Society managed to contact him re complaint: <b>Rules 2, 3, 25</b>	<b>Severe rep</b>
Stewart Berman (G84)	Driver did account trip to WWO, charged cash then input fare to be paid on account: <b>Rules 2, 3, 5, 8, 12, 25</b>	<b>4 wks susp Expelled (Appeal)</b>

### APPEAL RESULT

Stewart Berman (G84)	Driver did account trip to WWO, charged cash then input fare to be paid on account: <b>Rules 2, 3, 5, 8, 12, 25</b>	<b>Sentence upheld</b>
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**29 April – 4 June 2006**

Spring is in the air and London's museums and galleries are preparing for the world's biggest celebration of arts, culture and entertainment. With events for all the family taking place across the city throughout May, there is every opportunity to go out and make the most of all your local galleries and museums have to offer.

The biggest celebration of its kind in the world, **MGM2006**, encourages visitors to meet, learn, connect and be inspired in museums and galleries in May. Hundreds of individual museums, galleries and heritage attractions will be running events on the month's theme: "Making Connections: Past, present and future."

**Welcome Weekend –  
29 April to 1 May.**

*Welcome Weekend* events are taking place at museums across London, including the V&A, Museum of London, National Gallery, Horniman Museum, Royal Botanical Gardens in Kew and the Geffrye Museum.

The **People's Museum**, airing on BBC2 during MGM2006, will give people the chance to choose which objects they would have in their own museum. The programme, hosted by *Flog It* presenter Paul Martin, travels across Britain to unearth hidden or little known treasures tucked away in local and regional museums, galleries and stately homes. The result is an eclectic and surprising collection, which will be shown on BBC2 in the spring. Following each show, viewers will be able to vote for an overall winner and

*At a loss where to go now that the weather is getting warmer?  
Call Sign has the answer...*

# Museums and Galleries Month

to put their favourite museum pieces into the virtual online People's Museum. Watch out for it!

The Campaign for Museums and the 24-Hour Museum are creating regional Hidden Treasure Trails to link to the programme and the BBC History website. These trails will go live on 8 March at [www.24hourmuseum.org.uk](http://www.24hourmuseum.org.uk) and will give people details about how they can go and see the objects they have seen on television.

Later on in the month, *Museums at Night (Nuit des Musées)* is taking place on the evening of Saturday 20 May – this French initiative encourages museums and galleries across Europe to join together by staging evening events for visitors. The Hayward Gallery will be staying open late for an evening of music, games, films and performances in Hayward Nights.

Borders Bookstores will be supporting Museums and Galleries Month with a range of museum-related books on display in all their stores and competitions in selected cities.

Also in London, audio 'Discover London Trails' are being launched in May for people to download to discover

'Hidden London' by exploring the city through some of its best and smallest museums and galleries. These six free trails, supported by the Mayor of London, are in addition to five written maps already available from the Campaign for Museums and explore themes including sports, historic gardens and the history of immigration. The audio trails are narrated by well-known voices including Diarmuid Gavin for the Historic Garden Museums trail.

The *Government Art Collection* will be offering a rare chance to tour their premises in central London on Saturday 29 April. The Collection holds around 12,500 works of British art in a variety of media, dating from the mid-sixteenth century to the present day.

Take a walk through the city's streets to learn more about 'Satirical London'. Organised by the Museum of London, you can find out about Hogarth, Johnson, Defoe and other satirists who have been poking fun at the government for centuries!

**And don't forget to check to see what your local gallery is doing on museum and galleries month...**

*Bill Munro's book 'A Century of London Taxis' has received much praise in trade mags, although most of it seems to have come via press releases. So Call Sign asked our former Editor, Jerry Craig, to review the book and to give his honest opinion...*

## A CENTURY OF LONDON TAXIS

**(Crowood Press, £19.95)**

Within London's Taxicab trade there are many who not only drive a cab for a living, but who dip their toes into other fields of activity and creativity. One such talented person is Bill Munro. He has an undoubted talent for writing about the cab trade in addition to many other subjects. Like Maurice Levenson and Phil Warren before him, he has produced a fine book on the developmental history of all major taxi models in addition to those unsuccessful taxi prototypes that never quite hit the road!

In his book, Bill has included many previously unpublished photographs and cabmen stories of interest. His detail on many technical specifications of major taxi models is intriguing and informative while his depth of knowledge on his subject is praiseworthy.

The chapter I found particularly interesting was that on cabs in wartime (1939 – 45) including the two wonderful photos accompanying the section which showed the *Cabs*

of London (Taxi) Battalion on exercises. This Battalion was formed in 1941 with many cabbies being part of that force. If the Nazis had arrived, this was one set of cabs they would not have been able to hire! The *County of London Home Guard* would have given them a run for their money during those dark years. The driver's part in the war effort is well documented and commendable.

What really stands out in Bill Munro's book is the abundance of excellent photographs and useful information on the development of London's cabs over the past 100 years.

Did you know that we had gas cabs back in the 70s? **W.H.Cooke** of West London converted a section of their fleet over to LPG. Although enjoying a reasonable success, it ended when the Government of the day decided to add a duty tax to the cost of the fuel. Pity, the idea was good!

As part of his material for the book, Bill approached me for permission to use one of



my cab trade cartoons (from 1971). I felt honoured and of course said yes. Seeing my name in the index did rather tickle me.

If you are looking for a good read on the ranks, then Bill's book could be it...

**Jerry Craig**





## Penalty notices

Some of you will have seen recent news items on the television with reference to the ongoing penalty charge notices drivers have and are still receiving from various authorities – Camden in particular.

During one of the reports, the London Cab Driver's Club (LCDC) took it upon themselves to organise a drive-in, protesting about the unfair issue of the penalty notices to taxi drivers and the unwarranted attack on our industry, which is proving to be not only costly but also a hindrance to both drivers and the taxi travelling public. During a televised interview, LCDC Chairman Alan Fleming, claimed that Camden and other councils had no regard to those that live and worked in their areas.

Taxi drivers, of course, are a group that work in the Camden area 24 hours each and every day. We pick up and drop off passengers constantly, but do not pose a security risk or prevent the flow of traffic. Therefore, using CCTV evidence prior to fines being issued makes it quite apparent where their interests lie. That is in just one direction – the one that fills the Council's purse coffers the quickest.

**Dial-a-Cab** also has to pay dearly for the penalty charges issued to its members when they are picking up a legitimate credit account hiring. With this in mind, some DaC members and myself have written to the various councils and their parking enforcement contractors as well as having one-to-one discussions with some of those council's representatives, stating both our concerns and frustrations.

Speaking to an MP some time ago about another taxi-related matter, it was said that due to the fact the taxi industry was so diverse within its various representative organisations, whether it be governmental or local legislator's, they would not review or change recent laws. Therefore, when speaking to parking enforcement officers, it appears that although there is sympathy for our plight, unless the legislation is changed there isn't much that can be done and the issue of penalty charge notices will continue.

However, if the taxi trade and their representatives were to work together, I believe there could be a resolve to this matter. For as long as I can remember, the taxi trade's various organisations has been very fragmented in approaches to past issues, although during recent times

*Having undergone surgery for the repair of a hernia, Mike Son has been away from DaC for a few weeks. Consequently, Call Sign offered him the one-off opportunity to put aside his usual report and write more on trade matters...*

# Speaking Personally

**there has been some cohesion with some taxi organisations when tackling certain situations.**

Dial-a-Cab Chairman, Brian Rice, has had many meetings with authoritative bodies when protecting the interest of our members. Whilst having a great deal of success, he has also written many times of the problems he encounters during those meetings when told that we have far too many small factions, all apparently battling against each other! I second his desire to see a far more united trade.

This trade in its entirety needs to work more closely together, especially when there are such profound issues as at this time, where councils are preventing us performing our lawful duty as Licensed London Taxi Driver's or at the very least, charging us to do so by the fines being imposed.

Many of you will remember reading about **Sid Nathan (K88)** in *Call Sign* last year when he was fined after being caught on CCTV waiting for his passenger for four and a half minutes whilst that passenger went to buy a bottle of milk from a supermarket. This was well after midnight and Sid waited within the confines of a marked-out bus stop, but well away from the stop itself. No buses came during that period and traffic was very light. Yet through CCTV, Sid received a penalty ticket. It was only thanks to Sid's perseverance that he was finally let off the fine and given a smack on the wrist instead (don't do it again).

## Fixed Rates

In line with the recent Transport for London

tariff increase, fixed rates within our dispatch system have been increased accordingly.

Finally, having recently undergone an operation for the repair of a hernia, can I also thank the many of you who have sent me your good wishes. It is appreciated...

**Mike Son**  
**DaC Customer Services /**  
**Special Projects**

## RUFFLES

**The Complete Curtain Making Service**

Curtains, pelmets, swags and tails or blinds as well as soft furnishings...

\*

Cushions, quilts and headboards all made to measure using customers own fabric...

\*

Or choose from a selection of fabrics and trimmings bought to you in your own home...

\*

Tracks and blinds can be supplied and fitted

**For more information call**  
**Kim on 0208 505 9755**  
**or mobile 07961375418**

## M&O NOW HAVE FOUR CABS WITH DAC TERMINALS

Mann & Overton have four courtesy taxis fitted with Dial-a-Cab terminals and DaC drivers attending the Holloway Road dealership for servicing or overhauls have the chance of a free DaC-fitted TX1 or TXII while their own vehicle is being worked on.

*Speaking to Call Sign, M&O General Service Manager Mike Saunders said:*  
**"With the co-operation of the DaC Board who have made available the radio equipment, we are delighted to provide this facility for our Dial-a-Cab customers. It allows drivers to continue servicing account clients while their own cab is here. I would remind everyone though, that these courtesy cabs are subject to availability and not guaranteed."**

**You can contact the M&O Service Dept. on 020 7700 0888...**

**Thinking about a compensation claim but confused by TV ads promising the earth followed by requests for you to take out expensive insurance policies? Call Sign's legal expert, Hope Liebersohn, is on the Law Society Personal Injuries Panel and could help...**

# CALL SIGN LEGAL MATTERS

## Pain and suffering...

"It's not the money, it's the principle of the thing," my clients often say when they see me regarding personal injury compensation. Most of them mean it, but when someone injures you, they rarely apologise. Even less likely than an apology from the wrongdoer, is revenge against him – no court in England or Wales will award you an eye for an eye or a tooth for a tooth. An eye is worth £30,000 - £36,000 and a front tooth £1250 - £2150. Here are some other tariffs taken from the guide used by all county and high court judges:

**Sprained ankle - one year to recovery: £3250**

**Broken nose with full recovery: £1000 - £1350**

**Slipped disc, recovery to 'nuisance' level without surgery: £4250 - £7500**

**Total deafness: £50,000**

**Paraplegia: £120,000 - £155,000**

**Broken wrist with arthritis in future: About £6750 - £13,500**

**Food poisoning with cramps and diarrhoea: £500 - £2150**

**Impotence and sterility – young man: About £80,000**

**Post-traumatic stress disorder, causing significant disability for the foreseeable future: About £20,000-£25,000**

Facial scars on women are worth more than on men, although damage to marriage prospects no longer come into the reckoning. A permanent disability, such as a broken nose with breathing difficulty, could be worth twice as much at age 20 as it is at age 60, since the victim has to live with it much longer. Put forward evidence of your sports achievements and you'll get a bigger cheque than a couch potato left

with the same broken ankle.

Although it's hard to quantify, the loss of congenial employment can fetch up to half a year's wages or so, if the injury ends a career you loved. Firemen, performing artists, servicemen and teachers, for example, could do other jobs, but it might not give so much satisfaction. Injury can limit your employment prospects, too. After a head injury causing epilepsy, any driving job would be ruled out and you could get up to two years' net earnings for "disadvantage on the labour market," reflecting the limited choices now open to you.

Putting a value on pain, suffering and loss of quality of life is a difficult exercise. The value of life itself, under our law, is easy: No amount of cash can compensate the bereaved and a flat rate of £10,000 is laid down by statute to be paid only to a parent of a child under 18, widow or widower. If your 19-year-old is killed on the road, you can claim funeral and other expenses, but nothing at all for the loss of his or her life.

Quite different rules apply - and larger damages are to be had - if the police are paying your claim – more about that in a later article.



**Hope Liebersohn**  
hl@glenisters.com

## Exclusive Call Sign offer...

# TRY THE POWER PILL FOR FREE!

You have all read over the past 6 months about the UBiee Power Pill – how it has saved drivers 10-15% on their fuel bills, given their cabs a new lease of life with smoother running and increased power and reduced black smoke to assist drivers to pass the current emission tests. Well, **Power Pill UK Ltd** has devised a special offer exclusively for **Dial-a-Cab** drivers to say thank you for all the support you have given them by reporting your findings in **Call Sign**.

In return for some very simple data regarding how much fuel you use before and after using the Power Pill (plus your own views on how your taxi performs), you will receive 2 free packs containing 10 Power Pills in each. Earlier tests have shown that on average, one pack will last a driver approximately 1 month. Then, after completing your free allocation, if you see a benefit from continuing to use the Power Pill, so long as you fill in the simple form with your mileage and amount of fuel purchased at the pump, you will receive the Power Pills at the greatly reduced cost of £17.99 - £6.00 cheaper than the RRP.....and don't forget – the Power Pill is tax deductible in the same way your fuel is.

**All DaC drivers need do is to call Power Pill on 0845 1 30 80 77 and register your details – name, rank and number etc. This is what you do:**

- Call Power Pill on 0845 1 30 80 77 to register...
- Fill in form before using Power Pill and send back to Power Pill in pre-paid envelope...
- Receive free pack of Power Pills and second form...
- Send back second form and receive another free pack of pills and form...

**And that's it! Then, if you wish to continue using the Power Pill to save on fuel and reduce black smoke etc, just keep logging your mileage and you will receive the Power Pill at the reduced price for 10 months. Power Pill hope that this data will help to show various bodies the benefits of using the Power Pill. And of course, Call Sign will monitor the findings very carefully...**



*Go further, stay cleaner*



## Qlink - The Experiment Continues



The QLink Pendants

Last month's **Call Sign** published some remarkable – if early – results from an amazing product called **QLink**.

**QLink** came to Brunswick House and carried out some tests on 15 drivers and 10 staff members, all of whose work involves being on a PC for much of the day – whether in an office or in the taxi. We were told that brain cells, which communicate with each other electronically, could become scrambled by constant electro-magnetic waves that are constantly bombarding us. Even your TV or electric toaster can have an adverse effect.

The tests are scheduled to continue for one more month and we hope to have results in our next issue (July).

One driver, **Divyesh Ruparelia (V59)**, actually phoned Call Sign to tell us that the constant headaches he had suffered for many years have gone since wearing QLink! To say he was thrilled would be an understatement.

Some said there was no difference, but the majority claimed that they were much calmer since wearing the QLink. We'll know next issue whether this anti-stress device works long-term or not.

*Call Sign has had several drivers who were keen to purchase QLink. As testers, we get it at cost price. Phone 01732 744 033 and quote the 'Dial a Cab' offer. All work identically (except the "Classic" which contains slightly older technology), the extra cost is for looks and those who want to show the pendant off...*

The prices for DaC drivers are (inc VAT):

**Classic design:**

£41.13 (Regular price £70)

**New design (white or black):**

£64.63 (Regular price £99)

**Titanium:**

£88.13 (Regular price £157)

**Standard silver:**

£117.50 (Regular price £199)

**Silver pebble:**

£135.13 (Regular price £225)

# RTG Show £2.2 Million Loss!

The Radio Taxis Group report and accounts to 30 November 2005 are now in the public domain following a year of investment in their core business, new projects and acquisitions.

The acquisitions included the businesses of Xeta-Net Limited comprising the Xeta taxi circuit, College Cars and a licence for Xpert - a software package that utilises GPRS technology.

Major new RTG projects included the formation of Matrix, an executive licensed private hire business, which acquired and amalgamated a portion of Boughtons private hire and QVI Express.

Group turnover during the year increased by 15.7% to £45.8M and included £3M of subscriptions and £1.6M from new business. However, despite this significant increase in turnover, gross margins were down by 2.1% on the previous year and together with increased spending on administration expenses of £11.4M (an increase of 33.7% over the last year), resulted in an operating loss of £2.2M after an asset write-off amounting to £600K.

As a result of the losses experienced in 2005, consolidated share capital and reserves



RTG Executive Chairman Geoffrey Riesel

fell to £5.5M.

Executive Chairman Geoffrey Riesel reported that the Group will actively continue a program of company acquisitions in 2006 and is confident that this strategy will achieve a break-even position during the year.

The latest share price – originally priced at £3.29 - had dropped to 45p on the latest share dealing (21 April), valuing the company at £911,000.

***You may not need us now, but cut us out for when you do!***



**10% Discount on keys and locks for DaC Drivers**

**Free estimates    No call out charge**

**Burglary repairs / boarding up**

**Additional security / security upgrades**

**Safes opened, repaired and serviced**

**On site key cutting services**

**Grilles and security gates**

**Additional vehicle locks fitted**

**Auto locksmiths**

**Transponder and chipped keys**

**Domestic and commercial**

**Locks replaced and fitted to insurance specifications (BS3621)**

**All types of locks, opened, repaired and replaced**

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**Tel: 01708 437 123 (2 Lines) Fax: 01708 437 234**

## MAILSHOT

**Either write to Call Sign at Brunswick House or email us at - callsignmag@aol.com**

### Thank you Colin

I just want to thank Dial-a-Cab for the courtesy extended to me during my travel from London City Airport to the Radisson in Trafalgar Square. The taxi driver's name was Colin Carruthers and he was extremely friendly and courteous. He made me feel welcome. I liked him so much that I wanted to pass along these comments. Please let him know that I appreciate his professionalism and courtesy. Thanks to all in your organization.

**Philip M.Hronas**

**Houston, Texas**

**Well-done Colin (Y38). Mr Hronas is with the Shell organisation and as he comes from Texas, I just wondered whether he offered you any oil wells as a thank you! ...Ed**

### Thanks again...

On 22 March at around 1pm, a Dial-a-Cab taxi took my friend and I from Arlington Avenue, Islington to the London Palladium. After we had left the cab, I realised that I had left my scarf on the back seat. However, I needn't have worried because the driver very kindly returned it to my home. I just wanted to say thank you...

**Jean Semaine**

**London N1**

### And yet again!

I would simply like to say thank you to Dial-a-Cab's staff for their speed of reaction and kindness. Last Wednesday night, my boss called me at 8.30pm telling me she had left her briefcase in the taxi she picked up in the street just in front of our offices on Saint James's Square. She had no idea which cab company (if any) it was and she was desperate because she was flying to the US the following day.

We decided to start calling cab companies and Dial-a-Cab was the second one I called. It must have been around 9pm by then. Your call centre staff were extremely kind to take all the details and they called me back about 15 minutes later saying that the briefcase was still with the driver (Charlie 84) and that he was doing a job in SW6 where I happen to live. The briefcase reached my house before 10pm and you can imagine the relief of both my boss, for having found the briefcase, and mine for not having to spend the whole of Thursday talking to more cab companies and police stations, etc! Many thanks to Charlie 84 and many thanks to your call centre staff - they even called me back the following day to confirm whether the briefcase had been handed back.

**Vincent Leconte**

**BP, London SW1**

**The driver was Tony Handley. Well done! ...Ed**

### Not four thank-yous in one issue!

I'd like to thank both the Editor and Tom Whitbread for the wonderful article written about me in the **April Call Sign**. At the age of 74, I finally get recognition! My wife made some photocopies and I was able to give them to my family and friends. Dial-a-Cab has been a great part of my life and I have thoroughly enjoyed it. Quite honestly, I am missing it very much and I would like to take this opportunity to wish everyone associated with DaC many more prosperous years to come. If you are eventually involved in any takeovers, I would love to be included!

**Steve Marks (Ex-G12)**

**Hope you are enjoying retirement, Steve. Tom is rather miffed that you left without giving him the chance to put you on complaint for something! ...Ed**

### And thank you Cab Enforcement...?

We can all sleep safely now that the Cab Enforcement Section have confirmed that they will be coming down heavily on the miscreants among us who have to stop on a rank to buy a sandwich or use one of the many toilets provided in our capital city. Quite rightly, they indicate that the welfare of the cab trade is not their concern. Those weeks spent at the Hendon Police College were certainly not wasted! In fact I would suggest that the Cab Enforcement Section's gain is the Serious Crime Squad's loss! If they seek a further challenge, they could always start nicking cabs using Albert Bridge! Keep up the good work, says I...

**Geoff Levene (K43)**

**Thanks for the letter, Geoff, it certainly made me smile - although I have to say that you are being a bit harsh. Yes, the article that Dave Hillson wrote in Call Sign did go on about unauthorised parking on taxi ranks by taxi drivers, but it can be unfair on drivers when they have to squeeze onto a rank because someone has gone shopping and left their cab there. Have you seen the busy rank at Russell Street, Covent Garden and how many taxis are usually parked there? Try watching, as I did recently while having a bite in one of the restaurants facing the rank. Of 4 cabs parked, 3 were still there over an hour later. Is that fair? It won't always be busy and ranks such as that one could be invaluable. Yes, Sgt Hillson sounded quite cold in the article, but Call Sign has been out with the CES catching minicabs that were touting and believe me, they suffer far more. Cab Enforcement means them and us and if you are caught not wearing your badge,**

**they may well nick you - although one would hope that a little "chat" would be sufficient if you actually have it with you. No one likes authority, but sadly as usual, the minority that don't give a toss about anyone else are the ones to blame for the clampdown on rank parking ...Ed**

### Heathrow scrubs ... and non-rejectable trips

Re **Peter Moll's (K35)** letter in the **March Call Sign**, I think he has got an almighty nerve to ask for a fixed price scrub of £35 for any job cancelled at Heathrow. Why should he receive any more compensation than a driver working in town? The fact is that 'townies' only get what is on the meter - which isn't compensation at all.

Most of us know why the car park at Heathrow is full-up most of the time, it's because most jobs come back to town and are very lucrative. If occasionally one gets a wrong 'un, then so be it. You can't win them all. Mr Moll could always join the band of hard working drivers who cater for the public at large by plying for hire in town, where for most of the time they are crying out for cabs. If he does that, then our radio work will be covered much easier because I feel sure that the number of taxis filling the car park at any given time is quite unnecessary. That's why when the 'moaning minnies' complain about there being too many cabs on the road, the truth is that many of them are to be found at Heathrow!

So I invite Mr Moll to join us, the best cabbies in the world working in the greatest metropolis on Earth. If he isn't quite sure where that is, let him take the M4 marked Central London or failing that, he could use the more picturesque route - namely the Old Bath Road.

Can I also comment on **Mike Son's** column in the same issue. He writes that too many jobs are being rejected, even though the average trip amounts to around £26. Surely the average refusal is because certain trips don't pay very well - which includes those that go out of the way and where there is little chance of a return trip.

But there is a way of solving the problem overnight. Why not make all jobs non-rejectable including those Westminster trips that are so popular with drivers. If you do that, then I can assure you that the waiting list for DaC will disappear immediately. Not only that, but there will be a queue a mile long at Offord Road of drivers waiting to have their radios removed.

**Stanley Frankel (K46)**

**I'm not sure what Mike Son was referring to when he spoke of "drastic steps" being taken if too many trips were con-**





# MAILSHOT

## Mailshot continued from page 36

tinually being rejected, but I've never really been one of those who worried about where I was going to, provided that my last trip had some sort of going home facility to it. Sometimes we reject out of fear – and I include myself – because we just don't like certain trips and those aren't necessarily "out of the way" ones either. I'd be interested in why some jobs that stay in town are constantly rejected. With no traffic and hand on heart, would you run from St John's Wood to Maida Vale to cover a job to Kilburn? If you say no to that, would you run from Belgrave Square to Sloane Square to cover a trip to Kensington? If you have two different answers to the above two trips, I'd be interested in why and whether a no destination policy would terrify you? And to save anyone asking, no one has told me that one is to be brought in ...Ed

## Loof Lirpa?

About 10 days ago I was having coffee with a friend who works at City Hall (in accounts) and before long the conversation turned to transport. My friend said that he had heard that there were talks about plans to make the bendy buses even longer by adding an extra section in the middle, probably starting with **route 401**. I dismissed this as too far fetched, but on Thursday I was on a bendy bus and got speaking to the driver who said that yes, indeed, within six or seven weeks there would be a specialised driver training course starting up.

Perhaps Call Sign can contact TfL and either get an official denial or be first to break the news. Let's hope that there is no foundation to this.

**Laurence Kelvin (W88)**

I received Laurence's email on the morning of April 1 and treated everything that day with suspicion! That suspicion was raised even further when I saw the route number - 4/01. I also received two other dodgy-looking emails at the same time. One was from a driver who also sent a photo of his pet armadillo, *Cabby*, while another came from a non-DaC lady driver who told me that for medical reasons she was going to have to go topless while driving her cab (her skin wasn't breathing correctly) and was I interested in photographing her as she intended entering the next Taxi Driver of the Year competition! ...Ed

## Back to fixed prices

In reply to Mr Rice's reply (**April Mailshot To Finz or not to Finz**) and especially in regard to why I don't do fixed prices, can someone explain to me why prices are

being fixed within the London postal area? I don't live in hope that it times out on the meter.

**Patrick Noble (S55)**

**Brian Rice replies:** The point I was endeavouring to convey to you, Patrick, is that you cannot be in a position to complain about fixed prices when you do not actually do them. Consequently, as the trip would never be offered to you, you would not be in a position to judge whether the FP was good or bad. Why do we have FP's? Well, for a start the client wants them and the vast majority of our members are prepared to do them, even though as a company so far as we can, we resist them.

## EC5 – cut down on wasted mileage?

I've been a DaC member for almost three years and I understand the reasons for the Finsbury Square rank, but I think that now you've taken the (temporary) decision to be able to book into EC5 without the need of the Finz, wouldn't it be even more efficient to dispatch all EC5 work (except fixed prices) as directed, but giving a pick-up address with the reject option? It seems inefficient to have one cab running from the far east side of the city to the far west side to a pick-up and another cab doing the same thing in the opposite direction. Surely this would get cabs to clients more quickly and cut down on driver's dead mileage?

**Kevin Molyneux (B20)**

**Keith Cain replies:** Kevin, the point you raise regarding disbanding EC5 has been spoken about many times. It does make a lot of sense to dispatch the work into its original zone and I have requested this from our programmers to be done. Unfortunately, all work associated with EC5 will remain masked and non-rejectable because 30 /40 years experience tells us our service levels to clients after 21:00 hours is far better operating this way. I have asked for an update on this and was advised that we hope to be in a position to test it by the middle-to the end of May. If all goes well, it will be implemented straight away...

## Going home – or the happy hour!

On reading your lead article on *'Going Home'* (**Call Sign Editorial, April 2006**), perhaps this successful proposition should be renamed Happy Hour! Please explain what part is 'going home' and what represents cherry picking, because as this successful proposition stands at the moment, it represents a cheats charter! A driver can put

in Code 3 and cherry pick for 60 minutes. He or she can log onto EC2 and get an uncovered list of all jobs in all EC zones plus all back-up channels – SE1, E1, and N1 etc including all A/D jobs. Then at the end of an hour of looking at jobs going to Essex, Herts etc but wanting to go to SW London for instance, he or she can just decide to go back to work as usual! Surely, if all drivers played this game we would have a massive backlog of late and uncovered jobs and the bid channel would be full! So where does this leave the DaC drivers who are out there to work, knowing nearly all the jobs are being viewed by the cherry pickers?

This successful proposition regarding Going Home represents a dangerous recipe for disaster and will result in a bad service, ie late cabs, which equals lost accounts, which equals no work! As many of you know, ComCab thought it had all the angles covered and sold Going Home as one of its plus points for joining ComCab, but this system was abused and look what happened to that circuit then. So maybe DaC should consider hanging fire on its new premises until it has had a chance to audit the effect the new Going Home system has on its service.

Be lucky all of you and drive safely. From just another concerned old git...

**Graham Ellis (S95)**

You obviously agree with my Editorial comments on the subject, Graham, but the price we pay for belonging to a democratic organisation is that we must accept even that which we do not agree with if the majority vote in favour. As I also said in that piece, my real objection was that neither the proposer nor second-order turned up to explain their proposition. And yes, if what you say is the case, then this proposition will cause problems as against the old system of having one crack at getting something going your direction. Perhaps a better system would be for the Board to decide this type of procedure after asking for driver's views rather than having it changed via a proposition and then changed back the following year? ...Ed

## Agreeing with the Ed

I agree with your April Editorial. Anyone putting forward or seconding a proposition should be compelled to put it forward in person.

**Martin Freeborn (C67)**

**Thank you Martin.** I've had quite a few phone calls supporting my view and (so far) none against, which beggars the point – who voted for it? ...Ed



# MAILSHOT

## Mailshot continued from page 37

### Freebies...

Can *Call Sign* please pass my thanks on to Tom Whitbread for the stream of freebie tickets he seems to get for us. I recently saw the Billy Joel show (**Movin' Out**) and thoroughly enjoyed it. Any chance of Tom also sending me a few bob towards the dinner we had to have as we were out anyway!

**John Davis (V41J)**

**Tom did send a reply, but this is a family magazine! ...Ed**

### PowerPill and the PCO

I read with much interest on page 39 (**April Call Sign - PCO emissions exhibition packs 'em in**), Roy Ellis's reply concerning use of the PowerPill. As I understand from the article, he may have acknowledged some limited tacit approval for their use provided a valid means of on-going testing methods can be arranged. This is exciting news, Alan! Has anyone contacted PowerPill about this important development yet? I am currently in touch with one of the largest cab proprietors in London who would be most interested if this goes ahead.

**David Baker (D22)**

**I actually introduced the PowerPill representative to Roy Ellis at the show, but there is some way to go before the product can be used as an emissions buster. Firstly, it has to satisfy the authorities that it doesn't just reduce smoke, because reducing smoke levels and increasing mileage on fuel isn't what the Mayor is looking for. Fingers crossed! ...Ed**

### Spanish Taxi

Although I have Espana, I buy Austin Taxi FX4R. I not have spare parts, neither photos, neither manual of functioning. Hence I resort to you that he be kind, can send me some manual and please tell me where I can spare parts for this model get. FX4R and of him I do not know absolutely nothing. He would need some manual, books, photos and some market where acquire of spare parts when he need them.

If you may help oneself, he would thank it for life because I find myself in Cadiz, very far from England in order to be able to obtain information. If you or his wife collect something, or they desire some Hispanic object, not doubt in asking me for it, that with pleasure he would send it.

**Joseph M. Basadre Montesinos**

**Puerto Real, Cadiz, España**

**Does anybody have an FX4R manual that they no longer want? I'm not too sure if I can survive a long-term email exchange! ...Ed**

### No subs for holidays?

In January, my son married his Australian

girlfriend in Sydney where they have made a home. As we had not seen him for almost three years, we all went over for a special 7-week trip. Coincidentally, before our trip I was reading how well DaC were doing with £4.5M in the Bank and thought (admittedly with little optimism) that with the strong financial position and under my particular circumstances, it might be possible to apply for a reduction or suspension of subs for the period I was away. But I received a letter from Howard Pears telling me that after lengthy discussion, the BoM had decided my case was unsuitable. Disappointed, I wrote back to Mr Pears to say that in the absence of any details in his letter, I imagine the Board's decision was based, at least in part, on fears of setting a precedent. If so, then replication of my situation was unlikely and to appeal once more to the Board, adding that this might be an occasion to relent from being hard-nosed businessmen and allow our mutual status an opportunity to make a gesture that would have been very useful to me at a tough time financially.

Don't misunderstand me; this is not a whinge that I had to suffer 7 weeks in Australia during the depths of winter and still had to pay subs. For me, that particular issue is over. Essentially I want to take this opportunity to now go on and relay a personal slight by Howard Pears that I think ties in with my perception that drivers on the circuit are increasingly taken for granted.

When I returned from Australia, I wrote again to Mr Pears to ask the content of the BoM's lengthy discussion, but more importantly just an explanation why my case was unsuitable. I just wanted to know why! I delivered the letter by hand to the main reception. After a few weeks, I hadn't received a reply so I wrote again this time using Royal Mail and assumed that the internal mail had gone awry. Another few weeks went by without reply and I have no doubt my letters have gone in the bin. I simply think that a letter from a member should be acknowledged and answered; after all I don't think a letter from a client would be ignored - nor should we. This whole episode seems to me to be symptomatic of the way we drivers - the lifeblood of the Society - are treated. It manifests itself in the way members' legitimately raised questions in *Mailshot* are often ignored in favour of character assassination, with shockingly, details of the questioner's work record displayed. It is simply not right that members personal work details are gratuitously shown in the pages of *Call Sign*. Members have every right to seek answers without the rest of the fleet having to know how long they have been on the circuit or whether they have completed 40 jobs per month or have ever done fixed prices. After all, I seem to recall that until recently, the

BoM jealously guarded their privacy when it came to their pay rates.

Equally the complaint notes sent out by Mr Whitbread regarding motor cab licences which rightly caused such indignation, is another recent example. I notice that Tom took the time to address this in April's *Call Sign*, giving a detailed, cogent explanation of the problem non-production of the licences can cause. Dare I suggest that a letter sent to relevant members with that sort of detail, but emphasising the point that complaint letters would have to follow if the error was not rectified, would have been a more appropriate and respectful way to handle the problem. After all, I have no doubt that for 90% of members (including me), it was merely an oversight. Indeed, can you imagine an oversight by a corporate client being treated in such a way? Of course not! And why not? Because clients are important and here is the rub - so are we!

I urge you to resist the temptation to dump a pile of verbal poo on my head and see this letter for what it is, a genuine attempt to highlight a creeping malaise that can set in when respect is lacking. Of course it may be that I am far too sensitive or completely wrong. It would be interesting to see what other members think.

**David Brett (P93)**

**Company Secretary Howard Pears replies: David, I can confirm that I have not thrown your correspondence in the bin and in fact addressed this matter after my mother's recent funeral. Yes the Society is doing well and the cash position is very strong, however, in order to maintain this success and consistency, the Board sometimes need to make decisions that may not be to the liking of individual members. In this instance, the Board made a decision based on consistency and fairness. There was no intention of being disrespectful to you and a course of action resulting in the fair treatment of all members was paramount in the Board's decision-making process**

**How could a question such as did Mr Brett receive an allowance on his council tax, car insurance or television licence at the same time be answered without attracting searching debate? Similar special case requests have been declined by the Board in the past and you can rest assured that fairness and consistency will be applied to all future applications.**





# MAILSHOT

Mailshot continued from  
page 38

## Warning to SatNav owners

With more and more drivers fitting SatNavs to their cabs - especially Tomtoms - they need to heed the following warning. The removal of your SatNav at the end of your working day will leave a circular mark on the windscreen and is a sign for the would be robber that the SatNav has just been put out of sight and they will break in just to look for this very popular item. The easy answer is to take your SatNav out of the cab and clean the window before you leave the vehicle overnight.

Alan Nash (A95)

**There is an article in this issue which should be taken as a warning to drivers that there are miscreants out there who want your SatNav and aren't too fussy as to how they get it ...Ed**

## Powerpill tester's update

Just to let you know of the improvements I have noticed after using the Ubiee Powerpill. As mentioned previously in the *Call Sign* report on the pill, I certainly noticed that my cab was running much smoother. The cab also showed a reduction in emission levels from 0.75 to 0.67. But best of all has been the improvement in

fuel consumption that I am now getting. I used to get 29.5 mpg before using the Powerpill - which was pretty good anyway, but since using the pill that has improved up to 33.5mpg. Although following the original advice of using one pill at every other fill (I was using less than half a tank daily, but liked to fill up daily), my figures didn't show that much improvement with consumption going up to 31.5mpg. I now know that was because the pill was only treating half a tank of fuel, so I started filling up when my tank was more than 3/4 empty but then put the pill in at every fill. This has resulted in me now getting 33.5mpg.

On a different note, could I take this opportunity to thank **Pat O'Toole (T44)** for bringing the **QLink** to our attention. My energy levels have increased markedly since wearing the QLink. I used to suffer headaches daily, which I don't do anymore and I feel more refreshed every day. Thanks Pat and also Alan Fisher for testing it via *Call Sign*.

Divyesh Ruparelia (V059)

**Call Sign spoke to Powerpill and they confirmed Divyesh's point that if you only treat half the fuel in the tank, you will only see half the savings and that it is more beneficial to use 3/4 to a full tank of fuel for each Power Pill. That**

**way all of the new fuel put into the cab gets treated. However, I'd issue a warning on that point. No fuel saving is worth running dry and breaking down because you let the tank get too low and then found that you were in danger of running out of fuel. Don't leave it till the last minute ...Ed**

## Thanks for the flowers...

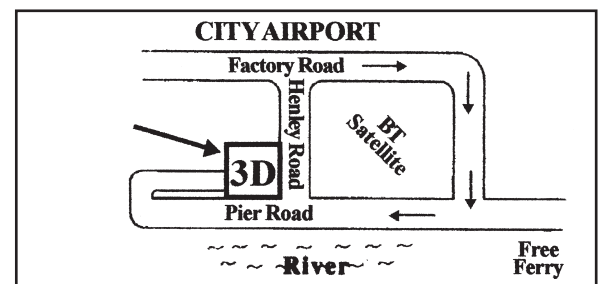
May I through your magazine express the thanks of my family and myself for the beautiful flower arrangement received. Thankfully my operation is now behind me and I am once again back home, beginning what I hope will be fast recovery to full health once again. The good wishes of The Board of Management, Drivers and all the Staff have helped greatly in aiding my recovery and making one appreciate a sense of belonging. To all of you associated with Dial-a-cab, my sincere thanks and please be careful out there.

I hope the above can be include in your next publication, keep up the good work on our behalf.

Roy Webb (D42)

**Nice to hear you are recovering, Roy ...Ed**

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