

October 2006



Call Sign

From the home of Dial-a-Cab International

Inside this issue...

PCO respond to Call Sign complaint

DaC take Corporation of London on a 'problem' tour

Dial-a-Cab off to Bollywood!

DaC dispatcher has kidney transplant

Is this Dial-a-Cab's best year ever?

DaC drivers and a dress code

Power Pill: After one year of testing, DaC drivers prove it works!

DaC drivers ready to take special children on their trip of a lifetime to Disneyland resort, Paris



Why is a DaC driver rowing along the Thames dressed as a woman?





NASH'S NUMBERS

By Alan Nash (A95)

It's a long time since I last did Heathrow departure terminals, in fact it was back in December 1999! To make sure the table below is up-to-date, each airway's website was visited to check their departure terminals and is correct as of August 2006...

AIRLINE	AIRLINE	AIRLINE
BRITISH AIRWAYS	Air Sahara T4	LOT Polish T2
BA Domestic T1	Air Seychelles T2	Lufthansa T2
BA International T4	Alitalia T2	Luxair T2
BA Europe T1	All Nippon Airways T3	Malaysian Airlines T3
BA EXCEPTIONS	American Airlines T3	Malev Hungarian Airlines T2
BA to Amsterdam T4	Asiana Airlines T1	MAE Middle East Airlines T3
BA to Brussels T4	Austrian Airlines T2	Olympic Airways T2
BA to Copenhagen T4	Bellview Airlines T2	Pakistan Int. Airlines T3
BA to Geneva T4	Biman Bangladesh T3	Pulkovo T2
BA to Hong Kong T1	British Midland see below	Qantas T4
BA to Johannesburg T1	bmi to all dest. except Lyon T1	Qatar Airways T3
BA to Kiev T1	bmi to Lyon T4	Royal Air Maroc T2
BA to Los Angeles T1	Cathay Pacific T3	Royal Brunei T3
BA to Lyon T4	China Eastern T2	Royal Jordanian T3
BA to Miami T3	Croatia Airlines T2	SAS T3
BA to Moscow T1	CSA Czech Airways T2	Saudia Airlines T3
BA to Oslo T4	Cyprus Airways T1	Singapore Airlines T3
BA to Paris T4	Egypt Air T3	SN Brussels Airlines T4
BA to San Francisco T1	El Al Israel Airlines T1	South Africa Airways T1
BA to Sofia T1	Emirates T3	Sri Lankan Airlines T4
BA to St Petersburg T1	Ethiopian Airlines T3	Sudan Airways T2
BA to Tokyo T1	Etihad Airlines T3	Swiss Internl. Airlines T2
BA to Vienna T4	EVA Air T3	Syrianair T2
BA to Zurich T4	Finnair T1	Tam T4
	GB Airways T1	TAP Air Portugal T2
Remaining Airlines (A-Z)	Gulf Air T3	TAROM T2
Aer Lingus T1	Hemus Air T2	Thai Airways International T3
Aeroflot T2	Iberia T2	Transaero Airlines T1
Air Algerie T2	Icelandair T2	Tunis Airlines T2
Air Astana T2	Iran Air T3	Turkish Airlines T3
Air Canada T3	Japan Airlines T3	Turkmenistan Air T3
Air China T3	JAT T2	Ukraine Internl. Airlines T2
Air France T2	Jet Airways T3	United Airlines T3
Air India T3	Kenya Airways T4	Uzbekistan Airways T2
Air Jamaica T3	KLM Royal Dutch T4	VARIG Brazilian Airways T3
Air Malta T4	Korean Air T3	Virgin Atlantic T3
Air Mauritius T3	Kuwait Airways T3	Yemenia T2
Air New Zealand T3	Libyan Arab Airlines T2	

It's not too late to avail yourself of the Nash's Numbers Useful Document. It features such information as run-in times, DaC map, outer London codes, attributes, TXC manual input codes, post codes / physical ranks, Heathrow in and outs, fare table, approx distance to towns with DaC codes, street numbering from past issues, Heathrow terminals, over 1000 pubs and wine bars, lots of restaurants, clubs and hotels, LCA and Eurostar arrivals. Simply email me with your name, call sign and badge number to: nashsnumbers@tiscali.co.uk.

You can find the usual What's On at ExCel, Earls Court and Olympia elsewhere in this issue...

from the editor's desk

Police: Friends or enemies?

It was closing in to Christmas 1966. England was still bathing in the glow of becoming world football champions and the papers were talking about whether Bobby Moore should be made a knight! I was driving a number 26 bus between Aldgate bus station and Leyton having recently become London's youngest bus driver – a title I proudly held for just 11 days!

It was around 4am and we had arrived at Aldgate. My conductor for the day was Bow Garage T&G union rep, the ultra-left wing Ernie Clancy and we made our way to the canteen that opened just for bus crews. Ernie had been around a long time and there was little that he didn't know about anything, but we were both about to be shocked.

Although the rule was bus crews (and inspectors) only, there was one unofficial exemption to the rule. In those far-off days, London had 6-foot burley policemen walking around on the beat. Crime was still around, but London felt fairly secure because wherever you were, there was always a bobby somewhere close. But walking around London's deserted streets at 5am deserved a quick cuppa and the bus station was the only place in the City area where they could get one. It certainly didn't bother us and besides, Ernie knew most of the police crews and their experiences of the nightshift always made interesting listening. Interesting, sometimes humorous – but never in any way dishonest. But this one morning was different and it stuck in our minds because coming across a copper who was not 100% honest was just so unusual.

The police are not and should never be treated as different to the rest of us. They too have families, a sense of humour and are just as capable of mistakes as are the rest of us, but Ernie and I were still shocked when this policeman told us how he had followed an Indian – his tone showed immediate prejudice – riding his pushbike the wrong way up Houndsditch in the early hours some months previous, but that he wanted to see if he "...could get him for something else as well!"

He obviously succeeded in his quest because the cyclist pulled up and entered a phone box. After a minute, the policeman opened the kiosk door and saw a bag full of pornographic photos. He nicked him and later in court discovered that he had been selling the photos and was looking at them to describe the contents to his customer at the other end of the phone.

In court, the cyclist was found guilty and as was common at the time, the Magistrate ordered the arresting officer to destroy the evidence. Destroy them! Obviously, that officer never heard the Magistrate because he brought the photos to the Aldgate canteen and while showing them to whoever was listening, was laughing about the whole thing. In all honesty, both Ernie and I had seen worse photos, but to arrest someone because you didn't like their skin colour and then to do almost the identical thing to that for which he had made the original arrest was, in our opinion, a disgrace. It was also very, very unusual and why it still sticks in my mind.

Call Sign has no doubt that there are many good policemen still around, the trouble is



finding them. How often have you, as a driver, needed the services of a policeman? Ok, not every day, but when you have, did you find one? If you phoned, did they come? When a member of my family was burgled earlier this year, the police didn't come round until the next day – about as much use as a carrot is to a dead rabbit.

Strangely though, when it came to putting in a mobile speed trap along Loughton High Road, there was no shortage of police officers because if you read last month's **Call Sign and TAXI**, you will know that two officers both claimed I was there, yet neither had any photographic evidence or a correct registration. Yet somehow, after receiving a Notice of Intended Prosecution (NIP) for a car that wasn't mine, 8 days or so later, another NIP arrived – this time with my correct number. So where did it come from, because it certainly didn't come from the police officers reports as they had written a different number down? Is the Crown Prosecution Service (CPS) so desperate for something to do that they not only put in hidden mobile speed traps, but then make up their own version of what they would like the reg number to be?

And why, when my barrister pointed out to the prosecution at Epping Magistrates Court that there was no evidence whatsoever linking me to the offence – in fact quite the reverse as my registration was different to that in the police evidence – did the CPS not pull the case when their own prosecution on the day told them they couldn't win?

The responsibility of the Crown Prosecution Service is to prosecute criminal cases investigated by the police in England and Wales, but according to one ex-policeman I spoke to, the CPS don't bother to check the evidence on cases such as mine and writing to them (as I did) explaining that they have made a mistake, is totally worthless. They are just too busy. My barrister on the day confirmed that. So justice now depends on how busy the CPS is.

And the police? How busy are they? Well, I went to my local police station prior to my case after receiving the incorrect NIP and in addition to showing my licence as requested, thought I'd show them my log book to prove that my car and the car on the NIP were different. Yes, it was rather stupid of me because after queuing for just over an hour, I discov-

ered that the only person in this police station (dressed in what looked like the shirt Fletcher in Porridge used to wear) was not even a policeman and knew very little about procedure other than how to fill in the form – 10 out of 10 for that bit! If you can't even find a policeman in your local police station, you know things are bad!

And the trade police?

Contrary to what other trade papers may say, at least the cab tout squad from the Met (TOCU) are out there and yes, they may well nick some taxi drivers for parking on a taxi rank, but they also nick an awful lot of touts who hopefully will now be identified separately from real taxis following the complaint by **Call Sign** to the PCO – which they have answered in this issue.

Whilst the PCO claim that they were "surprised" **Call Sign** interpreted the figures the way we did, they have agreed to look again at the way they put out the figures to the trade. With a total of just 13 taxi drivers caught toutting out of a total of 1095, we felt justified in asking that both groups not be lumped together for one grand total. And yes, we did find it rather surprising that no one else in the trade press felt the same way as **Call Sign**.

I started this piece at Aldgate bus station in 1966 and no, the days when a policeman behaving incorrectly was a huge exception, will not return. I'm sure the majority of police do as good a job as they are allowed to do, but we live in a different world – one where revenue has overtaken the need for justice, where the need to be of a minimum height to be a policeman has gone, a world where being a policeman is just a job – and one apparently where eyesight good enough to read a number plate is no longer a requirement.

Motorised Tuk Tuks

I recently spent a few days in Brighton, current home of the motorised Tuk Tuks that go from the station to the Marina. They were hardly rushed off their feet, but what was of concern to the local cabbies I spoke to was that within weeks of their launch, they were already leaving the designated route they were supposed to follow. If they come here in May, although they will have no set route, look out for a "we rule the world" attitude.

If they do anything they are not supposed to, take the time to write their licence number down and report the incident. The Brighton cabbies aren't bothering, they are just moaning about it – another reason why we taxi drivers get pushed about. We're all scared of losing 5 minutes work.

Concierge cliché?

I do enjoy reading Steve McNamara's column in **Taxi** (20 September), but surely he knows by now that DaC's Concierge is not a "minicab booking system" as his well-worn cliché calls it. It has helped DaC drivers be part of record trip numbers and probably classifies as the best £25,000 ever spent in this trade.

Alan Fisher
callsignmag@aol.com

Reflections Of The Chairman

Year-end results

Our financial year ended on 31 August and the preliminary results are excellent. Early indications appear to show that we have put more trips through the system than ever before and that our turnover has increased by a huge £5.5million to an all-time record.

Naturally we cannot announce anything officially at present as the figures are still subject to audit, but as soon as verification is received, we will be making an official announcement. So be prepared for record turnover and trips...

DaC new building: Contractor now appointed...

If the progress I've referred to above is to be maintained, then it is imperative we move to our new premises as soon as possible so that the growth this Society has enjoyed in recent years can continue. It is essential that we have the capacity to expand our business even further, consequently a contractor has now been appointed and work will commence on the new building from 9 October and I have been informed that completion will be early in the New Year.

It is surely a healthy sign as to how this Society has developed in recent years, that we can go out and purchase new premises for several £millions and yet still be in the enviable position where we do not have to finance the acquisition. We have built up enough of a 'war chest' in recent years, enabling us not to have to borrow any money whilst still retaining Brunswick House as we migrate the business to our new building. Exciting times indeed...

Coverage and the Christmas incentive...

Despite the fact that this business is now extremely sophisticated and uses the very latest cutting edge technology that we can supply to our clients, at the end of the day that technology means nothing if we cannot carry out the most imperative part of our business - supplying our clients with a taxi when they require it and one that is on time!

Of course that's where you, the Dial-a-Cab members, come into the equation. It is absolutely paramount that you continue to give the clients the service they require at all times. I know that circumstances are becoming increasingly fraught out there on the roads, however, as you are all no doubt aware, our clients are not interested in our problems - their only interest is in the supply of their taxi. Consequently, we must all try that little bit harder over the coming months as conditions become even more chaotic.

I am in the process of finalising this year's



Christmas incentive, one that will be very similar to last years in an attempt to convey maximum coverage to our clients. The big difference over last year is that this time we will be endeavouring to appeal to your wives and partners so that they will want to give you that extra nudge to go out and work even harder in covering our account work and picking up as many of our clients as you can! If I can finalise the incentive before *Call Sign* goes to press, then details will appear elsewhere in this issue, otherwise you will receive details in the post very soon!

Interesting proposal?

You know I always maintain that our members are among the best informed in the Taxi industry purely and simply because we use this magazine to convey all the latest issues to you. So I thought you might be interested in this latest piece of information that has been conveyed to me.

As you know, Northern Ireland is part of the United Kingdom and the taxis / private hire over there are licensed by the Department of the Environment (DoE). It has now been proposed by the DoE that in February / March next year, taxis and all private hire vehicles will be allowed to pick up off the street, although the only vehicles that will be allowed on a taxi rank are those with a wheelchair facility.

I find it quite extraordinary - although no longer surprising because it is something I have been concerned about for several years - that our Government is propos-

ing that private hire should be allowed to ply for hire on the streets. This unprecedented move has not yet been sanctioned but the depressing part is that it has actually been proposed. I believe this is a development that has to be followed very closely as we do not want anyone over here getting ideas!

Whilst on the topic of relaying information to you, I came across a question by John Biggs, a Labour member on the GLA London Assembly Transport Committee. His question was directed to our Mayor, Ken Livingstone and the question was:

What current view is there on whether private hire vehicles should be able use bus lanes?

The Mayor's response was that consideration was being given by TfL to the use of bus lanes by private hire vehicles, including the effectiveness of enforcement activity and the effect on road capacity.

He added: **"Although all private hire vehicles display licence discs in their front and rear screens, they are not immediately recognisable. Work is progressing to quantify these effects and ensure that any exemptions would not prevent the effective operation of bus lanes. TfL will also be co-operating on this with the boroughs (who are responsible for the majority of London's bus lanes) and the Department for Transport."**

Now, perhaps I am being just a little bit cynical here, but it sounds to me as though the only thing that keeps private hire out of bus lanes is that they cannot be easily identified and as a consequence, other road users would follow them into the bus lanes and cameras would not be able to differentiate between the two. That seems to be why they are restricted from using them.

However, I wonder what the effect would be if the Mayor were to allow exterior signage on Private Hire - that would make them easily recognisable. Naaahhh, surely not...!

Brian Rice
Chairman, Dial-a-Cab

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PCO Reply To Call Sign “Touting Figures” Complaint

The Public Carriage Office sent out a press release last month that I, as *Call Sign* Editor, decided not to publish as a separate entity. It contained a list of figures that you have probably now seen in other trade magazines that saw no problem with it. That is their prerogative and I offer no criticism on their decision to publish. It contained first-half year PCO figures on those from the taxi and private hire sections of the trade who had been “convicted” of touting and other associated matters. *Call Sign* has no problem with those caught touting being pulled up. It is against the rules and as such, we should not do it.

However, I took offence that the figures gave a total “convicted” figure of 1095 but which also made it clear that this was a figure made up from holders of both taxi and private hire licenses. I had no way of knowing, but felt that the taxi percentage must have been much lower than that of the private hire figure and felt aggrieved that we should be lumped together.

I later heard from DaC Chairman **Brian Rice** that he too was sent a copy of the PCO press release and he wanted to show them to DaC drivers and to also make it clear that he felt the figures could be deceiving. He wrote in last month's *Reflections of the Chairman*:

“Earlier this month, the PCO released figures regarding ‘Touting and Associated Matters’ for the period January 2004 to July 2006. They make shocking reading, but it is the tip of the iceberg because as we all know, hundreds of misdemeanours are committed every weekend. However, my biggest concern regarding the figures is that they apply to holders of Private Hire or Taxi Driver licences, so it would appear that the authorities have included any misdemeanours from within our industry to be included with the Private Hire industry. And that, in my opinion, is totally incorrect, they should be separated. However, I have decided to publish the information as I would be extremely surprised if the figures contained a high proportion of Taxi Drivers – let’s hope I am not proven wrong!”

The Chairman went on to add:
“If my suspicions are proven to be correct, can you just imagine how the problem would be exacerbated by the introduction of exterior signage on Private Hire vehicles? The authorities should heed these figures and deny the Private Hire industry the right of exterior signage – the price in public safety would be enormous!”

Brian then published the PCO figures, which claimed that from a total of 2047 private hire and taxi drivers whose names had been sent to the PCO by TOCU at the Met, 1095 had their cases looked at by the PCO of which just 169 had no action taken – including those whose licence application was withdrawn anyway.

I then wrote to the PCO to ask for a breakdown of the figures. By return, they confirmed that the number of Licensed Taxi drivers referred to were indeed in a tiny minority with just 13 out of that 1095 total being directly linked to the licensed taxi trade. As a result, I sent an official complaint to the PCO re the “lumping together” of both taxi and private hire misdemeanours in the PCO Notice.

The Head of the PCO, Roy Ellis, replied to Call Sign's complaint, writing:

“I refer to your letter dated 23 August on the subject of the PCO Notice announcing the action taken by the PCO following convictions / cautions for touting. I confess to being a little surprised that the Notice has been interpreted in the way you suggest. Touting is not an offence that I generally associate with taxi



Brian Rice with Roy Ellis

drivers because of its low incidence within the taxi trade. It is much more an activity associated with minicabs - which is confirmed by the subsequent figures you were given. It was not our intention to mislead anyone - and certainly not the intention to wrongly attribute offences to taxi drivers.

Now that I am aware of the interpretation you have placed upon the Notice, I will review the format and content of future such notices.

Thank you for making your views known.”

The fact that the PCO sent me a breakdown of the figures as soon as I asked followed by the letter from Roy Ellis, suggests that instances such as the one *Call Sign* complained about, may become fewer. We certainly hope so, because whilst not suggesting that the PCO did it deliberately, it isn't difficult to understand how people reading the PCO Notice could come to an incorrect assumption. Mr Ellis may know that it isn't the licensed Taxi trade that tend to tout, but there are others reading this and other mags that wouldn't know that...

Alan Fisher
Editor

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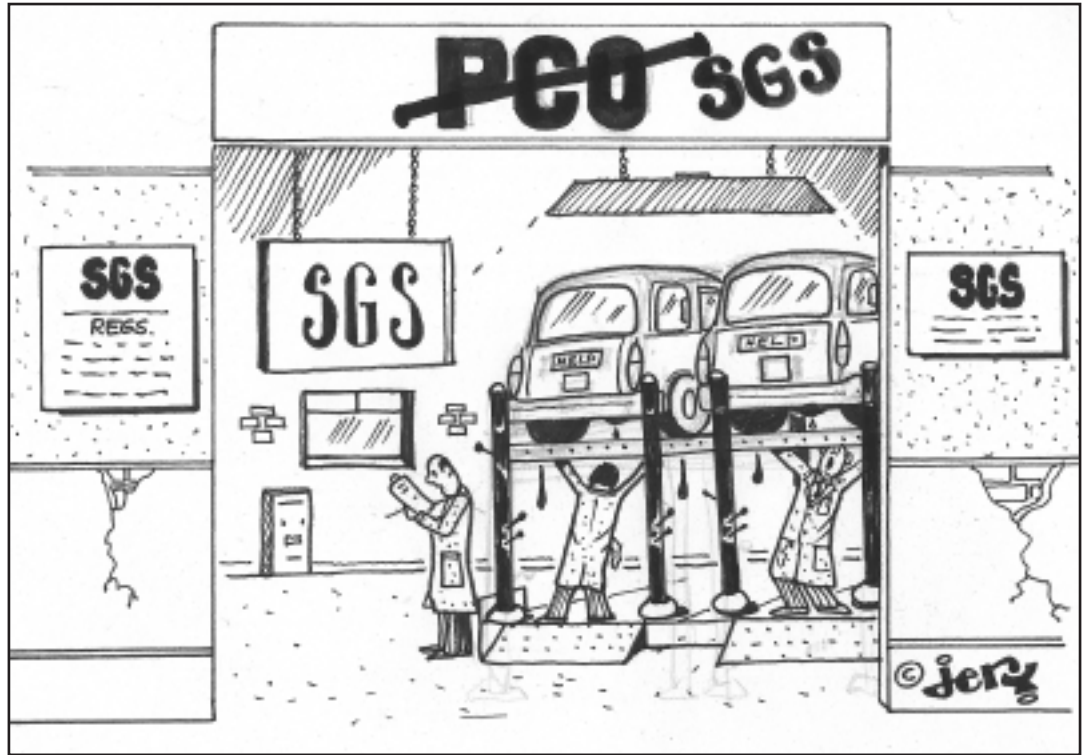
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Jery's World



"I'm trying to see which Euro classification these taxis should be. It says here that buses are ok with Euro 2 and minicabs are ok with anything provided they have at least 3 wheels – 2 of which are reasonably secure. Can't we just shove a Power Pill into these or give em all back to the PCO?"



THE FOUNDLING

Call Sign was recently contacted by Pontus Rosén, Operations Manager of London's most surprising museum, The Foundling. You've never heard of it? Well neither had we, but we can now understand why it is becoming more and more successful.

The Foundling Museum tells the story of the Foundling Hospital, London's first home for abandoned children and of three major figures in British history; its campaigning founder - philanthropist Thomas Coram, artist William Hogarth and composer George Frideric Handel. This remarkable collection of art and social history is now housed in a restored and refurbished building adjacent to the original site of the hospital, demolished in 1926.

Certainly the museum, which is in Brunswick Square, Bloomsbury, tells a sad tale. How could it be

otherwise? Among the most affecting objects are the small tokens mothers attached to their babies when they left them to the care of the Foundling Hospital, hoping one day to reclaim the children they could not support.

Thomas Coram, shipwright and businessman, was so horrified by the abandoned children he saw in London that he spent 17 years raising funds to build the Foundling Hospital. The hospital doubled up as the country's first public art gallery and concert hall, with paintings donated by William Hogarth and recitals by fellow governor George Frideric Handel.

Between its inception in 1741 and closure in 1953, the hospital looked after 27,000 deserted children. Admitted when they were under a year, babies were



The children queuing for lunch
Photo courtesy The Foundling Museum

baptised by the hospital, given a new name, put out to a wet nurse or foster mother and then readmitted between the ages of three and six and cared for until they were 21. Only a few were ever reclaimed by their mothers.

The Foundling Museum not only showcases the Foundling Hospital art collection and the Gerald Coke Handel Collection, but most importantly tells the story of those 27,000 children and is well worth a visit and telling your passengers about. Situated at 40 Brunswick Square, WC1 (020 7841 3600/ www.foundlingmuseum.org.uk. Adm £5, £4 concs, under-16s free. Open Tuesdays to Saturdays 10-6, Sundays 12-6

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RTG EXEC CHAIRMAN BECOMES A GRANDFATHER

The Executive Chairman of Radio Taxis Group, **Geoffrey Riesel**, has become a grandfather and *Call Sign* sends its congratulations to both Geoffrey and wife Jackie.

The new baby, Freddie, has been named after Mr Riesel's late father-in-law, Freddie Franks, who in addition to being a former Chairman at Mountview, began his taxi driving career as A49 with ODRTS...



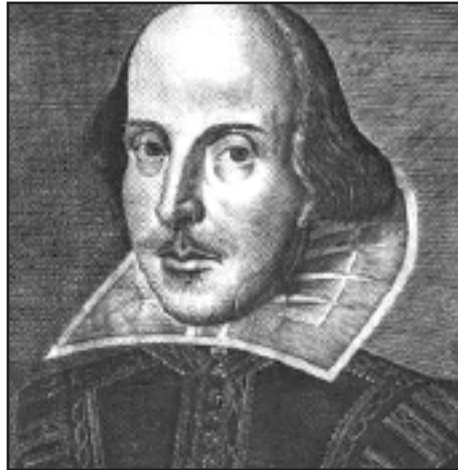
Over the past few years, tracing your ancestors has become an increasingly popular pastime. This can either be very easy or somewhat more difficult - depending on your family's place of origin. With records stored all over the world, it means that, in theory at least, you should be able to find your ancestors quite easily. But due to wars or other conflicts etc, some archives have been damaged or lost altogether.

I recommend www.ancestry.co.uk for British genealogy because they hold over 500,000,000 records of all types ie births, marriages and deaths (BMD), publication archives, probate records etc. On *Ancestry*, they also have the facility to search through all their records and present the results in categories and tables, although to make it easier they have split up the BMD records into 1837 - 1984 and 1984 - 2004. However, you should be aware that while the records in the 1984+ section are complete, the 1837 - 1984 are NOT. So the older section is only worthwhile for those searching records prior to 1910.

Since May of this year, *Ancestry* have added all of the books containing complete BMD records with free access to these records so long as you register your details first - so it's worth a try. All the records on the website are photocopies of the books that are held at the Family Record Centre in Islington, London. These are split into four sections of each year: January to March (incl), April to June, July to September and October to December. To access the images, first go to www.ancestry.co.uk and select **search**. Then on the right hand side click on **England & Wales BMD index**.

The July Call Sign had a piece from Vince Chin on websites that could help you to trace your ancestors. Jason Green is very much into the hobby and explains more...

Tracing your ancestors...



You may not be related to William Shakespeare, but you never know!

It can also be worthwhile visiting the *Family Record Centre* where all the books containing complete BMD records are available for free,

together with census, probates, wills and various other materials - you only need to pay for photocopying and it is £7 for a copy of a BMD certificate.

Using census records can be very helpful in your search, because they first began in 1841 and are carried out each decade. On every census, all the members of a household together with their age, occupation, birth place etc are recorded. But I don't think you'll find many taxi drivers! You must pay for these census records at *Ancestry* (unless it's the 1881 census which is free), but you can search for people in the 1901 census at www.1901censusonline.com - although it will only show limited information.

For international genealogy research I recommend www.familysearch.org because it's free. But they don't have as many types of archives as other pay-to-view sites.












Good Luck!

Jason D Green

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(continued from last month)

In those far off days of 1955, I thought I had been given the entry to a moneymaking heaven. I loved driving; even the FX3 2-litre diesel with its top speed of 60 mph flat out and acceleration best measured with an egg timer! If you had a longish ride, then you had to keep the FX3 diesel to less than 54 mph - or risk the engine blowing up!

Each night I would be taking more money than the night before and the ODRTS radio circuit was busy with numerous offers of work. Radio work in those days was 99% cash and drivers rarely blew out. We had perhaps six or so accounts in addition to a docket account with the three Royal Free Hospitals. This docket account mainly involved taking medical staff between the three hospitals that made up the Royal Free Group. These fares were carried at a loss to the circuit and drivers in order to give a much-needed service to the hospitals. One branch was in Liverpool Road, another in Grays Inn Road, with a smaller hospital in Haverstock Hill, Hampstead.

With the hospital rides, you were given a docket and could cash it in the following day at the ODRTS office in Pentonville Road. The dockets were usually priced between 2 shillings and sixpence (12p) up to the princely sum of 3 shillings (15p)! In return for our years of dedicated service to them, the RFHG dropped us when another circuit offered a better deal to the organiser! They too were dropped when minicabs came on the scene. It was rumoured that this was when money and a bottle of scotch first changed hands.

What you could get for £1...

In those days, the clock started at 1 shilling and 3 pence (6p), an FX3 cost £990, a £1 note would buy 4 gallons of diesel and a pint of Rotella oil and still leave you with sixpence to buy all three evening newspapers - the Evening News, Star and Standard. If you were paid £10 per week you were doing well. This was the era of you being someone in the City if you were on £1,000 a year!

Then it was my first Christmas Eve as a cabby. Most lucky workers were allowed to leave their jobs early, some even finishing by 4 o'clock that day. Many had to work their normal hours and only after leaving work could they party in their local pub. Most had Christmas Day off and if they were really lucky, Boxing Day as well. There was no two-week long shut down.

As for me - a greedy butter boy - I was driving from 6 pm and getting back to the garage at 6am, with my dayman waiting for the cab to go to work. I would walk home, count my takings, separating the money into two lots - one for the owner, using the Union supplied

"Sunset Strip" has now handed his badge and bill back to the PCO after 50 years. These are his memories. Can anyone out there in Call Sign land work out who "Sunset Strip" is?

Fifty Green Years...



"The meter started at 1 shilling and 3 pence (6p)

tables and the rest for me, around 43% plus tips. My mum helped me count the money and work out which was whose, then made

me breakfast before I went to sleep.

I would be woken up about 4 pm, have tea and get ready to go and pick up the cab. I was always early in case the dayman finished earlier than his allotted time of 5.30 pm. I told you I was greedy and hungry to take money after having been on the Knowledge! Then came my first big, big shock. Boxing Day had been and gone and where I had been so busy, now it was graveyard time with hardly any work on the street or radio. I had just experienced my first Christmas period working nights on a cab. Now it was time to learn my trade and become a real cabman, a true green badge man. This entailed running as far to the ODRTS pickup as the job was going, knowing when each theatre burst, when to 'do the rails' and the exciting if wing-damaging 'earlies' at main line stations. Equally important, why not to sit on point at Dalston Junction rank at 5 o'clock in the morning! That is unless you liked dwelling for an hour and blowing out...

To be continued...

Sunset Strip

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Parking: DaC Take the CoL on a 'Problem' Tour

The August *Call Sign* contained details of a meeting that Dial-a-Cab held with the Corporation of London after both the LTDA and T&G failed to turn up. As a direct result of the meeting, DaC Board member **Mike Son** took the CoL Department of Environmental Services Traffic Manager, Planning Manager and other members of their team on a tour of some of our more problematic parking spots – ie the ones we get most PCNs at.

Mike told *Call Sign*: **“I was delighted with the response they showed and I believe that they will be able to assist in our problem. We reviewed the parking legislations and these are the considered actions we spoke about.”**

Location	Restriction	Considered Action
1 South Place	No Waiting / No Loading (prescribed hours) on south kerb from Moorgate to South Place Mews	Remove 'No Loading' restriction
London Wall Buildings, London Wall	No waiting / No Loading (prescribed hours) on north kerb between Circus Place and Blomfield St	Consider removal section of loading restriction in London Wall towards Circus Place
75 London Wall	No Waiting / No loading (prescribed hours) on south kerb	Short-term street works to narrow London Wall will remove inside lane and alternative (Great Winchester Street) must be used. Long-term, Deutsche Bank will manage Great Winchester Street and is a better location to manage taxis
5 Old Broad St	No Waiting / No Loading at any time on east kerb	Due to nature of the street, no change in restrictions is possible Taxis must be called in to pick-up only when passenger is ready (set down is permitted). DaC will liase with client to discuss a strategy to reduce waiting time for passengers.
69 Leadenhall St	No Waiting / No Loading (7am-7pm Mon-Sat) on south kerb, with bus stop and cycle lane	Recommended to pick up / set down in Fenchurch St (see below)
90 Fenchurch St	No Waiting / No loading (7am-7pm Mon-Sat) on north and south kerb from Aldgate to Northumberland Alley	On checking street restrictions, traffic regulations indicate the restriction should finish 9m east of Northumberland Alley, but road marks on the street extend to Lloyds Ave. It is proposed to reduce the no waiting and loading area, which will give the opportunity for an increased waiting time for taxi pick-ups.
1 Lime St	No Waiting / No loading at any time	Short-term to use lay-by in Lime St with agreement from Lloyds. Long-term consideration removal of 'At Any Time' restriction as part of 'Managed Street' initiative.
1 Cornhill	No Waiting / No Loading at any time in Cornhill; No waiting / any time, no loading 8.30am-10am, 4.30pm-6.30pm Mon-Fri in Lombard St	After construction work is completed at junction of Lombard St near King William St, cabs should wait in Lombard St near Bank underground entrance

Mike added: **“Even with the changes of road markings to single yellow lines with no chevrons, the maximum time a vehicle can wait is 5 minutes. But while waiting for your passengers, if you move your cab a few yards, the 5 minutes starts again.”**

He ended by updating a few regular problem zones:

Throgmorton Street

The majority of contraventions being detected relate to cabs ignoring the 'pedestrian only' sign and cutting through Throgmorton Street to avoid

traffic. If you're not dropping-off / picking-up and just using Throgmorton Street as a rat run, you will be seen on CCTV and get a PCN.

75 London Wall

There will shortly be a major security construction outside 75 London Wall. The road will be severely restricted and picking-up / setting down will prove to be a problem. I am liasing with Deutsche Bank as to the best pick-up point. I envisage this will be Great Winchester Street. As soon as I have more definite information, I'll let drivers know.

5 Old Broad Street

Due to there being no immediate resolve with parking in Old Broad Street, I am liasing with our client to reduce the waiting time drivers have to wait for passengers.

Mike Son ended by telling *Call Sign*: **“The Corporation of London representatives have told me that they are pleased to be having this now on-going dialogue with Dial-a-Cab and consider the partnership to be very important. Whenever and wherever possible, they will continue to offer help with solutions to make life easier for all concerned.”**

Call Sign readers have an amazing record when it comes to tracing missing family roots. Here is the latest one. David Elisha would be so thrilled if anyone can help...

Hello *Call Sign* readers, my name is David Elisha and I am trying to trace any knowledge of the Elisha family in the taxi trade. My Great-Grandfather, **Joseph Nathan Elisha** was a Cab Proprietor (Job Master) and lived in Duncan Street, Islington (just off the Angel) around 1900. Joseph Nathan Elisha had two brothers, John James and Frederick C together with two sisters, Louisa Annetta and Annetta Marcia.

Joseph married **Florence Eveline Harris** (see picture) in 1901. Florence was the daughter of Nathan Harris - owner of the Red Lion pub in Clerkenwell. During the war, we know that Joseph was called up to join the Horse Artillery - possibly part of the City Of London Imperial Volunteers (CIV) based at St. John's Wood Barracks. We believe that Joseph was killed during the war, but do not know the exact circumstances.

After the war, Joseph's widow Florence - now with a young son also called Joseph Elisha - remarried to **Herbert Peacock**,

The Mystery of Cabby Family Elisha... Can You Help?



Florence Eveline Harris

Publican of the Earl of Essex pub in Islington. Herbert Peacock already had three children - Bert, Charlie and Gladys - and Florence

became their stepmother, while the young Joseph Elisha was adopted into the Peacock family.

If you know anyone in the taxi, restaurant or pub trade with the surnames ELISHA or HARRIS or know of any connection with surnames Peacock or Lewis, then please, please get in contact with me at:

david.elisha@yahoo.co.uk. If you do not have the Internet, please let the Editor know and I'm sure he could pass any information onto me.

My sincere thanks to Alan (the friendly editor) for his help and thank you to everyone else for taking the time to read about our search. Good luck to you all... and up the Spurs!

David Elisha

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: The Waldorf Hotel at the Aldwych in 1908 and now...



The Aldwych in 1908



and the Aldwych now...

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Sensation as Director realises Jim Rainbird's Hindu isn't that good!

Still basking in the fame of transporting Kermit the Frog around London whilst the green wonder himself was escaping the amorous advances of Miss Piggy (*July Call Sign*), Dial-a-Cab's **Jim Rainbird (T25)** moved from down-town Hollywood to the now-more glitzy world of Bollywood! Jim explained all to *Call Sign*:

"I was asked to do a film shoot for an Indian production that was going to involve me doing taxi driving scenes, whilst an actor was playing me in my cab - on a low-loader! It was early one Sunday morning when I turned up at Wood Street EC2 and met the crew.

"Do you speak Hindu," were the first words out of the Director / Producer's mouth when I turned up on location together with my taxi. At that time, he was unaware that a Hindu speaking actor would be taking my place as the cab driver on the low-loader shots!

My first shots as a Bollywood superstar - ok, my cab's first star shots - involved the usual hailing, being paid off and pulling away scenes with me driving. Then came the interesting bit in the form of the low-loader! I drove my trusty TXII - complete with its DaC logos - onto this amazing rig, which was being pulled by the biggest American 6 wheel pick-up you've ever seen. As soon as I was on, the riggers began securing it and before my eyes, they then built a scaffold cage around it for the lights and cameras with me wincing each time I heard the metal on metal screech of the spanners and clamps!

With my Hindu-speaking replacement now in the cab, I sat in the front of the pick-up with the rig driver who told me he'd just finished the new James Bond film and in which they had written off three brand new Aston Martin DB9s! I asked him to be gentle while my taxi was on the back as I only had the one and MI6 probably didn't regard me in the same light as Mr Bond!

After a few circuits of London Wall, Moorgate and EC5 - sorry, Finsbury Square - the low-loader shots were in the can and it was time for lunch. Even though most of the crew were English, it was the Indian production team who had requested vegetarian catering - and it truly was quite amazing! I had a three-bean chilli with pancake rolls followed by a sweet rice dish. All this while sitting on a double decker bus in Gresham Street!

Jim's Cab Reaches The Heights of Bollywood!



Katrina hires Jim's Cab. Pic inset: Katrina off-set!



Surreal or what...

After lunch, the First Assistant Director seemed to be suffering with an "over-dose" of vegetables

and at one point the camera crew dispersed away from him like the Red Arrows doing the Prince of Wales Feathers display with cries of *no naked flames please!* I'm guessing he wasn't used to veggie grub! If that day's weather forecast mentioned unusually high winds in the

City of London, well now at least *Call Sign* readers will understand why! I'm just pleased that we were all outdoors!

After a few more static shots taking in different angles, the production team went inside 88 Wood Street for the internal scenes and there ended my brush with Bollywood stardom..."

Namastey London will star the stunning **Katrina Kaif** and the not quite so stunning but not that bad, Jim Rainbird taxi! The movie will be released later this year...



Soon to be the cab's new - if temporary - home

In the January 2004 issue of *Call Sign*, we wrote about the hardship that Dial-a-Cab dispatcher Jay Gomez lived under due to the kidney failure he suffered in 1978. He was told that by the time he reached 14, his kidneys would probably pack up altogether, but because he looked after himself and avoided 'vices' such as smoking, drinking and drugs etc he managed to delay the inevitability of total kidney failure until he reached 25.

At that time, Jay told *Call Sign* that he could feel signs that his kidneys were beginning to fail and not clearing toxins from his body and he began to feel very weak as his red blood cell count dipped. It's the red cells that carry oxygen to the body. He also began to feel light-headed more often and had to start injecting himself with Epoetin as a boost to his red blood cell count. As he was already an Insulin-dependant Diabetic, although life wasn't too easy he at least was used to injecting himself. He also had to go into hospital for dialysis - a process where the patient is linked to a machine that manually filters waste products from the blood. The average human kidneys normally have around 1500 litres of blood passing through them on a daily basis and until such time as a replacement kidney can be found and transplanted, then the patient has to go on dialysis daily. That's what Jay did and eventually had a dialysis machine fitted into his home, going on it for 8 hours every night while asleep. He linked to it via a tube fitted into his stomach that attached him to the machine at night.

Thanks to mum Val (Driver Services) and all the Gomez family, Jay coped. He also told *Call Sign*: "I am so grateful at how brilliant Dial-a-Cab have been to me whilst I've been off sick. I knew they were good employers, I just never realised quite how good."

Jay was left waiting for a transplant. Val offered one of her kidneys as did brother Chad - who also works at DaC. But Jay didn't want to risk their health.

"The risks are small," said Jay at the time, "but I'd rather wait. I love my mum and brother and won't take any chances with their health." So Jay was left waiting for a transplant...

Then on June 10 this year, the call that Jay had been praying for came - a potential kidney donor. It was 3am - you don't get convenient calls when every second is vital. Brother Chad picked him up and off they rushed to the hospital. They arrived at 4.30 and Jay immediately had some blood taken for cross and tissue matches. He was told that he should be going down to theatre (if results came back well) at around lunch time.

It was 14 hours later. All the test results matched well with the kidney and Jay was on his way to the theatre. He had remained very calm throughout the day while awaiting the results, but became upset as he was being wheeled along the hospital corridors. It was understandable, because waiting for news is not the same as getting it and being on the verge of the biggest ordeal of your life. He had waited over 4 years for this moment but was now feeling scared and overwhelmed. His mum and dad walked alongside him holding

Jay Gomez Has Kidney Transplant



Jay Gomez - back to normality after a successful kidney transplant

his hands whilst brother and sister waited at the lift. All looked anxious...

The next day, Chad went to see his brother. "He was sleepy," he remembered, "and not really with it. I sat next to him and held his hand. He had lines coming out from everywhere. We were then just waiting to see if the kidney had started to kick in. We were told that it normally took around 48 hours, but Jay had a build up of fluid around the organ that doctors said they would drain and wasn't anything to worry about. But there was no sign of the donated kidney starting to work."

According to the medical team working with Jay, his transplant had gone well. Plumbing wise saw no problems, but two biopsies suggested that the kidney was still

sleeping. However, the next biopsy changed the terminology from sleeping to dozing according to doctors, with creatinine levels (waste excreted as urine) having gone down from over 800 when going into failure, to the 400s. Also, depending on blood results, there was a good chance that Jay could miss the following days dialysis. But after three long weeks, although doctors remained confident, the family began to worry. After all, they had originally been told to expect signs of improvement after 3 days! But at no time did they give up hope.

Call Sign Editor, Alan Fisher spoke to Val and Chad whenever he saw them and told the magazine: "You could see a strain beginning to show. It was the unexpected length of waiting time and while you knew they'd never give up hope until told the transplant had failed, you could tell they were getting concerned."

But after that 3-week mark passed, suddenly signs of life in the new kidney were seen and Jay managed 4 days without dialysis. That signalled a rapid improvement.

Now Jay has gone over three months without dialysis and doctors are confident that he will not need to go back on again! He still has some ups and downs and the freedom of not needing to dialyse is still a bit of a novelty! He also pees a lot - which for Jay is a blinding result!

Being without a functioning kidney affected Jay greatly, but not once did he complain. But now he is going to be able to start catching up on those lost years and will soon resume his dispatchers job with Dial-a-Cab. All the staff will be thrilled to see him...

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Contact John (M13) on 07921 920743...

Stevie Mac 1...LTI 0 *Call Sign Comment*

This section of *Call Sign* should have had an LTI press release headed "taxi drivers hail new TXII suspension." That article refers to the TXII's recently launched coil spring system on the rear axle and changes to the front suspension which, according to cabbies / owners quoted in the piece, has made for a much better drive with improved handling and driver comfort.

I have now pulled that article in annoyance and because I needed last minute room to put this CSC in. I will tell you, though – and not through a press release – that because of the huge discount offered, I bought one of the last TXIIs some two weeks ago and yes, I am delighted with its performance. It is far and away the nicest cab I have ever driven in 35+ years. I say that because I mean it and not because I suspect that LTI are going to be cross with me. If anyone should be cross, it's the whole trade press against LTI. Whether they will say so is another matter and up to them.

I personally cannot hold in my disappointment in the company that I sincerely believe make the best purpose built taxi in the world. I have always maintained that fact regardless of whether LTI were advertising in *Call Sign* or not. If it taints the relationship, then so be it. But I feel used by London Taxis International and I do not like it.

The heading to this piece should give most of you a clue as to what I am going on about. TAXI columnist, Steve McNamara has been claiming over the past few months that he had a "source" within LTI who had informed him that the new TX3 engine would be an Italian 2.5 MV. This, and a 2.8 version, is the engine currently used by the Chrysler Voyager and LDV Vans.

My job as Editor of *Call Sign* is to bring Dial-a-Cab drivers as much news as I can and when I first read Steve's piece on the TX3, I wrote it off as a wild guess because I knew that LTI had

signed a long-term contract with Ford and that they were tied to them for the next generation of engine. I actually wrote that in an Editorial piece. I know Steve well, but if I think he is wrong, I'm not afraid to say so (see this issue's Editorial) and neither is he afraid to respond!

I phoned LTI and spoke to someone whose name I am not revealing because I suspect that he was probably acting under orders. I was at the printers about to put that issue to bed and I asked them if there was any substance to Stevie Mac's story. In all fairness, he never gave me a categorical no, but said enough in a ten-minute conversation to insinuate that the next engine would be a Ford. I acted on that and put a denial into the issue. On that same day, I spoke to Taxi Globe

Editor, Sandie Goodwin, who told me that she'd had a similar conversation. Several weeks later, Cab Trade News also printed an article saying that the next cab would have a Ford engine, so I assume they too had a similar conversation with LTI.

Had LTI told me that they could not make any comment, that at least would not have been as bad as leading me (and the rest of the trade press) up the garden path when the matter had already been put into the public domain by Steve McNamara.

I now believe that Steve McNamara was right all along and that an announcement will come later this month. So well done Steve - a comment I sadly cannot extend to LTI...

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CYGNUS AT LEEDS DRIVER SAFETY SHOW

Organised by the West Yorkshire Local Transport Plan Partnership and supported by all the West Yorkshire Taxi Licensing Authorities, the *Leeds Driver Safety Show* focused mainly on safety and security issues and the way they affect (taxi) drivers and passengers. It was also designed to let drivers and operators see at first hand, equipment from the UK's leading manufacturer.

Dorian Franklin, Managing Director of Cygnus Automotive, told *Call Sign*: "We had a successful show and generated interest in CygCam, Cygnus' in-cab CCTV security system."

Visitors to the show were able to purchase the latest hand held TravelPilot Lucca MP3 Edition for £299 – an excellent discounted price, normally retailing at £449.99. In addition to the same features as the TravelPilot Lucca MP3, it has full European mapping and comes equipped with a Smart Cradle for a convenient connection to car radios. As well as a great price, the Cygnus offer included a free mini fridge worth £39.99 at no extra cost.



Steve Cartwright at the Leeds Safety Show

This offer is still available but only while stocks last, so if you would like a fully transportable satellite navigation system, the TravelPilot Lucca MP3 Edition can be purchased direct from Cygnus Automotive on **01543 573912**.

The benefits of *CygCam* in-taxi security devices are evident by the purchase of multiple systems by Corby and Bedford

Councils to enhance the security of their local taxi operators. The features that enabled these authorities to become actively involved in the system included the data protection management, use of video clips on removable storage media and sound recording. It helps to safeguard the driver and passengers against incident or attack and gives complete peace of mind.

Also on show was a selection of the taximeter equipment for which Cygnus are famous. This included the new MR350, blue LED taximeter and the world beating MR400 taximeter. These were linked to Cygnus' own brand printer, the PT73.

Cygnus Automotive would like to thank everyone who attended for visiting the stand at Leeds and also Neil Carter from Mann & Overton (Leeds), who came along to the show and supported the event. If *Call Sign* readers have any questions, Cygnus can be contacted on **01543 573912** or through any of their dealer network.

Dial-a-Cab driver **Lee Pearce (J71)** is the goalkeeper for Combined Counties football team **Wembley FC**, whose track suit tops look remarkably like DaC fleece tops – not that strange really because they are our fleece tops! DaC Chairman **Brian Rice** donated them to the team after finding a batch that had been left over from driver's Xmas gifts.

After a meeting with Wembley FC Chairman Brian Gunn, **Call Sign** decided to go one step further and put the sponsorship money we used to use for Donna

Merry's shooting into helping Wembley. That involved **Call Sign** buying the team's new home and away kits and putting up Dial-a-Cab banners around the ground.

That paid off in bucket loads of publicity when the **BBC** and **Sky TV** covered Wembley's FA extra preliminary cup match, which kicked off this year's road to either Wembley or Cardiff. Every time there was a goal, there was a DaC banner in full view on the TV screens!

The Sun also did a photo shoot and there again was a DaC banner in full view. **Call Sign's** money was well spent because in addition to far more publicity than we could have dared hope for, we also have our own team to cheer on.

Sadly, DaC Wembley were knocked out of the FA Cup in the second preliminary round, but as Lee told us: **"We hardly expected to win it, but all that publicity at the beginning was great. The team that beat us in the second round (Redbridge) had none of it!"**

So it's back to the bump and grind of getting out of the Combined Counties Premier Division and into the Ryman League, through their various channels and eventually into the Conference – just one step away from the Football League itself!

The season started well with DaC Wembley winning all their first four games, but coming back down to earth in the fifth with a 5 – 1 home drubbing by Sandhurst Town.

"Dunno what happened," said Lee after the match, **"we were awful. And then we just couldn't shake off that feeling and had that disappointing game against Redbridge, losing 3 – 0 – albeit with several key players out."**

Player/Manager Ian Bates banged a few heads together.

"You are going to see a different Wembley next time," he told **Call Sign**, **"we're a far better team than the way we are currently playing."**

That next game on 5 September against Camberley may have been a no score draw, but the difference was there to be seen. Four days later the team got back to winning ways with a 1 – 0 win over Staines Lammas followed by a 6 – 0 drubbing of Guildford City, which also included the first DaC Wembley

Call Sign on the DaC Wembley Trail



Lee in action in the Wembley goal
Inset pic: Lee when not in the DaC Wembley goal!

hat trick of the season from Paul Shelton taking his total up to 7 for the season and also a brace for Andrew Walker – his first goals of the season. Guildford included ex Spurs player David Howells in their line-up.

"In addition to playing so well," said Lee,

"the Guildford match made it three clean sheets on the trot, and if you don't let any goals in, you won't lose!"

You can follow DaC Wembley's hopeful march into the Ryman league only in **Call Sign...**

Combined Counties Premier Division (top 10 w/e 22 September)

Team	P	W	D	L	F	A	GD	Pts
Chipstead	9	8	0	1	29	11	18	24
Ash Utd	9	4	5	0	13	3	10	17
DaC-Wembley	7	5	1	1	19	8	11	16
Egham Town	8	5	1	2	18	7	11	16
Sandhurst Town	8	4	4	0	15	5	10	16
Merstham	8	5	1	2	13	8	5	16
Raynes Pk Vale	8	3	3	2	16	16	0	12
Camberley Town	9	3	3	3	8	11	-3	12
Nth Greenford	6	3	2	1	15	8	7	11
Chertsey Town	8	3	2	3	16	5	1	11

Third Grandchild for David Lessman

David Lessman, the Dial-a-Cab driver with the most famous call sign of all – D19 from the late Jack Taylor* – is celebrating together with wife Sandra on the birth of their third grandchild. Sadie Sydney Lessman is the first-born of their son and daughter-in-law, Darren and Ruth and all are doing well!

David, current Chairman of the London Taxidriers Fund for Underprivileged Children, told **Call**

Sign: "It looks like I may soon become my own night man - being a papa is an expensive business!"



Sandra and David with latest grandchild Sadie

*Jack Taylor was a former Chairman and Board member of DaC as well as being Chairman of the LTFUC...

The female view on emissions...

I want to talk about emissions this month, but as I am just a girl and can't understand these things, Glen, my front-seat DaC driver has come to the rescue. Here are our thoughts, proving once and for all that the sexes can come together in completely – and without pillows.

It is not likely that many readers will remember the London smogs of the early 1950s - most of you being too young. These thick dirty fogs, or peasoupers, caused thousands of deaths.

In December 1952, the death rate peaked at 900 a day on the 8th and 9th and remained above average until just before Christmas. Mortality from bronchitis and pneumonia increased more than sevenfold as a result of the fog. The rise in deaths matched exactly the rise in levels of smoke. With very cold weather, almost every household in London was burning large quantities of coal in their grates. Smoke was pouring from the chimneys and added to this were particles and gases emitted from factory chimneys in the London area. In 1956, the *Clean Air Act* was passed and smogs became a thing of the past.

Now taxis have to be fitted with emission reduction systems in a bid to make the streets of London more pleasant. Some of the articles in the trade press are so hostile to this, you would think we were being asked to have a man with a red flag walking in front of us and a lady following with a duster wiping the curb as we pass! (*Hmmm, not a bad idea ...Ed*)

There have been arguments put forward that no legislation was needed with the situation resolving itself as older cabs went to that Public Carriage Office in the sky - or to Liverpool - and newer cabs that were cleaner would then replace them.

This would have been like people in the 1950s saying that nothing needed to be done about the smog because as soon as houses collapsed, they would be replaced by newer homes with central heating, so in the meantime let's carry on burning coal which belches out poisonous smoke.

My DaCman Glen has been to India for a holiday on a number of occasions and had always noticed the foul dark smoke pouring out of the buses, trucks, tuk tuks and taxis. Injector servicing just never occurred to anyone and so there are probably hundreds of thousands of people suffering from TB and other lung complaints. Back in 1998, a black haze covered India's capital, New Delhi. Children were being born asthmatic, respiratory illnesses spread like wildfire and cancers menaced the city. Delhi was one of the world's 10 most polluted cities, with

Views on life, love and the laundry basket from the lady behind a DaC driver....

Back Seat *Driver*



vehicles accounting for 70% of polluting emissions. Pollution levels exceeded World Health Organisation standards by almost five times.

Since his last visit in 1995, the tide has turned and following the introduction of strict legislation, Delhi won the US Department of Energy's first "Clean Cities International Partner of the Year" award for "bold efforts to curb air pollution and support alternative fuel initiatives."

Compared to 1997, carbon monoxide levels are now down 32% and sulphur

dioxide levels by 39%. Since April 2000, private vehicles have only been allowed to be registered if they conformed to Euro II standards. Today, Delhi is a showpiece example of making air quality safe with its entire public transport fleet converted to Compressed Natural Gas (CNG) on a scale unparalleled anywhere else - 80,000 CNG vehicles including 9,000 buses. Delhi has banned taxis, buses and tuk tuks older than 15 years. In a poor country where vehicles are usually kept much longer than in England, 15 years is not that old for a vehicle.

Although Dial-a-Cab are always way out in front when it comes to introducing new technology, from my position in the back seat I am surprised there are still so many drivers who are against change. I remember the protests against the opening of the Heathrow Express Link. Now they object to improving air quality in London. If they have their way, it will be Britain that will soon be seen as a Third World country...

Love Poppy xxx (and Glen)

Spurs v Cab Trade – An Omission

In our report of the charity football match between a Spurs XI and the Cab Trade, we omitted to mention the man whose efforts each year are primarily responsible for enabling these matches - which help send sick children to the Disney Resort in Paris - to take place. We are happy to rectify that now and elevate the name of Dennis Pinchin to the top of the 'thank you' list...

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Thinking about a compensation claim but confused by TV ads promising the earth? Call Sign's legal expert, Hope Liebersohn, is on the Law Society Personal Injuries Panel and offers assistance in this exclusive series ...

CALL SIGN LEGAL MATTERS

The Motor Insurers Bureau...

After the sickening thud of a road crash, you expect the driver responsible to stop, call for the emergency services if necessary and give you his or her details - including insurance details if they have them to hand. Sadly, increasing numbers of drivers simply leave the scene claiming if caught, that they panicked. More often, they are not caught. Those who do give their correct particulars may not be insured or their insurance may not cover them.

Insurers can avoid cover if someone is driving who is not named or allowed on the policy, if the driver is using the car for a purpose (usually business) not permitted under the policy, or in some cases because the policy specifically says it does not cover anyone driving while drunk. If the driver has a medical condition and has not notified the insurer, it may decline cover. The driver may stop and give you a Gallic shrug, because he is Gallic - foreigners with overseas registrations can cause crashes - but most people don't know where to start in trying to recoup losses from them.

And in many other cases, the cover note has expired or the driver never bothered paying for insurance in the first place - with premiums of £500 or more for third-party cover for teenage male drivers and court fines often much less than that, it is hardly surprising.

The Motor Insurers' Bureau exists to help the injured victims get compensation for their injuries and damage to property in all these cases.

If you use a solicitor, the MIB will pay the full legal costs for an uninsured motorist case, but only a limited amount (£500 plus most disbursements) on an untraced (hit and run) case. Unless you use your own legal expenses cover, a solicitor will sign you up to a conditional fee agreement, which I discussed in my last article, for an uninsured case and you are likely to get all or nearly all of your damages. For an untraced driver claim, though, they may ask you to sign a contingency fee agreement. That can mean they take a fixed amount of your damages, typically 25% or more.

Happily, insurance companies have to deal themselves with uninsured drivers' claims, if there is any identifiable insurance cover relating to the vehicle - so in all the cases where insurers avoid cover (as the example above where the driver is drunk or failed to notify a medical condition) they still have to pay out to the victim. The only difference is that the insurer can try to get a refund from their policyholder if appropriate. Your insurance company has to pay if someone steals your car and injures people, but they should not try to recoup the money from you or reduce your no-claims bonus.

Joyriders or using the car as a weapon...!

The MIB has a limit to the amount of property damage it will pay and a deductible amount or "excess" for each claim. It will not pay if the victim was a passenger and knew the driver was uninsured. It covers accidents on public roads only, so with petrol station prangs and pub car park disasters, you are on your own. If a joyrider tears over the kerb, hitting people on the grass on a council estate, they may reject the claim. But if you are hit on the pavement adjoining the road, they will normally pay. And the damage has to be caused by a *motor* vehicle, so the baby run over in its pushchair by a cyclist is outside their remit. If someone uses their vehicle as a weapon and deliberately injures you, as happened to one of my clients in the middle of a nasty divorce, the claim is not to the MIB but to the Criminal Injuries Compensation Authority.

Any accident causing injury must, by law, be reported to the police straightaway and the MIB expects to get a police report corroborating what you tell them. Whiplash takes up to a day to be felt, so report the accident as soon as you realise you have been injured if it's the next day. If you are unconscious or immobilised in hospital, that is a good reason for delay, but check once you wake up that someone has already told the police - someone usually does.

The MIB has a vast database of insurance details and can often find an insurer when you or the police have been unsuccessful, although they

expect you to make an effort. Some drivers threaten their victims and others give false names - and not always Mickey Mouse! They might give a friend's name and address, sounding quite plausible and the friend could then prove he was in Canada at the time. Get the registration number of the vehicle and a description of it - including the make and model and a description of the driver.

The MIB is financed by the insurance industry, that is, by all of us who pay up every year. Not surprisingly, if you were driving when you were injured or suffered damage, they will want your own insurance details and if you are not insured yourself, they will pay you nothing. And in that case, I wouldn't bother to appeal!

If more than one vehicle was involved in the accident, if you have lost much time off work, if your claim is late or if someone died, you will certainly want legal advice. In a simple claim, you can fill in the form yourself and see how you get on.

The MIB is at Linford Wood House, 6-12 Capital Drive, Linford Wood, Milton Keynes MK14 6XT. Tel: 01908-830001 www.mib.org.uk.

Hope Liebersohn (solicitor) 020-8735-9776;

hl@glenisters.com



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DIAL-A-CAB: THE BEST YEAR EVER?



January's *Call Sign* reported that November 2005 had been Dial-a-Cab's busiest month ever. However, word now reaches us that subject to audit, DaC's accounting year – which ended on 31 August – is showing preliminary results suggesting that this has been our best-ever year since Founder Chairman Bonnie Martyn first took us to Pentonville Road in late 1953 and from where our first official job was dispatched in January 1954.

When *Call Sign* heard the rumours, we asked Chairman **Brian Rice** whether it was true and although he agreed that the past 12 months looked as though they would break all previous records, he was reluctant to give spe-

cific figures until they had been audited in mid-October. However, he did tell us that from the available information, DaC would be putting more trips through the system and turning over more money in this year than we have ever done before.

Brian also said that he thought our turnover could rise by as much as £5.5million over last year and put much of the praise for that onto the DaC Job

Distribution Engine (JDE) – more commonly known as Concierge.

"We now hope," said Brian, **"that members will see the Concierge system to be the excellent tool we always knew it would be. Unlike the rumours that were spread by some when the news of Concierge was first broken, it has generated much more work for DaC members who can now see that we are not giving work away as those early unfounded rumours had suggested. It is one of the main reasons why DaC has done so well – something we hope and believe will be**

confirmed by our Auditors."

The DaC Chairman went on to say that whilst trip numbers are certainly up substantially, he couldn't give numbers yet but believed that turnover would be up by over 14% on last year.

"What I am also really please about," added Brian, **"is that we have made a surplus every year over the past ten that I have been Chairman and after reinvesting the money into the Society, that has enabled us to buy our new premises for several million pounds, refurbish it and not need to borrow any money to do so whilst also not needing to sell Brunswick House. That's not bad for a little old taxi company and is a tremendous achievement for everyone connected to it!"**

Call Sign

October 2006

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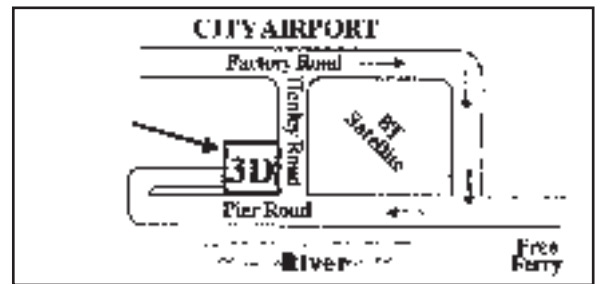
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Is it the end of the line for DaC's Westminster TaxiCard holders?

London's Mayor, Ken Livingstone, has announced plans that will transform Oxford Street into a trams-only High Street after a GLA decision to give it a £1billion facelift, including an electric tramway that will be replacing buses and taxis along its whole 1.5 - mile length. Plans show more piazzas and pedestrianised zones replacing the previously congested street.

The Mayor's aim is to transform the area enclosed by Marble Arch, St Giles Circus and Piccadilly Circus including Regent Street and develop what he calls a new West End shopping zone.

The West End gets around 200m visitors a year, but according to Ken Livingstone, it has become "unwelcoming and outdated" and has

Mayor: "Oxford Street to be Trams Only!"



Ken Livingstone - wants trams only along Oxford Street

Street ARE looking for bargains and the street has always been notoriously expensive compared to other areas.

In a survey carried out for the Mayor's office, it was found that 156 people passed one typical spot in Oxford Street every minute, around four times the number considered to be tolerable. That survey shows numbers are not necessarily falling, but does seem to prove that people are spending less. Will a tram-only Oxford Street make them spend more? Will the fact that they can't get a cab to Selfridges or Debenhams anymore cause many not to bother?

Will Dial-a-Cab's Westminster cardholders still go there? There are lots of calls from Oxford Street because many cannot use buses and therefore won't be able to use trams.

The main problems Oxford Street has revolves around traffic looking for parking spaces that wardens watch like hawks, the huge number of buses now going along its length and causing their own hold-ups, the success of out-of-town car-friendly shopping centres such as Bluewater, Lakeside and Brent Cross etc and the rise of Internet shopping. Will the tramway assist those problems? Time will obviously tell, but what is certain is that if the Mayor's tramway gets the starting nod, Oxford Street will be closed to taxis long before 2012 as the building work begins.

MARK WHITE'S MOTHER DIES

Many Dial-a-Cab drivers will remember picking up from Harold Holt at their premises in Portman Square, then Sinclair Rd (Olympia) and eventually in Chancery Lane, where they eventually merged and have now become Askonos Holt Ltd.

Those drivers may also remember **Peggy White**, who was one of the receptionist at Harold Holt during those early years. She got to know many of our drivers and was probably responsible for convincing the company that using licensed taxis was much safer than using minicabs.

Sadly Peggy, who was also the mother of Mark White (B86), passed away recently. Mark told **Call Sign**:

"She knew more about Dial-a-Cab than I did, as she used to talk to all the drivers picking up parcels and clients. Many of the longer serving drivers will remember her and my father, Fred, who was also a driver on the circuit."

Mark went on to add: "A few years back, during the '90s, someone at Harold Holt came in and persuaded the woman responsible for the taxi account that they should give the work to Addison Lee. The lady lived in Clapham and used them herself. My Mum, who used to book all the cabs, felt that she was being put in an awkward position having a husband who drove a taxi and a son who not only drove a cab, but was responsible for organising demos and making TV programmes against minicabs with the London Cab Drivers Club!

"So, citing a conflict of interests, she refused to book any minicabs and put up prominent notices on her desk area about the dangers of minicabs. From then on she only dealt with Dial-a-Cab bookings - which for that short time had been very few and far between!"

DaC Account Manager, Caroline McGowan told **Call Sign**: "Although I never met Peggy, the thing I remember most about our conversations on the phone was her lovely laugh! All our thoughts are with Fred and Mark."

That sentiment also comes from everyone at DaC on the loss to Fred and Mark of a mother and wife. It also goes to the rest of the White family.

Peggy was buried at the Dissenters Chapel, Kensal Green Cemetery, on 22 September...

dropped behind other major European capitals.

The Mayor said: **"The appearance of the area at the moment is pretty grim, especially for pedestrians. There is no point pretending you can take all the traffic out without providing an alternative and that's why I have stated my intention to work towards the introduction of trams along Oxford Street by 2012 or 2013."**

There can be little doubt that in recent years, Oxford Street has become tattier with more and more "cheapo" cut-price shops with some even practising the illegal *run out*, where stooges pretend to buy in order to get the public to believe they are getting a bargain. One problem is that many of the shoppers along Oxford

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Selling DaC with Lydia

Hi there ladies and gentlemen...

It is just fantastic to see how busy we are! As I'm sure you will agree, this is a very exciting time for our company what with the purchase of the new building added to the fabulous new accounts we have captured, we are really well placed to continue to grow our business organically.

As I'm sure you are aware, we are entering our busiest period of the year and without wanting to sound like a broken record, we implore you for your wholehearted support between now and 2007! Hard to believe that 2007 is actually around the corner, I can't really see how that is possible? Natalie and I have spent the year generating some incredible business, so I'm sure you can understand how frustrating it can be dealing with service issues that could so easily have been otherwise avoided. I would ask that you consider twice before rejecting a job, after all, street work is *as directed* and unlikely to be of the same calibre...

I would also like to take the opportunity to recognise Jeni Albert and the team over at Citigroup as well as DaC's IT Department - a big well-done to all for everyone's efforts. The account is running smoothly and is only set to get busier and busier.

Self defence

Bernice, Natalie, Caroline and I went to a self defence evening recently, I do hope you enjoy



You should have said please!



Natalie shows Lydia what to do if someone looks at you - break their arm!

the pictures! The evening was organised by Andrea Jackson at Michael Page and we were raising money and awareness for Breast Cancer.

There were about 25 ladies (and one chap) all who wanted to learn some moves. The evening involved a talk from Camden Police on safety and the Sports Representative from Breast Cancer reminding us what great work they do and the New York Marathon project they are currently running. I then gave an overview of our business, mainly to raise awareness for our *Vogue Card*, which is designed specifically for female travellers. We are about to relaunch the card, so look out for the details in the next *Call Sign*. It was a great opportunity to explain the dangers of taking unlicensed minicabs and also to explain to the audience how our business operates.

Mickey, John, Danielle, Ross and Shane, who represent Ryukyu, took us through our paces -

please view www.ryukyu-karate-gungfu-association.org. We were shown a variety of moves, all of which were quite easy but very, very effective and we then practised them on each other. We were told in that way we would remember them. Having spoken to my colleagues, we all feel more confident that should we find ourselves in a 'situation' at any time, we would be able to take the action required, leaving us free to make a quick getaway whilst our offender lays on the floor recovering from one of our many defensive moves. We will be running an evening for lady clients, drivers and staff when we move across to the new building and will keep you posted...

**Until next time...
Lydia Foulkes
DaC Sales Manager**

Driverless "Taxis" Set for Heathrow!

According to a report in the German online magazine, *Spiegel*, a new European Union-funded project will soon see the introduction of driverless "taxis" at Heathrow. The article talks of an age where driverless taxis could help alleviate traffic in congested areas. Now that vision of driverless urban areas could soon become reality.

Under the auspices of the European Union's *Citymobil* project - launched August 28 - companies and research institutes representing 10 countries have come together to develop small automatic transportation systems. Currently, three model projects are planned with funding of about €40 million. The first is the one for Heathrow where, starting in summer 2008, 19-computer steered electric cars - described as taxis - will go into operation. The automated "taxis" will be used to connect Heathrow's Terminal 5 with a parking lot.

The technology - named Ultra - has been developed by the British firm ATS and is already being tested. The driverless vehicles pick up passengers after they are ordered and deliver them to their destination. Magnets or sensors on the ground direct the vehicles along their route. Will the PCO licence them? Too busy looking at Tuk Tuks at present!

The other two experiments will take place in Rome - where a similar scheme to that at Heathrow will take place - and perhaps more astonishing still, in the Spanish city of Castellón, where a driverless bus will go through the centre in its own special lane.

Ray Simmons (G22) has been with Dial-a-Cab since February 2005 – around the time that *Call Sign* sponsored shooting champion Donna Merry made her retirement announcement. We continued to sponsor Johnny Wells (ex-K68) in his shooting exploits until the tragic announcement of his death last December at the young age of 47.

John was always known as Mr Reliable – a friendly but slightly sarcastic *Call Sign* dig at his total unreliability. That nickname applied to everything but his shooting. He took that very seriously and went with Donna to the World Championships that are held yearly in San Antonio, Texas. Although Donna came back with several medals, John failed in his attempt to bring one back. John told *Call Sign* at the time:

“I did my best, but just couldn’t find my best form when I needed it. Mind you, bearing in mind that Ed Dean – who took the gold medal – scored an amazing 650 out of 650, perhaps shooting brilliantly and still ending up with nothing might have been even more upsetting!” Then, typical of John, without a hint of jealousy he went on to rave about Donna’s performance.

But with Donna’s retirement and John’s sad death, that ended this magazine’s involvement with the sport of shooting and as you can read elsewhere, we now sponsor Wembley FC as their goalkeeper, **Lee Pearce (J71)**, is a driver on DaC.

But there is someone else out there who will be representing Dial-a-Cab in this month’s Texas World Championships. Ray Simmons was a close friend of Johnny Wells and they would often go clay pigeon shooting together

Ray off to World Championships!



Ray Simmons - soon off to San Antonio

– a day Ray’s daughter Gemma told us would always be filled with laughter.

It was Gemma who told us about her dad’s hunt for a world title and whilst we are tied up

with Wembley, we are doing a one-off sponsorship for Ray and hopefully he will give us a run-down of how he gets on.

So good luck from all of us to Ray...

Call Signs Springboard to your Portfolio?

David Shaller is the son of Dial-a-Cab driver **Steve Shaller (R75)**. He specialises in photo manipulation in Adobe Photoshop and the DaC aeroplane is his work. David hopes to find a job in an industry suited to his skills and that gave *Call Sign* an idea.

We often get requests from drivers - or more often their families - for temporary positions within *Call Sign*, whether it be art design, specialised photography, laying the magazine out or even taking over from Jerry doing the cartoons! So that gave us the idea of allowing those in the above categories - or even

those we haven’t thought of - to use a small section in *Call Sign* to display their wares whilst at the same time adding the published result to their portfolio.

So if you would like to see your work in print, tell *Call Sign* why and try to make the subject matter related to Dial-a-Cab...



David Shaller’s adwork. He hopes his talent will find him a position in that field. Have you got something you would like to display?

Mike Son Becomes a Grandfather



Congratulations to Dial-a-Cab Board member Mike Son and lovely wife Maxine on becoming grandparents for the first time.

Born on 29 August, Mike’s daughter-in-law Karin and son Jeremy have named the baby boy Elliot Samuel and the new arrival weighed in at a healthy 8lbs 11ozs.

Karin and Jeremy themselves made the pages of *Call Sign* in April 2004 when they flew to Las Vegas to be married by someone looking remarkably like Elvis Presley and who serenaded the happy couple with his hit *Can’t Help Falling in Love*.

Congratulations to all the Son family for producing a Son son!

War Disabled Charity helps out at Malta remembrance service

On Tuesday 15 August 2006, a Service of Remembrance and re-dedication of the National Malta Memorial was held at Tower Place in front of All Hallows by the Tower. This was to commemorate the period when the Island of Malta G.C. was continually attacked during WW2 and in remembrance of the many lives that were lost.

The service was attended by 65 George Cross Island Association member's wives and helpers, most of whom are 85 or over. Also present was the High Commissioner of Malta, Dr. Michael Rafelo and Reverend Bertrand Olivier of All Hallows by the Tower.

Following a welcome by the Lady Chairman of South East Region, Julia Gaw, the service began and was followed by the last post, during which the standards of the George Cross Island Association were lowered. A two-minute silence and reveille was followed by the wreath laying, led by Dr Rafelo and representatives of Royal Navy, Royal Air Force, Army, Merchant Navy, Lady Chairman for The People of Malta, Members of Tin Hats and HMS Ledbury.

The **London Taxi Benevolent Association for War Disabled** Chairman, DaC's **Michael Calvey (B95)** told *Call Sign* that the charity were pleased to be taking part in the ceremony and supplying the transport required to take the veterans to lunch at The Union Jack Club in Waterloo. He added that the committee wanted to thank all drivers who assisted on the day.



The wreath laying following the moving service

Report by Derek Leone (Hon PRO)
www.taxicharity.org

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

Russell's Hall of Footie



Arriba los Martillos!

The August transfer window was about to close and there wasn't much going on. Ashley Cole *still* wanted to leave Arsenal and win things with Chelsea! He reassured everyone that it was nothing to do with money! Really! It was a saga that was going on and on and boring one and all. I was pleased when it was all over so I could go back to other interesting soaps like Eastenders or Emmerdale! I hope all goes well for Gallas and Cole in their exchange and thus dispelling the rumour that Arsenal has become a feeder club to Chelsea! If Arsenal fans really believe there is any loyalty in today's game, you'd better wake up and smell your Starbucks! Don't tell me Thierry Henry stayed because he loves Arsenal, it's only because he's on £120,000+ a week and more importantly, he's married to an English lady who doesn't much fancy paella at the moment!

Talking of feeder sides, I can name a very good team that has played for West Ham over recent seasons that have come through the youth side, kissed the badge and then said they were really happy only then to go and join other teams and pick up more money – oh yes "...and to win things!" To be honest, I don't really blame them because football is now a mercenary game and the days of Harry Cripps, Gary Mabbutt, Billy Bonds and Tony Adams' loyalty have long gone. Oh, and by the way, there was a late transfer transaction though and it involved a certain side in E13 that deserves a mention! *Ed's note: Who could that be?*

It was late morning after another late night in my sherbet and I was wiping the sleep from my eyes when I heard a beep from my mobile phone! West Ham fan and fellow sufferer, **Jim Rainbird (T25)**

text me with: *Estoy siempre hacienda pompas. Arriba los Martillos!* Now I know Jim and his lovely wife Mel, love southern Spain and I thought they had crept off to Friggiana again and he was on the sauce, but after requesting the linguistic expert help of my 'A' level Spanish-speaking daughter Sophie, she told me that it translated to *I'm forever blowing bubbles. Up the Hammers!* More and more texts began flooding in. *We've signed 2 Argentineans and it's a real deal* claimed **Mark Lane (N97)**. I switched on Sky Sports News and sure enough there they were - Javier Mascherano and Carlos Tevez were the two internationals that West Ham had signed and I've got to say for once in my life, I was rather speechless - ok, just for a minute or two! Then another text from a now-worried Man U fan, **John Biddle (D73)**: *Can't see Tevez playing a 1-2 with Harewood!* Were WHU about to join the big boys and challenge for European honours in a big way? Then good mate **Tommy (two tickets) Shea** text: *Where did the money come from?* That's rich coming from a Chelsea fan! Yes, they (the big boys) were all beginning to get concerned about the fact that West Ham were going to be breathing down their necks for once! Later that same day I went to work and was driving along and dreaming of one day facing Real Madrid in the Champions League Final, when suddenly I heard: "Oi, you're still a small club!" It looked like **Martin Hizer (M47)** with a 'Spurs' air freshener dangling from his interior mirror and looking a wee bit jealous and envious, possibly remembering Messrs Ardiles and Villa and their good old days!

And me? Initially I was dubious about the deal and in the words of late night Call Centre dispatcher and West Ham fan **Dave Ivers**, "...it's too cloak and dagger for me!" But so far so good. I saw our two new boys play for their country against Brazil at The Emirates stadium and was impressed to say the least. But more importantly, what do you think? Was it the right deal? Will West Ham slip up on a piece of corn beef? Is your passport up to date? Anyway, it's something to gossip (or be envious) about while we're sitting in our cabs, eateries or evening courses learning holiday Spanish! And talking of sitting in our cabs...

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

Kupkake's Korner



Hidden rivers... and rats!

There's a river hidden below our feet,
under the street buried deep,
the river we know as the Fleet,
where once water ran swiftly sweet.

In this coffin cold and damp,
the vermin rats do encamp,
needing neither stair nor ramp,
emerging nightly 'neath street lamp.

And even before darkness calls,
they scratch their way up lichen walls,
seeking places where rubbish falls,
under the shadow of Saint Pauls.

In the market, by the bars,
scuttling low among the cars,
never looking at the stars,
avoiding the drunken "ok ya's."

Ere the sun rise in the east,
the rats have partaken of their feast,
every furry hairy beast,
now returns to below the streets.

Being successful in their quest,
each rat will find its cosy nest,
waiting for sunset in the west,
until again darkness stirs their rest...

Kopyright Kupkake 2006

Crash, bang, wallop

I recently 'T-boned' a police car that went through a red light, writing off my cab! My new cab with the same registration number is now running around and I'd like to thank Chairman Brian Rice, Editor Alan Fisher and Nuala Glavin in Driver Services for their concern, plus numerous other drivers that have wished me well. See you out there...!

Russell Hall (G44)

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

Following up on some of the points raised in Allen Togwell's column in last months' issue regarding a driver's dress code, **Call Sign** decided to run a mini-survey of subscriber's views on suitable attire for going to work in their taxi.

With his Saville Row trousers, Dial-a-Cab logoed short-sleeved shirt and tie and with a clipboard tucked under his arm, our **Call Sign** reporter went onto the streets of the metropolis to gauge our driver's views on 'dressing for work'.

This was no scientific poll; just a random sample of what our drivers felt was comfortable clothing for warm days / nights, while offering an image of respectability when meeting our passengers. Every driver we spoke to expressed firm views, eloquently stated and to a man (unfortunately no ladies were available for interview) told of their distaste for shabby clothing, which they regarded as a poor reflection on our industry and which was often mirrored in the condition of the taxi driven by those individual drivers!

What they said:



Paul McCann (W64)

"My cab does not have air-con, so I dress for comfort in an open-neck short-sleeved shirt and tailored shorts or trousers when the weather is cooler. I would not wear 'jogging kit' or a sweatshirt. Golf clubs have a

dress code, so why not us? Not a neck tie, but comfortable clothing."



Michael Kaye (N4)

"I think a dress code should be voluntary, as should logoed clothing, although such items as Xmas gifts are ok - although we should not be charged for such clothing. Clean jeans

(denims) are ok by me. I would not like to see an imposed dress code and I doubt if it would work. Generally speaking, if drivers are reasonably 'smart casual' that's ok. It's also a self-respect thing. Anyway, passengers expect to be driven safely and treated courteously, so as long as you are comfortable you can concentrate on driving safely."

Dress Code: Dac Drivers Give Their Views



Peter Crown (J30)

"I'm in favour of corporate image clothing, although I would prefer Polo tops to shirts. Being comfortable is very important, but we should look

respectable and not scruffy like one or two non-radio men I've seen!"



Eddie Smith (Y56)

"Yes, we should have a minimum dress standard. Tailored shorts and collared shirts as per golf clubs. They have dress

guidelines, don't they, and so should we. I haven't actually seen anybody in the proverbial 'string vest' but he must be out there. I certainly have no objection to corporate image logoed clothing... yes, why not?"



Bill Gillette (K31)

"My wife has her own dress code for me and she wouldn't let me out of the house looking scruffy. She says it would be a poor reflection on her! I'll probably need a flak jacket after that comment when she reads it! And Mr Interviewer, just

where did you dig up those strides..."



Laurence Lacombe (D68)

"I'm comfortable in tailored shorts - or trousers in cooler weather - and collared or Polo shirts with sandals. A DaC corporate image is ok, especially if supplied or available at reasonable cost."

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Complaints Results



A Complaints meeting was heard on 29 August 2006. The results are below...

Rep = Reprimand... Susp = Suspension... 'No complaint to answer' is not published

<u>Name/call sign</u>	<u>Nature of complaint</u>	<u>Sentence</u>
Colin Wallace (H65)	Not completing 40-job min during months in 2005/2006. Rules 20, 28	Expelled 3 months probation
Freddie Sartain (V27J)	Not completing 40-job min during months in 2005/2006. Rules 20, 28	Expelled 3 months probation
Robert Peters (F98)	Not completing 40-job min during months in 2005/2006. Rules 20, 28	Expelled
John Myers (K62)	Refusing a 'walk up' hiring on W101. Rules 2, 3, 25	4 weeks susp
Melvin Freeman (A37)	Shouting/arguing outside client office in front of client. Rules 1, 2, 5, 25	3 weeks susp
Anthony Beasley (A72)	Shouting/arguing outside client office in front of client. Rules 1, 2, 5, 25	3 weeks susp

Another Dial-a-Cab Call Centre update from Keith Cain...

It's that time of year again when we start to look towards you, the Dial-a-Cab drivers, for that extra effort in helping us cover the work. In previous years, our workload usually increases a few weeks after the children return to school and continues to get busier as we get closer to Christmas. This year, we have seen increased levels of work from the very first week in September and our early morning work especially has come in with a vengeance. Our controllers have been put to the test far earlier than expected in using their skills to get the work covered.

The whole Board, everyone within our Call Centre and all the other departments for that matter, have worked very hard to produce more account work, improve our technology, get the calls answered quickly and deal with the customer service issues when we fail. It's now over to you, the drivers, if we are to come through the next few months without any serious harm being done to our reputation. Our driver service will have to be better than we have every seen before.

I am convinced that having seen work stats for a very wet and stormy Wednesday evening in mid-September, that work levels will increase far beyond the record year of last. Daren Morley, DaC's Training Manager, and I are actively interviewing staff to expand the Call Centre. The move to the new building will hopefully commence in October, but until the move of all departments has been completed - scheduled to be February / March 2007 - we can free up space within Brunswick House to expand our Call Centre by 32 positions and I have set a target of recruiting at least 20 individuals to cover all shifts immediately.

Daren, as you might know, trains drivers as well as staff and because of the expansion

Call Centre Chat



**Keith Cain
Driver Operations / Call
Centre Manager**

programme we are now on, we have also found it necessary to recruit an assistant trainer to help him.

Once in the new building, there will be scope to expand the Call Centre to 120 positions! The scope of this is four times larger than our existing size. Can you imagine the amount of work we could process when we reach that level? However, that will never be possible unless we give our clients the service that I know we are all capable of.

I have always accepted that the driver plays a very important role within our Society and I see you all as being part of the very successful team we have within our organisation. Motivation is the key issue in any business and it applies to all of you. If we can keep you motivated as well as the staff, then only good will prevail for the future. As such, this year's driver incentive program to undertake more account work will soon to be announced. The targets have been understandably raised after

the levels of last year. They are realistic and achievable if you accept the majority of work you are offered rather than reject it.

Cash flow will become very important to many of you and last year I wrote about how we would give consideration to altering your payment frequency to help you manage your cash flow. The same applies this year and I hope as many of you as possible will start increasing the number of account trips you do now, so as to help you become accustomed to dealing with your income being derived from account work rather than cash as we approach the ever-longer holiday period.

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don't enjoy doing it?**



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**Former Dial-a-Cab driver, Bob Woodford, writes a regular column for
Call Sign from his home in Languedoc, France...**

Call Sign En La Belle France

Want the latest news on the French property scene? Wondering what house prices are doing in the Languedoc region? Well we've got hold of figures for **Call Sign** readers that have just been released by the French National Estate Agents' Association (FNAIM).

If you're thinking of an investment in property in France, then it's important you know which parts of the country are growing in value and which are stagnating. With the French economy flat, domestic demand for property has cooled off in recent years, so really it's foreign property investors that are helping prices in certain areas to rise.

FNAIM figures show that the south east of France (comprising Languedoc-Roussillon and Provence-Alpes-Côte-d'Azur) is the only place where real estate prices are currently growing at a similar or better rate than last year.



Across the rest of the country, vendors will be gloomy as the downturn in growth rates for French property continues apace. Values have seriously lost their va-va-voom!

And the moral of the story? Look to the Languedoc-Roussillon region for a safe bet. Sustained, long-term growth combined with 300-plus days of rays per annum makes for

a sunny outlook, whether you're buying a holiday home, a house for retirement, a permanent pad or a pure investment product.

So Languedoc it is then! Ok, so it's just as well as far as this column is concerned, but with France's best beaches, spectacular scenery, never-ending sun (well almost) and cheap flights, this is undoubtedly France's boom area for property investment.

Check out our property website www.immoboulevard.com and in particular click on numbers 34 and 11 on the site map for some interesting investments down here on the Med!

Jusqu'au mois prochain...!

**Bob Woodford (Ex-P49)
Saint Genies de Fontedit,
Languedoc, France**

With so many issues involving the licensed taxi trade, DaC driver Richard Potter takes a look at some of them. His views do not necessarily reflect those of Call Sign or DaC...

Joining a trade body...

I have spent all my life believing that unity and trade unions are a good thing and still do. Having not been a member of any cab trade representative body for some time, I have to admit that joining one gives me a problem, ie should I join one and if so which one?

For 10 years, I was a member of an organisation, but only because it was a condition of being part of that radio circuit, something I always thought of as being very unfair.

Looking at what's available these days, most of the leaders of cab trade representative bodies appear somewhat older than myself and somewhat long in the tooth. It also seems that there is a fair amount of point-scoring going on between them - via their own publications - and having a united trade body does not seem possible at the present time. Indeed, the whole issue of cab trade representation and consultation with TfL and the PCO seems to be in a mess and I am reluctant to put in an application form to any of them.

Getting to Ken's Olympic legacy?

With the 2012 Olympics less than 6 years away, I can't help but think that unless our taxi trade gets itself sorted out and quickly, we would have lost a golden opportunity. Ken Livingstone's legacy will be the Olympics and I am sure there will be much pressure put on the cab trade to provide a world-class service to this world-class event. TfL were one step ahead when they changed the compellable distance, taking away any advantage the cab trade could have had from the location of the Olympic site.

Also they were very quick to slow the east-west corridor via the Embankment and Trafalgar Square to add weight to their argument for Crossrail, whilst retaining the pedestrian crossings in Wellington Street, Cockspur Street, Waterloo Place and now South Carriage Drive. Then there is the proposed tram for Oxford Street, leaving cab drivers with virtually no good route to get from one side of town to the other. I'm sure that giving a pedestrianised phase to the changing of traffic lights has saved lives, but in most cases the sequence seems excessively and needlessly long. Thus the traffic slows down and the congestion charge goes up. What I do know is that people paying the congestion charge are getting a poor deal. I thought that the original idea was that you paid for the privilege of driving through empty streets!

Since the GLA was legalised, we have seen many changes pushed upon us by TfL via the PCO. I am not sure that the PCO should get as much criticism as it does, because are we not just shooting the messenger.

Yes, the enforcement of printers, emissions, the compellable distance and loss of extras are some of the issues we've had to swallow, but looking at the big picture, TfL are simply see-

A DaC Driver's Views on Life and Everything!



ing all this as a litmus test. Will the trade turn acid or alkaline whilst simply seeing what they can get away with? Would the trade hold drivers? Put up a fight? And yes, I got my free receipt pads too!

When it comes to the issue of emissions, Ken Livingstone said in a radio interview that the 20p environmental charge should cover any cost to a taxi driver, but what he failed to mention is that it's set against our loss of extras. To my reckoning, it will take approximately four years to recoup that money, but how much would I have in my pocket had there been NO loss of extras and an environmental charge?

How can we be cheaper than the buses? Take a five-hander from Harrods to The Hilton (Park Lane) for under a fiver that would cost them £7.50 on the bus!

Going back to cab trade politics, it's always been an important part of trade unionism to be able to defend a position and that's what the cab trade has failed to do. TfL has exploited divisions in the trade to maximum effect and I can't see things changing, unless the leaders of the cab trade organisations bury their hatchets or fall on their swords and allow young blood to take over with a view to the long-term future of our trade. There needs to be a greater level of respect for the trade as a whole.

Mayor Ken's flippant attitude to the trade and the forthcoming emission conversions was summed up when he asked a driver on a phone-in show: "How much do you earn?" In other words - you can afford it!

What's that got to do with it? We all know that the trade is made up of many drivers who do differing hours and earn different money, so some drivers will still struggle to find money to pay for converting their cab.

Giving our support...

Just like so many others, New Labour to me has been a huge disappointment when dealing with its own kind - Labour supporters, Labour unions and Labour voters. I believed that with New Labour would come better relationships

between government and Labour sympathetic representative bodies and trade unions.

Obviously taking the vote for granted, it has been more of a dictatorship at times and it's only really starting to dawn on us that the previous Conservative government kept the cab trade happy, year on year, simply to keep us 'on-side'.

Now Ruth Kelly has taken over the local government remit, plans are set to give more power back to the GLA from London Borough Councils. Surely alarm bells should be ringing in the taxi business by now? The bigger the GLA gets, the bigger the opposition from the trade will have to be. Now that Ken has shown financial autonomy with the introduction of the congestion charge, central government will be happy to oblige. The main bone of contention between Maggie Thatcher and Ken Livingstone was that the old GLC had powers to raise its own taxes. It has got to be just a matter of time before the GLA will be allowed to change legislation on taxi trade issues without having to go to the House of Commons. Our effectiveness as a trade is being compromised because of the lack of written agreements between a *united* trade body and TfL, when it comes to consultation and negotiations.

How ridiculous that DaC Chairman Brian Rice had to apologise - albeit tongue in cheek - for bringing an issue out to a wider audience after meetings with the PCO. What's this all about? Yes, they tell us what's happening, but no one is allowed to tell anyone else...!

Perhaps enlisting help from the House of Commons would put pressure on the GLA? The trade should lobby London and home county MPs in the Commons to start a *London Cab trade Support group* that would help in getting legislation changed that the trade feels it needs, rather than just having changes forced upon us.

The MP for Hayes and Harlington, John McDonald, does this already for other unions and as he was the deputy to Ken at the GLC and is standing against Gordon Brown for the Labour leadership when Tony Blair stands down, our support for him would be a good move and could help create good contacts.

So with 2012 looming, what could be negotiated in return? Proper rest ranks? Proper places to eat? Access to all bus lanes? An exemption from all parking tickets for taxi drivers who are performing their duty? Banning Rickshaws and Tuc-Tucs? Our extras back - or just respectability and a right to have a say in the job we do? You choose...

With the current political machinery, I feel very little will happen. The London cab trade really needs to wake up and smell the coffee before the train leaves for the 2012 Olympics - with us waving it good-bye...

Richard Potter (T51)

Around 180 smiling, excited children together with almost 100 taxi drivers (also rather excited) and helpers made the annual pilgrimage with the *Children's Magical Taxi Tour* to the Disneyland Resort, Paris on Friday 15 September, courtesy of the organising skills of the *Worshipful Company of Hackney Carriage Drivers*.

As usual, Dial-a-Cab drivers were plentiful among the volunteers who had collected the children from homes and hospitals throughout London and the Home Counties to get them to Cabot Square by 7.30am for their pre-journey breakfast before setting off for France...

The three-mile long convoy took the children - many with life threatening illnesses - on their weekend trip of a lifetime courtesy of P&O Ferries and many other sponsors. Joining the kids and helpers were doctors, nurses, paramedics, police officers, ambulance crews and of course, the AA. Even London radio station traffic reports talking of the convoy and the unavoidable delays it caused, were for once laughing about the hold-ups and saying how worthwhile they were.

The first leg of the journey to Dover was fast and uneventful thanks to the Met police, later aided by the French police who guided them onto the ferry. A quick lunch and raid of the Duty Free shop and the group were in Calais. After around 260 miles and a ferry ride from E14C, a huge cheer told everyone that the convoy had arrived!

The group stayed at Disney's *Hotel Cheyenne*, which is laid out like a typical 'Wild West' town with buildings named after well-known figures from the American old west. But it was the following morning that all the kids were waiting for (and a few adults), when after breakfast, everyone assembled outside the hotel and made their way to an unforgettable day in Disney.

They went on as many rides as they could and watched the truly amazing Disneyland Parade before the children returned to the hotel for a quick change of clothing and then headed back to Disneyland for an evening meal with Mickey Mouse and the rest of the characters. A disco finished off a fabulous day!

Sunday morning saw the long trek back to London, but the children will have the memory of Disney's magic in their hearts forever.

DaC driver and Disneyland committee member, **Jim Rainbird (T25)** told *Call Sign*: **"The kids always have a great time and**

Disneyland Paris taken over by DaC drivers!



Jason Graham (R36) with 2 of the children on the trip
Inset pic: **Mary Poppins and friend**



this year was no exception. They took the place by storm! It was just amazing..."

All finance needed for this amazing event comes via donations or fund raising activities

held throughout the year. The Company would also like to thank everyone who helped to make this such a special weekend.

Photos Sandie Goodwin and Russell Hall

Russell Hall (G44)



Janet Fox (G35J) on tour around Disney with one of the families

DaC's Peter in "Great River Race"



Peter (third from right) and the Ahoy crew. We assume he changed back into his normal attire after the race!

One of the year's toughest Thames boat races took place on Saturday 16 September when several hundred crews took part in the **Great River Race**, which sees them row their way from Richmond to Greenwich.

Two of those taking part were Dial-a-Cab driver **Peter Clark (M48)** and his wife Ginette. They were racing to help raise funds for the **Adventure Help and Opportunities for Youth (AHOY)** Centre in Deptford, whose aim is to ensure that everyone - and in particular the young, disadvantaged or those with disabilities - can learn how to sail.

Call Sign readers will remember *The London Taxidriver's Fund for Underprivileged Children* paying for a specially equipped boat for disabled young people that the Fund had donated to Ahoy. The cost to the Fund was in excess of £11,000.

Peter told **Call Sign** how the race day went...

"At 5.45am we arrived at the Ahoy Centre. After rigging 2 powerboats, we set off for Richmond. We arrived there at 7.15 and after meeting with Tracy Edwards MBE, registered and

the day - as you do!

"We set off at 10.42am and after a slow start and minor collision with a moored houseboat, soon got into a rhythm and caught up and began overtaking other boats - which together with the thought of the bar at the end - helped boost our morale. We finished the race at 2.32pm in 252nd place, some-way behind the winning crew - Team Atlantic Quest in their GB Row Challenge boat. But that was good enough for us and we went back to the Ahoy to put the boats away, shower and change and then off we went to the Poplar Rowing Club for that well deserved drink!"

Peter's crew raised a magnificent £606 and for those who don't know, Peter's guest - Tracy Edwards MBE - is the same Tracy Edwards famed for her bid to sail non-stop around the world with an all female crew.

Well done to Peter and co...

N18 S&H CABS
S57 JUST TAXIS
W9 COMPUTER CAB
SE17 COACHLINE TAXIS
M48 DIAL A CAB
M48 DIAL A CAB
SW6 RITNEY RESERVE TAXIS
E2 FRAMERIGHT TAXIS
EN3 ENFIELD TAXIS
TW8 CAMBERFIELD TAXIS
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M48 DIAL A CAB
E1 KPM UK TAXIS

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E2 - Frameright Engineers 020 7739 5617	HAB - Edgware Cab Company 020 8951 4590
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TW8 CAMBERFIELD TAXIS
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E1 KPM UK TAXIS




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Back to the Future for Parking Ticket Payments



As you know, DaC have been experiencing a huge number of parking tickets from drivers going about their normal daily business. So about six months ago, we decided to dispute all parking notices to see if this would make a difference. However, the resulting difference is negligible. The Boroughs and Transport for London are keen to uphold the letter of the law where parking restrictions are in place and will always give a reason as to why the parking ticket is valid and must be paid. Consequently, we have decided not to waste our time with the appeals process and would ask drivers to go back to the old system – as detailed below.

* In the event of a driver receiving a PCN, he should pay it within the time allowed for the reduced rate of £50.

* Send or bring into the office, the Parking Ticket and Proof of Payment. If you pay over the phone, please write the payment reference on the ticket.

* From the date and time on the ticket, we will check that you were on a bona fide account ride.

* Payment will be made through your credits.

* If you believe that you have a strong case for disputing a PCN, please come in and we will appeal on your behalf.

* If the ticket was not left on your cab and has increased in value, we will write to reduce the amount due to be paid.

Because our Appeals process was not successful, it does not mean DaC is giving up. Michael Son is campaigning to reduce restrictions so that parking tickets are not issued in the first place. His article on a meeting held with the Corporation of London and their tour of problem parking zones is elsewhere in this issue.

Warren Smith
Financial Accountant

Drivers Operations Update

Hello ladies and gents,

Every year, soon after the school holidays end, the traffic seems to come back even heavier than the previous year and this year is certainly no exception. It undoubtedly makes our jobs more difficult than ever and we will need all hands on deck until the end of the year.

Even more so this year, as I'm sure by now you have heard that the Limehouse Link will be closed every Tuesday till Saturday from the end of September through till March 2007 between the hours of 10pm and 5am. Together with the additional planned closures of Blackwall and Rotherithe tunnels, we surely will all have to rally round to give our clients as good a service as we possibly can.

More so than ever, your support will be required. Please press the accept buttons as much as possible and prove that Dial-a-Cab can supply a service through all types of extreme conditions. Of course our clients will be notified that coverage in certain areas will probably be affected and I'm sure that they will understand how difficult it is for us during the closure times. It will be no different for our competitors, but lets prove once and for all that we are number one for a reason.

The Board of Management are confident that you will all play your part under these testing conditions...

Roman Way

Throughout September, I must praise the Roman Way team for their efforts to fit and refit many existing and some new drivers. With the new registrations and discounted deals on TXIIs, they have worked flat out. It sometimes goes without notice, but they do a



good job under trying conditions. For those of you that have visited the fitting bay, I hope you have been satisfied with the service and that you have found it to be a much more driver-friendly environment. That, of course, is our aim.

The wait for refits has been a little longer than normal and I hope you understand that with so many new taxis sold during September, there were genuine reasons for the small delays.

It seems certain that the new model is about to be unveiled in the next two months and we all hope that there are not too many teething problems.

Can I end by reminding anyone that has any problems in using or operating the terminal in your taxi, please contact me on **0207 607 6403** and I will be only too pleased to help.

Allan Evans
Allane@Dialacab.co.uk

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Contact Andy (P32) on 07904 091278 or 07932 960350

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

Flashback
1971

Dial-a-Cab Flashback

This month's Flashback goes back to January 1971 and the Secretary's Report from Bill Browne...

Cars on ODRTS?

A meeting was held between representatives of the Board of management and car-owning members of ODRTS willing to participate in the pilot scheme for cars on the circuit. Many ideas were presented and discussed and were put on the agenda for the following monthly Board of management meeting. A good deal of progress is being made and further announcements will be made in due course.

Subscriptions

Within the next few years, it will be necessary to re-equip the majority of our mobiles. We may decide to purchase equipment outright rather than hire-maintain them as at present. For this reason plus increases in wages and extra staff now employed, we are obliged as from April 1, 1971 to raise the driver's subscription rate to £12 per calendar month. We feel that this increase, less than 5p (one shilling) per day, in no way compares with the escalating cost of taxi operating today. It will, however, ensure the continuance and growth of our Society.

Control room

Our control room recently came across a problem when their supply of docketts apparently almost ran out and dispatcher **Dennis**



The Control room back to normality after running out of docketts!

Samuels (F25) had to chase around London to try to get some more, but failed. Eventually it was decided to buy up as many exercise books from the sweet shop in Elgin Avenue as was possible and cut them docket-shaped! Fortunately, within an hour, a new supply reached the office, but congratulations to everyone down there for managing to carry on under such difficult circumstances.

Obituary – Bert Frankford

With deep regret we announce the untimely passing of **Bert Frankford (Ex D50)**. Bert joined ODRTS in March 1954 and ranked as one of our longest serving subscribers until September 1966, when through ill health he

was forced to leave the circuit. In later years he spent some time in hospital and after disposing of his own cab, was employed as a journeyman. On Saturday 20 February, he was taken ill outside the Houses of Parliament, pulled his cab safely into the kerb and passed away. He was 57 and had been a taxi driver for 36 years. A representative of the Board of management attended the funeral at Bushey Jewish Cemetery. We extend our condolences to his wife, daughter and family. Rest His Soul...

Bill Browne
ODRTS Secretary

Major new exhibition at the Jewish Museum, Camden ONE MAN'S FIGHT TO PROMOTE RIGHTS OF THE CHILD

Champion of the child: Janusz Korczak - 5 December 2006 – 8 April 2007

Champion of the child: Janusz Korczak tells the heart-wrenching, yet inspiring story of Janusz Korczak (1878-1942), who devoted his life to establishing and defining the rights of the child regardless of nationality or religion. His work was posthumously adopted by the United Nations as the *Convention of the Rights of the Child* and the exhibition at Camden's Jewish Museum shows how his teachings on the treatment of children continue to resonate around the world today.

Korczak, a Polish-Jewish doctor, educator and children's author, wrote passionately about the subject of children's rights and his ideas were adopted by the UN in the *Children's Human Rights Declaration* of 1959. In honour of his contributions, Pope John Paul II declared that "...for the world today, Janusz Korczak is a symbol of true religion and true morality," while UNESCO proclaimed 1979 as *The Year of Janusz Korczak* to coincide with the International Year of the Child and the centenary of his birth.

This exhibition reveals how Korczak came to represent the rights of street children and orphans in Warsaw in the early 20th century, introducing the first progressive orphanages for Jewish and Catholic children. He hosted a children's radio programme, founded the first children's newspaper and testified on behalf of children in juvenile courts. It also explores how life in Poland became increasingly difficult for Korczak after German occupation and how his Jewish orphanage was moved inside the Warsaw Ghetto in 1940.

On August 6 1942, he was forced to gather together the 200 orphans in his care to report for deportation. Refusing all offers for his own rescue, Korczak joined the children on the train that would take them to the Treblinka extermination camp, preferring to die with the children under his protection rather than abandon them.

The exhibition will feature original paintings and drawings of Korczak by Israeli artist Itzhak Belfer, who was born in Poland in 1923 and raised in the Jewish Warsaw orphanage. It is accompanied by a wide-ranging programme of talks and discussions and creative workshops for children.

The Jewish Museum, 129-131 Albert Street, Camden Town (020 7284 1997)

Open Mon to Thurs 10am-4pm, Sun 10am-5pm

Adults £3.50, Senior Citizens £2.50, Children/Students/Disabled £1.50, Family ticket £8.

It may surprise many of you to know that we at **Call Sign** have been following the progress of **Power Pill** for exactly one year now. Back in August 2005, Power Pill approached us with a product that they not only claimed would save us money on fuel and get rid of the nasty black smoke pouring out of our taxis, but also offered to prove it free of charge...and now the proof has come showing that it actually does what it claims! Not content with giving DaC drivers a chance to test the product for now (and with some amazing results), they have now set about demonstrating how much cleaner our cab engines will stay by using their product.

Power Pill set out to find a well-respected, long established specialist to conduct some major engine examinations and after much research throughout the industry, chose **MAG Diesels** in South London. Arthur Bolt, a veteran of almost fifty years in the trade, runs MAG and along with son Gary and the rest of his team, has taken apart more engines than you or I have had hot dinners!

Stripping down DaC driver's engines!

The protocol involved stripping down a typical diesel engine that had never used Power Pill in order to photograph and document the state our taxis get themselves into just by doing their everyday job. Then three Dial-a-Cab drivers were picked at random from the hundreds who are now using Power Pill, to have their vehicle engines stripped down to see what difference, if any, Power Pill had made.

Dealing with the non-Power Pill engine first, the amount of carbon build up left behind by the fuel on the inlet manifold is staggering. Gary Bolt explained to **Call Sign**...

"In every engine we work on, heavy carbon deposits like these are found within the combustion chamber and fuel system. The result is poor start up, excessive smoke, poor gas flow, reduced power and decreased miles per gallon. All of these significantly shorten the lifespan of the engine."

The first DaC driver to have his cab engine examined was **Ken Jackman (B29)** whose Metrocab Series I has completed over 290,000 miles. Like all the drivers involved, Ken has been using Power Pill for over 6 months. On inspection under his bonnet, the findings were quite remarkable. Ken was happy to share the findings...

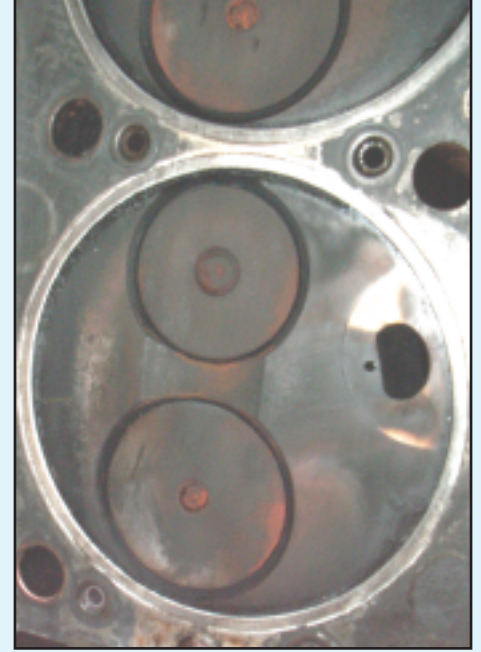
*"I started using Power Pill after reading the articles in **Call Sign** and immediately started to see improvements in fuel consumption. When Power Pill approached*

After one year of testing with hundreds of Call Sign readers, at last...

DaC drivers prove Power Pill works!



Valve seating in a cab not using Power Pill



Valve Seating in a cab that is using Power Pill. The difference is astonishing

me to demonstrate that my cab's engine would last longer, I was happy to oblige...and it was definitely worth it! The pictures produced are quite remarkable."

Next up to the plate was **Divyesh Ruparelia (V59)**, who many of you will remember wrote to **Call Sign** back in March to tell of his experiences with Power Pill. Divyesh now adds...

"Not only is the cab running better than ever, I am now delighted that with such a clean engine, my cab should last me as long as I wish to keep it."

Stephen Hassan (P95) was the third driver to have his cab examined and the results in his TXI were just as impressive...

"I was happy to be involved - especially as Power Pill supplied me with a replacement taxi while mine was tested! As the results showed, all parts of my engine, injectors, filters and even oil are much cleaner, while driving is much more of a pleasure since using Power Pill."

Arthur Bolt has been impressed by Power Pill ever since he started his own tests back at the beginning of 2006 and now that he has seen not only the fuel saving and emission results, but also the cleanliness of the engine, Arthur told **Call Sign**...

"Power Pill really does work - we have tested all kinds of devices which are designed to give better performance, but

in our opinion none have ever achieved results as consistently as Power Pill. The cleaning of the engine and fuel system starts immediately and within just a few tanks of fuel, you are driving a much cleaner vehicle, pumping out less emissions and saving money not only on fuel, but hefty servicing bills too. We believe engines using Power Pill should last in excess of 600,000 miles."

Power Pill CEO Leon Warner added:

"One of the things we wanted to show drivers is that Power Pill not only saves you money and helps the environment, it also extends the life of the engine and even after long-term use, causes no damage. We would like to thank all of the drivers involved and we look forward to continuing to help more drivers save money and reduce engine wear."

Power Pill is available from JVBright at Southbank Service Station, Mark outside Paddington Station or by calling Power Pill directly on 0845 1 30 80 77.

*Editors note: In the one year of **Call Sign** testing Power Pill, we have not asked for or received any money for advertising this product. Our only aim was to prove whether it worked or not...*

New DaC Building Name: Winning Entry...

With the huge number of entrants in Call Sign's "Name the new building" competition all striving to win the super prize of a table for four people at Brian Turner's Mayfair restaurant at the Millenium Hotel in Grosvenor Square, picking the winner was extremely difficult.

The wording to have looked for in the original article was: *"The winner's name may not be the one finally chosen for the building..."* That gave you the chance to use your imagination in

thinking of a name. *Call Sign* sent a copy of every name entered to each Board member (except Keith Cain who was on holiday) and asked them to choose two. We picked a winner on the strength of their majority choice.

The winning entry was **Lordac House**, which was sent in by **Mike Pollington (K17)**. His remark with the entry was that it commemorated the old with the new.

Close calls ...but sadly no prize came from Fiacre House (Elizabeth Winterburn), GCHQ (Pat France A81) and which she says stands for Gentleman's Circuit Headquarters, Taxi Towers (Laurence Kelvin W88)

and the many drivers who sent in Bonnie Martyn House or variations on the name of our founder-Chairman, but had that been chosen, all the winners would have had to settle for a cheese sandwich each! There were also several of 'The Lords House', which brought a smile!

But well done again to Mike Pollington (K17) and thanks to everyone that entered...

Brian Turner Mayfair is at the Millenium Hotel Mayfair, Grosvenor Square (entrance in Adam's Row or through the hotel)

*Reservations: 020 7596 3444
Lunch: Monday to Friday and Sunday; Dinner: Mon - Sat.*

The Anniversary Page

Geordie Boys...The Jarrow Marchers

In 1974, singer Alan Price wrote a song about them. Their 286-mile march from Tyneside to London had captured the hearts of the general public the length and breadth of the UK. They were the Jarrow Marchers...

Seventy years ago this month, a small group of unemployed men - mainly miners and shipbuilders - began a march from their home town in the North East, down to London and to lobby Parliament about the lack of work opportunities on Tyneside.

This was the Depression-hit 1930's and unemployment in Britains' industrial heartlands was running high. Particularly badly hit were the mining and ship building industries of North East England where unemployment was a staggering 85%!

In an effort to persuade the government of the day to generate work in support of the Jarrow men and their families, 200 artisans from the area hit the road south to confront Parliament.

On 5 October 1936, the 200 Geordie men set off on their 22-leg journey towards London. Wherever they stopped along the way, local people came out to greet and cheer them, offering kindness and material goods in support of their cause. The 'Crusade' as it became known, was given overnight shelter in drill halls, town halls or any suitable accommodation that would house the marchers and their considerable entourage, which included 2 doctors, a barber, a gaggle of newspapermen and a Labrador dog mascot!

After 3 weeks on the road, the weary but hopeful Jarrow Marchers reached London on 31 October. During the sojourn south, the men had collected 12,000 signatures in support of their cry for work to be directed towards Tyneside and the North East. The petition was handed in to Parliament by Ellen Wilkinson, Labour MP for Jarrow. To their utter dismay, the Prime Minister of the day, Stanley Baldwin, refused to see any of the Marchers' representatives. They had however, generated considerable public awareness of their plight through the media and gained the support of the nation. But to no avail...

Although nobody realised it at the time, it was in fact to be another 3 years of hardship, until the outbreak of WW2 in 1939, when the mining and shipbuilding industries of Tyneside would enjoy a revival, albeit at the cost of world conflict.

The last surviving Marcher, Cornelius 'Con' Whalen died in September 2003 aged 93 years.



The marchers pass through Bucks
Pic courtesy NMPFT Daily Herald archive

Bright Green Biodiesel is a cleaner, greener fuel that an East End charity is working to make available to London's taxi drivers. The fuel will be a blend of 50% biodiesel (made from used cooking oil) and 50% conventional diesel. The Environment Trust plans to sell their Bright Green Biodiesel for 93 – 95p per litre, making it similar to conventional diesel. The fuel also has significantly reduced carbon dioxide, nitrous oxide and particulate emissions compared to conventional diesel, which will assist taxi drivers in reducing the emissions that Mayor Ken is so eager to tackle. And the best bit is that no expensive engine modifications are required.

Quality

The fuel will be produced to the EU standard for biodiesel and each batch will be individually tested to ensure the product's quality. The more adventurous can use up to 100% biodiesel in your Dial-a-Cab taxis, but they are recommending a blend to ensure that performance can be guaranteed throughout the year. They will also be on hand to advise drivers who are starting to use biodiesel for the first time, to ensure a smooth transition between fuel use.

Flexibility

Another huge benefit of biodiesel, in addition to price and emissions reductions, is that making the switch to biodiesel is not an irreversible decision. It does not require expensive changes to your taxi and if you aren't in the area of a biodiesel pump, you can use conventional diesel. This means that unlike other alternative fuels, using biodiesel is flexible and inexpensive.

Where to get it

The details of where biodiesel will be sold have not yet been finalised, but The Environment Trust are hoping to link up with existing taxi filling stations and work in partnership by having a pump on their site. The Trust would be interested to hear from any DaC drivers who have ideas about taxi filling stations that might be interested in working with them or can give them contact details of pumps that you use so they can get in touch with the garages concerned.

What is it made from?

This will be London's first commercial biodiesel operation and their raw material will come from the fish and chip and kebab shops that cover the East End! They produce much waste cooking oil that can be made good use of. It is also an exciting opportunity for taxi

Bright Green Biodiesel Soon to Drive London Taxis?

drivers to use a fuel that is cleaner, better for both their car and London's air quality and which enables them to be part of changing London's approach to waste and transport for the better.

What do you think?

Please let us know

The Environment Trust told *Call Sign*: "The

enthusiasm of taxi drivers for our product will be crucial to our success, so please do contact us to let me know your thoughts on biodiesel. What will make you want to use it, what else is needed to convince you or what puts you off using it? Your feedback is vital in helping us to get our product right and ensure that it meets the needs of taxi drivers, so please do contact Faye Scott on faye@envirotrust.org or 020 7264 4669.

What's On

At London's Exhibition Centre...

From Alan Nash (A95)

Event name	Type	Date
The National Wedding Show	Earls Court 2	29/09/06 to 01/10/06
Footwear London Autumn	Olympia 2	01/10/06 to 03/10/06
Turkish Fashion Fabric	Exhibition Brompton Hall	03/10/06 to 04/10/06
Show House 2006	ExCel Trade	03/10/06 to 05/10/06
Brand Licensing 2006	Olympia National	04/10/06 to 05/10/06
SocietyGuardian LIVE	Earls Court 2	04/10/06 to 05/10/06
Cycle 2006	ExCel Public/Trade	05/10/06 to 08/10/06
London Dental Showcase	2006 ExCel Trade	05/10/06 to 07/10/06
Autumn Ideal Home Show	Earls Court 1	06/10/06 to 15/10/06
Context	Olympia	10/10/06 to 11/10/06
M&E - The building services event	Olympia 1	01/10/06 to 11/10/06
Sustainable Energy and Efficiency Expo	Olympia	10/10/06 to 11/10/06
Total Workplace Management	Olympia	10/10/06 to 11/10/06
The National Work Placement Exhibition	Olympia 2	12/10/06 to 12/10/06
National Graduate Recruitment Exhibition	Olympia 2	13/10/06 to 14/10/06
Salon International	ExCel Trade	14/10/06 to 16/10/06
Camexpo – Complem.& Natural Healthcare	ExCel Trade	15/10/06 to 16/10/06
Digital Print World 2006	Earls Court 2	17/10/06 to 19/10/06
GovNet Expo 2006: Public Service Reform	Olympia Conference Centre	17/10/06 to 18/10/06
IP06	Earls Court 2	17/10/06 to 18/10/06
Documation 06	Olympia 2	18/10/06 to 19/10/06
Storage Expo 2006	Olympia National	18/10/06 to 19/10/06
The Metro Ski and Snowboard Show	Olympia Grand	18/10/06 to 22/10/06
IX Investor 06	Olympia Conference Centre	20/10/06 to 21/10/06
THE BABY SHOW 06	Earls Court 1	20/10/06 to 22/10/06
Evening Standard & Metro Careers	Brompton Hall	20/10/06 to 21/10/06
ECMOD 2006	Brompton Hall	25/10/06 to 26/10/06
LinuxWorld Conference & Expo	Olympia 2	25/10/06 to 26/10/06
MacExpo 2006	Olympia National	26/10/06 to 28/10/06
Homes Overseas Magazine Exhibition	ExCel Public	27/10/06 to 29/10/06
London MCM Expo	ExCel Public	28/10/06 to 29/10/06
London Schools and Educational Show	Olympia 2	28/10/06 to 29/10/06

Tony has now left the building...

While our Tone embarks on his farewell tour and harps back to the days when he was at university allegedly in a rock band, his farewell concerts are going down a storm. He performs some old songs that he grew up with and chats along the way as to how each song relates to his time in office. The show opens with his theme song *things can only get better*; with backing performed by the Al Queda symphony orchestra and chorus. Behind him, as a backdrop, the EU flag unfurls the width of the stage along with video footage of the Afghanistan and Iraq bombings. He walks onto the stage - slow and sultry - with just a single spotlight on him as the backdrop changes to a montage of what Britain was like in the 60s and 70s, a time of peace, love, freedom... and strikes! He slowly sings the classic Barbra Streisand / Gladys Knight hit, *the way we were*. Tears welled up on the faces of the audience as they remembered those good old days.

This was quickly followed up by Bob Dylan's *times they are a changing*, played only to the accompaniment of an acoustic guitar. This went down a storm, with not a dry eye in the house. I wonder why? The backdrop then changed to Britain in the 80s and 90s, showing the Tories in disarray and meltdown under the Major leadership. The pace of the music also changed and Tone took on the glam rock look as he began to warble the Gary Glitter ditty *do you wanna be in my gang?* Most of the audience shouted no! A few thank yous and then to great relief, a large portrait of Mrs Thatcher was brought onto the stage. This could only mean one thing - and sure enough Tone was standing in spandex trousers, strutting his stuff as only he can and performing the Rod Stewart classic *Maggie May*. Was this his way of thanking her? The mood then changed again, as did the backdrop, to a picture of Rasputin, as the maestro went into a soulful version of Nina Simone's *I put a spell on you*, as if it were he alone bridging the great divide of this country. This, of course, led to the Simon and Garfunkle's brilliant *bridge over troubled water*. To close the first half, some spotty youths in hoods and tracksuit bottoms ten sizes too big for

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



The Views of a Grumpy Old Man

them, sauntered onto the stage along with their female counterparts (seemingly with belts for skirts) and pushing prams. This was to be a tribute to Pink Floyd as they all went into the teenage anthem *another brick in the wall*, a song about educashon, Tone's one great mantra...

Shafted?

The second half opened to Sister Sledge's *we are family*, with the whole Blair entourage on stage including some of his cabinet ministers for good measure. Showman that he is, Tone gave us his version of the Stevie Wonder great, *my Cherie amour* while the audience responded with Eagles' favourite, *witchie woman*. This was while the assembled masses were as one and really enjoying themselves.

As if continuing his tenure at number

10, the orchestra did Isaac Hayes theme from *Shaft* as by now we know that we have been - shafted that is! Continuing in the soul vein, a Motown medley followed as Tone warbled his way through the Four Tops *reach out*, segued by the Supremes *where did our love go* and the Temptations *just my imagination*. From the Stax / Atlantic catalogue came *respect* from Aretha Franklin / Otis Redding, quickly followed by *I can't get no satisfaction*.

Master of spin that he is, Tone then changed again. Donning dark glasses and standing motionless, he gave us his version of the Roy Orbison classics *only the lonely* and *it's over* - for surely now it was? But no, there was one more to come and you knew it just had to be Frank Sinatra's *my way*. Not for nothing was he known as the chairman of the board!

And so the curtain came down on this one-man show leaving the audience clapping with delight - that it was over at last. But no, like all great entertainers, there was at least one encore left and sure enough the curtain opened again and there in what can only be described as a halo of light, was the first family all together, bowing (and scraping) and thanking the production team of New Labour. The backdrop now was showing a large airplane - Blair Force 1 - and the orchestra began playing John Denver's *leaving on a jet plane*, while those still attempting to exit this venue were chanting Steam's *na na na na, na na na na, bey bey, goodbye*. And ala the Two Ronnies - it's was a goodbye from me and a goodbye from him...

Chas Kissin (P99J)

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Late deals and special prices for DaC members.

The PCO Guide to Picking Up and Setting Down

The PCO has sent a guide to exactly where taxis can and cannot pick up or set down. Among the reminders are:

Wheelchair passengers

Although taxi drivers have freedom to stop in many places that other vehicles cannot, this covers only the period while the passenger is boarding or alighting. There is no set time limit and taxi drivers can stop for as long as necessary for the passenger to get in or out. For example, if ramps are needed to allow a wheelchair user into the vehicle and time must be taken to ensure that the wheelchair is in the right position and the passenger is secured safely. This is allowed and all appropriate care should be taken. If there are waiting or parking restrictions, the taxi cannot stop for longer than necessary for the passenger to board or alight.

Assisting passengers

Where waiting or parking restrictions apply, there is no general exemption to leave the vehicle to assist a passenger to or from a building. Although the PCO recognises the importance of drivers helping customers in this way, each highway authority determines what discretion is allowed in its enforcement procedures. A driver who regards this assistance as an essential part of picking up or setting down a particular passenger, should minimise any time spent away from the vehicle and, if possible, record details of the passenger in case a Penalty Charge Notice (PCN) is issued.

Waiting

A taxi driver waiting at a time and place where restrictions apply (indicated by yellow or red lines and plates at the kerbside) is contravening the traffic order and may receive a PCN. This applies whether the taxi has arrived early for a booking or the passenger is late. Highway authorities will not allow parking where a passenger asks a driver to stop and wait while they visit a shop or use an ATM. This is generally seen as little different from a private motorist parking while they do the same. *Ed's note: Also see Mike Son's article...*

Times and places that a taxi can stop

Taxi drivers can stop to pick up or set down passengers at most places on Red Routes (see below) and on other roads. Boarding and alighting is allowed on single and double yellow and red lines, in places where loading is prohibited (shown by markings on the kerb), in parking bays and in bus lanes. You should not stop where you would cause an obstruction or a safety hazard, including on the zigzag lines by pedestrian or school crossings.

Bus lanes

Taxis can pick up or set down passengers in a bus lane, even if they are not normally allowed

to drive in it - apart from the stretches of Red Route mentioned below. The vehicle should enter and leave the bus lane in the most direct and safe way. Passengers should never be set down in the middle of the road, even if the taxi is stopped in traffic - the driver must always get close to the kerb.

Bus stops

Although taxis can stop to pick up or set down passengers at almost all London bus stops, it is recommended that drivers avoid these to reduce disruption to bus services. The bus stops where taxis cannot stop are on the three stretches of Red Route described below.

Red Routes

These are the main trunk roads in London - making up about 5% of the road network and carrying over 30% of the traffic. They are marked with red no-stopping lines by the kerb and with signs. London taxis can stop to pick up or set down passengers on most stretches of Red Route. The exceptions are three stretches of road with particularly busy bus stops or other problems: Wilton Road alongside Victoria Station, Euston Road eastbound in front of Kings Cross Station and Bishopsgate northbound between the junctions with Liverpool Street and Middlesex Street. There are plans to mark these stretches with a broad red line by the kerb, in place of the normal single or double red lines.

Passenger requests

Drivers should be familiar with the area that they work in and may be able to advise passengers of places where they can stop and wait if necessary. If a passenger asks a taxi driver to wait where this is prohibited, the driver should explain politely that the taxi cannot wait in certain places. If possible, the driver should suggest alternative shops, ATMs etc as appropriate or seek ways for the driver and passenger to

give each other mutual assurance so that the driver will not lose the fare, but the passenger is confident that the taxi will return for them. The PCO appreciates that these issues can lead to disagreement between drivers and passengers and understands the difficulties this causes. The professionalism of London's licensed taxi drivers is essential in maintaining the good reputation of London's taxi trade.

Enforcement

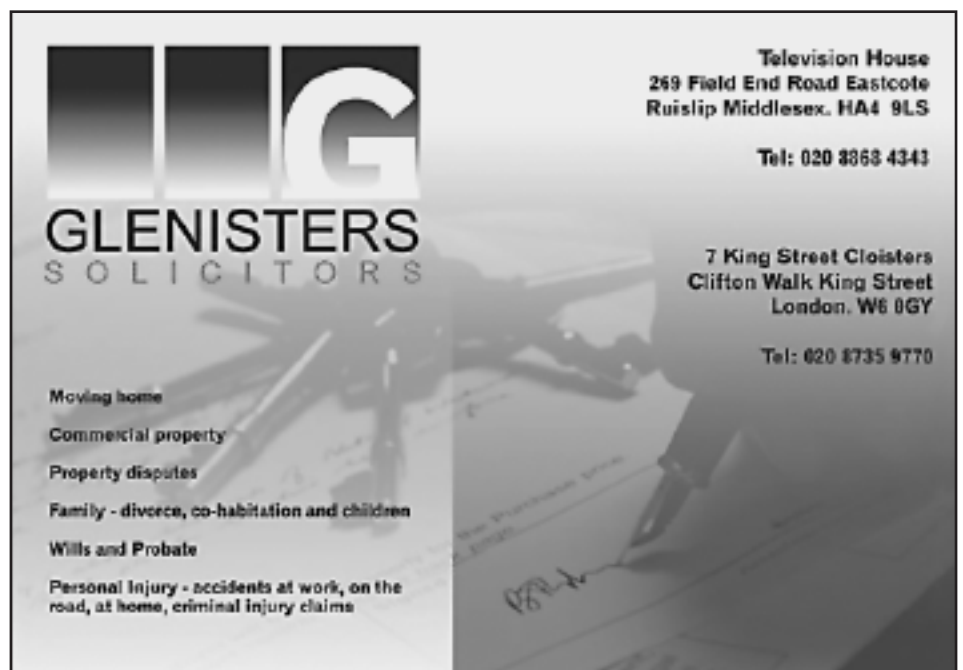
PCNs can be issued by Parking Attendants or can be sent to the registered keeper of the vehicle as a result of camera observation. A PCN may be issued even if an attendant was not visible. You can challenge any PCN offering any evidence you may have. If the authority does not accept your challenge, you can appeal to the independent Parking and Traffic Appeals Service. There is no charge for an appeal and you can go to the hearing if desired. Providing copies of all appropriate evidence will help the case. The adjudicator's decision is final and binding on both the driver and the authority and the adjudicator can award costs if either party acted unreasonably.

Transport for London

Transport for London is the highway authority for the Red Route network as well as the licensing authority for taxis and private hire and the strategic body for transport in London.

Staff engaged in enforcement on Red Routes have been advised that where stopping to pick up and set down passengers is allowed, there is no time limit and drivers can take as long as needed as long as that activity is clear.

Most of London's roads are managed by the 33 boroughs and TfL has encouraged these organisations to take sensible and pragmatic approaches to the above issues. Relevant officers in each of the boroughs have been advised of the contents of this Notice.



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Tel: 020 8868 4343

7 King Street Cloisters
Clifton Walk King Street
London. W6 0GY
Tel: 020 8735 9770

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SMILE

Sent in by Ian
Lingham (K64)



Fruity tale...

An elderly man in Florida had owned a large farm for several years. In the back he put in a large pond with a nice surrounding area including picnic tables, horseshoe courts, a volleyball court and some apple and peach trees. The pond was also properly shaped and fixed up for swimming. One evening the old farmer decided to go down to the pond and look it over as he hadn't been there in a while. He took with him a five-gallon bucket to bring back some fruit, but as he neared the pond he heard voices shouting and laughing. As he got closer, he saw a bunch of young women skinny-dipping in his pond. He made the women aware of his presence and they all went to the deep end.

One of the women shouted to him: "We're not coming out until you leave!"

The old man frowned: "I didn't come down here to watch you ladies swim naked or make you get out of the pond naked."

Holding the bucket up he called out: "I'm here to feed the alligator..."

Other offences taken into account...

An 80-year old woman was arrested for shoplifting. When she went before the judge he asked her what she had stolen? She replied that it was a can of peaches. The judge asked her why she had stolen them and she replied that she was hungry. The judge then asked her how many peaches were in the can and she replied six.

The judge then told her: "In that case I will give you 6 days in jail." Before the judge could actually pronounce the punishment, the woman's husband spoke up and asked the judge if he could say something. The judge agreed and the husband stood up.

"Best to get all offences out of the way together, your honour" said the husband, "...she also stole a can of peas!"

TAXIS EXEMPT FROM NEW CHILD SEAT LAWS

Dial-a-Cab drivers will by now be aware of the new child car seat regulations that came into force last month. Norwich Union, with whom many taxi drivers are insured, teamed up with clinical psychologist and expert on ITV1's *Driving Mum & Dad Mad*, Claire Halsey, to develop a series of easy tips to help parents get older kids back into booster seats and make for an altogether safer car journey.

That, however, applies to your car journeys. **Call Sign** is concerned only with your trips – especially those involving child passengers – as a DaC taxi driver and the question most cabbies are asking is: Do the new regulations apply to us? **Call Sign** asked Joanna Pritchard of PR company Lexis to clarify the situation. She explained: "It is impracticable to expect the right child seat or booster to be available in a taxi unless parents have brought one with them. Therefore, there is a qualified exception so that if child restraints are not available in a licensed taxi (or licensed private hire vehicle):

- **Under 3s may travel unrestrained, but in the rear only**
- **Those 3 years and above must use an adult belt in the rear seat only**
- **A child up to 135 cms in a front seat of any vehicle must use the correct child seat or booster**

The driver of the vehicle is responsible for seat belt wearing by children under 14 years if there is no fixed partition, so although that would apply to PH, it does not affect licensed taxi drivers.

Whilst the front seat information doesn't apply to working taxi drivers, those with added front seats in their luggage compartment and carrying their own children when off-duty are not exempt.

As for your cars, Brian Bridges, motor underwriter at Norwich Union, told **Call Sign**:

"We are aware that too many children are killed or injured during accidents on the road when the appropriate child restraint isn't used. Our research shows that children as young as 6, may have moved to using an adult seat belt and this simply isn't giving them the protection they need. The new regulations are a welcome revision and Norwich Union gives full support to the Government for taking the issue of child car safety seriously. The new regulations are estimated to save up to 2,000 child deaths or injuries each year."

Norwich Union is the UK's largest general insurer with a market share of around 14%, with a focus on insurance for individuals and small businesses. It is a leading provider of life, pensions and investment products and one of the largest Financial Adviser (FA) providers.

THE 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**.

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

Then, providing you are over 18, have been a member of the Credit Union for over three months and have established regular savings, 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 to.

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...?

MAILSHOT

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

Improving the way we work?

Although we have modern equipment in our cabs, we are still "old fashioned" in some ways. Bringing us up-to-date would not be difficult and I would like to suggest some ideas that could help us do that and provide an even better service.

* Increase 'soon to clear' to 20 or even 25 minutes. Modern traffic is too heavy for just 15 minutes.

* 'Temporary off' also increased to 20 or 25 minutes. Parking for toilet / tea breaks is very difficult nowadays.

* All Call Takers should be told to explain that passengers asking to be picked up from places such as Brent Cross, Hatton Cross or Kings Cross must wait at the head of the taxi rank and not in a car park, back entrance or loading bay where we can never find them.

* When passengers order a cab from a bar, restaurant or club etc, can Call Takers ask them to let the reception know that they are expecting a taxi.

I believe all the above will make the best service even better.

Sid Nathan (K88)

And more sugges- tions...

I asked Brian Rice some time ago why we can't STC into the same zone twice? I often misjudge the time it's going to take to do a job due to unforeseen circumstances and then time out on my STC. I'm still heading to the same zone and want to be available for work, but I'm then going to the back of the queue again. So what is the problem? Is there some unfair advantage / potential for skulduggery that I'm missing here?

I also made the point last year about the quality of receipt paper we are using. If you cannot get your receipts into an underground bunker at -30C within minutes of printing them, they degrade. Is the paper designed specifically to do this or is it the result of having a massive stock of 'inferior' paper? If it is the former, what is the reasoning behind it?

Mark Sherlock (W41)

Allan Evans replies: Mark, I can understand that with traffic conditions as they are, it is sometimes easy to misjudge the 'soon to clear' facility. The present system has been in place since the introduction of the date despatch system and the time parameters were initially set in conjunction with the lead-in times in Central London. A fifteen minute period would normally coincide with the lead-in time on a pre-booked trip. I would imagine that if you exceed the time on

the original STC by a small period, your suggestion would not give you any more advantage than actually clearing the trip and booking back into the original zone that you were travelling to. In both cases you will still be last in the queue. Drivers do not always necessarily STC into the zone that they are travelling to, they may STC into a back up zone which they feel is busier.

In answer to your second point, the paper we use in the printer is environmentally friendly bio-degradable which is thin, while the ink is water based which means that if the paper is open to direct heat or sunlight, it will eventually discolour. Although the ink is light fast, it will fade after a period of time. May I suggest that you keep the receipts in the black plastic account book folder in a cool and darkened area and you will not then have any problems for the six month period that you are advised to keep them. The folders are readily available at Brunswick House.

Where am I?

Last night whilst booked into E14, I accepted a credit ride with the pick-up address as Canada Square. I promptly sent a 'delay advise' message and within seconds the job was scrubbed. When I subsequently pressed 'no trip' and checked the 'original zone' box, I then found that not only was I booked into E14 - but also E14C...and I was nowhere near the confines of the Canary Wharf security cordon! After a quick call to the call centre to explain what had happened, I booked off of E14C but remained booked into E14.

My point is this... other drivers (should the same scenario arise) may be unaware that the computer has booked them on to a physical rank and may be put on complaint despite doing nothing wrong at all!

Robert Richland (N94)

Allan Evans replies: Robert, after checking the system loggers, the Credit Card trip that you accepted was offered from E14C - as all card and cash trips are. Although you were still in E14 when you cleared the scrub, you pressed the 'trip zone' box rather than 'original zone' box, which actually gave you back a queue position in both E14C and E14. If you in future press the original zone, you will only be given a queue position in the zone that you are in and not the trip zone, which would be E14 only.

Cheap and sweaty?

How condescending of Allen Togwell to relate his hygiene habits to we, the lesser mortals of Dial-a-Cab, the ones who pay his wages thus enabling him to pursue the pres-

tigious role of Marketing Manager! How nice to enlighten us on cheap non-iron clothing! The nylon / polyester combination he recommends is *guaranteed* to encourage perspiration and therefore sweat stains. Cotton is the best fabric for hot conditions. I would have thought the years Mr T spent in Ladies Fashion might have enabled some degree of expertise in natural materials and their suitability and application. Or was his forte in ladies underwear! His article shows just how out of touch he is with the Dial-a-Cab work force, further proof of my assertion that all Board members - except the Chairman - need to get out on a cab occasionally and into the *real* world of a working taxi driver! Jack Taylor did...

For starters, just where are you gonna park whilst you tend to your ablutions? It's hard enough to find a place to stop and pee without a warden sticking a ticket on one's cab. On a hotel rank? No way in today's climate of undercover tout catchers waiting in the bushes for a driver to leave his cab unattended. Get updated with our trials and tribulations Mr T and come down off your pompous horse in your ivory tower and get your arse on a (hot) cab seat now and again.

David Kupler (Y74) *shorts/ sandals wearer extraordinaire...!*

Allen Togwell replies:

What is it, David, that fuels your paranoia about Board members working their cabs? Yes of course Jack Taylor did, a) because his role as PRO didn't warrant being in the office for any length of time b) the remuneration was akin to working for charity and c) our turnover was barely £2m and not the £45m it is today. In your previous letter you state you object to any client dictating what you should wear. In actual fact, the client in question was stipulating what the driver undertaking their work should NOT wear. As for my not being in the real world, David, in that real world a client spending millions of pounds for an adequate taxi service has every right to stipulate anything they like. Hence the reason far too much work is being forced into minicabs rather than using drivers such as yourself, who arrogantly believe that because you have a badge, it gives you the God-given right to demand everything that suits you and not the client. And that is the very attitude that precipitated the arrival of minicabs in the first place! Had you possessed an ounce of business acumen, you would pre-empt the needs of our customers as well as the threat of the competition and make every effort to meet those needs. And yes, including having a wash and freshen up when nature calls, assuming you



MAILSHOT

Mailshot continued from page 36

do use the correct establishment for that purpose. I wonder, David, what your attitude would be had you taken a short busman's holiday and booked a cab to take family and friends on a tour of London and the driver's appearance was a disgrace. Would you accept it as his right and make no comment? I don't think so.

Finally your assumption was correct. I did once manufacture both ladies underwear and swimwear during the 60's at the height of 'flower power'. I had seven 18yr old mannequins working for me, but it bored me stiff so I changed to manufacturing cotton suits for an airline company, so yes I do understand the benefits of using cotton. But it is also, I think, a bit above your price range and it creases easily, so not adequate for sitting in a cab all day.

Albert Bridge

Is there any driver out there who has personally received a warning or fine for driving a taxi over Albert Bridge? There are several anecdotal stories about meeting someone who knew a mate who heard of a friend who "got done!" Is this regulation enforced, or is it a case of a few signs and expecting taxis to comply because of our good nature? Just recently, a passenger complained to me about my route over Battersea Bridge when he saw three other taxis using Albert Bridge...

Laurence Kelvin (W88)

If you have been fined for using Albert Bridge, please let *Call Sign* know. We spoke to the Engineer's Department for Kensington and Chelsea and they confirmed that due to a bridge weakness, the weight restrictions would be enforced, but as you have pointed out Laurence, the police don't seem to be particularly interested and when passengers see other taxis crossing the bridge, they can be forgiven for thinking their driver is taking a liberty. After all, minicabs are allowed to use the bridge ...Ed

Thank you London

As a disabled tourist from Fort William in the northwest Highlands of Scotland who lives within 7 miles of Ben Nevis and who visited London on 18 - 19 July, I would just like to say that I was most impressed with the level of professional assistance and courteous manner that all PCO taxi drivers that I came into contact with showed me in carrying out their duties in their assistance to help me in and out of their taxis. It really goes to show how not only does it enhance visitors and local population friendly attitude of London and Londoners, but also speaks volumes on the day-to-day attitudes towards others. As a

member of our local Disability Access Panel in Fort William, that meant a lot to me during my short visit to the capital.

I would especially like to thank the taxi driver who walked me across the road into the entrance of Kings Cross Station due to the reconstruction works that were being carried out nearby.

Mr N.T.Kellar

Fort William, Scotland

The above letter was passed on to *Call Sign* by the PCO ...Ed

Have a Spanish Archer (el bow)!

I have noticed recently the increase of work coming from the scabs. The early hours of Monday morning seems to be the peak demand for our services, with the majority of jobs before 6am having a 'T' attribute. With the scabs acquiring more and more work, but unable to meet demand as they are unable to attract drivers who pass PCO requirements, I would like to ask a question. With the Christmas partying season not far away, our services will be in great demand, so why put our accounts in jeopardy and help the scabs keep theirs by covering their work? I say give them the *Spanish Archer* just prior to the peak demand!

Recently during the mid-morning rush, some jobs have become non-rejectable because the customer is a VIP - a good idea when the VIP may have the power to close the account, but I was amused recently when offered one with a 'T' attribute? How can someone who prefers scabs before us be classed as a VIP?

Barry Spear (Y16)

Brian Rice replies: This is a question I have answered several times in the past, but it is still as pertinent today as it was then. I understand your concern, Barry, and I happen to agree with you, however, I cannot let my heart rule my head when running a commercial enterprise such as DaC. What would you do if a company offered to supply you all through the year, but when things become very busy before Christmas, they withdrew their service to you and only agreed to service you again in the New Year? I suggest you would not retain their services for very long and we are in exactly the same position with our taxi competitors waiting in the wings only too ready to service these 'T' accounts throughout the year - that is my dilemma! You complete a substantial amount of account work and have all available attributes, consequently you are prepared to do anything, which is to be commended. But we introduced the

'T' attribute for members that do not wish to be considered for the car work, however there are many members such as yourself that do wish to do this work. Consequently I believe everyone wins.

Regarding our coverage in the 'run up' to Christmas, with the size of fleet we have at the moment (the largest in Central London), we should be able to demolish all work that is despatched, but we won't because the average member only does 20% of his / her work off the radio - so we have ample supply.

Regarding the VIP with the 'T' attribute; this probably happened because there is a large account where we are the sole taxi supplier, however all the work is distributed through that car company's system. As a consequence, if the VIP requires a taxi, he only has a choice of one (us) so he becomes a VIP on a 'T' attribute, solely because he / she has some clout within the company.

Finally Barry, as you have no doubt gathered, I do have some sympathy with your letter, but I really don't believe I should change anything. That should be the member's choice as to whether he / she covers the trip or not, always bearing in mind that the average 'T' attribute trip is in excess of £30.

Tom Whitbread article

I would like to protest at the outrageous article that you allowed to go in the September issue of *Call Sign* under "Party political broadcast on behalf of the Compliance Officer!"

I think the silence of the Editor who allowed this rant from a Board member to appear in *Call Sign* speaks volumes. This is so as you never criticise any Board input and this brings into sharp focus that the editorship of *Call Sign* is a patronage position given by the Board. This is evidenced by the fact you allow this rant, yet censor letters written by members that criticise management decisions (as I know to my cost as you would not print a previous letter of mine regarding Brian being a Director of the TLPA.

I think it would be safe to say that Tom Whitbread's interpretation of immigrant as equals criminal and foreigner as equals rapist and murderer, he is not speaking of an ethnic group that is close to his own. For when he says;

"When a foreigner commits a murder, they plead mentally unstable and get sent to a cushy hospital or let off a custodial sentence. If they are that mad, how did they negotiate getting from their country to the land of milk and honey... the British Isles?"

He is not using foreign to mean anyone outside of his own ethnic grouping (ie white



MAILSHOT

Mailshot continued from page 37

British), as white French, white German would hardly need to negotiate from their poor-off country to a "land of milk and honey."

Also when he alludes to the feigning madness criminal foreigner, this also betrays his notion of immigrant / foreigner. Again I would say it would be safe to say he is talking of an ethnic mix that is not his own and an allusion to schizophrenia and association with being black.*

I am sure consequence will follow from this article, as many times we have read a journalist reporting on a 'right wing, hang and flog em, foreign scum cabbie'. For the most part this could be countered as an attempt at stereotyping using an unknown and unverifiable source material and says more about the journalist than the mythical unknown cabbie. But what we have now is a Board member putting such thoughts to print for all and sundry to read and to quote. I'm sure this rant will find its way to Transport for London (probably has already) and bring a whole load of criticism onto our heads. Probably more than criticism may well follow.

I think this article is very damaging to DaC and I think Mr Whitbread ought to resign the Board with immediate effect.

**"Studies seeking to explain the over-representation of black people in secure hospital and community forensic psychiatric settings have not moved beyond explaining this on the basis of the alleged epidemic of schizophrenia. The connection with the criminal justice system is based on an alleged high incidence of violent crime in blacks."*

Source; NHS National Programme on Forensic Mental Health Research and Development.

Maurice Haben (G17)

Maurice, your letter infers disturbing racial overtones. Tom doesn't mention colour yet you base your letter on the assumption that he means black. What right do you have to make that assumption because you have dug up some NHS thesis from the Internet? Since when was the NHS the know-all of the world?

For the benefit of Call Sign readers, the letter from Maurice Haben that I refused to publish some months ago was one of just four unpublished letters in my 9+ years in this hot seat. One of the reasons I didn't publish it was Mr Haben's inferences about the TIPA and in my view the possibility of them being libellous. Tom's views may not have been to everyone's liking, but there was nothing libellous about them.

As for Mr Haben's letter of this issue, I had originally decided not to publish it because A/ he put it on an Internet

list before sending it to me and I do not like second hand letters – not to mention him putting his unanswered accusations on-line in a place where Tom Whitbread would not see it, and B/ it has racial overtones that he is attempting to place into the mouth of Tom Whitbread. Tom's views are often controversial and as written at the bottom of his article, did not necessarily reflect those of anyone else at DaC. However, knowing Maurice as I do, had I not published his letter, he would have gone onto the Internet and told everyone how I censor everything when in reality, the reverse is probably more true. Just ask 'Grumpy' whose column often contains personal views that do not always meet those of others. Should I censor everything that Maurice Haben doesn't like?

Maurice also says: "I think it would be safe to say that Tom Whitbread's interpretation of immigrant as equals criminal and foreigner as equals rapist and murderer, he is not speaking of an ethnic group that is close to his own." For Maurice Haben's benefit, Tom Whitbread's grandmother was Polish.

Incidentally, courtesy copies of Call Sign certainly go out to TfL, just as they do to the Met Police, PCO and the Mayor's office. Somewhat surprisingly (at least to Maurice) and agreeing with it or not, none have complained at the freedom of speech exercised in Tom's article ...Ed

And Stan on Tom Whitbread!

Even though Tom Whitbread is an Arsenal supporter, I never realised that he could be such a putz as to withdraw money from a cash machine in Mare Street, Hackney! To be honest, I wouldn't attempt to do such a thing even if accompanied by 6 armed guards! Only recently someone asked me to take them to Peckham. I told him it was impossible because no one had yet made it there.

As for Richard Potter (T51), I'd like to ask him what it's like in Zagora, the capital of planet Zog? Because when he states that the trade should unite, it sounds as though he doesn't belong to this world. When the day dawns on a united cab trade, Iraq will be democratic, the USA Communist and Spurs will win the championship! He will have to come up with a less worn out cliché than "united we stand, divided we fall" because we've been hearing that one for ages. The truth is that 15,000 individualistic cabbies in the main don't care about anything but themselves. We all did the Knowledge on

our own and go out to work unaccompanied, with the only thought in mind being how much we can earn. The reality is that divided, we stand on our own feet and if one day we unite, it will be as a last desperate measure to save our trade.

Stanley Frankel (K46)

Thank you Stanley. Speaking of Planet Zog, what was it like? ...Ed

Jim Warren

Our thanks for everything you have done for us in *Call Sign*. It meant such a lot to us to see Brian Rice, Tom Whitbread and you at his funeral. Jim would have been so proud to see not just those three, but also all those lovely DaC staff and drivers who also turned up at his funeral. He thought such a lot of the company and you can see why.

Joan Warren, together with Carol, Sue and Rosina

London N1

Jean Martin

I am the brother of Roy Martin (R42) and was really touched by the article in September's issue of *Call Sign* regarding Roy's wife Jean who sadly died on 12th August. Her letter to you in response to the flowers sent to her by Dial-a-Cab was an indication of her courage in the face of such suffering and your comments were very much appreciated by Roy and his family.

In these circumstances, I wonder if it would be possible for you to let me have a copy of September's *Call Sign*?

Terry Martin

Hartley, Kent

You should have received the copy by now. Jean's letter to DaC will forever be deservedly available to read in the on-line version ...Ed

Strand U-turns

I'd just like to let our drivers know that I have had my PCN cancelled by Westminster council for doing a u-turn outside Charing Cross Stn on 11 May this year. I had the same original response from Westminster as **Dave Spencer (V39)** wrote about in the September *Call Sign*. I hope this gives some help to other drivers in a similar situation.

Michael Hegarty (A22)

Well done Mike. Dave Spencer received 2 similar PCNs for doing u-turns and was told that the council received neither of his appeals. This seems to be an ongoing problem with some councils and suggests that regardless of the extra cost, all PCN dealings with councils should be done using the recorded delivery or even registered post services...Ed



MAILSHOT



Mailshot continued from page 38

Why I use Power Pill...

Power Pill? Economic pills? When I first read about Power Pill in *Call Sign*, it didn't attract me at all. But later as I read in *Call Sign* that DaC drivers were offered 2 trial packs free of charge in return for filling in a form, I thought I'd have a go and to my surprise I was shocked at the results! Firstly, my fuel consumption has gone down, secondly I now have a much smoother running engine and thirdly, the cab's pulling power has improved greatly. Thanks Alan for arranging the privilege for DaC drivers.

To the 1600 or so drivers who didn't have a go – give Power Pill a try now and to save you the bother of looking up their telephone number, try this one: 0845 130 8077 or try www.powerpilluk.com.

You will be treated very nicely and if they are still testing, then you will get some free pills to try. Then it's up to you to see the difference as I did.

Thanks again to Alan...

Sid Nathan (K88)

An article in this issue seems to give conclusive proof that Power Pill works ...Ed

Cabot Square and fireworks

I was recently chatting to a security guard at Cabot Square about the new checks they were carrying out for traces of explosives and I asked him – bearing in mind that 5 November is just around the corner - what would be the result if someone coming through the checkpoint had recently come into contact with fireworks? His answer surprised me and I thought I'd pass it on to *Call Sign* readers. If they find the smallest trace of explosive – and that's what is inside fireworks – they will strip the cab down and you could be regarded as a possible threat until the all clear is given to your taxi! So if you are planning to let off fireworks on Guy Fawkes night and then going off to work, you could be carrying explosive traces on you and unknowingly transferring them to your cab!

Gary Johnson (P28)

Accident

I would like to thank all the drivers that came to my assistance following my accident in Aspen Way on 13 September. You will prove to be valuable witnesses. After the other driver jumped a red light, my taxi was hit and spun round sustaining major damage. My passenger and I were very lucky to walk away and our injuries thankfully are not life threatening. It's refreshing to see some drivers still retain the spirit of a

'gentlemen's circuit'.
Colin Jenkins (Y22)

Lou Gitlin

I noticed in the July *Call Sign* that one of my favourite dispatchers is retiring. Lou Gitlin, our Saturday afternoon "voice" despatcher, would carry us through the hours up to 11.30pm and it was amazing just how quickly that time would go with his wonderful humour and of course the football results that he absolutely hated giving. Time just whizzed by!

However, more than that, he was a great motivator. I can only speak personally, but he gave me loads of encouragement in order that I would not be shy in coming in for work. Of course he would do the same for everybody, but he did have the knack of making you feel special and of course we

did our best to cover whatever we could. He was a unique asset to our Society and will be greatly missed by myself and I'm sure by many other drivers. I will always know him as Uncle Lou and thank him for helping me get used to working with a radio. Yes, Saturdays were a great day to work and you got home refreshed after a day spent with Uncles Lou and Ivor...

Adrian Landau (T14)

Adrian, you must be much older than you look! For those who don't know, Lou Gitlin first started dispatching part-time at ODRTS in 1958 and from 1961, both he and Ivor Belkin ran the Saturday dispatching show between them for an astonishing 45 years including both being at DaC on the day we changed from voice to data. Ivor is still here ...Ed

**TAXI DRIVER OF THE YEAR
DINNER AND DANCE**

*The Taxi Driver of the Year Charity Fund is presenting their annual
Dinner Dance on Saturday 2 December 2006.*

The 34th Taxi Driver of the Year Dinner and Dance, will be held at The International Hotel, Marsh Wall, London, E14. Reception is at 6.15pm and Dinner at 6.45pm with tickets costing just £59 each!

There are free drinks at the reception, an excellent 4-course meal, a half bottle of wine per person and of course dancing till late to a live band.

This is always one of the great nights out of the year, so come along and enjoy the good food and great entertainment. It will prove to be an enjoyable and memorable occasion for all. And of course, with your support the Taxi Driver of the Year Charity Fund is able to give substantial donations to the taxi trade charities that support them.

Russell Poluck MBE (T55)

**Complete and return form (please print) to:
Russell Poluck MBE, Hon Chairman
5 St Brides Avenue, Edgware Middlesex HA8 6BT**

**Make cheques out to T.D.Y.C.F
RSVP by 12 November**

Name.....
Title.....
Company (if applicable)..
Address.....
Tel no.....
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Number of tickets.....
Dietary req: Veg.....Fish.....Meat.....

For further information contact Russell Poluck on 07850 056 765 or tel/fax 020 8952 1357
The Taxi Driver of the Year charity fund is registered with the Charities Commission no 1000761

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