

May 2007



# Call Sign

From the home of Dial-a-Cab International

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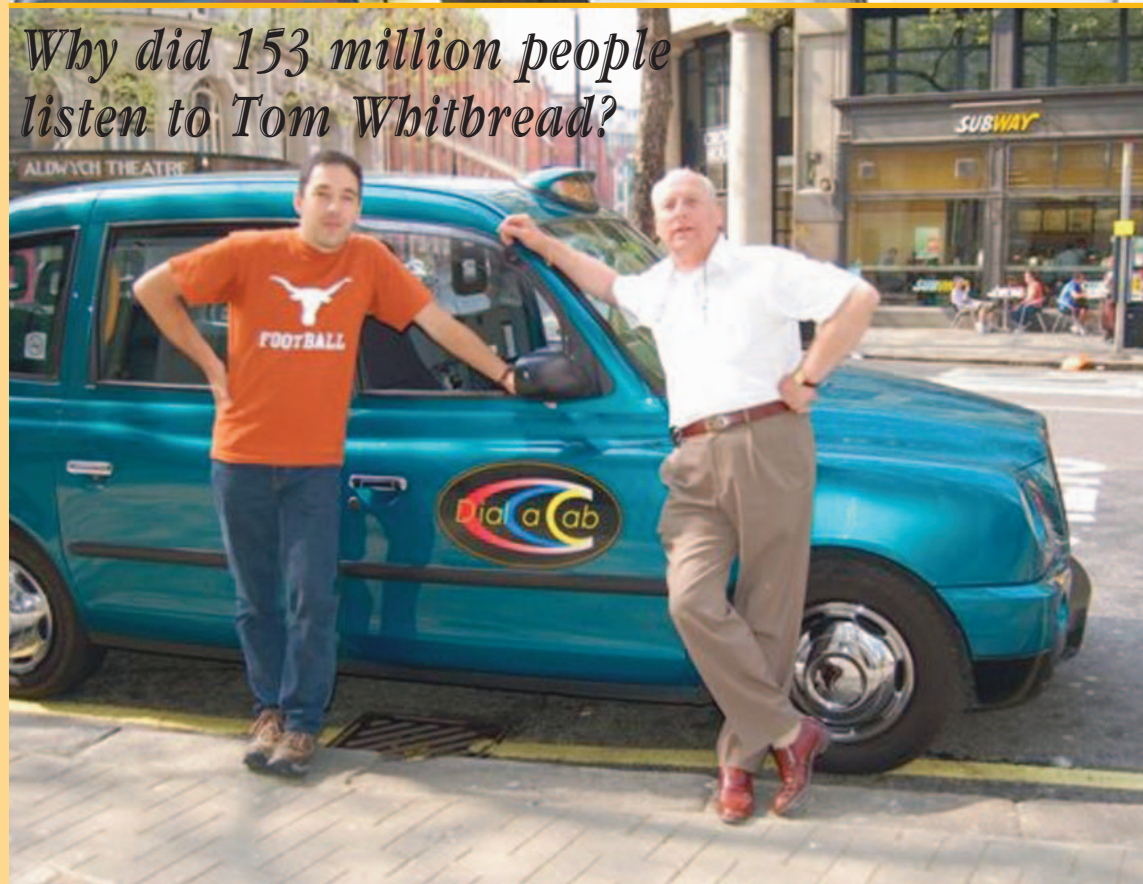
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*Why is DaC driver  
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squeezed into a  
Formula Ford  
racing car?*



*Why did 153 million people  
listen to Tom Whitbread?*





# NASH'S NUMBERS

By Alan Nash (A95)

Back to my list of hotel chains this month. I have included postcodes for those with SatNavs. If you can't wait for the complete list visit [www.nashnumbers.co.uk](http://www.nashnumbers.co.uk) and click on U.I.D.

<b>INTERCONTINENTAL</b>			
London	Hamilton Place, WIJ 7QY		
<b>JURYS</b>			
Clifton Ford	47 Welbeck Street, W1G 8DN	Great Russell Street	16-22 Great Russell Street, WC1B 3NN
Chelsea	Imperial Road, Imperial Wharf, SW6 2GA	Croydon	Wellesley Road, Surrey, Croydon, CRO 9XY
Islington	60 Pentonville Road, N1 9LA	Heathrow Airport	Eastern Perimeter Road, TW6 2SR
Kensington	109-113 Queens Gate, SW7 5LR		
<b>LE MERIDIEN</b>			
Piccadilly	21 Piccadilly, W1J 0BH		
<b>MARRIOTT</b>			
Slough Windsor	1 Church Street, Chalvey, Slough, SL1 2NH	Grosvenor House	86-90 Park Lane, W1K 7TN
Bexleyheath	1 Broadway, Bexleyheath, DA6 7JZ	County Hall	County Hall, SE1 7PB
Grand Residence	47 Park Street, W1K 7EB	Grosvenor Square	10-13 Duke Street, W1K 6JP
Hanbury Manor	Cambridge Road, Ware, SG1 20SD	Heathrow	Bath Road, Hayes, UB3 5AN
Kensington	147 Cromwell Road, SW5 0TH	Maida Vale	Plaza Parade, Maida Vale, NW6 5RP
Marble Arch	134 George Street, W1H 5DN	Park Lane	140 Park Lane, W1K 7AA
Regents Park	128 King Henry's Road, NW3 3ST	Slough Windsor	Ditton Road Langley, Slough, SL3 8PT
West India Quay	22 Hertsmeare Road, E14 4ED		Canary Wharf 22 Hertsmeare Road, E14 4ED
<b>MERCURE</b>			
City Bankside	75-79 Southwark Street SE1 0JA		
<b>MILLENNIUM</b>			
Gloucester	4-18 Harrington Gardens, SW7 4LH	Baileys	140 Gloucester Road, SW7 4QH
Knightsbridge	17-25 Sloane Street, SW1X 9NU	Mayfair	44 Grosvenor Square, W1K 2HP (Adams Row)
Chelsea Copthorne	Stamford Bridge, Fulham Road, SW6 1HS		
<b>MOAT HOUSE</b>			
	See Best Western		
<b>NOVOTEL</b>			
London City South	53-61 Southwark Bridge Road, SE1 9HH	Euston	100-110 Euston Road, NW1 2AJ
Excel	Western Gateway, E16 1AA	Greenwich	173-185 Greenwich High Road, SE10 8JA
Heathrow	Cherry Lane, West Drayton, UB7 9HB	Tower Bridge	10 Pepys Street, EC3N 2NU
Waterloo	Lambeth Road, SE1 7LS		London West 1 Shortlands, W6 8DR
<b>PARK INN</b>			
Harlow	M11 J7, Southern Way, Harlow, CM18 7BA	Heathrow	Bath Road, UB7 0DU
Hyde Park	66 Lancaster Gate, London, W2 3NZ		

## What's On at Excel, Olympia and Earls Court in start date order

EVENT	VENUE	START	FINISH
Internet World	Earls Court 2	01/05/07	to 03/05/07
The International Direct Marketing Fair	Earls Court 2	01/05/07	to 03/05/07
Think	ExCel (Trade)	01/05/07	to 03/05/07
EREC 2007	ExCel (Public/Trade)	02/05/07	to 03/05/07
Who Do You Think You Are	Olympia National Hall	05/05/07	to 07/05/07
Airline Purchasing Expo 2007	Olympia 2	09/05/07	to 10/05/07
Museum & Heritage 2007	Brompton Hall, Earls Court	09/05/07	to 10/05/07
Money Marketing Live 2007	Olympia National	10/05/07	to 10/05/07
Roger Waters	Earls Court 1	11/05/07	to 12/05/07
Mystic Arts 07	Olympia Conference Centre	12/05/07	to 13/05/07
Bathrooms and Kitchens EXPO 2007	ExCel (Trade)	13/05/07	to 15/05/07
Times Crème Executive Secretary and PA Show	Olympia National	15/05/07	to 17/05/07
The Credit Show 07	Olympia 2	16/05/07	to 17/05/07
Liftex 07	ExCel (Trade)	16/05/07	to 17/05/07
England Netball	Earls Court 1	17/05/07	to 17/05/07
Seni07 - The Combat Sports Show	ExCel (Public)	19/05/07	to 20/05/07
EPEC 2007	ExCel (Public/Trade)	19/05/07	to 20/05/07
Olympia Beauty Show	Olympia Grand	20/05/07	to 21/05/07
Caffè Culture 2007	Olympia National	23/05/07	to 24/05/07
The Wireless Event	Olympia 2	23/05/07	to 24/05/07
MCM Expo	ExCel (Public)	26/05/07	to 27/05/07

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# from the editor's desk

## Ten years...

I really do find it almost impossible to believe, but with this issue I have now completed 10 years as the Editor of *Call Sign*. I vaguely recollect some days after my original interview - when 7 of us went for Jery Craig's old job - being told that I was going to be given the job "but would be on probation" to see whether I could hack it or not!

In all honesty, I didn't really know myself as I had never done anything like it before. But I'm still here so it couldn't have been too bad - and my probationary period finishes shortly!

An Editor with 40 empty pages wouldn't last too long, so can I thank everyone who has ever written for me or written to Mailshot because it's you that has made *Call Sign* entertaining and not just another batch of press releases.

## Agreeing with Grant!

Who'd have thought that following last month's item on *The Internet and the Cab Trade*, I would have said that I agree with *Grant Davis* over anything! But, yes, Grant's comments in *The Badge* on drivers who have their SatNavs on display mirror mine exactly.

It is a form of suicide at a time when the difference between taxis and private hire is diminishing and will almost evaporate totally if PH get use of bus lanes and we ever get a choice of vehicle that includes saloon cars.

In the July 2006 issue of *Call Sign*, I wrote of a DaC driver who had been booked to pick me up from the Victoria Palace theatre and take me to Brunswick House. He'd been on Dial-a-Cab just 3 months, had a beautiful cab and was dressed very smartly. But he did the trip using his SatNav. In the back of my mind, I had expected to be on the Embankment.

As we headed north up Park Lane, I was about to ask if he knew where we were going, but he then turned right into Upper Brook Street so I assumed he was going to end up going via Clerkenwell Road. But no! He then turned left into Park Street, crossed Oxford Street into Gloucester Place before turning right into Blandford Street.

It was at this point that I noticed the SatNav system placed in the middle of his dashboard and realised that he was going by that. We went through to Portland Place, turned left and then right, ending up in the Saturday night Euston Road traffic going towards Kings Cross! Then it was straight down towards the Angel and City Road as I watched the SatNav's mileage indicator head towards the zero mark.

That article brought in more comments than any I had ever written. I had drivers phoning me up for months afterwards asking if I had yet found out who the driver was? I wasn't really interested in who he was, I was just concerned that his use of a SatNav could - if picked up by others - help to destroy our trade. Take a look at the above route on a map. It is nowhere near as bad as you'd think, but how many regular clients in a hurry to get to a meeting in the City at midday would agree with that? That's why they use us - because we



use our brains and not SatNavs.

I have a SatNav unit that I take out with me, but it doesn't go on show unless I get a trip out to the sticks. Yes, I'm with Grant on this one. Once passengers believe that we need these units, then the game really will be finished.

And as a (sort of) last word on the subject, according to rumour, Grant Davis and I had a fight outside an account client's address while a DaC driver videoed it with his phone and put it onto YouTube! Dunno about Grant, but I must have been looking the other way because I saw no fight! Still, think of the fun the rumourmongers must have had! It almost brings tears of joy to your eyes!

## And one that I don't agree with...

Having agreed with the LCDC Vice Chairman over SatNavs, I now wonder who it was at *The Badge* that decided to publish the press release regarding the Dodge Avenger as being appealing to the private hire market? Who cares what vehicles are suitable for their market? Certainly I'd expect *Private Hire and Courier* or *Private Hire Monthly* to run the article, after all, they cater to that end of the market. But for a taxi magazine that is constantly rubbishing the PCO to publish that article takes some believing.

The *Miles Better News Agency* send out interesting stories regarding Licensed Taxi business, but this wasn't one of them. That is why *Call Sign* refused to publish it and why I was surprised to see it in *The Badge*...

## Punished for buying a new cab?

You sometimes have to wonder whether the Mayor of London and the Government actually communicate at all or do they both just go along their merry way doing whatever they want? There have been several occasions when Messrs Livingstone and Brown (Gordon) not only don't read from the same song sheet, but attempt to sing in different languages.

The latest example comes with Mayor Livingstone's attempt to clean London's air. As a result, many London taxi drivers have bought new TX4 taxis, which take them up to Euro 4 level, as against the TX2 and older cabs with fitted emission systems that now reach Euro 3 (see page 5). Last year Mr Livingstone said:

*"There is a growing sense of concern*

*amongst Londoners about climate change caused by CO2 emissions, which is the biggest single problem facing humanity, and tackling this threat requires decisive action. 'Chelsea tractors', many of which are responsible for some of the highest CO2 emissions of any cars on our roads, have to be dealt with."*

By Chelsea Tractors, the Mayor was referring to gas guzzling 4x4s. He certainly was not referring to the new Euro 4 compliant TX4 that Gordon Brown has now labelled a gas guzzler and almost doubled the road tax levied on it. That leaves us in the ridiculous situation of the new TX4 costing far more in road tax than any of its predecessors from early TX2s down.

"Gas guzzlers" have been determined as vehicles emitting 225 or more grams per kilometer of Carbon Dioxide. The TX4 has 226 grams per km whilst older cabs have less.

Euro 4 relates to the health aspect of emissions. These are known as NOx and particulates (PM10). So the question has to be whether we agree with the Mayor and his healthy capital ambition by cutting emissions, or do we agree with the Chancellor and his policy on the phenomenon known as global warming and which apparently is responsible for anything that goes wrong with the climate and everything else.

So can we make yet another suggestion to a Mayor who only pretends to listen when on radio phone-ins but in reality just goes along his happy way taking any money we have so that we can buy fuel from South American dictators and celebrate the Cuban Revolution's 50th anniversary: Subsidise the cab trade as you do every other form of transport that you have placed under the TfL moniker. How? How about money? Yes, money! We suggest that you pay for us all to go Euro 6 and then leave us alone to wallow in it!

As for Gordon Brown and his budgets - well the man who may have just doubled your road tax also wants you to vote for him at the next election. Nuff said...

## Running the Marathon

Well done Ian McCarthy (R64) who completed this year's London Marathon in aid of the children's cancer charity CLIC Sargent. His 5hours 21minutes may have been slower than he anticipated but in temperatures of above 70° it took some guts. *Call Sign* was proud to sponsor him.

## Bye for now...

*Call Sign* is saying goodbye and thank you to two long-serving writers of many years, **Russell Hall** and **Chas Kissin** as well as our solicitor, **Hope Liebersohn**, who has been offering free advice to our readers since February 2006. To all three, a big thank you...

## No June...

As is usual, *Call Sign* does not publish a June issue so I'll see you all on 1 July. Those of you due to go on holiday, have a great time...

**Alan Fisher**  
callsignmag@aol.com

# Reflections Of The Chairman

## As I was saying about building sites!

If you remember, I informed you in my last Chairman's report that we were due to relocate buildings over the Easter weekend, but I was somewhat sceptical because the new building looked like a building site to me! Well, I was more correct than I would have liked to have been and it was indeed still a building site on that anticipated moving date weekend!

Consequently, we are now aiming for Saturday 6 May – also a Bank Holiday weekend and as such will probably be quieter than a normal weekend. Our intention is to switch over our systems during the very early hours of the morning and these are, of course, our despatching and telephone systems. We anticipate that our despatching system could be 'down' for up to four hours!

Naturally, all your clients will be informed of this scenario closer to the time and when we are absolutely certain that our moving is going ahead, we will also inform you, our members, probably by data terminal of the date and time of the move and confirm that all work will be despatched by voice – now that will certainly be interesting!

## Subscriptions increase

You have received the bad news that we shall be despatching by voice – albeit for a reasonably short period – so now the good news. Subscriptions are only going to be increased by £4 per month as from 1 June this year! I think most of you will agree that this is a modest increase, which will mean the basic subscription for members increasing from £115 per month (plus VAT) to £119 per month (plus VAT).

I know I will receive correspondence condemning the increase from the usual suspects, but I feel confident that the vast majority of members will recognise the need for a small increase to compensate for inflation and to also help towards the annual staff salary increase. I believe that Dial-a-Cab still represents excellent value for money, in fact the best within the industry.

In addition to the above, for a journeyman sharing a taxi with the owner, the increase will be £2 per month to £72 and a second journeyman from £16 to £20 per month. Naturally, for a journeyman who has sole use of the vehicle, their subscription will be the same as full members – £119 per month (plus VAT).

## DaC fleet recall...

As part of an ongoing programme and in our endeavour to improve signals, it



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

will necessitate a fleet recall. This will be to install new software into your terminals, which will give us the facility for channel re-use. That means that we will be able to install the same channels on the same frequency but in different locations, although still using our current aerial sites. We believe this will go some way to help improve signal strength.

We anticipate the operation taking place later this year – possibly June – when we have settled into our new building. The upgrade process will only take a few minutes for each mobile and will be performed at various locations. Obviously, all members will be informed of the exact timetable closer to the time.

## Happy birthday to him!

Finally, it would be remiss of me not to mention the fact that this current issue of *Call Sign* marks Editor Alan Fisher having been in place for exactly ten years! I would personally like to thank Alan and his proof-reader Linda, for

doing such an excellent job during the past ten years.

I believe the magazine is still as fresh as it was ten years ago and is undoubtedly the best publication within the London Taxi industry, indeed as it has been during the past ten years. I have no reason to doubt that *Call Sign* will continue to be the best in the industry – so happy birthday!

## GEELY WINS SHAREHOLDER APPROVAL

Manganese Bronze Holdings PLC say that Geely Automobile Holdings Ltd has secured shareholder approval for the two firms proposed joint venture to manufacture the London taxi, in addition to other vehicles, in Shanghai, China.

The total investment will be funded by shareholders equity in addition to bank loans. Manganese, which will hold a 48 percent stake in the joint venture – Shanghai LTI Automobile Co – said it will fund its share by issuing 5.7 million shares to Geely.

Geely, in turn, will hold a 51 percent stake in the company with 1 percent being held by its associate, Shanghai Maple.

Manganese, whose shareholders have already cleared the proposal, said in March that production of the London taxi in China is expected to begin by mid-2008.

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At around the time that **Call Sign**-sponsored shooting champion **Donna Merry** made her retirement announcement, **Ray Simmons (G22)** was just joining **Dial-a-Cab**. That was in February 2005 and Donna had just finished her shooting career with a successful trip to the World Championships that are held yearly in San Antonio, Texas.

On her return, **Call Sign** assumed that would be the end of our involvement as a shooting sponsor, but we were wrong! There is now someone else out there who successfully represented Dial-a-Cab in the 2006 Texas World Skeet Championships.

Ray Simmons was a close friend of **Johnny Wells**, who we also used to sponsor until his untimely death. Ray and John would often go clay pigeon shooting together – something Ray's daughter Gemma told **Call Sign** would be taken very seriously, but always with much laughter too.

It was DaC call taker Gemma who also told us about her dad's hunt for a world title in San Antonio and this magazine was happy to help Ray towards the cost of the trip – and well worth it was too as Ray returned with no less than five medals! Ray takes up the story:

**"This was my second time at the World Skeet Championships in Texas. This time the conditions were extremely hot and humid – conditions that can vary the effec-**

# RAY'S 5 MEDALS AT THE WORLD CHAMPIONSHIPS!

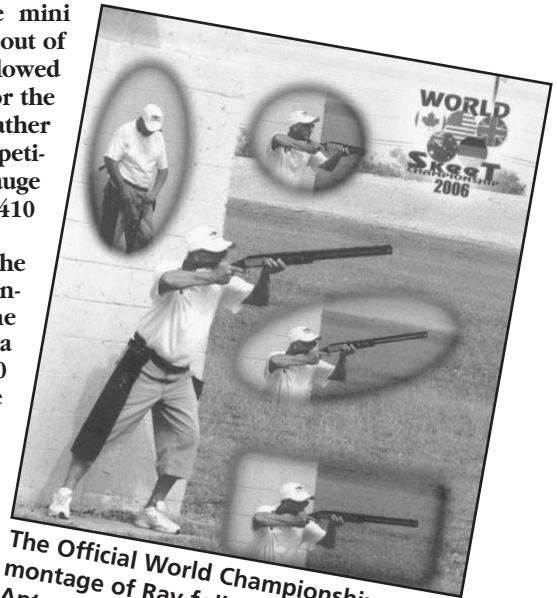
tiveness of the clays in clay shooting.

I started my first week – the mini world championships - with a 99 out of 100 for the 12-gauge shot and followed up with a disappointing 93/100 for the 20-gauge competition. As the weather got even hotter, so did the competition! I shot a 95/100 on the 28-gauge shoot and ended the week on the .410 bore doing 89/100.

"The beginning of week 2 saw the start of the main World Championship competition. That saw me doing a 120/125 followed by a 118/125 for the 12-gauge, 95/100 for the 20-gauge, 94/100 on the 28-gauge and 86/100 for the .410 bore.

It was a great competition and the organisers certainly know how to look after competitors giving the competition that "Dallas" feel with an ongoing BBQ and free bar! Mind you, we weren't that far from Dallas!

"The end result saw me returning to London with five medals and I would like to thank **Call Sign** for helping with the cost. I hope to return to San Antonio in 2008 for another crack at the World



The Official World Championship montage of Ray following the San Antonio Championship

Championships."

It was the USA's Kevin Monteleone who took most of the glory, but Dial-a-Cab can feel proud of Ray Simmons. Well-done Ray...

## THE NEW VEHICLE TAX LICENCE RATES FOR TAXIS

Fairway, Metrocab, TX1 and Metro TTT, automatic or manual versions, registered before 1 March 2001, up from £175 to £180.

TX1 and Metro TTT, automatic or manual versions, registered on or after 1 March 2001, up from £195 to £205.

TXII, automatic or manual versions, registered before 23 March 2006, up from £195 to £205.

TXII, manual version only, registered on or after 23 March 2006, up from £195 to £205.

**TXII, automatic only, registered on or after 23 March 2006, up from £195 to £300.**

TX4, manual version only, up from £195 to £205.

**TX4, automatic version only, up from £215 to £300.**

The reason for the 40% increase in the late TXII automatic and TX4 automatic versions is not in connection with excessive emissions, but purely due to the Chancellor bringing in a new rate band which caught all taxis registered after 23 March. So identical vehicles such as early and late TXIIs are now on different rate bands and charged differently.

(See Editorial on page 3)

**TAXI**

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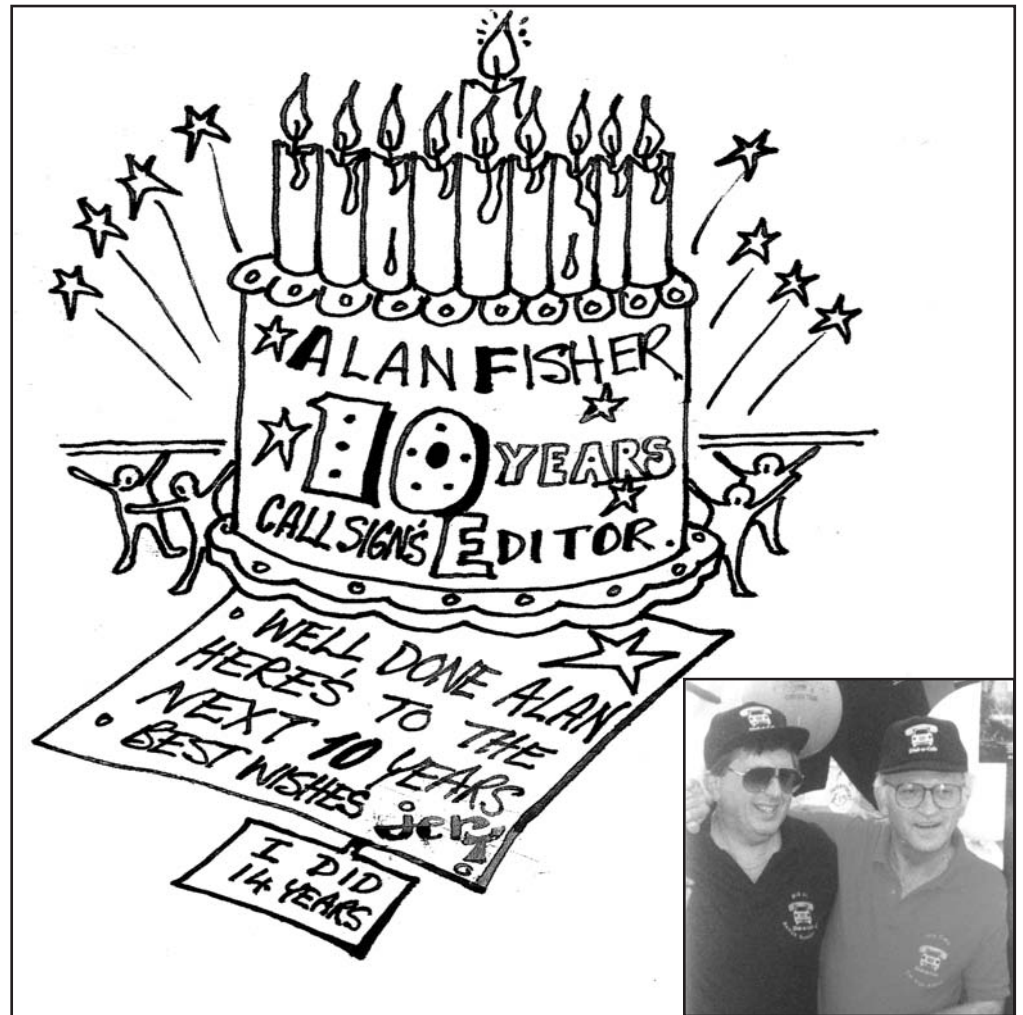
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# ALAN'S TEN YEARS IN THE HOT SEAT!

It's hard to believe that I've been out of the Editor's chair for the past 10 years that Alan Fisher has been in it, but for someone who, like myself when taking over from Phil Emden in 1983, had no experience of producing a magazine, Alan has done an excellent job. My sincere congratulations and happy tenth birthday!

Jery Craig  
Call Sign Editor (1983 – 1997)



Jery's 'happy birthday' cartoon for Alan  
Inset: 1997 and Jery hands *Call Sign* over to Alan

**Call Sign**  
**May 2007**

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## FORMER MOUNTVIEW BOARD MEMBER DAVE BARNETT DIES

*Call Sign* was very sad to hear of the recent death of former Mountview Board member, **Dave Barnett**. Dave, who was on Stan Samuel's BoM between 1987 and 1990, was one of the pioneers of Radio Taxis desire to go Data in the late 80s after seeing how successful it was on Dial-a-Cab.

Former Mountview News Editor, **Al Fresco**, told *Call Sign*:

"In those days I shared an office with Dave, he was a really nice, genuine guy and 100% Radio Taxis. He often spoke of data being the future of dispatching and was on a Radio Taxis trip to visit Gandolph in Canada. He was also an entertainer, doing much good work for JACS – his grounding being the years he spent at the Oxford and St Georges Club.

"I remember the year he got onto the Board. There were two vacancies and Dave asked me if I would write his speech for him. I decided to stand as well and wrote both. The result was that he got elected and I didn't! Looking back, it was probably a wise decision because he became an excellent Board member."

His Mountview Chairman, **Stan Samuels (C69)**, later came to DaC where he has been for many years. *Call Sign* caught up with him while Marshalling and he told us how sad and shocked he was to hear the news.

"I knew he was ill, but I'm shocked to hear that he has died. He was indeed a lovely man and an excellent Board member. He started as my PR man and was good at the job because everyone liked him. He would genuinely put himself out to help people – both drivers and customers. He went on to deal with Complaints but it was as a PR that he achieved most success. The trade has lost a lovely man..."

There were around 300 people at his funeral with many drivers there from both Radio Taxis and DaC. Mike Son represented DaC, while former Mountview Board member Harvey Ashley represented the Board Dave had been on.

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**Late deals and special price for DaC members.**

Many Dial-a-Cab drivers will have seen terminal messages from drivers parked for a few brief minutes in Paddington Street to use the toilet, warning others that their cabs had been broken into and robbed.

The thief entered the rear passenger compartment, kicked in the centre partition, robbed the cab and was away. The whole process took mere seconds. Now news comes of an arrest. One of the drivers involved was **Dave Humphryes (A69)**. He told *Call Sign* his story...

"I had stopped for barely two minutes to use the loo in Paddington Street. When I got back I was shocked to find that someone had broken in, kicked out the central partition, took anything of value and scampered, so much so that there was no sign of anyone having been there - except for the broken glass!

"I'd seen the terminal messages about this particular toilet and was determined that even if it did no good, I would still report it to the police in case they decided that forensics could help. I'd heard stories that the police weren't interested in fingerprints for taxi robberies, but I thought I'd go to Marylebone nick in Seymour Street

# The Paddington Street "khazi" robber caught!



Dave Humphryes - "Marylebone Police were excellent!"

just so that I would know I'd done everything possible.












"I went into the police station and at first was put off by the long queue, but then I saw a notice that read: 'If you have been robbed within the last 30 minutes, please go to the head of the queue.' I did that and was passed over to the Burglary Squad. They came out straight away and took prints from the cab. Two days later, the police phoned me and said they had a match to the set of prints!"

Dave ended by telling *Call Sign*: "What is almost as good as catching this miscreant is the news that the West End police now have a dedicated unit for this type of crime and if you are robbed somewhere in town, it's worth phoning or going to the police if you are nearby. I've got to say that Marylebone were excellent...!"

A plea of guilty was entered and a date for sentencing is expected to be announced shortly.

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

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No more maps,  
no more charts,  
those are for old boring old farts!  
SatNav is the way ahead,  
GPS can find your bed!

Cut price fares,  
forget those meters,  
hire a brace of 'meet and greeters'.  
Lease some Mercs and a couple of Lexus,  
perhaps a 'stretch' or two from Texas...?

Cheap labour from the EEC,  
pay them just a pound or three.  
In no time flat you'll make a mint,  
Or, I suppose, you could go skint!

Never mind, it's all the same  
You can start again in your wife's name.  
YOU don't care or give a f\*\*\*  
then go out now and buy a Tuk Tuk!

Livingstone and his Toady mates,  
think they will save the planet,  
but for Taxis it's too late -  
the end is nigh right now...damn it.

It is just a matter of time,  
As decreed by Euro nations,  
until they kill this trade of mine,  
with their emission regulations...

**Kopyright Kupkake 2007**

# "Big Brother" PCO still watching us?



The PCO's enforcement Vehicle

Hands up if you thought that taxi overhauls being farmed out to SGS meant that the PCO would no longer be going out looking for dodgy cabs? Well you'd be wrong!

A new PCO enforcement vehicle is out there checking that taxis and private hire vehicles are properly licensed and that they comply with health and safety requirements – another expression for checking emissions etc.

The enforcement vehicle – which runs on green fuel - will be used by the newly named PCO compliance team to search all over London for illegal plying for hire by drivers and – yes, you guessed it - over-ranking on taxi ranks!

So far, since January it has carried out over 150 vehicle inspections. Whether that includes looking for mechanical faults as well as the breaking of rules, *Call Sign* is not too sure, but we wouldn't be surprised if it included both.

It has been claimed that the work of the compliance team will mainly be intelligence-led, but who will be passing on those pieces of information is not made clear.

Ed Thompson, TfL's Taxi and Private Hire Director, said: "This vehicle gives the PCO the flexibility and mobility to get out and about making sure that licensed drivers and operators are working appropriately and the licensed vehicles meet the required standards."

Mr Thompson went on to add: "Our officers will also be carrying out joint operations with other agencies such as the Vehicle and Operator Service Agency and the Metropolitan Police including the Transport Operational Command Unit."

*Call Sign* recently spoke with TOCU's Chief Inspector Bob Marshall and it does appear that the police unit already carries out the job that the PCO are now trying to do.

Could this mean that SGS have got the contract, whilst the PCO will still be doing what they said they would no longer be doing...?

## NOW CABTIVATE BOSS GOES FOR PH!

Mark Greenhalgh, the man behind failed in-screen TV system, Cabtivate, which left so many London and Scottish taxi drivers with debts of up to £4000, has now been given the go-ahead for his latest enterprise – screens with an interactive, touch-screen computer for passenger use in private hire vehicles. The decision at an Edinburgh licensing meeting on Wednesday 18 April, brought calls of derision from drivers who had been caught by his previous company's collapse.

Mr Greenhalgh said his new company – Tapinto - would fit the screens onto the headrest on the front seat of the first company to use them, Festival taxis.

He said: "This will benefit everyone in the city who uses cabs. It will be good for tourists who can find out what's going on and even use the information in different languages. It will also work for residents who can find out latest news and events from the easy-to-use computers."

*Call Sign* would like to ask Mr Greenhalgh whether he could first pay back drivers such as Dial-a-Cab's Mark Lane (N97) before investing money once again in a scheme that may or may not work? Sadly, the answer would be that Mr Greenhalgh's Cabtivate company no longer exists and therefore cannot be liable. Even we now feel some sympathy for the Scottish PH trade...

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**Dear Ladies, Gentleman,  
Guys 'n' Gals,**

The 'Ed' has asked me to keep you updated with Sales Gossip and with much persuasion, I have agreed but hope not to bore you too much...!

For those of you who know me... hello! For those of you that don't, I would like to introduce myself. My name is Natalie Ezekiel and I have worked at Dial-a-Cab for almost 7 years. During this period, I have worked in the Call Centre, Administration Department and for the past 5 years I have played a large part in Sales. So you could say I know DaC pretty well!

So where do I start? As you are all probably aware, we won the Nomura account, which has been a very pleasant company to do business with. I'd like to say a huge thank you to the IT team, especially Theresa Whitfield and Steve Bearman for all their help in setting it up.

Another new account to join us is Atos Origin, who are based at Triton Square NW1 and who went live in February as a pilot scheme. All being well, they will stay with us

**With the DaC departure of Lydia, Natalie Ezekiel will keep Call Sign readers informed with occasional sales updates...**

**Natalie's HOT Gossip  
From the Sales Dept...**



accounts that have been opened in the past few months and business could not be better. So don't forget, if you get any leads, please forward them to me (details below) as we still offer an incentive for any accounts that are opened on information received.

So I'll say bye for now and a big thank you in advance for the support that I know you will give with all prospective new business and just as importantly, all existing accounts.

**Talk soon...  
Natalie**

**Contact me on Nataliee@dialacab.co.uk or call on 020 7251 0581 Ex 251**

and only grow in usage. New Business? There are many new

**TX4 STILL SELLING LIKE HOT CAKES!**

Figures published by *The Society of Motor Manufacturers and Traders* in April showed that 469 new TX4 taxis were sold during March. This was the fifth consecutive record month of UK sales since the new Euro IV compliant London style TX4 taxi was launched. The sales were 37.5 per cent more than the new registration plate month of March 2006.

Year-to-date, the new Coventry built taxi has achieved 940 sales, a 44.4 per cent increase over the same period last year.

**"To meet this demand, we have increased the**



production rate at our Coventry factory," Matthew Cheyne, Sales and Marketing director of LTI Vehicles told *Call Sign*.

He added: **"The growth in sales is being driven by owners recommending the new TX4 to their fellow cabbies as well as positive feedback from passengers to taxi drivers, not just in London but throughout the UK."**

LTI Vehicles is the largest British-owned vehicle manufacturer and the new TX4 purpose built taxi boasts a raft of new features including the cleaner Euro IV compliant VM Motori engine, anti-lock brakes as standard and improved suspension for a smoother ride.

**E<sub>3</sub>TAXIS**

**LOGO CARRYING DAC DRIVERS  
the following offer is for YOU!**

**AT E<sub>3</sub> TAXIS – 50% DISCOUNT! ON SERVICING**

*Some of our other services include:-*

- ★ Overhauls
- ★ Tracking/4 wheel alignment
- ★ MOT testing on Class 4 vehicles
- ★ Smoke Test
- ★ TXII Timing Chains/Belts
- ★ TXII Heater Control Valves
- ★ Tyres Supplied and Fitted

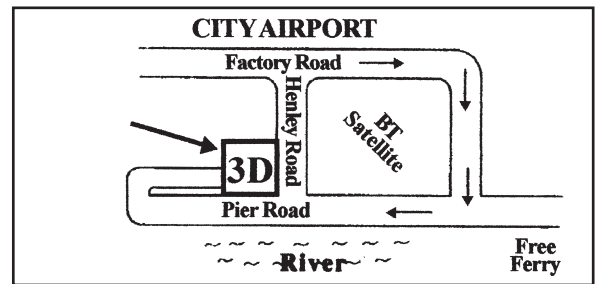
*We are also fitting the new PCO Approved Tyres MAXXIS, as well as DUNLOP & MICHELIN*

*We can service your TXII from new without affecting your warrantee  
And we will advise on any warrantee work needed*

**To book: Ring Christine on 0207 474 6592 and mention that you are on DaC**

**E3 Taxis Unit 3D Standard Industrial Estate, Henley Road, E16 2ES  
Open Monday – Friday 8.30am – 5.30pm, Saturday 9am – 1pm**

**WE ARE ALSO A PCO APPROVED EMISSIONS FITTING AGENT FOR THE TAXI CAT SYSTEM**



On 20 March, The Imperial War Museum in Kennington hosted a reception to celebrate the 90th birthday of **Dame Vera Lynn**, DBE, LL.D and because she is Patron of **The London Taxi Benevolent Association for War Disabled**, we were asked to participate in the event.

Dame Vera was joined by a number of guests including Baroness Thatcher, Baroness Boothroyd, Lord Slim (President of the Burma Star Association), Lady Soames, Lord Tebbit, Marguerite Patten, Jilly Cooper, Simon Hughes, Darcy Bussell and from the world of entertainment, June Whitfield, Liz Smith, Bill Pertwee, Frank Thornton, Roy Hudd and David Jacobs. Current 'Forces Sweetheart' Katherine Jenkins entertained with some wartime songs including, naturally, We'll Meet Again and White Cliffs of Dover.

**Dame Vera was born in East Ham and began singing at the age of seven. She made her first radio broadcast with the Joe Loss Orchestra in 1935 and began her own radio series in 1940 where she performed songs requested to the troops stationed abroad. It was at that time that she became dubbed The Forces Sweetheart.**

After the war, she continued her radio - and later television - career making many hit recordings. In 1973 Dame Vera was asked to become Patron to The London Taxi Benevolent Association for War Disabled and she readily agreed, always attending the yearly outings to Worthing - much to the joy of all the veterans that attend.

# Vera Lynn Honoured By Imperial War Museum

## LTBAWD Patron celebrates 90th Birthday



In 1995 she sang at Buckingham Palace to mark the golden jubilee of VE Day and at the age of 78, Dame Vera decided that this would be her last public performance. But in 2005, a concert was held in Trafalgar Square marking the 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the VE Day cere-

monies and Vera Lynn made an emotional appearance, joining in with We'll Meet Again and then going on to praise the veterans for what they did and telling the younger generation that they should always remember the sacrifices that were made by the veterans.

**The London Taxi Benevolent Association for War Disabled** supplied a number of taxis, which transported 40 of the Pensioners and the band from The Royal Hospital, Chelsea to The Imperial War Museum. Then, as Dame Vera made her way through the Museum's reception area, the band played Happy Birthday with Katherine Jenkins and a large gathering of visitors to the museum joining in. A presentation of a birthday card and a large bouquet of flowers was made by our President, Harry Joel MBE and our Chairman, Michael Calvey.

She then made her way over to talk to the Pensioners and have her photo taken with them. Someone then called out that Dame Vera will always be the Forces Sweetheart! In the hearts and minds of the veterans, she always will be.

*The photo shows Dame Vera in between Michael Calvey and Harry Joel*

*Photograph by kind permission of Dickie Goodwin*

## Former DaC driver starts 24-hour breakdown service

Former Dial-a-Cab driver **Jimmy Pullum (ex R45)** has started a 24-hour breakdown service for licensed taxis only.

**T&J Taxi Rescue** was launched on Monday 9 April and with its growing fleet of breakdown vehicles carrying a wide range of spares, should be able to get you going if you are unlucky enough to breakdown. The vehicles are also fitted with towing equipment just in case and will be on the road 24-hours a day, 7-days a week.

At the time of **Call Sign** speaking to Jim - just a few days after starting and with barely any publicity - he had already had some major callouts and achieved a 100% success rate with breakdowns ranging from a water pump on a TX1 to a TX2 radiator.

Jim's partner is a former AA man with 18-years experience and all the mechanics working on the new service were formerly with the AA and used to dealing with taxis and as Jim told **Call Sign**:

**"Between all of us, we have over 40 years knowledge of the taxi trade and 28 years of the roadside repair business. Our people are professionals and they care. They will do everything they can to try and get you back onto the road**



and as we say at T&J - to keep your wheels turning so that you are earning!

"Since 1 April, the AA have stopped using their permanent night-time patrollers who serviced the 10pm - 6am hours. They now use day and evening time men on overtime who probably would not have the taxi experience of the night crews," said Jim. "So

**there is now a late evening and overnight void for those unfortunate enough to break down in their cab. The better ones from those former AA nightmen are now with us."**

**T&J Taxi Rescue** offer three types of call-out. There's *Pay-as-You-Go* - with credit cards accepted if that's how you wish to pay, there is their *Premier Club*, which costs you £10 a year but gives you £10 off the cost of any callouts and 10% off the cost of parts and *Full Membership*, which costs £140 a year and gives you up to four callouts where you would only pay for the parts.

**Write down the numbers and cut out their ad from this issue:  
For breakdowns: 0845 094 5307  
For sales and more info: 0785 787 4665**

### Derek Leone, Hon PRO



- Roadside Repair
- Roadside Assistance
- Running Repair
- Recovery
- Accident Recovery
- Pay as you go to Membership
- Credit Card taken at Roadside

0845 094 5307

We make the wheels turn  
so you can earn,



On 3 April, Power Pill hosted a special day at JVBright, Southbank Service Station. Drivers had the chance to meet the Power Pill team headed by CEO Leon Warner, with Director Maria Tomas and Operations Manager Yvonne Lang also in attendance and answering drivers' questions.

Also there was Gary Bolt from **MAG Diesels**, who many of you will remember was instrumental in examining several Dial-a-Cab drivers' engines last year to show how clean they had become since using Power Pill. Those drivers were **Ken Jackman (B29)**, **Divyesh Ruparelia (V59)** and **Stephen Hassan (P95)**. Gary answered questions on how Power Pill works and its benefits...

He told *Call Sign*: "Power Pill is not a one-hit quick fix. It should be used to treat every tank of fuel for full benefit. In our opinion at MAG, Power Pill gets to work immediately, improving performance, increasing mpg and reducing smoke".

Special feature of the day was **Formula Ford's** rising star **Linton Stuteley**, complete with racing car. Linton learnt to drive at the age of 9 and began racing in 1996. He has risen through the ranks, winning titles on his way to Formula Ford. Many drivers in attendance had the chance to meet Linton and have their picture taken. Some were even brave enough to venture into the racing car itself – even though they may not have fitted too well!

"It was great to meet so many drivers from Dial-a-Cab who show such a great interest in motor racing," Linton told *Call Sign*. "Many drivers I met were knowledgeable about the car, engine, suspension and such like!"

Regarding Power Pill, Linton added: "Power Pill is a great product and if DaC drivers say that about a product that saves them money and helps the environment, then I believe everyone should take a leaf from their book and give Power Pill a go."

Jamie and Tony from JVBright, both BMW racers themselves, were delighted with the event.

They told us: "The day was one of the best organised we've ever had and drivers are already coming back and commenting. More and more are

# Formula Ford's Linton Stuteley At Power Pill's Taxi Day!



**Sid Nathan (K88) isn't silly, he decides to pose outside the Formula Ford car!**

**also buying Power Pill."**

Many DaC drivers attended the event and tried to sit in the car. **Barry Groner (V30)** got in but had trouble getting out, whereas **Sid Nathan (K88)** decided not

**Pic above: Barry Groner (V30) tries to get his own back on Linton Stuteley after getting stuck in his racing car by letting him sit in his TX2 (see cover pic) Inset pic: Linton Stuteley on race day**

to take the chance as the car had to be back by the following morning – without him wedged in! Many other DaC drivers asked us to thank the Power Pill team for the day – and we did.

*Power Pill is available from JVBright for just 19.99 per pack or £14.99 per pack when 5 packs are purchased. DaC drivers can also buy 12 packs for the price of 10 - that's just £12.49 per pack. These can also be purchased through the website at [www.powerpilluk.com](http://www.powerpilluk.com) where more pictures of the day can be seen. Power Pill can be contacted on 0845 1 30 80 77.*

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**Or call: 0701 741 5000**

**Call Sign** recently asked several drivers who had taken their overhauled cabs for passing at the PCO's successors – SGS – for their views. Sadly, many had tales to tell that resembled the PCO at their worst.

Founded in 1878 in Rouen, France, the company was registered in Geneva in 1919 as *Société Générale de Surveillance* and SGS are now recognised as one of the world's leading inspection, verification, testing and certification companies. It has almost 50,000 employees worldwide, operating a network of over 1,000 offices and laboratories.

As much of the taxi overhaul inspection is performed via computer, inconsistencies supposedly cannot exist. Yet one large company took a cab for passing and after being given a clean bill of health and a pass by SGS, had that taken away by the two PCO officers in attendance – there appear to be two at each SGS taxi passing station. Surprising to say the least as the PCO constantly claim they have nothing to do with passing cabs any more.

Many Dial-a-Cab drivers complained to **Call Sign** that their cabs had failed on minor problems such as headlight alignments that could have been fixed quickly, yet new appointment dates showed no attempt at helping out with a quick retest and the average length of waiting retest time seems to be around 10 days – that's 10 days with no income.

DaC driver **Mickey Lappin (E46)** told **Call Sign** that he had been pleased with the way SGS at Tottenham had booked his cab in.

"They were very accommodating," said Mickey, "and I paid over the phone, which saves you going down and queuing at the PCO."

Sadly, that was as good as it got. Mickey went on:

"I got to SGS, Tottenham, at 7:30 on April 5 for my 8 o'clock test. I was seen at 9 o'clock as they told me they'd suffered a computer crash. Then my cab failed on headlight misalignment and a missing meter seal on the gearbox. I rang for a retest date and was given 13 April. I had the two items rectified (which took 10 minutes) and went back to Tottenham and explained that I couldn't afford to be out of work for another 8 days! This was met with a shrug. I also went to the PCO to see if there was any way I could get it tested earlier, but they said it had nothing to do with them any more. At 4:30 that afternoon, SGS finally relented and retested my cab on just the faults. It took 2 minutes and it then passed. Mine was not the only cab to fail on the headlight alignment because I think SGS have the settings for a cat and not a cab! Eight and a half hours to pass a cab? Must be a record!"

DaC driver **Laurence Kelvin (W88)** goes to Fred's Taxis of London Lane in

# How are SGS doing?



Hackney, a specialised Metrocab garage with a consistently excellent pass rate and one that he has happily used for many years (*Aug 2005 Call Sign: Fred's Taxis 96% pass rate according to the PCO...Ed*).

## Laurence Kelvin: Waited 9 days for 10 minute retest

His cab was first taken up on 4 April, but failed on an exhaust test. The garage fixed the problem within an hour, but the next available date for inspection was 13 April. It was re-presented then and passed.

Laurence told **Call Sign** that he had since heard of one cab failing because the headlights were too high, then failing because they were too low and failing

again a third time as too high! Fred's Taxis presented another cab with lights adjusted exactly to the same alignment as Laurence's, but it failed even though Laurence's passed.

## Call Sign comment:

*The above stories seem to be not unusual and we have to wonder whether this pettiness could be connected to the possibility of mid-year passing "...to show how much needs doing to our cabs?"*

*The more "failures," the better the argument for 6-monthly testing, the more business SGS will get and the more justification the PCO will feel they have for offloading the whole process. That follows the Evening Standard report that "50% of London Taxis failed their first overhaul inspection," and TfL's London Assembly spokesperson Geoff Pope going into print saying what a disgusting state our cabs were in and that it was about time that we were given 6-monthly tests.*

*Of course, we could be wrong, but it all sounds extremely convenient and we ask whether SGS really are the answer to the London taxi's overhaul?*

*Several weeks ago the PCO sent out a press release claiming the Deptford centre was now open. Not according to our drivers who tried to get an appointment there. Just what is going on?*

## 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...?**



Manganese Bronze plc, LTI's parent company, has received the *Best Performing Share Award* - sponsored by Winterflood Securities - for its incredible results in the past year.

LTI, based in Coventry, are famous for manufacturing the London Taxi and their astonishing share revival showed an upward rise of 289% in 2006, making them the best performing share outside the FTSE 350 on the London Stock Exchange. Prior to the rise, several Dial-a-Cab drivers told *Call Sign* that they had sold their MBH shares believing that they would not go up.

Much of the increase can be attributed to the announcement of their recent joint venture with the China-based Geely Automobile Holdings Limited and to the successful introduction of their latest model, the TX4.

GMTV presenter Penny Smith presented Mark Fryer, Manganese Bronze Group Finance Director and Peter Shillcock, the company's Chief Operating Officer and MD of LTI Vehicles with the award at the Grosvenor House ceremony.

Peter Shillcock told *Call Sign*: "To receive this prestigious award is a tremendous honour. It not only provides us with the recognition that we deserve as the largest UK owned motor vehicle manufacturer, but is also testimony to the fantastic product we produce in the form of the iconic London black cab, as well as being a result of our business development strategy for Manganese Bronze and LTI."

The MBH lowest share over the year was 204p with a high point of 850p - certainly nothing less than astonishing. The plc Awards event was founded in 1987 to reward excellence in the smaller quoted company sector.

*With a share price increase from 204p to 850p...*

# Manganese Win Best Performance Share Award!



The photo shows (l - r): Peter Shillcock, Penny Smith, Mark Fryer, Martin Larner of sponsors Winterflood Securities and Kieran Poynter, Chairman of Pricewaterhouse Coopers

## DAVID IS A BIG WINNER ON NEW TV QUIZ

A new game show from the makers of the hit series *Deal or No Deal* is about to hit the TV screens which, as the title claims, could change **The Rest of Your Life!** This new show gives contestants the opportunity of being set up for life just by taking part.

Dial-a-Cab driver **David Thomas (V35)** read a terminal message put out by **Tom Whitbread** regarding the show, which uses a contestant and their partner. David - not the world's shyest person at the best of times - fancied the idea and contacted the number given offering the services of he and his wife Carol.

**The Rest of Your Life** has contestants engaging in two separate battles - the first to determine the amount of a monthly cheque they will receive, with the second to see how long they will continue to receive that cheque for.

The prize could be £100 a month for one year or £10,000 a month for the next 70 years!

"That sounded quite an attractive proposition," David told *Call Sign*, "we didn't need to discuss it for too long! I phoned up Tom and the TV company as soon as I had spoken to Carol, she agreed to our volunteering."

The game depends on the contestant's playing and the actions of his (or her) partner who are kept apart by entering a soundproof pod and unaware of what the other is saying or doing.

The game itself involves choosing an envelope in which an amount of money is offered. Contestants then play the game, which involves trying to get a series of white lights and missing any red ones. The more whites, the more chance of scooping the top prize - a huge monthly cheque for the rest of your life.

*Call Sign* spoke to Carol Thomas who was on holiday with David and their grandchildren after the show:

"I had a terrible problem," she told us, "I had to spend the money as quickly as I could otherwise I'd never have been able to get David back to work...!"

Look out for *The Rest of Your Life* on Channel 4 in June. We won't spoil the show by telling you how much David wins, but it is a sizable amount...

### NO SMOKING IN LONDON TAXIS FROM 1 JULY

In response to a question from a Dial-a-Cab driver, the Senior Driver and Operator Policy Manager at the PCO, Simon Buggy has confirmed that from 1 July, smoking will be prohibited in all licensed taxis and PHVs at all times by all occupants.

A PCO Notice providing advice and guidance to taxi and PHV drivers and operators regarding the new legislation will be issued in the near future.

## FOUNDLING MUSEUM

*Britain's original home for abandoned children  
and London's first-ever public art gallery...*

**Free entry to Dial-a-Cab drivers on  
production of your badge or bill  
Tues-Sat 10am-6pm, Sun 12-6pm  
(closed on bank holidays)**

**Usual admission £5, concessions £4,  
children up to 16 years free  
The Foundling Museum is at 40  
Brunswick Square WC1**

**Tel. 020 7841 3600**

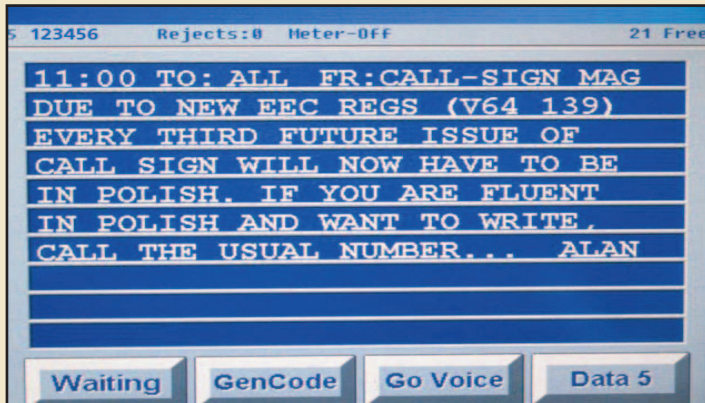
**Visit their website at  
www.foundlingmuseum.org.uk**

# Call Sign's April Fool gag fools 'em!

**Call Sign** doesn't usually run April Fool gags, but this year Dial-a-Cab's in-house magazine thought it would have a go!

With the actual day falling on a Sunday, putting it in the magazine and asking the post office to run a special delivery with a guaranteed arrival of before midday, seemed rather pointless. So the next best thing was to put out a terminal message. And that's what Editor, Alan Fisher, did.

**At 10am and again one hour later, a message went out on data terminals looking like this:**



**Call Sign** then received fourteen calls from drivers who claimed they knew someone that could write in Polish! One driver told us that whilst he had no problem with different nationalities being assimilated into our culture, he was fuming when he first read the message!

Another driver told us outside JPM: **"The idea of us having to put out an issue in Polish really shocked me – I feel rather silly now. I should have realised what date it was, but you just don't expect terminal messages to be anything other than genuine. Congratulations to Call Sign – you fooled me!"**

No one, it has to be said, took real offence although all those caught said they'd rather not have their names published! Can't think why!

We also believe that the first Polish Dial-a-Cab driver started with the Society recently – although he wasn't one of those fooled!

Jay Sands

## Baxter Vs The Bookies - Part Two!

Following the success of his first racing book "Baxter vs The Bookies" which sold over 3000 copies in addition to being broadcast on BBC Radio 4, London Taxi driver Roy Granville has written a follow-up – *More Baxter vs The Bookies* (Hayes Press, PO box 489, Hayes, UB3 2WZ, £9.95 post free).

The stories revolve around Baxter, a long-time punter and proprietor of a tipping service and his quest for winners! It is well written and amusing. Perfect for reading by the pool or beach!

*More Baxter vs The Bookies* is a fully illustrated hardback book and available from the above address or by calling 0208 561 3133.



## ANOTHER GRANDSON FOR TREVOR CLARKE



Trevor and Jeanette - Now five grandchildren

After fifteen years at Dial-a-Cab and with most of that period as Secretary to the Society, Trevor Clarke said goodbye in April 2001 when he entered the realms of retirement. Trevor had served under four different Chairmen during his tenure at Dial-a-Cab - Ken Burns, Phil Messias, Aubrey Siteman and Brian Rice.

Even having been gone that long, Trevor still keeps in touch with DaC via **Call Sign**. This time it was wife Jeanette who wrote to us with the news that the Clarke family had received a new addition in the form of another grandson for Jeanette and Trevor - their fifth!

Jack arrived just before midnight on 19 March to give 5-year-old Ben a brother and help close the gap on their three granddaughters – two-year old Ellie being the latest!

Congratulations to all the Clarke family...



DRIVE FURTHER CHEAPER  
 CLEANER GREENER

### Benefits of Power Pill

- Improves fuel economy
- Increases engine power
- Easier start-up
- Lubricates valves
- Cleans entire fuel system
- Slashes smoke emissions
- Saves on servicing costs

### What DaC drivers have to say...

*Fuel consumption is lower and engine runs smoother  
 I could hardly believe it, it's suddenly like driving a new cab!*

1 Pack £19.99  
 5 Packs only £14.99 each

**Special Dial-a-Cab Offer of 10 Packs at £14.99 each and receive 2 extra free packs**



Available from Power Pill UK Ltd on **0845 1 30 80 77**  
 or by visiting **www.powerpilluk.com**  
 Entering Promotion Code **DaC12**

JVBright - Southbank Service Station, London



In this issue, Poppy will answer some of your problems on taxis and love...

Dear Poppy,

My husband has worked hard and we've saved hard for all of the 10 years we've been married, six of them on Dial-a-Cab. Last year we bought a fabulous detached house in Chislehurst, got a big dog and put our children into private schools. I was really happy and proud. Now we've been turned down for membership at a local golf club and I've been told the neighbours don't like a taxi parked on the street. My older child came home crying recently and asked why some children were calling her 'common'. Please help.

**Charlene**

*I'm afraid, Charlene, it's time for you to realise that rejection from the golf club is nothing to do with your husband being a taxi driver. But your name - indicating Essex origins - is out of place in Kent. Even a name change will not help if you persist in having your hair styled to look like the wife of John Prescott. You were pointed out to me by a friend at a recent event. And maybe it's time to take the England flag off the taxi...?*

Dear Poppy,

My boyfriend owns an old black taxi and I

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

**Back Seat *Driver***



Dear Poppy,

My husband used to work days but last year started on nights, saying it paid more and that there was more account work. He doesn't seem to be bringing more money home and is always tired, even if he sleeps till noon. He finds fault with me for nothing, and although I am fat and forty, we used to have a laugh. His mobile is often switched off and I'm sure he's having an affair. What should I do?

**Name and Address Supplied**

*Your husband is safe, my dear, and in a snooker club frequented by taxi drivers but whose location I had better not divulge. Mobile phones are not allowed in there, nor, obviously, when he is driving and the money is going because of the players' fondness for medium-high stakes on the games - up to £25 a game. Until his game bucks up and he starts winning, or he gets bored, you are a snooker widow. Check his fingers for chalk if you doubt me. Dry your eyes and join an evening class - I have found a 'Fatblasters' slimmers range on your local authority's website - the water aerobics is particularly suitable for larger ladies and mums-to-be. Have a laugh with the gals and good luck.*

In the meantime, keep your letters coming in - I'm always happy to help!

**Till then...**

*Love Poppy x x x*

**However well you know what to do in London**



**There's always something else!**

Ever been stuck for something to do with the wife and kids informing you that you are supposed to be a taxi driver who knows everything? Well, worry no more because help is at hand!

**Time Out have produced the answer - 1000 Things to do in London (Ebury Publishing £12.99).**

320 pages packed with everything you could possibly think of to do in this great capital city of ours, from climbing London walls to learning Savate fighting to visiting some of the more beautiful of London's underground stations!

Fear not, if you want something not so outlandish, the more usual stuff is also there - like where you can buy the best sweets or which pub you can visit where mobiles are banned - assuming the kids are tucked up in bed!

All in all, a useful tool to have - especially as the school hols are approaching and even just for the odd weekend...

ride in the back, which sometimes smells and makes conversation really difficult, especially when my boyfriend closes the little window between us (although with an old rug he thinks it's fine for a bit of nookie). He promised me a new Peugeot last Christmas, but didn't win it and I dread more years of feeling like a piece of luggage in the back. He says he'll buy a new taxi, but it's illegal for me to travel in the front and there's only a small luggage compartment there. I'm fed up. What do other WAGs do?

**Emma**

*Come on, Emma, get on to Amazon and order your copy of 'He's Just Not That Into You: The no-excuses truth to understanding guys' by G.Behrendt and L.Tuccillo. An extra seat for a passenger in the front of the new TX4 is £599 and he doesn't think you're worth it? No surprise, you are a whinger. Why not get a job, earn your own money and buy a car that suits you. Respect!*

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

# 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: Australia House, The Strand in 1913 and now...



Australia House in 1913

And now...



## LTFUC need your help for Legoland



**The London Taxidriver's Fund for Underprivileged Children urgently need your help and support for their outing to Legoland (Windsor) on Thursday 17 May 2007.**

The Fund's Driver Liaison, **Susan Angel**, has asked *Call Sign* if any Dial-a-Cab drivers could come and help them give 200 'special needs' and underprivileged children a fun-packed day out to Legoland? They really do need your help.

Susan told us: **"As well as giving a great deal of pleasure to so many kids, we promise you will have a brilliant and fun-packed day out yourself. Please don't forget that without you there are no outings. So please contact me on 07958 280881 if you can help."**

The Hon. President (Bill Tyzack C06), Hon. Chairman (David Lessman D19) and Committee will be very grateful and look forward to seeing you on the day. If you can help, please call Susan...

*Photo caption: DaC's David Lessman and Bill Tyzack with the Mayor of Camden after donating sensory equipment totalling over £8,000 for the opening of a new children's Sensory Room at the UCH - just a part of what the LTFUC does. But they need your help to do it all...*

### PORTRAIT AND WEDDING PHOTOGRAPHY

Looking for a present? There is nothing quite as personal as a picture of you and your loved ones in a frame. I do portrait shoots in the comfort of your own home or on location.

Are you getting married? If you want something a bit different and contemporary, then look no further. My speciality is to capture candid moments and the story of your day will be presented in a stylish coffee table book.

As a regular **Dial-a-Cab** client, I will offer you a special deal on portraits: £50 with a CD of all your images (not normally included) and 8% discount on the wedding package.

**Please check out my portfolio on [www.anjaking.com](http://www.anjaking.com)  
Enquiries: email: [anja@anjaking.com](mailto:anja@anjaking.com)**





The Worshipful Company of Hackney Carriage Drivers present:

The Worshipful Company of Hackney Carriage Drivers present...

# THE 2007 CITY TREASURE HUNT!

# Tuesday 5 June 2007 COMPANY GOLF DAY AT NAZEING GOLF CLUB

Competing for the Micky Ascott memorial challenge shield



DaC's Jim Rainbird collects the winners's 2006 trophy from Natalie, the lovely granddaughter of the late Mickey Ascott

The second annual Treasure Hunt will take place on Sunday 10 June, starting at Finsbury Square at 11 am and finishing at 2 pm at The Prince William Henry Public House, Blackfriars Road.

The Treasure Hunt is an exciting drive around London finding answers to the questions and taking photographs with the camera supplied. Each team - maximum 4 persons - will be supplied with a taxi and driver unless you wish to provide your own. Light refreshments will be provided for your journey with the prize presentation following a buffet luncheon, included in the entry fee of £150 per team.

All proceeds will be donated to the Company's Charity Trust (registration number 1026395).

*This was a hotly contested event last year, finally won by DaC's Jim Rainbird (T25) but with the whole trade putting itself to the test. Come and join in this year's fun with the family or friends for a great day out.*

**More info? Contact Gary Mankelow on 07983 806155 or Jamie Owens on 07939 277922.**



All are welcome to come and join in a fun day on behalf of the WCHCD. All proceeds will be donated to the Company's Charity Trust (registration 1026395).

**Tee Times:** 1:30 pm to 2:30 pm -  
Arrive at 12:00 noon for light refreshments...

**Format:** Individual Stableford, full handicap...

**Dress code:** Smart casual for the evening (no jeans or trainers permitted)...

**Food:** There will be a three-course meal served in the evening - Partners are welcome to attend the evening meal for an additional £20...

**Evening:** After dinner there will be the Presentation of prizes, followed by a relaxing social evening - till late...

**Cost:** The whole day will cost £65 for non-members and £40 for Nazeing Golf Clubmembers. The club will offer a special membership deal on the day if you wish to join...

**This promises to be an entertaining and profitable day for the charity.**

To reserve your place, contact Brenda Bartlett on 07976 261 692...

OR Mary Whitworth on 01494 765 922...

Cut along edge....

I enclose a cheque for ( ) entries @ £65 (non-members) or £40 (members) per person made Payable to WCHDC or please charge my debit / credit card

## ENTRY FORM

TEAM LEADER'S NAME \_\_\_\_\_

CONTACT TELEPHONE NUMBER \_\_\_\_\_

I enclose a cheque for £150 per Taxi made payable to WCHCD or please charge my debit/credit card

Expiry Date     Start Date

Cardholder's Name \_\_\_\_\_ Address \_\_\_\_\_

Postcode \_\_\_\_\_

Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Please return this form together with your cheque or payment details to  
W.C.H.C.D. 25 The Grove, Parkfield, Latimer, Bucks HP5 1UE

Expiry Date     Start Date

Cardholder's Name \_\_\_\_\_ Address \_\_\_\_\_

Postcode \_\_\_\_\_ Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Please return this form together with your cheque or payment details to  
W.C.H.C.D. 25 The Grove, Parkfield, Latimer, Bucks HP5 1UE

**Call Sign** isn't quite sure what the previous regime of *Mann & Overton* would have made of it, but late March saw what can only be described as a riot at LTI M&O's former building in Holloway Road. So much so, that the police were forced to close the road!

An event had been organised by the *Reclaim The Future* group – a function the group described as “a major event on the social calendar of the anarchist movement.”

The event combined workshops, various stalls, cinema screenings, a vegan café and what **Call Sign** was told was “a noisy, but well-behaved party.” It was attended by several hundred people in what was the former LTI salesroom. Police tried to stop any more people getting in as they claimed the building wasn't designed for such a large gathering, but many found a way in over the high wall at the back with some even clambering in over the roof!

Riot police then started pushing people from the outside of the building's gate – more used to the rather genteel TX2 - down Holloway Road towards Holloway tube station. Holloway Road was blocked off and stayed closed for about 3 hours. Some guests attempted a sit-in.

A *Reclaim The Future* spokesperson told us: “ We do not understand what the police hoped to achieve with their

# Riot at the old M&O building!



Riot police face protestors at M&O former building. Pic courtesy Indy media uk

demonstration of force. At all times we were hopelessly outnumbered and their most significant success was the rerouting of many motor vehicles from a busy

road.”

Several arrests were made, but none included M&O staff returning to search for lost spanners!

## Ghetto Warriors: Minority Boxers in Britain

*New exhibition at the Jewish Museum, Camden Town: 9 May – 2 September 2007...*

*Ghetto Warriors – Minority Boxers in Britain* charts the story of minority boxers in Britain from Daniel Mendoza to Lennox Lewis and Amir Khan. While boxing has always been a very English sport, it has often been popular with ethnic minority groups at the bottom of the socio-economic ladder. Boxers of Jewish, African-Caribbean, African, Romany, Traveler, Irish and Asian origins have all, at one time or another entered the British ring. The exhibition highlights how boxing has not only been a way out of the ghetto, but also a means of gaining acceptance, respect and in some cases, riches and fame. Despite encountering prejudice, minority boxers have gained status and recognition as prominent representatives of their communities and also as part of British society.

The story starts with Daniel Mendoza, the 18th century English-Jewish boxing champion who is credited as being the father of modern scientific boxing and his contemporaries, Tom Molineaux and Bill Richmond, black boxers who escaped slavery achieving fame in the ring.

Then during the 20th century, young East Enders like Jack Kid Berg, Ted Kid Lewis and Johnny Brown took the boxing route to success. Boys' Clubs and National Service brought opportunities for those handy with their fists and the area east of Aldgate Pump was a breeding ground for young boxers.

If you like boxing and its history, you'll enjoy this exhibition...

*The Jewish Museum, 129-131 Albert Street, Camden Tel. 020 7284 1997*

*Open Monday to Thursday, 10am - 4pm, Sunday 10am - 5pm. Closed 23 and 24 May 2007.*

*Admission: Adults £3.50, Senior Citizens £2.50, Children/Students/Disabled £1.50,*



Jack Kid Berg

## Ruffles

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or mobile 07961375418**



According to an article in the Evening Standard, the traditional style of London taxi - as manufactured by LTI - could be driven off London's streets by tough new European pollution regulations.

They claim in the article (12 April) that LTI had warned ministers they could be "killed off in three years" and that a memo was sent to the *Commons Trade and Industry Committee* in which LTI said that their manufactured taxis would have to pass the strict Euro5 emission limits from 2010.

The article then claimed that LTI had begun to develop a hybrid engine to meet that target but that without government financial backing, the vehicle could not be completed.

**Call Sign** had heard of this hybrid engine, but was under the impression that work on it had ceased last year, so we asked LTI. They told us via a statement:

*"The publication of an article on Thursday 12 April in the Evening Standard, other publications and associated websites has raised concerns over the future of LTI Vehicles and the continued production of the TX4. The claim, in the article, that LTI Vehicles will be 'killed off' in three years is simply untrue.*

*The article implies that all taxis will have to meet new Euro 5 emissions standard by 2010. This is incorrect. There is no requirement for all taxis to meet Euro 5 by 2010. LTI's product has an extension under the new Euro 5 regulations until 2012 and Euro 6 rules until 2015.*

*There has also been some confusion over which vehicles will have to be Euro 5 compliant and to clarify the situation, LTI want to state that any vehicle purchased between now and the introduction of future Euro 5 regulations, will NOT have the regulations applied to that vehicle retrospectively. The new regulations will only apply to new vehicles first registered after the date of introduction of the new regulations.*

*This is exactly the same as the introduction of Euro 4 regulations. The new TX4 has to be Euro 4 compliant, however existing vehicles such as the TX1 and TXII can still be driven and used on the roads as a taxi. Currently the PCO requires all taxis to meet Euro 3 emissions standards by July 2008 but have confirmed that they have no further plans for increasing this.*

*The Evening Standard article was based on a submission by LTI to a Parliamentary Committee written in May 2006; the information is therefore*

### MARILYN SAMUELS

*Call Sign was very sad to hear of the death on April 21 following a battle against illness, of Marilyn Samuels, wife of DaC driver and former Mountview Chairman Stan Samuels (C31).*

*To Stan, his sons Paul and Steve and all members of the family, the deepest sympathy from everyone at DaC.*

*We wish you all a long life...*

# Is This the end of the Taxi?

**Or is the Evening Standard playing silly buggers?**



How Evening Standard readers saw the factually incorrect article

*nearly one year out-of-date. The article overstates the business challenges faced by LTI and overemphasises information in our submission to the Parliamentary Committee.*

*Furthermore the submission was also made before the signing of a legally binding agreement for a joint venture partnership with Chinese car manufacturer Geely Automobile Holdings Limited in November 2006, which has secured LTI Vehicles' future in Britain.*

*LTI also successfully launched the TX4 in*

*October 2006, which provides further long-term security for our business. Indeed the success of TX4 has increased vehicle sales by 35% in the last month.*

*Like all businesses LTI faces continual challenges, which are raised with regulators, politicians and government and LTI will continue to meet these challenges. LTI are also confident that their current strategy and product plans for Euro 5 will continue to meet market requirements for many years to come."*

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# Dial-a-Cab and Jim's T

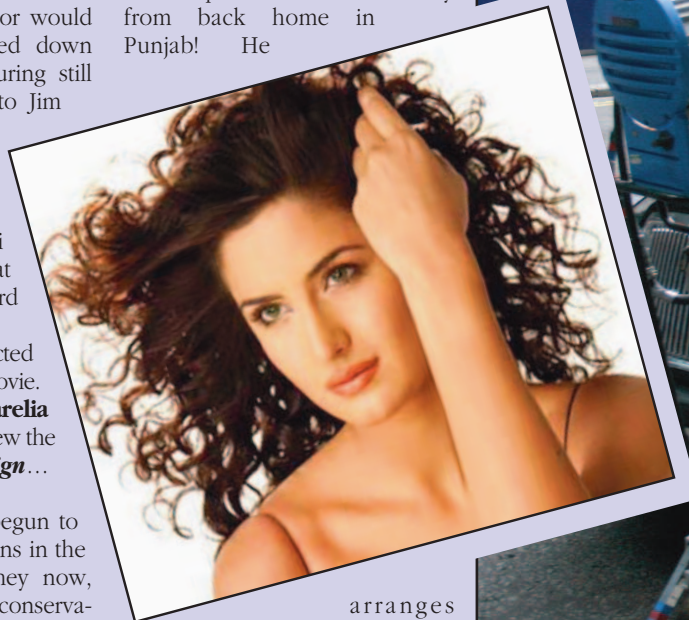
The October *Call Sign* revealed how Dial-a-Cab's **Jim Rainbird (T25)** had been involved with the glitzy world of Bollywood! Jim explained how he had been approached to do a film shoot for an Indian production that was going to involve him driving his fully logoed DaC taxi, but that as his mastery of Hindi wasn't quite up-to-scratch, an Asian actor would actually play Jim while Jim ducked down inside the luggage compartment during still shots! The Indian actor explained to Jim how he had just finished working on the new James Bond film and in which they had written off three brand new Aston Martin DB9s! Jim asked him to be gentler with his taxi as it was the only one he had and that anyway, MI6 probably didn't regard him in the same light as Mr Bond!

Now several months later, selected London cinemas are showing the movie. We asked DaC driver **Divviesh Ruparelia (V59)** to visit his local cinema and review the movie, **Namaste London**, for *Call Sign*...

"Bollywood movies have finally begun to deal with issues facing modern Indians in the UK, USA and of course, India. They now, thankfully, challenge deep-rooted conservative thinking and beliefs held from time immemorial. **Namaste London** deals with the conflict between Indian and Pakistani parents who have emigrated to the UK and their children - who are born and bred here - when they are old enough to get married.

Jasmeet (Karina Kaif), the daughter of Punjabi parents, fancies her white boss

(Charlie Brown) because he possesses everything she would want in a man (class, money, career). Charlie fancies her too and proposes. This is in contrast to what her father (played by Rishi Kapoor) wants - a nice boy from back home in Punjab! He



arranges for Jasmeet - who calls herself Jazz - to meet a guy from India at a London restaurant and she successfully plays a drunken fool and scares the poor guy off!

**Then coming out of the restaurant she hails a cab, a nice shiny Dial-a-Cab taxi driven by Jim Ra... sorry, by Parvez Khan!**



Jasmeet hails the taxi... Inset: The lovely Karina

On the way back to her workplace, she changes from her Indian clothes to western clothing and the driver - like any good cabbie - adjusts his rear view mirror to get the full view of the goings on at the back!

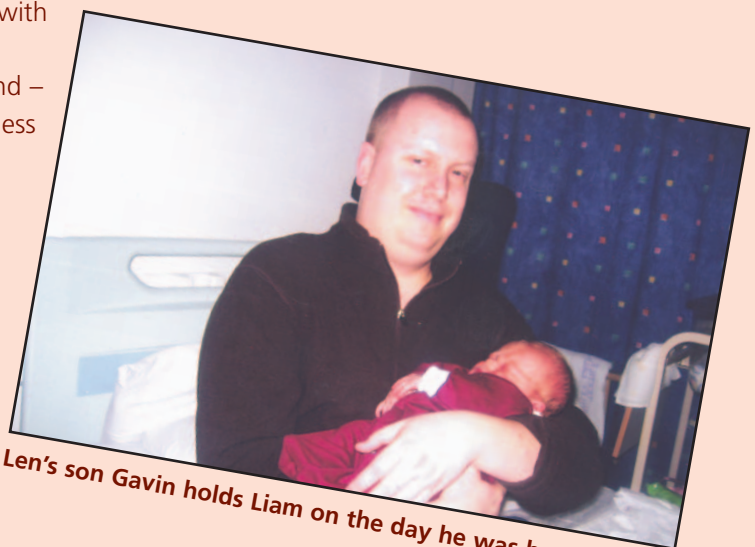
## Introducing Lenny Bell's Grandson Liam

On 17 March 2005 at Rainham Jewish cemetery, along with many Dial-a-Cab drivers, Board members, relatives and numerous friends, *Call Sign* said goodbye to a real friend - **Lenny Bell (ex-L01)** - who finally succumbed to his illness after a very long and brave battle.

In June 2003, Len and wife Stephanie's daughter Julia gave birth to twins - Mathew and Georgia - and they, together with their other daughter Abigail, became the love of his life. Len never saw them growing up, but he fought to make sure that he was going to have at least some time with them. And he did, even to the extent of sending photos of the twins to *Call Sign* just like any proud grandfather.

Len's daughter-in-law Emma - together no doubt with assistance from son Gavin - has now given birth to another grandchild for Stephanie and wherever he is, for Len as well.

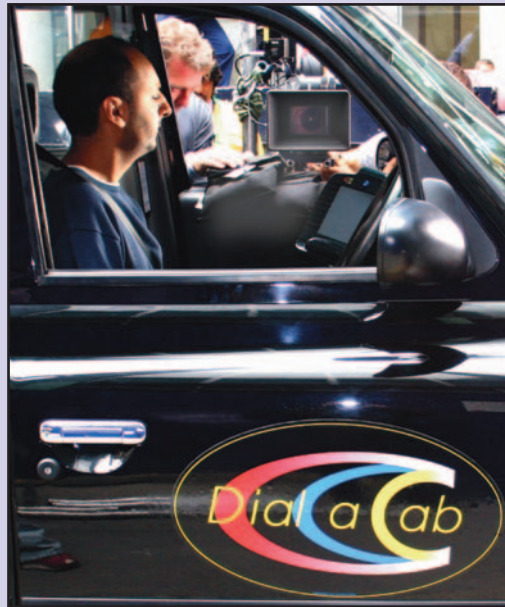
Liam came into this world weighing 8.5lbs and apparently in a West Ham babygrow! While this photo of Liam on the day he was born doesn't show too much of him, it shows enough of an uncanny likeness to his dad to prove that Gavin is his father's son!



Len's son Gavin holds Liam on the day he was born



# Taxi move to Bollywood



**Jim Rainbird magically becomes Parveez Khan**

and who can't even speak English! Yep, a perfect match! This is where the movie turns to farce. She agrees because she is trapped, but agrees provided they get to London by the day after the Indian wedding. Once back in London, she makes it clear that as the wedding wasn't registered, it is not legal in the UK and she has no intention of honouring it but is going to accept Charlie's proposal and marry him instead.

Arjun decides to fight for her and after what seems an eternity, the movie climaxes with Arjun winning Jasmeet

back from the altar just as she is about to marry Charlie - conveniently palatable for Indian audiences. Ho hum!

Gosh there must be lots of fathers around the UK who would be hoping for an 'Arjun' to steal their 'Jasmeet' back from 'Charlie' at the altar. Fortunately reality is different..."

**Unbeknown to the cinema audience, our Jim Rainbird must have changed colour because he sure looked Asian!**

Back to the movie, Jasmeet's father tricks her into going to India where he forces her to marry village boy Arjun (Akshay Kumar) who has nothing at all in common with Jasmeet, no idea of what life in London is going to be like

in Kaif - no wonder they are fighting over her!

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Following last month's offer by the Leon chain of restaurants to London's licensed taxi drivers to pick up a free tea or coffee at any time OR a free sarnie or hot soup if you purchase any smoothie, a LEON spokesperson told *Call Sign* that the DaC logo has been very prominent at all their establishments!

LEON is the award-winning group serving fresh, seasonal and naturally fast food with five restaurants currently located in London and more branches opening later this year.

LEON food is boldly flavoured with herbs and spices instead of additives and none of the bad fats, carbs and high GI levels of conventional fast food.

Expect to see on the menu Moroccan meatballs, grilled free-range chicken served with Leon-made sauces and baked sweet potato falafels.

**You can beat the Monday morning blues with free LEON coffee or tea all day (including refills on personal hot cups) for taxi drivers.**

**Tired and hungry taxi drivers will also be able to pick up a bacon sarnie for brekkie (8-11am) or hot soup for lunch (11.30am - close) with any purchase of a smoothie so long as your badge or bill is produced.**

LEON restaurants are located at:  
 136 Brompton Road,  
 Knightsbridge (020 7589 7330)  
 35 Great Marlborough Street  
 (020 7437 5280)  
 12 Ludgate Circus (020 7489 1580)  
 3 Crispin Place, Spitalfields Market  
 (020 7247 4369)  
 73-76 Strand (0207 240 3070)

**You can take a peep at their menus at [www.leonrestaurants.co.uk](http://www.leonrestaurants.co.uk)**

**LTI: TIME OF DECISION?**

News has reached *Call Sign* that the former crown colony of Hong Kong with its 18000 taxis carrying some 1.3million passengers is in talks with LTI's Chinese partners, Geely, about replacing the current fleet of Toyota with the TX cab that is to be made in China.

According to Geely's Zhao Fuquan, the HK government has requested talks on the possibility.

The part that interested *Call Sign* was Geely's price for the cab - between US\$23,000 and US\$30,000. With the current exchange rate, we make that almost half the UK price? Perhaps LTI can enlighten us?

# DaC drivers love Monday's Leon Taxiday!



Leon at Spitalfields

## Will This Dog Have His Day?

The July 7th London bombings had a lasting effect on many Dial-a-Cab drivers due to the tremendous difficulties in getting concerned passengers home through extremely difficult and worrying circumstances, or perhaps like *Call Sign* Editor Alan Fisher, who together with his wife Linda, were within just a few hundred metres of the blast.

But it also had a lasting effect on East London folk singer *Dan Raza*. So much so, that in the true tradition of English folk artists, he wrote a song about it.

The song "Every Little Dog", along with his powerful live performances, has led to Dan embarking on an eight-date tour of Holland and Germany supporting legendary American singer-songwriter *Joan Armatrading*.

Before he left the UK, *Call Sign* caught up with Dan to learn more about the inspiration for his song and a little about the man himself.

Friday July 7<sup>th</sup> 2005 started normally for Dan Raza, but like many others the day's atrocities were to have a lasting effect on his life. Dan takes up the story...

**"I was on my way to work and arrived at Aldgate Station only to be turned away due to what they claimed was a power failure. I went back to my flat, turned on the radio and it was then that I found out what had actually happened."**

And the song? **"I tried to get my head around why anyone could do something so horrendous to achieve their political aims. To this day, I still don't see why, but out of it came Every Little Dog..."**

Dan moved to London 4 years ago to take up a degree course in American Studies at Kings College and carve out a career in music on the London Folk scene. He played venues such as The Marquee, Half Moon (Putney and Dulwich), The Pigalle Club and The Water Rats - where American Legend *Bob Dylan* played his first-ever gig in this country.

*Call Sign* would like to wish Dan good luck on his tour and for the future.

If you'd like to find out more about Dan, hear the haunting *Every Little Dog* and get news on his forthcoming gigs, then go to [www.danraza.com](http://www.danraza.com).

***Call Sign* has five copies of Dan Raza's up and coming EP on CD, which includes the previously unreleased Every Little Dog. All you have to do to win a copy is to tell us in which London pub Bob Dylan played his first UK gig? Answers to [www.callsign-mag@aol.com](mailto:www.callsign-mag@aol.com).**

**Entries in by May 19 and of course, the Editor's decision is final...!**



Dan Raza

**Mickey Lappin (E46)**



I'd like to ask you Dial-a-Cab guys a question at the end of my story.

Some years back, I was dispatched to a high-rise apartment house on Capitol Hill in the centre of Denver. I buzzed the apartment and the gentleman said he'd be right down. As he emerged from the lobby, his appearance was so impressive that almost 30 years on I vividly recall it.

A man of medium height and slim figure wearing a black Homburg hat, black suit with a waistcoat. What brought my attention to the waistcoat was the old-fashioned chain suggesting a pocket watch on one side and the watch fob in a pocket on the other. Black leather shoes with such a high shine one might mistake them for patent leather, topped off with a gold-headed cane that he was using more as a 'swagger stick' rather than to assist his spry animated steps as he walked toward my cab.

He told me to take him to Fitzsimons General Army Hospital, located on the eastern edge of Aurora, a Denver suburb.

"Take me to the main hospital building," he said, "I have to have my annual physical as I am retired from the Army."

During the rather long ride, we had a pleasant conversation. At Fitzsimons, as he paid the fare, he asked if I could pick him up to go home at three o'clock "...after I lunch at the Officers Club with some old friends." I agreed. When I picked him up for the return home, he was livid.

"Those gosh-darned doctors," he blurted, "they come out of medical school and the Army gives them Captain's bars and they think they know everything!"

Then he went on to describe all the tests they had given him with a detailed explanation of each procedure. Finally he got around to the questions that riled him.

"The Captain asked me if I smoked, so I said sometimes. 'Whaddya mean sometimes', he asked me?

"Well," I said, "some days I enjoy a smoke and other days I don't smoke at all. Then that smart alec asked me how often that would be? So I told him I might not have a smoke for several days - and sometimes for several weeks - then at other times I might have several smokes in a day.

"Then he asked what I smoked, so I told him tobacco."

"Cigarettes, cigars or a pipe," the Captain asked and I replied just cigars. Then he asked me how many cigars I would smoke?

"Depends," I said, "sometimes I might have one or two cigars in a month and sometimes I might smoke four or five cigars in a day..." "Then that punk said to me: 'General, you really shouldn't smoke.'"

"Why not," I asked?

"Because it will shorten your life-span," he answered.

"Damn it," I told him, "I wish someone had told me that sixty-three years ago!" "How old are you, General," the doctor asked me?

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

# Out and about in Denver...



"Ninety-six," I said, "just like it tells you in those records, Doctor!"

## Comment:

I love the interchange of conversation. Proponents and opponents in the USA are passionate in their arguments over the merits or disadvantages of safety shields in taxicabs. I remain one of the agnostics, undecided if it would help or hinder dialogue with my pas-

sengers as I've never had a shield / partition in my cab. Perhaps you guys at Dial-a-Cab in London could tell me if a conversation such as the above would be possible with a shield?

Till next time...

**Wendell White  
for Call Sign  
Denver, Colorado**

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# Allen Tagwell's Ma

I'm aware I'm repeating a subject that was briefly mentioned in two previous editions of **Call Sign** but as there was little mention of the effect it has on our clients, I consider it important enough to elaborate further.

The issue in question is the use of a hand-held mobile telephone whilst driving. More to the point, doing so whilst in the process of transporting our account clients. Whether it be our clients or carrying no passengers at all, using hand-held mobiles whilst driving is not only foolish, but with the increase in the fine to £60 plus three points on your licence, can be a very costly experience and for persistent users, particularly amongst those in the taxi industry, it could well put your licence and your living in serious jeopardy.

I cannot stress strongly enough the importance attached to being attentive at all times whilst undertaking a journey involving a passenger, because apart from the obvious requests such as a change of destination, temporary stop en route or wait and return, something far more serious may require your urgent attention. It is also important particularly in a busy City like London, that an element of vigilance is shown and the vehicle is driven safely - none of which can be achieved when driving one-handed whilst waffling non-stop on a mobile phone.

I feel it prudent to mention at this point, particularly to those who may feel aggrieved at getting their collar felt by our new Compliance Officer, Allan Evans, of an incident that may well occur on one rare occasion. We have some 2,300 drivers (including journey-men) and if just a small number of those were to commit a one-off rare misdemeanour to the same client, for example using a mobile, the client won't associate the misdemeanours to individual drivers; they list them collectively as repetitive incidents of which Dial-a-Cab is responsible. Assumptions are then made that we have no control over our workforce, which reflects badly on our quality of service. We all know this to be unfair, but try telling that to a client who has repeatedly experienced problems - and not just with mobiles.

It's amazing really when one considers all the media publicity of late concerning the use of hand-held mobile phones, how many taxi drivers are still prepared to flout the law. Every day without exception when travelling from home to and from the office, I see cab drivers using their mobiles and in many instances, totally oblivious to the manner in which they are driving. That includes I might add, bus, coach and lorry drivers as well as a whole multitude of drivers in cars, many of which curiously enough are top-of-the-range and as such, one would have thought would have had a hands-free unit as a standard fitting.

Close to where I live is a school where practically every pupil is delivered and collected by anorexic looking females driving the obligatory mammoth-size 4x4's one-handed, while in the other hand a mobile is affixed perma-

nently to their ear. Personally, I have never considered women to be naturally gifted drivers and even less so when driving one-handed and rabbiting on a mobile! The consequences are that - together with their arrogant disregard for other road users - traffic and pedestrian flow is affected and one day I envisage a serious accident occurring. However I'd like to add very quickly before our sizeable contingent of female members start converging on Brunswick House to set about my person, that I mention the above only to emphasise the effect using a mobile has on concentration and driving ability and that it does not just apply to women, it effects everybody and whatever the situation.

Research has shown that driver's reaction times are up to 50% slower than normal when driving whilst using a hand-held mobile phone and there are 4 times more chance of having an accident. These statistics, together with the penalty if caught breaking the law, makes it absolutely senseless not to invest in a hands-free kit. There are literally dozens of different types of models on the market to suit all requirements, including the cost that can be as low as a typical taxi fare across town.

Finally, whilst I don't wish to undermine the seriousness of the above, I can't resist commenting on some other facts, which could

**Personally, I have never considered women to be naturally gifted drivers and even less so when driving one-handed and rabbiting on a mobile! The consequences are that - together with their arrogant disregard for other road users - traffic and pedestrian flow is affected and one day I envisage a serious accident occurring.**

well be the reason why so many people have and will continue to break the law concerning mobiles. It's estimated that around 500,000 motorists use a hand-held mobile each day whilst driving. Exactly how those figures are arrived at I haven't a clue, but assuming that little bowler-hatted man at the ministry has got his facts right and assuming my limited ability at maths is correct, then in 2005 alone, approx 185 million people would have been using their mobile phone each day whilst driving, out of which the entire 145,000 police officers from England and Wales managed to nick just 72,000 culprits. We are not talking about offences here that can be easily missed such as doing an illegal U turn or running a red light, we're talking about holding a mobile for 5-10-15 minutes or more and in many instances in stationary traffic. Yet out of 185 million people committing this offence, 50% of the entire police force chose not to apprehend one solitary offender and the other 50% nicked just one culprit each in a whole year!

Far be it for me to understand the reasoning for this leniency, however it appears a purge is about to take place and knowing from experience how if anybody is going to get sin-



gled out when it comes to nicking motorists, its going to be our lot - twice if the PCO get involved and rightly so - then all the more reason why every one of you should get that kit fitted...

## AT and the curvacious Swiss au pair!

On a lighter note, there is a saying in marketing that "business has only two functions - marketing and innovation." Of the two, innovation is something that is rarely off the minds of most marketeers as ideas are often created from the most unusual of circumstances, including from previously related subjects. For example, I recently wrote an article about the likelihood of Polish immigrants coming into this country to work in the taxi industry, but before doing so would learn to speak fluent English, which prompted me to wonder why it is that people throughout Europe, irrespective of their level of education, have the inherent ability to speak several languages. Yet English speaking nationals, even amongst those in the service industry where a second language would be considered an asset, appear to show very little interest in this subject.

Professional footballers, for example, are rarely considered to be high on the list of academic ability, yet there are a considerable number of foreign players who speak very good English. One example is Philippe Senderos of Arsenal, who is from Switzerland and is supposedly fluent in six languages, yet he is only 21 years of age. Go to virtually any country outside of England and you can be sure to find local cab drivers who have a basic understanding of English, no matter how small, yet how many English born cab drivers in London can speak another language?

Mentioning Switzerland reminds of a time many many years ago when I worked in that wonderful country in a place called Ebnat Kappel, which is a canton or region of St Gallen and whose population at the time was only a few hundred thousand. I was made to feel completely inadequate by the fact that



# Marketing Place

children as young as 7 or 8 could speak three or four languages and there was I whose mother tongue was a dialect of English, incomprehensible to most people outside of the east end of London, struggling to communicate in pigeon German.

Exactly how I came to be working in an isolated - but none the less picturesque - mountain village, knee deep in snow making Lederhosen of all things (leather shorts worn with embroidered braces, supposedly associated with virility and popular amongst neighbouring Bavarians) was in truth due to a combination of my own hot-blooded virility plus a pre-concieved notion of living a life of Riley!

I was young, a bit rash and totally besotted with a curvacious Swiss au pair who pursued me, - without too much difficulty - to go live with her and her parents who owned a hotel in Switzerland. In my ignorance, I hadn't a clue where Ebnat Kappel was and assumed it was somewhere in Zurich. As for the hotel, the way she spoke I was thinking something more on par with the Hilton, not a small guest house perched precariously on the side of a ruddy Swiss mountain! But my time there was a happy one and also a bit of adventure for a young man at a time when travelling abroad was quite uncommon for people of my ilk. However I feel it to be true to say that I might have been happier still had I been more proficient in the language before I went.

The beauty of travelling abroad, especially alone, which I did for 2½ yrs, are the situations one encounters and which stay in the memory. One example being when my amorous pursuit of glory first began. It was early February 1958. My Swiss girl friend had already returned home several months earlier and I promised I would follow when I had sufficient funds. I owned a clapped out Ford Poplar car, which I managed to sell for fifty quid - big bucks to me back in those days. I went to Victoria Station to buy a one-way train ticket to Zurich, but the dodderly ticket clerk who was probably a bit mutton, must have misheard and he gave me a ticket to Munich - more or less in same direction but it was only when I reached the train's final destination did I realise the error.

Even then I had doubts as to where I was. The station was crowded, I could see no signs and it was absolutely freezing. I had never seen so much frost, ice and snow in my entire life and the sight of everybody in heavy top-coats and boots wearing Russian trooper-style fur hats gave me the sudden fear that I had arrived in Moscow! I had no gloves or overcoat, I couldn't speak a word of German and thought I would die of hypothermia before I eventually managed to find a cab driver who spoke a little English and who kindly helped me to book a room at a cheap local pension.

Late the following day, I was back at the railway station buying a ticket to Zurich when

the headlines on a newspaper stand caught my eye. Curious, but not knowing how to ask if they sold English newspapers, I managed with the aid of a small English-German dictionary to put together a sentence in German

**I was young, a bit rash and totally besotted with a curvacious Swiss au pair who pursued me, - without too much difficulty - to go live with her and her parents who owned a hotel in Switzerland.**

which I hoped could be understood. I was a little nervous at sounding like a wally and for 10 minutes I kept repeating to myself, 'haben Sie englische zeitung bitte' over and over again until I eventually picked up enough courage to approach the lady vendor who looked at me quizzically when I spoke and then said in the broadest cockney accent imaginable: "Wot wun you want sweetart? Daily Mirror OK?" I couldn't believe it and neither could I believe the terrible news that I was reading about how the plane carrying the Manchester United football team had crashed on take-off from Munich Airport the previous day, leaving 23 dead, 7 of whom were the famous Busby babes. The cause of the crash was ice on the wings and excessive slush on the runway. Tragic and there was I in the very City when it happened.

So what, you might wonder, has any of the above got to do with the price of fish? Well I digressed a bit but it was about languages.

Not surprisingly, almost every English speaking country considers the learning of a foreign language to be totally unnecessary because wherever in the world their countrymen travel, they expect to be spoken to in English - which is not only an arrogant attitude as well as being disrespectful, but by making no attempt whatsoever to speak or understand the simplest of words of the country you are visiting, is to deny yourself of a certain amount of pleasure and I might add, make your stay that much easier.

One of the difficulties of learning a foreign language away from the country of origin for most people is the inability to practice what you have learnt. But this need not necessarily be

the case for those in the cab trade because London being one of the most cosmopolitan cities in world, whatever language you learn you are sure to pick up a native on whom to try out your new found skill. I've mentioned in the past how driving a cab can become at times a pretty mundane occupation with little to occupy the mind, particularly whilst waiting for a client, so what better way to use that time and to stimulate the brain than by learning a foreign language? With all the gizmo's and MP3 whatnots on the market that can be used for this purpose, learning couldn't be easier whatever the subject. So why not give language a try? It's also worth noting that apart from the enjoyment and immense sense of achievement, think also of what it could do for your Society and your future when our marketing portfolio includes the little fact that our members are bilingual. I repeat what I said at the beginning: 'Innovation' - the definition of which is something newly introduced, which is what your Society should always be looking for to keep ahead of the field.

Finally, we are often asked how we measure our success and one of the analogies I use is the way grass grows. You cannot see it, but every week you have to mow the lawn.

Au revoir, auf wiedersehen, arrivederci, hasta la vista...

**Allen Togwell**  
DaC Marketing  
allent@dialacab.co.uk

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## They think it's Hall over...

Ah the memories! No, I know I can't fool you! That wasn't me who actually lifted the World Cup back in '66, but you must agree that my old mucker, good friend and part time happy snapper **Jim Rainbird (T25)** did a good job of sticking my boat race on the front of my birthday card - don't bother sending me cards now, it was in March! But will we see an England captain lift a trophy at the new Wembley Stadium?

## Chelsea v Manchester United at Wembley...

Only days away now from the first FA Cup Final at the new Wembley Stadium that will capture the attention of football fans from all over the world. This match between the two giants of the Premiership should, if the form books suggest, be a right old ding-dong. I managed to squeeze a few words out of two opposing fans and first up was an ardent Chelsea fan, **Bernie Doyle (B37)**. Bernie has followed the Blues for over 40 years and has held a season ticket for the past ten. He and his son, **Mark Doyle (K47)**, have already seen Chelsea obtain the first of four trophies they are chasing and they will both be at Wembley on 19 May to hopefully witness their beloved 'Blues' capture the FA Cup. Bernie believes that the Red Devils, although in a rich vein of form, are beatable and commented that Ronaldo is running the show and will probably be Player of the Year - no argu-

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

# Russell's Hall of Footie



**They think it's Hall over - it is now... at least for the present!**

ment from me there.

When I asked Bernie for a prediction of the score, he replied with confidence that it would be a 2-1 win for Chelsea and argues that his back four, with the addition of an in-form Petr Cech between the sticks, will be the difference on the day. Bernie added that his side are capable of winning another Cup, but sees the league title as a foregone conclusion. He also reminisced of the Chelsea stars of the 70's and admitted they were a great side, but feels that not one of them would be able to get into today's side. Lastly Bernie

scotched rumours of a rift at management level between Abramovich and Mourinho as being hyped up in the media and the news of Jurgen Klinsmann joining the Kings Road elite as just paper talk

For the Man U perspective I contacted **John Biddle (D73)** who also believes, with pure honesty, that Chelsea will win the FA Cup because the depth of Man U's squad is limited. But John was not down-hearted for too long as he said that Fergie's boys will win the Premiership. John also felt that it won't be an English club that wins the Champions league but Milan!

So there you are. Chelsea for the FA Cup, Manchester United for the Premiership and Milan to be Champions of Europe. I know John quite well and he is astute with his predictions, so I'm off to the bookies with my 50p!

The editor has decided that this is the last Hall of footie for now, but I look forward to having a soccer chat when I see you on the road...

**Russell Hall (G44)**

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



### Another successful Marathon...

My Rome Marathon went well considering the eve of the event fell on St Patrick's night! Organisers always tell runners to keep up their fluid levels, so I obliged with a few pints of Guinness! It took a while to get into my stride with the run starting at 9am and it being a very warm day... oh, and those cobblestone streets!

My personal best of 4:21 in New York in 1994 was never in danger of being beaten; it's all about getting round the course these days and I shall be back in the big apple once more in November.

Summer has started early

here as well as the UK and we are having some real scorchers at the moment. Our cricket season ([www.midicricket.com](http://www.midicricket.com)) got underway the day before writing these notes and it was thirsty work indeed - a gentle reminder in April of the very hot days that lay ahead in July and August!

It really is a good time to visit right now, those sandy beaches are empty and so too are the popular tourist attractions. We have many more holiday-makers and house-hunters booked between now and our peak season ([www.southoffrancelets.com](http://www.southoffrancelets.com)), the numbers are well up on last year and

Taxi Globe Editor Sandie Goodwin is arriving shortly for her second visit.

I am taking our property portfolio ([www.immoboulevard-herault.com](http://www.immoboulevard-herault.com)) to Baden, near Eindhoven at the end of the month, so I'll need to brush up on my Dutch, although thankfully most folk from the Netherlands speak English! **Call Sign** readers will be welcome visitors!

Time seems to race by ever so quickly and I have just looked up at my wall calendar to note that my regular stint on the taxi ranks at Wimbledon fortnight is now just weeks away - where does the time go?

*Until next time - a bientôt...*

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



Dial-a-Cab's new Roman Way Manager, **Tom Whitbread**, let a few people know that he was still around after leaving the Complaints department – 153million of them!

As you may have seen if you are a reader of the *Sunday Telegraph*, the article on 15 April asked Tom about theatres and ticket agencies giving away free tickets to our drivers so that they can hopefully recommend shows and give a first hand report to their passengers and prospective show ticket buyers (*I had those cabbies in the back of my theatre*).

Interviewed by the paper's Arts and Media Editor, *Chris Hutchins*, Tom explained that allowing cab drivers to see the shows and pass on their review to passengers can be a much better way of spreading the word than by them reading what could be a biased report in a paper or magazine. The *Sunday Telegraph* article had a photograph of a taxi roof sign and a Guys and Dolls still, but their Internet website version ([www.telegraph.co.uk](http://www.telegraph.co.uk)) had the photo published on this page of four Dial-a-Cab drivers – including Tom.

The article, in which Tom referred to DaC drivers as “ambassadors for the theatres,” also referred to a review in *Call Sign* at the beginning of the Rat Pack run (by Gerry Dunn MBE S84 who wasn't named) which ended up outside the theatre with the rest of the media reviews. That show was scheduled to run for 6 weeks and ended up lasting over 4 years with the theatre manager of the time claiming in this magazine that DaC drivers passing the word had a big impact on the show's success.

Within a few hours of Tom's interview appearing in the Sunday telegraph, the *BBC World Service* had picked it up and were on the phone to Tom for an interview with reporter William Edmundson.

Tom told *Call Sign*:

“I don't care who it is that wants an interview so long as I can promote the name of Dial-a-Cab. If it is *BBC World Service*, so much the better because their interviewer told me that their listenership is around 153million and

# A FUNNY THING HAPPENED TO ME

...whilst going to Roman Way



L-R: Louis Loizou (T58), Mickey Tarbuck (L41), Tom Whitbread and Paul Clark (J86)

Photo courtesy Sunday Telegraph

between' twixt DaC and theatre-land, went on to give Tom's review on 5 of the top shows. It will be interesting to see if any of the theatres concerned put his name up with the rest of the reviews because he raved about 4 of them – Guys and Dolls certainly won't though (“disappointing for me!”)...

Tom ended by issuing a plea to our drivers:

“Those who give us these show tickets are kind enough to let the driver take their wife with them, but we still have some rather greedy drivers who want to take all the family including aunts and uncles. Some have even been taking tickets and not going to the

show, but getting them for their wife and a friend. This is not the object of the exercise – it's for the sole purpose of us advertising the shows whilst working and carrying potential theatregoers.”

hey, that's some coverage! People already read *Call Sign* magazine's on-line version all around the world, so we must by now be the most well-known licensed taxi company in the world.”

The article, which described Tom as the ‘go

## DARREN COMPLETES HALF MARATHON

In aid of St Francis Hospice and to remember DaC's Colin

Dial-a-Cab driver, **Darren Dennis (W65)**, recently ran in the 26<sup>th</sup> **Brentwood half-marathon** to help raise funds for **St Francis Hospice** in Havering-atte-Bower, Essex. He also ran in memory of a former DaC driver and good friend, **Colin Starr**.

He told *Call Sign*:

“The race began at 10am with a record number of entries estimated at around 2,500. It was a lovely day for March as I ran through the Essex countryside. I had lots of support throughout the race and it really helped spur me on, something that to be honest I really needed as the final two miles were uphill and the temperature was beginning to warm up. I virtually stumbled across the line in 2 hours and 7 minutes and proudly accepted my medal. I just wished I hadn't eaten that curry the night before!

I would like to thank both *Call Sign* and Dial-a-Cab itself for sponsoring me and indeed, to all the cab drivers who dug dip to help me raise money for such a worthy cause. A special thank you as well to Sue Starr for all her support.



I hope that Colin was watching me suffer as I crossed that line and that perhaps he thought that I'm not such a bad chap - even though he was a gooner!

I am hoping that my final total will be around £700.”

St Francis' Hospice does much good work to help those with terminal illnesses, their aim being to alleviate suffering regardless of whether physical, emotional, social or spiritual so that they can give patients the best quality of life possible

for however long that life may be. They care for more than 1,400 patients and their families each year at a cost of £4.9million to run all the St Francis services, ensuring that loved ones get the care they need 24/7.

If you would like to make a donation, you can phone on 01708 723593 and their fundraising staff will help you to make an instant donation or you can send a cheque to: Saint Francis Hospice, Freepost, The Hall, Havering-atte-Bower, Romford, RM4 1BR.

Photo: Darren stops briefly to pose for *Call Sign*. In addition to running for St Francis Hospice, his top shows former DaC driver Colin Starr in whose memory Darren was also running...

## Topsy turvey...

If you're sitting in your living room with a cup of tea reading this whilst occasionally looking up to watch the football on TV, next time there's a pause have a look out of the window at your flower beds. In April did you see some confused flowers wondering whether it was spring or not?

28? Yes, with climate change and Global warming going under the media spotlight, spare a thought for the poor old daffodil or crocus with experts predicting that by 2020, average British temperatures will rise by 1.2 degrees. That's not much, you might think, but what we experienced last summer would become the norm as daytime temps in London average 32-34 degrees. The problem we have as city workers is that the buildings store the heat generated during the day, so the temperature stays high for longer. Personally, I feel it most between 4pm and 7pm. I didn't miss a day last July, but I admit that it did cross my mind and I promised myself that next time I'm buying a cab with air-con!

As the seasons seem to be changing for life's vegetation, the same can be said for us cabbies as the *Kipper* season appears to have moved to August from January. It can also signal the end of the business financial year, thus a dip in the need for our services. Even Christmas isn't as manic as it used to be, with workers appearing to spend more time socialising throughout the year. Have a look into pubs a few weeks into the New Year and they are packed. Long gone are the days when January was a no-spend month with people saving money, as they now have money to spend - or access to it - all year around. The run up to Christmas now appears a time to get home a little early and spend as much time as possible with the family. Working in London can be tough and every now and then I make sure I spend a day wondering around town with my family. London takes on a completely different perspective on a day trip - rather like walking south down Wardour Street against the flow of traffic.

## Where's the grub!

If you want something to eat, there's no shortage of restaurants from the cheap to expensive from all over the world. However, since the *Piccolo* owners left the underground car park at Marble Arch, the trade seems to have very little to offer food wise if you want to sit-in and eat. I can't remember the last time I didn't eat my afternoon meal in the cab stuck down a side street. I used to go to the *Royal Oak* but it's changed significantly since it was taken over by new owners. Someone should wake up to the fact that there are 24,000 London cabbies looking for a decent place to stop and eat in pleasant surroundings everyday.

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...

# A DaC Driver's Views on Life and Everything



## Parking in Westminster

Whilst doing an account ride from the *Four Seasons Hotel*, I was approached by a traffic warden who asked me to move on. I pointed out that in that vicinity there was nowhere for me to stop without committing an offence and if I went around the block, the customer would complain about the amount on the meter. Having none of it, he issued me with a ticket - with me still sitting in the cab! Have Westminster Council started instructing parking attendants to put a ticket on any-

thing that moves or in this case doesn't move, or is it resentment that we don't pay the congestion charge? At present DaC is paying out £13,000 a quarter in parking fines. It seems there is no place for some commonsense and understanding. I am not militant by nature, but would support a cab trade drive-in to highlight to the media the way we are being treated, not just by Westminster council but also by a majority of councils.

I encountered Westminster's new weapon, the CCTV Smart Car taking photos of cab drivers simply trying to get a bite to eat in Shepherd Street. The car was parked part in a meter bay and half on a yellow line, causing an obstruction and committing an offence. After a phone call to Westminster parking, I was informed that, to look into a complaint and as there is more than one smart car, the attendants number and registration of the vehicle was required. Any driver wishing to make a complaint should phone Westminster Parking Customer Services on 0207 823 4567.

*Finally, if you would like to get in touch regarding any cab trade issue, feel free on [callsignmag@aol.com](mailto:callsignmag@aol.com) putting Richard Potter in the subject line.*

**Richard Potter (T51)**

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When **Bill Gillette (K31)** phoned *Call Sign* to tell us that the locals around Mayfair's Grosvenor Square "were revolting," he wasn't actually referring to their personal habits!

He told us of a conversation he'd had with his passenger – a long-time Dial-a-Cab account holder in Upper Brook Street – about the serious concerns of those who either lived or worked in close vicinity to the United States embassy.

**"He told me about the group of locals who had been battling for several years to have the embassy moved to another location,"** said Bill. **"With the area surrounding the embassy becoming more and more of a no-go zone with concrete bollards seemingly forcing traffic further and further away from the US building, it seemed logical that someone, somewhere was going to attempt some form of terrorism and that as they were being forced away from the building by the various security measures including 24-hour armed police personnel, anyone desperate enough to try leaving a truck-load of explosives was likely to cause more damage and fatalities to the workers / residents in the surrounding area than to the embassy itself."**

*Call Sign* spoke to one of those in The Grosvenor Square Safety Group who told us that although it might appear to outsiders that the embassy was safe, that did not take into account the fact that those on the outside of the blockades were not. We were told the names of some of the residents who were battling to have the embassy – which has been in and around the area for over 200 years and at 24/32 Grosvenor Square for almost 50 years – and it read like a who's who of the rich and famous. In fact, the last people you would expect to become militants! But they have!

The group have burst into meetings, placed full-page anti-embassy ads in *The Times*, *The Washington Post* – although not, apparently, in *The Sun*! One of their number, Romanian Countess Anca Vidaeff, even went on a hunger strike.

But now The Grosvenor Square Safety Group have achieved that hard-fought for victory and the Embassy building has been placed onto the market with Knight Frank of Mount Street. It is expected to fetch around £350million.

*Call Sign* tried to speak to the US Ambassador Robert Tuttle to find out when they would be departing to more peaceful surrounds. We couldn't quite manage that, however, one of the 700 people who work there told us that it would take several years just to move everything from Grosvenor Square to a new building and that so far as he knew, they were looking but had not yet found anything. But he did confirm that the embassy could

# Bill Gillette: The Locals Are Revolting!



**Bill Gillette: "The area was becoming an unsightly mess of concrete bollards."**  
inset: The Eagle will have to land elsewhere in London!

not guarantee the safety of local residents and that was their bottom line.

Where will they be going? The favourites seem to be Kensington Palace or Chelsea Barracks, but wherever it is, it will certainly remain in the capital. But wherever that is, after 221 years in the area, Grosvenor Square will soon revert back from the concrete jungle it has

become to being once again one of London's most beautiful squares.

Last word goes to Bill Gillette who told us before the news came through of The Grosvenor Square Safety Group's success: **"I agree with them. The area was becoming a total unsightly mess of concrete bollards."** Well, that is now on the way out...

## CALL SIGN GETS TAXIS BACK OVER ALBERT BRIDGE!

Following many DaC drivers being ticketed for crossing **Albert Bridge** in taxis weighing just under 5550 old style pounds (around 2.47 tons) and in contravention of the signage stating 2 tonnes (2000kg) max weight, *Call Sign's* protests have at last brought success and the weight limit has now been raised to 2.5 tonnes, which means that taxis can now legally cross the Thames most attractive bridge.

One of the first places to originally notice the difference was the taxi rank at South Ken when drivers noticed far more passengers going into the minicab establishment opposite. Why? Because it was becoming too expensive to travel to SW11 in a taxi having to use Battersea Bridge – especially on the higher rates - whereas the minicabs could still use Albert Bridge.

In April 2006, *Call Sign* spoke to *Kensington and Chelsea Engineer's Department*, who are responsible for the bridge. They told us they did not want to ban taxis and understood the problems it could cause, but that they had a responsibility to safeguard the bridge and that was why the 2 tonne limit was being enforced.

*Call Sign* suggested the possibility of increasing the minimum weight to 2.5 tonnes or to keep it at 2-tonnes "except for taxis?" We also said that if it were to be made single lane each way, that would ease the load at any one time and make it easier to raise the limit.

Several months later, the bridge became single lane each way. At that time, *Kensington and Chelsea Engineer's Dept* informed *Call Sign* that they were going to recommend the weight limit be increased to 2.5 tonnes and once again usable by taxis.

The late Sir John Betjeman was a regular user of taxis and a real fighter for causes he believed in. He would have been proud of *Call Sign* today...!

Several DaC drivers – even **Call Sign** advertiser and accountant to thousands of taxi drivers, **Martin Cordell** - sent in word that **Neil Tennant** – he of the **Pet Shop Boys** – had given a rare interview on BBC Radio 4's long-running **Desert Island Discs** and while selecting his 8 favourite tracks, offered praise to the taxi company he uses "all the time" – **Dial-a-Cab!**

"I don't need a car," he told **Kirsty Young**, "I use **Dial-a-Cab...!**"

Each week, presenter **Kirsty Young** invites someone who has been - or still is - in the public eye, to pretend they have been cast away on a desert island and to select the music they'd like to take with – assuming of course that there is electricity on the island! **Desert Island Discs** is still one of Radio 4's most popular and enduring programmes. **Roy Plomley** first brought it into existence in 1942 and presented it until his death in 1985.

The **Pet Shop Boys** consist of **Neil Tennant**, who provides main vocals and keyboards and **Chris Lowe** on keyboards and occasional vocals. The duo are one of the most consistently successful two-some in pop music and have had 39 top thirty singles in the UK, including four number ones: *West End girls*, *It's a sin*, *Always on my mind* and *Heart*. They have recently been touring South America, Australia and New Zealand.

Singer/songwriter, **Neil Tennant**, grew up in Newcastle and although he enjoyed amateur dramatics, he would always tell anyone prepared to listen that one day he'd become a famous pop star – and he did! On the way, he also discovered the best radio taxi organisation!

Neil's favourite 8 recordings from number one downwards were: *Why Can't the English*, from *My Fair Lady* and performed by **Rex Harrison**, *She Loves You* by **The Beatles** and **Thomas Tallis'** *Fantasia* on a Theme Performed by **Sinfonia of London**, conducted by **Sir John Barbirolli**.

His number 4 was *Changes* from **David Bowie**, followed by **Shannon's** *Give Me Tonight* with **Billie Holiday's** wonderful *Good Morning Heartache* at six. Number seven was **Dusty Springfield's** *I Don't Want to Hear It Anymore* followed in eighth place by the 1<sup>st</sup> movement of *Symphony No 5 in D Minor* performed by **New York Philharmonic**.

Did we also mention that his favourite taxi company was **Dial-a-Cab!**

**Pet Shop Boy Neil Tennant on BBC Radio 4's Desert Island Discs...**

**"I Don't Need a Car – I Use Dial-a-Cab!"**



The Pet Shop Boys with **Dusty Springfield**: **Dusty's "I don't want to hear it any more" was in Neil Tennant's eight selections**

**DAC-WEMBLEY CRASH OUT OF CUP ON PENALTIES!**

In a season of almost – but not quite – **DaC-Wembley** just failed to make the final of the prestigious *Middlesex Charity Cup* when they came up against **Brook House**, who were promoted to the **Southern League** last year.

**Dial-a-Cab** driver and **DaC-Wembley** goalkeeper, **Lee Pearce (J71)**, told **Call Sign** before the game that the team were confident and not only were they playing well – they were unbeaten throughout the month - but **Lee** had also struck a rich vein of form saving two consecutive penalties and also saving a third even though it was then disallowed and it had to be retaken – and he saved the retake too!

Sadly, that talent deserted him on Tuesday 17 April when they played **Brook House** in the semi-final. Although taking the lead through **Jamie Walker**, **DaC-Wembley** went in 2 – 1 behind at half time. With 15 minutes to go, **Jamie** scored his second to level the tie up at 2 – 2 and taking the game into extra time.

Almost the last kick of the extra time then saw Captain **Ian Bates** miss a clear chance and the tie went into a penalty shoot-out to decide who would go into the Final. Sadly, **DaC-Wembley's Kristian Hale** missed his penalty, watching sadly as it rebounded off the post. Every other penalty went in, giving **Brook House** the decider by five penalties to four.

In the league, Saturday 14 April saw **DaC-Wembley** away to league leaders **Chipstead**, having already beaten them in the home match. After just 8 minutes, **Chipstead's** goalkeeper, **Michael Nicholas**, was sent off whilst at the other end, **Barry Ward** and a **Paul Shelton** penalty put **DaC-Wembley** into a comfortable 2 – 0 lead.

The league's top scorer, **Danny Oakings** dragged one back for **Chipstead** before **Scott Simpson** levelled things up when he beat **Lee Pearce** with a well-taken penalty.

The result probably puts the championship beyond **DaC-Wembley**, who look to have enough to finish as runners-up. At this time, it is unclear if there is to be a play-off for a second promoted team, but we'll know by the next issue of **Call Sign**. Even so, it has still been a successful season for **DaC Wembley...**



**Jamie Walker** scored two against **Brook House**. **DaC-Wembley** still lost on penalties

**Combined Counties Premier Division (top 6 of 22)**

**Week ending 20 April 2007**

Team	P	W	D	L	F	A	GD	Pts
Chipstead	39	30	2	7	102	43	59	92
Merstham	39	28	2	9	90	34	56	86
<b>DaC-Wembley</b>	<b>38</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>89</b>	<b>41</b>	<b>46</b>	<b>82</b>
Ash Utd	36	22	8	6	71	28	43	74
North Greenford Utd	38	19	12	7	83	56	27	69
Banstead Athletic	38	20	8	10	71	51	20	60



**This is the true love story of a Dial-a-Cab driver and a Californian beauty who met and fell in love on the Internet in 1998. Sam lived in London and drove for DaC, while Jenny lived on the USA west coast. Call Sign is publishing Jenny's story exactly as she sent it and with her permission. For obvious reasons, their names have been changed, but any photos are genuine...**

**Continued from April**

*We have decided to share a room. Even though we have never met in person, we have shared many wonderful times online or on the phone. We have talked to each other every night for the past four months - an hour or more every night. We've gotten to know each other so well even though we are so far away and have wanted so long for this moment to arrive. Now it's here and we're face to face. This is our moment in time. They show us to our room...*

Sam and I have agreed that if we don't like each other once we meet in person, we would just put a pillow in between us when we slept. Yeah, right...!

I had tried to find a hotel that would have a room number 319, something that we used to say when we'd write stories to each other trying to imagine how it would be when we first met. He made up the name of *The Rem Hotel* and it would be room number 319. Too bad this hotel doesn't have a room with that number. It would have been so funny if they had. I tried my best. I wanted this time to be very special for both of us.

Sam and I sat on the edge of the bed and just stared at each other. I touched his face very softly. I wanted to be sure he was here for real and not just a dream. He just looked at me with those beautiful blue eyes and smiled. We touched hands and just kept on staring at each other.

We broke the ice by exchanging some gifts we had brought. I gave him a watch with an inscription of the first part of his email address adding 'with love Qbn,' the first part of mine - after all, we did meet online.

He gave me a gold cross and chain and as he put it onto my neck, the touch of his hand made me quiver! He also gave me a very beautiful candleholder with many small lime-green candles. He knows I love candles, they are so romantic...

I don't think I should say more since what happened after that is very private. We didn't even have dinner that night. We lit the candles, put on some music and stayed in all night. I will never forget that night for as long as I live... never. It was the most wonderful night in my life. I was there with the man I loved more than words could ever say, I was in his arms and I felt I was in heaven!

The next morning we decided to change hotels because the room at *The Modern* was too small, so they moved us to *The Ameritania Hotel* just down the street and right on Broadway. But that first night in our small room

# L ve On the Internet



**Jenny and DaC lover Sam in New York after their first night together**

will stay in my memory for as long as I live.

Making the change to the other hotel was silly because I had brought too many suitcases with me. I wanted to look my best for him and brought half my closet with! He kept making fun of me. It was crazy! The taxicab driver who helped us move all of our things into the Ameritania Hotel thought I was a crazy woman as well, we hardly had any room to sit down in the cab. It was all full of luggage. Sam joked that *Dial-a-Cab* drivers would be more accommodating. I can go along with that!

At our new hotel we have a window overlooking Broadway Street, the main street in

Manhattan and right next to David Letterman's Theatre. Sam couldn't believe all the taxicabs that were going down this street. There were hundred of them going by. We took pictures of them. We took lots of pictures while in New York. Some are very good and others even better - although a bit more private!

The next seven days and nights were the most wonderful of my life. We have had so much fun, we ran through the streets of Manhattan like two kids. We loved each other day and night. We just couldn't get enough of each other...

*Continued next month*

## CONDO FOR RENT

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**Three beds, high spec swimming pools,**

**Gym, Restaurant, 10 Minutes Disney Nr**

**Lake Davenport**

**Great offers available**

**10% discount for Dial-a-Cab drivers**

**Contact John (M13) on 07921 920743...**

# Tom Whitbread's last Compliance Officers report

## Moving on...

After almost 20 years, the Chairman has decided to give me a break from being the Compliance / Complaints Officer and give me the more pleasant task of managing the Roman Way Depot.

The job of being a Compliance Officer can be very stressful if you allow it to be, or you can address it as a challenge. Trying to sort out complaints can be like making up a jigsaw, you start off with the basic pieces, then work to view the whole picture.

It's been said that I applied myself to the job like a duck to water as I had a mind that could work both sides of the fence. Firstly, on the honest side of the fence, but also on the opposite side – that which villains who wanted to cheat had decided to settle on. I could put myself into the position of either of these groups, therefore seeing the problem through their eyes.

Because I love working out problems and puzzles, this allowed me to work out and catch those minority of villains who were operating scams to gain an advantage over their fellow honest colleagues – the majority.

During the 20 years, many a driver has been amazed at how I was able to unravel the complicated schemes, whether on voice or data despatch. It has been more challenging since being on data, as I had to learn all about computers and their workings before gaining solutions.

Since my move to Roman Way was reported in a previous issue of *Call Sign*, I have had many phone calls from drivers regarding my past record - and my future. They weren't just from drivers who never got to be put on complaint, but also from some who had suffered suspensions. The latter group surprised me by their comments; they were sorry to see me moving on! Why was this? Because they enjoyed trying to get one over on me, but if I won they knew it would be handled in a fair and honest way and I can honestly say that I have never tried to "fit up" any driver - there was enough work to keep me fully employed with ongoing complaints without trying to make up fictitious ones.

The honest drivers were sad that some dishonest drivers might now have a much better advantage over them. One driver even jokingly asked me whether he could put the Chairman on complaint saying that he was giving the villains an unfair advantage! Although he was exaggerating, I was still very happy to hear these comments as it proved to me that I had applied myself to the job with the best of my ability and I



Tom and his Roman Way team, minus Steve who had to leave early

appreciated hearing them.

I'm sure that Allan Evans can learn quickly and put his full attention into the position that he has now been given - it is a job that needs your complete attention without getting too involved in other member's jobs - which could detract you away from the main task.

Each Board Member has his own area in which to devote his working time. If you are unfamiliar with them or new to the circuit, address your queries as below:

**Michael Son is involved in special projects and selected clients accounts.**

**Keith Cain runs the call centre and drivers journey queries.**

**Allan Togwell's expertise is advertising and the designing of Dial-a-Cab material. Allan Evans will be covering complaints.**

**I will be doing the day-to-day running of the Roman Way Depot.**

**Shelagh Adkins deals with new drivers, driver's fittings, training and marshals. Daren Morley and Christina Conn deal with the hands-on training and queries of drivers re working of taxi terminals and the rules you need to adhere to when working them.**

If you would like to contact any of these people via email, use their first name and the first letter of their surname, then add @dialacab.co.uk. My email would be TomW@dialacab.co.uk.

As some of you may remember, I used to manage Roman Way when Peter Thurston was there, this was within the Driver Operations department that I managed, so some of the fitters have worked with me in the past and hopefully will not be upset by the change. In fact they might enjoy me being back and chasing them to achieve the standard that I expect!

## Assisting with aerial signals

I have been asked by John Bankes, our IT Supremo, if I would travel around London in my car

with a set of computer recording equip-

ment. This equipment would constantly record the strength of aerial signals from all parts of London, then it will be up to our experts from the USA to try and improve the quality of these signals with the information gained.

I'm sure that at some time during these excursions around London, I will come across the

little band of drivers who have been so intent on discrediting me. When they see the aerials on the roof of my VW, they will no doubt once again incorrectly report back to their gang that I'm earning a living driving a minicab - just like the story they put about that I owned a minicab firm which was driving the Royal Family around. But if that's what rocks their boat, let them!

## Is he allowed to have a taxi badge?

At this year's AGM, a subscriber took great pleasure in going up to the lectern and stating that he thought I should not have a taxi badge due to my "heart problems." It wasn't true, I have not had heart problems, I had preventative surgery on my arteries – the implanting of stents.

So due to another subscriber who had written to the PCO and informed them of this, I had a call asking me to have a *Bruce Protocol Test*. I informed all those at the AGM of this along with the date and an invitation to join me just to make sure that I was not telling a lie. Before the date, I asked a driver who had completed the test what levels and speeds they expected?

I then went to a gym and tried myself out on the treadmill at his given levels. Being the type of person that I am, I completed the 10-minute test and then did it again. Yes, I did break out in a sweat on the second go, but I just kept thinking of Kelly Brook and there was no problem!

On the day of the test, I attended the Homerton Hospital and was met by an attractive young lady who took me through the test. At the end, she asked how I found it, I said very easy as I had been practising and this seemed much easier. She asked what levels I'd been practising at and when I told her, she said that it wasn't surprising that I had passed, I had been using the wrong levels - more suited to a 20 year old!

When we finished the treadmill test and I sat for the 3-minute cooling-off period

*continued on page 33*



*Continued from April*

For the next two years I rented a full flat cab, with weekly rentals being around £10. To put this into perspective, a long day man would hope to take around a £10 a day when it was busy. A new cab cost about £1,100.

At first I rented a cab from a medium-sized fleet. The father of Sam and Derek - the Harris brothers - ran the garage from what used to be an electricity substation in Kingsland Road. The building was very impressive with its grey stone pillared front and vast interior, but the cabs were carts, many having been converted from petrol to diesel power using the infamous Ferguson tractor engine - noisy at any speed and with not enough power to pull an FX3 up Fitzjohns Avenue in third gear! If you had four punters and luggage, then even with a run you ended crawling up hills in second gear and the engine sounding as if it was going to blow itself to pieces at any minute!

After a few weeks suffering, I saw an advert for full flat BMC diesel powered cabs - with heaters! This advertisement was in *Steering Wheel*, the only real London taxi trade newspaper in those days. The owner lived in Golders Green, had three cabs, drove one himself which he said he used as a spare to provide backup if either of the other two had a problem. He kept his three FX3's in excellent condition and even had them fitted with stylish Ace wheel trims. These bright chrome rim trims made the FX3 look very smart, but the real ace in the card was the one I was going to rent - which was on the **ODRTS** circuit. So we agreed terms, still at £10 a week paid in arrears, and I was to pay the radio circuit direct.

**I spoke to a lady called Florrie Culverwell at ODRTS about a change (I had been on before), she passed my request on and I was back on the circuit.**

**"Sunset Strip" has now handed his badge and bill back to the PCO after 50 years - much of it with ODRTS. These are his memories...**

# Fifty Green Years...



Sunset Strip spoke to Florrie Culverwell at ODRTS Pentonville Rd

In those days we trusted one another when it came to payment, in any case the PCO reacted very quickly if drivers didn't pay their debts. This latest rental lasted until his son also passed out and the spare cab was no longer a spare. The owner also kept asking to use my cab when I wasn't working.

The final straw came when Mark, my second son, was born and the owner demanded to use 'my' cab when I needed it to work and visit the Victoria hospital in Barnet to see my wife and new son. In those days, mothers stayed in the maternity ward for a minimum of 8 days

and more often than not, for 11 days before returning home with their new baby.

Personally I think hospitals were kept much cleaner then, helped by restricted visiting hours. With many of today's hospitals, the sooner you can get out the better. Doctors are today worried about patients catching infections whilst in hospital. Bring back the old style battle-axe matrons and sisters who ruled with a rod of iron, but kept their wards clean and free from infection...

*Continued next issue...*

Sunset Strip

## Tom Whitbread's last Compliance Officers report

*continued from page 32*

(they are watching to see how quick your blood pressure goes back to normal), the young lady said: "Don't worry, I'll strip them off in a minute." I quickly informed her if she did that, my blood pressure might shoot up! She very quickly assured me that she meant the ECG wires that she had attached to me to gain the readings. Just my luck again...

It was the same when I decided to go to a gym, I looked through the brochures and picked the one with all those young ladies in skintight lycra suits. But when I came out of the changing room, what was I confronted with? Female senior citizens in elasticated stockings and smelling of wintergreen.

Then when you go into the showers and you see all those other naked fellows parading about flexing their muscles, straight

away I knew why some had described me as hung like a hamster. I went into the toilet to use the urinal when a well built black guy rushed in next to me and said: "Just made it." I looked over and said: "Can you make me one like that in white?"

### Wash and brush up

As I will now be down at Roman Way, I'll see at first hand in what condition and state of cleanliness our taxi fleet is in - and that includes the drivers. So I will be able to see if some of the complaints that I've been dealing with regarding lack of cleanliness, were true. As many of you know me and that I'm not backward in coming forward with my views over something that is not up to the Dial-a-Cab standard, I will tell you if your taxi is dirty. In this day and age, even if you are too lazy to wash your taxi, there are plenty of cheap and efficient taxi washes.

If you come into the Roman Way Depot

with the drivers compartment in a filthy condition as I have seen in the past, stale food, rotting fruit and other unmentionable articles lying on the floor, I will ask you to clean them out before a fitter is allowed to work on our equipment. I would also ask you to lock any top shelf magazines in the boot, as the fitters need to do a certain amount of work in a day, I do not need them to be any more knackered than they are at the moment.

In finishing off this article, again can I wish Allan the best of luck in his new job at complaints, he might need it in keeping some drivers in line.

**Anyone attending Roman Way will find we do quite a nice cup of coffee and we are cheap.**

**Be Lucky and drive safely...**

**Tom Whitbread  
Roman Way Manager**

## Rewriting history?

Does this government really believe in *education*? I hear that certain aspects of history are to be withdrawn from school curriculums for fear of offending some groups of individuals and so as not to promote racial hatred.

No longer will the 12<sup>th</sup> century crusades be taught for fear it will harm Moslem relations. And to counter that, the holocaust of WW2 will not be taught either as it conflicts with the teachings in some mosques and – it is claimed – could fan anti-semitism again. It may also upset our German partners in the EU, after all, it was they who perpetrated this heinous crime. We could also do away with the 100 years war with France, as well as the Napoleonic wars, which included the Spanish – even more of our Eu partners.

Forgetting the numerous wars this country has had, let's also do away with the Victorian era completely as this is where we ruled the known civilised world and the map of the world was coloured red. Unfortunately, what goes around comes around and if we don't teach history with all its aspects, how can we learn from mistakes that have been made – as well as from the triumphs?

It is not just in later education that the syllabus is changing, but at the nursery stage too. Children will be taught new gay fairy tales where the handsome prince rejects the beautiful princesses in favour of their more handsome brother and probably vice versa, where the princess falls in love with another beautiful princess! I suppose, they will live happily ever after. Hans Anderson must be turning in his grave.

## Desanitised?

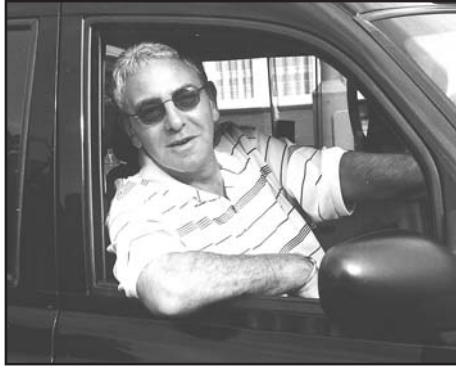
I make no comment on the sailors and marines capture and subsequent release by the Iranians, but the total capitulation of the men and women came as no surprise to me. They are only following the lead of this Labour government who, over a ten-year period, have not only managed to sanitise us, but to desensitise us as a nation as well. We've given in to the faceless ones in Brussels over almost everything and yet somehow thanked them for the crumbs they throw our way! The one saving grace – at least we haven't got the Euro!

Because of the new green policies, (to save the world?) we'll soon have lower wattage light bulbs – a return to the dark ages in more ways than one. Although dimmer and burning less electricity per bulb, you'll need more of them, eliminating any saving. The same principle will be applied to carbon emissions and footprints? If you use up your quota before the elapsed given time, you will be able to buy up parts of someone who has not used theirs. What a load of old horse manure!

These emissions will affect the cab trade as Brussels wants us to be Euro 5 compatible (whatever that is) by 2011. LTI have said it will cost millions to produce a vehicle to that standard, and inevitably add ten to twelve thousand pounds to the price. Can you imagine that? £50,000 for a cab! With older cabs not replaced as quickly as newer ones can be produced, this can only pave the way forward for minicabs to be licensed to ply for hire on the streets. Meanwhile Ken and Tone have signed up for this nonsense. To me it will be the final nail in the coffin – at last...

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

## The Views of a Grumpy Old Man



### And who will watch the watchers?

First there was the photograph, then the moving picture and in 1927 the first talkie was pro-

duced. Now we have someone, somewhere, watching your every move with the advent of CCTV. Shortly the watchers will be able to talk to you, making George Orwell's vision of the future via 1984 seem all the more real. Different messages for different misdemeanours perhaps or will one message be for all?

Will they use their own voices and words, or will they be enhanced electronically? Perhaps someone about to throw a sweet wrapper onto the floor could hear Clint Eastwood's Dirty Harry voice being used: "Hey punk, do you feel lucky? Make my day!" We could even use the Dalek's "exterminate, exterminate!"

For the crime of urinating on the wall, how useful would Bruce Forsythe's "give us a twirl" be? Perhaps even a human side to the camera with "nice to see you, to see you nice!"

How long will it be before a Jack the Lad gets his 15 minutes of fame by not only appearing in the movie, but by shooting it dead? And just who will be watching the watchers?

### And finally...

That's my lot for the present. Thanks for all the kind comments when you see me marshall and I can now stop being quite so grumpy – at least for the moment...!

Chas Kissin (P99J)

## M&O HAVE FOUR CABS WITH DAC TERMINALS

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

*Speaking to Call Sign, M&O General Service Manager Mike Saunders said:*

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

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

## SUNNY LIFE Spanish Property

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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

## Psychiatric injuries

Over the last year, I have tried to explain some of the workings of the legal system and how it may relate to you as a taxi driver, particularly with regard to injuries. *Call Sign* is about to take a well-earned break for a month, but before the holiday sun and sangria takes effect I would like to wind up with an explanation of compensation for post-traumatic stress and other psychiatric disorders e.g. **depression, acute grief reaction and anxiety.**

Anyone would be upset - even traumatised - by a car crash, falling off a building, a violent mugging or even a pavement trip if it robs you of your fitness for any length of time. The "normally robust" claimant, however, gets nothing more for trauma, as the time it takes to feel yourself again and regain confidence is built into the damages awards. If you fail to recover, however, and suffer long-term sleeplessness, flashbacks to the accident, weight loss, irritability, memory loss or a range of other symptoms bad enough to see your doctor about, you are probably entitled to extra compensation.

The law says that psychiatric harm - above and beyond the usual recovery time - is fore-

seeable by the person who injured you and if you are vulnerable to mental suffering, for example because of a bereavement or previous episodes of depression or old age, then the party at fault must take you as they find you and pay for all the resulting harm. This includes the cost of counselling, if required, or cognitive behavioural therapy - useful for people who suffer panic reactions, as can drivers or passengers long after they have recovered physically from a road traffic accident.

My clients often tell me that they are not their old self and haven't been since the accident - and their families back them up. Almost everyone describes themselves as "happy-go-lucky" before the accident, but the medical records are really important in this kind of case for a psychiatrist to be able to decide whether the accident was indeed the trigger for the client's current disability, or not.

The wrongdoer owes a duty not to damage the mental health of not only his victim, but also rescuers who come onto the scene, as in train crashes or public bombings. As for onlookers who see close relatives seriously injured - some people never recover from these sights and never fully function again in their daily lives. In order to claim for "nervous shock," as lawyers call it, however, you have to see the injury when it happens or see the immediate aftermath. People who saw relatives crushed to death at the Hillsborough football stadium disaster could recover damages for nervous shock, but those who saw their relatives dying on television could not - they were physically too remote from the deaths, regardless of the effect it had on them.

**compensation. For example, there are special rules for children's cases and fatal accidents, but since this is my final article, I can only invite you to consult me if you need to - and I hope, of course, that you never do.**

Finally, I would like to thank you for the feedback I have received and for the flattering drawing of me that your editor has used, never mind the wig and sex change!

**Should you need a solicitor, please remember to call first at Glenisters in Hammersmith for friendly, professional legal services in West London (phone 020 8735 9770).**

In addition to personal injury cases, we handle wills and probate (based at our Eastcote office), conveyancing, family and general property advice. As well as a friendly greeting and cup of coffee, there is parking for your taxi in the Kings Mall car park in Glenthorne Road at just £2 for 4 hours - a 5 minute walk from our offices.

This could also give you time to do some shopping or have a stroll along the river...

*Be Lucky,*

**Hope Liebersohn, solicitor  
hl@glenisters.com**



## Panhard Rod on the TX4 recall?

Several Dial-a-Cab drivers have expressed concern over a possible problem concerning the Panhard Rod fasteners on the TX4. This is the part of the taxi suspension system that provides lateral location for the axle. The problem was with the bolt that attached it. The name comes from the inventors, the Panhard Automobile Company of France who developed it in the early twentieth century. Its purpose is to allow the wheels to move vertically with respect to the body. LTI have now made contact with The Vehicle and Operator Services Agency (VOSA) in order to initiate a formal recall process in connection with the possible failure of the Panhard Rod fasteners on certain TXII and TX4 models.

LTI will be making direct contact with owners of the potentially affected vehicles...

**There is a lot more to say about injury**

## SOUTH LONDON TAXIS 10% DISCOUNT FOR DAC DRIVERS!

**If you live to the south of London and are looking for a garage offering quality work for a discounted price, try South London Taxis Limited because if you pull in with a Dial-a-Cab logo on your taxi, you will get a 10% discount on ALL work you have carried out there. And YES - that includes overhauls! South London Taxis Limited are already well known in Croydon, but with the savings on offer for Dial-a-Cab drivers, they must be worth those few extra miles even if you don't live there!**

**South London Taxis Limited  
69 Wortley Road, Croydon, Surrey CR0 3EB  
Telephone 020 8665 1435**

***This 10% discount offer is available to all new and existing customers who have the Dial-a-Cab logo on their cab doors.***

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

# DaC Flashback

Flashback  
1979

*This month's Flashback goes back to April 1979 and the Chairman's Report from Peter Fennymore and his reaction to the first woman to join DaC. Plus, the days when inflation meant 25% increases in the meter! Peter was Chairman from 1976 to 1984 – the second longest chairmanship after current Chairman Brian Rice...*

From ODRTS News and Views, April 1979...  
Chairman's Report – Peter Fennymore

## Ladies on ODRTS!

At last it's happened. No I am not talking about the fare increase (yet), I am talking about woman Taxi-Drivers on our circuit as subscribers! At the moment we have one fitted – Mrs Myers (G30) and another to be fitted shortly, Mrs Sawyer (W83). Although Mrs Sawyer has been driving her husband's cab on the circuit for a couple of months now, Mrs Myers is actually our first female subscriber. I would like to welcome them both to ODRTS and wish them the best or luck.

## Fare increase

The latest information I have on the fare increase is that in spite of being told some weeks ago that the Home Secretary would sign an order forcing an unknown increase on us to

be implemented by the end of May, this has not yet been signed.

Due to the fact that the Joint Trade Committee is now in total disarray, negotiations between us and the Home Office are now being carried out on two fronts - the TGWU and the LTDA - with the Union pushing for a 25% increase and the LTDA trying to get the order signed implementing the second offer. It is undeniable that taking note of the Price Commission Report and totaling up the points, we are entitled to at least 25%, but some of us accepted the fact that under the Labour Government Restraint, we had received the highest amount possible. Certainly our referendum showed that we should accept the second restructured offer.

I fully understand the reasons for the TGWU refusing to accept clock and a half. I also believe that because the Concord Act that the Unions had with the Government replacing the 5% rule, it entitled them to fight on for more. There should never have been any refusal from the Home Office to add that extra 4% on when the Concord Act was first agreed. I can also understand the LTDA pushing for quick acceptance of the second offer because of the time factor, but I cannot understand or condone the degrading of the trade that is now going on with insults in print from one to the other.

This latest episode outside the London General Cab Company in Brixton Road or the picketing by the South east branch of the LTDA in protest against the refusal of the LMPCA to accept the Second offer, resulted in an open conflict between Union and LTDA members, almost to the point of fisticuffs. I disassociate this Society from that event.

If this is the type of thing that the Home Secretary was trying to avoid by signing the order over our heads, then I am tempted to say that he should do so. One thing I do feel sure of is that we can say goodbye to a further increase in December.

## Staff Wages

Having now increased the staff wages all round, we are now offering £110 per week for despatchers, so come on, jump on the bandwagon.

## Dinner and Ball

The dinner and ball was once again a huge success with food, wine and dancing until the early hours. It was lovely to meet so many drivers who I haven't seen for such a long time. I hope you all enjoyed it as much as the Board of Management did.

Peter Fennymore  
ODRTS Chairman

# The Anniversary Page

## Selfridges

**Our anniversary celebrant was a giant among pioneering retailers and died 60 years ago this month.**

**Harry Gordon Selfridge** was born in Wisconsin, USA on 11 January 1858. He started work at the age of 10 in a goods store and then a local bank. But with dreams of the wider world and armed with a letter of introduction to Mr Marshall Field, a partner in the Field, Leiter & Co department store, he set off for Chicago where he started as a stock room assistant.

Harry's hopes of commerce inspired him to visit some big US cities for marketing ideas. Full of enthusiasm and innovations on his return, he was promoted to Retail Manager in 1887 and introduced many fresh approaches to the store, including the opening of new departments selling a wider range of goods.

During 1888, Harry travelled to Europe, seeing for himself the way other retailers promoted their merchandise and he visualised Field, Leiter & Co expanding internationally. Among Harry's many radical marketing concepts was the phrase *only (x) number shopping days to Christmas* and he installed illuminated window displays to



Harry Gordon Selfridge

entice customers in.

Trouble was, his directors did not share his vision, but to keep him on board they offered him a huge salary increase and junior partnership deal. However, continuing friction with his partners at the company - by now Marshall Field & Co - led him to leave the firm and look at retailing possibilities in his own right. Casting his eyes towards London, he was advised by a banker to seek a site 'at the dead end' of Oxford Street and so, at the age of 50, Harry built the impressive, multi-storey complex that we see today, at a cost of £400,000.

The prestigious store opened its doors to the public on 15 March 1909 and was visited by King Edward VII and Queen Alexandra. During that first week, over a million customers passed through its doors. The store boasted a library, post office and a soda fountain, while in the *Quiet Room*, a sign read: "Ladies will refrain from conversation!" Yes, this was a time before women's equality and the efforts of the Suffragettes!

Steadily the business grew, allowing **Selfridge** to treat his expanding workforce well and fund his own lavish life-style, a trait that was later to be his downfall.

In 1922 a young salesman visited the store hoping to see the main buyer. Noticing that the young man was still waiting after one hour, **Selfridge** demanded that his buyer see the trouser salesman and give him an order! Decades later, that same patient trouser salesman – **Charles Clore** - would buy the **Selfridges** store outright!

The company's fortunes changed over the years and **Harry Selfridge** left the Board in 1941. He died on 8 May 1947. Today, a Blue Plaque in Fitzmaurice Place W1 recalls the London residence of this most enterprising retailer.

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## MAILSHOT

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

### Black cabs?

I recently received a date, time and place to pass my taxi, which was a week before I had booked it in at the garage who look after it for me. I phoned to cancel the appointment and the lady asked if it was a *black cab*? Now that was like a red rag to a bull, because my present one is a nice red! So when I said no, she said that is what she was told to ask because that was what was shown on her screen.

I think it is about time that all of us put a stop to the phrase *black cab* because it is both misleading and also very untruthful. However, whilst all from the Mayor down are using it, I think I will go and find a brick wall and talk to that, because I will get more sense from it!

Have you noticed in *East Enders* that when they phone for a taxi, a car with a roof sign pulls up? Now that is misleading! Has somebody in the BBC got a downer on our trade? The same goes for newspaper reporters who do not check their facts when they write about private hire drivers and call them taxi drivers or cab drivers. One of the proudest days of my life was 17 July 1957 when I was handed a Green Badge with the words *cab driver* on it. So it goes to say that nobody else, unless they have a Green or Yellow badge, should be called a *cab driver*.

What I find strange is that nobody inside our trade really cares.

Can I also add a comment re the letter in *Call Sign* from Yaqub Rafiq (April Mailshot). I think that we are very lucky that only our badge number goes onto the printer receipt. When I travel abroad, I always ask for a receipt so I can check how the fare differs from our own. The most expensive was in Aurrhuss Denmark and the cheapest in Beijing. All of them show the cab number, time the trip started and ended, the distance and in some cases waiting time ie stopping at traffic lights.

From a very grumpy 70 year old (but young at heart)...

**Stanley Roth (Y53)**

**Stanley, you are wrong when you say nobody cares. I have gone on about it for years, Stuart Pessok, Editor of TAXI has gone on about it for years, the only difference being that Stuart still believes in it, whereas the last time I wrote about it (April 2006), I quoted a DaC driver who had changed his mind on the expression "black cabs" after a conversation with his passenger, who had come out of JPM. It also changed my view – albeit only slightly. The article read:**

*"Why," the passenger asked, "does the most famous and respected taxi business in the*

*world throw away its biggest advantage?" He went on to explain to the DaC driver that the expression "black cabs" can and only does apply to London Taxis and that so far as marketing was concerned, you could not put a value on it. "Black cabs," he went on, "are known all over the world as referring to London Taxis and you lot want to get rid of it! You must be mad! Look how many tourists coming to London are advised to use black cabs only?"*

*He also went on to query why we were using different colour taxis when black is the traditional colour?*

**I still agree with you (and Stuart), but as much as it irritates me to admit it, I also think the passenger has a valid point as well. We have become 'black cabs' – like it or not. If anyone wants to add to the debate, feel free to write in ...Ed**

### To Cabtivate or not to Cabtivate – ask the Chairman!

Since reading the article in *Call Sign* about Cabtivate last year, I was interested to know more. I made further enquiries as I was about to buy a new taxi around October / November 2006 and the income generated from Cabtivate would go some way towards the taxi repayments. On the surface, it seemed to be a much better financial deal than Cabvision.

I did quite a bit of research, including speaking several times with Cabtivate's MD, Mr Greenhalgh at his office in Glasgow. He was helpful in answering all of my queries, however, I still had a nagging feeling that all was not well. Having to pay approximately £4,000 to lease the equipment did not sit happily in my mind - or in my wallet! Knowing that the cab trade is quite insular, I phoned Brian Rice and asked if he knew anything about Cabtivate. Brian said he would make enquiries. At the same time, news of the imminent release of the TX4 was filling the trade press, stating that it would have headrests on the centre partition and confirming what I had seen on a previous *Call Sign* / Virgin Trains sponsored trip to the LTI factory in Coventry last year (thank you Alan Fisher).

Considering that the Cabtivate system was located on the centre partition behind the driver's head, it seemed to me to limit the future success of the company. On pointing this out to Mr Greenhalgh, he pooh-poohed my deduction. Yet another alarm bell rang for me.

The next day, Brian Rice called me as promised. After speaking with Brian, I was left in no doubt not to continue with Cabtivate. Thanks to Brian's speedy and informative response, I am now £4,000 better off.

**Malcolm Levan (F24)**

**I passed your letter on to Brian Rice. He mentioned something about half of**



**£4000 but possibly forgot to tell you! ...Ed**

### PCO, SGS and Taxi licensing...

Further to your notices in *Call Sign* regarding taxi vehicle licensing, which have been very helpful, here is my experience of the whole fiasco over the past few weeks - and I'm still waiting for an appointment. Below is a copy of the letter I sent to TfL for the PCO but which has yet to be acknowledged...

**Philip Smith (G51)**

**Phil's letter to TfL is below. He doesn't appear to have been the only DaC driver to have had problems with the changeover – especially as the PCO cocked up with the actual changeover dates. SGS finally got Phil's details on 4 April, but the earliest appointment he could get was 20 April in Hanworth! Considering he lives in Bexleyheath and that would be almost one month after his plate had expired, not too satisfactory. Deptford wouldn't have been bad, but that failed to open on time. Phil was given the impression that slots would be made available for drivers who could not get an appointment at the PCO in March, but that it just didn't happen. The PCO now say everything is running well ...Ed**

### Phil Smith's letter to the PCO/TfL

*Dear Sir,*

I'm writing to let you know of the saga I've been having trying to get an appointment for the licensing of my cab. My plate ran out on 29 March so I went to my garage to book the cab in for its overhaul. KPM told me that I should have received a letter from SGS with an appointment and to come back when I received said letter. For one reason or another I don't pick up the trade papers as I work nights and do a lot of radio work. So I was not up to speed on the latest changes, as I had not received any letters from SGS. I went back to KPM a week later and this time I was told go to the PCO. This I duly did and found out there were no appointments to be had. The man at the appointments window told me that plating stopped on 23 March, but they had extended it by a day, that there are 150 drivers on the waiting list waiting for a cancellation and that I will have no chance of getting an appointment! He suggested I phone SGS.

The next morning I phoned SGS and they

## MAILSHOT

## Mailshot continued from page 37

informed me that they don't take over until 2 April and at that time the PCO would have sent over my details. To be fair to them, they were helpful and gave me the number of the Service Delivery contact at the PCO. I phoned them and after a short wait of 3 hours, someone finally answered the phone! I talked to a lady and explained my situation; she questioned what could she do as SGS were taking over in April? I phoned SGS again but still couldn't book, as they didn't have my details. I phoned the lady at the PCO again pleading with her for some advice as to what I should do? She took my home and mobile numbers and promised that someone would contact me. Two weeks later and a week before my plate expires, no one has called from the PCO with the advice I need. I'm fuming now and called the PCO again, this time to complain. I want to talk to Dave Stock, the man with the funny title of Head of Service Delivery! WHAT SERVICE! I'm told that as he's leaving at the end of the month, he won't be taking any calls. Angry as I am now, the word *charming* springs to mind!

So here I am; no appointment and no help or advice from the PCO. My only option is to book a mechanical with KPM and present the cab at my nearest testing station myself, which would be Deptford! My plate runs out on Thursday 29 and I'll work it till then, book my mechanical in with KPM for Monday 2 April and phone SGS for an appointment. But KPM tell me they don't do overhauls on a Monday! I have to bring the cab in on Thursday. Peed off big time now, I booked my cab in with another garage for 2 April.

Then on 2 April, I phone SGS to make my appointment **but I can't, as the PCO haven't sent my details over!** I'm amazed to put it mildly! SGS promise me that the PCO will send my details over later that day and to phone the next day (3 April) and I can finally make my appointment. With this news, I drove to Bethnal Green and dropped my cab off at the garage. I hear the news that my nearest testing station - Deptford - isn't even open yet! I go round the corner to pay and change my meter like you do, **but I can't as I now need a log book to do that!** The meter people tell me I should have had an information pack from the PCO telling me all this! Er, sorry, but no pack dropped through my letterbox. So that's another job I can't do. Anyway, I dropped the cab off at the garage and made my way home.

**Then 3 April and I phoned SGS to finally make my appointment and the PCO still haven't sent my details over!**

Well, to sum up this sorry saga, I have a few questions I'd liked answered. Firstly, what 3-year old or ex-bus driver dreamed

up this amazing new service that we pay through the nose for? Why couldn't commonsense break out at TfL? We could have had a smooth transition if the PCO kept its doors open for plating for the first two weeks of April.

Why tell me that drivers were issued with a temporary extension to their plate if they couldn't find an appointment? I now know the reason why... they don't care!

Looking, as I did to find ways to contact TfL to complain and get details from either them or the PCO is a nightmare! There are no email addresses or contact telephone numbers. But if a member of the public wants to complain against a taxi driver, then it's as easy as pie!

Licensing is a good thing as it protects the public, but the licensing authority is duty bound to give a service to the licensee! In my case, I've been pushed from pillar to post by a totally shambolic PCO who neither provide nor care. This handover was a total disgrace. Ed Thompson should hang his head in shame or resign. Its high time we had some taxi drivers on TfL who know and understand the workings of the cab trade, ex-bus drivers just don't cut the mustard in my book.

**P. Smith**

**Call Sign emailed the PCO on Philip's behalf with a copy of the above letter and asking for someone to explain the situation. They phoned him the following day telling him that they would be issuing temporary plates for all drivers affected by the situation and which would be valid for up to 50 days. We also had a response from Transport for London, which suggests that they didn't receive Phil's letter until Call Sign resent it. Their letter is reproduced below ...Ed**

## Response from TfL re Phil Smith:

*The Public Carriage Office held extra licensing sessions in the evenings and on Saturdays throughout March and drivers whose licenses expired during that period were given priority for appointments. Over 1,860 licensing sessions were available (roughly the same number as would be available any other month), exceeding the number of licenses expiring in March, and 1,740 licenses were renewed. These licensing arrangements were well publicised, with two PCO notices published - one in January and one in February - advising drivers what they needed to do. We recognise that this is a period of transition and where drivers have had genuine problems, we are happy to help. The PCO has offered to issue a temporary licence plate specifically to those vehicles where the licence expired between 1 and 31 March 2007 and the PCO had been unable to process the renewal application prior to the transfer of the service to SGS. These temporary plates allow drivers to continue to work as normal until such time as a full licensing*



*inspection can be arranged. Anyone requiring a temporary plate should contact the PCO contract management team on 020 7126 1638.*

*We did contact Mr Smith as soon as we received his letter and we understand that he has now made arrangements for a temporary licence plate to be issued.*

## Warning on parking

I recently received a £100 PCN whilst being parked on the north side of Finsbury Square (the City Road side) at 3.30 in the afternoon. I was waiting for my passenger and although there is a marked out bus stop that takes up much room, I was careful not to park in it. After 30 minutes I was scrubbed off. The PCN gives several possible reasons as to why you feel you had to stop there, one of which is being "on hire." Even then there is no guarantee that my appeal will be accepted, as the CCTV will not catch sight of the passenger due to the scrub. So be careful out there. Perhaps I am being paranoid, but remember, just because you are paranoid doesn't mean they aren't out to get you!  
**Sid Nathan (K88)**  
**Well I think they're after you, Sid! ...Ed**

## Receipts and badge numbers

Thank you for publishing and responding to my letter re badge numbers on printed receipts (April Call Sign). In your response you said: "Whilst I have not heard of any complaints brought in the way you suggest..." May I refer you to the letter written by a certain Richard Potter in the December 2005 edition of Call Sign.

There is no PCO requirement for badge numbers to be on any receipts.

Why should I give a hand written receipt to a 'legal' when we have been ordered to pay for and install receipt printers? I and other drivers I have spoken to object to this information being on DaC printed receipts. It is unfortunate that the leading radio circuit is unwittingly assisting those that would make false, malicious, complaints against DaC drivers. I would like to ask the BoM to immediately instruct the IT Dept to re-programme the software so that badge numbers are not shown on printed receipts. Instead, why not print the driver's call sign on the receipt?

**Yaqub Rafiq (O28)**

**Brian Rice replies: I have never ever had a false accusation regarding receipts levelled at one of my members! Why are you so nervous regarding members of the public being aware of your badge number? After all, you have to wear it whilst you are working! You say you**



## MAILSHOT

## Mailshot continued from page 38

have been "ordered to pay for and install receipt printers." That is nonsense as DaC installs your printer as part of the equipment we supply to you for your monthly subscription. I also see that you have 'dug out' a letter from Richard Potter in 2005 to emphasise your point and my reply to Richard then is the same as it is to you now - there has never been a problem! However, I must congratulate you on your detective capabilities as Richard penned that letter in 2005 and I notice that you have been with us for nine months - some time after the original letter was written. In conclusion, I have every faith in my members and the BoM do not have any intention of changing the way our receipts are produced. We will not endeavour to rectify a problem that does not exist!

## House of Commons account

It was disappointing to hear that we've lost the House of Commons account. We've given them a good service over the years. Nothing's perfect and there has been the odd glitch, but overall we can be proud of the way the account was serviced. But what was particularly galling was the way in which it was lost. Having tendered with a modest increase to reflect the tariff increase, we had the rug pulled out from under us with Mountview undercutting our price by a reported 50p per mile. How on earth can this be good for the trade? Whilst acknowledging that we work in a competitive market, how do Mountview expect to cover the work at £2.80 per mile on tariff 3? It remains to be seen how they manage it, but what's the betting that we see cars in Old Palace Yard doing OUR work? Surely the time has come for the Licensed Taxi circuits to come to a consensus on price. This way we can be judged on the service we provide. If our service levels drop and we subsequently lose accounts, so be it, that will be down to us. Until such consensus, our clients will continue to play one off against the other with the only loser being the driver. BoMs, CoMs, Sales Executives - call them what you will - do not see a reduction in their salaries or call-in rates because they are offering cut price deals, the only ones who lose are the life-bloods of the circuits, the drivers, who continue to see their operating costs rise but are expected to work for less.

But maybe, just maybe, if the circuits can get their act together we can stop this ridiculous policy of maintaining the services levels of minicabs by covering the work they can't. Let them struggle and when their customers complain then we can offer our services and tell them what they tell their customers - that service comes at a price. It's bad enough

being shafted by the Licensing Authority who seem hell bent on putting more and more obstacles in our way, but to see our own who think we can work for peanuts is particularly disappointing.

**Paul Jenner (L19)**

**Brian Rice replies: I think you know my sentiments regarding the topics you have raised, Paul, that's why we didn't go in with cheap prices. There is also a problem with getting all the circuits to agree - it's called a cartel and is totally illegal. Having said that, I couldn't possibly see the other two circuits agreeing even if it were legal, because as you know, they both operate with cars!**

## Ranking in E14

I am new to the circuit and would appreciate some advice on Canary Wharf rank (E14C). I was recently ordered to book off from this rank as I was not physically on it even though I was second cab from point. Am I on the rank when I put on to the rear part or do I have to wait until I reach the front part, which holds four cabs before I book in? If it is the latter this does not make sense for the following reason. Suppose there are no Dial-a-Cab taxis on the front part and a job is sent out. Who will it go to? Will it go to cabs that are somewhere else in E14 or even farther away? This cannot be good for the customer or for our reputation if they are in a hurry and see DaC cabs on the rear part of the rank, but none of them are for him. Could you please advise me of the rules regarding this rank or indeed any others where this problem could arise. I suspect the driver in front of me who should have been number one thought I was trying to jump the queue and I wasn't.

**Tom Reynolds (O85)**

**Tom, welcome to DaC and Call Sign. The answer to your question is that both portions of the rank on the left side of the roadway are classified as E14C. Cabs parked on the right (where it says no cabs to wait) cannot book in! It sounds as if you booked in too quickly and were asked to book off to allow the cab in front to get that position ...Ed**

## Last year ... this year... next year?

In last month's *Call Sign*, the Chairman wrote that in the first five months of the current financial year, our turnover has increased by £3.4million - 19% up on the same period last year. However, in the same issue and in reply to a letter I wrote to Mailshot, the Chairman claimed that the increase in turnover going to our members this year through Concierge will be in excess of £11.4million. This would mean £6.3million more, an increase of well over 100%. These figures seem to indicate that Concierge is being expanded at the expense of all other business.



**Brian Cohen (C81)**

**Brian, I'm not sure if your letter is a wind-up, but surely you realised that the response Brian Rice gave you last month was totally made with his tongue firmly in his cheek! You asked him how much of his estimated Concierge increase to £15 - 20million this year would go to the drivers in taxi work? His comment referring to crystal balls as being the latest in technology was supposed to give you a hint that it was impossible to give an answer as the clients hadn't yet phoned! Surely his answer of £11,426,394.20p would have given a further clue! However, whatever it is, are you complaining that Concierge is giving us too much work? ...Ed**

## CHANGE OF TAXI OWNERSHIP

It is now possible to transfer a licensed taxi to a new owner without having to surrender the existing licence plate or present the vehicle for a further inspection. In order to do this, the PCO will require a declaration from both seller and buyer to confirm that the necessary formalities have been completed regarding insurance, notification of change of owner to the DVLA and notification of change of owner to the taximeter installation provider.

**Depending on the date of licensing, the licensee will be required to follow the procedure described below to enable the licence to be transferred:**

Licensing after 2 April 2007: The new paper licence issued to the licensee at the point of inspection includes on the reverse, clear instructions about what to do when changing the ownership of a licensed taxi. The seller and buyer are required to complete the relevant declaration, sign and date it and then return the completed declaration to the PCO Taxi Contract Management Team at the PCO.

Licensing due before 2 April 2007: As the 'old style' paper licence does not make provision for the transfer of a licensed taxi, the current licensee should contact the PCO Taxi Contract Management Team on 0845 602 7000 and ask to be provided with an application for change of ownership form. The seller and buyer are required to complete the relevant declaration, sign and date the form and return it to the PCO Taxi Contract Management Team.

On receipt of the completed declaration, the PCO will issue a replacement paper licence in the name of the new owner.

Where the new owner is neither a licensed taxi driver nor existing PCO approved proprietor, the PCO will require the new owner to complete the necessary CRB disclosure form so that a decision can be made on the new owner being a 'fit and proper' person to own a licensed taxi. This process will not, however, delay the issue of a replacement licence.

If you are a vehicle owner who might be directly affected or if you require further information about this Notice, you can contact the PCO on the following contact numbers:

PCO Taxi Contract Management Team 0845 602 7000  
Ray Biggs, Senior Project and Contracts Manager 020 7126 1924

Luke Giles, Project Support Manager 020 7126 1861

# The new TX4

## comes with over 1 million km on the clock...

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John Paton Ltd - Edinburgh tel: 0131 558 8005  
Mann & Overton - Birmingham & West tel: 0121 322 0700  
Smith & Humphrey Ltd - East Sussex tel: 01424 210 746

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