

September 2008



Call Sign

From the home of Dial-a-Cab International

Inside this issue...

Parliament account comes home!

DaC driver wins PCN appeal thanks to PACE...

Driver's daughter Channel swim success...

DaC driver saves children's lives following car smash...

Are Camden council ripping us off?

Call Sign's women correspondents in catfight!

Fancy sailing the Adriatic?

Did Ken Livingstone obstruct traffic deliberately?



***DaC's Gerry Rosen
cycles in the Tour
de France!***





NASH'S NUMBERS

By Alan Nash (A95)

Prompted by an email from Ray Sorene (A53) that Air New Zealand and United now use Heathrow T1, I noted I haven't updated you with Heathrow departure terminals since October 2006.

However BA are moving more flights to T5 soon, so this month I'm listing BA terminals only and next month will be the other terminals. It would be so much easier if tickets were issued with the terminal numbers on them ...

All BA flight depart Terminal 5 except those listed below. If shown "until" then after that date they will be T5...

Abu Dhabi	T4 until 16/09/08	Damascus	T1	Mexico City	T4 until 16/09/08
Accra	T4 until 16/09/08	Dar es Salaam	T4 until 16/09/08	Montreal - Dorval	T4 until 21/10/08
Addis Ababa	T1	Delhi	T4 until 21/10/08	Mumbai (Bombay)	T4 until 16/09/08
Aleppo	T1	Dhaka	T4 until 21/10/08	Muscat	T4 until 16/09/08
Almaty	T1	Doha	T4 until 16/09/08	Nairobi	T4 until 16/09/08
Amman	T1	Dubai	T4 until 21/10/08	Nassau	T4 until 16/09/08
Ankara	T1	Dublin	T1	New York (Newark)	T4 until 16/09/08
Bahrain	T4 until 16/09/08	Dulles (Washington)	T4 until 16/09/08	Newark (New York)	T4 until 16/09/08
Baltimore	T4 until 16/09/08	Entebbe	T4 until 16/09/08	Nice	T1
Bangkok	T4	Freetown	T1	Philadelphia	T4 until 16/09/08
Barcelona	T1	Grand Cayman	T4 until 16/09/08	Providenciales	T4 until 16/09/08
Beirut	T1	Guarulhos	T4 until 16/09/08	Rio de Janeiro	T4 until 16/09/08
Belfast	T1	Helsinki	T1	Santiago	T2
Bilbao	T2	Houston	T4 until 16/09/08	Sao Paulo	T4 until 16/09/08
Bishkek	T1	Islamabad	T4 until 21/10/08	Seattle	T4 until 21/10/08
Bombay (Mumbai)	T4 until 16/09/08	Khartoum	T1	Shanghai	T4 until 21/10/08
Boston	T4 until 21/10/08	Kolkata (Calcutta)	T4 until 21/10/08	Singapore	T4
Buenos Aires	T4 until 16/09/08	Kuwait	T4 until 16/09/08	Sydney	T4
Calcutta (Kolkata)	T4 until 21/10/08	Lisbon	T1	Tbilisi	T1
Calgary	T4 until 21/10/08	Luanda	T4 until 16/09/08	Tehran	T1
Chennai (Madras)	T4 until 21/10/08	Lusaka	T4 until 16/09/08	Tel Aviv	T4 until 16/09/08
Chicago	T4 until 16/09/08	Madras (Chennai)	T4 until 21/10/08	Toronto	T4 until 16/09/08
Cork	T1	Madrid	T1	Washington - Dulles	T4 until 16/09/08
Dakar	T1	Mauritius	T4 until 16/09/08	Yerevan	T1
Dallas/Fort Worth	T4 until 16/09/08	Melbourne	T4		

NB Air New Zealand and United now using T1.

What's On at O2, ExCel, Earls Court and Olympia

Events at ExCel		From	To	Events at O2		Date
Paul McKenna's I Can Make You Thin	P	13/09/2008	13/09/2008	Kool & the Gang	C	05/09/2008
Real Man Cycling Challenge	P	14/09/2008	14/09/2008	GB Basketball	S	06/09/2008
No Limits	PT	17/09/2008	18/09/2008	Gary Numan	B	07/09/2008
London Homebuilding & Renovating	P	19/09/2008	21/09/2008	Stevie Wonder	B	11/09/2008
The Property Investor Show	P	19/09/2008	21/09/2008	Stevie Wonder	B	12/09/2008
IX Investor 08 - Focus on Equities	P	26/09/2008	26/09/2008	Nickelback	B	19/09/2008
Primary Care Live	T	30/09/2008	01/10/2008	Howard Jones	B	20/09/2008
Post-Expo 2008	T	30/09/2008	02/10/2008	Stevie Wonder	B	30/09/2008
Courier and Parcel Logistics Expo	T	30/09/2008	02/10/2008	Stevie Wonder	B	01/10/2008

Events at Earls Court & Olympia	Hall		From	To
Doctor Who Exhibition	Museum Hall, Earls Court	C	20/03/2008	20/09/2008
International Jewellery London 2008	Earls Court 2	T	31/08/2008	03/09/2008
Turkish Fashion Fabric Exhibition	Brompton Hall, Earls Court	T	02/09/2008	03/09/2008
London Landlords' Day 2008	Olympia Conf. Cntr	C	04/09/2008	04/09/2008
Subpostmaster & CTN World 2008	Olympia National Hall	T	06/09/2008	07/09/2008
Speciality & Fine Food Fair 08	Olympia Grand Hall	T	07/09/2008	09/09/2008
LondonEdge & LondonCentral Autumn 08	Olympia Two, Level One	T	07/09/2008	09/09/2008
PLASA 08	Earls Court 1 & 2	T	07/09/2008	10/09/2008
World Internet Summit 08	Olympia Conf. Cntr	C	11/09/2008	14/09/2008
French Property 2008	Olympia Two	C	12/09/2008	14/09/2008
Top Drawer Autumn 2008	Olympia Grand & Nat. Halls	T	14/09/2008	16/09/2008
100% Light/Design/Detail 08	Earls Court 1 & 2	T	18/09/2008	21/09/2008
7th MedTech Investing Europe Conference	Olympia Conf. Cntr	T	18/09/2008	19/09/2008
AD:TECH 08	Olympia National Hall	T	24/09/2008	25/09/2008
Project Challenge 08	Olympia Two	T	24/09/2008	25/09/2008
Telecoms 08	Olympia Two	T	24/09/2008	25/09/2008
Coinex 2008	Earls Court Conf. Cntr	C	26/09/2008	27/09/2008
National Wedding Show (Autumn) 08	Earls Court Two	C	26/09/2008	28/09/2008
Home Discount Show 08	Earls Court One	C	26/09/2008	28/09/2008
Olympia Musicmania	Olympia Two	C	27/09/2008	27/09/2008
Law Autumn 08	Olympia Conf. Cntr	C	30/09/2008	01/10/2008

Key - P=Public - T=Trade - C=Consumer- S=Sport- B=Concert

Don't forget to sign up for the "Nash's Numbers Useful Information Document" just email alan@nashsnumbers.co.uk with your name, email address, call sign, badge no. & contact no., and please put UID as the subject. Visit www.nashsnumbers.co.uk for all back issues plus more.

from the editor's desk

Return of the dark days?

We now know of Mayor Boris Johnson's Consultation document to help keep his promise made in the February 2008 issue of **Call Sign** when he categorically stated: *"I will scrap the midyear inspections. They add to the cost of the licence and are an unnecessary burden on cab drivers."*

This magazine proudly stated in our May issue that we had the best maintained vehicles on the road and that the only people who would benefit from a half-yearly check would be *Société Générale de Surveillance* - ie SGS. But we have also wondered in print whether, if the half-yearly check is finally got rid of, the PCO would play a bigger role than the one they were currently doing at the time?

Well, our exclusive story in the last issue on the PCO at Buckingham Palace where the marshal felt that their presence was having a detrimental effect on the work pattern, must have given a clue. Add to that the number of times they now show up at the O2 arena, ExCel, Heathrow, railway termini and of course in London's streets - and that WITH the mid-year check still with us - it seems possible that there could be a return to the dark days of 'them and us' when you could get a stop note for just displaying an AA Relay sticker. Or perhaps like the time in my early editing career when I criticised the PCO for something, then on the day following publication, I received a hand-written stop note through my door for having an "under-inflated tyre."

Inside this issue are details of the Consultation exercise regarding the mid-year check. I have given my view beneath the article concerned. All I will say here is that the choice is yours. If you are happy to have a mid-year check, then fine. If you are against it, as most drivers seem to be, then be part of the consultation by either going online to read it or picking up a copy from the PCO and then responding to it. What you mustn't do is to leave it to someone else. If you feel that the mid-year check is unfair, then say so and why. If you think it's wonderful - as many garage proprietors unsurprisingly seem to - then you must say that. But don't complain afterwards if you don't like the result, but didn't take part yourself.

This issue of **Call Sign** also has another press release from the PCO concerning the new *Transport for London Act (2008)* that we wrote about in the August issue. That already had a PCO explanation as to what *section 16* of the act meant. It read:

Section 16 amends section 2 of the London Hackney Carriages Act 1853 to allow TfL to serve an unfit notice on the driver as well as the proprietor of a cab found to be unfit preventing the cab being used until it is repaired. An unfit notice means that, with immediate effect, the vehicle cannot be used for hire and reward purposes until the notice is cleared. If the vehicle is used in contravention of the notice, then the vehicle licence can be suspended.

Now we have been sent a list of all the things that classify an "unfit cab." Most are justifiably included, but I am concerned at what wasn't in the press release - a small item on the form you will receive if your cab is deemed as being unfit for use. Subsection 4



adds that the inspection could go beyond the items the cab was initially reported for. Or in other words, you could well face another overhaul if your road tax is missing.

As an *epilogue* to the above, I've noticed at times that there is often a difference in tone between PCO / TfL press releases regarding the taxi trade as against those aimed at the private hire side (which **Call Sign** does not publish as we have no PH drivers here). One example - almost humorous - was regarding signage on private hire vehicles and why the roundel was kept - apparently a larger sign might have upset those with chauffeur driven limousines. Well gee whiz and whoopee-doo, we don't want to upset them, do we?

I think it's important to add that there are also some very nice people at the PCO who have helped **Call Sign** whenever we have asked with a needed piece of info. But a return to the dark days? We're about to find out...

Merc v TX4?

My views on the new cab are now well known. Board member Allen Togwell in this issue refers to it as looking like a van, while driver Ronnie Marlow likes it, but thinks it resembles a minicab. They are both right, but the most important aspect is that it doesn't look like a taxi. All those trade writers who keep talking about the *"bloody great big for hire sign"* are living in a dream world - especially as the *TAXI* flash along the side isn't compulsory. And even if it was, put 2 Mercs and 3 PH vehicles behind each other parked on a Friday night in Oxford Street and the average punter wouldn't know one from another because they all look the same. Does anyone really believe that prospective passengers who are about to be touted will firstly go round to see if there is a *"bloody great big for hire sign"* on the front? I don't think so. And that is why I think this is the most serious problem we have ever faced. It's also the reason why people such as Michael Dufner and Tommy McGowan in Atlantic City have just bought a batch of second hand London taxis from LTI in Coventry. Their London Taxi Limousine company knows what a taxi is and what it isn't - and they live in America!

When on 19 June 1961, London saw a fleet of Renault Dauphines appear to become the first minicabs, passengers at least knew a minicab from a taxi. With the Merc, the distinction

has evaporated and we are now all the same. If that's what this trade wants, then I can't stop it happening. All I know is that I'd rather retire than drive a minicab - which is why I have now ordered my new TX4. Yes, there are some things I fancy in the new Merc - but not at the price of selling my soul.

And if anyone can tell me why an experienced company like Mercedes Benz couldn't provide a built-in wheelchair ramp, but instead placed one in the boot that is so heavy, it almost guarantees the drivers won't be doing wheelchair work, I'd be interested. One person compared it to lifting out the spare tyre from a TX4. At least punctures don't happen too often...

Bob's on board...

My congratulations to LTDA General Secretary, Bob Oddy, on his appointment to Boris Johnston's first TfL board. There isn't much Bob doesn't know about the trade and the appointment can only help the Licensed taxi industry...

Doreen Freeborn

I, along with many others, was at the cremation service to Doreen - wife of Martin Freeborn (C67). It is the nature of life that people eventually die. With Doreen, I was on a list of around 75 people who were being emailed by Martin as to Doreen's updated condition and it was becoming obvious that we were looking for some kind of miracle. Well a kind of miracle happened in that she kept fighting and survived far longer than might have seemed possible at one time. But in the end, the cancer became too strong and she succumbed quietly and peacefully - but not before organising her own funeral, selecting the music to be played and reminding Martin to organise a *Wake* at the finish!

Strangely, I suppose at one time Doreen and I were on opposite sides of the fence when she worked at 17 Curzon Street with pop pirate Radio London, whilst I was shifting boxes around the corner at 6 Chesterfield Gardens with Radio Caroline - both mortal enemies! But on Friday 8 August, like most people at Hendon Crematorium, I was proud to say that I knew Doreen Freeborn, however briefly that was.

As Martin said afterwards: "I did everything with a good heart; after all I paid my 12/6p for the licence, for richer or poorer, in sickness and in health, till death do us part. And it was hard, but my love for her made it all worthwhile. Oh I shall miss her, as you will."

Yes, we will...

Last word...

Not too long ago, we were paying close to 134p a litre for diesel. One of the reasons - or so we were told - was the strength of the pound against the dollar. Well, our pound has slipped over 20 cents from its high of over \$2. Who wants a bet that the fuel companies will find another reason not to cut prices because of the pound's weakness?

Alan Fisher
callsignmag@aol.com

Reflections Of The Chairman

August again!

It's that time of the year again when our account work becomes extraordinarily quiet and this year is certainly no exception. However, as we all know, it's the same every August even though each August seems to be even quieter than the previous one - well it always appears that way.

Business is certainly very quiet on the account side, but we must remember that we are not the only ones noticing the difference. Everyone, no matter what business they are in, notices a downturn in August - the holiday season - so we are not alone.

Of course the 'credit crunch' has exacerbated the situation, especially with many of the financial institutions making redundancies, which in turn means they have less staff to ride in our vehicles.

As most of you are probably aware, DaC's financial year finishes - or by the time you read this finished - on 31 August. We would have had a fairly good year, in fact exceptional in comparison with our competitors, but I must say with all the 'doom and gloom' around and the media talking the economy down, I have noticed a downturn in our figures from May this year. At present, it is not any worse than we experienced in 2002/3 and we came through that unscathed and then experienced a couple of years of unprecedented growth, so perhaps things are not quite as bad as the pundits would have us believe - let's hope not.

Parliament account comes back to DaC

On a more optimistic note, I am very pleased to inform you that we have won back the House of Commons and Lords. Their accounts have been opened, but as you probably know they are in recess until October. New rates have been negotiated with the 'House' and I know you will be delighted with what has been achieved on your behalf regarding revised pricing. So it goes without saying that you should do your utmost to supply the client with the type of service they require and which we are renowned for!

TfL board

It has just been announced that a representative from the Licensed Taxi Industry will be given a place on the board of TfL. This is a long overdue appointment and an issue that I had previously raised with former Mayor, Ken Livingstone, only to be promised 'jam tomorrow'!

However, it would appear that our new Mayor, Boris Johnson, has decided to listen to the trade and appoint one of our own to the TfL board. Bob Oddy, General Secretary of the LTDA, will represent us and I am sure he will do a very good job. Consequently, I would like to congratulate Bob on his appointment and will look forward to reading his articles in *Taxi* regarding the progress that is being made by the TfL board.



100-year-old passenger...

You will read elsewhere in the magazine about a visit that was made to Dial-a-Cab House by a Westminster account holder who was celebrating her 100th birthday. She was quite an amazing lady with all her faculties completely intact!

It would appear she was in the entertainment business and I do believe her Godfather was Fred Astaire! She certainly kept us all entertained with her stories, all of which were very amusing.

So how did this all come about? Wayne Garrett, one of our members, started to pick-up Mrs Pattison on a fairly regular basis and it was he that brought this situation to our attention - what with the telegram from the Queen etc. I must say I did enjoy the time that Eileen Pattison was in the building. But more than

anything I felt a sense of pride towards Wayne, who has built up quite a rapport with our client. Not only did Wayne transport her to our building and refuse to accept any payment, but he also gave up best part of an afternoon's work to stay at the building and take Mrs Pattison home afterwards.

This type of kindness and understanding all too often goes unrecognised, so to **Wayne Garrett (D64)**, well done! Your kindness is greatly appreciated by me, all at Dial-a-Cab House and no doubt by the remainder of the membership.

Doreen Freeborn

Finally, I would like pass on my sincere condolences to one of our members, Martin Freeborn whose wife Doreen recently passed away after a long and valiant fight against cancer. I knew Doreen personally, as did my wife as we all attended many functions together. We both attended Doreen's funeral on 8 August, as indeed did many other mourners, which confirms the esteem in which she was held. Doreen had a long battle against cancer; however, it was also a battle for Martin. I can only imagine the anguish one must have to go through to watch a loved one suffer so much!

Rest in Peace Doreen and my sincere condolences to Martin, Ken and their families...

Brian Rice
Chairman Dial-a-Cab

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

LOCKHOUSE SECURITY



10% Discount on keys and locks for DaC Drivers

Free estimates No call out charge

Burglary repairs / boarding up

Additional security / security upgrades

Safes opened, repaired and serviced

On site key cutting services

Grilles and security gates

Additional vehicle locks fitted

Auto locksmiths

Transponder and chipped keys

Domestic and commercial

Locks replaced and fitted to insurance specifications (BS3621)

All types of locks, opened, repaired and replaced

Specialists in UPVC doors and windows / patio doors

24hr service

8-10 The Arcade, Farnham Road, Harold Hill

Tel: 01708 371115

CLIVE USES 'PACE' AGAINST WESTMINSTER PCN!

In April 2006, Dial-a-Cab driver **David Marks (R22)** showed *Call Sign* an article taken from monthly mag, *Motor Cycle News*. The PACE letter, as it was known, had an amazing impact on CCTV speeding offences and helped get charges dropped via a legal technicality. Several DaC drivers used it and told *Call Sign* that it had worked with UK police forces dropping cases when the technicality was used. We were later told that many police forces had blocked the loophole.

However, several DaC drivers phoned *Call Sign* to say they had used it and it was working to a degree. They had been offered a one-day course on road safety instead of getting the usual 3 points – if true, then a very satisfactory swap! Full details are in the May 2008 issue, which is available in *Call Sign's* on-line library at www.dac-callsign.co.uk.

However, we had never heard of a DaC driver using the PACE letter in regards a cctv-issued PCN for parking. But DaC driver **Clive Pamment (M09)** has changed that with an astonishing appeal against his PCN...

He received a *Penalty Charge Notice* in June while processing a credit card trip for a passenger. He admitted that the stopping place had double yellow lines, but rightly claimed that taxi drivers are allowed to pick up or set down on them.

In his representation to Westminster Council, he informed them that he was indeed the driver, but because he had not received a caution at the time – as required under the PACE code – any statement he made could not be used in any proceedings against him.

But Clive also added this astonishing piece of info:

It is illegal under the 1686/9 Bill of Rights duly passed by the Monarchy and Parliament, which has never been repealed, to demand any monies, goods or chattels from an English born person unless convicted in a court of law. And as I have incriminated myself by providing the details of your requirements, this cannot be used against me or disclosed in any proceeding whatever against myself.

The case was passed onto the Parking and Traffic Appeals Service and they gave him an adjudication date for August. But just 3 days before Clive's appeal was due to be heard, Westminster Council wrote to him once again and informed him – perhaps unsurprisingly – that they had decided to drop the matter "on technical grounds" and cancelled the PCN.

No council ever reveals what "technical grounds" refer to although all use the expression. It could mean that they know they can't win and rather than allow a precedent and let the relevant information come out, the easier option is to cancel.

Whilst we congratulate Clive on his victory and his patience, it should come as no surprise because there can't be many drivers on DaC who can trace their ancestry back to 15th Century France. Clive has traced his roots back to before the Huguenot 'revolution' in France when his family name was Pamont. In 1600, Benjamin Pamont was a church stonemason, while his son was a Thatcher and HIS son a Wheelwright and it was HE who came over to England settling in Isleham, Cambridgeshire after being forced out of France by Catholics, at a time when Protestants and Methodists were being hounded. He was later to become the Mayor of Isleham.

Clive has been on DaC since 1986, having previously been on the extinct *Black Radio Taxis*, which were taken over by *DataCab* – who in turn were taken over by *ComCab*.

Ron Yarbrough

WCHCD ROYAL INVITE TO TEA...

Each year, one of the highlights of the Royal summer calendar are the garden parties given by HM the Queen. Around 8,000 guests from all walks of life attend each party and this year **Alan Parker**, Master of *The Worshipful Company of Hackney Carriage Drivers*, together with his wife **Christine**, were invited to attend one of the parties.

Alan told *Call Sign*: "Complete with morning coat and green X label in the bottom left hand corner of my taxi wind-screen, I was ushered onto the Bridle Path in Constitutional Hill by a policeman. Just dropping off, sir, he asked? No, going in for tea, I replied!

"What an afternoon we enjoyed. The sun shone as the bands played. Then Her Majesty came out and joined us for tea on the lawn. Finger sandwiches, delicious little cakes together with iced drinks and then later ice cream was served. This was a real piece of English tradition – long may our country remain the world leader in yet another field of excellence... afternoon tea! And there is no better venue than Buckingham Palace!

"Being Master has enabled me to experience a series of events normally out of reach to most; but afternoon tea at the Queen's request has to be one of the highlights. Thank you, Your Majesty."



Alan and Christine at the Palace

TAXI MORTGAGES ESPECIALLY FOR LICENSED TAXI DRIVERS

RECOGNISING THE SPECIAL NEEDS OF
LICENSED TAXI DRIVERS AND IN CONJUNCTION
WITH MAJOR UK BANKS WE HAVE ACCESS
TO EXCLUSIVE MORTGAGE SCHEMES INCLUDING:

- No proof of income up to 95% LTV
- Recently Qualified
- Fixed rates and cashback available

To find out more about these schemes and other services I can offer,
please call Peter Griffin of Griffin Financial Consultancy on

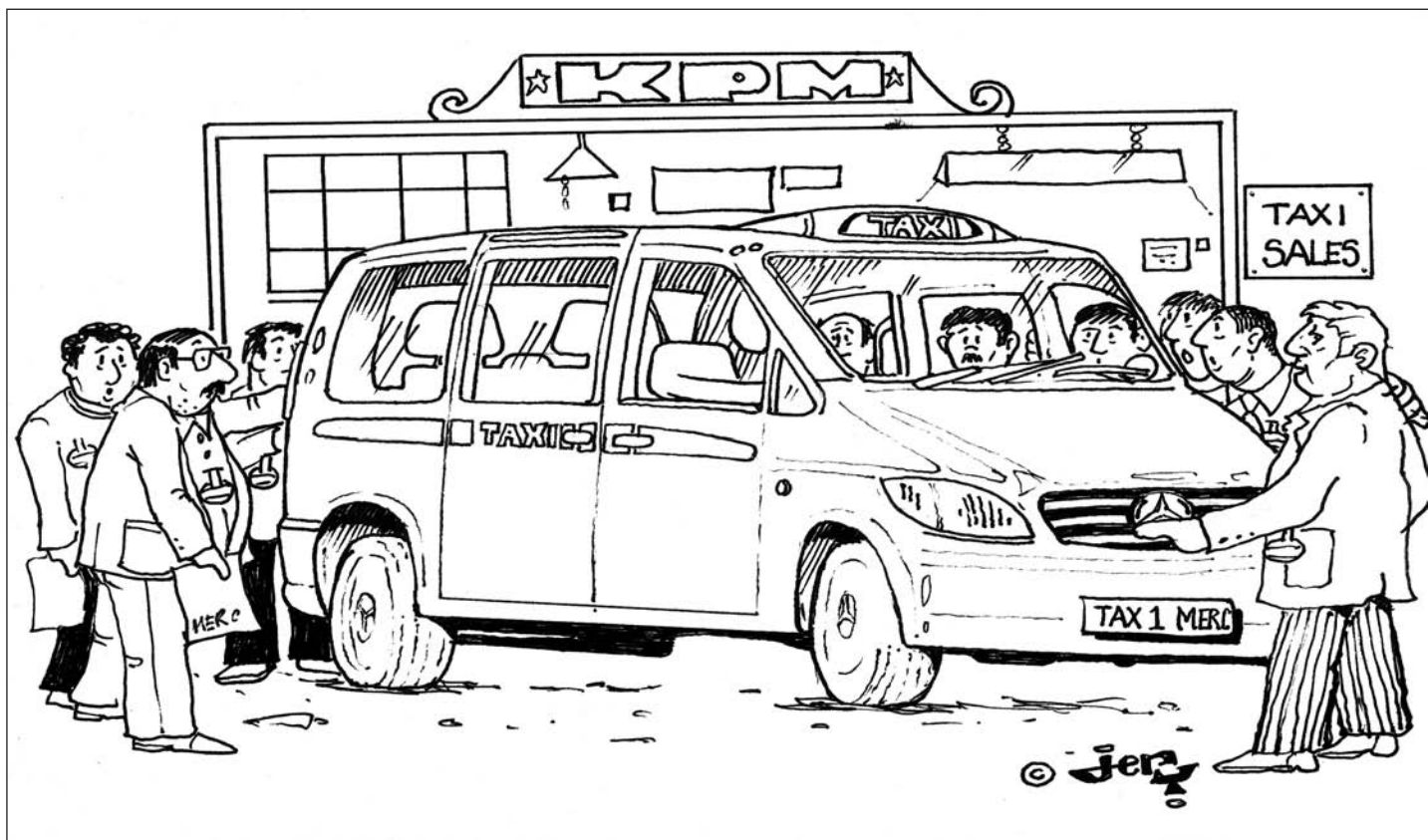
01322 293600/07702 302863 (mobile)

peter@griffinmortgages.com

Peter Griffin, Mortgage Adviser, 1 Market Street, Dartford, DA1 1EY
YOUR HOME MAY BE REPOSSESSED IF YOU DO NOT KEEP UP REPAYMENTS ON YOUR MORTGAGE

Griffin Financial Consultancy is an Approved Representative of Openwork Ltd. Openwork Ltd. offer insurance and investment advice on products from a limited number of product providers and advice on mortgages representative of the whole of the market.

Jery's World



"Naaah! Course it's not a minicab. It says TAXI on top dunnit...!"

Taxi Drivers and Healthy Eating

Try a healthy snack on Call Sign

Busy taxi drivers are living on unhealthy snacks of crisps and chocolate bars because they haven't got time to cook a wholesome meal, according to the light-hearted survey carried out by *Fridge Raiders* chicken bites.

According to the survey, over a third of the cab drivers questioned said they regularly swap breakfast for a snack, with nearly one in four starting their day with a packet of crisps! The research also found that the average cabbie gets through three snacks a day, with a whopping 53% most likely to snack on crisps, 30% on chocolate or sweets – but just 8% on fruit.

Seventy-seven per cent of cab drivers have even gone a whole day without eating a single meal, surviving on bars of chocolate and biscuits instead, whilst 84% of those questioned said they snack instead of eating a proper meal because they can't be bothered to cook.

Nutritionist Fiona Hunter says: "It's extremely worrying to find that so many people are relying on a diet of crisps and chocolate to get them through the day. Sugary and high fat snacks are meant to be treats, to be enjoyed alongside healthy, balanced meals but it seems many busy Brits are choosing these foods because they haven't got time to cook a proper meal."

"Most nutritionists agree that the best way to balance blood sugar levels is to eat three small meals, plus a couple of healthy snacks such as fruit, yoghurt, meat or cheese in between."

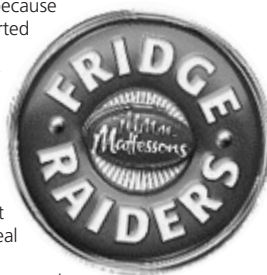
"If you are going to snack, it's important to snack sensibly and choose foods that contribute vitamins and minerals to the diet rather than just calories."

Fridge Raiders chicken bites are pieces of 100% chicken breast packed full of protein and low in fat. The perfect meaty snack, *Fridge Raiders* are great to grab if you are peckish and on the go. They are also now available in Sweet Chilli and Southern Fried flavours. The bite-sized snack is also available in Chinese Spare Rib, Roast and Tikka flavours.

Not only are *Fridge Raiders* delicious, but they are also a healthier alternative to other savoury snacks. They are low calorie (only 125kcal calories per pack), low in carbohydrates and contain less than 10% fat. They are available in a convenient 65g snack-sized pack and are an ideal snacking alternative to crisps or as an accompaniment to a sandwich.

Priced from 99p, *Fridge Raiders* are available in all major supermarkets and convenience stores.

Call Sign has 50 x £2 vouchers to try out any *Mattesons* products including *Fridge Raiders*. First come first served to Driver's reception. Only one voucher per driver...



SUPERIOR 5 BEDROOM EXECUTIVE VILLA IN ORLANDO, FLORIDA FOR RENT

3 master bedrooms, 2 twin bedrooms,

3 bathrooms (sleeps 10/12)

30ft private swimming pool and Jacuzzi

Fully equipped kitchen

Cable TV in every room

Just off the I-4 - 15 mins from Disney

Close to local shops and golf courses

From £500 per week (late deals available)

For further details and availability go to
www.dovevillas.co.uk

Or contact Derek Donnelly (V47 on 07951 130 154.

Prices are for the villa per week and not per person

Late deals and special price for DaC members.

WHERE IS JACK RUSSELL?

When former Dial-a-Cab driver **Sam Harris** phoned **Call Sign** to ask whether we had heard from ex-Chairman **Jack Russell** as he had been unable to get through on his phone, we thought little of it.

Even at the age of 94 and without his long-term partner, Barbara, who died exactly one year ago and with whom Jack once described his relationship with as a 30-year love affair, the former ODRTS Chairman (1964 to 1969) had been coping admirably well. He still undertook the occasional car ride to local shops and following a multiple heart by-pass operation in April 2002, was as mentally alert as he had been during his years as Chairman.

So **Call Sign** gave him a call and sure enough, the phone number was now out of use. We put a message out on driver's terminals just in case anyone out there knew where he was and if he was ok.

After several weeks, we decided that as we'd still not heard anything despite making numerous enquiries, we'd go to his North Harrow home. There was no answer to the bell, but neither was there any dated post on the doorstep. So we rang the bells of several neighbours, but none responded.

Just as we were about to give up, a car pulled up alongside the house and a voice asked if we were looking for Jack? He pulled over and said that so far as he knew, Jack had gone into a home and the only person who might know where that home might be was on holiday and he didn't know when they would be back. We had a chat and I explained that Jack had been our Chairman for 5 years in addition to being a driver for many more. Astonishingly, just then a people carrier came round the corner and it was the holidaymakers just returning!

When you have just returned from two weeks away, the last thing you want is a cab driver pestering you about the whereabouts of a former neighbour! Fortunately they didn't mind and after confirming that we were genuinely concerned about Jack, gave us an address for the home he now lives in.

I went there fearing the worst, assuming that a sudden deterioration must have occurred and that he wouldn't know who I

was. But there was no doubt that I had to know. I needn't have worried! He was exactly the same as I'd ever seen him. His conversation was as lucid as ever and his first words after expressing delight to see me, was to ask how Dial-a-Cab were doing and how Brian Rice was!

He had been left with little option but to go into the home because both his knees were in a bad way and getting around had become dangerous. He was happy now, although missing many friends that he used to see.

"But I've made some nice acquaintances here," he told us, "and I still have my car so I can get about a bit – although I've only done 2000 miles in the last year as I don't go too far."

Jack has asked **Call Sign** to tell anyone who would like to visit him that he'd be delighted to see them. It's probably a good idea to phone the home first just to make sure that he hasn't popped out!

His new address is Abbotsford House, Room 3, 53 Moss Lane, Pinner, Middx HA5 3AZ.

The home's phone number is 0208 866 6030. Jack also mentioned that his eyes are still perfect and if anyone wanted to write to him, he'd be thrilled to receive any letters.

So the answer to 'where is Jack Russell' is that he is in a home but is very well, thank you!



Jack Russell - ODRTS Chairman from 1964 - 1969

Alan Fisher

TAXI INFORMATION STICKER

A new information sticker has been produced for the passenger compartment of taxis. This optional sticker advises passengers of the service they should expect from a London taxi, how fares are calculated and the limitations on taxis' freedom to stop or wait. It also gives information on how to comment about a taxi service and provides contact details for the lost property office and travel information services.

The new sticker goes inside the taxi passenger compartment on the nearside rear quarter light window (the same side the wheelchair ramp is on). If your vehicle is already fitted with the current taxi information sticker, you don't need to replace it. The sticker goes in the same position in all models of taxi whether LTI, Metrocab or Mercedes Vito.

The stickers and instructions on how to fit them are available on request from the SGS taxi inspection outstations and the ground floor reception of the PCO.

Alternatively, to request a sticker and the instructions, phone 020 7126 1872/1865, email enquiries@pco.org.uk or write to Taxi Information Sticker Request, Public Carriage Office, 15 Penton Street, London N1 9PU...

NetXposure
<http://www.netxposure.net>

*Vintage Photos
 Large Format
 Canvas Prints
 Calendars
 Greetings Cards
 Enlargements
 Photo Restorations*

*Superb Cab Photos
 Hansom Cabs
 Growler Cabs
 Early Motor Cabs
 FX3s & FX4s
 Cab Shelters
 London Speciality*

Great as Xmas Presents

It was Friday August 1 and as you'd expect from that time of the year, London's afternoon streets were far from buzzing. It's the time of year when any job looks good! Dial-a-Cab driver **Stewart Chapman (Y06)** has been on the circuit since September 1995 and wasn't surprised to see it so quiet, even though it was a Friday.

"There were empty cabs everywhere," Stewart told *Call Sign*, "and when that hand goes up, it becomes easy to miss because it's so unexpected! Part of me almost wishes I did miss it..."

August 1 was the day when the newspaper 'silly season' broke into life with the news that Barry George had been found not guilty of murdering BBC television presenter Jill Dando outside her Fulham home in April 1999. Mr George was first convicted in 2001, but an Old Bailey retrial was ordered after doubt was cast on the reliability of gunshot residue evidence.

According to the world's press, Barry George then left the Old Bailey in a taxi. In fact so desperate was BBC News to show a glimpse of Mr George on their evening bulletin, that they paused the news video on the cab showing a perfect shot of the DaC logo for around 10 seconds – and a blurred shot of Barry and two others sitting in the rear compartment. *Call Sign* alone managed to speak to the driver. Stewart told us about the job...

"I was just coming up to Old Bailey from Ludgate Hill and a guy hailed me and said he wanted me to go to the 'Lord Mayor's' entrance of the court to pick someone up. I'd been listening to the news and had half an idea of who it was going to be. I asked if it was Barry George and he said yes. He guided me through some heavily guarded gates and then a policeman came up to me and rhetorically asked if I knew who I was going to pick up. I nodded and the look on his face told me that it wouldn't be as straightforward as most taxi rides! He told me to turn round so I was facing the right way and then three people jumped in. It was Barry George, psychiatrist Susan Young and a member of his legal team. I was told to take them to the Barbican Thistle hotel, to make sure the windows were up and not to stop! I didn't realise what they meant until I got to the gates to leave.

Word must have got out that a taxi had gone

The Dial-a-Cab driver and Barry George...

in the back way and when I reached the gates there was a throng of newspaper people waving cameras and microphones. I really didn't want to hurt anyone, they were only doing their job, but I knew that I daren't stop because otherwise I'd have never been able to move.

As I drove through the crowd of newspaper hacks, I suddenly felt a bang when one guy's camera hit the cab. I had to carry on driving and was slowly cursing ever having seen the passenger that hailed me! Who would pay for any damage? Eventually we got through and sped away.

Once we'd left the photographers behind, Barry George said that he hoped there was no damage to the cab because of him? There wasn't!

As I dropped them at the Barbican, there were several cab drivers that called out if I had realised who I had just dropped. I was tempted to say that I wish I hadn't, after all I had a virtually new cab and I didn't really need all that hassle. But I can't deny that it was hardly a run of the mill afternoon! And for August 1, it was a job...!"

© *Call Sign Magazine*



*The photo shows Barry George and psychiatrist Susan Young in the back of Stewart's cab
Pic Mark Large*



LTFUC D&D AT THE HOC

In celebration of their 80th anniversary, the LTFUC are having a Gala Dinner & Dance at the Palace of Westminster on Saturday 18th October 2008 (see last month's *Call Sign*).

Availability is limited, but at the time of going to print there were still some tables left. Application forms for this unique event can be obtained from DaC Driver's Reception.

☆ POLARIS WORLD ☆

The 5 star resort! 3 double bedroom Spanish Villa for rent...



- * STRICTLY NO SMOKING *
- * Sleeps 6-8 *
- * Fully air-conditioned
- * Two bathrooms *
- * Upstairs terrace *
- * 8 communal pools and tennis courts
- * Hi-tech entertainment system (Sky TV/plasma screens/surround sound/DVD)
- * 18 hole 'Jack Nicklaus design' golf course
- clubhouse/bars/restaurant on the resort

Price: From £600 per week for up to 4 adults.

Each additional adult (16+) add £150 p/w

(Additional £500 cash deposit required for any damages)

Call Danny (N95) on 0796 747 6626 or email: thedevilles1720@aol.com

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

DIAL-A-CAB FLASHBACK

Flashback
1999

This month's Flashback goes back to 1999 and to tie in with his forthcoming 80th birthday, is the retirement of Aubrey Siteman...

From Call Sign, November 1999...

Aubrey Siteman was first elected onto the ODRTS BoM in 1967. Now as we enter the last days of the 20th century, Aubrey has decided that the new millennium will mark his new life as a retired person. So this will be his last Call Sign report...



Dear Members,

I am writing this letter to mark my resignation from the Board on the occasion of my retirement. Firstly, may I say that having read the October *Call Sign*, how overwhelmed I was to read the kind words said about me, it was totally unexpected. I sincerely thank all those contributors, many whom I've known and respected for more years than I care to remember.

Having been a member of the Society for 35 years, serving as Chairman, Treasurer and Board Member for 28 of them, I have seen us grow from small beginnings to the leading company in the taxi trade. When I stood down as Chairman, my words to you were that we had come through difficult times, but with yours and my fellow BM's help, we had established a firm foundation that could lead to great success. How prophetic those words proved to be! I also said I would stay on to ensure a smooth transition while Brian settled in and to offer advice if needed. Little did I know of the political trauma that would subsequently arise. Happily, that is now at an end.

Over many years, this Society as a democracy has always been driven by politics and minorities who feel that they have a point to

prove. In a democratic society, this is always a price one has to pay and providing it is done in the correct manner, it is how it should be. After all, no one person owns the Society, it belongs to all its members and long may it be so!

Any success that I and those who served with me have had is due to you giving myself and others your respect and trust. Your loyalty in electing me time and time again is something that I will always treasure. I hope that I have lived up to your expectations.

Why I had to go...

In these last few months, it had occurred to me that although my term of office had another 18 months to go, a decision had to be made about converting my cab into becoming wheelchair accessible. Also, perhaps I had gone as far as I could go in serving the Society. I feel that the time is now right for me to pursue other interests and to make way for some young blood to take the strains and stresses of helping to run the Society. Over the years, I have made many friends and acquaintances and would always, God willing, be available if asked to help. I do leave with a little sense of sadness, but overridingly, I leave with great pride when I see what has been achieved.

The next few years will see challenges and decisions to be made. Remember that the Society belongs to you collectively, it has taken much sweat and tears, both past and present, to put it where it is today. But the past is the past - the future is your responsibility. You must be prepared to meet the challenges and changes in order to safeguard your future living standards. Be proud to be taxi drivers and members of Dial-a-Cab.

In closing, I would like to thank Brian and all my colleagues who have served with me for their respect and support, not forgetting our Secretary Trevor Clarke and all the staff who work for Dial-a-Cab. Forgive me for not mentioning every individual, you certainly all deserve it, but the Editor would probably say enough is enough!

Last but certainly not least and probably most importantly, my thanks go to you, the drivers, for without you there would not be a Dial-a-Cab.

God bless...

Aubrey Siteman (C07)

CROSSRAIL TO TRANSFORM TOTTENHAM COURT RD

As *Call Sign* exclusively revealed in our April issue, the *Astoria* in Charing Cross Road has now seen its final *Gay Attack* on Friday nights and has closed to make way for a new Crossrail Station at Tottenham Court Road. The new station will be built between Great Chapel St and Charing Cross Road and be linked into Tottenham Court Road Station.

Huge transport improvements are also planned for Tottenham Court Road and its surrounding area. Initial works are already underway as most DaC drivers can testify to, with the main works being scheduled to begin next year. The improvements will include the new Tube and Crossrail stations as well as better facilities for pedestrians, cyclists, bus passengers and road users.

When completed, Crossrail will be a new high-frequency and modern railway line from Maidenhead and Heathrow in the west to Shenfield and Abbey Wood in the east. Running through central London, Tottenham Court Road will be a key point on the route.

More information is on the TfL website at tfl.gov.uk/tcr.

REDBRIDGE HAND CAB WASH

Roding Lane North, Woodford Avenue

For Essex drivers, the best cab wash for miles around is now offering Dial-a-Cab drivers a discount every time you come in to get your taxi washed!

Inside and outside including a free air freshener:

Usually £10... The DaC price is £8

Outside only:

Usually £6... The DaC price is £5

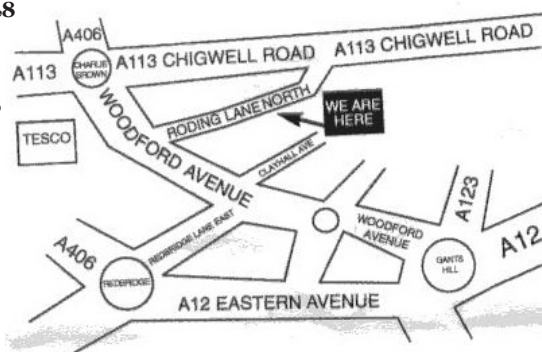
Full valet service available

Opening times:

Mon – Fri: 9am to 7pm

Sat: 8am to 6pm

Sun: 9am to 6pm



In the April issue of **Call Sign**, we wrote of Dial-a-Cab driver **Andrew O'Regan (B92)**, but more especially of his 15-year old daughter **Ella**. While most of the country were thinking of holidays, Ella and members of the **Clissold Swimming Club** in Hackney were attempting to relay swim the English Channel.

Ella wrote to us on behalf of the club, asking whether we would consider being a sponsor for their Channel relay in July. Naturally we said yes and following several months of training, the big day arrived. She told **Call Sign** how the day went...

"Everything has been so busy and crazy! From the evening of Thursday 24th July, the team were staying in a Margate youth hostel waiting for the call to say we could go! In the meantime, we had a training session every morning in the sea to keep us prepared and we all took turns at cooking for 22 people at each meal.

I loved being in Margate; the atmosphere was relaxed as we spent most days lazing around on the beach. Not knowing when we were going to be called for the swim was difficult, but we were fourth in line for both of the boats we wanted and had to wait for the solo swimmers to do their swims before we could go. We got the call on Sunday evening to say both boats for both relay teams were to be at Dover Marina by 5.30am Monday morning and ready to be at *Shakespeare Beach* (where the swim started) by 6am.

It's so hard to put the whole experience into words... it was just incredible. We had the most crazy team names that were influenced by the Dr Seuss books. My team was *The star belly sneetches* and I was team captain. The other team were *Dr Derrington's singing herrings*!

The weather was lovely at 6am that morning - which also helped the mood! Both our teams started off at the same time as the horn went. I was the second to swim. The sea was lovely - nice and wavy, just as I like it! As you swim, you lose sense of time and literally think about nothing. You enter a Zen-like state and it becomes rather surreal! I kept up a decent pace and covered a good distance for my one-hour swim. Everyone swam for one-hour, even though the tides were against some more than others.

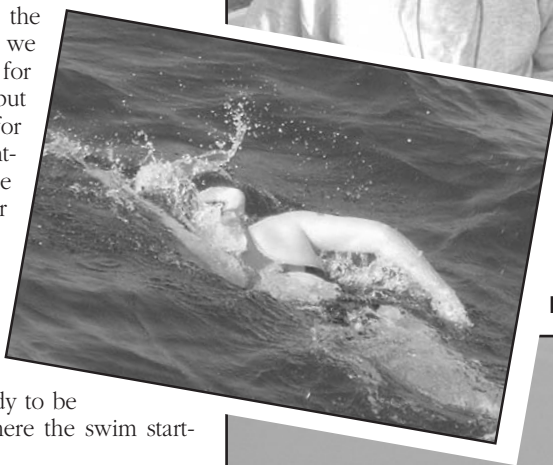
My team were very supportive to all the team members whilst they were swimming and together we had a really successful day. We completed the swim in 11 hours and 34 minutes - beating our target of 12 to 14 hours. The other team finished 12 minutes behind us and even though we were really all one big team and it wasn't a race, I did feel a sneaky sense of pride that we made it before the senior team, as earlier that day they had made a joke they'd be waiting for us with their deck chairs on the beach!

We landed on a beach to the right of *le cap Gris-Nez* (the point of France closest to England) and all swam for the last 200metres, allowing Tom Grilles, the last swimmer in the relay, to reach France first. He had to get out

Channel Swimmers Success!



Team members Abi, Ella and Devon
Inset pic: Ella in the Channel



The happy team at Le Cap Gris-Nez

unaided before the rest of us for the swim to be ratified.

As my feet touched the rocky shores of France, a huge sense of achievement and emotion ran through me, along with a buzz of excitement. The *star belly sneetches* had made it and successfully reached our destination proving that all our hard training had paid off. We cheered and jumped up and down with excitement. We picked up some rocks, swam back to the boat and sped back to England by 9.30pm.

It was something of an anti-climax that it was all over, but nothing could take away my pride in the determination, love and team spir-

it that allowed us to complete that huge challenge. I will never, ever forget the day I crossed the English Channel - undoubtedly the proudest day of my life. Also, our sincere thanks to **Call Sign** for being a sponsor."

As for proud dad Andy - who was on the boat for the whole trip - he told **Call Sign**:

"I was so impressed with the team's hard swimming and not a hint of moaning from anyone. Naturally my wife Tina and I are so proud of Ella, but that pride also extends to the whole team who constantly supported each other throughout their long training period and the Channel relay crossing as well. Well done to both teams. They were brilliant..."

John Davis (V41J) has been on Dial-a-Cab for many years, but found fame in *Call Sign* four years ago after successfully jumping from an aeroplane over Cambridge in order to raise funds for 10-year-old Jack Pitcher, who was blind, epileptic and wheelchair bound through a neurological degenerative disease. John raised a significant amount that went towards buying Jack a specially converted van to give his life some extra quality. Sadly Jack died, but his family told this magazine at the time what a hero they thought John was.

Now John has hit the news again after helping to free four children from the wreckage of a car wreck, as their mother lay trapped and unconscious in the driver's seat.

The accident happened in Epping New Road and John Davis was first to come on the scene following the three-vehicle smash. He jumped out of his cab and battled to free the woman's children and also a man trapped in one of the other cars – this one being on fire.

John told *Call Sign*: "I was on my way into town and I could see a group of vehicles in the distance. Suddenly I saw one of the vehicles go up in the air. I just couldn't believe how high it went and I had to brake really hard to avoid going into it. It landed on four wheels and shot into the trees before stopping. I could see the woman was unconscious and I was pretty

DAC HERO PULLS 5 FROM CAR WRECK!



John Davis - saved the children's lives. Inset pic: Lucky to be alive! Juliet and Robert Anderson and their four children. Photos courtesy Epping Guardian

to cut her free."

But it wasn't just that car in trouble; John also helped to pull an unconscious man from one of the other cars as it caught fire before placing him in the recovery position.

"I just can't believe no one was killed," said John. "When I went back to the first car, the woman (Juliet Anderson) had begun to come round and was asking where her children were? Fortunately she had strapped them in properly, otherwise it would have been a different story and she would have almost certainly lost some of them."

Robert Anderson, Juliet's husband, said afterwards: "We're eternally grateful for what John did. The police described his actions as incredibly brave and way above what a passer-by would be expected to do."

A 36-year-old man, who sustained internal and leg injuries, has been released on police bail after being arrested on suspicion of dangerous driving and driving while unfit through drink or drugs.

frightened that the car could burst into flames.

Then two women from one

of the other cars involved ran over and between us we managed to pull four children out, but there was no way we could get the woman out. Fire fighters later took 90 minutes

LADY IN RED...

Doreen Freeborn:

13 February 1947 - 31 July 2008

Martin Freeborn (C67) and I go back a long way, to our earliest days on Dial-a-Cab. And as our friendship grew closer and stronger, so our wives got to know each other too.

Doreen grew up in Shepherd's Bush and started her working career with pirate radio ship Radio London (Big L). She met many of the DJs that are now household names as they were just starting their careers during those early days of pop music broadcasting.

She then moved into the insurance world, staying with the same firm almost 39 years before retiring in February 2007. Several directors from the American parent company specially flew over to the UK, not only to join in Doreen's leaving party festivities, but also to pay tribute to Doreen's loyalty and competency at her job.

Doreen and Martin met while abroad on holiday and were married in October 1968. They lived for each other, with many shared interests including regular sea cruises, music concerts, Masonic weekends and a 30 year love affair with a certain north London football club whose emblem is a Cannon...!

My memory recalls Martin's 60th birthday bash when with my wife's permission, Doreen and I trotted around the dance floor, her dress in her favourite colour of red flowing from side to side as we moved across the room. She reminded me of the Chris de Burgh song from which my heading is derived.

Meanwhile, and also with my wife's permission (!), Martin was whizzing my Marilyn around like she was Ginger and he was Fred!

Alas in recent years, Doreen's health began to wane as she struggled with the effects of rheumatoid arthritis and latterly, cancer. Never once though did I hear her complain about the difficulties of living with such debilitating illnesses, nor the discomforts of treatment. She will be missed by family and friends alike, none more so than by her beloved Martin.

Friday August 8 at Hendon Crematorium saw Doreen's final goodbye before a standing room only congregation. Doreen had even picked out her own farewell music (The Bee Gees hit - and Doreen and Martin's personal favourite - Massachusetts and Cliff Richard's Miss You Nights). Chairman Brian Rice represented DaC...

Doreen, may you rest in eternal peace...



Doreen with Martin on his 60th Birthday

Alan Green (E52)

Allen Togwell's Marketing Place

How many times have we read or seen something happen that we consider unusual, only to see it repeated on several occasions immediately afterwards?

Recently during lunch I read an article about a motorist who was fined £240 for throwing a cigarette butt out of the window. At the time I thought that was a bit harsh, particularly as I honestly could not remember ever seeing anyone throw things out of a car before, other than ash from a cigarette. However, on the same day I read the article, something extraordinary happened. I was leaving the office and about to cross East Road when a passing motorist threw a plastic bottle out of the car window, almost knocking a female cyclist off her bike.

Less than 15 minutes later, I was driving along Bethnal Green Road when the driver of a PH vehicle in front of me threw out of his window what looked like several empty cigarette packets. I shook my head in disgust and thought the driver was probably one of many who have just arrived from an East European country where litter laws don't exist and throwing rubbish out of vehicles was accepted as the norm. However what happened just five minutes later both surprised and got me really incensed.

I was still in Bethnal Green Road and following a licensed taxi, when suddenly the driver threw out of his window the remains of a fish and chip dinner - including the plastic container and wrapping paper. I could not believe my eyes as it scattered over the road. I wondered what on earth we had driving cabs. The driver obviously had the manners of a pig and such was my compelling desire to tell him so, I deviated from my normal route home before eventually catching up alongside his cab. Needless to say his response to my telling him what he had done was a disgrace to the cab trade, was as expected; a mouthful of verbal and 'the finger'. But I felt better for having made my point.

It's a pity a similar attitude hasn't applied throughout the taxi trade over the years. Standards would have improved immensely. For the record, I'm not a typical Victor Meldrew, a bigoted grumpy old git forever moaning and groaning about the ills of the world, in fact had the offending cab driver been an ordinary motorist I wouldn't have endangered myself by getting involved. But I've had a Bill for over 40 years, a Bill that I'm proud to own and which for centuries has been held in such high esteem. It breaks my heart when I witness first hand examples of why that esteem and the good reputation of the licensed cab trade is being eroded. I am not for one minute suggesting any Dial-a-Cab members act in this manner, but as with so many other things in life, it takes the actions of just one individual to tarnish a trade's image, resulting in everyone else in that trade being tarred with the same brush. Hence the reason I am always advocating the need for us to go that one little step further in the service we give, be it attitude, helpfulness or appearance, in an attempt to balance up the damage done by the senseless morons among us who shouldn't be wearing a badge.

★★★★★★

Whilst on the subject of image, there was yet another article on the same day in the press on the number of motorists in London using hand-held mobiles and as is typical, the picture accompanying the article was of a licensed taxi driver with a mobile stuck to his ear. However in this



instance I have to say the article and the picture were not unjustified. I see it every day to and from work; dozens of licensed cab drivers using mobiles, including I might add cabs not just displaying our logo, but using a mobile with passengers on board. It just doesn't make sense to me why so many cabmen are prepared to break a law that could jeopardize their Badge and their living, rather than having hands-free equipment fitted. I'm sure in most cases it has nothing to do with cost - just apathy. The intentions are probably there in getting the appropriate equipment fitted, but it just hasn't been a priority. And I have to admit I've been guilty of that very same attitude myself and because of it, recently suffered the consequences.

For almost a year I've been meaning to get a SatNav for my car, but with so many models to choose from and particularly the varying clarity of sound, I just haven't got round to making a decision. Then in last month's *Call Sign*, you would have seen a picture of me attending a DaC golf charity day. It was a great event, well organised, a lot of money was raised for charity and I thoroughly enjoyed it, especially as I had as my partner and sharing my buggy Joe Goodman, our comedian for the evening. I've played golf with Joe on several occasions in the past and the moment I was informed he was to be my partner, I knew my golf was going to suffer because he just doesn't stop telling jokes! He has me in stitches even when I think he is being serious. For example, on the first tee and having just loaded the buggy, he asked me how I was health wise? I told him I was due to have another operation on my ear to replace a damaged eardrum and which involved a new technique; instead of using normal skin the surgeon is going to use cartilage, which has a greater resistance against infection.

"Really," Joe said with a look of concern, "would you believe it, I've just had a similar operation myself and in my case they used pigs skin." Like a jerk I believed him. "How is it," I asked? "Well" he said, "after the operation the doctor asked how it was and I said one ear is OK but in the other one I get a lot of crackling!" Needless to say from then on I went to pieces - and so did my golf. But it was great fun. However, what wasn't fun was when the day ended and I was leaving to go home.

It was late, pitch black and raining when I left the course. I took a wrong turning, drove for miles down narrow, dark, unlit country lanes surrounded by forest without seeing one solitary traffic sign and eventually got completely lost. I was livid, made worse by the fact that I had

someone with me who I had offered to give a lift on my way home! I was also angry knowing it was my own damn fault because I had put no urgency into buying something that I know could have prevented the problem from happening, a **SatNav**. Fortunately I was doing nothing to break the law, but you most definitely are if you use a hand mobile whilst driving. Don't chance suffering what could be very serious consequences if you get nicked. Those of you who don't yet have hands-free equipment fitted, please do so immediately.

★★★★★★

Most of you by now would have seen in the nationals and *Call Sign*, reports on the new **Mercedes Vito Taxi**. My own personal view of the vehicle - and it is only my view and not necessarily that of the Board, influenced by the fact I am a traditionalist on certain issues due to age I guess - the Mercedes Vito as a licensed taxi does not impress me at all. The make of vehicle alone would, I imagine, deem it to being a very comfortable vehicle to drive and it has many compelling features. But in my opinion, for what it's worth, no matter which way you hack it, it is a van - a smart comfortable van maybe but still nonetheless a van. It is also a van very popular amongst PH.

Each morning on my way to the office, I go via Boot Street off Pitfield Street, which is the back entrance to the Holiday Inn in Old street and I regularly see a number of these PH vans waiting for fares. God knows how many are already on the streets of London. Add to it the licensed taxi version and very soon the public will think the licensed cab trade doesn't exist. This is not what visitors to this country from around the world identify as the famous London Taxi, a feature of London alongside such sights as Tower Bridge, London Buses etc. London's taxis traditional style is unique. Those that hail them, especially women, do so by sight with a sense of security, identifying the vehicle as safe and the driver beyond reproach and with a geographically knowledgeable brain unsurpassed anywhere in the world. There is nothing to confuse them. A cab is a cab is a cab. It's not a rickshaw, it's not a van, it's not a stretch limo, it's that peculiar shaped vehicle that even the sound when idling is recognisable to 50 million people in this country alone, as a London taxi. You don't need me to tell you about the *power of identity* except to say it's priceless, particularly when associated with a commodity that has been servicing the public for over 300 years. So why on earth change it? I did tell you I was a traditionalist!

Anyway, the only reason I mention the new Mercedes Vito Taxi at all is primarily for the benefit of those members who will be purchasing them. It is to make them aware that the style of the front two doors, which have a crease going at an angle across the middle, prevents our normal size logo from being attached without being distorted. Subsequently a new reduced sized logo has been designed to fit just below the crease. These have been produced and are available at Roman Way. Please be aware that this smaller size logo is only to be used on the new Mercedes Vito Taxi and not on taxis that can accommodate our normal size logo.

Allen Togwell
DaC Marketing

I took up **Ascott's** offer of a 2-hour check for £99 plus VAT and booked my cab in for 11 am.

Ascott's is a clean, friendly garage that do body work, mechanical, Digitax meters and cab sales. There's a nice air-conditioned waiting room / office area, free drinks and LCD Sky Sports. They have applied for LTI warranty status and expect it through soon.

My cab didn't need any remedial work even though it's 18 months old, they must have checked something - but who knows what! All I saw was the cab out on 2 road tests and having an engine wash. I had the cab washed inside and out earlier that morning.

I got to SGS at Blackhorse Rd in Deptford half an hour early and was told to move off site in no uncertain terms as I was too early and to come back in 20 mins. So I did, and 20 minutes later went to reception only to be confronted by the rudest, most impolite young lady asking for my meter certificate.

"Name and reg," she yelled. She then told me to "...take the hub caps off, leave the keys in the cab, engine running and you'll get your paperwork back after the test."

I said thank you, but I don't think she understood that. Mind you, in her defence she was surrounded by half a dozen garage mechanics and drivers all demanding they were there first!

The cab was driven in by an SGS mechanic and 10 mins later emerged.

"Here are your papers," he said, "off you go, ta." I assume he meant it had passed.

I won't do that again! Didn't like the people, arrogant unfriendly lot. They need urgent training in customer relations. I also didn't like listening to other cab drivers moaning about

A DaC driver on his first 6 month TX4 check

And on the day that the first two Mercs are passed!



their cabs - I've heard it all before. Worst of all was watching my cab up on the ramp being shaken (not stirred) in a most violent manner. What that proves is a mystery to me, I know it rattles! Next time KPM can do it for free (special deal for regular customers) and I'll have the day off.

What was probably more interesting was to see KPM's first two Mercs to be sold (apart from their four demos) - one silver and one black - being inspected and subsequently passing first time! I took the opportunity to sit in and look

around the new cab and was most impressed.

Steve, the sales director at KPM, was there and explained the many advantages of the Merc. Some of those are front and rear parking sensors standard, aircon climate control throughout standard, leather drivers seat standard, amazing array of controls and switches for the driver standard, electrically opening rear doors standard, metallic paint standard. Standard, you know, means no extra charge! And 27 mpg!! OK, so you say it's over 35K, but then so is my TX4 without all the standard features of the Merc - and rubbish aircon to boot with 20 mpg if I'm lucky. It's 6 inches longer, 4 inches wider (without the mirrors folded in) and 2 inches higher.












Off they proudly drove with the PCO plates gleaming on the rear tail gate next to the number plate. Steve said that 34 were being presented in the next 14 days and they will soon will be a common sight for us on the London streets.

How they perform will be very interesting, and how they sell...well, wait and see. I'm not convinced. To me it looks like a private hire vehicle apart from the hire light on the roof! Will Joe Public recognise the difference? But then, it's nice to have an alternative choice!

by Ronnie Marlow (L81)

Martin Cordell & Co ACCOUNTANTS

Does your accountant supply you with the following?

-  Over thirty-five years of experience with the Licensed London Taxi Trade.
-  Processing of Self-Assessment Returns.
-  Advice on trading as a Limited Company with its tax advantages and potential pitfalls.
-  Preparation of accounts.
-  Initial consultation dealing with loss of Earnings Claims (due to accidents on the road etc.)
-  Letters to banks, building societies and other lenders.
-  Specialist in house facilities to deal with Inland Revenue enquiry cases,
(This is expensive and time consuming - Ask your accountant how much he will charge should this unpredictable event occur).
-  A three hundred and sixty five days a year service.
-  A 'nightshift' service.
-  Offices in North and East London.
-  First Consultation Free of Charge.

Martin Cordell & Co....DO!

All for one yearly fee

The London Taxi Trades Premier Accountants

(24 hour answering facility for prompt service)

020 8980 7161

(24 hour answering facility for prompt service)

1/5 Alfred Street, Bow, London E3 2BE also at

Front Office, First Floor, 9 Church Road, Stanmore, Middlesex HA7 4AS

www.martin-cordell.co.uk

In February 2005, **Call Sign** published an article by **David Kupler (Y74)** who was one of several Dial-a-Cab drivers that had received *Penalty Charge Notices* for doing a U-turn in Southampton Row.

At around that time, we heard from **Paul Tully (Y40)** who had also received a PCN for the same offence. He too wrote to Camden Council and not only had his PCN cancelled, but received acknowledgement from the council that the points Paul has raised about their signage – the same as David Kupler's – had been noted and passed onto the relevant departments.

Part of David and Paul's defence against Camden Council was that any driver turning left into Southampton Row from Vernon Place couldn't see the 'No U-turns' sign. Eventually David and the other drivers that had appealed, all won their cases. That was well over 3 years ago, yet **Call Sign** has now heard from DaC's **Bob Stafford (N75)** who did exactly the same as David and Paul did in 2005, but for all Camden's fine words, has also received a PCN for doing so.

Bob told this magazine: "I was empty and turned left into Southampton Row from Vernon Place. Soon after, I accepted a radio job and had to turn round to head south. The first no U-turn sign can't be wholly seen from Vernon Place as you

The Camden Rip-Off Merchants?



Paul Tully - council acknowledged his point re signage but have done nothing!

his appeal, he also told them that he would be advising all taxi drivers as well as Transport for London.

In their response, Camden Council agreed to cancel the PCN due to what they referred to as "a problem with the signage" – something they had apparently decided to look at 3 years ago!

The council then had the nerve to add that Bob should "...*please be advised that future contraventions of this nature may not be treated in the same way.*"

We contacted Paul Tully who went back to look at the signage. He agreed that it was no better now than it was in 2005. "Just ridiculous," said Paul.

Call Sign recommends that any driver who has paid a fine to Camden Council over the past 3 years for doing a u-turn in Southampton Row, ask for their money back. Bob's PCN reference number is CU13686540.

We also believe that any council who are told that their signage is incorrect, agree to look at it and then take money of those who would just pay up quietly are nothing short of rip-off merchants. **Call Sign** is open for Camden's comments. A copy of the mag will be sent on to them...

Alan Fisher

SMILE



Sent by Peer Lindholdt, Editor of Cabbie Magazine, Australia

Jim and John on holiday

Siamese twins walk into a pub in New York and parked themselves on a barstool. One of the pair said to the bartender:

"Don't mind us, we're joined at the hip. I'm John, he's Jim. Two cold beers please."

The bartender, feeling slightly awkward, tried to make polite conversation while pouring the beers.

"Been on holiday yet, guys?"

"We're off to England next month," said John. "We go there every year, hire a car and drive for miles, don't we, Jim?"

Jim nodded in agreement.

"Ah, England," said the bartender, "wonderful country, the history, the people, the culture..."

"Nah, we don't like that British rubbish," replied John. "Hamburgers and American cold beer, that's us, eh Jim? And we can't stand the English - they're so arrogant and rude."

The barkeeper looked stunned. "So why keep going to England," he asked?

John looked at him in obvious surprise: "It's the only chance Jim gets to drive...!"

turn in, while the second one is further down but is obstructed from view if there are buses there – as there usually are. I did my U-turn and received a PCN."

Bob decided to WALK his route just to confirm to himself that the signs were poorly sited. Happy that he was correct, he refused to pay the £120 (reduced to £60 if paid within 28 days) and appealed on those grounds to Camden Council. In

Saunders
solicitors
— LLP —



Licence in jeopardy?

Drink Driving

Speeding

Failing to Notify Driver Details

Driving without Due Care

Use of a mobile phone whilst driving

These are just a few of the areas where we can help make a difference if you find yourself on the wrong side of the law

Gary Bromelow can provide expert legal advice on motoring issues

Fixed fees available / Credit cards accepted

bromelow@saunders.co.uk

020 7710 6300

www.traffic-motoring-law.co.uk

www.saunders.co.uk

TX4 Limited Edition

£27,495 on the road

(offer ends 30th September 2008)

Act now, this limited edition model is only available in restricted numbers. Vehicles must be registered by 30th September 2008 and are available on a first come first served basis.



If you want we'll guarantee to buy it back for at least £14,500 after 3 years*

Vehicle shown is for illustration purposes only

Official fuel consumption figures for the TX4 in mpg (l/100km): Urban 25.5 (11.1) - 28.0 (10.1), Extra Urban 38.2 (7.4) - 41.5 (6.8), Combined 32.0 (8.8) - 35.2 (8.0), CO2 emissions: 211 - 233 g/km.

For a list of LTI Authorised Dealer and Service Agents in your area visit www.lti.co.uk/dealer-locator/servicing/ or call us on 02476 572000

Mann & Overton - Manchester & NI
Mann & Overton - Birmingham & West
Mann & Overton - London
John Paton Ltd - Edinburgh
John Paton & Son Ltd - Glasgow

tel: 0161 831 3434
tel: 0121 322 0700
tel: 020 7700 0888
tel: 0131 558 8005
tel: 0141 553 4000

Taxifix Ltd - Liverpool
Conders Garage Ltd - Peterborough
KPM UK Taxis PLC - London
Smith & Humphrey Ltd - East Sussex

tel: 0151 482 5101
tel: 0870 850 5457
tel: 020 7377 2182
tel: 01424 210 746



Vehicles

HAILED THE WORLD OVER

www.lti.co.uk

* Business users only. Available on Limited Edition manual or auto, on the road price of £27,495, £29,190 respectively. Guaranteed Future Value of £14,500 only available in conjunction with Preferences Scheme through Black Horse Taxi Finance. The guaranteed future value is subject to maximum mileage, condition and excess mileage terms. Credit subject to status. Indemnities may be required. This offer is not available with any other offer. Offer subject to availability. Prices and payments correct at the time of going to press. Finance available through Black Horse Taxi Finance, a trading style of Black Horse Limited, St William House, Tresillian Terrace, Cardiff, CF10 5BH. From participating dealers only.

© LTI Limited reproduced with permission. Fairway & TX shape are registered designs. Fairway™, TXII™, TX4, the LTI device, the LTI logo and the London Taxis International logos are all trademarks of LTI Limited.

If your idea of going out for an 'Indian' is a lager fest followed by a *Ruby Murray* then **Indian Zing** is not for you! Set next to the Polish centre at 326 King St W6, a rather understated front leads you to the restaurant. It opens up to reveal a contemporary, yet very comfortable, large Indian eatery – or if you prefer Al Fresco, it also has a covered garden for 16 diners at the back.



For this eating experience, I was accompanied by a new driver on Dial-a-Cab, **Dean Rafferty (O19)**. Our waiter, Rahul, not only made us feel very comfortable, but also helped us with the menu and explained the inspiration behind the dishes that he had helped us choose. In addition, to accompany our food we had some *Indian coolers*, which are drunk by all classes during the hot summer months in the sub-continent. My *Rose Lassi* was combination of yoghurt and rose petals, which made for a very refreshing and aromatic drink.

But we were at **Indian Zing** to eat! For our starters we shared a platter of succulent appetisers consisting of Vegetable Bhanavla, Green Peppercorn Malai Tikka, Lamb Salli and Prawn Kharphatla. They were served with fresh salad and relish and prepared our pallets nicely for the main courses.

Dean opted for lamb chops with roasted vegetables in an Indian sauce. The cutlets had been marinated in ginger, green chillies and mint, griddled with peppers, onions and new potatoes in a clay oven and then served with smooth spicy lamb gravy. Dean's verdict? Cooked to perfection and delicious!

I was recommended the Chicken Mirvana, which was very succulent in a creamy sauce with natural green fresh herbs and spices. Both dishes were served with lemon rice and vegetable side dishes chosen by Raul. The portions of the food were generous without being over the top, but with our side dishes we struggled to finish the meal. But for the **Call Sign** cause, we gave it our best shot!

As you'd expect from two growing lads, we managed to find space for some dessert. I selected the lemon sorbet while Dean liked the sound of the tandoori griddled figs with vanilla ice cream. Two espressos finished the meal off nicely.

As you enter the restaurant, you notice among other plaudits that Indian Zing was voted one of the top five Indian restaurants in London and has been included in the *Michelin Red Guide* as a recommended restaurant. This certainly showed because we ate on a Tuesday at around 7 o'clock and the restaurant was very busy, so booking in advance is highly recommended.

The chef and patron, Manoj Vasaikar, who previously worked at Veeraswamy, is not only an excellent host, but has organised three summer festivals. Two have now gone but the third is listed below.

As a former ComCab driver, Dean couldn't believe how DaC treat their new drivers! But then again, we are the gentleman's circuit.

David Kupler (Y74), David Ballard (N28) and Alex Constantinou (N05) are Call Sign's restaurant reviewers. These DaC drivers and their guests will visit restaurants periodically and give their honest opinions. This month Alex Constantinou visited Indian Zing in Hammersmith ...

Eating Out with Call Sign

Third summer festival at Indian Zing

Indian Zing's final Summer Festival of the year - *Maharashtrian Fiesta* - will be held from 16 - 27 September for its third year! It will feature a sumptuous array of wholesome, healthy, uncomplicated and tasty dishes from the region. Maharashtra is one of the largest states in India, located on the West coast and dominated by the capital, Mumbai (Bombay) - it is also where Manoj originates. Dishes include chicken Suke (chicken braised in roasted spices and onions, served with rice pancake), Dhangar lamb curry (a classic bone-meat shepherd's broth with seasonal root vegetables), Zunka and fenugreek leaves (a farmer's

traditional lunch made of thickened gram flour and fenugreek leaves) and Shirkhand with berries (hung yoghurt with roasted cardamom and saffron served with summer berries). The festival menu will be served alongside the restaurant's *à la carte* menu.

For more information / reservations visit www.indianzing.co.uk or call 020 8748 5959.

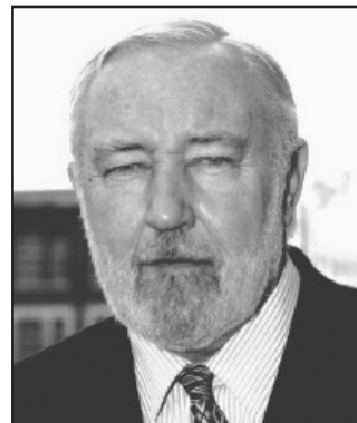
The restaurant is open seven days a week for lunch 12 noon - 3pm (1pm - 4pm on Sunday) and for dinner 6pm - 11pm (10pm on Sunday).

Alex Constantinou (N05)

ALAN FLEMING AND PCO VISITS

If for any reason, you have to visit the Public Carriage Office and feel that you would benefit by having someone experienced with you, Alan Fleming, the former Chairman of the London Cab Drivers Club, is available to represent Dial-a-Cab members on PCO matters. He has already successfully represented 2 DaC members.

Contact Alan on a.fleming1@tiscali.co.uk or obtain his number via Driver Services.



Moving home

Commercial property

Property disputes

Family - divorce, co-habitation and children

Wills and Probate

Personal Injury - accidents at work, on the road, at home, criminal injury claims

7 King Street Cloisters
Clifton Walk King Street
London, W6 0GY

Telephone: 020 8735 9770

Call Sign Catfight!

Call Sign has a stack of mail writers to call on but just two female ones – but they are now at each other's throat!

Poppy, whose partner Glen is a Dial-a-Cab driver, has been writing tales of a *Back Seat Driver* for several years, while **Jenny**, who wrote of her love for DaC driver Sam in *Love on the Internet*, had been detailing her affair with him in this mag since early 2006.

The problem arose when Jenny, who lives in California and reads *Call Sign* online, ended the story with a love poem aimed at Sam – even though he was then with someone else and Jenny herself was married. Poppy, who incidentally is also American, wrote in her column:

"Now, I may be stupid but I'm not daft. Jenny, you are daft. You convinced me that Sam was a love-rat. I grabbed Call Sign every month when it landed on the mat – no, even before it landed – to read each instalment of your fabulous love story knowing it would end in tears and sure that it would all be HIS fault, the lying, two-timing toad. Now I've read your poem I'm not so sure."

Poppy went into detail about her views on Jenny's love poem to Sam. The complete article is available in Call Sign's online library.

Now Jenny has replied from her Californian home...

Dear Poppy,

"I'm sorry you think of yourself as stupid, but I'm certainly not daft. While I'm happy you liked my story in *Call Sign*, I don't think you read it too well because if you had, you'd know I didn't call Sam again, it was he who kept calling me saying how he missed me and how he could not talk with his girlfriend the same way he could talk to me. I was the one who told him to marry her when I found out she was pregnant with his child. I also told him never to call me again. I wanted to put this all behind me and get on with my life.

"I all he said me that Sam was a *love rat* even though he did many things that were wrong. The cheating happened because he was a 30-year-old man alone in London,

5,000 miles away from me and I could only see him every few months. I'm not stupid. I knew it was a matter of time before something happened. I just asked him to tell me when it did, to be honest with me and that I would understand. He said he didn't tell me because he didn't want to hurt me, but by being dishonest he ended up hurting me much more. He was looking for a permanent mate and I couldn't be it, my family were here in the US and I wasn't willing to leave them to live with Sam in London. I don't think I'll love any man as much as I love my children, even though they are now grown up. Yes, Sam said he wanted to move to the US, but his children were in London and very young at the time, so it was impossible for him too. We were both in a difficult position. He even wanted to come and see me in California when he was with his now-girlfriend! I refused.

"As for me writing poetry, no Poppy, you are the one who needs to get a grip. We live in the 21st century. Women today can take the initiative and not just wait for men to do it first, you know? Over here, if women want to write love poems, they can – and do. Sam wrote me poems and sent me songs. He'd call every night and play the songs over the phone as he sang along. I didn't call him. The days of Ingrid Bergman and Humphrey Bogart and Romeo and Juliet are long gone. Those were our grandparent's days. Maybe if Juliet had written Romeo some love poems, they would not have ended up the way they did?

"About the poem I wrote for Sam in which I say I will love him *always and forever*, that was the way we always ended up the emails we wrote to each other, so it was a phrase that was ours alone and that's why I included it in the poem. I also believe that once we have loved someone in our lives for real, that love will never completely die. It always leaves part of our heart belonging to that person. How could



I say I loved someone one day and hate him the next? We love everyone in different ways. No one has ever loved two men or women the same way. Maybe if you could write love poems, you would understand my words.

"When it comes to me being *besotted*, how could someone who thinks she's *stupid* know what the word means? Yes, my husband knows about Sam, but has not and never will read my story. And yes, I also write him love poems and he loves them. He has read my whole book of poems – which, by the way, will be published once it's completed. And yes, that poem to Sam will be included too..."

My best wishes to you, Poppy...

Jenny A, California

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 specialty 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
Enquiries: email: anja@anjaking.com



LTFUC AT COVENT GARDEN PIAZZA

Take the family along and join the fun on Sunday 7th September...

On Sunday 7th September 2008, the **London Taxidriver's Fund For Underprivileged Children** will be extending their 80th anniversary celebrations by holding a fun day at the Piazza in Covent Garden between 10am and 6pm.

Go along and support them by bringing family and friends for what will certainly be an enjoyable day out. There will be something for everyone: Vintage Taxis, Tombola, Raffle with a flat screen TV to be won, a fun 'knowledge' quiz, children's favourite characters and much more!

The raffle will be drawn on the day and anyone interested in buying raffle tickets before then should contact any committee member - contact details on the website at www.ltfuc.org.uk.

Put the date in your diary and go to the Covent Garden Piazza on Sunday 7 September and give them your support.

Who is buying Manganese Bronze?

A strange press release came to **Call Sign** recently. We often receive notification that there has been interest in purchasing some Manganese Bronze shares – usually totalling to a small percentage. BT's pension fund were one such investor some time ago. But this

latest one caused something of a buzz. It read:

Manganese Bronze advises that it received notification on Wednesday 6 August 2008 from Morgan Stanley that it has a notifiable interest in 5,391,825 of the Company's ordinary shares of 25p each, representing 21.6% of the issued share capital.

Our first thought was why Morgan Stanley would be interested? The service they receive at their Docklands HQ is always first class, so the chances of them needing to build their own cabs seemed quite remote!

The following day, another press

release arrived saying that *Hermes UK Small Companies Focus Fund* had a notifiable interest in 3,290,042 of MB's ordinary shares, representing 13.180% of the issued share capital.

We spoke to one of the people that sent out the press releases and whilst not prepared to name any "interested parties," confirmed that it could be that as bankers, MS are simply acting as intermediaries for the party concerned.

Call Sign also asked Manganese Bronze for a comment, but they said they couldn't add anything to the statement. So we are left with a puzzle. Who is buying Manganese Bronze?

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

Kupkake's Korner



EVERY LITTLE HELPS?

It was printed on the leaflet:
discount fuel at your Tesco store,
five pence off per litre,
just spend £50 pounds or more...

I put it in my pocket,
Every Little Helps,
then it's off to the supermarket
to see what's on the shelves.

Some fruit juice and some honey,
milk, eggs, beans and bread,
spending lots of money...
£50, the leaflet said.

I lined up at the checkout,
unloaded all my stuff,
then waited while she totalled...
I hadn't spent enough!

Just £2 short of target,
and I didn't qualify,
so at Tesco's supermarket...
I let out a great big sigh.

I didn't get the discount,
no 5p off my fuel,
I hadn't spent the right amount...
sometimes life is cruel.

Seems I'd chosen some specials,
As in 'buy 1 get 1 free',
they were displayed on large trestles...
for everyone to see!

Behind me they had formed a line,
so I took my bags and went.
It was a total waste of all my time...
and all the money spent.

Kopyright Kupkake 2008

DaC Shirts Available



We have had drivers showing interest in the short-sleeved shirts that the staff at Roman Way are now wearing. If any drivers are interested, we can get the shirts for £10.16 each (incl VAT). This includes the Dial-a-Cab logo on the left breast. Long sleeved are also available.

The shirts are from *Alexandra*, the company that supplies all major companies with their corporate wear.

They come in grey, white, pale blue or lilac and are 70% cotton / 30% polyester. Collar sizes are 14½ up to 19½ ...

Tom Whitbread

SPARKLING DRI

The waterless car wash! It cleans and polishes in one!

**Help save the environment by cleaning your taxi with
SPARKLING DRI**

**Each litre bottle gives you 9 washes and using just one
bottle will save the environment from losing 500 gallons
of valuable water.**

**The recommended price per bottle is £19.99 (+ £6 postage)
but DaC drivers can get each bottle for £11.00 (+£6 postage).**

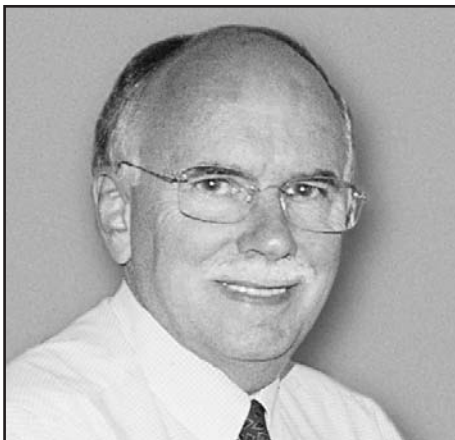
Or you can pick up a bottle at Roman Way for £13...

More info on 07763 962 422

Among Boris Johnston's new appointments to the *Transport for London* board is the *Licensed Taxi Driver's Association* General Secretary, **Bob Oddy**. Bob has been in the trade since 1966 and has held the LTDA position for many years. Most would agree that he is an excellent choice to represent this trade. Bob told *Call Sign*:

"The appointment of a taxi trade representative to the Board of TfL is a tribute to the

Bob Oddy Appointed to TfL Board



Bob Oddy now on the TfL board

assemble a board of quite staggering expertise. Each and every member of the board is chock full of the ideas, enthusiasm and energy that will propel the improvements we intend to make to the capital's public transport system; especially to make it easier and safer to walk and cycle.

Every member of the board knows that the decisions they take will potentially impact on millions of lives. And they know that I am determined to ensure the new Mayoralty differs from the last by listening to Londoners and then acting on what they say. There are eight million experts on getting round London who live in our city and their opinions will be crucial in helping us provide the capital with a transport system that is safe, pleasant and easy to use."

The Mayor had previously appointed three members of the board, Tim Parker (since resigned), Kulveer Ranger and Steve Norris, while seven previous board members have been reappointed. They are Christopher Garnett (Deputy Chairman), Tony West, Eva Lindholm, Mike Hodgkinson, Patrick O'Keeffe, Judith Hunt and Peter Anderson.

There were 165 applications to join the board. The Mayor was required to ensure that together the members of the Board have experience in the impact of transport on business and the environment, finance, local government, management of organisations and the organisation of trade unions. He was also required to consider that the membership of the board represents the interests of women and people with mobility problems.

The term of appointment for board members extends to 45 days after the Mayoral election in 2012, although the Mayor can terminate these appointments at any time.

CONGRATULATIONS JON AND RACHEL...

But West Ham v Celtic!!!



Both Jon and Rachel looked magnificent at their wedding

While others are happy to take in a round of golf or a gentle jog, Dial-a-Cab driver **Jon Trevor (W94)** is usually competing in the most gruelling races imaginable. Known by the rather innocuous title of Triathlons, they involve swimming, cycling and running various distances with no break in between. And when not doing the event for charity, he does it for fun!

But long-time West Ham supporter Jon has now gone one step beyond a Triathlon – he has not just got married, but has married a beautiful lady who is as passionate about Celtic as he is about the Hammers!

With the couple looking like prince and princess, the ceremony took place at Marylebone Town Hall on August 1st when Jon nervously said *I do* in response to the Registrar asking if he would take Rachel McLallie to be his wife? Two guests were heard to mumble that Rachel deserved a penalty, while a third guest said it was offside and began singing *I'm forever blowing bubbles!* Once the jokes were out of the way, the very happy couple were joined by relatives and close friends who celebrated long into the night.

Call Sign wishes them both a long and happy marriage, but hope that West Ham and Celtic are never drawn against each other in a European cup-tie!

important role that London's 25,000 licensed taxi drivers play in the provision of our capital city's public transport. London's status as a world city faces increasing competition, and continued investment in an affordable, integrated public transport is crucial if our capital is to successfully withstand the challenges posed by our European neighbours and the developing nations. I will work to build and improve on our city's existing transport infrastructure in an effort to provide Londoners and visitors with a system which is second to none."

Other new members on the TfL board include the Paralympic gold medal winner Dame Tanni Grey-Thompson, who brings experience on the use of transport by those with mobility problems and Steve Wright, Chairman of the *Licensed Private Hire Car Association*.

The Mayor of London, Boris Johnson, said: "I am thrilled that we have been able to

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**. Any member of your family residing at your address also qualifies for membership!*

Then if you are over 18, have been a member of the Credit Union for over 3 months and have established regular savings, you can borrow up to 3 times your total savings...

The cost?

Just 1% per month on the outstanding balance (or APR of 12.68%). Loans can be paid back early AND there is usually an annual dividend on your savings.

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

Call us on 020 8522 4503

DaC's Oldest Passenger

Dial-a-Cab driver **Wayne Garrett (D64)** recently mentioned to **Val Gomez** in Driver Services that a Westminster passenger he had picked up many times had reached the grand old age of 100. He also told Val that **Eileen Pattison** had an amazing past and was the Goddaughter of Hollywood legend **Fred Astaire!**

But one other thing stuck in Val's mind; Eileen had been speaking to the same Westminster telephonist for many years and even knew her as Irene, but of course they had never met. In fact Eileen even remembered Val Gomez from when she worked in the Call Centre many years earlier. But then Val forgot about Eileen until she saw this mag's editor and recounted the story to him...

To **Call Sign**, it seemed more than just a nice little tale, so we asked those upstairs whether we could organise something in the form of a celebration to Eileen and thanks to the Board's PA, Jacqui Chart, a small reception was held for her at DaC House.

During her time on DaC's fourth floor conference suite, Eileen told her "guests" who included

Brian Rice, Keith Cain, Val Gomez, Westminster McGowan, calltaker Irene Russ, Jacqui Chart, taxi about her amazing life as actress Eileen May.

Her parents had also been on the stage and it and he asked whether he could be Godfather to tgression for Eileen to fit into her parent's theatrical stage, she either appeared with or became friends **Gene Kelly, Joan Crawford, Dora Bryan, Nor** many other household names from the theatre and

In between the tea and birthday cake, more an than appear tired or even confused considering t and gave incredibly detailed answers.



Eileen arrives at DaC with carer Marva



After many years, Eileen meets the two voices she knows so well, Irene (left) and Val

Deano Marries Laura at Lake Garda

In March this year, **Call Sign** writer **Mickey Lappin (E46)** in his *Mickey's Music* column wrote about a London Busker **Dean Saunders** and his daily grind of travelling from home in Rainham, Essex to Vauxhall for his regular job, but how at night he turned into Deano the busker, playing his guitar and singing his own songs to help cheer up the tube-travelling public.

Deano is a licensed underground busker and registered member of *The Guild of International Songwriters and Composers* and currently compiling a catalogue of songs that he hopes to sell to signed artists and music publishers. But that's not what this piece is about...

Dial-a-Cab driver **Terry Catherall (Y90)** and his wife **Dawn** proudly called **Call Sign** to tell us that their gorgeous Daughter, **Laura**, had married Deano in July. However, the wedding certainly didn't take place anywhere near any underground station that we know of; it was in the beautiful location of the Riva del Garda end of Italy's Lake Garda.

"They looked absolutely magical in that setting," said a delighted Terry, "and they make a really lovely couple."

Adding to Deano's talents, his first book was published recently. Called *Nice work if you can get it* (John Blake Publishing), it tells the story of a gigolo on the Costa del sol. A good and very funny read for both sexes...



With a Lake Garda backdrop, Deano and Laura make a lovely picture. Inset: Deano's book, nice work if you can get it

ger Visits the Office!

er Account Manager Carol Carpenter, Caroline
i driver Wayne, Eileen's carer Marva and others,

was they who had a friendship with Fred Astaire
their expected baby – Eileen. It was a natural pro-
al lifestyle and during her many years on the UK
with the likes of **Ginger Rogers**, **Julie Andrews**,
man Wisdom and of course **Fred Astaire**, plus
d movie industries.

nd more questions were fired at Eileen and rather
hat she is over 100, she lapped up the questions

When **Call Sign** asked for her secret to a long and healthy life, she said: "Don't drink, don't smoke, go to bed early and mind your own business!" She also added that "too much booze and sex wouldn't help either!"

Amazingly, Eileen also gave the amazed audience a song from one of her shows. Her only regret, she said, was the passing of her husband who she still missed.

Driver Wayne had heard many of the stories before, but told **Call Sign** that Eileen was a remarkable lady and even though her card trips rarely went beyond the doctor or hairdresser, he was always delighted to be one who got the trip.

"Today has been truly wonderful," Eileen told us afterwards, "you are all such lovely people and the service you provide is unbeatable." Then to the males present, she instructed us to go home and to be nice to our wives. "They don't get anywhere near the appreciation they deserve!"

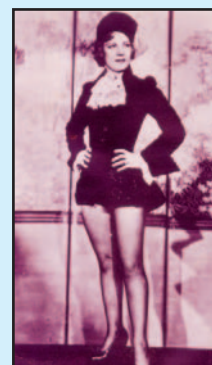
To Eileen May Pattison, a very happy birthday from everyone at DaC to a truly remarkable lady...



Eileen grabs Keith Cain's hand as she
counts a story about Ginger Rogers



A kiss from the Chairman - available to all
who reach 100..!



It's 1935 and Eileen
stars as the Prince
in Cinderella

THE 'HOUSE' COMES HOME

Parliament account returns to Dial-a-Cab...

In the Chairman's **Call Sign** report of April 2007, Brian Rice informed Dial-a-Cab members that we had been unsuccessful in our tender to retain the House of Commons account.

We had been associated with the account for many years and according to Brian, would have to assume that they were not prepared to accept the DaC tender in which our fixed prices had been raised. The account went to the **Radio Taxis Group** and in the true DaC way, Brian wished them well with it and also assured the client that we held no grudge and that any time they needed any assistance from us, we would always do our best to help.

Now **Call Sign** has heard that the account – both commons and Lords – would like to return to DaC. We do not know the details as to why RTG have suddenly lost the account and possibly never will, however, it is a great compliment to DaC to be asked to return.

The account, which is mainly an evening one, will operate on a fixed price basis and all trips will be dispatched *As Directed*. As on EC5, *going home* trips will only be available via the *bid zone*.



The House is returning to Dial-a-Cab

ISLINGTON COUNCIL LISTENS TO CABBY PLEA



James Kempton - the leader of Islington Council

Call Sign recently received an astonishing letter from Dial-a-Cab driver, **Michael Beevor (N76)**. Michael lives in Islington and like all residents of that borough, receives a copy of *Islington Now*. Sure enough, attached to his letter was a copy of *Islington Now*.

Mike pointed out the letters page where the leader of the council, Councillor James Kempton, answers reader's queries.

One query came from licensed taxi driver, **Terry Sullivan**. He was complaining that the council had doubled the price of his parking fee because they were attempting to become the greenest borough in London and as part of that aim, were decreasing the cost of resident's parking permits for owners of low emission vehicles. However, those with higher emissions would see hefty increases. Terry's argument was that he had no choice and even though his cab was Euro IV compliant, he couldn't just go out to buy any vehicle to use as a taxi.

Councillor James Kempton's response was to agree with Terry and add that the council wanted to be responsive to individuals within the borough. As a result, the council would be reducing the parking fees for 'black cabs' parked within the borough as of next autumn.

The last word comes from Michael Beevor.

"Isn't it nice to know that someone is listening....!"

DaC's Lee Pearce Wins Man of the Match!



The pic says it all - we're through to the next round of the cup!

DaC driver **Lee Pearce (J71)** left Wembley FC last year to join fellow *Combined Counties Premier Division* team **Bedfont Green**. Towards the end of the season, his efforts between the posts helped push mid-table Bedfont Green almost into a promotion spot.

"We have an excellent chance this season," Lee told **Call Sign**, "and my own form seems to be on the up as well!"

Following a 2-2 home draw against Horley Town to open their season, Bedfont Green – sponsored by *Gladedale Homes* – got their first three points in the away game to Hartley Wintney – who had won their season's opener. Hartley took an undeserved lead into half time, but within 5 minutes of the restart BG's Adie Barrance pushed a through ball to Aaron McLeish who calmly slotted the ball past the keeper to make it 1-1. Then on 65 minutes a Hartley forward was brought down and the referee awarded them a penalty. It was hit to Lee Pearce's right, but Lee read it well and made a great save. The Hartley player tried to hit the rebound into the net, but Lee blocked it. The ball flew up with HW forwards waiting

for it to come down, but Lee again saved the day by punching it clear. With 10 minutes left on the clock, Bedfont Green got the winner when Adie Barrance smashed it into the roof of the net from 6 yards out.

The Man of the Match award went to Lee Pearce. He has been described as currently the best keeper in the league.

The next match saw Bedfont Green open their **FA Cup** campaign when the visitors to Stag Meadow were Barking in the extra preliminary round – a mere 12 rounds from Wembley!

Adie Barrance continued his goalscoring form when a great hat trick put them through to the FA Cup preliminary round where they will face Great Woking Rovers.

BG were 3-0 up within 30 minutes with 2 from Adie Barrance and Aaron McLeish firing in a third. Adie completed his hat trick 15 minutes from time with a nice finish. Bedfont Green manager, Dennis Bainborough, said that he was delighted with the win and that after 26 years of management – this was his first FA Cup success!

POWER PILL IS BACK!

Call Sign finds another Power Pill supplier!

Chris Hayball is happy to supply any Dial-a-Cab drivers with the amazing Power Pill & at an even better rate than before!

You can buy 1 pack for £15, 5 packs for £65 or 10 packs for £110 – and all prices include postage!

**You can order by phone on
01246 856 153 or 07737 956 298**

**You can order via post to: Chris Hayball, 2 Meadow View,
Holmewood, Chesterfield S42 5UL**

Or by visiting www.powerpillonline.com

Pay via PayPal ziggystardust1000@hotmail.com

(Enter promo code DAC 10)



There have been two events in **Dial-a-Cab driver Gerry Rosen's (W56)** life that have dramatically changed it. In February 2007, his 6-year old niece stared at Gerry's rotund shape and in all seriousness asked him if he was expecting a baby! Then the following April, Gerry went for a check-up on the testicular cancer that had attacked him during his time on the Knowledge and was told that he was clear and no longer needed to go for further checks! It was then that Gerry decided to change his lifestyle – so much so that he decided to enter a stage of the Tour de France, known as *L'etape du Tour* - one that involved climbing the Pyrenees! This is Gerry's story...

"On October 25th 2007, the route for the *Etape du Tour* 2008 was announced. It would be 169 kilometres long, from the spa town of Pau at the foot of the Pyrenees to the mountain top finish of ski station Hautacam. *L'Etape du Tour* is a one-day cycling event open to members of the public from all over the world, where they allow you to compete in a stage of the *Tour De France* on closed roads. The date for this event was Sunday July 6th...

If you asked me a year ago whether I would be able to take part in such an event, I'd have emphatically said no! After all, I weighed over 21stone and couldn't even run 20 metres, let alone cycle 169 kilometres. But as soon as the route was announced, I consulted a few people who told me that it **was** achievable - but that it would be hard work! With that in mind, I went online and booked my place at a cost of 200 euros and that was it! I was entered and there was no turning back!

I had a training plan that I adhered to with some long distance rides to simulate sitting in the saddle for anything up to 10 hours. The months of May and June were busy with rides planned for the Brecon Beacons (180k), Dartmoor (165k), Hampshire (200k) and the Surrey Hills (155k). All were hard slogs, but I managed to complete the lot. My training was well on target and I threw in a reconnaissance trip to the Pyrenees to see what the course was like, so I was really busy! Unfortunately, 3 weeks before the big day I was struck down with flu. It took 2 weeks to regain my fitness and get myself ready for the event - now just one week away. But I did and finally at 2am on July 3rd I was on my way...

Over to la France...

Once in France, I spent a few days getting short rides in, but nothing too excessive. You needed to keep as fresh as possible. I must say it was an absolute pleasure to cycle in France. There's none of the London intimidation and the often heard 'get out of the effing way!'

Back at the hotel, I got everything laid out and ready for the following day. There was the clothing, 8 energy bars, 5 energy gels, bananas, drinks, chewing gum, pain killers, repair kit, inner tubes - and believe me you need it all! Finally, 9pm on Saturday night and lights out.

So, after 255 days preparing and losing over 5 stone, the big day had arrived. But what a start! A torrential thunderstorm woke me up at 3am and that was it - no more sleep! I was on the road at 4.45am in the pitch black and pouring rain. I arrived at the start to be confronted by over 1000 cyclists, but by the starting time, that had increased to over 9000!

DaC's Gerry cycles in Tour de France!



Gerry before leaving for France

Cover pic: Gerry cycling in the 'Tour'

and within a minute was back in the saddle psyching myself up for the climb. That was going to be 14k long at an average of almost 8% and rising to 1000metres. I thought I was ahead of schedule by a minute, but I was wrong. I was abruptly stopped by some pompous French official who told me in broken

English that I was finished. He whipped off my timing chip and disappeared. Was it the weather or something else? It transpired that I was outside the time limit by 1 lousy minute! Taking that pee had cost me the chance to finish (there was still a further 2.5 hours before the official closing time).

The gun went off and we were on our way. It was still raining and I was soaked and cold, but soon warmed up as the kilometres went by. Bizarrely, I was enjoying myself and having all the towns and villages coming out to cheer for you on a dreary Sunday morning is quite remarkable. We then had some divine inspiration as we reached the holy town of Lourdes and the site of the first feed station. I was 20 minutes ahead of schedule. You are cycling against the clock and if you reach timing points late, you are stopped and not allowed to continue.

I was shattered and fuming; every swear-word invented came out of my mouth. For the next two hours I was not a person you wanted to talk to – and most definitely not a good reflection on **Dial-a-Cab** as the *gentleman's circuit*! Eventually, after returning to where I was staying and a few beers later - I calmed down and it was a chance to reflect on what I had achieved. There was the 155 kilometres covered in the most atrocious weather, losing over 5 stone in weight since signing up for it, giving myself a new lease of life and making a new set of friends through my cycling club. And of course, finally getting the all clear from the big C!

On my way again and with the first mountain pass fast approaching, there still wasn't time to take it easy - and the rain was now of Biblical proportions! The French press described the day as 'an apocalypse' and the worst weather in the 17 years of the event. But at 11.15am and 20 minutes ahead of time with 100k covered, I reached the bottom of the *Col du Tourmalet*. That translated means *terrible mountain*. It's the highest road mountain pass in the Pyrenees, climbing to 2115 metres with a gradient average of 7.5% that goes on for 17.5k. It really is vicious. Eventually I reached the summit with just 5 seconds to spare before elimination. It was that close! Almost 2 hours to climb it. The weather had now changed from relentless rain to thick fog and I was absolutely shattered... but I was there!

The next challenge was to get down the mountain - a task in itself with virtually no visibility, freezing cold hands and no grips on my brakes. Fun this wasn't! But it was downhill all the way for 37k with speeds touching 70kph. All this had to be completed in just over an hour, as there was a cut off time of 3.05pm, when the final climb of the Hautacam begins.

As the mountain road opened up and the weather cleared, I went flat out. But with 2k to go before the start of the climb, I was desperate to spend a penny, so I quickly stopped

and within a minute was back in the saddle psyching myself up for the climb. That was going to be 14k long at an average of almost 8% and rising to 1000metres. I thought I was ahead of schedule by a minute, but I was wrong. I was abruptly stopped by some pompous French official who told me in broken

English that I was finished. He whipped off my timing chip and disappeared. Was it the weather or something else? It transpired that I was outside the time limit by 1 lousy minute! Taking that pee had cost me the chance to finish (there was still a further 2.5 hours before the official closing time).

I was shattered and fuming; every swear-word invented came out of my mouth. For the next two hours I was not a person you wanted to talk to – and most definitely not a good reflection on **Dial-a-Cab** as the *gentleman's circuit*! Eventually, after returning to where I was staying and a few beers later - I calmed down and it was a chance to reflect on what I had achieved. There was the 155 kilometres covered in the most atrocious weather, losing over 5 stone in weight since signing up for it, giving myself a new lease of life and making a new set of friends through my cycling club. And of course, finally getting the all clear from the big C!

I now have one goal in mind for 2009 and that is to complete the *Etape Du Tour* 2009 and get that piece of metal around my neck that says I completed it. So watch this space...

Gerry Rosen (W56)

If you would like to help Gerry raise money for the Institute of Cancer Research and Everyman, you can do so at <http://www.just-giving.com/etapedegezza>



Keith Reading
Professional Toastmaster /
Master of Ceremonies

Telephone: 01279 465938
Mobile: 07774 860374
Email: kgr.2@virgin.net

Graduate of the
Professional Toastmasters' Academy

FIXED PENALTY NOTICES FOR CAB OFFENCES...

And how you can protect yourself...

A new Bill received Royal Assent on July 22nd 2008, which will result in any contravention of the *1934 London Cab Order or Hackney Carriage offences* carrying a Fixed Penalty Notice. The outcome could also result in penalty points being incurred and added to your licence.

If you do not belong to a trade organisation, you run the risk of suspension or revocation of your cab driver's licence, or those penalty points could even take you closer to losing your DVLA licence and your livelihood.

Now Dial-a-Cab drivers have an opportunity to join a scheme that will cover the above

and in addition, any motoring offences incurred while working as a licensed taxi driver. This does not include Penalty Charge Notices (PCNs) for parking offences.

The cost of the scheme will be around £6 per month and every member joining will have cover for up to £25,000 legal expenses. Membership also includes a 24/7 help and advice line.

If you would like this invaluable legal protection for your licence, contact either Ian Lewis or Dee Scott at Lewis Hymanson Small LLP and they will send you all the relevant information. You can telephone them on 0161 827 1808 or write to them at:

Lewis Hymanson Small LLP
South Central
11 Peter Street
Manchester M2 5QR

Lewis Hymanson Small LLP also have offices in London's Royal Exchange Avenue, but the Manchester office has all the details relating to the scheme. LHS have a wealth of experience in Hackney Carriage and motoring legislation and will be on hand to advise you and to protect your interests.

Ask any cab driver who has lost his licence how difficult life can become. This is an opportunity to gain complete peace of mind for approximately 20p a day.

Sailing The Adriatic With Glen

Glen Robertson (E54) and his pals are once again taking their 50ft sailing cruiser, *Ascendon*, around the Greek islands from October 4th to 25th and have a spare berth should any **Dial-a-Cab** subscriber like to join them for one, two or all three weeks. It is an excellent opportunity for an economical sailing holiday and they can show the ropes to anyone who has no sailing experience. Many of their past 'guests' have gone on to achieve *Day Skipper* qualification, whilst other more experienced sailors have welcomed the opportunity to increase their sea-miles in order to gain full *Yachtmaster* certificates. Apart from that, it's partying all the way! Information about the trip is on their website at www.ascendon.co.uk.

There is only one berth available, but it's a double, so if a spouse or girlfriend - but not both (!!) - wants to go along, there is plenty of room.

Ascendon is a 2006 model 50ft Bavaria sailing cruiser owned by 4 friends. She has 5 well-appointed cabins and can accommodate up to 11 persons, but to keep things comfortable and ensure you get plenty of hands-on experience, they never have more than 7 on board. If you have sailing experience, then you'll know what a great thrill it is to take a craft like this to sea. If not, they'll show you the ropes as all are R.Y.A. trained.

How much? With a maximum of 7 on board, they charge from £32 per person per day, which covers everything you'll need to enjoy the holiday. The only costs not included are travelling expenses to and from the yacht, travel insurance and whatever you spend on food and entertainment ashore. Full details available by clicking *Prices* on the website.

Evenings are usually spent on terra firma in tavernas, which are reasonable in price but if you have culinary skills that you wish to employ, dining on board is always fun (and free), as is the wine and beer, plus of course your sun-downers to help you unwind after a good day's sailing. They normally embark in Athens and also return there, but sometimes set sail from the Ionian or elsewhere around Greece.

Email: glen_roberton@msn.com if you fancy this fantastic trip!



Fancy cruising the Adriatic with Glen and his pals? Email Glen now...

HOLIDAY HOME DEALS FOR DIAL-A-CABBIES

In Ostuni, Puglia, Italy (the heel)

More info at: www.holidaylettings.co.uk/41004

Brindisi Airport 25 mins... Bari Airport 50mins

Flights with Ryanair from £10 each way

Several Blue Flag beaches nearby

Typical rates for 1 week's rental before 20% discount for DaC drivers

January £210 August £560

Contact Shayne Wise (G05)

Tel: 01708 753128 or on mobile: 07961 912340

Email: shaynewise@yahoo.com

Rough Guide: "One of the most stunning small towns of southern Italy, a gleaming white splash of sun-bleached streets and cobbled alleyways..."

Gasrec, the UK's first commercial producer of liquid BioMethane fuel, Veolia Environmental Services, the UK's largest waste management company and commercial vehicle manufacturer Iveco, have collaborated on a commercial trial of compressed BioMethane (CBM) derived from landfill sources.

The natural gas-powered Daily light commercial vehicle, in use for the trial, is one of the latest generation of natural gas powered vehicles manufactured by Iveco and was supplied by Gasrec to Veolia Environmental Services, who are using it for garbage and recycling collection duties.

Gasrec will provide CBM for a trial lasting six months and the performance of the fuel will be measured against existing vehicles running on Compressed Natural Gas (CNG). The vehicle will be refuelled at a CBM refuelling station installed by Gasrec at Camden

Stanley Roth (Y53) drives a gas taxi and is a great believer in leaving diesel / petrol behind. In this short article, he writes of a street-cleansing vehicle that will run on compressed BioMethane fuel derived from landfill and asks a question about taxis...

A sensible rubbish collector...

Council's York Way depot.

I know that some Dial-a-Cab drivers may think that this may be a load of rubbish, but it's projects like this that will help cut pollution and also cut down on noise pollution too.

The question I keep asking is this: When are we going to see a Natural Gas taxi on the

streets of London? I have proven that running a CNG taxi is cheaper than anything else. It also puzzles me as to why LTI closed down the natural gas project when they put the Iveco CNG engine into a taxi. Answers one day perhaps?

Stanley Roth (Y53)



TFL Act 2008: Section 16 explained...



The Transport for London Act 2008 received Royal Assent on 22 May 2008 and relevant sections of it were itemised in the August *Call Sign*. Among those was *Section 16*, which dealt with the issue of *Unfit for public use* notices.

The PCO have now sent out additional information on *Section 16*. They write:

"Section 16 amends section 2 of the London Hackney Carriage Act 1853 to allow TfL to serve an unfit notice on the driver as well as the proprietor of a cab found to be unfit, preventing the cab being used until it is repaired. An unfit notice means that, with immediate effect, the vehicle cannot be used for hire and reward purposes until the notice is cleared. If the vehicle is used in contravention of the notice, then the vehicle licence can be suspended. This provision came into force on 22 July 2008."

The PCO notice continues: **"Where serious and safety related defects are found, unfit notices will be issued directly to drivers, taking immediate effect. In other words, the vehicle is unfit for public use and the defects must be rectified before being used for hire and reward purposes. Serious defects would include tyres, steering, suspension, brakes, extensive accident damage, absence of road tax and insurance."**

Safety related items include seat belts, carriage seats insecure or damaged, rear carriage grab handles insecure or damaged, door locks inoperative.

Where only minor defects are found, an unfit notice will be issued to the licensee by post in the usual way."

Looking at the *Unfit for public use* report form that will be issued at the time of any infringement, subsection 4 adds that: *This inspection may extend beyond the items specified on this notice.* In other words, if pulled up, you are likely to face another overhaul...

E₃TAXIS

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

AT E₃ 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

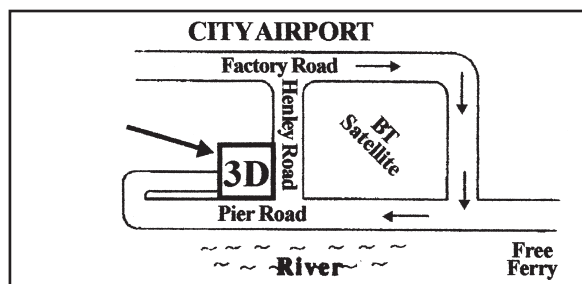
And we will advise on any warrantee work needed

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



ASCOTT CAB COMPANY & SALES LTD

Victoria Wharf, Grove Street, London SE8 3NW

Telephone: 020 8692 1122

Friendly Staff & Quick Service

For All Your Running Repairs & Overhauls ...

Phone Now To Book An Appointment 020 8692 1122



TXI Service

Standard Service

£44.65 inc VAT

ASCOTT CAB CO.

ONE STOP CAB SHOP

Book On Line
www.ascottcab.com

Minimum
5 Days
In Advance



TXII Service

Standard Service

£75.20 inc VAT

Major Service

£116.33 inc VAT

TX4 Service

Standard Service

£88.00 inc VAT

Major Service

£129.00 inc VAT



Call Sign has always had one problem with the prospect of licensing pedicabs – licensing equals respectability. However, several recent events involving reporters from this magazine and pedicabs has given our view of getting rid of the dangerous three-wheelers rather than licensing, something of a shake-up.

The Editor gave instructions to those working for the mag that if they saw pedicabs flouting the law, they should take their photo after saying the photos would be passed onto legal agencies. Several results of what began as a gathering of proof to show how the cyclists constantly break the law, has turned into another question – what are they afraid of?

Editor Alan Fisher recently set a passenger down on an empty M&S rank at Marble Arch – empty but for two pedicabs trying to attract the attention of prospective customers. Alan takes up the story...

"I'd been paid off and wanted to put onto the point, but couldn't because of the two pedicabs. I asked the riders to move but they laughed and said they didn't understand English. I asked them again to move and one just came out and said no and that there was plenty of room on the rank. I got out of the cab and again told them to move. Again they just laughed and repeated – in good English – that they didn't understand! I went back to the cab and took out my camera, quickly went back to them and took a photo. I said that I hoped they were registered because I would be sending the photo to the Home Office! I've never seen two people move so quickly – almost colliding with a bus!



Pedicabs block the pavement at Leicester Square
Inset pic: The rider only left the M&S rank when threatened his photo would be passed to the Home Office. Why?

"Later that day, I did the same thing at Leicester Square. Pedicabs had blocked the whole of the Coventry Street side including the traffic lights, so I had to drop my passengers by the Thistle hotel opposite. After being paid off, I left the cab on the rank, went over to the line of pedicabs, took a photo and said so that the first few could hear me that I would be passing the photos over to immigration. The first one didn't move, but the second and third flew off!

"And of course, as I got back to the cab, a

warden was about to take down my details. I asked him about the pedicabs and he just shrugged his shoulders!"

If Licensed taxi drivers are now on a *one strike and you're out* policy with the PCO / TfL, perhaps licensing pedicabs would help make sure that they not only obey the rules or fill up the exits of every west end theatre and major store, but it would also guarantee that they are legally in the country and legally allowed to work here. Getting rid of them no longer seems to be an option. Food for thought perhaps...?

Ron Yarbrough

MOON BEEVER

S O L I C I T O R S

- Will Writing Service (Wills, codicils, will reviews)
- Elderly Client Advisers/Specialists
- Inheritance Tax Planning / Trust Work
- Lasting Powers of Attorney
- Advice for executors / trustees / attorneys / mental health issues
- Lifetime & Post death tax planning
- Family & Matrimonial matters
- Conveyancing and all property issues

We rely on you to get us from A to B so you can rely on us to protect you with our legal expertise.

**Contact Nicholas Hall on 020 7612 7744 or
email nhall@moonbeever.com
to discuss Wills, Inheritance Tax planning or
any of the above range of legal issues.**

Moon Beever Solicitors
24-25 Bloomsbury Square, London, WC1A 2PL
Tel: 020 7637 0661 Fax: 020 7436 4663
Email: info@moonbeever.com Website: www.moonbeever.com

Tom's Roman Way Happenings...

In the two months since I last wrote in *Call Sign*, we have been trying to get as many drivers computer and radio equipment upgraded as possible to help improve the standard of the signals received by both taxi mobiles and the host computer.

If a driver has a *Motorola* radio, we have to change that for a new *TAIT* radio and upgrade their software to the 3.6.0. version. This may sound technical, but it's easy to check; the *Motorola* has the on/off switch by your left leg and has *Motorola* written on the radio. The *Tait* radio is powered up by using the yellow screen button; if you have one of these, we have to upgrade the software to version 3.6.0.

The software is the programme working within your computer and which is situated on the floor of your passenger luggage compartment. If we have to upgrade your radio from a *Motorola*, then the work will take 45 minutes plus. If we just have to upgrade the software for a *Tait* radio, you are looking at 5 minutes or so.

There are a small number of Fairways that we will not be upgrading as they have a short amount of time left on the road. What we will be doing to these cabs is upgrading the computer cables and software, which will bring them online with the *Tait* radios.

When you are using the new software, one obvious difference is the 2 new buttons - the first being to **Reset Terminal** and the second to **Change Channel**. If your terminal locks up for 3 minutes or more, then you should press the **Reset Terminal**, which should then clear the problem. If your signal strength has dropped, which causes you to lose the channel you are currently receiving and it is not automatically relocating to a new channel, then you should press the **Channel Change**. That will make the radio scan available channels and select the strongest one. There have been over 800 taxis upgraded and only 2 or 3 drivers have come back with problems, so this is a positive result to show it is working.

During the course of drivers being at Roman Way, we have noticed that there are a number who are not complying with the Society rules. These drivers are claiming the reduced subscriptions for allowing the company logos to be displayed on both front taxi doors, a yellow CCC sticker on the windscreen and a *we take credit cards* sign on the centre partition.

Drivers, who do not display all of the above company stickers could have their subscriptions increased from £124 (+ VAT) to £175 (+VAT). This can be done without warning if an official of the Society sees your taxi is not complying with the rules.

I would also like to advise you that all members that joined after January 1996 have all agreed and signed to comply with the above regarding the carrying of our logos.

If you have damaged the outside of your front doors and have just had repairs completed, then you should inform the Compliance Officer or Driver Services that you currently have no logo. There is no reason for the inside stickers not to be attached; Roman Way fitters have been informed that if a taxi comes in with any stickers missing, then they are to replace them.



The Call Centre advises subscribers that if their terminal freezes up, they should go to Roman Way to get it fixed. If they are in Wimbledon, it is a long way to travel and when they arrive the fitter will pull the fuse out, refit it and the terminal powers up. Drivers could do this action themselves and it would save them time and money, so I am supplying the Call Centre with photographs of the fuse boxes and an explanation on what fuse to remove and then refit some 10 seconds later.

Speaking of a possible *freeze-up*, we still have a large number of the coats that were last year's Christmas presents; that includes the special one-off order we had to get for drivers we could not accommodate on the initial order. I would ask any driver that has not collected his coat and is size L or XL to please collect it. We do not have any other sizes left.

On Friday 15 August, we were fitting the first Mercedes Vito onto our fleet, with the agents prior to the launch having caused a delay thanks

to a lack of liaison. Drivers bought the new taxi only to be told by us that we could not fit our computers or terminals as we did not have brackets or posts to hold the equipment. Also, we were being denied permission to put a hole in the roof to fit a correct aerial. We were being instructed to fit a magnetic aerial; this would make you look more like private hire than before. For drivers who purchased these vehicles before talking to us, they found there was a delay in fitting and that they had to be non-radio drivers for longer than they had anticipated.

Tom's views on the world...!

Over the months since giving my views on the way we were being treated as taxi drivers and British voters, I've had quite a number of drivers call or phone to say that they were glad someone was saying what others had been thinking. There have always been a small minority who consider that I am too outspoken and that I criticise the government without justification. Well if those people have been keeping abreast of the news, it seems I've been correct all along and it was the Government who were giving out false information. The truth is now beginning to emerge.

It is being said in the media that the white English are being discriminated against, well we were saying that when Ken Livingstone wanted to give non-English, free bikes, maps and assistance for doing the knowledge of London.

We now have the farce of Thames Water who want to increase the yearly bills for the next 3 years to pay for upgrades they are completing on pipe-work in London. What I'd like to know is what have they done with the profits over the last 25 years? They have not used any of it to renew the crumbling Victorian pipes. That is except for the pipes that corroded and burst causing major leaks and major traffic jams for all traffic including taxis.

The vehicles in the jams then cause an excess of emissions, but because the problem is caused

continued on page 29

Executive 6 Bedroom Villa in Florida

From £395 per week



3 Master Suites, 3 Twin Rooms, 4.5 Bathrooms, 30ft Pool on large extended SW facing deck, Games Room. Luxury Specification. In Remington Golf Community. Within 12 miles/16 mins of Disney. Near Lake Toho. Easily Sleeps 14 in beds.

Contact Andy (P32) on 07904 091278 or 07932 960350

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

CALL SIGN EN LA BELLE FRANCE



Fancy buying a house in the Languedoc?

The time has never been better to purchase a holiday home or a house to retire to in the south of France. It is a perfect buyers market, with prices of properties for sale being negotiated down by between 5 and 10%. Bargains are plentiful as French vendors realise that the market is stagnant and that to sell their property they need to have it correctly priced at the outset, as well as to be prepared to accept low offers.

Why the Languedoc?

Located in the south of France, the region is loved for its Mediterranean resorts, safe beaches, high mountains and most especially its vineyards - making the Languedoc Frances' biggest wine producer. The attraction of *Languedoc-Roussillon* has increased in recent years. With budget airlines serving all of the area's main cities, including Montpellier and Toulouse, property here enjoyed France's biggest rise between 1999 and 2004. With its beautiful countryside and warmer southern climate, it is little wonder that Languedoc is enjoying so much attention. Buyers and holiday-makers find themselves delighted by what the region has to offer. World famous *Carcassonne*, home to one of the world's most picturesque walled cities, *Cathar castles*, the *Canal du Midi* and the type of old stone and quaint villages that one

dreams of. The mixture of northern Spanish influence and a large proportion of northern French that have moved south, create a gentler, cosmopolitan type.

What type of properties can we find?

All sorts! From renovated properties and old stone barns that can be found for about 60,000 Euros, to village houses (often without a terrace or outside space, though becoming more popular now that many have been renovated). There are houses on the outskirts of villages and towns that have some land, sometimes a pool and are more peaceful.

We also have a great choice of modern or recent villas that are very popular. Most have big rooms, swimming pool, aircon, garage, integrated vacuum points throughout, integrated watering systems for the garden, more than one small bath / shower room - and one can move straight into them - maybe changing the colour of the paintwork! Prices for Villas start at around £165 000.

How to find your dream home?

Either go onto the internet and do all the searches yourself, make appointments with the vendors (often in French) and give yourself a few weeks to see as many as possible before deciding. Alternatively, use an estate agent who has a good knowledge of the local areas and can advise you

about the whole buying process, pitfalls, villages that are liable to flood and guide you through the process from A - Z.

The 2 most difficult decisions are which department and then which sector? The *Aude* is the most popular within the Languedoc, but within 20 to 30 km there can be great variances in countryside, architecture and micro-climates.

We specialise in the sector to the north of Narbonne, an area where the Canal du Midi is at its most beautiful, the villages are very varied and within very easy access to airports.

Once you have decided that you would like to start looking, contact us either by email to either Bob Woodford via woodford19@btinternet.com or Michael Bowditch via mbowditch@mac.com or you can phone 0033 468 27 18 13 and we can send you details of properties that may interest you.

It is estimated that about 297,000 people have bought homes in the Languedoc since 2000. Come and join them and enjoy 320 days of sunshine a year, great wine, good golf, locally caught seafood and long stretches of beaches. *Be lucky, be careful et à bientôt...*

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

TOM'S ROMAN WAY HAPPENINGS (continued from previous page)

by a major utility company, that is OK! Obviously the Government does not mind them adding to global warming, but if it is the normal working-man or woman, then you can tax them in every way possible because we must not have global warming!

We've had spasms of global warming over the last 2000 years, but it is only now that a Government wants to tax people under the pretence it will use the money to combat that same global warming, rather than because it has wasted billions and needs to find a way to get money back into the coffers.

If they wanted to stop much of the emissions from cars, they should get rid of speed humps. Why? Because all you are doing is braking and then accelerating every 50 yards, causing your vehicle to pump out excess fumes. If there was any truth to it, then the cost of putting these speed humps all over London could instead be used towards eradicating global warming.

Mobile phones, guns and knives...

I mentioned some months ago about the number of drivers you now see on mobile phones whilst moving. The police and Government say they have tackled it and it is going down. What a load of rubbish! They should come into the real world where it is on the increase. They should increase the fine to £150 fine and 3 points on your licence. That might make it more of a deterrent.

A driver spoke to me recently about combating the growing menace of knife and gun crime in addition to the drivers who cause death whilst driving under the influence of alcohol or drugs.

If a person is found guilty of causing the death of any other person, it should be a stiff jail sentence. But the sting in the tail should be that as we do not have any spare prison space, to franchise it out. Let's pay Russia to build some jails in Siberia and we could send these killers there for their sentence. If you consider this too harsh, think of the person who has lost their loved one to these selfish killers. We have done away with the death penalty, so send them to these Russian jails where they would get no creature comforts and find armed guards. Visiting rights would be nil, then they would know how the families of the person they killed felt at not seeing their loved one again. I can almost guarantee that they would come back a changed person and they would not commit a crime again.

Freebie tickets...

Ladies and Gentlemen, if you make use of the free tickets that we acquire for the theatre or just read the messages, could I ask you to keep it within the Society? Many get very jealous to think that those 'greedy taxi drivers' are always getting offered freebies. They don't realise we're offered them for a reason; so you can tell your passengers how good the show was...

Sparkling Dri cab cleaner

One of our drivers went to the manufacturer of the cleaning fluid **Sparkling Dri**, which was advertised in the July *Call Sign*. Whilst there, he got the makers to reduce the price to £12 from £19.99 (the £11 in the July magazine was a one-off). He also bought an extra 8 bottles that he

brought to the fitting bay for any driver wishing to purchase. After I gave some demonstrations to drivers who attended the depot, the bottles were all snapped up! It saves drivers postage and packing of £6.

This driver is now going to travel up to the makers again to purchase more **Sparkling Dri** to allow drivers to get it direct from the depot. **Sparkling Dri** allows you to clean and polish your taxi or car without the use of water. That is unless it has really caked on mud, but normal dirt and dust on a taxi that has decent paintwork will come up with a great shine.

One driver came to Roman Way with a taxi where the paint had lost its bloom and expected the cleaner to act like *T cut*. This is a really good product - but it cannot produce miracles! If you would like a demonstration, just drop into Roman Way and see me.

Doreen Freeborn

All the staff at the fitting depot were shocked to hear of Doreen Freeborn's death. Martin had called into the depot on his way home from the hospital after visiting with Doreen and the staff who spoke to him felt that she was a lovely lady. I cannot say that I know how Martin must feel at this moment and I pray I am never put in that situation.

Martin, all of the boys at the depot and myself wish to send our condolences and hope you can find some way in which to ease the sadness you feel at this moment.

Tom Whitbread
DaC Roman Way Manager

Last month's **Call Sign** told of the amazing trip that was to be undertaken by Dial-a-Cab driver **Steve Bryant (Y41)** and NHS Practice Development Facilitator, **Jane Barr**.

The trip is built around Jane and any help in the form of advice she can give to Ugandan medical staff that could hopefully help extend the lives of their patients. With so much HIV and AIDS in many African countries, Jane's task won't be easy. There is also the more practical side of showing them how they can re-use wheelchairs for young children, who are so often the victims of landmines.

Steve, a friend of Jane, will be cheering on some of the local young footballers from the **Kampala Kids League**. These kids love soccer and know all about the English Premiership, so Dial-a-Cab presented Steve with a set of Spurs' shirts to give to one of the lucky teams in the Uganda capital city's KKL. The photo in our last issue of a young goalkeeper with no feet probably brought in more comment than we have ever had before – most just to wish the duo good luck.

Last month we had Steve's side, so this month Jane tells why she is doing it...

"Firstly, many thanks for the very generous donation of the shirts. Steve and I will ensure that they are worn with much pride and we hope to take photos of the enthusiastic and grateful kids for **Call Sign**.

It's amazing how this has all happened. I am a nurse in charge of 22 community hospitals across Devon and decided that rather than lying on a beach doing nothing for my holiday, I would use our local networks to do something exciting and meaningful! I'm not sure that Uganda was the first thing that crossed my mind, but I am delighted that

Steve and Jane Now in Uganda!



Kids from the KKL at a meeting on how to live with HIV
Inset: Steve Bryant

we're going there.

Our **Primary Care Trust** is twinned with a hospital in

Kampala, as well as a parent of one of our accountants being a founder of the KKL. Two contacts in Kampala just seemed too good an opportunity to miss. I happened to mention my planned adventure to Steve, who seemed really interested and so it took hold.

So here we are on a trip to personally deliver DaC's generous gift to kids who need so much

help. Our PCT's 'gift' is for me to do some training with the hospital staff and to look at the re-use of some of our wheelchairs for the children who are often victims of land mines and as you saw from the photo in the last **Call Sign**, who use sport as part of the rehabilitation process.

I will ensure we keep **Call Sign** informed. Once again thank you for your kindness and generosity."

Jane Barr
Practice Development Facilitator
Devon Primary Care NHS Trust Exeter

BRITAIN LOVES THE LONDON TAXI



The London Taxi has once again been voted the most iconic vehicle in Britain, according to a recent survey commissioned by Holiday Inn. The poll of over 7,000 Brits was carried out by the hotel chain to find out the 50 things people love most about Britain.

The instantly recognisable "black cabs" ranked the highest vehicle on the list ahead of the Aston Martin, Mini Cooper and Jaguar E-type. Fish 'n' Chips topped the overall poll, followed by the Queen in second place and old-fashioned pubs in

third.

Rob Laidler, Sales Director for LTI Vehicles said: "This survey sums up everything we love about Britain and is yet another accolade for the London Taxi. It's not hard to see why our cab is loved by millions of Britons and this result serves only to reinforce its iconic status. Visitors to this country always quote a ride in a London Taxi as one of their favourite activities. This helps make London a unique city in the world with the best taxis and taxi drivers by

far."

Andrew Smith, spokesman for Holiday Inn, commented on the findings: "As a nation, we are rightly patriotic. This list gives a fascinating insight into exactly what it means to be British – our food, history, Royalty, our many wonderful characters and all the fabulous places we love to visit."

**Convert all those
precious memories**

From VHS to DVD
From LP to CD
From cassette to CD
From cam recorder tape to DVD

All at just £5 per item!
Call now: 020 8518 8765

One essential ingredient you need to be a successful London cabby is to not take things too seriously. I know there are plenty of drivers who drive around with a long face, however if you stop and have a quick chat, it doesn't take long until you both start seeing the funny side of things. We also need to not get offended too easily. I was at my local Tesco recently when I noticed that the three-pack of Jaffa Cakes were BOGOF. At first I was tempted as I've yet to find anyone who doesn't like a Jaffa Cake! An old lady came up and said she'd have two and how nice they were. With a smile on my face, I said I'd probably eat them all in one go! The lady replied with no hint of a sense of humour that I needed to get a bit of self-control. I smiled politely, tipped my hat and quietly tiptoed away. But having a GSOH must go to the now sadly-departed *Humphrey Lyttelton*, who was well known for being an excellent jazz musician and also host of Radio 4s *Sorry I haven't a clue*. This had to be the funniest show on radio and with quips from the likes of Tim Brooke Taylor, Willy Rushden and Barry Cryer, it will be looked back on as pure classic comedy. English people are well known for not taking themselves too seriously and listening to *one song to the tune of another*, typifies that.

Indeed I could have been guilty of doing something similar myself recently, except I'd call it *asking for one product in replacement for another*. Read on and you will know what I mean...

I was heading out of the door for the shops when my wife asked me to get some *Stop and Grow*, which stops kids from biting their nails. I admit to being a bit hard of hearing at that precise moment and just nodded. At the shops, I entered the chemist and told the pharmacist I was after some *No More Nails*. He looked up slightly startled asking if I needed a DIY shop? I was insistent and started to describe what it was and he politely suggested *Stop and Grow*. Well I've never had a grand piano dropped on me from 15 feet, but the reality hit. What was I saying, what had I asked for! I squirmed on: "Oh well, if you haven't got the other stuff, I'll have to make do with *Stop and Grow*! I imagined phoning my wife from casualty explaining how my daughter's finger had bonded to the roof of her mouth!

They say all things come in twos and I have to put this one down to being a little more advanced in years. I was doing some paperwork on the dining room table recently. It had place mats and coasters on it and after fiddling about with the money and paying-in slips, I headed for the Post Office and into the queue. I was served by *cashier number 3 please* and put the bundle under the partition. I looked up and saw her smiling. "I won't be needing this," she said, passing a coaster back to me. You know when you laugh through combination of embarrassment and nerves...!

It's amazing to think that I brought my first laptop 10 years ago and have been surfing the Internet for that period. Prices of both laptops and printers haven't really gone down much and even though you can get a printer for £50, that's because they get their money back when you need to replace black and colour ink cartridges. The cost of both from *Dell* on a 946 model is a staggering £46. After doing this a few times, I found an alternative company called *Cartridge*

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 Drivers Views on Life and Everything...

World on the web. I took an old set down to the Croydon branch and they did a refill for £18.50 and it took 5 minutes with a guarantee that it would work or your money back. That's a £27.50 saving on each occasion. They have branches all over London and you can find more info on www.cartridgeworld.org.

Finally, I was recently surprised to receive a recorded delivery letter from M&O regarding my warranty on the TX4. It laid out what LTI expected of me regards maintenance schedules and the recording of it, whilst promoting what servicing M&O do and what good value they are. I personally don't like being told that I have to go to a main dealer to get my cab serviced in order to keep my warranty valid, when this is actually not the case. You can go anywhere so long as you get an itemised receipt (including vat) and keep to LTI schedules, then there should not be a problem. You don't have to use LTI parts either. I phoned LTI and they suggested that I use their check-



sheets, which lists what needs to be done for use by my own garage. The part number is 980330 and can be obtained free of charge from M&O parts.

If you want to get in touch, it's Richard Potter in the subject line to Callsignmag@aol.com.

Richard Potter (T51)

Driving Touts off the Streets

Following Boris Johnson's decision as London Mayor to bring in a 'one strike and you're out' policy regarding any licensed driver caught tout-ing, LTI Vehicles, manufacturer of the TX4, is encouraging other local Councils to follow the Mayor's example.

An LTI spokesperson said in welcoming the Mayor's proposals: "According to Met Police statistics published by the London Mayor's office, unlicensed minicabs contribute to some of the most serious crime in London. Last year there was an average of seven sex attacks and rapes on women by illegal minicab drivers each month."

The spokesman ended by expressing the hope that other Councils, if they had not done so already,

would quickly follow the Mayor's example.

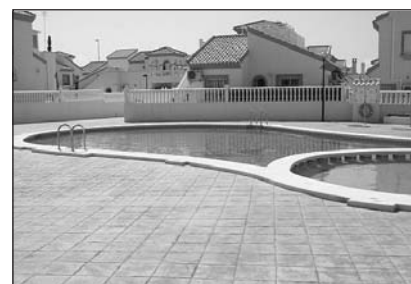
The Coventry company, who are currently celebrating their 60th year, said:

"Removing touts from our streets is a step in the right direction to ensure that everyone can feel safe when they travel by taxi. It's important that people using a taxi late at night can hire one with complete confidence. The best way to do this is to hail an instantly recognisable London style taxi or to book a private hire vehicle in advance using a reputable firm."



2-BEDROOM SPANISH VILLA FOR RENT

Village of Pinar de Campoverde (nr Pilar de la Horadada)



★ Sleeps 4 - 6 ★ two bathrooms ★ upstairs terrace
★ communal pool ★ Sky TV

many local bars-restaurants – ideal golfing weekend – 9 courses within 30 mins (including Polaris World) – 20 mins Murcia airport – very clean villa

Prices from £225 (includes final clean) OR £199 golf weekend (Thurs-Mon)
Email john@sheridanj.freesevice.co.uk or phone John (E35) on 07866 943 469

LICENSED TAXI DRIVERS? BLACK CAB DRIVERS? WHAT ARE WE?

The Call Sign Survey

Important to some and less so to others - are we Licensed London Taxi drivers or are we Black Cab drivers? We randomly asked some Dial-a-Cab drivers...

John Hall (K74): It isn't something I worry about any more. When people refer to black cab drivers, we know they're talking about us. It differentiates us from minicabs who are often referred to as taxis. The difference is that with black cab drivers, there is no mistake and the passenger knows they have a Licensed taxi driver!



John Connor (Y11): I've always referred to myself as a Licensed London taxi driver and have always been proud of that name. But you have to say that the name black cab driver nowadays suggests a real taxi driver as against someone on the private hire side. Go into most accounts where they use both and the receptionist will phone the passenger and tell them their "taxi" is waiting. If black cab driver means we're accepted as being the best, then we may not like it but we'll have to put up with it.



Terry Dodd (W15 and Credit Union President):

I'm proud of being a Licensed taxi driver and until minicabs were licensed, I always referred to myself as a Licensed taxi driver. But now I believe that the term black cab driver differentiates us from private hire. It's a losing battle anyway because everyone calls us black cab drivers anyway, so why fight it?

Bill Gillette (K31):

I don't like the expression black cab driver because it no longer accurately describes what we do - ie drive a black cab. I consider myself to be a Licensed taxi driver, but there are far more important things in life to worry about. If people want to call us black cab drivers, then it doesn't really bother me that much.



John Dixon (B67):

Does it bother me being called a black cab driver? In a word... no! That's what we're called wherever you go and everyone knows who it refers to. So why fight it...



Terry Brosnan (V77):

I think the expression black cab driver only really refers to London taxi drivers, as a consequence the two are really the same and if someone calls us a black cab driver, they really mean Licensed taxi driver anyway! Does it bother me? No...



Stanley Roth (Y53):

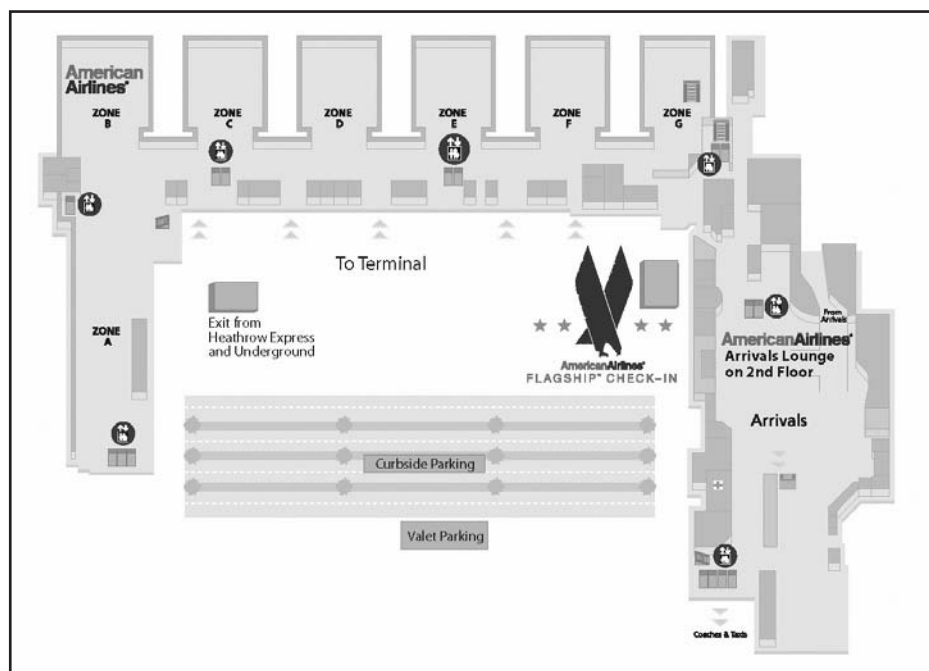
I am not a black cab driver, I am white Jewish and proud of it and I do not drive a black taxi, it is a red LPG Metro. I will always be a Licensed taxi driver because that's what I do. Calling me a black cab driver won't change my life, but I will still be a Licensed taxi driver...



American Airlines...

New Flagship set down for first and business class passengers

American Airlines now offers an exclusive check-in service at Heathrow Airport for first and business class passengers. Located away from the crowds for a more



private, relaxing check-in, first and business class passengers can now experience the new Flagship Check-in. The set down point for this service is adjacent to Terminal 3 and offers Flagship passengers a drive-up and drop-off convenience. They can then use a self-service kiosk or meet with American Airlines highly trained staff who will assist them with checking bags, upgrades, ticketing, seat requests and connecting flight information. They can then continue to the Admirals Club (first and business class passengers) or Flagship Lounge (first class passengers) until their departure.

Passengers flying on American between London and the US in first or business class, as well as oneworld Emerald and Executive Platinum members, are invited to enjoy the convenience of Flagship Check-in.

The next time your DaC passenger wants American Airline at Heathrow and expressly asks for their Flagship Check-in, you'll know where to go.

'Wedding bells, wedding bells. What a world of happiness their harmony foretells!'

My daughter had a romantic proposal of marriage on bended knee at Niagara Falls last month. She accepted, dear readers, which is just as well as her handsome young man, Paul, would doubtless have thrown himself over the Falls without a barrel if she hadn't. Ahh! Hearts and flowers and the words of *Edgar Allan Poe*, quoted above. But is it true love – or just an opportunity to spend a year shopping?

Venue hire, cake, shoes, invitations, new suits for the men. No, I told my son, your existing suit will not do, it's deceased effects from Oxfam and however little worn, would be bad luck. Flowers, hairdresser, live music, photographer; open your wallet in a strong wind.

My daughter is busy getting her ring adjusted as it is a family heirloom and dreaming of setting up home with her husband for the first time. Unusually these days, they haven't lived together, as they have never had work in the same part of the country.

For my part, obviously, my thoughts wander to what might be in it for me? Sons-in-law are, I think, supposed to mend your car and help you out. When the happy couple rolled up at our place, I folded young Paul in loving, motherly arms, saying: "You'll be wondering what little jobs need doing around the flat." But he was saying something simultaneously, which sounded like: "Now I can call you mom." This will tell you first that he is from across the Atlantic, which is fine, but second, that we may be at cross-purposes when it comes to his role in my life.

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

Back Seat *Driver*



I already have a son. I have a partner too, the fearless *Dial-a-Cabbie*, Glen. They are both fabulous when I get the pleasure of being with them, which isn't as much as I'd like. What I **don't** have is an odd job man. The railings are rusting. I need help moving some heavy garden rubbish. Champagne and parties are lovely, but what exactly is your fiancé's skill-set, my dear? Maybe I am already the mother-in-law from hell before the wedding date has even been set? Maybe I'll become the butt of all the mother-in-law jokes, with cause! If that happens, though, I'll take it on the chin, hoping that

nature will take its course and however tyrannical I may appear now, in a few years I'll morph into a dear old granny before you can say: "The Olympics have started." You never know.

It's interesting what people say when they hear the news, or get emailed the announcement we put in *The Telegraph*. Some think Glen is going to taxi the wedding guests around with ribbons and flowers on his old, but smart, Metrocab. Of course he won't! He'll be eating and taking photos and asking people if the lady vicar who is doing the service is a lesbian and enjoying himself in his own way. Don't people ever give taxi drivers a break?

And despite intending to carry on all the mother-in-law traditions, I won't interfere with any of the wedding planning at all. Well, perhaps I do have two very small requirements – *Love Me Tender* by Elvis has to be played in the church, obviously, and no one gets in wearing jeans, even if I have to supply proper trousers myself and de-bag any callow youth who turns up in denims. That's not a lot to ask, is it?

Till later...

Love Poppy xxx

Livingstone Deliberately Obstructed Traffic!

Shock ABD report criticises previous mayor

The Association of British Drivers (ABD) is an organisation that is run on a voluntary basis and which has the objective to lobby for the beleaguered British motorist. In a shock press release, it claims that previous Mayor, Ken Livingstone deliberately obstructed traffic through excessive traffic light systems and other road problems.

The ABD claim is based on a *Transport for London* report which states that despite 70,000 fewer cars a day entering the central zone and 30,000 fewer in the Western Extension, congestion in both of these areas is every bit as bad as it was before the introduction of congestion charging.

Some of this is down to road works, but the report admits that many traffic light schemes reduced road and junction capacity and publicly confirms what previously was only admitted behind closed doors - obstructing traffic was a deliberate policy.

The ABD's **Nigel Humphries** said: "This latest report on the London congestion charge demonstrates the fundamental dishonesty of all road pricing proposals. They claim that by paying even more money to use the roads, drivers will benefit from lower congestion. But London has proved that anti-car authorities and pressure groups will simply not allow this to happen. They just increase the number of traffic lights and reduce the road space available until drivers are just paying through the



Ken Livingstone: ABD claim he deliberately obstructed traffic?

nose to sit in the same jams as before."

ABD's report continued: "The crazy transport schemes of Ken Livingstone and his friends have brought London to a halt - they put in bus lanes to give the bus priority, but then they louse up the junctions with *pedestrian priority* measures which negate all the advantages to buses as well as hitting car drivers with a double whammy of delays. These problems are not confined to London - with or without road pricing they are endemic in every city in the UK."

They add that Boris Johnson has made a start by reviewing the flow implications of all proposed schemes, announcing the end of bendy buses and consulting on the Western

extension, but needs to go further and among other things, the ABD proposed the following:

- A major programme of investment in trunk roads and junctions to remove conflict between heavy traffic and vulnerable road users by means of underpasses and pedestrian / cyclist bridges / tunnels. Costs should be paid via the congestion charge, which should then be phased out following completion.
- All bus/taxi lanes to be reviewed to ensure that they do not restrict overall road capacity. This means no bus lanes through junctions or across pelican crossings, which halve the amount of traffic that can pass when there are no buses or taxis on the road.
- Removal of at least 20% of the traffic lights in central London by identifying those that do nothing but obstruct traffic flow.
- Redesign all *forward* stop line schemes for cyclists. These are ill named as they really are *backward* stop lines for motorists and reduce capacity at traffic light junctions, irrespective of whether any cyclists are there. Forward stop lines for bikes should be just that - in front of the normal stop line - and should not place cyclists in front of the traffic.
- Reversal of ruinous schemes such as Trafalgar Square, which reduce road capacity and create huge jams, mostly comprising buses and taxis.
- Removal of all 20mph speed limits imposed on main roads.

Whatever happened to the CR5???

What with LTI's FX3s, 4s, Fairways, TX1s, 2s, 4s, their variants and with the launch of KPM's Mercedes Vito taxi, do any of you remember when the rarely seen, but much talked about **CR5** new-style London taxi was being trialled on the streets? This was the first London PCO style taxi to be designed from the very start to be wheelchair accessible. The body style closely resembled that of the full-size Range Rover, indeed many alleged it was made using the same body pressings. Of the two prototypes seen driving about, one was painted in that biscuit-sand colour so frequently seen on Range Rovers before they became upmarket 4x4s. The CR5 even boasted the same split tailgate as a Range Rover.

Much of the early road testing was carried out in Hanley, near Stoke-on-Trent, no doubt to stop rumours about a new London taxi, which could have slowed down sales of the FX4. What was unusual for anything connected to the London taxi trade was the CR5 being given a substantial government development grant to help with the wheelchair accessibility. Remember this is several years before any taxi had to be wheelchair accessible by law in order to be passed by the PCO!

Rumours started and questions were asked about what was happening to this somewhat

"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...

revolutionary design, but without any response from the manufacturer the future of the CR5 seemed to be in doubt. Many wondered if it would ever be made. The sand coloured prototype was occasionally seen on London's streets, usually in the vicinity of Westminster and the 'Gasworks.' At the same time, questions on the progress of the CR5 were being asked in Parliament, but MPs were given the usual non-committal answer: *"The facts pertaining to this project are a matter of business confidentiality and so cannot be revealed."*

The lack of answers annoyed various interested parties, including those who had said yes to funding wheelchair ramp developmental grants, running into many tens of thousands. With no production and delivery dates in sight, they tried in vain to get substantiated answers.

Then a 5-days a week TV programme - *Reporting London* - took an interest in the non-appearance of the CR5 taxi. A young lady reporter was sent to interview the Chairman of the manufacturing parent company to ask him whether London was ever going to be able to hire the increasingly expensive development grant funded CR5. And if so, when?

The answer she was given by the Chairman caused a mixture of amusement and incredulity to those of us in the London cab trade who were buying, selling, running, and maintaining London taxis. His answer was: *"We will not put the CR5 on the market until it has been thoroughly tested and proven to be 100% reliable for use as a taxi in London. This is what our customers expect and get from us."*

For years we had been fettling variants of the FX3 and 4 to make them reliable, with all sorts of modifications including extra fans to cure overheating in traffic, cylinder block fractures, leaks, rust and draughts - to name just a few. Most complaints made while in warranty took you off the road without any form of compensation or loan cab and implied problems getting them seen to if too many complaints were made. Ah, the good old days!

About two weeks after the programme was shown on *Thames Television*, an announcement was made in Parliament. A partial refund of the grants given to design and make the CR5 were to be made by the manufacturer and no more work was to be carried out on the project, as it was likely to be too expensive to be able to sell it to its main market - London - as a purpose built taxi. Future efforts would be centred on further developing the FX4. As far as I know, half the grants were then refunded.

A few years later, the Metrocab came along and taxi manufacturer's attitudes began to change for the better. So as has often been said, a bit of fair competition never hurts the customer, but it can have a hell of an effect on the supplier.

Be lucky and be careful out there...

Sunset Strip

30% KoL applicants from black/ethnic backgrounds

Figures released by the PCO show that candidates taking the Knowledge are increasingly reflecting the capital's diverse communities. Since the launch of a TfL campaign in 2005 to encourage more applications from these groups, the proportion of applications from people from black and ethnic minority backgrounds has increased by more than 50%. 1,300 licensed taxi drivers now serve London from BME communities out of a total of well over 25,000.

Information booklets about how to become a taxi driver have been distributed at post offices, community centres, libraries and job centres across London and publicised via a poster campaign. The PCO also ran road shows, attended events and job fairs supporting the initiative.

Transport commissioner Peter Hendy said: "Black taxis are an instantly recognisable part of London life and an incredibly important part of our transport network. It is a welcome reflection of the hard work that TfL has been putting in, that this world-renowned service is now becoming truly reflective of the diverse communities it serves."

The PCO is also striving to attract more women to the licensed taxi trade. Currently, fewer than 4% of knowledge applicants are women



TFL Transport Commissioner Peter Hendy



- 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,



Transport for London

Consultation on Future Arrangements for Taxi Vehicle Licensing Inspections

The Public Carriage Office (PCO) is consulting on the future arrangements for taxi (and private hire) vehicle licensing inspections and specifically on the mid-year safety inspection for taxis (and the requirement for private hire vehicles to have a mid-year MoT test). This fulfils the Mayor's commitment to consult on the abolition of the mid-year safety inspections for taxis.

The consultation document can be found on the *Transport for London* web-site at www.tfl.gov.uk/pco or copies can be collected from the ground floor reception at the PCO. We would welcome responses from anyone who may be affected by the proposals. The deadline for submitting responses is **Friday 24 October 2008**.

Responses can be submitted in the following ways:

- Email:
PCO.Consultation@tfl.gov.uk
- Fax: **020 7126 1897**
- Write:
**Taxi and PHV Licensing
Inspection Consultation,
Public Carriage Office,
15 Penton Street,
London N1 9PU**

Until further notice, the existing conditions of licensing for taxis remain unchanged (as do the regulations in respect of PHVs). This means that all taxis must continue to have a mid-year inspection (and all PHVs older than 12 months at the date of the annual licensing inspection must continue to have a mid-year MoT test).

Any changes to taxi (and PHV) licensing inspections would be introduced following consideration and approval by the TfL Board.

Call Sign comment:

If you are happy with the mid-year inspection, then you need do no more because there are enough garage proprietors in the trade who will battle hard to keep it. It suits their business and brings them in added finance – from you! Some even have their own newspaper to push those claims in a

way that makes them sound reasonable. They'll argue that it saves facing occasional on-street inspections. If however, you believe that our vehicles are already very well kept and that the yearly overhaul, together with on-street inspections, has always been enough for vehicles that are far safer than they have ever been anyway, then you MUST respond to the consultation document.

It's no good relying on others, because then the Mayor's promise to abolish mid-year inspections will fail to pass the consultation stage and we will end up with two overhauls a year AND occasional on-street inspections. After all, we currently have the safety check, yet PCO officers seem to be out there most nights.

Do not accept "increased" half-yearly

failure percentages as automatically being mechanical. Many are for technicalities or even incorrect forms taken to SGS. Neither should you be taken in by garage claims that a mid-year check will make overhauls cheaper. A well-maintained taxi is a well maintained taxi and if presented with the attributes that SGS are looking for, then it should pass anyway. If it fails, you can assume it probably would have failed even with a mid-year check.

It is up to you, the Dial-a-Cab owner driver and the person who pays the bills – and yes, the person who pay the bills to those who would like to keep the check!

As we said, if you are happy with the mid-year check, just look the other way and it will be with us for ever...

Alan Fisher

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 taxi while their own vehicle is being worked on.

Speaking to *Call Sign*, M&O Dealer Relations 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...

FANCY GETTING FIT? *And at times to suit you?*

Personal fitness training and boxercise
in Rotherhithe
Flexible training hours
Special rates for Dial-a-Cab drivers

**For more info call John Brightwell
07952 215 345 or
email johnbrightwellmfc@yahoo.co.uk
AND YOUR FIRST SESSION IS FREE!**

According to a Manganese Bronze interim statement, production levels are being cut at LTI's Coventry plant but advance orders for international variants of the TX4 are flooding in. This section of their business is in connection with their joint Shanghai venture with Chinese car manufacturer Geely Automobile Holdings. Together, the two companies formed the Shanghai LTI Automobile Company.

Manganese Bronze, who trade as London Taxis International, had claimed to have orders for 500 vehicles that were to be delivered over three years and which were being built in partnership with Geely. By May this year, there were an additional 2,500 orders added.

MB said in its interim results statement that yet another 3000 have now been added to the total. "This brings the total to over 6,000 London taxis over a three-year period with deliveries commencing in early 2009," the statement said. "In total we have signed agreements with partners in 11 markets spanning the Middle East, Africa, Scandinavia, Eastern and Western Europe."

MB is on record as saying that the Geely deal had secured LTI's long-term future by allowing volume production of the TX4 at a "significantly lower" cost and means that the company can penetrate international markets that were previously closed to its low volume, high cost, UK operation.

At home, UK results weren't so good as like many others, LTI has been hit by the so-called credit crunch with many taxi drivers who would probably have bought a new cab, now delaying the decision. That showed by MB's

Manganese Bronze Uk Sales Down...

But global prospects are up!



MB CEO John Russell with international Partner Li Shufu, Chairman of Geely...

UK turnover in the six months to June 30 falling by 7% to £42.4 million. Actual cab sales fell by 13% to 1,169 vehicles over that same period. However, it is probably fair to say that the launch of the TX4 last year as its most successful ever vehicle, could have given a slightly false comparison. TX4 earnings have also been hit by the strength of the Euro, making the Italian VM engines more expensive to purchase.

Production at LTI's Holyhead Road factory has seen a drop of around 15% to approx 2,000 vehicles a year. The group's Chief Executive Officer, John Russell said:

"UK sales performance continues to be challenging as drivers' confidence to commit themselves to the purchase of a new taxi remains weak due to uncertainty about the general state of the economy. The actions we have taken to reduce our build rate and take out cost have been timely and effective."

Interim pre-tax profits rose to £1.5 million from £700,000 in the same period last year on revenue of £42.4 million, down from £45.5 million last time. The company said it expected sales in the second half of the year to follow the normal seasonal pattern and be below those seen in the first six months, adding that their break-even point had been significantly reduced and that the group had available cash and no long-term borrowings. The statement went on:

"These factors put the group in a good position to handle any future UK market challenges. In the short-term, management will continue to focus on operating costs and procurement savings from Chinese sourcing to offset any lower volume in the UK business."

LTI is currently looking to develop an electric-powered cab for next year (TX4E) and a fleet of hydrogen fuel cell taxis in time for the 2012 London Olympics.

Asking TfL about...

Last month, Chas Kissin quizzed the Mayor's office about licence fees, minicabs and pedicabs. This month he asks about London's traffic problems and the Mayor's promise in *Call Sign* to adjust traffic light phasing – especially at Trafalgar Square, Piccadilly Circus and St Giles High Street. He also brought up the pollution this traffic causes...

Andrew McBride is a Customer Service Advisor for TfL's Surface Transport department. He answers Chas's question...

"In managing London's very sophisticated traffic lights system, we seek to balance the needs of motorists and pedestrians within a heavily over-subscribed road network to ensure safety of all road users while keeping London moving. As it is early days yet for the Mayor, we shall be discussing with his Transport Advisor the guidelines and mechanisms we use to do this in the context of the Mayor's manifesto aspirations."

I understand *Call Sign's* concerns, particularly those relating to the amount of pollution caused by the vehicles in these areas. I'm sure you can appreciate that traffic has increased exponentially in the last decades and the road network in London is almost at full capacity. Moreover, it is not our aim to inhibit the flow of traffic via the use of re-phasing mechanisms and I regret that you see this to be the case.

Since the creation of TfL, we have been endeavouring to curb congestion and traffic growth by encouraging and favouring more sustainable modes of transport like cycling, walking and public transport. We are concerned about the deterioration of the urban environment, whether it is in the City or in the Greater London area. We hope that the effect of our efforts will be perceivable soon.

Thank you for raising the issue. Your comments as experienced London motorists will always be welcome."



Call Sign

September 2008

Editor: Alan Fisher

Address: 39-47 East Road, London, N1 6AH

Tel: 0207 251 0581 **Fax:** 0207 553 7293

E/mail: callsignmag@aol.com

Web Site: www.taxicab.co.uk/dialacabmag

Printers: John Brown Printing 112 Portland Rd, London SE25 4PJ

Design: Aldam Publications,

Tel: 07958 300 428

Email: danny.fresco@dsl.pipex.com

Views and opinions expressed in Call Sign must not automatically be assumed to represent those of the Editor or Board of Management.
No part of Call Sign may be reproduced either manually or electronically without the express permission of the Editor



Wendell White drives a radio taxi in Denver, Colorado and writes the occasional column for Call Sign. He is the current TLPA Taxi Driver of the Year...

Out And About In Denver

Democratic National Convention in Denver

Our Independence Day (July 4th) was a three-day weekend, so I took the opportunity to do some things that needed to be done around the house. Being manual labour, I had lots of time to think.

For months, Denver media has been focused on the *Democratic National Convention* that was held here last week and thinking of the 'push' to develop a good attitude among cab drivers, there have been several sessions to turn local cabbies into *Good-Will Ambassadors*. Lots of luck needed there!

Recalling an old time driver, Don Spahn, I had to laugh about what sort of ambassador he would have been. My little Italian Grandma Rosa would have said: "That-a Donnie, he's-a Diamond in the Rough."

I didn't know Don back then, but have heard stories about his youth. Reared in a tough part of town, his were the usual youthful antics and he was often recalcitrant against authority and the law. As an adult, he frequented the horse and dog tracks and got into some high-stake poker games. Even to one encounter I knew of when he was deeply in debt to a loan shark with Mafia connections.

His physical appearance was intimidat-

ing. Medium stature, as broad as he was tall, facial expressions suggesting he could take care of himself in any circumstance. Despite a ready smile, his voice was gruff.

My chuckle was in recalling the story about him driving his cab. Starting about 7am, he turned his radio to a broadcast of *Ollie North*, then switched stations to catch *Gordon Liddy*, followed immediately by *Rush Limbaugh*! Just the fact he listened to so much *conservative* talk radio surprised me.

Don told me he'd just picked up a couple of young fellows in the rough part of town. One of them said: "Turn off that damned radio!"

Wrong approach! Instead, he turned the volume higher and admonished the pas-

senger: "You really should listen to what this guy says! You might learn something and if you pay attention it might even make you both a better person and a better citizen!"

Remembering that incident, I had to imagine what if Don still drove a cab and during the Democrat National Convention someone attempted to convert him to some of the liberal arguments we have heard in recent months. And what sort of 'response' such an effort might provoke from *Don, the Good-Will Ambassador*...

Wendell White
Call Sign Online
Denver, Colorado

TAXI DRIVER OF THE YEAR DINNER/DANCE

The Taxi Driver of the Year Charity Fund presents their annual
Dinner / Dance on Saturday 29th November 2008

The 35th Taxi Driver of the Year dinner dance will be held at:

Crowne Plaza London Docklands
Western Gateway, Royal Victoria Dock
London E16 1AL

Reception 6.15pm, dinner 6.45pm with a 4-course meal and half bottle of wine per person.

Tickets £60 per head includes complementary drink on arrival.

With your support The Taxi Driver of the Year Charity Fund is able to make donations to the taxi trade charities that support us. Don't be the one to miss one of the great nights out. Come along and join in with good food, great company and a wonderful time.

Please complete and return to the Hon Chairman
with cheques made out to TDYCF

Russell Poluck, 5 St Brides Avenue, Edgware, Middlesex HA8 6BT

RSVP: 28.10.08

Dress: Smart

Please Print:

Name:.....

Title:.....

Company (if applicable):.....

Address:.....

Tel:.....

Email:.....

Number of tickets required @ £60 per head:.....

Dietary requirements: Please tick: Veg.....Fish.....Meat.....

For further information contact: Russell Poluck 07850 056 765 - Tel/fax 020 8952 1357

Registered with the Charities Commission No: 1000761

'Remembering those less fortunate than ourselves'

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

MAILSHOT

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

First electric taxi?

I wonder who the bright spark was that claimed the UK's 'first electric taxi' was at the Motor Show (*Aug Call Sign* page 8)? Well, it was a false statement - in fact it was 110 years wrong! In August 1897, 12 Bersey Electric Cabs left their garage in Juxon Street, Vauxhall, to ply for hire on the streets of London. The Bersey had a range of 30 miles and a speed of 9mph. The Bersey project lasted two years.

In 1908, the Electromobile put 20 cabs on the road with a range 45 miles (50% increase over the Bersey), but which was still 10 miles less than needed. As cabs, the Electromobile didn't last long either. In the late 1890s, New York, Paris, Berlin and other cities were putting electric cabs on the street. All finished with the advent of the petrol engine, which gave the cab a longer range and better speed. Now *Allied Vehicles* claim that the E7 has a range of up to 100 miles and a top speed of 60mph - not too great for a hurry up job to the airport!

I wonder if they looked at what happened in New York last year when the New York Taxi and Limousine Commission pulled the plug on the Electric taxi project because despite similar claims to those *Allied* are making, the ones in New York failed to do as stated.

The only cost effective way forward for the cab trade in all our cities is to use *BioMethane*. It would be a lot less expensive than using Lithium-ion batteries. In fact Mercedes, Fiat, Honda, Ford, Volvo, Opel and many others all produce and sell Natural Gas cars and vans.

Remember, the taxi is a go-anywhere vehicle and none of us would like to lose the job of a lifetime because of a stupid battery.

Stanley Roth (Y53)

Stanley has written an article in this issue on a vehicle that will run on compressed BioMethane fuel derived from landfill rubbish...Ed

Buck House Demo

I found the *Call Sign* article on the cab strike at the Buckingham Palace garden party very interesting. I especially liked the way you reported on both sides of the dispute. A good story well reported...

Jon Trevor (W94)

Thanks Jon. What I find interesting is how a newly married man to such

a gorgeous wife - albeit a Celtic supporter - has time to write to Call Sign! ...Ed

PH in the Royal

Parks

After reading your Editorial (*August Call Sign*) I'm still a bit confused. Are private hire vehicles now allowed in the Royal Parks? I've seen three in the past hour as I've driven through Regents Park and two by Buckingham Palace. I know you said that the situation applied in January and you'd heard nothing since, but it would be useful if we knew for certain...

Kevin Went (N15)

I spoke to TfL and they tell me that my synopsis was correct - ie private hire vehicles are still not allowed into the Royal Parks. TfL also said that there is currently a consultation in which taxi and private hire representatives are being asked for their opinion. My opinion is that if the PCO are correct and there are currently 50,000 licensed private hire vehicles in London and they are to be allowed into the parks, then the traffic along The Mall will stretch back to Marlborough Gate as a normality. It should be pointed out that the PCO's support for allowing PH into the parks is because they now deal with all licensed vehicles and not just taxis ...Ed

LCDC

I am writing to notify you that both the former Chairman of the LCDC, Alan Fleming, and former LCDC Treasurer and Membership Secretary, David Cohen, have now cancelled their membership of the above with immediate effect.

Our decision has not been taken lightly and has been the result of recent events.

David Cohen (E94)

W101 hotel

Re W101, our island rank for Mayfair accounts. Up until a year or so ago, I used to be a regular on what was then the Mayfair Hotel as it was a reasonably straight hotel ie first cab, first job. It suited us as cab drivers for local account work and if we had not yet accepted a job off the radio by the time we got to the point of the rank, you might be lucky with a flyer or possibly not so lucky with a local. Either way it was a

fair gamble. Not any more; when it closed for refurbishment as the Mayfair Hotel, the BoM closed the rank whilst ongoing work was completed and our accounts still got covered very well from W1SW or its backup zones. Now we have a situation where the hotel has reopened as the Edwardian Radisson with many new staff and porters and a concierge being 100% bent or crooked - call it what you will. I know very well they are using private hire for LAPs and any other job that gives them a commission. I'm also ashamed to say many of our own so-called 'black cabs' are paying a bung to get a decent job while we Dial-a-Cab drivers are servicing the hotel. Anyone passing by this hotel rank will see it is made up by at least 50% DaC drivers. So my question to the BoM is why should we be asked to rank and service this hotel, when the rank could be moved to a hotel say like the Dorchester, Intercontinental, Hilton etc. They at least may appreciate our services as these hotels are reasonably straight. I don't like it to be seen that we DaC drivers rank on this hotel with the BoM's blessing. I've voted with my own feet, I don't use that hotel anymore.

Pat Keefe (G01)

Keith Cain responds: I will ask the Board to discuss this at the next Board meeting. I agree with Pat's sentiments and I for one do not want to force drivers into having to sit on a hotel that is not 100%.

The Utility Warehouse

I have just gone into business with *The Utility Warehouse* in my spare time and wondered if anyone out there would be interested in it? You can read about it on-line and it is a way of getting your services much cheaper. The more services you have with them, the cheaper and more discount you get, with the average household being able to save up to £500 a year when they take gas, electricity, home phone and internet.

If any DaC driver is interested, either drop me an email to bardin@btopenworld.com or call me on 07811 474 516 and I'll be happy to meet up with you to give you some more info. We changed over 3 months ago and have saved £17 a month alone just on the internet. You don't have to worry about any paperwork, as I will complete it all for you.

Look forward to hearing from soon.

Tony Bardin (R09)



MAILSHOT

Mailshot continued from page 38

DaC Credit Union

I have just returned from holiday... where has all the work gone? It must be August again!

But the purpose of this letter is to offer a big thank-you to all at the DaC Credit Union for dealing with my cash flow problem so promptly. What a great job the Credit Union do and so much more efficiently than my bank!

Be lucky all...

Anthony Beaumont (B20)

You're right Anthony, the DACCU do a brilliant job and it just astonishes me that everyone isn't a member ...Ed

Spurs to Uganda?

Re the *Call Sign* story about Steve Bryant flying to Uganda to present the kids with Spurs shirts, haven't those people already suffered enough without giving them Spurs shirts! They may well say: "We've heard of Dial-a-Cab... but who is this team called Tottenham!"

Richard Barford (R39)

Thank you Richard. If ever you appear in this mag again (last time was when you won a free 'gold' spec taxi) remember that modern technology gives me the ability to change people's facial looks! ...Ed

Thank you DaC...

I'm sorry I can't remember the name of your extremely helpful Dial-a-Cab operator who helped me regarding my lost property. I had taken my granddaughters to visit Buckingham Palace and just as we were entering the Gallery, one of them realised that she had left her bag in the taxi. She was the only one of us who had brought her mobile phone – and that was in the bag! We had to return home to SW3 to report the lost bag to DaC and then returned to the palace – just in time for the last tour of the day. When we later arrived home at 6.30pm, there was a message to say that the bag had been found and that the DaC driver had delivered it to my husband's office. We could hardly believe it! Mary, the granddaughter, was so relieved and thrilled.

We just wanted to say a big thank you to the DaC operator and driver for their helpfulness and efficiency in retrieving and returning the precious bag. It was such a happy ending to our rather blighted afternoon. Well done to Dial-a-Cab and their lost property department.

With gratitude and great appreciation,
Mary Higgins and Pamela Bullmore
London SW3

Thanks for taking the time to write.

I'm pleased it all worked out in the end ...Ed

Tony Gillam and DaC

I recently read an article in the July issue of The Badge newspaper, proclaiming a court victory over DaC in a court case concerning Tony Gillam. I assume that you have read it too. What concerns me is the accusation that Brian Rice left out certain facts when writing about the case in the May edition of *Call Sign*. I know that the LCDC have their own axe to grind concerning Brian and DaC, so perhaps Brian would like to clear up any uncertainties about this matter.

Brian With (Y84)

Brian Rice replies: Unfortunately Brian, I have not read the piece you are referring to. However, I would like to make it crystal clear that I stand by every word that was written by me in the May issue of *Call Sign*. You obviously realise that I have been around long enough and have enough experience, that I would put nothing in print regarding a legal matter unless it was vetted and deemed to be true and correct by our legal advisers. Consequently, as I have previously stated, I stand by everything that I have written and it was

written with the knowledge and consent of our legal advisers and was a true and accurate statement regarding the course of events. It is now up to you to decide who is correct!

Ed's note: You can read the May issue in the Call Sign online library...

A WEE CALL SIGN COMMENT

I sometimes think that people perceive us as idiots. Westminster Council have informed us that drivers caught having a wee in the streets – especially around Warwick Square, Pimlico – will be reported to the PCO who may then pass those names to the Met. Fair enough! Would you want to come out of your house to see someone urinating against your favourite tree?

Then the Council in their wisdom slap a 50p charge on using the toilets along Victoria Embankment. Do we all live in the same world...?
Alan Fisher

THE SALIERI RESTAURANT

376 Strand, WC2

We Invite Dial-a-Cab drivers and their guests to our restaurant where you can partake of the finest food and wine

And as a thank-you for helping our clients come and go over the years, we are happy to be able to offer you a genuine 25% discount on your bill

We are certain that you will be delighted



Please bring along your badge or Bill as ID

Salieri Restaurant

376 Strand, WC2

Reservations: 020 7836 1318

FREE DIESEL!



Step 1 - Visit our Brewery Road Showroom with your currently licensed TXII, TX1, Fairway or Metrocab

Step 2 - Let us give you a Part Exchange Valuation

Step 3 - Fill in a no obligation Finance Proposal*

Step 4 - Receive your no obligation quote on a new TX4 or a used TXII

Step 5 - Drive away with your **FREE Diesel!!**

Demand for good, clean, well cared for used cabs is strong, so at Mann & Overton we're keenly looking for such trade-ins to replace our rapidly selling stock. If you've owned your current cab for 2-years or more, let us show you how really affordable it could be to drive away in a new 58-plated TX4 or one of our superb Quality Assured Used TXII's and while we do, we'll take your cab and fill it up with diesel **FOR FREE!*** There's absolutely no obligation to purchase, your free diesel is our thank you for coming in to see us!

*Offer open only to London PCO licensed retail owner-drivers with a licensed cab first registered or purchased before 1st September 2006. Proof of ownership may be required. Only one free diesel fill-up per customer. Finance Subject to Status. Business Users Only. No Purchase necessary. This is a strictly limited promotion which may be withdrawn at any time.

Mann & Overton London
39 - 41 Brewery Road, London N7 9QH
T: 020 7700 0888 F: 020 7700 6676
E: london@mannandoverton.com
W: www.mannandoverton.com



Mann & Overton