

January 2011



# Call Sign

From the home of Dial-a-Cab International



*A young John Boca in 1960, now fifty years on and another ODRTS stalwart goes to that cab rank in the sky*



*More staff members celebrate long service at DaC*



# NASH'S NUMBERS

From Alan Nash (A95)

It's the traditional visit to the theatre time of the year again. Here's what's on at the theatre plus, where possible, I have included the "burst" times. Happy New Year...

Show	Theatre	Burst	Show	Theatre	Burst
39 Steps, The	Criterion Theatre	21:50	Julius Caesar (RSC)	Roundhouse opens 6/1/11	
As You Like It (RSC)	Roundhouse opens 13/1/11		King Lear	Donmar Warehouse	22:30
Barbers opera	Trafalgar Studios 2 opens 11/1/11		King Lear (RSC)	Roundhouse opens 21/1/11	
Apocalypse No	Cottesloe, National closes 5/1/11		Legally Blonde The Musical	Savoy Theatre	22:15
Beauty and The Beast	Almeida opens 13/1/11		Les Miserables	Queen's Theatre	22:30
Becky Shaw	Wyndham's closes 8/1/11		Leslie Jordan Trip Down the Pink Carpet	Apollo opens 27/1/11	
Bill Bailey - Dandelion Mind	Victoria Palace	22:25	Lion King, The	Lyceum Theatre	22:10
Billy Elliot : The Musical	Comedy closes 15/1/11		Love Never Dies	Adelphi Theatre	22:00
Birdsong	Barbican closes 22/1/11		Love Story	Duchess Theatre	
Black Watch	Phoenix Theatre	22:30	Mamma Mia	Prince Of Wales Theatre	22:00
Blood Brothers	Old Vic Theatre		Master Builder, The	Almeida closes 8/1/11	
Cause Celebre	Noel Coward opens 28/1/11		Men Should Weep	Lyttelton, National closes 10/1/11	
Cherry Orchard, The	Cambridge Theatre	22:30	Million Dollar Quartet	Noel Coward Theatre	
Chicago	Comedy opens 22/1/11		Mousetrap, The	St Martin's Theatre	21:50
Children's Hour, The	Trafalgar Studios 2 closes 8/1/11		Oliver!	Theatre Royal Drury Ln closes 8/1/11	22:00
Christmas Carol, A	Sadler's Wells closes 23/1/11		Onassis	Novello Theatre	21:30
Cinderella	Wyndham' opens 28/1/11		Phantom Of The Opera	Her Majesty's Theatre	22:20
Clybourne Park	Apollo closes 22/1/11	21:45	Potted Panto	Vaudeville closes 9/1/11	
Country Girl, The	Noel Coward closes 15/1/11	22:15	Priscilla Queen Of The Desert	Palace Theatre	22:00
Deathtrap	Aldwych Theatre	22:15	Return Of Ulysses, The	Young Vic Theatre	
Dirty Dancing	Playhouse Theatre		Rivals, The	Haymarket, Theatre Royal	22:00
Dreamboats & Petticoats	Trafalgar Studios 1 Theatre		Sandra Bernhard: Whatever It Takes	Leicester Square Theatre	
End Of The Rainbow	Olivier, National closes 23/1/11		Season's Greetings	Lyttelton, National Theatre	
Fela!	Trafalgar Studios 2 opens 11/1/11		Snow White And The Seven Poofs	Leicester Sq B'ment closes 9/1/11	
Fitzrovia Radio Hour, The	Shaftesbury closes 15/1/11	21:40	Stomp	Ambassadors Theatre	21:45
Flashdance The Musical	Old Vic Theatre	22:30	Three Sisters	Noel Coward 24 & 25/1/11 only	
Flea In Her Ear	Royal Ct Downstairs closes 15/1/11		Thriller Live	Lyric Theatre	22:00
Get Santa	Young Vic Theatre closes 15/1/11		Twelfth Night	Cottesloe, National opens 11/1/11	
Glass Menagerie, The	Piccadilly Theatre ( Friday burst 23:00)	22:00	Vernon God Little	Young Vic opens 27/1/11	
Grease	Lyttelton, National opens 25/1/11		War Horse	New London	21:25
Greenland	Garrick Theatre closes 16/1/11		We Will Rock You	Dominion Theatre	22:20
Gruffalo, The	Olivier, National closes 26/1/11		When We Are Married	Garrick Theatre	21:40
Hamlet	Garrick Theatre		Wicked	Apollo Victoria Theatre	22:20
Hurly Burly Show, The	Vaudeville Theatre		Woman In Black, The	Fortune Theatre	22:00
Ideal Husband, An	Noel Coward opens 21/1/11		Woody Sez	Arts Theatre opens 13/1/11	
Into The Whirlwind	Prince Edward Theatre	21:50	Yes, Prime Minister	Gielgud Theatre closes 15/1/11	
Jersey Boys					

Please Note that "What's On" and the 70+ page UID are now stored on the [www.myfav.co.uk](http://www.myfav.co.uk) website. Not only will you find this a very useful launch pad to the rest of the internet, but you can access the above very simply. You need to register. Step 1. Load [www.myfav.co.uk](http://www.myfav.co.uk). Step2. Click 'Register', enter your name, email address and in the 'code' box enter 'taxi' then press submit. Step 3. Check your email for your temporary password. Step 4. Go back to [www.myfav.co.uk](http://www.myfav.co.uk) and click 'Log in', enter your email and password, which will now show the unlocked page "TAXI". If you make this your home page, every time you switch on your computer and launch the internet, you will have this information to hand - every time! Recommend this site and you will have the chance of winning a monthly prize. A genuine something for nothing...



# from the editor's desk

## End of another year...

Well, that's Christmas done for another year – a year I personally would rather forget following Linda's heart by-pass surgery just weeks after we moved home. It has ended with me being unable to work due to a mysterious infection that has turned my leg – from ankle to knee – a nasty shade of crimson in addition to it being covered in lumps and bumps. At times it has been so painful that I couldn't stand up on it let alone try to work – which at the time of writing I haven't for over a week. I'm on seven antibiotics a day, which are knocking me for six to such a degree that I awoke one night in a sweat having dreamed I had become an Arsenal supporter and that my leg was supposed to be red in order to match the player's shirts!

And then when awake, I suddenly realise that the New Year issue of *Call Sign* has to be produced in one week less than usual as the printers – unlike we cab drivers – don't work for the ten days following Christmas Eve! It isn't so much the production side, but the fact that I couldn't get out to see drivers – the only way that *Call Sign* operates. As a result I know very little, begging the question of how to fill up this page, let alone the rest of the magazine!

But we'll have a go...

## PCN result!

PCN expert **Barrie Segal** works for Dial-a-Cab and in doing so has literally slashed the amount of money this Society was paying out in PCNs each year.

Barrie recently attended a case at London's High Court that answered the question of when a radio taxi (yes, or radio minicab) was considered to have been legally hired and from which moment should that allow him to wait on London's "no parking" streets?

The decision would have far-reaching effects for Dial-a-Cab and radio circuits in general, but the end result turned out to be very satisfying and you can read Barrie's report inside this issue. It adds to the precedent set and reported on in the *September Call Sign* when Dial-a-Cab driver, **Monty Dobrin (B56)**, was issued with a PCN in W2 while stopping to read his trip offer as the sun shining onto his terminal stopped him seeing what the offer was. So he briefly pulled over, accepted the trip, wrote down the details and moved off again. Westminster Council claimed he should have looked for a meter, whereas the Arbitrator accepted that would not be possible in the 60 seconds given. More importantly, he set a precedent by saying that the trip offer was part of the trip.

Now another cab parking case – this time at the High Court itself – and the question of what was the necessary time needed for a cab driver to pick-up a passenger when they receive a pre-booked trip? The basics of a radio job are that the driver arrives, looks for his passenger, the passenger comes out from their premises, finds the cab and enters it. What if the passenger isn't quite ready yet or asks you to wait for a second passenger or even wants to scrub the trip? It all takes time and during that period the driver can only wait.

But when a High Court Judge comes out



and says the time taken looking for the passenger or waiting for the passenger to find their cab, is all a necessary part of the process of picking up – and that accordingly any parking tickets issued in those circumstances must be cancelled – I think we can claim that we're really getting somewhere.

On the same topic, you can also read inside this issue about the PCNs issued to Dial-a-Cab driver **Dave Raymond (F56)**, who unsurprisingly is rather fed up of receiving constant PCNs for brief stops. Dave happens to be diabetic, treated by tablets and he does occasionally have a need to get to a loo pretty quickly. Very often, that leads to a Penalty Charge Notice.

But things do seem to be changing – especially so far as radio trips are concerned. So even more importantly now, if you get a PCN whilst involved in a DaC trip, DON'T PAY IT! Just drop it into Nuala's office in Driver's Services. If you receive correspondence regarding a PCN, also get that to Nuala asap.

As for Dave Raymond, Westminster Council place great store on their disabled *TaxiCard* – and indeed they deserve great praise for their constant support of the scheme – yet they penalise diabetics such as Dave whose only crime is that they may need to "go" at shorter notice than the rest of us...

It could be that at long last, the London radio taxi trade is starting to win a few points over those councils who would rather earn money out of us than allow us to do what our job entails – provide a service to the public...

## DaC long service appreciation ceremonies

The latest batch of long service recognition ceremonies for Dial-a-Cab staff took place in mid-December and a report is inside this issue. This was the third such ceremony of 2010 and from what *Call Sign* has been told, the DaC staff at whom they are aimed have been delighted to be a part of the process.

The idea originated from DaC's *Human Resources* Department, where Manager **John Rogers** and assistant **Dionne Bennett** queried why an organisation with staff who seem to stay far longer than the average of other companies, were not recognised? The answer was as simple as that no one had ever suggested it.

The occasional staff member reaching 25

years has always been celebrated, but John and Dee are right in saying that nowadays ten years is also worth celebrating. There were several ten and fifteen years celebrations this month and although the staff involved do not receive anything that will change their lives, they get an enjoyable reception in the Board room where food and drink flow, a certificate stating how many years they have been with the Society, but perhaps more importantly, the knowledge that their loyalty to this company is appreciated.

## Mickey's amazing success

What more can I say about **Mickey Gordelier (ex-L27)** other than he makes me feel humble.

Together with **Ken Freeborn (W06)** and three other drivers who are sadly no longer with us, I worked for six years at St Josephs Hospice in Mare Street during the formation years of what turned into the *Macmillan Cancer Support*, so yes, I know a bit about what it's like in a hospice. Sadly, even without checking I know that many of our drivers will have had personal experience via a family member or close friend, of what life in a hospice involves.

Mickey was with DaC for over 20 years and says he enjoyed every minute. He enjoyed a great life and into his 50s, was now appreciating some of the benefits that you don't get in the early years when starting out.

I doubt that many of us can begin to imagine how Mickey and wife Sue must have felt when given the devastating news that he had *Motor Neurone Disease*, a condition that affects voluntary control of muscle activity including walking, breathing, even swallowing and speaking. Mickey was then told he probably had a maximum lifespan of 3 years left in front of him and that time period could even be as short as 12 months.

When he wrote to *Call Sign* in our *October* issue – via a nurse as he can no longer control his arms – explaining that he wanted to thank Greenwich & Bexley Cottage Hospice in Abbey Wood, where he is a patient, by launching an appeal to raise £30,000 to pay for an extra nurse, we were of course happy to publicise the cause, which also runs online.

The Hospice care is free of charge, but someone, somewhere has to stump up some dosh and sadly, appeals such as Mick's are the only way these amazing institutions have to raise most of their funding. Mick, who has never been afraid to utter the occasional word about any topic when it was needed, has now also put that ability onto a very moving appeal on the Hospice's website. If you feel you might like to help Mick, then details are with the article inside this issue. Mick's appeal is now over two thirds towards its' £30,000 target having already raised in excess of £20K. Anything I say is going to sound trite, but Mick, we raise our hats to you!

But going back to my time at St Joseph's, I came into contact with many hundreds of patients from 7-year old Sarah to a pair of 90-year olds. Over that period I saw two recoveries that had the medical staff baffled. They would never use the word miracle, but something amazing happened. You now know what I wish for you, Mick...

**Alan Fisher**  
callsignmag@aol.com

# reflections of the chairman

## Another New Year

It seems that I have only just finished my Chairman's report for December and the Editor is already chasing me for this January report! I have to submit it in the second week of December due to the printers taking an extended break over the Christmas period.

Consequently, at the time of writing I am unaware of how the final two weeks prior to Christmas went, however it does look quite promising and also the start of our financial year was an improvement over last year. The first three months of our financial year showed an increase in turnover in excess of £1.5million over the corresponding period for the previous year. We can only hope this trend continues throughout 2011.

## Age Limit

I have just learned that the Mayor has decided the maximum age of a taxi in London commencing in 2012 will be 15 years and that around 1200 taxis are likely to be more than 15 years old by then. Whatever the Mayor decided, there was bound to be a section of our industry that would not be content with the outcome and obviously the owners of these 1200 taxis will come into that category.

**I believe it is almost impossible to argue against taxis in London becoming newer and greener, however, it is how we arrive there that is important and whether or not the trade can afford it.**

There was much concern within the trade that the Mayor would opt for ten years instead of fifteen and of course if he were to have gone for that option, then I believe he would have had to introduce a scrap-age scheme as the trade could not possibly have complied with the directive without it leading to a shortage of taxis and a fall in the resale value of vehicles.

The whole trade, led by the LTDA but with the exception of the RMT, formed an alliance and all signed a proposal at Dial-a-Cab House to present to the Mayor why the fifteen-year rule should be implemented and not the ten.

What was particularly encouraging was the fact that the whole trade signed the document to present to the Mayor, something which showed a united front to TfL - the first time that has happened since the LTDA and T&G (Unite) left the Taxiboard around about 1997/98. I am hopeful this situation can be repeated in the future, as I'm sure many of you are aware that I have always believed this industry is far stronger with just one voice, instead of the many we have had in previous years.

The manufacturers together with the radio circuits signed the document for fifteen years when it could be argued that it was in the interest of both these parties to have the age limit at ten years. Yet we both voted (two manufacturers and three radio circuits) for fifteen, because we believed that was in the best interest of the trade.

**If anything is to be achieved in the future by the 'association' of these various factions, then we must all agree initially that we should be bound by the majority vote. I have seen all too often in the past, organisations resigning from a collective body due to the fact that the collective policy was perhaps against the interests of their own respective organisation, so they resigned and went their own way. If we are to have any credibility, this scenario should be resisted in the future.**

As I stated earlier, you cannot please all the people all of the time and those with cabs over fifteen years old in 2012 will not be impressed with the latest decision, however there are many in the trade that welcome the decision and feel the new legislation has not gone far enough. These are the drivers that invest in new cabs and feel drivers with older cabs are letting the side down. They feel that the public should be travelling in newer, greener vehicles and there should not even be the opportunity of hiring an older vehicle. I know



we have many of those members at Dial-a-Cab and I must confess to seeing the logic in both arguments, after all the argument has always been that if the PCO pass a vehicle they consider to be fit to carry members of the public, who is anyone to contradict that view - irrespective of how old the vehicle is?

Contained within the press release from TfL is the news that as from 2013 at the latest, all taxis will be required to have two full MOTs tests every year instead of a once yearly overhaul, but these can be carried out at local garages rather than inspection centres. That is all the press release states on the subject of MOTs, however, there must surely be a third inspection because as far as I am aware an MOT does not cover the general condition of the inside of the vehicle, such as seats and head-lining? I believe an MOT just covers the roadworthiness of a vehicle. Consequently, someone somewhere will have to check the 'cosmetics' of the taxi, although this has not been mentioned in the press release.

## And finally...

I hope you all had an enjoyable Christmas and I would like to wish you and your families a very healthy New Year. Let us all hope the second quarter of our financial year will be as good as the first quarter. If it is, then it means that business is getting better...

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



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# It's January and Euro V time!

It has been spoken about for several years and now it's finally here... Euro 5! The European Union's Euro-V emissions law comes into effect on January 1st 2011. It won't affect taxis for a further 12 months (January 1 2012), but as of Jan 1 it will be illegal to sell new cars that are not compliant with the Euro-V emissions standard. Many cars are already Euro V compliant, but buyers can expect to pay more for the technology in addition to the extra VAT. Taxi drivers had been waiting for the Mayor's decision on limiting older taxis. The proposal was for a 15-year rolling age limit from 2012, dropping to a 10-year limit in 2015. Acceptance for this came two weeks ago. The Mayor is said to be willing to work with the trade in developing a zero-emission taxi by 2020 and has offered £1million as a financial incentive to assist in heading towards that target.

Many in the trade agree that whilst it would be nice to see more new cabs around, a 10-year limit alternative suggestion would have caused irreparable damage to numbers with many older drivers having to hand in their badges rather than have to invest in a new cab.

The 10-year limit would have dramatically cut the resale value of second-hand cabs leaving many drivers who were considering the option



## Will we all end up driving Hydrogen powered taxis

of buying a new taxi without the deposit they hoped to get when selling their older cab. After all, who would buy an 8-year old second-hand taxi knowing it only had two years left? Fortunately, the Mayor saw the trade's point.

Euro V will, however, mean cleaner diesel vehicles, which will help reduce particulate emissions and if the move to diesel vehicles slows in favour

of petrol or other alternative forms of fuel, it could help reduce the price of Derv. It is still a fact that Euro V compliant diesel vehicles will still be more polluting than cars and that in September 2014, we'll be staring into the face of Euro 6.

Another problem coming as a by-product will see the Mayor's Congestion Charge affected as Euro V compliant cars with emissions below 100g/km will be exempt from the charge. And as all new cars will now be compliant, more will become exempt and feel able to drive into London. This will push congestion up again and decrease air quality by numbers, even with their lower emissions.

## COUNCILS VOTE TO LIMIT TAXICARD USE

### No public consultation offered...

Campaigners for the disabled have condemned the decision by the *London Councils' transport and environment executive committee* who recently voted through plans to limit the disabled passengers **TaxiCard** scheme without offering a public consultation.

This vital transport scheme, which is operated by **ComCab**, allows the disabled to get around the capital independently at a much-reduced rate, just as the **Westminster TaxiCard** scheme allows passengers to do with **Dial-a-Cab**. There is no word that Westminster plan to follow the London Council's move.

The transport and environment executive committee have suggested cutting back the number of trips allowed, in addition to refusing any further applications for the card until April at the earliest.

The nationwide charity of young disabled and non-disabled campaigners, **Trailblazers**, have said that with just 10 out of 260 Underground stations being wheelchair friendly, the TaxiCard scheme is essential and that without it many disabled people will no longer manage to lead an active life in London – or even carry out such basic functions as shopping for food. They plan to lobby the Mayor in addition to the transport committee of the Greater London Authority.

A TaxiCard spokesperson said: "The scheme has increased by 17% over the past three months alone with almost 100,000 users. We just cannot keep expanding."

ComCab may be the "opposition" but when it comes to the transportation of the disabled, no one can deny their excellent track record and hopefully the London Councils will see sense...



London Councils are cutting back on Taxicard use...



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# Jerys World



I know it's now 2011, but are you sure about this idea of entering a DaC team for next year's Olympic marathon? I don't think it's quite the same as the London Marathon

## LTFUC Christmas Concert

Months of rehearsals, planning and organisation saw the LTFUC's Gala Christmas Concert arrive at St. John's, Smith Square - the first time the charity had undertaken such an event and indeed it was a tremendous success.

Organised mainly by DaC Board and LTFUC committee member **Mike Son**, almost 400 people took their seats inside the magnificent St. John's Church - a truly marvellous setting for what proved to be a wonderful evening of music and song.

Sixty-five members of the **London Charity Orchestra** took their places on stage before Conductor William Carslake stepped onto the rostrum, picked up his baton and turned to the musicians as they entered the world of Tchaikovsky's *Sleeping Beauty*. Following on was guest Soloist **Emma Halnan**, BBC Young Musician of the Year 2010. Playing her flute, she performed *Concertino* (composed by Cecile Chaminade) turning a magical piece into a thing of beauty.

It was left to the **Finchley Children's Music Group** and **Grace Rossiter**, together with sixty children and accompanied by Harpist, **Hannah Butler**, to sing some of the world's most beautiful Christmas carols.



LTFUC new Hon Chair, **Susan Angel** welcomed everyone and spoke of the charity's activities. She went on to thank **Mike Son** for organising the event and also **Malcolm Shaffron** and other members of the committee for their roles as Stage Managers, including **Ray Levy** for his input as PR. Michael said how grateful the committee were for **Dial-a-Cab's** support in helping to sponsor the Fund's first Concert. He went on to thank all the artistes, the orchestra, the management of St Johns, **Print4London.Com** for the production of the souvenir program and **Steve Allen** at LBC for publicising the event.

All in all, a magical event...

Pic left: Mike Son thanks everyone for attending the Fund's Xmas concert

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**Mickey Gordelier (ex-L27)** was on **Dial-a-Cab** for over 20 years, then his life was turned upside down when he was diagnosed with *Motor Neurone Disease* (MND) and given between one and three years to live. Mick now stays in the **Greenwich & Bexley Cottage Hospice** in Abbey Wood and says that the care he receives there is nothing short of magnificent.

So he wrote to **Call Sign** via a nurse because he can no longer use his arms and explained his situation, ending with a heartfelt plea to assist him in his aim to raise £30,000 to pay for another hospice nurse. He felt that he wanted to thank them in a practical way. This magazine published the article and within days cheques began pouring into the hospice. Then we had two phone calls from the Editors of *Taxi Globe* and *TaxiCab News* who asked if they could reprint the story. Of course we said yes.

Mick is fifty-five years old now, been married to Sue for thirty-one years and they have three children.

"I've had a great life - a wonderful family, friends and a job as a licensed taxi driver on a great circuit - Dial-a-Cab. Life could not have been better until the day I was diagnosed with MND. As my condition deteriorated, I was offered the chance to go to **Greenwich & Bexley Cottage Hospice** in Bostall Hill, Abbey Wood, but declined at first believing I could cope better at home. Big mistake! At the Hospice, staff and volunteers put me at ease straight away and without their help I just could not survive.

"I feel I owe it to Sue, my family and all the

# Mickey closes in on his £30k



**Mickey and wife Sue in happier times**

staff at the Hospice to carry on making the most of what I have. The level of care, support and friendship I receive at the Hospice is just magnificent and I've made many friends from all walks of life. I'm proud to be here. If I had to say thank you to all the staff and volunteers who are now so close to my heart 1000 times, it would not be enough. I am so lucky and grateful to have met each of them and will always be in their debt."

All the care the Hospice provides is com-

pletely free of charge, but they have to raise most of their funding from local people. So that's when Mickey decided to launch his appeal.












Amazingly, from the initial target of £30,000, they have now raised in excess

of £20,000, so one last push could do it. If you would like to hear Mick's poignant appeal - and thankfully his voice seems unaltered - just do the following.

Go to <http://www.cottagehospice.org.uk/location.html>, click on *make a donation* and then click **Mick's Appeal** to see and hear him tell how it is. Wouldn't it be just a wonderful thrill for Mick to be able to tell us that his target has been reached...

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**Barrie Segal** is the founder of **AppealNow.com** – the website that has helped thousands of drivers facing unfairly dished-out PCNs. Barrie also assists in fighting parking tickets issued to **Dial-a-Cab** drivers whilst doing credit trips, with the result that money the Society now pays out in fines has been slashed!

But a recent case Barrie attended has far-reaching effects for **Dial-a-Cab** and radio circuits in general. The High Court decision *R (on application of Makda) v Parking Adjudicator* has clarified the very important aspect of the law relating to licensed taxis (and radio controlled minicabs) and how long they can wait for a passenger when the passenger has pre-booked the journey.

The general rule of law is that taxi drivers are allowed to wait for as long as necessary on single or double yellow lines for the purpose of picking up a passenger and/or their luggage. In the case of licensed taxis, which can be hailed by a passenger in the street, it is easy to see what time is taken and in the normal course of events that pickup time is clearly necessary.

The question arises and was dealt with by the court: What is the necessary time for a taxi driver to pickup a passenger when they receive a pre-booked cab fare? Barrie has won many cases with the parking adjudicator, arguing that there has to be a time period to pick up a passenger starting from when the vehicle arrives. The driver looks for his passenger, the passenger comes out from their premises, finds the cab and enters it.

**Barrie told Call Sign:** “My long-held view is that that this is all part of the process of waiting for the purpose of picking up the passenger. I’m very pleased to say that the court confirmed my view!”

## Background to the case...

Most councils have taken the rigorous view – in the view of Barrie Segal, totally incorrectly and illogically – that when a taxi driver receives a pre-booked fare, the driver cannot wait at all and that the passenger has to be at the kerb ready to get into the vehicle.

Some parking adjudicators have agreed with the councils’ view, but many adjudicators have not agreed. Indeed, one parking adjudicator said that it was preposterous to suggest that a driver arriving to pick up a passenger should

**Barrie Segal goes to a groundbreaking case at the High Court and tells Call Sign:**

# Councils incorrectly issuing PCN’s to taxis!



**According to a High Court decision these young men will have to pick on someone else**

act like a Formula One driver performing a pit stop, with the passenger diving into the vehicle and the vehicle taking off!

The High Court has now clarified the law on this issue and stated that councils are wrong to adopt the position they have taken so far. The learned Judge stated that when a driver arrives at the destination, the time taken looking for the passenger or waiting for the passenger to identify the vehicle, is all a necessary part of the process of picking up the passenger – and accordingly any parking tickets issued in those circumstances must be cancelled!

The Judge also decided that if a driver arrives at the pick up but the passenger then cancels the journey, this is still nevertheless part of the process of picking up the passenger and accordingly, any parking tickets issued in such circumstances must be cancelled.

**Barrie Segal told Call Sign:** “This is a very important clarification of the law which demonstrates that councils have been unfairly penalising licensed taxis.

In this particular case before the learned Judge, the driver arrived for a pre-booked journey, looked for the passenger but could not find them and the job was scrubbed. The PCN was issued by Westminster Council via their CCTV system and *Traffic Management Order*, which is the legal document that governs parking restrictions.

The Judge stated that: **“It shall not be unlawful to cause or permit a vehicle to wait in any restricted street for so long as may be necessary for the purpose of enabling any person to board the vehicle or to load thereon his personal luggage.”**

This may not stop councils issuing PCNs, but it must now make them far easier to cancel! The trade owes a great deal to Barrie Segal, who is probably the foremost authority in the UK on parking fines.

**If you need help with a PCN that came other than when doing an account trip with DaC, go to [www.AppealNow.com](http://www.AppealNow.com) and get the best help available – from Barrie Segal...**

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## Ramp up the rank

All the major stations have in the past few years been refurbished and renovated with new taxi pick up points being constructed. But despite all the brains from their relevant departments and organisations involved in the design and construction of these ranks there are, I'm afraid, some serious questions that need to be asked about the practicality of the ranks.

There has been a large amount of political lobbying and kudos claimed about how the transport system has become accessible for all. Throughout Greater London, a tremendous amount of money has been invested to make sure that virtually every bus stop offers easy access for all. From passengers with disabilities to families with small children and buggies, raised kerbing has been a great success. Finances have been made available for private bus companies' grants and incentives to adjust the floor levels of buses to ensure the system works. Once again the taxi ranks proves that we are the poor relations of the TfL family. No concern, thought or investment has been put into the construction of these ranks.

The total lack of any permanent wheelchair or easy access slopes is, quite frankly, disgraceful. It would not have been that hard for the planners to work out that our taxis are a uniform distance from the floor and that every new rank should have a *fit for purpose* permanent ramp installed irregardless of whether it's to pick up or drop off. The whole procedure of us setting up our ramps, delaying our passengers - sometimes waiting in the rain or getting frozen - should not occur.

## Kept in the dark with our lights on

By the time you start reading this, the lights will almost be coming down on Oxford Street, and once again there will bright yellow lights looking for work with all the ranks full of cabs. We will sit there cursing our luck and regretting that we never worked those few extra nights in the boom period.

Whichever rank you sit on is purely a matter of choice, but if it is a rail station, apart from obvious access and exiting issues mentioned in the earlier piece, a further easy enhancement could have been made.

Not one of these ranks has had an LED notice board with train information or traffic updates installed. We sit there like mushrooms (we know what they are fed) in total darkness, oblivious as to what is going in the station.

Kings Cross and St Pancras are my pet hates; you sit and do time on either whilst there is a queue or not on the other ranks. You walk into the concourse of St Pancras and there are an array of notice boards giving the latest updates on all the traffic conditions and train times. There is even a massive blue electric notice light to tell you that you are in St Pancras! On every underground platform and virtually every bus stop, there is a neon light giving passengers a rundown of train / bus arrival times. If they can run neon signs with updates to a bus Stop on Highgate

# LOOKING AT (TAXI) LIFE...

with Tom Quigley



Hill, surely it's about time they ran to our ranks?

## The student riots of December 9

And what about the travesty of the students marching through London on Thursday 9 December. In this time of austerity with us all striving to increase our income, I question the timing of the vote

in the House. We all know from the financial institutions, retailers, hotels and bars that Thursdays in December are always the busiest and most lucrative periods of the year.

As anyone could foresee there would be trouble and the need for a large police presence with all the cost to the country that involves, you just have to call into question why David Cameron and the Coalition didn't delay the vote on student fees until the New Year? It was obviously going to cause problems. However, it may have been that the level of violence would have been the same - although we'd like to believe otherwise - but at least London would have been almost empty of tourists and Christmas shoppers. It takes just a small amount of thought, but it appears that some people can't do that.

According to David Cameron on the following day, no one in the HoC was involved with any violence. What he failed to say was what did cause it? Thoughtlessness perhaps?

*Till next time, a very happy New Year to you all...*

Tom Quigley (Y33)

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

# DIAL-A-CAB FLASHBACK

This month's Flashback returns to 1999 and a long-forgotten series detailing that one job that always stuck in your mind...

From Call Sign March and April 1999...

*Is there a cab driver who doesn't like to talk about that one favourite job that he did. Now is your chance to tell us all about it with a trip down ...*



## Memory Lane

A particular cab job has stuck itself firmly in the mind of Dial-a-Cab driver, **Paul Jenner (L19)**. At the time he was working for another cab company which had an account with the Duchess of Kent. The Duchess had planned a holiday and had requested a cab to take her luggage to meet her train at Euston.

Paul accepted the job and was given strict instructions to leave the luggage in the care of two policemen who would then meet him on the station platform.

Upon arrival at Euston, two burly policemen approached Paul's cab as planned, but instead of helping him unload the luggage, they began to try and remove him from the platform! An argument arose, with the two policemen becoming very rude and abusive. They even began to threaten Paul with arrest!

"Eventually, I said I'd drive off," said Paul, "but told them that when the Duchess awoke the next day with no clean knickers, they should inform her that they're driving round Euston somewhere in a cab, because the driver was unable to unload the luggage."

Suddenly, both policemen became much more co-operative and the royal undies were saved from unnecessary exposure!

\*\*\*\*\*

Take Dial-a-Cab driver **Howard Sales (A11)** for example. He remembers an occasion when he collected a passenger from BCCI in Cannon Street. The passenger was attempting to reclaim money owed from a bad debtor, however, this debtor could not be found and had given addresses all over London as to his whereabouts. Howard and his passenger had to visit each and every one, leaving letters demanding repayment of the money owed.

Beginning at 8.45am, the pair travelled up to Elephant & Castle, then on to Finchley, Potter's Bar, back to Gloucester Place NW1, into Soho, back to Dulwich before finally returning to Cannon Street at 2.15pm - a five and a half hour journey!

And what's the most outlandish item that has travelled in your cab? Howard has driven a picture of a piece of beef to Gloucestershire and back! Helping a Sainsbury's ad campaign that was running behind schedule, Howard had to take the picture to a designer in Gloucester, wait while changes were made to the depiction of the beef and then return it in time to allow the ad team to meet their deadline!

*Do you have a tale about that one job you can't forget? Phone Call Sign's Susan Murray on 0181 742 3388 and let everyone else in on it!*

Muted perhaps, but the Mayor's pollution strategy represents

## VICTORY FOR THE TAXI TRADE!

The Mayor of London Boris Johnson recently announced his third – and probably final – emissions policy for London and surprised taxi drivers by backtracking on the policy that had been touted by London Assembly Green Party member, Darren Johnson. He had wanted a ban on ten-year-old taxis but the final decision has come down on a 15-year ban – something many in the trade consider to be a fair compromise.

The policy - *Clearing London's Air* – says that as of 1 January 2012, taxi licences will not be issued if the cab is more than 15 years old. Around 1200 taxis are expected to be affected. It seems clear that behind the scenes talking by trade representatives, including DaC Chairman Brian Rice, has convinced the Mayor that we



It looks like goodbye to the Fairway

can put our own house in order by natural wastage rather than by putting some older drivers out of work. There is little doubt that the Mayor is proud of the London taxi business.

The Mayor's office told **Call Sign** that road traffic was responsible for about 80% of air-

borne pollution in central London, and that we contributed 20% of that!

Darren Johnson, after accusing the Mayor of backtracking on his original policy, urged him to act quickly and introduce road pricing, proper inspection of black cabs and a very low emission zone to target vehicles in central London.

Taxis will also be required to undergo two MOTs each year but no more yearly overhaul, while new drivers will be required to undergo an eco-driving course, teaching them how to cause as little pollution as possible whilst getting the most out of their fuel consumption.

The Mayor also announced a £1million fund to encourage taxi owners to upgrade to low emission vehicles such as electric taxis. Details will be made available next year...

## Langham takes top hotel award...



The **Langham** at Portland Place recently scooped top place at the *BT Visit London* awards ceremony for the **Best Large Hotel in London**. The **Milestone Hotel** in Kensington took second place from the **Jumeirah Carlton Tower**, a close third.

In the smaller hotels category, the **Egerton House Hotel** came out on top...

# Allen Togwell's Marketing Place

**Firstly I would like to take this opportunity of wishing all of you and your families a prosperous and above all, a healthy New Year.**

In the November 2010 *Call Sign*, I wrote an article about Prostate Cancer and by co-incidence a moving article appeared at the same time on a taxi website from a driver who has prostate cancer, which had spread to his lymph nodes and he published his experience to urge his fellow cabmen to not be an idiot like him and ignore, as he had done, a disease that has the second highest mortality rate amongst men after lung cancer.

In 2008 there were 10,168 deaths through prostate cancer in the UK and the irony is prostate cancer is one of few cancers that can be detected early with a simple PSA blood test. And, if detected early there is almost a 100% chance of a complete cure. Proof of this is myself who had prostate cancer 15 years ago and a number of people I have known since then including the cab driver friend who I mentioned in the November *Call Sign*. At the time of writing that article, my friend was due to go for his treatment just three weeks after the result of his biopsy. He was treated at Guys Hospital by one of the top specialists on Bracky Therapy, which is inserting radioactive pellets directly into the prostate. It was done under general anaesthetic. He was in and out on the same day and was back at work within a week, fit and with no lasting side effects. A glowing example of beating the Big C as easy as having a tooth taken out.

Many rich and famous people have died of prostate cancer and many of these people would most likely be alive today had they made the effort to go just once a year for a simple PSA blood test. We all know having big bucks can solve many of life's problems, however it is of little use when the Big C has got out of control. So whether you are a billionaire or an out of work drifter, the easy and only way to beat prostate cancer is by detecting it early. Incidentally, one of the signs of Prostate problems can be the need to empty the bladder often, which brings me onto another subject that I have been informed about in the hope I can prompt our members into action. That is the use of public toilets without the fear of getting a parking ticket.

This is becoming a serious issue that affects everybody who drives a cab, including female cab drivers. An issue that is only likely to be resolved if ALL of you get your local MP involved. I'm aware a vast majority of cab drivers suffer from apathy, preferring instead to let others take up the cudgel. But in this instance only you know your local MP and it is for you and many like you in your area to bombard your MP to the point where he or she takes notice.

I myself have been in contact with Nick Raynsford, my local MP in Greenwich and Caroline Pidgeon, Leader of the Liberal Democrat Group at the London Assembly. I



expressed my concerns about the shortage of facilities for cab drivers to take a natural break and gave one suggestion on how I believe the issue could be resolved.

I was informed that the *GLA Health and Public Services Committee* are to review the provision of public toilets in London and the Mayor has launched the Open London Scheme with several aims, one of which is to encourage businesses to open their toilets to non-customers. However, whilst much is being discussed on the subject, on reading their agenda I notice nowhere does it mention the issue of motorists - especially cab drivers - being able to park to use the toilets without incurring a parking violation.

My suggestion was that 20p parking meters with a maximum stay of 10 minutes be installed close by public toilets, similar to that operated in Guernsey. Except in Guernsey there are no meters, instead you use a plastic timer that you set on arrival and place on view inside your vehicle. I suggested a maximum of ten minutes to prevent the meters being used for other purposes.

When I first got my Bill, there was never any problem using public toilets, a note in the window was enough for the police to give you a few minutes for a natural break and the majority of hotels made their toilet facilities available. However, I remember many years ago regularly using the toilet facilities of the Durants Hotel in George Street. The way I was dressed, it never occurred to the doorman that I was a cab driver. I would use the toilet and the auto shoe cleaner, have a wash at the basin and a dab of free cologne! When finished, I made sure the toilet was as clean as when I found it, and on the way out the doorman would tip his cap and say have a nice day Sir. Apparently he thought I was a long term resident until by chance he saw me parking my cab nearby. He laughed but still let me use the facilities, until one day he said I'm sorry but you can't use the toilet any more. When I asked why, he said to go and have a look how a cab driver has just left it. I was shocked. Two basins were covered in what looked like mud. I can only guess the cab driver had changed a wheel, or repaired something to his engine and used their facilities to clean up. The toilet was absolutely filthy. I was both angry and embarrassed and insisted I be allowed to clean it. I got a bottle of flash from the back of my

cab and set about making the toilet as clean as possible. The doorman appreciated it, but from that moment on he banned all cab drivers from using their toilet facilities, including me. Rightly or wrongly, we live in a society where people or groups are stereotyped and often judged by the worst examples and unfortunately there are an ignorant few in our trade who act like complete morons. Regrettably, that image reflects on the rest of us, so when I hear of drivers being banned from using hotel toilet facilities, it doesn't surprise me and neither do I blame the hotel management.

As for those like **Norman Lewis**, who wrote in the November issue of *Call Sign* that he had a weak bladder due to prostate cancer, and being angry at not being allowed to use a hotel's toilet even though he explained his predicament, I'm not sure if he and others are aware but there are aids available for this purpose.

When I was undergoing Radiotherapy for my prostate, it involved 26 sessions and as each one progressed it was making my bladder weaker and weaker and making it almost impossible to hold half a pint - let alone the two litres of water necessary when having the radiotherapy! On talking to one of the radiologists about my problem, she said I could have a catheter fitted or one of several aids available. I didn't fancy a catheter so I asked for one of the aids, this was a heavy-duty condom that is fitted to where you would expect with self adhesive, while the other end had a narrow tube that goes to a sterile bag strapped to your leg. I'll never forget the amusing experience when I was sent up to the department in Bart's Hospital to get the aid.

It was a large outpatients waiting area, where I was told to sit. A short while later a nurse came out and called my name and probably because she saw I was wearing a hearing aid, she said in a unnecessarily loud voice: "Is the condom you want small, medium or large?" Suddenly the whole place went quiet and I could sense everybody looking in my direction. Fortunately, having a sense of humour, I asked with a silly smile if I could try one of each and she said OK, come along and I'll show you how to use them. What followed was one of the funniest experiences of my life!

Go to <https://www.charterhealthcare.co.uk>. The brand name for this aid is **Simple** and they are available at most chemists and anybody with a need for these aids would be eligible for free NHS prescriptions. Personally I found them hygienic, practical and extremely convenient - ideal for long journeys and fantastic when I was undergoing radiotherapy, because in many instances the feeling of wanting to empty the bladder can be in the mind, the fear of wetting yourself, so by wearing this aid I could drink a full two litres of water knowing that whatever happened, I would not embarrass myself whilst having my treatment.

**Allen Togwell**  
**DaC Marketing**



The *Worshipful Company of Hackney Carriage Drivers* recently celebrated their 7th Annual Liverymen's Dinner at Cutlers' Hall. The *Company Master*, **Dial-a-Cab's Jim Rainbird (T25)**, together with his Wardens – including *Lower Warden* and *DaC Chairman*, **Brian Rice**, welcomed guests to the beautiful Cutlers Hall. The building stands on Warwick Lane, having escaped the bombing of London in December 1940 only to be damaged in a bombing raid the following May.

Whilst the WCHCD is a non-political organisation, the Company promotes the London taxi trade and is held in high regard throughout the City along with other Livery Companies. So they were pleased to welcome guest speaker **John Mason**, *Director of Taxis and Private Hire* at TfL. Since taking up office just over a year ago, Mr Mason has gained a reputation within the trade for being a straight talker and there are indeed many contentious issues facing his office. But even though Cutlers Company artefacts - including swords and knives - were on display at the Hall, it was agreed that no sword fighting was possible on this occasion!

Following dinner, Jim Rainbird made a speech in which he said how pleased he was to be able to admit six Freemen of the WCHCD to be clothed in Livery in addition to those who were joining the Company as Freemen.

Jim is also a member of the organising committee for *The Magical Taxi Tour* and was delighted to make **Sergeant Phil Scott** of the *City of London Police* an Honorary Freeman in recognition of the hard work he and his team put in for the annual trip. Eight other officers who made the trip this year also joined the diners.

The Master also remarked that for one of the diners, **John Sheen**, this was a more unusual dinner because John was sitting down at the table – reference to the fact that for many years John had been *Beadle* to the Company before his recent retirement. This time it was the newly appointed Beadle and DaC driver, **Sean Ferry (T90)**, who was on hand to help with the smooth running of the evening and to make any announcements.

Congratulations were given to students of the latest *WCHCD Cab Guiding course*. Every student had passed the exam and the course tutor **Graham Woodhouse** was delighted to be able to present them with their badges and certificates. The students all enjoyed the course and as a result of the experience were choosing to join the WCHCD. Fellowship of the members is an important part of the Company – politics are put aside and raising the profile of the cab trade is the priority.

**The next course begins in February and anyone interested in joining can contact The Clerk, Mary Whitworth, on 01494 765 922 for more details.**

In John Mason's speech, he told diners that speaking in front of the Company diners was more petrifying than the

# John Mason at WCHCD Annual Dinner



Master Jim Rainbird with John Mason



**We've forgotten his name but think we've seen him before!**

was the world's best, although he added that he knew there were serious issues facing the trade - such as illegal touting - as well as difficult issues and choices to be made but that he looked forward to working with the trade on those

speech he was due to make as best man at a forthcoming Boxing Day wedding, but went on to say that his first year had been both enjoyable and challenging. He acknowledged that the London taxi trade

issues.

Brian Rice told *Call Sign*: "It was an excellent dinner, but then again they always are. John Mason's speech was certainly informative..."

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The name of **Adolfo Giovanni Bruno Boca** may not immediately conjure up memories of ODRTS' very early days, but to long-serving members, his better-known name of **John Boca (ex-A64)** certainly should. In fact Dial-a-Cab founder-Chairman **Bonnie Martyn** once told *Call Sign*:

"Without the Boca brothers, half of our Board meetings could never have taken place!"

John Boca sadly passed away on 1 December at the age of 74. He had suffered health problems for some time, but according to his son John – who is on RTG – just seven days earlier "...he had been playing with my son – his grandson – and looked so happy."

When John died, he took with him 1001 memories regarding those pre-Dial-a-Cab days when ODRTS operated from small premises on the corner of Pentonville Road and Affleck Street.

John, together with his Italian parents and brother Alan (ex-B99) – real name Aldo who died in June 2003 – ran the cafe on the opposite side to the ODRTS building with its single dispatcher sitting in the window, tongue hanging out as he watched drivers popping in for their cuppa! In those days it was called the Welcome Cafe.

Bonnie Martyn – who died in 2002 – had told this magazine how in those days, space for ODRTS Board meetings was very limited at the office so they would frequently have them in the cafe over a cup of tea. Among

# John Boca: An ODRTS legend...



**Happier times: John and his late wife Ellen**

Then one day Bonnie Martyn came in leading his Board and told Alan that he could do much better as a taxi driver. We both did the Knowledge and eventually ended up as ODRTS drivers in our

those involved in the meetings were those such as **Dave Fiertag, Albert Hall, Frank Duncan, Trixie Solomons, Doug Naismith, Alec Cobden, Sailor Papier** and of course Bonnie himself. They would march in and grab the biggest table they could find and call the meeting to order!

When still driving his DaC taxi, John had told us that he really wanted to be a publican, but an ODRTS driver called **Ronnie Frewin** came into the cafe one day and talked him into going on the Knowledge instead.

"I had already done the odd bit of dispatching over the road, so I thought it was worth a try. A similar thing happened to Alan; he had worked in a fish and chip shop before the cafe days, but didn't fancy that type of life although he didn't want to run a cafe forever.

own right instead of just serving them tea! We finally sold the cafe in 1963 and it became a block of flats."

With John's death goes a large chunk of the early history of DaC – a history that amazingly is forever enshrined within the English cuppa! Our everlasting thanks are due to people from our past such as John Boca.

Our condolences go to his son John – who helped us with some of the details – and his sister Tina who flew back from Australia. John is going to be in good company up there with friends such as Jack Taylor and Bonnie Martyn in addition to all those tea drinkers mentioned earlier, all waiting to see if he has had any good jobs lately!

**Rest in peace...**

## 2010 DAC AGM



All members should by now have received an individual notice informing them that the 2010 Annual General Meeting will be held at The HAC, Armoury House, City Road, London EC1Y 2BQ on Sunday 6th February 2011 at 11:00hrs.

**The meeting this year was to consider an agenda including the Election of Officers and any proposed Rule Changes and Propositions.**

Proposed Rule Changes and Propositions had to have been received at Dial-a-Cab House on or before 09:00hrs on Friday 19th November 2010 and received in accordance with Society Rules. However, none were received and no more of the above can now be accepted.

There was one Nomination for the Board in addition to the sitting BoM received by the due time.

**Howard Pears  
Company Secretary**

## Dial-a-Cab Credit Union

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# E14 ranks: Why the system changed

**This issue's Mailshot contains a letter from Tony Guerrier (L28) about the E14 zones, so Call Sign asked Allan Evans to explain why it operates as it does...**

E14C and E14S ranks operate as they do because in the past, as more account clients moved their premises to the Island, it was a method of ensuring we gave as good a service to them on the Island as we do to our account clients based in the City. Having physical ranks on the Island ensured that only those drivers who were in close proximity of our account client's pick up addresses were offered the work. All physical ranks become self-policing, which ensured fairness in the way work was and still is distributed. The result is that clients get an exceptional service. Over the years this has proved to be very successful to us as we now have the majority of account work on the Island.

Some time ago, those drivers working day shifts welcomed the use of the two ranks because it gave them the choice of taking a cash ride off the rank or an account ride via their terminal and for those drivers who start work on the island, this has become a very popular way of working. Then evening and night drivers spoke to various Board Members asking them to consider changing how E14C and E14S operated after 9pm. They asked us to make E14 non-physical, which would stop



them being forced to sit on a rank and have to take cash walk-ups. They also said that all they wanted to do was service our account clients and after discussing it, the Board felt it was in everyone's interest to make the change.

You may also remember at the time the changes were implemented, Canary Wharf Security were insistent that drivers were not allowed through the security gates unless their *for hire* lights were on. This then allowed members to book in when they were physically in the E14 zone, even though they were not necessarily through the security barriers. That was the best way to get round the problem so long as it was correctly monitored – which it is.

When you think about it, what would have been the point of having procedures in place

just to aggravate members who would then just not cover the work? The same applies now to disbanding E14C and E14S completely. Would it improve the service we currently give to our clients and would it be beneficial to the vast majority of members? If it was, then it would have been implemented.

If the Board were to implement the *soon to clear* that Tony mentions in his letter, it would permit drivers to book in from so far away that those doing a local ride would get a much higher STC queue position and have to wait far longer for the next trip. The way the system operates now ensures the work is offered to only those drivers who are close to the pick ups in and around the Island, while allowing DaC controllers to be able to monitor driver activity so much easier and ensure fair play. If there are uncovered trips, drivers can *Bid* in the normal way and offer reasonable times.

Drivers being rude to clients and expressing their disappointment at getting a local ride is certainly not something that would be made up. The effort involved in tendering to regain our account work is hard enough and does not need to be hindered in any way by a small number of individuals who believe it is perfectly correct to be able to speak their mind to a passenger. All procedures we currently have in place take account of both the driver and client; as a Board, we have done just that.

**Allan Evans**  
**DaC Compliance Officer**

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Following a *Call Sign* article several issues ago offering drivers a tour of **Dial-a-Cab's** headquarters by *Driver's Operations* and *Call Centre Manager*, **Keith Cain**, the latest driver to take up the offer was **Mark Sherlock** (W41).

"At first I wasn't sure how genuine the offer was and then when I realised it was, I assumed that it would be in a group with other drivers. Either way, having been with DaC since June 2003, I thought it was about time that I saw life from the other side of the data terminal - other than just the Driver's Reception!

Back in 2003 following my training at Brunswick House, I was given a short tour but had no real idea as to what 90% of the references and terminology actually related to.

Nowadays I'm a bit more savvy and have read in *Call Sign* how DaC like to keep things such as software changes 'in house' wherever possible, but never knew for example that we make the *Westminster TaxiCards* on the premises!

I'd like to give a big thank-you to Keith Cain, not just for taking the time to show

## Mark pays a visit



Mark with Keith Cain at DaC House

me around Dial-a-Cab House on my own, but for also answering all my questions relating to many aspects of the DaC operation, including my queries regarding Concierge. I'd also like to thank the staff

that helped demonstrate and explain how our systems work.

I can recommend the tour to any other drivers who would like to see what happens on the other side of the terminal.

## STARDUST IS BACK!

Many of you will remember back in your younger days a theatre workshop group known as **Stardust**, which led you to an older pupils group known as **Stagestruck**. The group were responsible for many talented actors beginning their careers. One of the biggest was **Tamzin Outhwaite**, who went on to star in *Hotel Babylon* and west end musical *Sweet Charity*.

Now **Phyllis Borden B.A.Hons** is pleased to announce the re-establishment of **Stardust Children's Theatre Workshop** in the Essex area. It will commence on Monday 10th January 2011 from 4 - 5pm at the **Steepleview Memorial Hall, Osier Drive, Laindon** - (opposite Costcutters and close to the A127).

The age group is 5-9 years old, so for an hour why not let your children gain confidence, sociability, imagination, good speech, self-discipline and of course, have fun! Past students have achieved distinction, not just on stage and TV, but also in the fields of medicine, law, science, art and teaching.

**Phone 01268 928 004 to pre-book or just come along on the day.**

At the end of next year, a scholarship of 1-year free tuition will be offered to the most promising student...



Tamzin Outhwaite was one of many who started at Stardust

## Jim's WCHCD donate to Mick's fund



Micky Gordelier

Worshipful Company of Hackney Carriage Drivers Master, **Jim Rainbird (T25)**, telephoned *Call Sign* recently to say that he'd read the original report about **Mick Gordelier's (ex-L27)** appeal for £30,000 to pay for an extra nurse at the **Greenwich & Bexley Cottage Hospice** in Abbey Wood (*Call Sign* Oct 2010 with an update in this issue).

The WCHCD usually buy charity cards to send out for Christmas, but after reading about Mickey they decided to make their own card using a stock photo and donate the money they saved - around £150 - to the hospice fund.

Jim told *Call Sign*: "The WCHCD is always ready to help charities, but Mickey is also one of our own. His cause is magnificent and worthy of anyone's help."



WCHCD Master Jim Rainbird



In the November issue of *The Badge*, a threat to **Dial-a-Cab** appeared in the form of a statement signed by LCDC Chairman **Grant Davis** and six others, whom we presume to be on an editorial board.

The threat came when their statement claimed they had "...now sought legal advice over the damaging accusations made after *(Call Sign)* articles were published."

*Call Sign* was going to answer the statement in our last issue, but decided to wait and see whether any solicitor's letters popped through our letter box. As none have, the Editor decided to restate in simpler terms our problem with the LCDC and the *Private Hire Operator's Licence* that organisation keeps going on about. Because for all their denials, their Chairman/Editor still refuses to answer the questions we put, preferring instead to just say they stand by their article about a Private Hire operator's Licence. So let's once again ask the questions that Mr Davis won't acknowledge.

Without any smart-alec answers about being that good – because obviously they aren't – can The Badge editor explain how they could publish an article in a monthly mag claiming that the PCO / TPH had told DaC they would have to have a Private Hire operator's Licence, some time before any letter was even sent out – unless it was they who informed TPH in the first place? In fact we KNOW they did, but it would just be nice to hear an honest admission.

As The Badge apparently knows everything, perhaps the editor can explain why DaC do not have a Private Hire operator's Licence? Certainly this Society was told to apply for one – then again Mr Davis would obviously know that – but

# LCDC 'SNITCH' STILL IN DENIAL...



they don't mind wasting member's money on legalities, then we would and undoubtedly could provide evidence that Mr Davis 'snitched' on us.

We ask for nothing more than his admission that he was the one who "advised" TPH that we should be governed by a Private Hire operator's Licence, because no doubt if The Badge feels that it doesn't mind wasting LCDC member's money on legalities, then we would – and undoubtedly could – provide evidence that Mr Davis snitched on us. Be assured that we do not want to go down that road and would never instigate legal action over such a trivial matter, especially as it would be against a trade organisation albeit with not even one third of DaC's membership on their books.

We look forward to their next issue...

## The LCDC Committee statement

*It has come to our attention that in recent issues of Call Sign Magazine, allegations have been made about articles printed in the Badge.*

*We would like to put on record that both the Badge newspaper and the London Cab Drivers' Club stand by the accuracy of the content of the articles printed in relation to Dial-a-Cab requiring a Private Hire operator's Licence.*

*In addition, we strongly object to the personal attacks and unfounded allegations made in this publication over the past four months, and have now sought legal advice over the damaging accusations made after our articles were published.*

*We sincerely hope that the editorial board of this magazine will properly consider its responsibilities, both to the cab trade and to its readers, before any further issues are published.*

**Grant Davis, Darryl Cox, Alan McGrady, Danny Sullivan, Tony McGrady, Tony Lawyer, Mark Davis**

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

### Kupkake's Korner



### Nun but the brave???

I was comin' out of Euston  
got stuck on the slope,  
when up comes a crazy lady  
who says she's given up hope!

"My car's at the station,  
would you take a ride to Perth?  
I'll show you how to get there,  
just tell me what it's worth."

I said: "Lady you're in London,  
you'll need to catch a train,  
there's plenty in the station  
just go back in again..."

Her face paled as she quivered,  
she turned as if to run  
towards the station entrance...  
where waited several nuns!

I rejoined the rush hour traffic,  
and tuned into LBC,  
this job's just terrific...  
No boring days for me!!!

**Kupkake 2011**

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Former ODRTS and LTFUC Chairman, Jack Taylor, would have felt so proud as one of those two organisations that he loved so much, The London Taxidriver's Fund for Underprivileged Children, was invited by the charity's new Patron Camilla, Duchess of Cornwall, to enter the portals of her Clarence House home. The children then helped Camilla decorate her Christmas tree – something that has now become an annual event at Clarence House.

The children came from the school in Swiss Cottage that many years ago was renamed after Jack Taylor. These children suffer from learning difficulties and joined young adults from Helen and Douglas House in Oxford, who provide respite care for those with life-shortening illnesses. The Duchess is their patron as well.

The event has been an annual fixture for Camilla who always joins the children in their efforts to cover the fir with brightly coloured toys and objects.

Joining the two groups was the Royal couple's Equerry, **Captain Henry Finnegan** of the Welsh Guards. The kids loved it when he appeared dressed in his traditional scarlet tunic and bearskin – especially when he used his sabre to place ornaments onto the tree!

Lunch of sausages and mash followed and before finally leaving, each child was given a goody bag.

The Camilla era has begun for the LTFUC. How nice to see Jack Taylor involved and no doubt had he still been alive, he would have told Camilla how he met her husband Prince Charles and his two younger brothers, Princes Andrew and Edward at a Leicester Square Royal World film premier when Edward and Andrew were still children. The three royal Princes were there with Her Majesty the Queen. Jack greeted them all as LTFUC Chairman...

# LTFUC: The Camilla era begins with Jack Taylor!



DaC Board Member and LTFUC Committee member Mike Son meets Camilla



Back to the days when Jack Taylor was LTFUC and ODRTS Chairman. He greets the Queen and a young Prince Andrew at a Royal film premier

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### Call Sign

**January 2011**

**Editor:** Alan Fisher

**Address:** 39 – 47 East Rd, London N1 6AH

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

**Email:** callsignmag@aol.com

**Website:** www.dac-callsign.co.uk

**Printers:** Premier Print Group

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**Design:** Aldan Publications

**Tel:** 07958 300 428

**Email:** danny.fresco@dsl.pipex.com

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Still without their goalkeeper and **Dial-a-Cab** driver, **Lee Pearce (J71)**, **Ashford Town (Middx)** still managed to defeat Ryman Premier outfit AFC Hornchurch to move into the last 32 of the **Carlsberg FA Trophy** for the first time in the team's history. Having beaten Bishops Stortford of the Conference South in the last round, the team are on a nice run of cup form having beaten those two giants and they won't be afraid of anyone in the next round. Certainly the £9000 they earned for reaching the last 32 is well-worth having to small teams outside of the Football League.

The Zamaretto Division 1 Central team had to wait until the last minute of injury time to grab the tie. In truth, Hornchurch had the more opportunities and had probably decided to take a replay back to their place. But with just those 60 seconds left, **Jones Awuah** swooped to make Ashford Town history.

Just ten minutes earlier, Ashford's goalkeeper – 41 year old Paul Burgess – was left stranded as a Hornchurch effort struck the inside of Ashford's post and could have gone either way. Fate decreed it would bounce out.

## FA Trophy; Ashford make last 32 for the first time!



**60 seconds of injury time left and Jones Awuah puts Ashford Town into the last 32**

Much of the match was played inside the Ashford Town half, but thanks to some stout defending from AT's central defenders Bill Jeffreys and Russell Canderton and quite a good slice of luck, the ball kept out.

Then Jones Awuah put that huge smile onto the faces of the Ashford supporters and kept their minds on that possible trip to Wembley Stadium, with Conference team Dartford awaiting them in the next round, while AFC Hornchurch can carry on their charge towards the Football League by winning promotion into the Conference.

As for Lee Pearce, he told **Call Sign** that he was hopeful of his knee returning to full fitness in around February 2011, however, unlike the big clubs, Lee has to rely on the generosity of the Professional Footballers Association. They have now given him £3000 out of the £4500 total cost for the operation and recovery.

"£1500 is still a lot to find, Lee told us, "but not as bad as looking for £4500. And who knows, perhaps I'll be on the road for a Wembley visit! You never know in football..."

### *Taxi Driver of the Year Charity Fund*

## DAC AT 37TH ANNUAL DINNER AND DANCE

On 4th December, around 120 guests enjoyed the annual TDOY dinner and dance. Following a drinks reception, everyone enjoyed a dinner before presentations were made to some of London's taxi trade charities. **Helen Chapman**, Deputy Director of TfL's Taxi and Private Hire Office was amongst the guests and she proposed a toast to The Queen before **Bill Tyzack BEM (C06)** made a speech welcoming those present.

Bill, who is one of the longest standing drivers on Dial-a-Cab, said: "What we have to remember is that we are all here to help those less fortunate than ourselves and not compete with each other. It would be nice if one day the charities could work together, as this might be beneficial to us all."

The charities that received cheques on the night were the London Taxidriers Fund for Underprivileged Children, the East London Cabbies Outing, the London Taxi Benevolent Association for War Disabled and the Southend Taxi Drivers Charity Fund for Children. One of these was **Sue Angel** who has recently taken over the role as Chairperson of the LTFUC – the first lady chair the charity has had and Russell congratulated her on the appointment. She takes over from DaC's **David Lessman (D19)**.

**Russell Poluck MBE (T55)** Honorary Chairman of the TDOY Charity Fund and his wife Barbara work hard to organise this event each year and this year has been particularly hard as Russell has had heart surgery. It was good to see him at the function and on his way to making a good recovery.

During the course of the evening there was a popular tombola running with some great prizes.



**You SHALL go to the ball! Brian and Brenda Rice together with Allan and Gill Evans**

In the raffle the main prize was a weekend in Amsterdam, which had been donated by Quotax. This was won by David Hawthorne. The Ladies Gift for the evening was donated by KPM and sponsorship for the event was provided by **Dial-a-Cab**, whose Chairman, **Brian Rice**, was present together with staff from DaC, Westminster Insurance and Audrey Sherry. Grateful thanks go to all the sponsors. Dancing on the evening was to Fraternity, an excellent live band who soon had everyone up on the floor dancing.

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# Standing for election at the AGM

The following are standing for election to the Dial-a-Cab Board of Management.

They appear in alphabetical order...

## Joe Brazil (K16)

Fellow Subscribers...

My name is Joe Brazil and having been employed by Dial-a-Cab for over 17 years, I realise how much of a positive and calming influence the current Board Members have been through with the financial upheaval we have all suffered.



That should be recognised by all our Subscribers, but our future will not rely on the past and in time, all teams must be rebuilt. An ever-changing chain of technology, savvy customers who demand a proactive product to match, will guide our economic future. The fact we have to face is that whilst our competitors have adapted to new markets, we have been slow to react and as we know, the chains of habit are too light to be felt, until they are also too heavy to be broken.

The question you need answering is how will you increase my income? Promises of duty and hard work fade in light of our present situation. We must realise that if a product is not unique, you have to build in value to attract consumers or increase value by association.

For example, if you could attract an increase in account volume of 25% by advertising the fact that a small percentage of a run-in charge would be donated to a sponsored charity, maybe Breast Cancer Research or Help for Heroes, would you be willing to be unique within our market place?

Mobile phone apps already exist and with the integration of our credit card authorisation system, this could also increase your income if properly applied.

Our account work is the most important part of our product, and our core business must remain focused. Your income must also be protected, building in value for you is essential, and after all, without your subscriptions, Dial-a-Cab would fail. I will protect your investment in us whilst building in value for you.

Whether you decide to use all your votes, or just one or two, I ask you to consider me as an asset investment for you the driver. As a Dial-a-Cab team member in the past, I hope to have a positive effect in the future.

My name is Joe Brazil; I ask for your trust and your vote.

## Keith Cain (Q07)

I have held my taxi licence for 29 years and been a member of the Society for 25 years. It was in 1990 when I was first elected to the Board of Management and during the 20 years I have gained a great deal of knowledge and experience in managing the Society. I have also been involved in many different areas of our business, which have included Sales, Finance, Training, and my current position of Drivers Operations Manager. Within this role, it gives me the responsibility of managing the call centre where we employ in excess of 100 personnel. Employing that number of staff on a 24/7 basis can at times become both time consuming and challenging. Having been a Board Member as long as I have, it has given me a tremendous amount of business acumen, which has helped me play a part in managing the Society through yet another recession. Making difficult business decisions is very much being a Board Member and those made recently now see the Society in a much stronger financial position, one that is the envy of our competitors. But one thing I have learned over the years and that is to talk and listen to what members have to say. Being able to do this gives you a very good insight into what makes the membership tick. What they find is acceptable to them and what is not. This type of knowledge is essential when reviewing existing procedures or dealing with requests to make changes. Where I believe our Society stands out from the rest is the system we operate, which is a fair one for all members. I have spoken to many about this and often written how I believe it is wrong for one member to try and gain an advantage over others. To maintain this and be part of the forward planning of the Society I am asking for your continued support. I have never made promises I know cannot be kept and I like to think that I have carried out my position with honesty and integrity.



## Allan Evans (Y83)

I have for the last ten years been priv-



ileged to serve you, the members, on the Board of Management. I am a working licensed taxi driver with 32 years experience and a member of our Society since 1985. During my time in office I have held a number of important roles; I am jointly responsible for Driver Operations and now hold the position of Compliance Officer. My aim in this essential role is always to make the system fair and equal for us all and I have not been frightened of making important or difficult decisions when necessary. I treat my position extremely seriously and my judgements are based on experience, integrity and the need to safeguard our Society and most importantly you, the members. Prior to being elected, I worked as a new Driver Trainer and Marshalling Officer, on hand to assist members and always seeking to raise the Society's profile and generate additional income for us all.

I have throughout my time in office worked on a number of key projects, helping me build up an excellent working relationship with some of our most senior clients. As a current working driver, I have never lost touch with you, the members, and I have always made every effort to be approachable, fair, open minded and at all times willing to offer help and advice. The knowledge and experience I have gained over the last ten years has given me a deep understanding of our Society and my enthusiasm has never wavered. I am confident in my ability and have always been totally committed to my position of Board Member, it is a responsibility that I certainly do not take lightly.

I am very fortunate to be part of a tremendously experienced Board of Management, totally committed to steering our Society forward. I ask you once again for your support in voting for me to represent you for a further term in office, I will certainly not let you down.

## Mike Son (V52)

Dear fellow subscribers...

Well it's here again, yes, the Board of Management elections. By now you will know who is standing or re-standing for the BoM.

I am given to understand there is only one other member seeking to be voted onto the Board.





With that in mind, I assume that the number of candidates has diminished due to the fact that previous nominee's must believe the existing Board have performed an excellent job during what have undoubtedly been and what will probably continue to be, very difficult times.

During the past few years, the Chairman and existing Board have been very positive in the administration and financial wellbeing of the Society. There are not many organisations at this moment that can look forward to a bright future with money in the bank and the opportunity to keep ahead of market trends by planning and investing in new technologies.

I understand what it's like out there and I believe that my experience as a working taxi driver in addition to being a Board Member with DaC and Committee Member with the London Taxidriers' Fund for Underprivileged Children are still assets that I am proud to use. I would like to continue as your Board Member and ask for your continued support.

## Allen Togwell (Q08)

My name is Allen Togwell. I have been a Board member of Dial-a-Cab for the past 24 years. For much of that time I was responsible for Sales & Marketing. In recent years there have been changes in our management strategy with the employing of professionals. Resulting in my being able to reduce my



time in the office to two days a week, which is adequate for the work I do including Board meetings, interviewing new drivers, chairing complaints hearings and creating artwork and graphic design - although much of this I do at home in my own time.

Examples of what that involves are our tip-up seat ads, rear window ads, annual reports, give-away cards, photo graphics for our website, banners for sales presentations and ad hoc illustrations for brochures when DaC sponsor charity events etc. Our technology is such that I can extract data from my office PC when off-site or at home, enabling me to reply promptly to members and company emails and keep in touch with the day-to-day running of your Society.

We have come a long way since I first joined the Board of Dial-a-Cab, which had an annual turnover of £4m. And it's no co-incidence that our success during the past decade has been achieved during a period of stability, continuity and the experience of our Chairman and Board of Management. I therefore look for your support to allow me to use my experience for a further term of office.

Thank you...

## Tom Whitbread (Q09)

I do not want to bore the older members of our Society who I have worked with for over 30 years, as they will know all of the work that I have put into



the Society since our days in Shirland Road.

It is the new drivers who have joined in the last few years, who may not recognise the name or face except from articles in this magazine or on your computer screen after acquiring free theatre tickets for you.

In those 30 years I have worked as part of the team, a team that has made your Society the success that it is today. I am the longest serving Board Member on Dial-a-Cab, having covered most of the jobs that are available to Board Members.

Since the recession, some Board Members have been employed doing a minimum number of hours, which saves the Society more money. Being a Board Member no longer guarantees that you get full employment just because you have been elected. I fall into that category now, but I have completed a long time gaining experience and knowledge after starting with the most basic jobs then working my way up through the company to becoming a Board Member.

Over the years, I have worked with many Board Members who have promised members such fantastic deals if they elect them. They then fail and leave the Board as they cannot work as part of a team, which has been proven in the way which we as a Society have reached our pinnacle above our rivals.

I think you have at present the best team as a Board of Management that I have seen in the 30 plus years that I have been a shareholder. It would be an honour to serve you for another two years.

Thank you...

# More Hydrogen Buses for London

## ...and 15 hydrogen-powered taxis by 2012!

A new totally emission free hydrogen bus has gone into service on London roads. According to Mayor Boris Johnson as he unveiled the new bus that emits no polluting gases, this new red bus was a marvel of hydrogen technology. In fact, the only emissions that the bus makes are water vapour.

It is claimed that by the time this batch of 8 buses are all in service, London will have Europe's largest hydrogen fleet. That should be by the early part of 2011.

The buses will form the RV1 route, which Mayor Johnson claimed will be the first totally emission free bus route in London. That route goes via Covent Garden, the Tower and South Bank.

The Mayor added: "These buses will run through the most polluted part of the city, through two air pollution hotspots, helping to improve London's air quality."

The buses run off batteries containing stored electricity generated by a hydrogen fuel cell, which combines hydrogen and oxygen to produce energy. It leaves just water as a by-product. The batteries also store energy generated by braking.

London now has 100 hybrid buses and the intention is to treble that number. The much-touted new Routemaster itself is scheduled for 2012 and is said to be some 40% less polluting than current diesel buses.

The Mayor also announced the launch of the UK's largest permanent hydrogen refuelling station in Stratford. It is hoped that by 2012 there will be a further 6 refuelling sites.

By 2012, it is hoped that around 150 buses will be operated by hydrogen with the added claim that there should also be at least 15 hydrogen-powered taxis!

It will be interesting to see how much TfL are providing towards the buses and comparing that *pro rata* to the taxis...



More emission free buses - with 15 Hydrogen taxis following close behind

There is nothing remotely funny about Tuesday 30 November, but several Dial-a-Cab drivers still came out with the same joke – getting the best job they'd had in some time was most definitely not funny and as an added bonus, it was snow joke! That was the night when not only did the heavens empty their shovel-loads of snow down to earth, but almost at the same time they went on to freeze it over!

Umit Uzguner (E12) has been on DaC since 1999. On that Tuesday evening he took 4 passengers to Gatwick Airport. He told *Call Sign* that knowing what he knows now, even if someone offered him £1000 to do the job again in those conditions, he'd say thank you but no thanks!

He picked up the people at the Victoria Gatwick Express terminal – very badly named for that night as the weather stopped all trains running. It was two couples that offered to share the cab between them. Knowing that the traffic was bad, Umit warned them that the fare could be as much as £200, but they still agreed knowing that there was no other way of getting there. He also said that it could take 2 – 3 hours. It ended up taking over 7 hours and he still had a long trip to get home!

Umit decided to go via the M4 and M25 as his terminal had put out several warnings about traffic queues via the A23. In fact the M4 was clear and he reached junction 10 on the M25 after they had been going around 40 minutes. But it was there by the A3 that things suddenly got bad. In fact they just stopped with the next two junctions taking Umit around 6 hours! When he finally got past that, the road became clear but was also like a skating ring.

"Eventually we arrived at Gatwick," Umit continued, "and I apologised for the length of time it took and for the excessive amount on the meter. They very nicely paid up and said that they felt sorry for me! The roads were so icy that you couldn't relax for a single second and I had that for much of the way back home to Chingford. That also took me just under 3 hours and I felt as stiff as a board when I finally got in - almost 11 hours since picking them up. I just hope I don't make the same mistake ever again!"

Also caught out that awful night was Jon Robinson (E88). He was on an account trip from Covent Garden to Paddock Wood in Kent. Jon told us that the warnings he'd heard seemed irrelevant as he got to Eltham in no time.

"Suddenly everything just stopped and eventually I thought I'd cut across country via Orpington, but the roads were like sheet glass and eventually we just ground to a halt again. It was around 5.5 hours after POB that my passenger just got out and said he would walk to Sidcup and stop there!"

Jon lives just 5 miles from Sidcup but even that took him close on two hours and he final-

# Snow Joke for DaC Drivers!



It wasn't an evening for roaders!

ly got home over 7 hours after picking up the job!

Finishing his tale of woe, Jon added: "I spoke to people stuck in their cars with less knowledge than I of the area, so they had to stick to the main roads. Some had been there almost 11 hours and were literally freezing!"

A slightly different tale came from *Call Sign* Editor, Alan Fisher. He had just set down in Victoria and was immediately surrounded by desperate passengers trying to go southwest. He turned down two Gatwick trips having heard about the possible problems on the M25 and M23. Then for reasons that even he

admits he doesn't understand, he took pity on someone who said they were desperate to get home to Brighton! Mind you, the fact that they stuffed £150 into his hand might have helped!

"It was just after 6pm," Alan told us, "and I thought that even if the traffic was a bit slow, I'd still be back by around 10.30. Well, we reached Streatham just over 2 hours later and nothing was moving when a message came out that all motorways and A-roads around Gatwick were totally gridlocked. So I told the passenger that I couldn't take him any further and dropped him at a local minicab office where I gave the £150 to a driver who had been on his way home. I was just happy to write off the two wasted hours and turn around. Even so, I felt rather worried, so I phoned up the minicab office the following morning at 8am to find out if my passenger had reached home ok. The dispatcher told me that his driver hadn't yet got back! That really was snow joke..."

Some days later, *Call Sign* received a call from DaC driver Bernie Silver (G08) who had been to visit his son in Munich. He'd heard about the motorway chaos and phoned to say that all the trains there were still running on time, even though the weather was as bad as the UK.

"If it makes you feel better," said a smug-sounding Bernie, "there were some delays at the airport while they swept snow from the runway. Then it was all back to normal..."

**Ron Yarborough**  
Call Sign on-line

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

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**Call Sign** likes to take the occasional wonder back through **Dial-a-Cab** history because we've always felt it to be important and that in any case, it is part of what we are. And there is no doubt that **Alan Lewis (A44)** is very much part of that history, going back a long way in the history of our company. In fact Alan joined what was then ODRTS (Owner Drivers Radio Taxi Service) on 30th August 1962 and retains his original callsign to this day.

The sprightly 75-year old, who looks much younger and with a clarity of mind belying his years, told **Call Sign** of the days when our offices were in Pentonville Road and Alan's Cafe, owned by **Aldo Boca**, brother of the recently departed former DaC subscriber **John Boca**, was just across the street. The young Alan Lewis and ODRTS friends would all meet up there for tea breaks and a natter. Renowned DaC names from the past flowed from his tongue as if it were only yesterday. **Jack Taylor** and **Martin Gellman** (both former Chairmen) and the still hale and hearty **Bill Tyzack BEM (C6)** were just some of them.

"The Boca brothers started on the Knowledge after we cab drivers began visiting their cafe. We'd go into the radio office to collect our credit money and then nip across the road for a cuppa and a chat," he continued. "I actually brokered a 'marriage' there between Bill Tyzack, who was looking for a dayman to share his cab and a friend of mine, **Harry Barrs**, who was looking for a nightman to work with." Alan beamed as it all came back!

"I was partners with my late brother Phil, a nightman known as '*Phil the Pipe*' before going on my own for a few years. I've now been partners with **Lawrie Klein** these past 30 years."

Going onto **Dial-a-Cab** specifically, Alan added: "I absolutely love this wonderful circuit of ours, I would not be without the radio - not just any radio because ours is by far the best. I know you would expect me to say that, but it's none the less true!"

"As an example, around seven years ago I had prostate cancer and there were rumblings about me possibly leaving the circuit because I was not able to complete my quota of trips due to those health problems. It was very busy at the time and terminals were in short supply. To his eternal credit, **Call Sign** Editor, **Alan Fisher** was instrumental in keeping me on the circuit and I have never forgotten that gesture." Alan's voice broke with emotion as he thought back to those times.

"Your boss is a real gentleman" he assured the **Call Sign** reporter, "but I expect you know that already," he said, his voice readjusting. "Thankfully I'm fully cured now, but those were tough times back then and of course it's really hard on the family as well."

"Oh yes," Alan Lewis continued now in full flow, "there's another example of the compassion and personal touch our Society shows to drivers. When I had an eye operation for a detached retina some time ago, DaC Chairman **Brian Rice** personally telephoned me to chat and check on my welfare, which I thought was really nice and it certainly impressed my wife Helen into the bargain!"

Talking of the time he bought his first cab, Alan said he had bought a four-year old FX3 from **Levy's Garage** at York Way in 1960. "In

## Alan Lewis: DaC's second longest serving member



Alan Lewis looking very young for 75

those days you had to wrap up really warm in the winter or you could freeze. Fingers and toes would often go numb and there were draughts everywhere!" His eyes narrowed at the recollection of muffler, hat and heavy coat. "Today's cab is like travelling executive class by comparison," he smiled, "just, no comparison really!"

Alan went on to recall some of the more eccentric account clients of those distant times, including one individual who would book a cab to Liverpool Street Station as a wait and return. The client would then put a chalk mark on the tyre of the cab to ensure the cab did not go anywhere and then he would go to Cambridge for the day and expect the same cab to be waiting for him upon his return! The same scenario could happen at Victoria Station when the client decided to visit Brighton or



Alan in 1960 with his first cab - a FX3

even the continent! There was no Eurostar in those days - or the type of traffic wardens we get nowadays! But that type of job was very much the exception, generally they were hard times, but you just got on with the job," Alan said with a shrug of the shoulders that said it all. "By comparison, it's a good bit easier these days, even though some people think they may be having a tough time of it."

Alan's hobby is playing Bridge, something he really enjoys. "Perhaps when I do eventually decide to hang up my Badge, I will have more time to pursue the game. But I don't foresee that happening anytime too soon, because it would involve leaving DaC and that would be hard - very hard indeed..."

Alan Green (E52)

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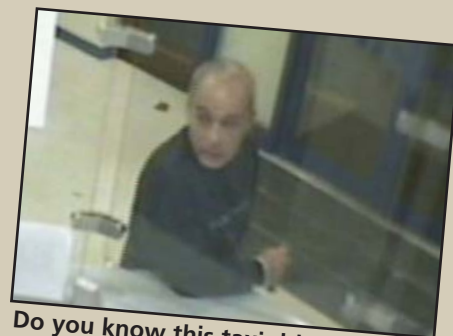
## Police appeal to trace witness

Police are appealing to the public to help trace a licensed taxi driver who they believe is a potential witness or victim of a crime in Islington.

Officers are releasing a CCTV image of the man, which was taken when he came into Islington Police station, Tolpuddle Street, N1 on 13 November, at approximately 02:00 hours.

Officers would like to speak to the driver in connection with an incident which happened around this time.

Anyone with information about this, should contact DS Chris Skelt at Islington CID on 0207 421 0255 or 0300 123 1212.



Do you know this taxi driver?



**From Dial-a-Cabs Victor Meldrew, Tom Whitbread**

When Christmas descends on us, we automatically think about family, relatives and friends that we have not seen for some time. Why is this, why do we not think of these people throughout the year? Why is Christmas so special that it jogs the memory into remembering these friends?

Is it because we're worried that if we do not send them a card and others find out, then the repercussions are transferred into tight-fistedness or just being miserable. Or it could be that the people we love and respect have travelled away during the year for whatever reason, causing them to be missed at the Christmas table and the festive meal.

This year, my son Russell will be missing due to him following his chosen occupation, unable to do this in his home country he has had to travel to the other side of the world. The chance of him realising the employment he would like to continue with for the next 30 years, being found in a recession gripped England was non-existent. Russell left UWE (University of West of England) with his qualification as an Aeronautical Engineer; this enabled him to get a job with *Quinetic*, a company that deals with all aspects of armaments from guns, tanks and high-powered fighter jets.

After working for *Quinetic* for a few years, he decided he'd like a change. So back to University and he trained as a maths teacher, spending time trying to inspire and educate teenagers at Salisbury High School; during this time he added his words of wisdom to children who would do anything to get out of a maths class!

During one lesson, his words of wisdom were that if there was one thing in your life you wanted to do, then go and do it before it is too late. It was at that point that a budding Einstein with a big mouth said: "Sir, do you want to be a maths teacher all your life?" No, came Russell's reply. "What would you like to do then, sir?" Russell replied that he would like to be an airline pilot! The reply from the student was surprising, "Well why don't you f\*\*\* off and do it then?"

Because Russell didn't want to lose face, he had to show he could take his own advice and try to learn how to fly. He had been in the air cadets whilst a pupil at the **London Oratory School**. As he had been up in planes and gliders, he knew he had a head for heights - unlike his father!

His first challenge was to try and convince his bank manager to give him a loan against his flat, before looking for an air school to do

## WHY DO WE THINK OF MISSING RELATIVES AT CHRISTMAS?



**Russell Whitbread with some Susi Air Stewardesses in Indonesia**

in the mainly jungle areas.

The planes that *Susi* use are mainly new Cessna 208 Caravan planes, with space for a dozen or so passengers and cargo, but they can be changed to suit the situation.

When I speak to Russell via *Skype* on my PC, he upsets me that I am being subjected to freezing cold while he imparts the information that he went

onto the beach and burnt his feet, not realising with the tropical heat he should have been wearing flip-flops.

He did his familiarisation at *Susi* training airstrip, which just happened to be some 100 feet from the beach. Going out for a meal will cost around £3 and about the same for your drinks. Then flying over the islands can give you some spectacular views and variety from the dense jungle to the clear blue sea, but the weather can change in an instance from a beautiful sunny day to a steamy blinding monsoon downpour.

Although Christmas is not celebrated in Indonesia as we do it in England, the people who are abroad still miss that family gathering for the festive season. I know this for a fact as during my early working years, I spent six years abroad including Christmas, but the misery was lessened as I spent the time in New Zealand, Fiji, Canada or Australia. But at sometime during the 24 hours of Christmas day, when you are abroad you will get a pang of loneliness. That will soon disappear if you are in a warm, sunny climate and you know England is gripped in icy conditions!

When my son started his flying, he bought a small teddy bear in a flying outfit and it travels with him as his mascot wherever he goes, the bear's name is Colin Stapleford, named after the airfield where Russell trained. Colin has his own page on *Facebook* with photographs taken all over the world with new friends, locations and celebrities!

If you would like to see his photographs with views whilst he was in different locations and meeting personalities such as Sir Alan Sugar and Peter Crouch or in the cockpit of a trans-pacific jet, follow him on *Facebook*. There are many pilots and stewardesses who are friends with Colin, one stewardess on a regular commercial flight who recognised Colin in my son's hand luggage, gave him his own seat and treated him like a VIP. The pictures are well worth a look so for photos to go with this article go onto *Facebook* and join Colin Stapleford and Russell Whitbread as a friend. I hope you enjoy the photos of warm tropical isles as we suffer this long, cold winter.

I hope you had a nice Christmas and may I also take this opportunity to wish you and your family a very healthy and prosperous New Year. May **Dial-a-Cab** remain a success story and gain you the money you need to give your family a good life style.

his training. He checked air schools in Spain, Australia, America and England - the foreign ones were cheaper at that time but a twist in circumstances - the recession - changed everything. It became cheaper for him to stay at our home free and do his training at Stapleford, Essex, the same air school as **John Riley** of the **DaC Credit Union**.

To train as a commercial pilot, you are looking at a cost of between £40,000 to £60,000 with a hell of a lot of studying regarding how to fly, air and weather conditions, map reading, air law as well as another stint back at university. Once he had passed his exams to fly a single engine aircraft, he then had to build up his flying hours to carry on to the next stage. To complete this in the shortest possible time, he joined together with 4 other pilots from his course and they travelled to America and hired 3 single engine planes. Two of the planes accommodated two pilots and the other had one pilot and the luggage, these tasks would be alternated day by day.

They started in the southwest and flew up the coast to Canada, then across to the east coast down south and across America to their starting point. The trip took 1 month and allowed them to see sights like Niagara Falls, the Hudson River leading into New York, the Grand Canyon and many more magnificent sights from 2000 feet up in the air. This expedition was still cheaper than doing the same amount of flying hours in England.

After his return it was back to studying for his multi-engine licence, he passed this along with 6 of his colleagues. They all then started their search for jobs, but the recession had taken a greater grip of the airlines with many going into receivership. Russell is now the only one of this group who has been lucky enough to gain an interview, even though he had to travel to Munich for the appointment. This was after the group sent many 100s of letters trying to gain interviews or employment.

Now 8 months after passing, Russell is the only one who is in a job flying and completing his dream. But to achieve this he had to fly to Indonesia for his position as a pilot. He is flying for a company called *Susi Air* a fast growing company in Indonesia, carrying passengers and cargo. He is flying around Borneo, Sumatra, Java and the many local islands. Some of the airports are in slightly built up towns or cities, some are just a rough airstrips



Since Sam's early exit from the CYPs, he has been having a well-earned break from boxing and has focused on his studies at college. Not really expecting too much before the start of the Junior ABA Championships that begin towards the end of March, Sam was thrilled when he got the call to represent England once more in an international tournament with Scotland. There was just 4 weeks notice, but Sam jumped at the opportunity of a rematch with the current *GB Champion Mark McKeown*.

Soon after training had begun, the bad weather moved in which made travelling to and from the gym in the ice and snow each evening hugely difficult. It was a 70 mile round trip and there wasn't a gritter in sight. With just a week to go before the tournament, the weather took a turn for the worst in Scotland with people having to spend up to 20 hours stranded in their cars on the M8 and just a stones throw from the tournament venue. It was looking very doubtful as to whether it would go ahead at all but with just 36 hours to go, the call came from the English ABA to say it was on, the ploughs and gritters had been out and roads to the venue were said to be passable. Sam had to leave almost immediately with a 9-hour journey ahead of him by road and rail, meeting up with the England Squad en route.

His mother and I flew up the next day, hired a car and drove straight to the venue. The roads, although clear, had huge piles of snow where the ploughs had been and were spookily empty of traffic. I was amazed how easy our journey had been from Essex to Glasgow, with no delays and in such poor conditions - probably because most people were staying at home!

The venue was the Time Capsule and the atmosphere was building as the boxers come out for the ring parade. The Scottish team entering the ring with their anthem played on the bagpipes, followed by the English team entering to Land of Hope and Glory. The two teams lined up in the ring opposite their counterparts, shook hands, exchanged badges and off we went.

Sam was the 7th bout of the day and with

**For those new to Dial-a-Cab, Call Sign had been following the progress of Sam Bezzina - son of Dial-a-Cab driver Dean Bezzina (M10) - and his ambition to box for England. He has now achieved that and has already won a silver medal for his country...**

## Sam boxes for England again!



**Commonwealth Games shot for Sam?**

McKeown being a local lad, the crowd erupted with cheers and whistles as he entered the ring. Both his mum and I had done our fair share of shouting for Sam as he entered the ring with his normal support unable to make it due to the adverse weather.

The first bell sounded and it was time for business. Sam opened with a cracking right hand and the bout was off at a ferocious pace. There were plenty of great exchanges from both boxers and it was hard to believe that the score at the end of the first was just 2pts to 1pt in favour of McKeown.

Sam's corner told him to slow things down,

as the computer scoring was not effective for fast combinations and most of the punches being thrown were not being counted. The second saw Sam trying to control the pace connecting with some great shots, working well with the jab and with the back hand getting through. I was amazed to find that Sam had failed to score a point in that round and he was now behind 6pts to 1pt.

Sam knew he was not going to be able to pull this one back, but in his usual style Sam went out for the third and final 2 minutes and entertained all the way. Just like the first round, the leather was flying and the crowds were screaming with full-on exchanges throughout. At the final bell, the scores were 13pts to 3pts in favour of McKeown.

I had McKeown down as winning, but I don't think the scores were a good reflection of the bout and afterwards it was great to see the two lads outside speaking to each other, shaking hands and congratulating each other. That's how boxing should be with no hard feelings.

This International Tournament is one of four in Scotland being billed as *The Road to 2014* - Scotland's Commonwealth Games. I know Mark McKeown is a strong favourite and has every intention of representing his country there. Wouldn't it be great if Sam supplied the opposition for England? Either way, Sam would like to thank **Call Sign** for its backing and sponsorship.

**Dean Bezzina (M10)**

## Where have all the Dunlop Taxi tyres gone!

A member of **Call Sign's** staff recently needed to renew a taxi tyre and appeared at his regular supplier, only to be told that there were no **Dunlop** Taxi tyres in stock, that they had not been in stock for some weeks as they were in short supply and that Dunlop were unlikely to produce any more until 'back order demand' made future production of this popular inflatable rubber mix, a more viable economic venture!

The **Michelin** equivalent was offered, which would have meant replacing more tyres than necessary at considerable additional cost. Indeed, a taxi driver waiting at the depot was having his cab 'converted' to the French equivalent for all five tyres on the basis he had been unable to source Dunlop as his first choice.

With a sense of urgency to renew the worn tyre, he noticed an ad in the December issue of **Call Sign**, which prompted a phone call to **Tiger Tyres** in Hackney Road.

"How many would you like," came the cheery response!

"Er, just one please," our staffer requested.

"No problem, come over and we'll sort you out," came the positive reply.

Twenty minutes later saw our hack being warmly greeted - perhaps it was the **DaC** door logo that was the recognition factor even though we got the impression that everyone was treated with the same enthusiasm - and receiving immediate attention.

Then came a rather surprising statement from Adam, the guy I had spoken to over the phone.

"I've bought up the lot," he admitted to our reporter, referring to Dunlop's existing stock. "There are other taxi tyre makes we can also offer as we carry a large stock of various marques. Our advertising campaign in **Call Sign** has certainly brought in business!"

The old tyre was speedily replaced, with balancing and a new valve completing the job. Then within just fifteen minutes of arrival, our staffer was back on the road looking out for more **Call Sign** stories to bring our readers!

And just in case anyone thinks this is just a crafty way of Tiger Tyres advertising, they know nothing about it and certainly haven't been charged. And a memo to our staffer... there are three car washes around the corner from Tiger Tyres!

**Tiger Tyres are at 472 Hackney Road E2. Tel: 0207 729 5237...**



**Adam fits a Dunlop tyre onto the DaC taxi**

I hope you've all had a good Christmas and are enjoying the last few days of your well-deserved holiday. This month I thought I'd follow up on last month's article, which mentioned **Steam**, the online PC game client. As there are so many games out there, choosing one or two to stick with can be difficult. I like to play PC games in all genres and try out almost every new game as soon as a demo is available - time permitting, of course!

From my recent experiences, here are what I consider are some of the very best current PC games - some of which are available on other platforms - in each main genre and why I chose them. As there are several genres and limited space in *Call Sign*, I will split this into two articles. Part 1 this month will cover MMORPG, Single Player RPG, FPS and RTS. Part 2 next month will cover Racing, Sports, Adventure and Casual.

**I hope this helps you to find the right game out of the veritable myriad of titles available, but I hasten to add: also check other reviews on metacritic.com and similar websites.**

**Genre: MMORPG (Massively Multiplayer Online Role Playing Game)**

This is probably the most popular genre, with millions of people playing against each other all the time. Whilst there are quite a few great titles out there, my recommendation has got to be **World of Warcraft** (aka WoW). Set in the fantasy medieval Warcraft world of Azeroth, the player must choose to join the Alliance or the Horde and gains experience (or XP) through controlling their avatar around the world, whilst completing quests and taking part in raids. The game world is constantly being developed and provides the gamer with a *massive* online world that you can freely roam. You can choose one of many classes (ie warrior, rogue, mage, paladin, druid etc) as well as race (human, elf, dwarf, goblin, draenei, ogre etc).

The recently released **Cataclysm** expansion pack has altered this online world considerably, providing players with new challenges. If you like medieval role-playing with your friends, then this is the game for you. The graphics are stunning, the game is very immersive and addictive and there are over 11 million online players worldwide!

However, there is a sting in the tale - after buying the game you have to pay £8.50 per month to play (as all content is hosted on the game developer Blizzard's servers). WoW is available on Windows and Mac.

**Genre: Single player RPG (Role Playing Game)**

If you're not the social type or you'd rather just play a game for a couple hours here and there on your own without the commitment of arranging multiplayer raids, then a single-player RPG might be more your thing. There are *loads* of single-players RPGs out there, many of which are free. However, in my experience the one that eclipses all of these is a relatively recent release called **Dragon Age: Origins**. This game is set in the mythical kingdom of Ferelden, during a period of intense civil unrest. You can play as a warrior, rogue or mage and you have to fight off the demonic powers and reunite the torn kingdom. It's based on Dungeons & Dragons and has a very

On behalf of all Call Sign gamers, DaC's Jon Winterburn asks...

# Gaming:

## What's worth playing?



I rate UT3 very highly; in fact it is my favourite game of all-time! Whilst it is available on some consoles, I would not recommend playing it with a controller - this game requires extremely fast reflexes, consequently only players using a keyboard and mouse stand any chance of winning against the stiff competition! I have my own public/private UT3 server, so feel free to drop me an email if you would like to access it and perhaps play against my friends and I some time!

**Genre: RTS (Real-Time Strategy)**

Not my personal favourite genre, but that doesn't stop me trying out the latest titles. I have to recommend two games here because RTS games differ so much in theme. If you like building civilisations and playing as God, then **Sid Meier's Civilization V** is the game of choice. As the latest instalment in the Civilization series, this edition is great for novice and experienced players alike and I found it easy to get into. Essentially you start the game in an ancient time of your choice (ie ancient Babylon) and you build your first settlement, which you then grow through building, trade, politics and war until your civilisation reaches the year 2050 - if you make it that far without your people being wiped out!

However, if war is your thing, then **R.U.S.E** will be more up your street. Based during WW2, the players have to develop strategies to win battles and ultimately the game by using ruses and tricks to change the outcome of battles and prove themselves the superior power.

Both games provide you with single player and multiplayer modes. R.U.S.E is for Windows only, but Civilization V is available on both Windows & Mac.

**If none of the above games take your fancy, be sure to check back next month when I cover Racing, Sports, Adventure and Casual genres. Thanks for reading, and happy gaming!**

**Jonathen Winterburn**  
**DaC Network Administrator**

## Studio flat for rent in Jan / Feb

**A furnished studio flat in the Putney area  
(Friars Ave near ASDA on the A3)  
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**Contact Tony (R09) for more details**

**Tel: 07811 474 516**



In a ceremony that has been taking place every four months or so, further members of **Dial-a-Cab's** ultra loyal staff have received recognition of that loyalty in the form of a reception held in the Board room, where food and drink flowed and a certificate was issued to each of them commemorating the occasion.

**There were four staff members with 15 years service and two with 10 years.**

Probably the best known was **Andy Parry**, who joined DaC in September 1995 as a Customer Service Representative (CSR) before being promoted to Evening Shift Controller and then to his current position of evening shift Operations Manager.

**Charmaine Cameron** arrived in October 1995 as a temporary CSR - could that have been just for Christmas – but she soon made the position permanent. Charmaine is now a Concierge CSR.

Also celebrating 15 years was **Hilary Briscoe**. Hilary walked through the Brunswick House doors for the first time in November 1995 as a temporary CSR, but was to soon make the position permanent. She is now a night shift Team Leader.

Last of the 15-year staff members was **Theresa Whitfield**. She too was a temporary CSR from October 1995. However, Theresa saw her future going in a different direction. Her interest in computers saw her move to the DaC IT department on the first floor as an IT Assistant and Data Systems Managers. She later became an IT Support operative and will soon resume her position as DaC Business Analyst once returning from maternity leave.

The two ten year members were led by **Annita Young**, who joined in August 2000 as a receptionist. She later moved onto the Sales Administration department and is currently an Accounts Manager, but was unable to attend.

Last but not least was **Yvonne Bird**. Yvonne arrived in the November of 2000 as a CSR, a position she obviously enjoys because she still holds that position.

The Board of Management were on hand for the presentations and **Call Sign** would like to add its congratulations to all six staff members...

# More DaC Staff receive long service recognition



Brian Rice congratulates Hilary Briscoe on her 15 years at DaC



The BoM and four of the six staff members on parade



**The Hon President, Hon Chair & Committee  
of**

**The London Taxidriver's Fund for  
Underprivileged Children**

*Would like to wish you all*

**A VERY HAPPY NEW YEAR**

**With grateful thanks to all our drivers, sponsors, helpers  
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**As we move further forward into the second decade of the 21st century, Call Sign randomly conducted a survey of our drivers' opinions as to how they saw the taxi trade developing over the next ten years up to 2021 – and indeed if there would still be a trade...**

**Ian Holland (H38)**

thought that the taxi trade would decline slightly given the relentless expansion of PHVs.

"They rely on SatNav, so they're not up to our standard in terms of topography, but I think they are slowly catching up with us in other ways. Take the M4 bus lane as an example, although that has now been scrapped, how long will it be before they can use all the London bus lanes that we now currently enjoy?"



**Steve Rumbol (F44)**

said it was a downhill slope with things getting harder "...especially if certain legislation goes through. If PH cars are allowed to rank at Heathrow and with the scrapping of the M4 bus lane, it will not be any quicker to get into town in a taxi and then we'll have lost another advantage over them."



**Kevin McGreevy (C38)**

was adamant that the taxi industry had to modernise and that unification of cab trade representation was the way to survive.



"There are too many splinter groups with far too much in-fighting and trade reps throwing their toys out of the pram when they don't get their own way. Trade unions and associations need to unify and work together to have an influence, not walk off and start a separate 'group' just because they don't like some of the things they hear or just when things do not go all their own way. Otherwise we are just banging our heads against the wall. PH have iPhones, apps and that's the sort of thing we should go for which is what I mean by modernising. We should employ such technology to assist our existing extensive and intimate knowledge of our City."

**Dean Suett (V44)**

also suggested modernising and improving our image was the way forward, the key to our future success and retaining our status and popularity with the public.



"Too much technology though makes the Knowledge obsolete – SatNavs are fine for longer trips or unfamiliar territory, but not the London catchment area, that's why we did

**The Call Sign Survey:**

# Will the taxi trade survive till 2021???

The Knowledge in the first place! The map on my DaC terminal is very useful for the smaller, outlying streets it's true, but like all *real* cab drivers who have completed the KoL, a slavish attention to electronic navigation is not what it's about. Yes, I am hopeful for the future of the London taxi trade – but the cost of operating a taxi versus car is very expensive. One annual overhaul via Boris is much better than two from Ken and very welcome, but the general running costs are still high by comparison. Also, in order to retain our present client base and hopefully expand our clientele, because that's what growth is all about, we need to project a clean and professional image. Appearance and attitude coupled with professionalism is vital in the public's eye."

**Alec Wilkey (W83)**

told *Call Sign* there was a future for the taxi trade while people are prepared to put their hand up in the street or call Dial-a-Cab.



"If we can continue to assure the cab-riding public of the high standards and quality both of driver and taxi and the maintenance of those standards, then we will see off the opposition. But I fear there is an ulterior motive within TfL to water down The Knowledge, which inevitably lowers the standard of candidate. Yes to high standards of driver and taxi offering a professional service to the public, no to SatNavs!"

**Next was Sean Ferry**

**(T90)**, a new recruit to **Dial-a-Cab** and someone with very positive ideas for promoting the taxi trade into the next decade and also facing the challenges that lie ahead.



As the recently installed **Beadle** of the **Company of Hackney Carriage Drivers**, Sean is well placed to gauge opinion, speaking as he does to so many drivers during the course of his duties.

"At the Olympics site in Stratford, there is a very long walk from the arena to the taxi feeder park and ranks, which will be detrimental to the cab trade and very inconvenient for the public, particularly the less able. It seems taxis will not be allowed into the designated Network lanes, those will be reserved for athletes and officials, suggesting that members of the public will be left to make their way on public transport or sit in a cab in the inevitable traffic queues! Looking longer term, I think TfL have an alternative agenda to steadily merge the two trades – Taxis and PH. Ultimately, I wonder if they will adopt the provincial model of unifying the two services? They are already both under one roof at the *Palestra* building. I

may be cynical, but I for one would not be surprised if it did eventually happen and that just might be the ultimate demise of the traditional licensed London taxi as we know it. Obviously I sincerely hope not, only time will tell. And another thing, we should adopt a Dress Code. The PH people are suited and booted, projecting a professional image in the public's eye, it's a psychology thing. I know we are all individuals in this trade, but we need to promote ourselves as the professionals – and that means dressing the part."

**Jon Robinson (E88)**

thought that the cab trade would stagnate because we are seen as expensive and driving out-of-date vehicles.



"We are now doing work that PH doesn't want. When they covered the smaller or unsavoury jobs we turned a blind eye, but now that they have steadily moved into our traditional markets they have left us behind to some degree. We will end up being good for tourists and seen as a novelty of the past. Our 'patch' is getting ever smaller and our pool of work is shrinking."

**Robert Webb (A03J)**

thought there would always be work out there for us, but suggested the taxi trade needs to move forward and evolve to meet changing trends.



"We need to seriously have a modern vehicle fleet to compete with the latest PH cars. The way things are at present, it is possible to have an old LTI Fairway taxi and new LTC or MB taxi – all with the same fare meter tariff. Surely the older taxis have paid for themselves many times over and need to be updated if we are to face the challenges ahead? I believe Addison Lee cars are changed every three years, which must give them an edge in the PH sector.

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## TAXI AIR CONDITIONING

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

# Call Sign En La Belle France

I'm not sure if **Call Sign** readers will agree with me, but I thought that work levels on the streets before Christmas were markedly higher than last year – or was it the combo of tube strikes, student demos and snow that helped us out?

I write these notes in the wake of the extraordinary admission that Camilla, Duchess of Cornwall had been poked and prodded about in the ribs with a stick by a masked protester while travelling with the heir to the throne in a car in Regent Street en route to the theatre; you really couldn't make that one up!

On the same crazy night, just around the corner in Whitehall, the stepson of *Pink Floyd* legend **Dave Gilmore** was caught swinging from the Cenotaph like a monkey! Ape man Charlie is studying History at University – obviously his lecturer had not got around to teaching him just how emotive this monument is to the British public – but then the crowd he was in that night were already relieving themselves on the Statue of Winston Churchill. Get back up to the Zoo lads!



The Government, Police Authorities and Boris need to get a grip here – the type of anarchy on the streets of London in the season of goodwill was a great excuse for tourists to want to body-swerve this great City. I would like to see nothing short of a water canon rain on their parade, but of course we cannot do that as the poor little darlings would get wet!

So what is it about student demonstrators?

Why on earth do these people have to be carefully handled? I'm sure that if Millwall and West Ham fans squared up to each other in Parliament Square that night, the Old Bill would have taken a different stance. Anyway, they could have done with some practice – those two teams will be in the same division next season!

## DaC wine “club”

On a more cheerful note, I would like to sincerely thank the ever increasing numbers of **Dial-a-Cab** subscribers who now subscribe to our organic wines – so sorry I had to disappoint some as I could have done with so much more – you cleared me right out this time so it had to be first come, first served. There will be much more volume and choice of wines in 2011... speaking of which, I hope that you all have a great one!

*Bonne Année*

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

## Some people get Tango'd

# DAC'S BARRY GETS GRIFFIN'D!

**Dial-a-Cab** driver **Barry Spear (Y16)** is one of life's night people, leaving his west London home at around 1am to come into town to earn his money. So it was soon after one in the morning that saw Barry pass the Royal Lancaster Hotel in Bayswater Road, still looking for his first fare.

Suddenly, out of the corner of his eye he saw a hand extend from a dinner-jacketed arm. Barry stopped and his smartly attired passenger got in. He certainly wasn't drunk but had obviously had a few! The address was given off Chalk Farm Road and off they went.

"I can do the trip blindfolded," Barry told **Call Sign**, "Sussex Gardens, Marylebone Road and left at Albany Street. Normally I would then go into Oval Road but I knew that there was a road closure in Jamestown Road, so I carried on down Parkway and did a left into Arlington Road. I thought my passenger had dozed off but suddenly he called out *no, no, no, you should have turned left at Oval Road*. I explained why I hadn't done it and we continued.

"He gave me directions for the last part of the trip and we stopped outside his house. He then passed a card through the partition – which I assumed in the dark was a credit card. I went to process it but then realised it was a business card. For that brief second I thought he'd taken one too many drinks and believed this was his credit card! I looked at the card and was stunned to see the name **John Griffin**, Chairman of *Addison Lee*!"

Barry ended by telling us: "He said that he had been wrong regarding the directions and that I had been right! Then for a £16 fare he gave me £20 and told me to keep the change. He got out, winked and made his way into the house. My only thought was why I hadn't noticed him when he got in – there are a million questions I could have asked! I feel like I've been Griffin'd!"



**Chairman of Addison Lee, John Griffin, in a more official pose. Pic Courtesy Joe Anderson/eyevine**

## Return of Stardust Children's Theatre Workshop

Phyllis Borden (B.A. Hons) is pleased to announce the re-establishment of the Stardust Children's Theatre Workshop in the Essex area. It will commence on Monday 10th January 2011 from 4 - 5pm at the Steepleview Memorial Hall, Osier Drive, Laindon - (opposite Costcutters and near to the A127).

Age group is 5-9 yrs old, so for an hour why not let your children gain confidence, sociability, imagination, good speech, self-discipline and have fun.

Past students have achieved distinction not just on stage and TV, but also in the fields of medicine, law, science, art and teaching.

Phone 01268 928 004 to pre-book or just come along on the day.

At the end of next year, a scholarship of 1 years free tuition will be offered to the most promising student...

The task of raising funds for the **Magical Taxi Tour** each year means more children with life threatening illnesses get to go on this trip of a lifetime. This year's annual dinner/dance was fun filled and magical itself – as well as raising enough money to send at least three cabs on next year's trip.

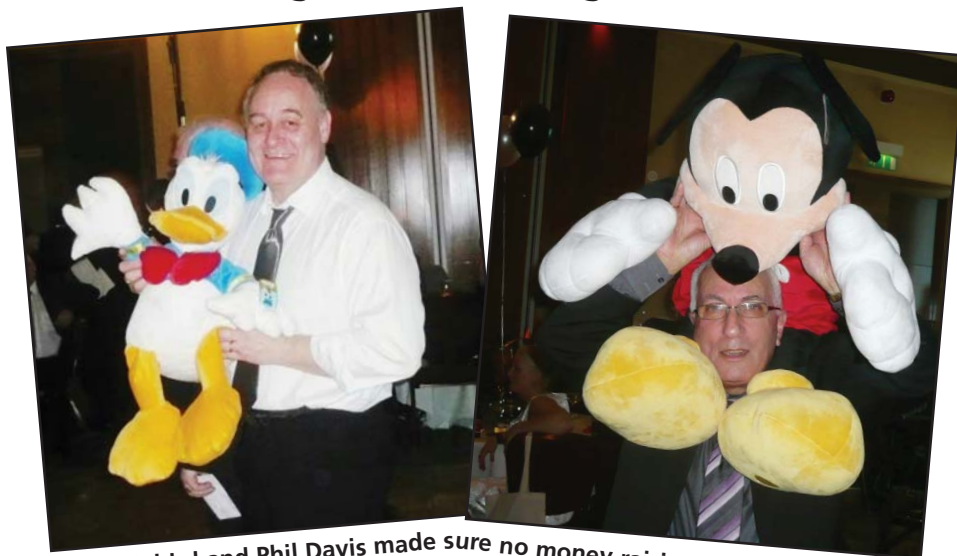
The Children's Magical Taxi Tour annual dinner/dance took place on 11 December at The Marriott West India Quay Hotel and was designed as a fund raising event for the next Disney trip in September 2011. This is a great opportunity for those involved with the charity event to enjoy a fun filled evening, with good food and company whilst raising money for a good cause. Many of those present were drivers, helpers and committee members who made the trip in September 2010, or actual sponsors of the event.

The evening began with a drinks reception, sponsored by Dial-a-Cab, followed by the dinner. Despite the fact that the kitchen at The Marriott had suffered a fire just days before the event, the meal was excellent and the service impeccable. The hotel is a keen supporter of the Magical Taxi Tour and had provided packed lunches for everyone on the Disney trip once again this year, as well as sponsoring a cab.

Then came an evening of terrific entertainment. The band, the **Jive Aces**, were sponsored by **ComCab**. This band are rock'n'roll, swing and jazz all rolled into one and their high energy levels kept everyone entertained during the first set. Dancers took to the floor and strutted their stuff, although for some of the evening it was good to just be able to watch them perform! During the break, the raffle was drawn and a silent auction, which had been running during the evening, was closed. With auction lots given to the winners, there was a surprise performance by the **Cab Trade All Stars Band**, with Master of **The Worshipful Company of Hackney Carriage Drivers**, **Jim Rainbird (T25)** on the drums. Then it was back to the Jive Aces for their second set, including some East End

# Raising funds for the Magical Taxi Tour

*Including Fiona's amazing cross-stitch!*



Jim Rainbird and Phil Davis made sure no money raising opportunity was missed!

Cockney songs with audience participation!

During the evening, the amount raised was £3500. The silent auction was well supported and the items raised an impressive amount of money with **DaC's CSR Fiona McLachlan** cross-stitch raising an impressive £130. The swimming hat of **Ian Thorpe** - the Australian swimmer known as the Thorpedo who had won 5 Olympic gold medals - raised £75, a

**Kate Moss** signed perfume took £110, a **Pele** signed football programme raised £330, **Cheryl Cole's** signed autobiography sold for £360 while the top bid was for **Arsenal** signed team photos, which raised an impressive £600.

With **DaC's Jim Rainbird and Phil Davis (F10)** running around to make sure no money-raising opportunity was missed, the evening was a great success...



## CABSURANCE TAKES SERVICE DIRECT TO CUSTOMERS

*at The London Taxi Company*

London taxi insurance experts **Cabsurance** have taken an office at **The London Taxi Company's** Brewery Road retail outlet, to provide their specialist advice and services direct to their core London Taxi customer audience. The office is the fourth outlet that the company has opened and is history repeating itself as the firm used to have an office at the previous Mann and Overton site.

Commenting on the new outlet, Mark Brown, The London Taxi Company (London) General Manager, said: "I'm really pleased to have the team from Cabsurance back in the heart of our dealership and able to offer my customers a great service, at their convenience. It's all part of the one-stop-shop offer we are trying to build up here."

As well as being able to offer annual, quarterly or monthly taxi policies at competitive premiums, the company is also able to offer excess from just £250. Managing Director, Michael Rose, said: "We were really pleased when Mark offered us the chance to reopen an office at his dealership. It's really vital that our customers can talk to us at a time and place convenient to them, so this location was ideal for both our business, The London Taxi Company and most of all our London clientele."

To celebrate the new outlet, independent brokers Cabsurance are offering any driver a month's free personal accident and sickness cover – just pop in to 39 - 41 Brewery Road to find out more or to talk about breakdown cover, travel and even home insurance! The Cabsurance office opening hours are 9.30am until 5pm, Monday to Friday or alternatively, you can contact Dani on 0207 697 9990 or email her at [dani.sullivan@cabsurance.com](mailto:dani.sullivan@cabsurance.com).





Bonnie hurried down and entered her waiting **Dial-a-Cab** taxi. It was on Tony's account so she wasn't the one that paid the bill. The TX4 turned left from Caversham Road - where she shared the top floor of a house with two friends - into Kentish Town Road. It was the last Friday of the month and as usual her trusty DaC taxi had turned up on time to take her to the *Charlotte Street Hotel*. This is where she had frequent dinners with Tony and had often joked that the food was so good, it was a pity not to stay over for breakfast so she hadn't forgotten her overnight bag! As the cab moved off, she took out her mobile phone to text a few friends about yesterday's after-office drinks soirée.

Tony worked at a large advertising agency in Camden Town. He'd met Bonnie a few years earlier at The Hawley Arms just before it was burned to the ground. They had got on quite well from the start, helped in part by Bonnie's easy manner and friendly smile. Tony often sent an account cab to pick her up whenever they had a date. Bonnie too had progressed well in her PR job, her pleasant style winning friends at work and charming new clients into joining the agency in which she worked. She had certainly met some nice men through her work.

While texting, she hadn't noticed the driver veering off route and heading towards St Pancras Way. She'd been re-reading the text message received earlier from Rupert, a most intriguing guy who she'd met a few weeks back at a film premiere she was attending through her PR work. He was from Rome, with English/Italian parents and a background of studying law in Boston and engineering in Milan. He was certainly more interesting than Tony - who while not being totally dull, was rather predictable. She had enjoyed a few lunchtime drinks together with Rupert and a dinner that had turned out to be far more romantic than she had expected. She was just 29, had made no commitment to Tony and did not want to feel tied down - at least not when there was such a good looking and rich admirer as Rupert around. He was entertaining, fascinating and fun to be with! She even let some close friends know that Tony was soon to be history, while dropping hints about Rupert. His silver Porsche might also have influenced her!

When Bonnie finally looked up, the taxi was crossing Agar Grove and her driver - spotting her concerned look - explained that there had been a message on his terminal regarding road works in Camden Street and this had been the best way to avoid any delays. This gave her time to text Rupert and arrange to see him on Sunday afternoon. Tony was certainly on the way out, but why not have just one more luxury meal at *Oscar's Restaurant* at The Charlotte - probably the grilled Dover sole - before enjoying the superb Frette linen sheets one last time!

*To celebrate another new year, a story to amuse in the cold weather on the ranks...*

## Bonnie's New Year Date...

She was putting the mobile back into her handbag when the driver pulled up by the side of St Pancras Station. Bonnie started to ask him why he had stopped, when the passenger door opened and she saw Tony standing there with a huge grin while thanking the driver for his part in the subterfuge! He was also holding a suitcase, waving her passport and 2 tickets to Paris!

Kissing can be quite lucrative - and not just in the 30 pieces of silver context. As Bonnie stepped out of her Dial-a-Cab, the driver thought of the large *Paul Day* statue inside the *Eurostar* station of a couple embracing and then recalled the many couples who had procrastinated as one of them was leaving his taxi, but had lingered for yet another goodbye kiss. With the meter running, all this smooching over the years must have totalled enough to buy several decent meals!

The distinctive *Fendi* metallic spy handbag that Bonnie was holding also provoked the driver's train of thought. He knew they cost almost £2000 and he had seen her clutching it outside Chelsea Cloisters two days earlier when she was engaged in a lingering goodbye kiss to yet another gentleman, this one with an Australian accent and a large wad of £20 notes! Not that it was any of his business; he was a DaC driver so always discreet and professional. Well quite discreet! This Aussie gent was at least 20 years older than Bonnie and the driver realised that social attitudes had changed since his courting days.

Bonnie's mind briefly wondered. She had a history of dealing with unusual and uncomfortable situations. At work she had pretended to clients that presentations were ready even though there was still more preparation to be done, or that a conference hall had been booked although it would have been more accurate to use the word *planned* rather than *confirmed*. Socially she had told many white lies when it came to making excuses about not being available for a date. The border between saying that she was busy, not in the mood to go to a film, needed time to catch up on some correspondence or even seeing her mother, was just that - a border that was a bit wavy and grey. Not a definite line or a lie, more of a comfortable evasion. There had been previous occasions when she had seen more than one guy at a time, but had always told herself that this was acceptable, since it was just the beginning of an association and she didn't want to be tied to someone whom she had only seen four or five times. However, her dates had frequently received a distinctly different impression, with Bonnie's natural enthusiasm being mistaken for personal affection and even commitment! There had been no deliberate intention to deceive - well not unless there were diary clashes or the prospect of a romantic meal with someone else who was too good to miss.

But this was a totally grand scenario unlike anything she had encountered before. Suddenly she was at the top of an escalator, confronted by flames to her left and wolves to her right with no way down. Tony was leading her into the station and towards the long *Eurostar* champagne bar. He had been planning this surprise for months.

She was very special and he had arranged this treat down to the last detail telling just three of his friends about the trip and how smitten he was with Bonnie.

She looked gorgeous and nothing was to go wrong. He prided himself on his organisational abilities and so far everything had run smoothly. On arrival in Paris, it would be a five-minute taxi ride to their hotel, the *Sofitel Paris le Scribe* near Place Vendôme. He had a table booked for a late dinner at the hotel's *Café Lumière*. Tony was letting Bonnie know how fond he was of her and some snippets of the treat he had scheduled, but Bonnie was thinking about Rupert and their date fixed for Sunday afternoon, what fun he was to be with and how she had already told her friends that Tony was to be replaced. Yet he was about to take her on a fantastic trip to Paris. It was when Tony asked her for the second time what she would like to drink at the bar that she realised she had not been listening to him, but now some decisive action was urgently needed. She made her excuse to visit the Ladies. She didn't know what to do. Even *she* realised that it would be contemptible of her to accept a fabulous weekend from a lovely man and then drop him. Just as she was returning to the champagne bar, there was a station announcement over the tannoy: "*Due to industrial action by transport workers in France, all trains to Paris are cancelled for the next 24 hours.*" Her eyes caught Tony's sad look as the announcement ended. As she sat down, her mobile rang. Without checking the caller display, she answered it and thought it would delay speaking to Tony for another minute or so. A voice asked to speak to Bonnie. "This is Dr Peter Blackstone at Charing Cross Hospital. I'm sorry to say that Rupert Williamson has been pulled from the wreckage of his Porsche. Most of his personal possessions were destroyed in the crash and this was the only contact number we could find. I'm sorry to have to give you this news over the phone, but do you think it would be possible for you to get to the hospital as soon as possible?" She said yes and hung up.

Her mind was in turmoil. Memories came back of how fast Rupert drove his Porsche and she was now relieved that she had only been a passenger a few times. She knew his fathers' place of work in Rome and this information would be necessary to take to the hospital. She'd have to make her own way, as she could hardly ask Tony to take her.

As she reached for her powder compact, she burst out crying in spite of herself. "Don't worry, love, I'm just as disappointed as you are," she heard Tony saying. "I'll re-schedule it all soon - I promise." And then she thought of Doctor Blackstone's reassuring and distinguished voice and wondered if he might be single.

Meanwhile the DaC driver had driven off to look for his next fare, turning on his wireless as he made his way towards the rank at King's Cross. By coincidence it was playing *La Donna È Mobile* from *Rigoletto*: *Woman is wayward as a feather in the breeze, capricious in word and in thought...*



As it's the holiday season, we asked Tom Whitbread to set readers a quiz. No prizes, just a bit of fun. Answers are on page 39...

# QUESTIONS ABOUT LONDON

1. On October 23rd 1843, how many persons ate a steak dinner on the plinth of Nelsons Column before the statue was installed?
2. Why does a postman never deliver to 23 and 24 Leinster Gardens W2?
3. What was the name of the lady who volunteered to act as a decoy for Jack the Ripper?
4. Why do Members of Parliament bow when approaching or leaving the floor of the House?
5. What was the Monument intended for by Christopher Wren?
6. Where and when was the first movie taken in London?
7. In what year did the first woman post office clerk start at the Eastcheap branch?
8. Where would you have seen the first pillar-box erected in London?
9. Which London church was the first to use gas and electric lighting?
10. Where was the tomb erected to Rear Admiral William Bligh, the senior figure involved in the Mutiny on the Bounty?
11. A game played with a mallet and ball gave its name to what London street?
12. Which London station is furthest north, London Bridge, Waterloo or Victoria?
13. Which of the London parks is the largest and smallest out of Hampstead Heath, Regents Park or Blackheath.
14. Where in London is the statue of famous French soldier Marshall Foch on his horse?
15. Why is the Adelphi in London so called?
16. Who lived and died at 22 Calshot Street, Islington N1?
17. The statue of George IV in Trafalgar Square was originally designed to surmount which London building?
18. Until 1992, the second smallest Police station was in Wellington Arch, at the top of Constitution Hill. Where was the smallest?
19. Which London church was called the saddest spot on earth and why?
20. When was the vote by secret ballot first used in London?
21. Where in London can you sit on a metal camel?
22. Where in London can you see a statue of a boy with a football under his arm?
23. Eros was removed from Piccadilly Circus in

1925. Where was it taken and why?
24. In which famous London building could you see a Christmas Pudding every day of the year, except Christmas Eve, Christmas Day and Good Friday?
25. Which district in London has four underground stations named after the four points of the compass?
26. Why was the original Scotland Yard so called?
27. What was the Bell of Doom and where is it?
28. Name the first poet to be buried in Poets Corner 600 years ago?
29. Where is the Clowns Church in London?
30. Which central London church has a clock that appears to be contained in two beer barrels?

## And a few facts that you may not know...

**Fact:** Edwardes Square off Kensington High Street was set out by a Frenchman named Changier in the 18th century. He built the houses for the accommodation of French Officers in Napoleon's army, ready for when

they invaded and settled in England. His faith in Napoleon ruined him and he fled the country owing £100,000.

**Fact:** The Church of St Paul's, Covent Garden was the church used for the first act of George Bernard Shaw's "Pygmalion" – the play My Fair Lady was based on.

**Fact:** A Member of Parliament is allowed to drink intoxicating liquor at the bar, which has no licence to sell it, at any time of the day or night. This is due to the Houses of Parliament being a Royal Palace and not bound by any licensing laws.

**Fact:** If you caught a hansom cab at the junction of Regent Street and Conduit Street in the 1880s and asked for Regents Circus, the cabbie could go either way. This is because both Piccadilly Circus and Oxford Circus were known as Regent Circus.

**Fact:** When the underground's first escalator was installed at Earsl Court Station in 1911, to allay the fears of travellers, a Mr "Bumper" Harris was asked to use it first. He was employed to go up and down all day to give passengers confidence in this new device. "Bumper" had only one leg, the other was a wooden stump...

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**Yes, snow on your taxi roof can earn you three points on your licence**

Those heavy snowfalls back in December caused all sorts of grief on the roads – some of which you can read about inside this issue of *Call Sign*.

Soon after, the rumour mill suggested that a driver had been warned about the amount of snow he had on his taxi roof and told that if he didn't clear it and was issued with a ticket, he faced three points

*During the first period of heavy snow, rumours abounded that leaving home with snow on your roof could land you with three points on your licence. Many drivers asked Call Sign:*

## Is Snow on your taxi roof illegal?

on his licence. But was it true? The short answer is yes!

Not many drivers realised that leaving snow on the roof of their vehicle – not just taxis but any vehicle – is an offence worthy of a £60 fine and 3 penalty points! *Call Sign* saw several taxis on the streets laden with the slippery compound from the sky, but fortunately did not see any being pulled over to the kerb by the police.

**The Highway Code states quite clearly: "Remove all snow that might fall off into the path of other road users."**

It also tells drivers about the more obvi-

ous jobs of keeping windows, lights and mirrors clear. There is also general advice for driving in icy or snowy weather, with the usual what to do or not do provisos regarding motoring in inclement weather.

But the most salient point is to keep the roof free from snow, which could otherwise fall off in lumps and into the path of following vehicles and perhaps cause an incident resulting in a claim of negligence.

The relevant piece in the Highway Code is page 72, paragraph 229.

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## 115th anniversary of the electric taxi!



**Was the Bersey 115 years ahead of its time?**

The latter end of 2011 will represent 115 years since the first electric taxi arrived on the streets of London. Surprised? Well it's true! Just read on...

Towards the end of the nineteenth century, London still had many horse-driven cabs, but petrol powered cabs were beginning to creep in, the first being the French-built Prunel (1903), followed by the less-successful British manufacturers of Herald, Rational and Simplex. However, these latter three failed to make any significant inroads into the London taxi market.

Yet even with all these choices, by the time the PCO introduced the Conditions of Fitness in 1906, there were still only 100 or so motor-driven taxis floating around the capital. Although there was a Beardmore company in Scotland, they were still building ships, while an M&O would soon be based in

Belgravia but only sell luxury cars!

But the strangest fact is that prior to the Prunel taxi crossing le Channel to Grand Bretagne, London had the **Bersey**. This was an electrically powered vehicle and known as the Hummingbird because of the buzzing sound it emitted as it approached. It arrived at the tail-end of 1896 with the first sale taking place in 1897. Sadly that was one of its few sales because the battery operated vehicle had a very low mileage range and driver's enthusiasm for the expensive technology waned very quickly.

**But who would have believed that there could have been an electrical vehicle all those years ago, whilst 115 years later we seem to be struggling to regain an electric taxi?**

Another thing that killed off the Bersey in addition to having such a low range was when, almost as if by magic, there appeared five hundred Renault cabs courtesy of the General Cab Company. These revolutionised the trade and the licensing authority – yes, the PCO – introduced the Conditions of Fitness which cut down on the numbers of new entrants trying to get their vehicles accepted as London taxis but which did not have the 25ft turning circle.

That gradually took us to where we are now – a choice of two cabs. Where was Boris when you needed him...!

**Ron Yarborough  
Call Sign on-line**



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Contact Steve on **07939 503 132**

When *Call Sign* met **Dave Raymond (F56)** recently, he was still fuming at the number of PCNs he had collected over the past few weeks around Ebury Bridge Road and Warwick Avenue while stopping to use the loo. David takes up the story:

"I am diabetic, on medication by tablet and I sometimes have to go to the loo real fast with very little warning, which can mean leaving the cab in a hurry - a *real* hurry! But it's usually for just a few minutes.

There are ever-fewer conveniences being available where you can leave the cab for a short time, plus the fact it has become quite an achievement to find a rank that is not already full and anyway, it needs to be within striking distance of a toilet. The few 'rest ranks' we have are invariably full up as driver's have got wise to the wholesale issuing of parking tickets, so they leave their cab while they shop or whatever, which means less opportunity for me to find a space. This means that when I do 'get a call' I sometimes have to leave my cab wherever I can if there's a loo nearby," he said.

"Contrary to what the Mayor says, most cafes allow only patrons to use their convenience, so I buy a coffee and bun or the like, but that just increases the frequency I have to go for a wee," he sighed dejectedly!

"I have emailed several officers at TfL, Westminster Council and even Mayor Boris, who, while sympathising with my plight, have not really come up with any positive or constructive solutions other than to suggest finding a pay and park meter bay or the afore-

# Dave Raymond - Mr PCN!



Dave Raymond with some of his recent PCNs

stop near a loo. This is especially the case for people like me who have a medical condition that requires frequent comfort breaks,"

mentioned rest ranks. Great," he said allowing himself the merest hint of a smile.

"I have sent in copies of my medication prescriptions and other documentary evidence of my health to the Parking authority, but to no avail, so I am going to challenge these callous PCNs by going to the Parking Adjudicator in February 2011," he said, "as I feel that as taxi drivers being on the road all day, we should have some dispensation - say 5 minutes - to

he added.

With serious implications to drivers' health due to a lack of 'on street' public toilets and the apparent lack of understanding on the part of parking attendants, *Call Sign* will be following David's fortunes with close interest, revisiting this important topic in the new year. So watch this space...

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## Is there another new taxi on the horizon?



Could this taxi ever appear on London's streets?

A fascinating article and photo in a recent issue of *Autocar* suggests that a third London taxi - an electric one - could soon be on London's streets competing against the London Taxi Company's original cab and the Vito. In the article (14 December issue), *John McIlroy* writes of *Volkswagen's* idea for a new London taxi that has been conceived by a design team in Germany.

The *VW Taxi* is still just a concept and smaller than any taxi already out there, probably only capable of carrying two passengers in addition to the driver - although the blurb adds that it will have legroom comparable to luxury saloons with room for several suitcases.

The taxi's powertrain is a 112bhp electric motor, which will be fuelled by a 45kWh lithium-ion battery. This will allow a top speed of almost 75mph, with a distance covered in between charges of up to 186 miles. The claim by *Volkswagen* is that 80% of charge can be restored in just over an hour.

There is a touchscreen display for the driver showing all the vehicle information they would require, including the fare and navigation instructions. Passengers have an infotainment panel that allows them to control the air conditioning and read information on the route and their immediate location.

Will it come about and would there be a demand for a two-seater? *VW* are considering the option of putting a taxi into production, but it would also need a wheelchair facility and partition, neither of which the concept has.

## PC running slowly?

Internet or email not working?

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**For all/Windows/Mac problems  
Viruses or Trojans?**



It may be a rather grisly subject, but a recent survey from *Post Office Insurance* has been trying to find out just what – if anything – people would like to have buried with them when they depart this mortal coil. As a result, POI developed a top 5 items we want to take with us – with not one mention of a green badge, moneybag or most disappointingly, a copy of *Call Sign*!

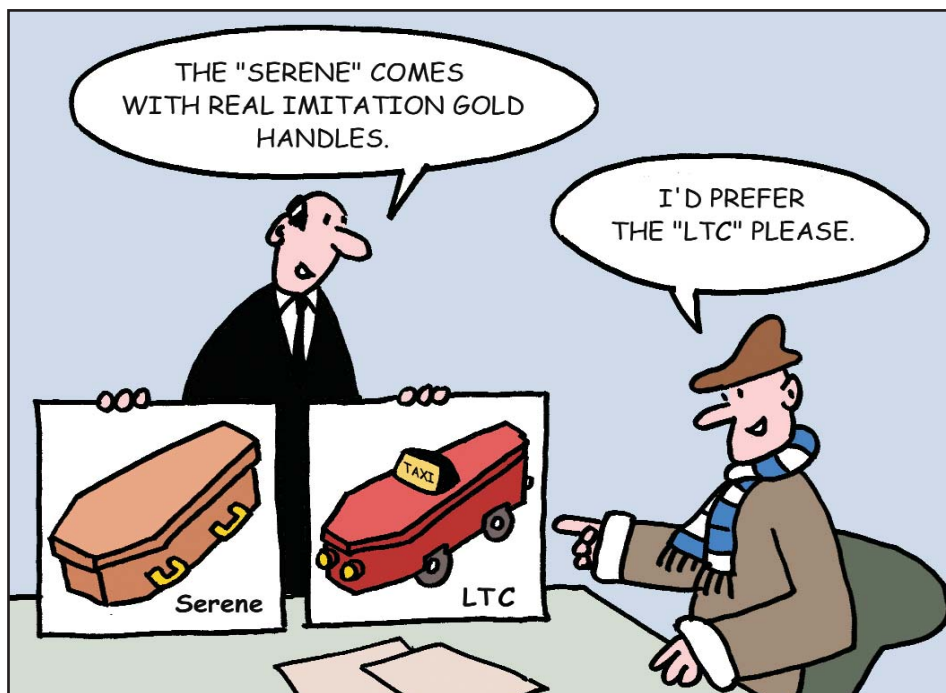
The main list provides few surprises with a photo of a loved one taking top place followed closely by flowers, an object belonging to my spouse/partner, a photo of a loved pet and a Bible or other religious item coming in fifth.

But some of the items not in that top five brought a few smiles. Some said they wanted their mobile phone buried with them – not allowed for cremations – while others fancied their bike leathers, wetsuits or even a George Michael tour t-shirt! Some even asked for cigarettes – this time not for cough-in' but for coffin!

What the survey discovered was that few people actually made their wishes known to their loved ones and so could end up without their last request.

Post Office Head of Insurance, Duncan Caesar-Gordon said: "Although many have very specific ideas about how they'd like to be remembered and what they would like to take with them, the vast majority have not taken any steps to

# Rest in peace – if your phone doesn't ring!



make sure it happens. Talking to loved ones about your wishes and putting in place financial provisions can make a big difference to a bereaved family who are left to make decisions and finance arrangements. A simple plan like the Post Office Over 50s Life Cover costs from just 25p per day and can give peace of mind to family and friends."

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## Mailshot

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

### Cars on ranks?

Hi Al

I'm was waiting outside McKinsey when a car driver asked me if I could move up so that he could park on the rank. I pointed out as politely as I could that it was a taxi rank and that he should look elsewhere. He then said that he worked at *Tiger Tiger* and that he parked on the rank every night. He went on to add that anyone could park on the rank after 6.30pm.

So isn't it amazing that if we park on a rank out of regulation hours, we soon get a PCN...

**Barry Spear (Y16)**

**Call Sign took a look at the rank signage and there is no mention of any time limits. That means no one can wait there other than Licensed London Taxis ...Ed**

### John Boca

Dear Alan

It was with much sadness that we learnt of the passing on Wednesday 1st December of Adolfo Giovanni Bruno Boca – known on Dial-a-Cab as **John Boca (ex-A64)**. He was the younger brother of the late Alan Boca (ex-B99) and the two of them used to run the cafe opposite our first radio office in Pentonville Road. Born of Italian parents, they decided to do the Knowledge and joined ODRTS (as we were then called) in the early 1960s I believe. The pair were always a credit to the circuit.

Alan and John were not the only brothers we have had on the circuit in years past. I remember Stuart and Malcomb Webster, whilst we still have my brother Ken - who has been on the circuit since 1965 - and myself (1970). There must have been others as taxi driving does run in families. Ken and I have 2 uncles who drove from before the last war, one is still with us and now in his 90s.

But for now our thoughts go out to John's son John, a taxi driver with Radio Taxis and his sister Tina, who is married and living in Australia.

Rest in peace John, from ALL your friends in the taxi trade.

**Martin Freeborn (C67)**

**There is an article on John and Alan elsewhere in this issue ...Ed**

### E14 and voting

Dear Alan

Some time ago I was talking to another driver on Finsbury Square and he said he had emailed Brian Rice concerning the workings at E14. The things he said sounded very sensible but nothing has come of it. His suggestion was that E14C and E14S should be disbanded, leaving our cabs free to put onto any of the ranks – including hotels – while

being on the electronic E14 rank, but not restricted to the two longest as at present. Mr Rice replied that he would put it to Keith Cain. Surely it would have been better to put it to the drivers via their terminals? We all have a 'yes' or 'no' button.

On the subject of E14, could somebody please explain why we cannot *soon* to clear into E14 after 9pm? There was a gripe some time ago about drivers being rude to clients, probably not so, just an attitude for which management take no responsibility. If a driver has been waiting some time for a job and gets a local, he has to wait until the client has cleared the cab before he can book in. This benefits nobody, especially the driver concerned.

I would have liked to propose that anything directly affecting the owners of the Society be put to them via their terminals. However, according to *Rule 29*, 25 seconds are needed and can only be proposed once a year. Also in this rule, management are free to do as they please.

I don't know if anybody agrees with me, but if you do print this letter Alan, perhaps at the end a simple agree/disagree *Call Sign* signature to be returned to where we trust you have the best interests of the drivers at heart.

**Tony Guerrier (L28)**

**Interesting letter Tony and because the answer about E14 is fairly lengthy, I've asked Allan Evans to answer it elsewhere in this issue. I should also add that I showed it to Brian Rice and he trawled through many, many emails to find the one the other driver says he sent because I know from experience that the Chairman always answers emails from drivers. Consequently, I assume the BoM looked at the situation and decided against any change and the member you spoke to would have been advised of that. But Tony, surely you don't believe for a single second that the BoM would implement procedures purely to damage the Society, because if they do then they aren't making a very good job of it? They have to consider what's in the interest of the majority of members (and clients), not just in the interest of a small percentage of members. So far as voting is concerned, would you want daymen voting on procedures that affect nightmen and vice versa? That's why an organisation such as DaC needs a BoM - to initiate procedures that are fair to the majority. However, through *Call Sign*, every driver can always have their say – something I am very proud of.**

**Our terminals have been used for surveys on occasion, but not for anything important. Being ruled by a computer would lead to sheer chaos. After all, if the Board decide to go for a nationwide GPRS system with chip and pin in the next generation of terminals – which I personally hope they do - should it be put to drivers first and then DaC would go by the majority decision? I don't think**

**that method of voting is the way ahead.**

**As for the 25 signatures before changing rules and procedures; I don't remember the Board insisting it had to be passed, it was the Members who voted for it because from memory AGMs were getting bogged down with ridiculous attempts at rule changes. If I remember correctly, at one AGM we had a driver putting forward 11 rule changes and propositions – some of them being just silly. Because of drivers like that, democracy took a small kick in the 'ruperts' but if a rule change or proposition is worthy enough, then surely it will get the 25 seconders. Thanks for a great letter Tony and read Allan Evans report for the answer to E14 ...Ed**

### Call Sign's speeding letter

Dear Alan,

Would you have a copy of the letter to send to the court about speeding? I remember it was in the magazine a couple of years ago. Or perhaps you could let me know the issue it was in?

**John Mason (B83)**

**The original article was in the May 2006 issue (*can this loophole save your licence*). I repeated it in the May 2008 issue (*is this speeding loophole still working*). Both are available on the *Call Sign* website ([www.dac-callsign.co.uk](http://www.dac-callsign.co.uk)) by going to the respective years and clicking the small PDF logo at the bottom of the icon. A large number of Dial-a-Cab drivers contacted me to say that the first letter worked, but only around 50% of the second batch of drivers were successful. Now some 30 months later, I'd be amazed if the police hadn't blocked the loophole, which enabled drivers to avoid the three points by taking a one day classroom refresher course instead. But if anyone tries it successfully, please let us know and we'll be happy to pass on the news to drivers ...Ed**

### Happy holidays to all religions?

Mr Editor

I was shocked to find in the *December Call Sign* where you itemise religions and wish them all a happy holiday, that you never mentioned my religion. It's probably 'cos like most folks, you're in the *dark force* against us. One day in the future, you will see the light and fulfil your inner desire. Jimmy Greaves, David Ginola and Stanley Roth are all members and have now reached





# Mailshot

continued from page 36

the point of gaining their light sabre early next year - but naturally this is a secret. Please don't be prejudiced against us. My temple is the cafe opposite the 'iron lung' if you fancy a frock and the ability to whip out your sabre.

I am sincerely your grandmaster knight Jedi, three down, four across around the corner. May the force be with you. Your servant and prophet...

**Gary Cox (0046)**

**I knew Gary's dad, John, very well. He was a really lovely man so I have to wonder exactly where his son went wrong. Perhaps it has something to do with him buying a Vito!!! ...Ed**

## How to insult quietly!

Dear Alan,

Congratulations on your 150th issue of *Call Sign*. You have managed to produce a fun magazine and maintain a high standard through the years. However you let yourself down in your latest editorial when you felt obliged to send best wishes to Christians, Sikhs, Jews, Hindus, Jains and Muslims. By ticking all the correct boxes, there was a clear lack of sincerity. But more important, you excluded the rationalist sensible drivers who could be agnostic, secular, atheist or humanist. Why should followers of the religions you choose to include who believe in man-made fairy tales about supernatural powers be given space compared to Druids, Shamanists, Pagans, crystal wavers, Animists, and Voodoo worshippers?

May I end by wishing you a Happy New Year...

**Laurence Kelvin (W88)**

**Thank you Laurence. I do sometimes get the feeling that whatever I say, I'm going to offend someone! A happy New Year to you and everyone connected to Dial-a-Cab ...Ed**

## 150 not out!

Hi Alan,

Congratulations on reaching 150 issues, and yet still looking no older than half that age! As a former editor, publisher, writer and contributor with various publications, including *Taxi Globe* and many others, I know you do deserve acclaim for maintaining such consistently high standards. By doing so, you have made and kept *Call Sign* as the best in-house radio taxi publication.

However, in the December *Call Sign*, on page 5 the caption should have included David Day, and I cannot see the robust Dave Stock in that picture. On page 16 the car is a Porsche, not an Aston Martin. Only last week I was evaluating - ie "borrowing" - a 4 door Aston Martin Rapid, but as this supercar starts at £180,000 plus options, I doubt it can ever be made to pay its way as

an owner-driven or fleet taxi, never mind the cost of insurance, tyres and servicing!

Keep up your good work for the best London taxi radio circuit, and here's hoping to see you and *Call Sign* reach 300.

**Rodney Lewis (ex-D77)**

**Thanks Rodney, but 300 issues? I don't think so! ...Ed**

## Eddie Lambert's 'additional info'

Dear Alan

What an excellent article and idea from **Eddie Lambert (V37)** in the December *Call Sign* - *Competing with the likes of Addison Lee*. Like most drivers, I have had the problem of trying to find an address in a one-way street and ended up missing it thereby needing to go round again. As an example, I recently had to pick up a passenger in Earls Court Road and couldn't see the number. It turned out that it was in Childs Place and had I had access to that extra piece of information as explained in Eddie's article, life would have been so much easier. So yes, I do hope the Board will consider his suggestion for the next generation of terminals.

**Sid Nathan (K88)**

**No one seems to dislike the idea (including me), so you never know. Keep nagging Sid! ...Ed**

## David Brown

My son Simon is on **Radio Taxis** but managed to get a copy of *Call Sign*. After digesting it, he passed it over to me and although I no longer drive a cab due to illness, I never tire of reading about the trade.

In your December issue on page 28, there was an article about a former **Dial-a-Cab** driver, **David Brown** and about his loss of both legs. The article said he would like to get in touch with any old friends he had before moving out to Gorleston-on-Sea. Well he and I shared a taxi in the 1970s, which we rented from Jannards at Fairchild Place. We were also on Mountview for a short time as Mike 25. If you could bring us together I would appreciate it and I enclose my phone number. Thanks for any help...

**Howard Buskin**

**If anyone else wants to get into contact with David Brown, just send me your phone or email details and I'll pass them along ...Ed**

## PCNs bad for the environment?

Hi Alan

Giving cab drivers a PCN is bad for the environment. Why? Because contrary to public belief, we don't have a mattress stuffed full of cash we can dip into to pay a £60 fine, we have to go out and earn it. Earning a clear profit of £60 to pay a fine equates to about four hours work - that's four hours burning precious fuel and four hours of an engine pumping out fumes. So, Mr and Mrs London



Borough, if you do care about the environment please be sensible when issuing PCNs. If however, you care more about robbing people then please just carry on!

Question: How many red bus drivers have received fines for stopping in yellow boxes? I think I know the answer. And I wonder if that bus in the December *Call Sign* (*Anyone seen a number 22 bus*) which turned 180 degrees in Brompton Road near Harrods, was fined? I know I would be. After all, it's a **no u-turn zone!**

Oh and please fine me double if I park in a bus lane to pop into a kebab house, once for parking and once for eating such garbage (*James £60 kebab* - same issue!)

Rant over - for now!

**Terry Catherall (Y90)**

**Thanks Terry, pleased I could help exercise your ranting inner desires! ...Ed**

## Cash rides

Dear Alan

I picked up a cash ride this week and when we were near the destination, the passenger asked why there was £4 and £2 extras on the meter when she got in? So I did the usual "sorry we didn't tell you when you phoned and that the booking fee is part of the fare and that all radio taxis have a run-in etc." She paid me off and I sent a message to ask why she hadn't been told about the £2 booking fee? I was told that the *Terms & Conditions* are automatically on when customers phone and they are given the option of hearing them, but that she must have chosen to skip them, so it is not our fault. Had I known that, I would have been able to ask if she had listened to them and that if not, it would be her fault and not ours.

So Alan, could you please tell all drivers via *Call Sign* about the T&C so we can all be prepared for this problem and sort it out quickly.

**Martin Freeborn (C67)**

**I think you have already done it! ...Ed**

## Chips with everything!

Hello Alan

Just got a TX4 with a new chip (*Call Sign tests super-chipped TX4 - November 2010*). I only had a TX2 to compare it against, but boy what a difference!

Changing tack, could you please ask Brian Rice if any consideration has ever been given to a 'black cab' Concierge - not instead of, but to run alongside the present model? Clients can then choose a car or cab. All taxis to be fully loaded (ie all round aircon, sat-navs for rides outside the met, and for all non-fixed price work, a £25 premium. It would be totally voluntary - their money, their choice...

**Stephen Field (F68)**

**Brian Rice replies: Passengers can actually do that by requesting a Vito, which**

# Mailshot

continued from page 37

as you know is fully air conditioned (not sure about your TX4 Stephen). I would also hazard a guess that all Vito drivers have a SatNav, because that's the way they are and that is not meant to be a derogatory remark.

Anyway Stephen, if I remember correctly ComCab did as you are suggesting with their 'Club Class' taxis back in around 1995 - and it was an unmitigated disaster, which ended up costing them many thousands of pounds. I don't believe we should endeavour to emulate that.

## John Griffin: I'm guilty as charged...why did they drop the case?

Steve Norris is right (*December Call Sign* - I don't think John Griffin has won). I would have preferred the DfT to pursue the case against me for encouraging my drivers to enter the bus lane. The two points worth making are that no individual or group voiced any opposition to the M4 bus lane. The facts were that the bus lane worked well and visitors to London were happy with the reduction in their journey times. Secondly why did closing the bus lane mean that I was no longer to be pursued for breaking the law? If a group of robbers are caught robbing a bank and shortly afterwards the bank closes down, are charges dropped against the robbers? Lets face it, I was guilty, how did I get away with it?

**John Griffin**

**Chairman, Addison Lee  
London NW1**

Mr Griffin, my belief is unchanged. I think that if your drivers had been stopped from using the M4 lane, then it would have suited you to see it totally disbanded. After all, if you can't make the Heathrow return trip quicker than normal traffic, I have no doubt that you'd rather we didn't have the facility either. For the record, I dislike immensely what you did re the M4, but would find it difficult to blame you knowing the amazing weakness of the authorities who were so obviously afraid of standing up to you - hence the dropping of all PCNs and no charges etc. And congratulations to our Chairman Brian who two months ago said in his column that he believed John Griffin wanted his day in court! ...Ed

## Credit card problems

Dear Alan,

I read with interest Allan Evans article on credit cards in the December issue of *Call Sign* and would like to relay to other drivers the realities of what can happen when a job

goes "belly-up." In April I accepted a radio despatched credit card job from WC1 to the Marriott Hotel, Waltham Abbey (E99). The job was completed and a printed receipt with signature and authorisation code was obtained. Four months later, I was called by DaC's accounts department to ask for the receipt, which I sent back the same evening thinking what a clever boy I had been for having everything in order! I heard nothing more from DaC until I opened my statement about five weeks later to find that the money (£85) had been snatched back by DaC. I left a message with Driver Services and when they called back I told them what had happened and they said that I should be covered as I had the receipt and authorisation code, but that they would look into it. One week later I again rang Driver Services and again went through the whole process of explaining what had happened. I was now told that the card had been stolen and that was the reason I had the money taken back (even though I had the printed receipt with auth code) but they would check my loggers and get back to me. One week later I rang them again and yes, you guessed it, I had to explain the whole process over again! I was told it was a Tuesday and that problems were sorted out on Wednesdays (if you don't believe that, please check the phone recordings) and I would be called back. One week later I thought I would try a different approach and call the Driver Operations Manager, but he was off that week so I explained the whole process to the lady who was covering for him and that the loggers were supposed to be checked. She informed me that she would look into it and get back to me. Guess what? Yes, one week later I rang DaC and the Driver Operations Manager was back. I explained the whole sorry saga to him and he said he would look into it and get back to me. One week later I rang him again to see what was happening and only had to briefly explain the problem as he sort of remembered - lucky me! I was then told I should have taken a rubbing of the card, even though I had the printed receipt and was made to feel like it was my fault, although at no time was I asked if I had taken a rubbing of the card before the money was snatched back. But he assured me that he would look into it and contact me. We were now into November, and my head was heavily bruised from bashing it against the brick wall, so I left it at that.

Happy days? Last week an envelope from DaC dropped through the letterbox! Great I thought, they've resolved it and are reimbursing me. Uh-uh, it was a request for the staff Xmas box

**Ian Skeels (J74)**

Hi Ian, sounds like you wish you hadn't taken the job! However, the reason you haven't been paid is because you broke the number one rule that has been written about in *Call Sign* so many times by Keith Cain, Allan Evans and Warren Smith. You manually input the number

(I assume because the card wouldn't swipe) and the bank will no longer accept card trips where the number was input manually because according to a Warren Smith article last year, there are too many stolen cards out there. If it doesn't swipe, then you shouldn't take the job and according to a BM, the loggers show if it has been swiped or manually input. Perhaps the card is genuinely just worn and that's why it won't swipe, but you can't take the chance - at least not for roaders like that one. If the card had swiped and was stolen, you would have been paid. Sorry Ian, I wish the news was better. And at least you only had to ask me once! ...Ed

## The Mayor's emissions policy...

Hi Alan

Just read on my terminal a message from Brian Rice under the heading of *Hot off the Press* regarding the Mayor's announcement that as of 2013, no cab aged over 15 years would be passed for use as a taxi but that there would be two MOTs per year. Thanks to the Chairman for getting it out so quick, even *Taxi* hadn't hit the stands with the news yet!

Whilst this news sounds pretty good, as I get older I become more of a cynical old duffer and usually find that there is no such thing as a free lunch and can't help wondering what the private hire bandits have been offered for Christmas!

**Kevin Went (N19)**

You're right Kevin, there's usually a piece that we don't like hidden in there somewhere and two MOTs isn't wonderful news, however these are going to be MOTs and not overhauls - just as PH have been doing for some time. If your 15-year-old cab were to be licensed on 31 December 2011, then it would be ok to drive it until 31 December 2012. Otherwise the 'no to 15 year olds' will start from 1 January 2012. There will also be a yearly emissions test that you could be stopped in the street for, but believe me Kevin, the possibility of a 10-year ban was on the cards and that would have killed us. The way I see it is that if London Assembly Green Party member Darren Johnson doesn't like the plan, then it must be good for us! ...Ed

## Vito rant?

Dear Al,

I read the whole of last month's *Call Sign* and I thought you'd let me down, but there





# Mailshot

continued from page 38

it was on page 34, the anti-Vito rant. Well you're going to love me cos I've got a Vito and a SatNav. Why did I get a Vito? My last cab was a TX2. Nuff said! You said you can't understand why drivers use SatNavs, well maybe it's because we have a map facility that is 12 years out of date and shows the O2 arena as Millennium Experience (under construction), the Jubilee Line extension is apparently due for completion in 1998 - all being well! The A102 extension is due to be finished in late 99. By the way that's the road Swampy was protesting about -remember him? He's probably telling his kids about his 15 minutes of fame now. The Croydon Tramlink will be finished in 2000 as long as we survive the Millennium Bug, even the Arsenal are still at Highbury!

Al, I can remember you writing a piece telling us how great the new terminal was going to be, I bet you didn't think we'd still be using it 13 or 14 years later. Maybe you could do another article asking the Board why we still have a screen that you can't read when the sun shines or why the supposedly bankrupt Radio Taxis are getting their second new terminals while we're sitting with £5 or £6 million in the bank and have now got the worst system in the trade. At the same time, could you ask why after years of telling us that we are causing the

poor signals due to doing queue positions and sending messages, the signals are as bad as ever? On second thoughts don't bother; can we have another story about a parking ticket and a picture of a member of the board?

**C.S Clark (F25)**

**Congratulations on writing the longest letter I have ever received via an iPhone! You sound as though you enjoyed it and yes, you succeeded in making me smile! But sadly, your letter has done nothing to convince me that a vehicle which looks like a minicab complete with SatNav, does this trade any sort of favour. But hey, it's a free world and anyone can buy a Vito if they want to – including minicab drivers. Of course those same drivers can't buy a TX4 to use as a taxi as it's illegal, some silly rule about minicab drivers not being allowed to drive a real taxi.**

**You might be right about me and the terminal, but only because computers lasting this long are practically unheard of and a testament to the excellent quality of the original product. The map is truly out of date, but that wasn't DaC's fault, it was due to Geographers who pulled the plug. But I suspect that you are pretending when you infer you need it to find the O2. Or should they spend another few million quid getting new terminals just to get another map facility? Isn't that why you did the Kol? I carry a SatNav just in case and have used**

**it 4 times in three years. On those 4 occasions I stuck it to the windscreen, otherwise it stays in my bag because I consider it to be humiliating when passengers give me a postcode rather than an address. And in any case I'd bet that by the end of 2011, we have new terminals that blow away anyone else's. Anyway, it's all irrelevant now. Once we all drive the same vehicles with the latest SatNavs, the trade that many of us fought tooth and nail for will be a distant dream and all you will need to become a taxi driver is a licence that you can just send off for.**

**Are the signals still bad? I work five nights a week and have had no trouble for ages and for your information, stories in *Call Sign* about parking tickets given to drivers have led to a successful High Court case which will assist radio drivers in their PCN battles. That story is in this issue.**

**Pictures of Board members? Mike Son and Brian Rice led the field in the issue you refer to with two each! Sorry that was too much for you, but it was Mike's 45th anniversary!**

**I assume we both feel better now! ...Ed**



## ANSWERS TO THE CALL SIGN QUIZ

1. 14 persons
2. Because they are not proper houses, just five-storey frontages with dummy windows and doors. It is supported by girders over the metropolitan railway.
3. Her name was Amelia Lewis, living to over 80 years of age in Adys Road, Peckham.
4. They bow to the altar, which used to be in St Stephens Chapel, not to the Speaker.
5. The monument was intended by Christopher Wren to be a vast vertical Telescope. The height (202 feet) being insufficient for the focal length and the idea was abandoned.
6. The first movie was taken at Hyde Park Corner, by William Friese-Greene in 1899.
7. 1870.
8. London's first pillar box was erected opposite 101 Fleet Street, EC4 in 1854.
9. St Martin's in the Fields; gas first used in 1808, electric light first used in 1888.
10. The Churchyard at St Mary's Lambeth.
11. Pall Mall.
12. London Bridge
13. Largest, Regent's Park, 450 acres: smallest Hampstead Heath, 250 acres.
14. Grosvenor Gardens opposite Victoria Station.
15. After the Greek word for brothers as it was built by the Adams Brothers.
16. The world famous clown Joseph Grimaldi.
17. Marble Arch.
18. On the South East corner of Trafalgar Square.
19. St Peter's ad Vincular on Tower Green. There are buried the victims who were beheaded on the nearby executioners block Tower Hill.
20. It was first employed by the London School Board election of 1870. The Ballot Act for Parliamentary elections was passed in 1872.
21. Victoria Embankment.
22. He is in the group erected in memory of Quentin Hogg in Portland Place.
23. It was moved to Embankment Gardens while Piccadilly Underground was being built.
24. In the mosaic on the floor of the entrance hall of the National Gallery.
25. Acton.
26. It took its name from the palace where Scottish Kings used to lodge when visiting London.
27. It was a handbell, now in St Sepulchre's Church, Holborn Viaduct. A Robert Dowe left a sum of money to buy the bell, which was rung outside the condemned cell at Newgate Prison on the night before an execution.
28. Geoffrey Chaucer.
29. Beechwood Road off Dalston Lane E8.
30. St Anne's Church, Dean Street, Soho

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