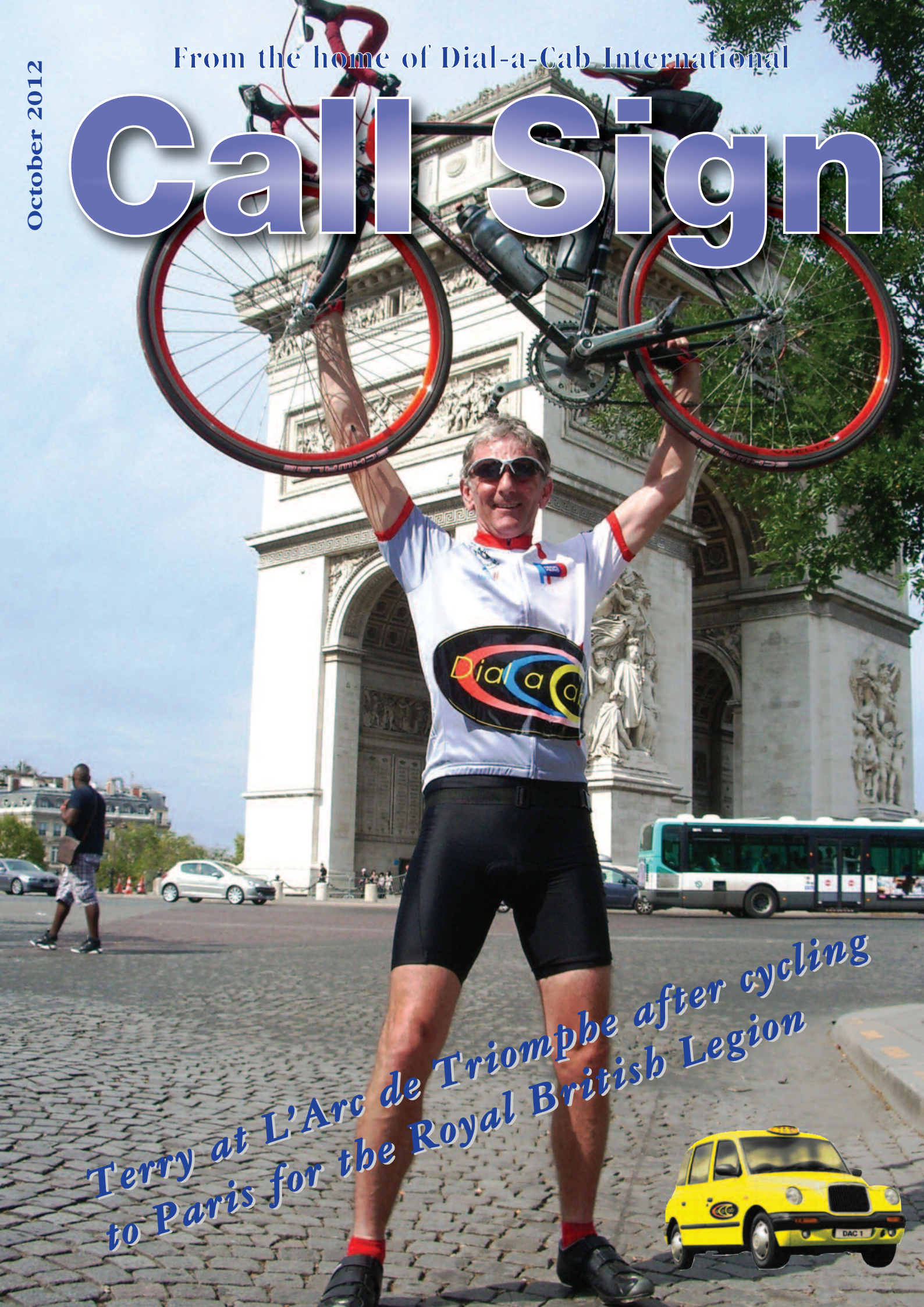


October 2012

From the home of Dial-a-Cab International

Call Sign



*Terry at L'Arc de Triomphe after cycling
to Paris for the Royal British Legion*





NASH'S NUMBERS

From Alan Nash (A95)

I had intended to update car pounds in every borough, but I had problems. Did you know that Westminster no longer has a pound? They lift a vehicle and dump it in another road. And that TRACE has changed its easy to remember number to 0845 206 8602. So you've got LCA winter arrivals instead....!

LONDON CITY AIRPORT ARRIVALS TIMETABLE (correct as of 14/09/2012)

From	Arr.	M	T	W	T	F	S	S
Amsterdam	07:05						*	
Antwerp	07:05	*	*	*	*	*		
Rotterdam	07:05	*	*	*	*	*		
Frankfurt	07:10	*	*	*	*	*		
Luxembourg	07:10	*	*	*	*	*		
Geneva	07:15						*	
New York	07:15	*	*	*	*	*	*	
Amsterdam	07:20	*	*	*	*	*		
Amsterdam	07:25	*	*	*	*	*		
Luxembourg	07:30	*	*	*	*	*		
Frankfurt	07:35	*	*	*	*	*		
Paris Orly	07:35	*	*	*	*	*		
Munich	07:40	*	*	*	*	*		
Eindhoven	07:45	*	*	*	*	*		
Bern	07:50	*	*	*	*	*		
Basel	07:55	*	*	*	*	*		
Rotterdam	07:55	*	*	*	*	*		
Zurich	07:55	*	*	*	*	*		
Antwerp	08:00	*	*	*	*	*		
Edinburgh	08:05	*	*	*	*	*		
Glasgow	08:05	*	*	*	*	*		
Rotterdam	08:05	*	*	*	*	*		
Amsterdam	08:10	*	*	*	*	*		
Geneva	08:10	*	*	*	*	*		
Luxembourg	08:10	*	*	*	*	*		
Zurich	08:10	*	*	*	*	*		
Dublin	08:15	*	*	*	*	*		
Aberdeen	08:20	*	*	*	*	*		
Dundee	08:25	*	*	*	*	*		
Zurich	08:25	*	*	*	*	*		
Edinburgh	08:30	*	*	*	*	*		
Frankfurt	08:35	*	*	*	*	*		
Edinburgh	08:40	*	*	*	*	*		
Isle of Man	08:45	*	*	*	*	*		
Jersey	08:45	*	*	*	*	*		
Dublin	08:50	*	*	*	*	*		
Milan Linate	08:50	*	*	*	*	*		
Amsterdam	08:55	*	*	*	*	*		
Rotterdam	09:00	*	*	*	*	*		
Stockholm	09:00	*	*	*	*	*		
Madrid	09:05	*	*	*	*	*		
Edinburgh	09:10	*	*	*	*	*		
Paris Orly	09:10	*	*	*	*	*		
Glasgow	09:15	*	*	*	*	*		
Nantes	09:15	*	*	*	*	*		
Billund	09:25	*	*	*	*	*		
Zurich	09:25	*	*	*	*	*		
Paris Orly	09:30	*	*	*	*	*		
Antwerp	09:35	*	*	*	*	*		
Luxembourg	09:50	*	*	*	*	*		
Dundee	10:00	*	*	*	*	*		
New York	10:00	*	*	*	*	*		
Rotterdam	10:05	*	*	*	*	*		
Edinburgh	10:10	*	*	*	*	*		
Glasgow	10:15	*	*	*	*	*		
Dublin	10:20	*	*	*	*	*		
Edinburgh	10:20	*	*	*	*	*		
Edinburgh	10:25	*	*	*	*	*		
Dublin	10:30	*	*	*	*	*		
Toulon	10:30	*	*	*	*	*		
Chambery	10:35	*	*	*	*	*		
Amsterdam	10:45	*	*	*	*	*		
Zurich	10:45	*	*	*	*	*		
Amsterdam	11:05	*	*	*	*	*		
Angers	11:05	*	*	*	*	*		
Antwerp	11:10	*	*	*	*	*		
Münster	11:25	*	*	*	*	*		
Amsterdam	11:35	*	*	*	*	*		
Luxembourg	11:40	*	*	*	*	*		
Geneva	11:45	*	*	*	*	*		
Glasgow	11:45	*	*	*	*	*		
Münster	11:45	*	*	*	*	*		

From	Arr.	M	T	W	T	F	S	S
Zurich	11:45	*	*	*	*	*		
Luxembourg	11:50	*	*	*	*	*		
Edinburgh	12:05	*	*	*	*	*		
Nice	12:05	*	*	*	*	*		
Barcelona	12:10	*	*	*	*	*		
Frankfurt	12:10	*	*	*	*	*		
Ibiza	12:10	*	*	*	*	*		
Zurich	12:10	*	*	*	*	*		
Palma	12:25	*	*	*	*	*		
Dundee	12:30	*	*	*	*	*		
Edinburgh	12:35	*	*	*	*	*		
Glasgow	12:35	*	*	*	*	*		
Nice	12:35	*	*	*	*	*		
Geneva	12:45	*	*	*	*	*		
Ibiza	12:45	*	*	*	*	*		
Dublin	13:00	*	*	*	*	*		
Geneva	13:20	*	*	*	*	*		
Palma	13:25	*	*	*	*	*		
Paris Orly	13:25	*	*	*	*	*		
Aberdeen	13:30	*	*	*	*	*		
Billund	13:45	*	*	*	*	*		
Rotterdam	14:05	*	*	*	*	*		
Amsterdam	14:10	*	*	*	*	*		
Glasgow	14:15	*	*	*	*	*		
Isle of Man	14:15	*	*	*	*	*		
Angers	14:20	*	*	*	*	*		
Pau	14:20	*	*	*	*	*		
Barcelona	14:25	*	*	*	*	*		
Luxembourg	14:25	*	*	*	*	*		
Edinburgh	14:30	*	*	*	*	*		
Deauville	14:35	*	*	*	*	*		
Florence	14:40	*	*	*	*	*		
Nice	14:45	*	*	*	*	*		
Glasgow	14:50	*	*	*	*	*		
Luxembourg	14:55	*	*	*	*	*		
Antwerp	15:00	*	*	*	*	*		
Mahon	15:00	*	*	*	*	*		
Malaga	15:00	*	*	*	*	*		
Paris Orly	15:00	*	*	*	*	*		
Glasgow	15:20	*	*	*	*	*		
Quimper	15:20	*	*	*	*	*		
Luxembourg	15:30	*	*	*	*	*		
Brive	15:35	*	*	*	*	*		
Glasgow	15:45	*	*	*	*	*		
Dublin	15:50	*	*	*	*	*		
Dundee	15:50	*	*	*	*	*		
Rotterdam	15:50	*	*	*	*	*		
Venice	15:50	*	*	*	*	*		
Pau	15:55	*	*	*	*	*		
Malaga	16:00	*	*	*	*	*		
Antwerp	16:05	*	*	*	*	*		
Rotterdam	16:05	*	*	*	*	*		
Faro	16:15	*	*	*	*	*		
Amsterdam	16:20	*	*	*	*	*		
Frankfurt	16:20	*	*	*	*	*		
Palma	16:20	*	*	*	*	*		
Zurich	16:20	*	*	*	*	*		
Amsterdam	16:25	*	*	*	*	*		
Eindhoven	16:25	*	*	*	*	*		
Edinburgh	16:30	*	*	*	*	*		
Zurich	16:35	*	*	*	*	*		
Pau	16:40	*	*	*	*	*		
Milan Linate	16:50	*	*	*	*	*		
Dublin	16:55	*	*	*	*	*		
Rotterdam	17:05	*	*	*	*	*		
Amsterdam	17:20	*	*	*	*	*		
Brive	17:20	*	*	*	*	*		
Nice	17:20	*	*	*	*	*		
Glasgow	17:30	*	*	*	*	*		
Ibiza	17:30	*	*	*	*	*		
Antwerp	17:35	*	*	*	*	*		
Ibiza	17:40	*	*	*	*	*		

From	Arr.	M	T	W	T	F	S	S
Zurich	17:40	*	*	*	*	*		
Paris Orly	17:50	*	*	*	*	*		
Zurich	17:50	*	*	*	*	*		
Antwerp	17:55	*	*	*	*	*		
Bern	18:00	*	*	*	*	*		
Edinburgh	18:00	*	*	*	*	*		
Edinburgh	18:05	*	*	*	*	*		
Eindhoven	18:05	*	*	*	*	*		
Geneva	18:10	*	*	*	*	*		
Madrid	18:10	*	*	*	*	*		
Amsterdam	18:15	*	*	*	*	*		
Luxembourg	18:15	*	*	*	*	*		
Brest	18:20	*	*	*	*	*		
Münster	18:20	*	*	*	*	*		
Rotterdam	18:20	*	*	*	*	*		
Stockholm	18:25	*	*	*	*	*		
Amsterdam	18:30	*	*	*	*	*		
Edinburgh	18:30	*	*	*	*	*		
Billund	18:35	*	*	*	*	*		
Chambery	18:35	*	*	*	*	*		
Jersey	18:35	*	*	*	*	*		
Frankfurt	18:40	*	*	*	*	*		
Frankfurt	18:40	*	*	*	*	*		
Paris Orly	18:40	*	*	*	*	*		
Barcelona	18:45	*	*	*	*	*		
Avignon	18:50	*	*	*	*	*		
Dublin	18:50	*	*	*	*	*		
Luxembourg	18:50	*	*	*	*	*		
Paris Orly	18:50	*	*	*	*	*		
Nantes	18:55	*	*	*	*	*		
Zurich	18:55	*	*	*	*	*		
Aberdeen	19:00	*	*	*	*	*		
Isle of Man	19:00	*	*	*	*	*		
Basel	19:05	*	*	*	*	*		
Deauville	19:05	*	*	*	*	*		
Geneva	19:05	*	*	*	*	*		
Luxembourg	19:05	*	*	*	*	*		
Rotterdam	19:05	*	*	*	*	*		
Luxembourg	19:10	*	*	*	*	*		
Amsterdam	19:15	*	*	*	*	*		
Basel	19:15	*	*	*	*	*		
Munich	19:15	*	*	*	*	*		
Zurich	19:15	*	*	*	*	*		
Edinburgh	19:20	*	*	*	*	*		
Malaga	19:30	*	*	*	*	*		
Faro	19:35	*	*	*	*	*		
Amsterdam	19:45	*	*	*	*	*		
Zurich	19:45	*	*	*	*	*		
Amsterdam	20:00	*	*	*	*	*		
Amsterdam	20:00	*	*	*	*	*		
Dundee	20:00	*	*	*	*	*		
Münster	20:00	*	*	*	*	*		
Paris Orly	20:00	*	*	*	*	*		
Toulon	20:00	*	*	*	*	*		
Brest	20:05	*	*	*	*	*		
Nantes	20:05	*	*	*	*	*		
Rotterdam	20:05	*	*	*	*	*		
Venice	20:05	*	*	*	*	*		
Ibiza	20:15	*	*	*	*	*		
Edinburgh	20:20	*	*	*	*	*		
Florence	20:20	*	*	*	*	*		
Glasgow	20:20	*	*	*	*	*		
Edinburgh	20:25	*	*	*	*	*		
Frankfurt	20:40	*	*	*	*	*		
Geneva	20:40	*	*	*	*	*		
Ibiza	20:40	*	*	*	*	*		
Dublin	20:50	*	*	*	*	*		
Nice	20:55	*	*	*	*	*		
Zurich	21:05	*	*	*	*	*		
Palma	21:15	*	*	*	*	*		
Edinburgh	21:20	*	*	*	*	*		
Ibiza	21:25	*	*	*	*	*		

For a larger type face version with flight numbers go to www.nashsnumbers.co.uk and click the "MyFav Taxi Page" button. You will then find a dedicated LCA timetable icon...

from the editor's desk

After a pretty lousy summer - both workwise AND weatherwise - we now come to the month where it all changes; ie the clocks go back an hour on 28th of this month and it will get dark even earlier! Even worse, I 'celebrate' yet another birthday this month! Ah well, at least it's getting busier! Onwards and upwards!

Taxi sales war?

At the same time as KPM long-time Chairman, Peter DaCosta stands down from his position with Eco Vehicles and its Vito taxi to become a non-executive director and take a well-deserved rest after many years, along with Tim Yeo MP who apparently subsidises his money as an MP by becoming a director of every 'Green' company he can find, I cannot help but worry about what looks to be a price war between the Vito and the TX4.

Some will say that any price war is good news for drivers, and indeed it can be. But only if the companies concerned can afford a war.

The Mercedes Benz team began by introducing its *Agility* scheme where you could 'buy' a brand new Vito for £135 per week. Added to the usual stuff that owners have to pay for, it still made a new cab affordable - especially with many driver's taxis coming off the road courtesy of the Mayor's *clean air* policy, where any taxi over 15 years of age suddenly became unclean and where drivers had no deposit for a new cab to speak of.

With the Vito scheme, you paid the equivalent of £135 a week and then after three years, you could buy the vehicle - with a huge amount still outstanding as the payments made just a small inroad into the price. Failing that, you could just give it back and get another new one. In other words, you are renting but paying all the costs that owner-drivers pay. However, you have a vehicle whose servicing costs should be permanently under warrantee.

Several months ago, the London Taxi Company came on with a similar scheme at the same weekly cost of £135 plus all the usual owner-driver costs. The advantage of the TX4 scheme was that the initial cost was £thousands less, so you would owe substantially less after the three years were up.

But now KPM have cut the weekly cost from £135 to £125, making it look even more attractive. But of course, nothing is for nothing and after three years you will owe even more, having nowhere near even paid half off of the hugely expensive Vito cost with many drivers being unable to afford the cost.

Will the LTC follow again? And if they do, where will it all end? Garages won't bother buying new taxis to rent out as the 'buy' schemes will look to be cheaper. And if the cost of cabs increases, how many drivers will still buy new? And what will happen when the Nissan NV200 arrives on the scene. Yes, it's ugly but it has an even lower price than the TX4? Where will that leave the Vito and its £43,000 price? Will they then cut the weekly cost to £100?

Yes, price wars can be great, but in this case it could also be disastrous...



Fooling the world!

Do you know Dial-a-Cab driver John Gerber (N62)? How about Sky Sports, you must know that? And if you do, then you will certainly know Tottenham Hotspur! But what do the three have in common?

Well the answer is that John not only fooled the *Sky Sports News* channel and Spurs, but he and his son fooled much of the world that takes Sky's content. Yet it started as a little joke that eventually took over the internet as Spurs fans gradually realised what John had done using his taxi and DaC name board. The story is inside this issue...

Kupkake

If you work on DaC's EC5 rank, then the chances are that you will hear *Call Sign's* long-time poet, David 'Kupkake' Kupler (Y74) moaning about something or other. He has also been writing for both this magazine and its predecessor, *Phil Emden's News and Views* since 1974 and even his poems usually have a moan about something running through them! Yet they - and he - remain incredibly popular.

Sadly, David recently lost his mother, Mary. She used to work for ODRTS on the phones at Shirland Road. Indeed his daughter Rachel worked for DaC at Brunswick House, except that being 'on the phones' had been elevated to telephonist by then and later on to calltaker. His wife Jan did a similar job at Shirland Road and his sister Sam had previously been married to former DaC Secretary John Bernardout. To complete an astonishing DaC family, David's father Judd was also a regular on the old Finsbury Square rank, but sadly passed away in 2005.

Just as he did back then for his dad, David has written a poignant piece inside this issue about a mother whom he obviously loved very much. Our sincere condolences to all David's family on their loss...

Alpha Power Pill

I recently sent off for a pack of Alpha Power Pills and sure enough, they arrived the very next morning. And it was nice to see that they work as well as ever - smoke down and fuel consumption improved. Steve Vale, who is operating the system, tells me that all orders received before 3pm go out first class post that same day.

Technology passed me by when DVD players took over from tape recorders, but apparently if you go to the Alpha Pill ad inside this issue, you will see the website address (non-PC drivers can

still phone) where you log onto, but you will also see a QR code (a pretty pattern to me), but if you have a smartphone you will be able to scan the website in just by putting the phone next to the pretty pattern!

I'll have to ask my grandson how that works, after all, Samuel is nine now and should be able to explain it to me! All I can tell you is that the Alpha Pill works!

DaC and charity

For many years, Dial-a-Cab drivers and Board members have been intrinsically linked to various charities - most of which are involved with the taxi trade. The London Taxidriers' Fund for Underprivileged Children has and still has DaC drivers on its committee. Board member Mike Son has been on it for many years, as have David Lessman (D19), Gerry Dunn MBE (S84), Bill Tyzack BEM (C06) and many others going back to Jack Taylor and Sam Harris.

Then there's the Taxi Driver of the Year Charity Fund under the Chairmanship of Russell Poluck MBE (T55), the Worshipful Company of Hackney Carriage Drivers' *Magical Mystery Tour* committee including drivers such as Jim Rainbird (T25) and Phil Davis (F10) and the East London Cabbies Outing charity with DaC men such as John Dixon (B67). The Albany Taxi Charity has had many DaC drivers working for it over the years, as has the LTBAFWF, better known as the Taxi War Disabled Charity under their President and former ODRTS Board member, 88 year old Harry Joel.

Why have I mentioned all the above? Well they all publish occasional articles in the trade press and some drivers just turn over the page when they see one of them. But these guys represent our trade in a way that should make us all proud and even if you don't want to read the same article as it makes its way through the papers in a press release, please at least read it once. Not everything in life can be sensationalistic; some people do things because no one else will. And they should make us feel proud of being London taxi drivers...

Max Bygraves

At a time when taxi work has seen better days, I feel I should mention the times when things were really buzzing and one of those regular clients at the time was Max Bygraves. He used to call Dial-a-Cab for taxis to pick him up from his luxury apartment in Palace Street, Westminster. Whilst he used to go everywhere in a cab, he was very fussy that it always turned up on time although he was always the nicest possible celeb you could pick up.

I remember the late Len Bell (ex-L01) telling me how Max asked to be taken to Brighton after phoning to ask for a taxi to Victoria. He told Len that he was just testing DaC to see whether they would arrive on time to take someone just round the corner!

When Len arrived within five minutes, Max asked him to take him to the coastal town instead. He also gave Len two tickets for his London show. A true gent and one who is sadly missed...

Alan Fisher
callsignmag@aol.com

reflections of the chairman

Olympics – just one more time...

My *Call Sign* report last month was - perhaps unsurprisingly - almost entirely devoted to the Olympic Games. Now they are over, I just have a little more to convey on the subject.

There is not any doubt that both the Olympics and Paralympics were a huge success and I, like many others, became quite involved in watching some of the events. What with **Bradley Wiggins** winning Gold and also the *Tour de France* and then **Andy Murray** winning Gold and the New York *Grand Slam* event, becoming the first Briton to do so for seventy six years, it really was a fantastic summer for our sportsmen and women and of course, the nation as a whole.

However, not every cloud has a silver lining and there were many businesses in and around the capital that suffered tremendously during the six week period that the Games were on. The London Taxi trade was no exception with probably the quietest August the trade has ever seen, due in no short measure to the authorities persuading most people to avoid London unless their visit was absolutely vital. It appeared that everyone heeded the advice and as a consequence the taxi trade did not have any passengers to convey!

I don't need to tell you that the past year has been a very difficult trading period and I was somewhat pleased when your Society entered August, the last month of **Dial-a-Cab's** trading year, showing a small surplus. However, due to those abysmal trading conditions during August and the unusually high loss we experienced that month thanks to the Olympics, we finished the year in the red and not showing a surplus. Fortunately, the loss incurred will not have a detrimental effect on your Society as we have built up considerable financial strength over the years. I am just pleased that the London taxi trade will hopefully not experience in our lifetime another huge downturn in business like the one we experienced during August.

House of Commons/Lords

We have serviced the above account for many years, with the exception of some five years ago when we lost the account on price to one of our competitors in the radio taxi industry. Their contract was for three years, but after fifteen months the *House* called me in and asked if I would service the account once again. This was due to service issues, as the account is very complex and the new provider experienced some difficulty in providing a satisfactory service.

Consequently, we once again began to service the *House*. They then sought to go to tender earlier this year. The staff that had previously awarded the contract back to us due to our competitors inability to service them to an acceptable level, had all moved on and we were faced with new staff that were unaware of the difficulties that were experienced in service levels those few years earlier.



Although I had explained the situation to them, they had never actually experienced a situation themselves when service fails on all fronts.

We tendered for the business on exactly the same terms as the current contract; however, the new contract was not awarded to us but to a company based in Finchley. The new company that has won the tender is **Fairway and Kenwood**, a minicab company that claims to have 250 cars. The current contract with us expires at the end of October.

However, I have now received another communication from the *House* to request we continue to service them into November whilst the new supplier beds their new system in. Of course I agreed to their request and I know you will continue to service the *House* to the very highest standard until the contract finally expires.

I believe that the way in which a contract

is terminated is extremely important. It should always expire on amicable terms as you never know what the future holds. After all, just like last time we could be invited to service this account again in the future.

App for credit cards

We are currently testing an App for the **iPhone** and **Android**, however we are only testing it for credit card transactions to begin with and when we are happy with that Application, we will extend the service to other areas of your business.

At the moment, the App appears to be working very well and when we are ready to launch it, the charges applied to current credit card transactions will be revised.

When we are happy with everything and the App has been thoroughly tested, we will then submit it to *Apple* for their approval and for inclusion in their App store.

At that point, everything will depend on you. If you don't cover the work, then the public will delete the App and we will suddenly see derogatory remarks written about us on the internet because that is how many show their discontent with Apps nowadays.

We can produce the App, but the service we give will be entirely up to you. We could even make all credit card transactions *As Directed* just to try and guarantee a good service, but as I've said, if you don't cover the work then we might as well give it up now...

Brian Rice
Chairman
Dial-a-Cab

THE SALIERI RESTAURANT

376 Strand, WC2

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

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

We are certain that you will be delighted



Please bring along your badge or Bill as ID

Salieri Restaurant
376 Strand, WC2

Reservations: 020 7836 1318

Peter DaCosta stepping down as ECO CEO

KPM Chairman and Eco City Vehicles Chief Executive Officer, Peter DaCosta, has said that he is stepping down from his position with ECO. He will remain as a non-executive director.

Tim Yeo, who has chaired the company behind the Mercedes Vito since its 2007 admission into the AIM market, is also standing down, to be replaced by former Sky and BT executive, John Swingewood.

The company have had a relatively successful period since their lease/buy deal for the Vito, claiming to have increased its share of the new London license taxi market to 36% this year. How successful that will remain to be now that the London Taxi Company has launched a similar deal for their TX4 but at that cab's lower price, remains to be seen.

The changes to the ECV Board was said to be in preparation for the next phase of development. It comes after ECV raised £1.75m in a share placement, which will help to reduce their debt and provide working capital.



Peter DaCosta is becoming a non-exec director

Those debts include £1.5 million (plus accrued interest of £66,120 as at 31 August 2012) owed to the pension scheme (whose beneficiaries are the original KPM directors and now ECV directors and/or shareholders, Peter DaCosta, Michael Troullis and Keith Marder). Also owed to the pension scheme are accrued rent arrears of around £200,000 relating to premises owned by the pension scheme. There are outstanding arrears of £514,000 owed to Global Meter Systems Limited, £61,000 owed to the executive directors in respect of loans they made to the Company, £126,000 in deferred gross bonuses owed to the executive directors together with employer national insurance contributions, £97,500 in deferred fees owed to non-executive directors, £100,000 owed to Peter DaCosta's son Lee and £250,000 accrued interest owing to Cabvision Networks Limited.

Revised repayment terms have now been agreed, pursuant to which £0.25 million including associated expenses will be paid out of the Placing proceeds.

At the Science Museum...

If you have never taken the kids to South Kensington's **Science Museum** then it's something they could well enjoy. There are lots of different galleries to visit with many of them free of charge to enter. **Call Sign** looked at four...

Web Lab is made of up five experiment installations that bring the workings of the internet to life and aims to inspire the world about the possibilities of the web. Besides being physical, it is also an interactive website and available at www.chromeweb.com.

Visitors, both on and offline, will be able to make music with people across the world; launch information into cyberspace and see where images on the web live or watch their portrait being drawn in the sand by a robot!

Web Lab is on at the Science Museum (basement) until July 2013 and is free to enter...

Another attraction at the museum is **Codebreaker: Alan Turing's life and legacy**. This biographical exhibition celebrates the centenary of the birth of Alan Turing, exploring his inspirational story and examines his profound influence on the fields of code-breaking, computing, mathematics, artificial intelligence and biology.

The life and legacy of Alan Turing is told using objects (including some which have never been on public display), archival material, interactive exhibits, photographs and quotations.

This exhibition, supported by Google, is on until May 2013 and free to enter.

Visitors can also ask the question: **Can we get electricity from nuclear waste?** You will be able to see a magnet from a brand new type of particle accelerator which made it possible to run a nuclear reactor to release energy, rather than relying on a critical nuclear chain reaction. You will be able to learn about the accelerator technology being developed here in the UK and to reflect on the issues surrounding nuclear energy and waste.

This exhibition is on till January 2013 and free to enter.

A new free display connected to recent research into DNA. **'The Who Am I'** gallery is the Science Museum's biomedical gallery that allows visitors to explore how genetics and the brain combine to create your unique identity.

This exhibition opens from September 6 until December 5.

There are many other exhibitions always on, plus of course the amazing IMAX theatre where 3D presentations on the giant screen are like no other 3D films you have seen before. You will have to pay an admission charge to see any of the IMAX presentations.



Alan Turing: Code breaker

The Science Museum at Exhibition Road is open daily from 10.00 to 18.00.

More info at www.sciencemuseum.org.uk or 0870 870 4868.

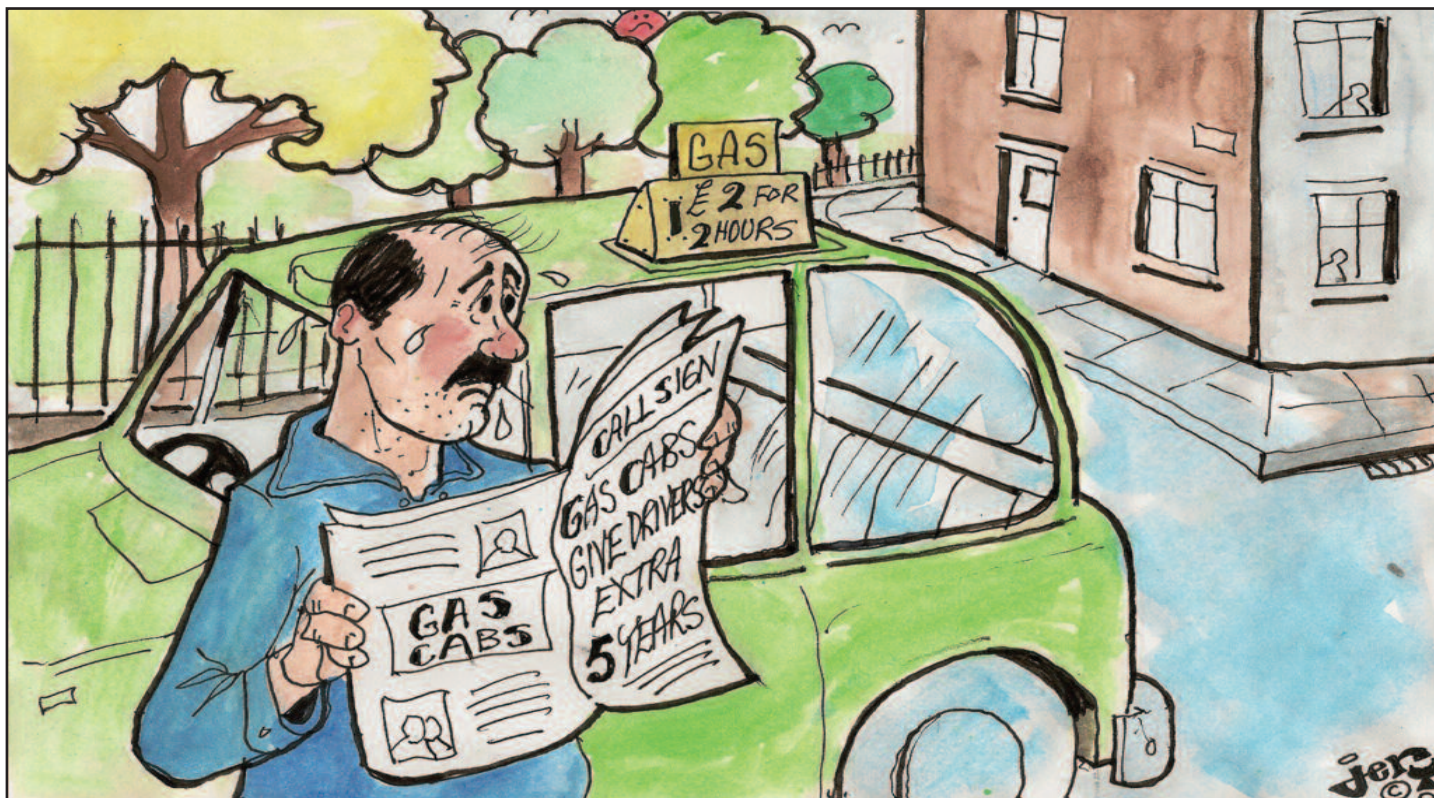
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Jery's World



Thinks: "When I bought this gas cab, I fort it'd work off the wife's nagging every morning! And now I've got another five years of it! Fanks for nuffink LT-bloody-PH!"

New London Taxi Company Service Dealer



The London Taxi Company is continuing to appoint new approved Service Dealers around the country and have recently announced the appointment of a new Approved Service Dealer in London.

They are **E1 Taxis Ltd**, who are based at **67 Stephenson Street, London E16 4SA**. E1 make the sixth new service dealer to open around the country in just two months.

LTC's **Rob Laidler** told **Call Sign**:

"We continue to strengthen and improve our aftersales support, from the quality and training of our network to the launch of our first ever Service Plan – our new maintenance package that can be used at any of our Approved Service Dealers."

"When our drivers visit one of our Approved Service Dealers, they know that they are dealing with factory-trained professionals, specifically geared up to work on their vehicle. They are also completely tuned into the needs of the customer. They understand that taxi drivers simply cannot afford prolonged periods off-road."

"Our priorities are to ensure that our customers can maintain their vehicles properly and have them maintained or repaired as quickly as possible. We believe that our drivers definitely benefit from having access to a specific maintenance network. They also have the added reassurance that only genuine parts and the correct specification oils and lubricants will be used on their vehicle; with all faults diagnosed using authorised tools and equipment."

Go to www.london-taxis.co.uk and click on 'servicing' for more information on the Approved Service Dealer network or to find your nearest one...

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**We make wheels turn
so you can earn.**

I very often stop for a rest at the RAF church rank on the Strand; there are normally a few vagrants who sit outside the church and who at times can be a bit rowdy, but who seldom cause any bother.

When I was there recently, I saw one vagrant who I didn't recognise walking along the line of taxis and looking into each one as he passed, so I promptly shut my window only to see him pass by and get into the taxi behind! The cab – not a Dial-a-Cab – then pulled away!

So on the back of that experience, and as the thorny subject of dress code has resurfaced in recent issues of *Call Sign*, I decided to conduct my own very unscientific mini-survey with the people that we couldn't survive without – ie the general public as taxi passengers.

All ten passengers that took part were male, wearing suits and the questions referred to male taxi drivers and their general dressware...

* All ten passengers agreed that a collar and tie was unnecessary, with eight out of the ten saying that a T-shirt was fine.

* All ten called sleeveless vests "totally unacceptable."

* Two of the ten thought there was a small element of scruffy drivers in the trade.

I then asked about a dress code if radio drivers had to go into client's office reception areas.

* Five out of the ten thought a T-shirt was fine.

* Five out of the ten said that a collared T-shirt as a minimum should be worn.

* Four of the ten said that jeans were okay, whereas the other six said that trousers or casual slacks should be a minimum standard.

* All ten said that shorts or track suit bottoms

In an unscientific survey, Mike Lyons (Y52) asks male taxi passengers... "How should London taxi drivers dress???"



Why doesn't Allen Togwell wear casual clothes? Perhaps he just doesn't know who he may pick up!

Allen Togwell has been banging on about a dress code for more years than I can remember – a campaign I totally agree with. However, it does not help his cause if every article he writes on the subject was not next to a

were unsuitable.

* None of the ten seemed particularly concerned about footwear.

So there you have it and make of it what you will! It has to be said that wearing a suit and tie is an extremely easy way of dressing, with any adjustments necessary to the suit being made before you take it home. The only serious daily challenge after that is choosing a tie!

Once you move into casual wear, it becomes a completely different ball game and the outlets do not make it easy with a *medium* size being a perfect fit in one outlet, while other shops describe that same size as an *extra-large*! So labels cannot be relied on and if you end up with an ill-fitting garment, you can take it back, use it for doing messy jobs, use it as a duster, just bin it or maybe – just maybe – consider that it will make do behind the taxi wheel!

photo showing him suited and booted. Perhaps it would be better if he showed himself in a more casual light and in an outfit he would consider wearing behind the wheel.












Allen currently gives the impression that he would even do the gardening in a three piece suit, goes to bed in a shirt and tie and just wouldn't dare leaving the house in a pair of socks that hadn't been correctly ironed – although I'm sure none of the above is true!

On a more serious note, we are up against very serious competition in top of the range cars that are driven by smartly dressed drivers. Their only disadvantage being that many don't know where they are going! So I would hate to think that we were losing work purely due to the lack of any dress code or that was contributing to it...

Michael Lyons (Y52)

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Carshalton's **Danny 'Cassius' Connor** put on a great display recently to capture the Southern Area title belt in the biggest fight of his career and his fourth consecutive win. Referee Ken Curtis gave him the decision after the 10 rounds in the title fight, which was shown live on **Sky Sports** in Matchroom Sports 'London Calling' show at Alexandra Palace.

Trained by Dial-a-Cab driver **Alec Wilkey** (W83) under **Johnny Eames** managership at the **TKO Gym** in Canning Town, **Cassius** took on local favourite **Chris 'The Flash' Evangelou** in the Light-Welterweight division in an entertaining battle that had the crowd on their feet!

The styles of both fighters made it a close and interesting fight with Connor maintaining a high work rate and using his jab and combinations throughout against the previously unbeaten Evangelou, who counterpunched using powerful single shots. Connor was coming off the back of a great points win over **Tyler Goodjohn** for the Masters Welterweight title back in May and was in great form after winning 6 of his last 7 bouts. But Evangelou was clearly confident after remaining unbeaten in winning his first 9 bouts. While Danny trained with **Alec** at the **TKO Gym**, Evangelou had been to train at **Floyd Mayweather's** famous gym in Las Vegas!

Both fighters had great support and it was evident this was going to be a tight affair after the first round in which both fighters had their successes, with Connor establishing his jab early and landing a couple of straight right hands and Evangelou landing a good left hook and loading up for the power punches. The second round was also tight with Connor putting pressure on his opponent and landing some good combinations, but Evangelou, with his hands low, was relying on power and continued to land with those single shots.

Then in the third round, Evangelou looked to have made a breakthrough when he caught and stunned **Cassius** with a great left hook, but he was able to regain his composure and began firing back with shots of his own. The styles of both fighters gelled, with the counterpunching of Evangelou mixed with the work rate and combinations of **Danny Connor**.

The fifth round saw **Chris Evangelou** continue his tactics of explosive attacks, but **Cassius** responded with several shots each time he was caught, showing the tenacity needed to become a champion. But by round seven, Evangelou was beginning to show signs of tiring, as this was his first time beyond 6 rounds. Connor, who had **Pinto** printed on the front of his shorts in memory of his friend and fellow boxer **Lewis Pinto** who died earlier this year, worked the body with some hooks and continued the pressure while beginning to control the fight behind his jab. Towards the end of the round, both fighters kept the crowd entertained with some brief simultaneous foot shuffling before trading blows once again. The eighth saw Evangelou catch **Cassius** with an eye catching three-punch combination but the **Carshalton** man came back with his own flurry of punches before switching the attack to the body with his own right hook.

In the last 2 rounds, Connor looked the stronger, landing right hands more frequently as Evangelou's hooks failed to find the target with any regularity. Danny's volume of punches overwhelmed **The Flash** as he tried to take them on his gloves. Both fighters showed determina-

ALEC'S BOY TAKES THE TITLE!



Danny Connor with DaC's Alec Wilkey after he won the title

tion as they squared up at the end of the ninth and the last round had the crowd on their feet, with Connor again showing he had the fitness to outwork his opponent with some effective straight shots as Evangelou tried to cover up.

At the end of the bout, **Danny Connor's** hand was raised in victory with the ref scoring the bout 98-94 in his favour and he was crowned **Southern Area Champion**. Such was the excitement of the fight and the attitudes of the two boxers, that there were calls for a rematch and if it materialises, it will surely be another

treat for the fight fans.

Danny Connor told **Call Sign**: "I'm very happy with that. All credit to **Chris**; he was slippery and I thought it would be a big step up, but if he wants a rematch, he can have one."

Chris Evangelou added, "I thought I had the cleaner shots, but **Danny** has got an engine on him. I really thought I was going to knock him out in 4-5 rounds, but I wish him all the best with his career."

David Wilkey
Call Sign Online

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In this issue's *Mailshot* pages, **Dial-a-Cab driver Charlton Clark (F25)** asks about the progress of the Society's next generation of in-cab terminals.

Charlton was possibly taking something of a risk in case the Chairman read his comments, because there was the teeniest hint of some sarcasm from the DaC driver when he ended his letter by saying that he needed to know when the terminals would be ready as he was thinking of throwing a 16th birthday party for his current one and wanted notice so that he could get the invitations sent out!

So we asked Brian Rice to give an update! The DaC Chairman told *Call Sign*:

"Yes Charlton, I agree that our current terminals need to be replaced as they are looking a little dated at the moment. We are testing the new one and currently have two on a bench and two in a taxi. But as you can probably imagine, as with most new software, our IT department have found some bugs.

The manufacturing will not commence until we are totally satisfied that we have ironed out most of the problems. This will be

NEW TERMINALS UPDATE



The new terminal out on test

street level map, an extended arterial road Greater London map and a Great Britain road atlas. The London map contains over 24,000 specially selected points of interest. All the maps can be 'toggled' at the press of button and zoomed in or out up to four levels, also at the touch of a

button. There are speed and traffic light camera warnings, a cotton line drawn between location and selected destination, a facility to trace the route and the ability to search street name, post code or point of interest.

There is also automatic route planning in navigation, a favourite destination storing facility, a history of previous destinations and a database of almost half a million UK points of interest!

And because the new terminals will be working on O2, drivers will be able to clear trips virtually anywhere and there will no longer be the problem of no signal when needing to clear a credit card ride. And hopefully they will also contain lots of work!

The new terminals will contain the **Knowledge Master** *Cabbies Mate* A-Z maps and satellite navigation software, which include a central London super scale and

button. There are speed and traffic light camera warnings, a cotton line drawn between location and selected destination, a facility to trace the route and the ability to search street name, post code or point of interest.

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Ron Yarborough
Call Sign Online

Due to a personal tragedy, we haven't asked David Kupler for a poem this month but have republished one of his older ones. This one is from Call Sign, February 1979...

Kupkake's Korner



A Kupkake Kipper Poem

The kipper season is upon us,
It's getting hard to earn a crust,
And there is no bonus...
So out to work you must.

No alibi or excuses,
No long lie-ins in bed,
No more refusals...

Whether Brixton or Plumstead!

Like Christmas lights at midnight,
The cabs through London pass,
I can't say it's a nice sight...
Please God, it doesn't last!

Kopyrlgt Kupkake 1979

Dial-a-Cab Credit Union

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

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"I suppose I'd better start thinking about a replacement before the winter sets in," **Barry Spear (Y16)** told *Call Sign* after being informed by **Dial-a-Cab's Roman Way** technicians that his MDT problems were being caused by a weakening battery.

"Mind you, this present accumulator owes me nothing, it is the original one from when I bought the cab five and a half years ago and I've done 188,000 miles, so I can hardly complain too much," Barry continued sporting a huge grin!

Call Sign and the *Roman Way* staff stood speechless in amazement at the revelation that a cab battery, with all the stresses and strains of taxi work - and in particular *radio taxi* work - with its continual cycle of engine stop/start starter motor engagement activity should - or even could - last so long, was astounding.

The N7 techies reckon a decent battery is usually good for a couple of winters provided it is well maintained, while some of the cheaper brands can just about outlive their warranty period. So to hear of a battery that has performed reliably for so long is possibly a record that might be hard to beat. They went on to compare it in Olympic terms to the winning of a Gold medal in a record time!

The demands of radio taxi work and everything that involves including the additional requirement of powering the MDT itself, puts huge pressure on the battery to give 100% all the time. Listening to a music radio or running another electronic device, especially when sta-

Poor Barry!

Now in its sixth year, his battery starts to play up!



Barry and his battery

a major source of battery failure as dirty or loose contacts means the battery is not being charged by the alternator. Where possible, maintain the water level in the cells using the appropriate top-up fluid. Also, gently scratch the date of the purchase of the battery onto the casing so that any warranty claim can be speedily resolved.

Can you beat Barry's battery time of five and a half years? Editor **Alan Fisher** has had an **Optima** battery that came with his new cab for over four years, so there could be a challenger somewhere. Let *Call Sign* know if it's you...

tionary while waiting for a passenger or sitting on a rank, simply adds to the load imposed on the battery.

With this in mind and as we enter the winter months, *Call Sign* sought advice from **Sheldon Posner** of **Cricklewood Carriers** and also **Tony** and **Jamie** at taxi parts specialist **J V Bright** in SE1. They all suggested that now might be an opportune time to ensure the battery terminals and leads are scrupulously clean and secure. Loose fitting leads are

Michael Toomey
Call Sign Online

LTC HIT JACKPOT!

At a time when it's not just taxi drivers who are struggling to regain some of the momentum they had just four short years ago, but both major taxi manufacturers having gone into print saying that conditions for selling their cabs are "extremely tough" with both showing heavy losses, the **London Taxi Company** and their **TX4** may have found a golden saviour.

As *Call Sign* reported last month, the LTC have now completed the deal to supply Azerbaijan's **Baku Taxi Company** with 1000 TX4s, but so happy is Baku's director, **Ilgar Gasimov**, that they have now said they want to buy another 2000 taxis!



Baku Taxi Co-director Ilgar Gasimov wants another 2000 taxis!

Mr Gasimov told us: "This next batch will be delivered over the next two years and bought in stages of around 200 taxis every few months with 1,000 coming to Baku over the next year and the first batch of 200 taxis arriving in January 2013."

The £53million agreement signed with Geely in 2006 that involved building look-a-like London taxis in a joint venture from their factory in Shanghai and with a £20million investment by Manganese Bronze, seems now to be paying off in spades.

TICKETS ON SALE NOW!

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LT Museum Family Open Weekend



And it's a Taxi special weekend!



London Transport Museum's Depot in Gunnersbury Lane, Acton, will open its doors to the public on Saturday 6 and Sunday 7 October for its Family Open Weekend and will include a taxi special! The Depot is home to the Museum's collection of over 400,000 objects, consisting of historical road and rail vehicles, thousands of posters and artworks, engineering drawings, signs and ephemera. Tickets are valid for both days and kids go free.

As well as having the rare opportunity to explore the Museum's treasures, there will also be a number of activities for the family to enjoy. These include a **London Vintage Taxi Association** display with LVTA members on hand to answer your questions about the old cabs. There will also be talks from guest speaker and taxi historian **Bill Munroe** on the history of the London taxi and Knowledge of London.

The LVTA taxis will include vehicles from 1912, 1934 and the modern day TX4, brought in especially for the Open Weekend with LVTA drivers on hand to answer any of your questions. Guests with a valid UK driver's licence can take a taxi

test drive at the Depot, tests will include a three point turn and driving in a full circle. Guests will need to book their test drive on arrival on a first come first served basis. A donation of £5 per test is suggested with proceeds going to London Transport Museum and the London Vintage Taxi Association.

There is also a celebration on the 60th anniversary of the end of the tram, behind the scenes tours, curator-led tours of the small object store, exclusive depot retail products and heritage vehicle runs.

Also, for real enthusiasts and to mark the end of the 'A' stock trains after 50 years of service on the Metropolitan line, the museum is making available a special range of commemorative products at the Depot Open Weekend. Due to popular demand, this range will include a limited number of RAW Metropolitan line luggage racks. The RAW luggage racks will be surface cleaned but require additional deep cleaning for domestic use. They will be available at special event prices of £125 for large racks and £75 for small ones. We bet the wives will love 'em!

Model collectors

Model collectors can purchase an Acton special model throughout the weekend, the First Editions London Transport Green Line RT Type double deck bus on route 362 to Amersham at £35.99 (model number 30507A). Two special commission models will also be on sale that were previously only available through the Collectors Club website: Exclusive First Editions Guy GS London Transport on route 316 to Chesham Broadway at £35.99 (model number: 30507A) and the exclusive First Editions United Counties Bristol LS on Route 359 to Amersham at £35.99 (model number 16324A).

Tickets to the Acton Open Weekend are valid on both days and cost £10 for adults, £8 for senior citizens and £6.50 concessions. Accompanied children under 16 go free.

To avoid possible queues, tickets can be booked in advance by calling 020 7565 7298 or online at www.ltmuseum.co.uk. The Museum Depot is open Saturday 6 and Sunday 7 October from 11.00 to 17.00 with the last admission at 16.00 and is at 2 Museum Way, 118 – 120 Gunnersbury Lane, London, W3 9BQ. The nearest Underground station is Acton Town.

Call Sign Comment

The one-a-year Transport Secretaries!

With the arrival of new Transport Secretary, **Patrick McLoughlin**, in the PM's recent reshuffle, that now means that there have been seven Transport Secretaries in the last six years. No prizes for remembering their names – although **Call Sign** doubts there would be too many winners anyway!

The incumbents of the position were **Douglas Alexander** (May 2006 - June 2007), **Ruth Kelly** (June 2007 - October 2008), **Geoff Hoon** (October 2008 - June 2009), **Lord Andrew Adonis** (June 2009 - May 2010), **Philip Hammond** (May 2010 - October 2011) and **Justine Greening** (October 2011 - 4 October 2012). Making the seven was **Alastair Darling** from the previous administration. According to HMG, transport infrastructure development is an essential building block for economic growth, but most Secretaries of State for Transport seem to use the position as a building block for their own future with barely a nod towards the licensed taxi business. But with 7 of them in 6 years, at least we should be used to being ignored!



Patrick McLoughlin is the new Transport Secretary

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COMPLIANCE OFFICER'S REPORT



Hello ladies and gents,

Getting back to normal

We are now into October and finally getting back to some kind of normality. It's actually good to get the City back again after the Olympics. Trip figures are gradually rising on a daily basis now that the holiday season is at an end and schools are back, albeit roadworks and its associated traffic congestion have also returned to pre - Olympic levels!

Having said that and I know I've said it many, many times before, but with those numbers picking up, it is so very important that all trips are covered as quickly as possible and that arrival times and any acceptable delays are continually updated. If your delay is taking longer than you at first thought, please remember to send a revised 'delay' so

that the client can be further informed.

JPM Rolling Rank

The J P Morgan 'Rolling Rank' is working very well and there is certainly a lot more work coming out of E14, in fact so much so that at certain times of the day there are a lack of Dial-a-Cab taxis booked into the island, something we all need to address.

As you know, procedures on the Island change on weekdays from daytime working (6am until 9pm) when you can book into E14C on any rank provided you are inside of the security cordon, to just E14 working from 9pm up to 6am, Mondays to Fridays and at all times throughout the weekend.

You must then at all times be physically in the E14 postal zone; booking in from any other zone is a procedure violation. When both 'Rolling Ranks' are operating, the trips are As Directed and at this moment in time, outside of these hours all other trips will, in the main, be unmasked.

Temporary off facility

It has become apparent that a minority of members are abusing their *temporary off* button when on Canary Wharf in an effort to give them an unfair advantage if and when certain trips are allocated. This is certainly not in the true spirit of the Society and is not what the *temporary off* button was designed for. It will be monitored over the coming weeks and I am sure those few drivers who are pushing the boundaries further than they should, know exactly where I am coming from.

You will also by now be aware of the terminal messages each night asking drivers to book off E14C before 21:00. This is even more applicable since the JPM Rolling Rank operates from this time. If persistent offenders choose to ignore the messages from the Call Centre and accept a trip rather than following procedures, they will not only be taken off the trip, they will also lose their queue position and may face a complaint if it is a regular occurrence. Again it is only a very small minority, but they spoil it for the rest of us. Please play the game...

Discounted holiday car rental for DaC drivers

Although this summer has been and gone, many of you may still choose to take a break to sunnier climates during the winter months to recharge your batteries. If you require a car rental either in the UK or further afield, Dial-a-Cab have negotiated a really good deal with award winning car hire company 'Affordable Car Hire' (www.affordablecarhire.com).

They have offered our members and staff a large discount of up to thirty per cent on rates throughout the year, so it is well worth contacting them (please see the ad on this page for full details and the unique promo code).

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Winner 2010

Winner 2011

"Yes, after half a million miles, we have to part," DaC driver **Lee Anderson (P57)** told *Call Sign* with a sigh as he brought his old Fairway taxi into the Roman Way depot to have the radio equipment stripped out, prior to being re-fitted into his forthcoming TX4.

"This old girl will be a hard act to follow, because other than regular maintenance costs and consumables such as tyres and brakes, I have only ever needed to replace one coolant radiator, a water pump and a starter motor during our time together!"

Lee's wife Michelle had joined him to say farewell and looked on approvingly with what looked like a lone tear in her eye as she listened to Lee talking as though he was losing an old friend..

"While I'm looking forward with high hopes for the future with a TX4, I have realistic – if not lower – expectations of the reliability of the TX simply because of the rugged longevity of my old bus right there," Lee said pointing towards the aged cab sitting forlornly in the work bay. "But I never considered an alternative work tool other than another LTC product – a real taxi!"

Before driving away in his new mode of transport, Lee remembered some of the people and events that had involved his Fairway.

"Well," Lee offered, "there was a time when I thought that either I, or the cab, was putting the mockers on people because a week after **Sir Robin Day** was in my cab on an account ride, he died. Then shortly after that, **Paula Yates** got in and blow me down, within a few days of

Another DaC driver talks about losing his "old friend..."

My Fairway will be a hard act to follow!



A sad goodbye to his Fairway from Lee

stepping out of my taxi, she too had left this life!" At that point Lee and *Call Sign's* intrepid reporter were not sure whether to laugh or cry.

"I recall Paula coming out to the cab carrying

an inflated plastic chair," Lee continued, "and then struggling down the road with it after I set her down in Notting Hill, so maybe it was that. I'll never really know, but after those two events I was tempted to ask everyone I stopped for whether their life insurance was fully paid up!"

But to prove that his Fairway wasn't really connected with any bad luck, Lee named actor **Larry Lamb**, **Madness** frontman **Suggs** and Irish singer **Rose-Marie** as being really pleasant...

"And both Sir Robin and Paula were always very nice as well - which is more than I can say about a now retired middle and super-middleweight former world-champion boxer whose name I won't mention, but if you've picked him up you'll know exactly who I mean!" Lee's voice tailed off at the thought.

The taxi Strip-Out process complete, Lee left the depot with the words *hard act to follow* echoing from his lips..

Alan Green
Call Sign Online

LOOKING AT (TAXI) LIFE



Cutting the ribbon!

Generally in life, the most things that I am asked to open are onion jars and my wallet at a family gathering! Obvious doors for ladies and the elderly I do automatically.

So it was a nice surprise and lovely – if unexpected - gesture when the management of the local gym, **Greens** in Chingford, which I have been frequenting for quite a few years, asked if I would do the honours and cut the ribbon at the handing over ceremony as it is now owned by **Nuffield Health**.

I was a bit taken aback at first and asked myself the obvious question; why me and why not a local celeb as a few of them use the gym? Surely not because I write for *Call Sign*! Naturally, I didn't want to talk myself out of the honour, so I gratefully accepted.

So up bright and early on 1st September, in my best suit and tie and polished shoes, I proudly cut the ribbon at the opening ceremony. I had to put up with quite a few **Dial-a-Cab** members and other taxi drivers ribbing me all day about autographs and speeches! But I loved every minute of it.

With Tom Quigley (Y33)



Tom Quigley cuts the ribbon at Green's gym

September 12th saw an interview with the local paper and even more photos! Who knows, I could end up kissing babies and standing as US President – or at least to open the gym he belongs to!!!

Legacy of sport on TV

Now that the Olympics are over, there is much talk about the legacy of the Games. If TV is anything to go by, it seems that after the **BBC** and then **Channel 4** finished their stints on the Olympics and Paralympics, that daytime viewing has once again reverted back to the same diatribe of boot sales, auctions, crime show re-runs

and family argument programmes like The **Jeremy Kyle** Show. Hardly inspiring stuff and it generally shows our youth in a negative way.

Judging by the massive viewing figures for the excellent coverage by both Channel 4 and BBC, with multi channels and red button options, there is no doubt of there being an appetite for watching all types of sport on terrestrial TV.

We watched both forms of the Games with commentators quoting statistics and careers of our own sportsmen and women who had obviously been competing and training for years, but who were complete strangers to us. For we arm-chair fans, the thought of getting excited over **BMX racing** and **wheelchair rugby** just six weeks ago would have been laughable, but as crazy as it all appeared to us, they had us on the edge of our seats and wanting more!

The terrestrial channels have lost most of the football, cricket and rugby to subscription TV; the networks should now grab the initiative and promote these lesser sports through the medium of television, helping to attract larger viewing figures and spectators to the live events, with the prospect of advertising at the events being shown on the screen.

There would be more money and sponsors coming into the respective sports, further helping our bright and committed athletes to achieve greater results while providing more facilities and opportunities for others to emulate their new-found heroes.

That's the legacy I would like to see...

Tom Quigley (Y33)

Call Sign Editor Alan Fisher writes about the time when you just know by looking at someone that your passenger is going bilk you...

A yob is a yob is a yob???

The Olympics were over, it was beginning to get busier and my meter was starting to earn its rental. Ok, I was hardly getting rushed off my feet, but compared to the six weeks when passengers took note of all the warnings and kept well away from London, it wasn't bad.

I dropped my passenger at Paddington having brought him from Wapping and was delighted to see a long queue of prospective passengers waiting for us kind-hearted taxi drivers to dispatch them to their onward destinations. I pulled out of the station in case any cabs were waiting to come in, did a quick U-turn on the bridge and went straight back in again.

A few cabs were either side of the pick-up island, with the station marshals doing their best to keep the queues moving. Many passengers were literally drowning under the weight of their suitcases – that was until I reached the point. There stood my passenger, around 18 years old, two metres in height, compulsory baseball cap facing back to front and dressed in a vest that must have been three sizes too big, torn jeans and expensive looking trainers. Never mind luggage, there wasn't even any sign of a carrier bag.

"Terminal three at Heathrow, mate," he said as he jumped in. The enthusiasm you'd normally get from such a request on an already busy day wasn't there for this trip. My only thought was how he would pay? Of course, I could have made an excuse and pulled away, but that would have shifted the problem on to the next driver – and something inside me kept asking how I'd like it if someone else did it to me. So I decided that I would take this guy, who looked like every yob you always told yourself you'd never pick up, and on arrival at Heathrow I would keep my foot on the brake so that he couldn't get out until he had paid – always assuming he actually had any money!

Thankfully it was a reasonably clear run and within 35 minutes we were heading along the slip road towards the tunnel. Just as I was reminding myself about the footbrake, he said his first words that weren't actually whispered into a phone.

"Can I pay with a debit card, mate?"

Result, I thought, perhaps I was going to get paid after all! I asked for the card and swiped it before we entered the tunnel. A bleep on the terminal told me what my inner self already knew. Card declined, it read. I tried again on the airport side of the tunnel with the same result. I told him he'd have to pay cash and naturally his response was the one I knew he'd give.

"I'll have to go into the terminal to use a cash machine then. Strange, though," he continued, "I've used it several times today without any problems."

"Of course you have," I thought to myself, "and your dad is Santa Claus!"

I pulled up to the end of the terminal where I saw two wardens talking and told them of my predicament. I asked if I could leave the cab for a few minutes while I went to the cash point with my passenger. While they agreed I could leave the cab there, they said that I had to wait with it. So off trotted the passenger, leaving his purse with a screwed up travel card in it with an expiry date in 2009 as deposit.

"He'll be back," said one of the wardens, "after all you still have his luggage."

When I explained that he had no luggage, to her eternal credit one of the wardens tried to follow the passenger, but his long legs left her standing and she returned apologising profusely.

So the question remains: Why did I take him? And that's exactly what the warden who chased after him also asked. There was no real answer. I hadn't had a bilk for at least ten years – possibly longer – and perhaps my faith in humanity is stronger that it should be. But at



Alan wonders why he picked the youngster up

least I had used up this decade's bilk and I got back into the cab.

Suddenly the warden tapped on the door. I looked up and there strolling towards me was my bilker with three £20 notes in his hand.

"Sorry to keep you," he said, "but there was a queue for the ATM. Oh yes, can I have my wallet back please. It belonged to my late mother and I'd hate to lose it."

I didn't bother telling him that it was £61.80, sixty smackers did me nicely. I thanked him and off he

trotted into the terminal, once again with his phone stuck to his ear.

I thanked the wardens for their help and drove off. I gave the terminal a tap to set the screen back into view and was surprised to see the passenger's debit card details. I sent a message to dispatch asking why the details were there when the card had been declined.

"Your terminal must have been jammed; you should have pressed the *resync* button to clear it," explained an anonymous wordsmith. I explained that I no longer needed it and didn't expect to have to pay any credit card charges. It was changed to cash and I went back to work.

Ok, he came back and his card was genuine after all. But he was probably still a yob – after all, he had no luggage!

Alan Fisher
Call Sign Online

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David Kupler (Y74) – known to most drivers as **Kupkake** – has been writing poetry for *Call Sign* and its predecessor *News and Views* since 1974. His family's blood runs through *Dial-a-Cab* with dad, **Judd** being a driver, daughter **Rachel** having worked at **Brunswick House**, sister **Samantha** being previously married to a former **DaC** Secretary, wife **Jan** having worked on the phones at **Shirland Road** and mum **Mary** having been an evening shift telephonist at **Shirland Road**.

In March 2005, David's father passed away at the age of 86 and David wrote a moving piece about him, now his mother **Mary** – who preferred to be called **Michelle** or **Micky** – has also passed on at the age of 93 and David has penned a piece about her. The thoughts of everyone at **DaC** House go to the **Kupler** family – a true *Dial-a-Cab* family if ever there was one...

"My beloved mother **Mary Cohen** was born on May 3rd 1919 and the world became a richer place. She was raised in Stepney in what was then the *Jewish Area* of London with her five brothers and one sister.

She became a seamstress in a tailoring shop. When WW2 was thrust upon us, she volunteered to join the *Auxiliary Territorial Service* (ATS) and worked in dangerous locations around the Kent coast, being involved in the spotting of enemy aircraft intent on destroying this country. On two separate occasions, her *look out posts* were attacked by German fighter planes and she survived the ordeal.

She married my Father, also an East End

Obituary

MARY (MICKY) KUPLER



Mary and Judd - Together again

boy and a union that lasted over 60 years.

My Mother was a *giver* and gave love and affection to her family and friends. She always seemed to understand that people were not perfect and she would forgive all transgressions. She installed the virtues of *tolerance* and *forgiveness* to her children and passed on her wisdom and comprehension of the imperfect world in which we live.

She loved to cook, and her Apple Pie and Strudel were almost legendary in our family. She loved the sunshine and to be buried on a sunny day would defiantly have met with her approval.

My Mother had a wonderful sense of humour. She loved a saucy joke. Just one day before her death, I was sitting by her side, holding her hand just as I did as a child, talking and remembering happier times. She knew she was not going to beat this illness and was very pragmatic regarding the end of her life. She said:

"David, I've had 93 years and that's enough. I've given life to you and your sister and I've always tried to be a good person. If there's an afterlife, I want to come back as a bird - a Robin or an Owl. Don't sit Shiva for me; just remember me in your heart."

My nephew Adam was with her when she passed away on Sunday evening and there was a flock of birds making a loud commotion in the tree outside of the window at that exact time. Now she will rest beside my Father and be missed by those who knew and loved her as a remarkable kind and loving woman.

I know I speak for my sister **Samantha** and myself, for her grandchildren and great-grandchildren when I say that I will think of you and miss you Mum every day for the rest of my life.

Rest in peace, I will cherish your memory forever. Your loving son David...

Wembley Dream Over

Almost but not quite! That could have been the after match comment from **Wembley FC's** Technical Director, **Terry Venables**, as his assistant for the evening, **Martin Keown**, left the club's **Vale Farm** ground after Wembley were unceremoniously dumped out of the FA Cup by **Uxbridge**.

The month had begun well for the team with **Dial-a-Cab** driver **Lee Pearce** (J71) in goal and ex-pro guests for FA Cup matches, **Ray Parlour**, **Martin Keown**, **Graeme Le Saux**, **Brian McBride** and Argentinian superstar **Claudio Caniggia** all ready to play when needed! In addition, Lee had his own personal trainer in ex-Arsenal and England goalkeeper **David Seaman**!

The team's first cup game – shown live on **ESPN** – saw Wembley defeat **Langford FC** 3 – 2 with a four-figure crowd said to be 10 times the usual number! Wembley's reward in the next round was an away trip to **Uxbridge** – a team one league higher than Wembley's Lions – but you'd have never guessed it!

From the start, Wembley started knocking the ball around with **Claudio Caniggia** playing like a man 10 years younger than his 40+. After 25 minutes, **Paul Shelton** gave the visitors a deserved lead and 15 minutes later **Daryl Atkins** doubled Wembley's lead and an FA Cup shock was well and truly on the cards. But halfway through the second half, Wembley began to tire and Uxbridge scored twice in 2 minutes through **Kevin Warner** and **Chris Moore**. Then it was a matter of hanging on for a replay.

The ninety minutes were up and there were just three minutes of injury time added on. Wembley had possession and looked safe, but with just seconds left of that third minute, **Chris Moore** ran through and had an open goal to shoot at to give Uxbridge the win. But **Lee Pearce** threw himself at the shot and managed to parry it. The ball shot upwards and **Moore** tried to finish it the second



The FA Cup dream may be over but Lee Pearce will keep in touch with mentor David Seaman

time, but the DaC man pulled off another great save and the replay was on.

After that game, **Terry Venables** said that he had been pleased with the way Wembley played, even though they had shown those signs of tiredness. However, the replay was a strange game. Again shown live on **ESPN**, Uxbridge started the stronger, but Lee Pearce stopped all their goal attempts. However, in the end their superior strength and league position began to tell and by the end of 90 minutes, the away team had established a 5-0 lead.

Lee Pearce told *Call Sign*: "If we could have

held on to that lead in the away game, who knows what might have been. But we'll never know now."

Budweiser, the sponsors who brought the ex-pros to Vale Farm, are continuing to assist Wembley although the ex-pros are now ex-pros once again. Lee Pearce still maintains contact with **David Seaman** and at the time of writing, **ESPN** were still showing their weekly **Wembley FC: Dream On** programmes...

Jamie Corum
Call Sign Online

WAR DISABLED CHARITY AGM

The London Taxi Benevolent Association for War Disabled (LTBAWD) is holding its AGM on 12th November 2012 at The Royal Hospital Chelsea SW3. The meeting begins at 3pm.

Nominations must be in writing only, duly proposed and seconded by first post on 5th October 2012 and send them to the secretary:

Mr Paul Davis, 88 Grasvenor Avenue, Barnet, Herts, EN5 2DB.

Due to security at The Royal Hospital and a change of meeting room, any persons wishing to attend should contact the Secretary on 07860 850 102 by Friday 9th November 2012.

You can read all about the LTBAWD at www.taxicharity.org



My minicab? And can you see the licence through the tinted glass?

Digging ever deeper...

There was a time when private hire had to be careful about using the word 'taxi' or 'cab' in advertising. Nowadays it seems that most things are just accepted and that minicabs can quite easily get away with mini transgressions!

LTPH do chase up reported incidents where a PH company attempt to get away with moving the boundary ever further, but there are minicab companies all over London that now use a variation of the word taxi.

Dial-a-Cab drivers over the years have sent in reports of minicabs incorporating the word taxi or taxee or even tacksy! But use of

the word 'cab' now seems to have been fully accepted.

A DaC driver (who forgot to add his name) sent us this photo of a minicab. At one time the company concerned would have been breaking the law – not only through inferring the word cab, but also for having such tinted glass that it was impossible to read the licence. Now no one either knows or apparently cares!

Dennis Latchett
Call Sign Online

Olympic ORNs: The Last Word!

London's incredible *summer of sport* ended with the Paralympics, but some **Dial-a-Cab** drivers still have a few niggles they need to get out of their systems! **Bill Kibble (K86)** is one of them and he found the *Olympic Route Network* to still be an irritant!

As a result, Bill sent this photo to **Call Sign** of two signs on the island by **St Mary's Church** on **Strand**. The signs were just thirty yards apart and although his camera couldn't capture the actual wording on the illuminated messages, the differences are recognisable after seeing them so often during August and September. One says we can and one says we can't use the Games lane!

Bill ended by saying that now the Games are over, Councils and TfL should do the decent thing and cancel all Olympic penalty notices for taxis.



Thirty yards apart - one sign says Games traffic only while the second sign says ALL traffic can use lanes!

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Brian Rice and Andrew Overton ready for din dins!

On 6th September at The Girdlers' Hall in Basinghall Avenue, the WCHCD held their Installation Dinner. During a *Court Meeting* at the Hall prior to the dinner, **Brenda Bartlett** was installed as *Master* for the coming year. Brenda is a licensed London taxi driver, having completed her KoL in 1991. In 1997 she joined the Company as a Freeman and was clothed as a Liveryman in 2004 when the Company gained Livery status.

Once Brenda had been installed by outgoing Master, **Eddie Crossley**, she began her year by installing her Wardens. These were **Graham Woodhouse** as Upper Warden, **Malcolm Paice** as Renter Warden and **Colin Evans** as Lower Warden.

Dial-a-Cab Chairman, Brian Rice, was there to see the WCHCD new Master clothe Freeman **Divyesh Ruparelia (V59)** in the Livery. Brenda then welcomed **Martin Castle, Leigh Dargan, Micky Harris, Graham Long, Wendy Sorrell and Gary Wilcox** as **Freemen of the Company**.

Becoming Master of a Livery company is an honour earned by Liverymen within their Company. The *Court of Assistants*, who support the Master and the Wardens

As the WCHCD hold their Installation Dinner

DAC'S DIVYESH RUPARELIA CLOTHED AS LIVERYMAN...



Divyesh and Brenda Bartlett after the Liveryman ceremony

in their duties, are the organising body of the company. There are also opportunities for members within the WCHCD to sit on various committees including Education, Magical Taxi Tour, Charity, PR, Membership and Awards. It is through involvement in the running of the Company that members are elected to the roles of Warden or Master. The WCHCD continues to thrive because of the commitment of its members, but new members are always warmly welcomed.

A Champagne Reception took place in the garden before dinner and among the guests were **Sheriff Wendy Mead CC** and her consort **Mr Robert Tipping**.

Wendy was elected as Sheriff of The City of London last year and is Chairman and Spokesman of The Save Bart's Campaign. She is also a Past Chairman of St. Bartholomew the Great Heritage Trust, Vice Chairman of The Guild of the Royal Hospital of St. Bartholomew (League of Friends) and Chairman of Housing the Homeless Central Fund. She is a Liveryman of the Worshipful Companies of Glovers and Patternmakers.

Go to www.hackneycarriagedriver-scompany.com if you would like to know more about WCHCD or contact The Clerk, Mary Whitworth on 01494 765922.

Call Sign October 2012

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"It is at the edge of a petal that love waits"- William Carlos Williams

Terry Catherall (Y90) did a cycle ride to Brighton in 2010 for charity and enjoyed it so much that he thought he'd do another one.

But this one was to be somewhat further afield – to **Paris** and for a charity that has long been associated with the London taxi trade, **The Royal British Legion**.

Following the demob of so many males after the end of WW2 with most having no jobs to go to, it was the Legion that encouraged many of them to go onto the Knowledge and become taxi drivers by setting up the **British Legion Knowledge School**.

Terry began training for the ride in February and continued right through the summer to make sure that if anything went wrong, at least it wouldn't be because he lacked fitness!

Terry had his bike specially made and maintained for the ride by Russell Coe of Vandome Cycles. Coloured red and black, he aptly named it **Poppy**. Terry continues the story for *Call Sign*...

Firstly I'd like to thank my wife **Dawn** for putting up with all my training - around 2000 miles since February – and the fact that it seriously disrupted our social life. I must also thank training partners **Christopher McKellick**, **Bernie Kerslake** and the 'we hate hills' cycling group at **Club Woodham**!

Riding my Poppy with pride: Day one from Crystal Palace FC to Dover...

A refuel at Aylesford Legion village, then on to catch our ferry. Got soaked and dried out three times that day! Thankfully we had no more rain from then on all the way to Paris...

Day two...

The day started with a service at the **Calais War Memorial**, an emotional start to the day. From there on we had a team of French motorcycle out-riders providing a rolling road block each day all the way to the centre of Paris. We had 250 cyclists split into three

DaC's Terry Catherall cycles to Paris for the Royal British Legion

Riding his 'Poppy' with pride!



Terry at the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier



Terry and friends at the end of the ride by the Arc de Triomphe

ing many Brits, were going ballistic as they spotted our lead rider with a rather large Union flag flying on a ten foot high whip aerial! With

the Champs Elysees closed except for us, we felt as though Paris belonged to us - albeit for only a short time!

Celebration drinks were on hand before the most poignant of all the wreath-laying services at the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier situated beneath L'Arc de Triomphe. A lot of grown men cried that day.

The trip was filled with poignant moments which I shall always remember, but there were so many other times when the trip became an unforgettably enjoyable experience. My training paid dividends and on behalf of The Royal British Legion, I'd like to thank all the **Dial-a-Cab** drivers who donated. If anyone would still like to donate, then you still can. Just go to my donation site:

<http://uk.virginmoneygiving.com/terrycatherall>

Terry Catherall (Y90)

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groups, each with back up vehicles carrying medical staff, mechanics to maintain the bikes - everything like a military operation, as you would expect from the Legion.

Day three...

Another memorial service, this one at **Abbeville**. Then it was on though some beautiful countryside and villages with locals making us feel very welcome by waving flags and cheering us on. Just fantastic!

Later that day we arrived in **Beauvais** to a great reception by the Mayor - she was much better looking than Boris! Then there was another service of remembrance before putting the bikes to bed for the night. By now I'm becoming *au fait* with the French national anthem!

Day four...

Onwards into Paris with a couple of stops for food and drink. As we approached the centre, the crowds grew larger and noisier, police sirens were blaring out and tourists, includ-

It seems that so many of you enjoyed reading my last article involving a taxi job I did rather than my usual type of BoM report, that *Call Sign's* Editor has asked me to do another one! So here goes – although unlike my last one, this one doesn't involve drugs and prostitutes!

Many of *Dial-a-Cab's* older drivers will remember **Shell Haven** in Thurrock (Essex). It had been purchased by the **Shell** Company as an oil refinery, but closed in 1999. Several years later it was taken over by marine terminal operator **DP World**, one of the largest operators of its kind in the world. They also took over the P&O Company. So here goes...

I was sitting on point at a Heathrow rank. It was around 11pm one evening and the one and only passenger walked towards me and said a few words in a language that I couldn't understand. He then handed me a piece of paper with the words **Shell Haven** and a phone number on. At the same time he screamed out: "Shell. I join ship. Phone agent. Ship Capitan will pay fare."

I phoned the number and after a short while, a man answered who sounded as though he had just woken up. I explained that I had a passenger who apparently had flown in from North Africa and wanted to go **Shell Haven** to join a ship.

When I eventually gave his name, the agent's first comment was to leave him at the airport as he was just a member of the catering staff. But almost immediately he suddenly changed his mind and gave me instructions and directions where to take the passenger. The agent also said that the ship's Captain would pay the fare but that I should phone again when I reached the entrance to the docks.

On reaching **Shell Haven**, I phoned the agent and after around twenty minutes we met up. He certainly did not look too happy to see the passenger and asked who told him to come to the UK? After a number of heated words between the two men, the agent got into the cab alongside the passenger and

Mike Son looks back at some of his taxi trips that were that bit out of the ordinary...

The "Haven" of Shell Haven!



directed me to a quayside.

As we arrived, the agent said that we needed to walk part of the way. Together with my Heathrow passenger, we got out of my Metrocab and followed the agent to the quayside. I asked where the ship was and was told it was moored out in the estuary and he would contact someone to take us out to it. By this time, I was beginning to feel a bit apprehensive. The fact that it was a cold, dark and damp winter's night and somewhat misty as in the cheaper horror movies, didn't help me feel any better!

Some 30 minutes passed when I heard the engine of a boat, but the mist stopped me from seeing anything. We went to the edge of the quay and as I looked down I saw a small boat with a very elderly sailor in command – a sort of scruffy Captain Birds Eye!

The only way to reach the boat was via a plank of wood placed from the quay to the small dinghy. Once we were all aboard, we set off. I couldn't see a thing but within a

short time the dinghy hit something with a mighty thud. I asked what we'd hit? It was the ship – an oil tanker!

The agent and my passenger began shouting to try and attract the attention of anyone on the ship. After a few minutes a voice came out of the mist. The agent explained the situation and we were told that a ship's officer would be sent for. He soon arrived together with a crew member and they unravelled a rope ladder, which our elderly boatman then tied to the dinghy as though he'd done it one million times before. Looking at him, he probably had! Both the agent and the North African started to climb aboard the tanker.

They then told me to climb up because the Captain was the only person authorised to pay the fare and he would require a receipt. I looked at the rope and at the same time saw a vision of my wife and family. I made a decision: "Stuff the fare! There's no way I'm going to climb up that bit of old rope!"

The agent looked at me in astonishment and then said that I should wait for him to take him back to the quayside. I had no choice as I would never have found the cab again without him guiding me.

After fifteen minutes, I heard him calling me. He said he was going to stay on-board the tanker until morning, but that he was sending a piece of rope with a glove attached down the side of the ship. It contained the taxi fare and a petty cash receipt which I had to sign. The rope was then pulled back up and I went back to the quayside with Captain Birds Eye. I got into the cab and went home. And do you know, no one ever believed me...!

Mike Son
DaC Special Projects

From the winner of Team GB's first Paralympic gold medal...

THANK YOU LONDON TAXIS!

In *Call Sign's* July issue we ran a story about 20 year old Yorkshire born Paralympic athlete, **Hannah Cockroft**. She was the holder of two World Championships and on her way to coach – together with her specially adapted racing wheelchair – to the Olympic stadium where she was to be involved in the first track meeting prior to the Olympics starting.

All Hannah had to worry about was getting to the stadium, but that turned into a nightmare when her coach broke down. The coach driver called a minicab but the wheelchair wouldn't fit in, so Hannah did what anyone with any commonsense would do – she hailed a licensed London taxi. She explained the situation to the driver and because she was now running so late, she asked the driver if he would mind her getting changed in the back of the cab whilst they were making their way to the stadium! Being a gentleman, the driver said yes and adjusted his mirror to give Hannah as much privacy as he could. En route, he told Hannah that he was delighted at getting the opportunity of seeing how to get into the Olympic stadium.

Hannah later told *Call Sign* that the driver helped her to relax even though she was running very late – but at least she was on the way! They reached the security barrier and the driver explained that he had an athlete in his cab who was scheduled to go in a race that was to be off in just minutes, but **G4S** security showed why it was about to lose £50million for being rather stupid in the way it prepared – or didn't as the case may be! The guard wouldn't allow him in. Hannah said she was scheduled to be in the 100 metres and that she had already missed her warm-up time, but nope, **G4S** were not allowing taxis in! So Hannah got out and found her own way to the track. She said that it had been the worst preparation she'd ever had before a race, totally missing the warm-up and literally just having time to get her race number on and go straight onto the track for the race. Amazingly, she not only won, but broke the world record in the process, putting her name into the record books as the first world record holder at the London Olympic stadium! And of course there can only ever be one 'first' so the record will last forever.

But that wasn't Hannah's only first because – no thanks to **G4S** – Hannah won **Team GB's** first gold medal when she took the Paralympics' 100 metre wheelchair race in a new record time of 18.05 seconds. She also went on to take the 200metres gold medal as well! When *Call Sign* called her, she remembered all about that taxi driver who got her to the track on time and she sent her thanks.

"Without the encouragement of that world record, my confidence may well have taken a knock and who knows if I would have then won those two gold medals! I don't know his name, but London's black taxis will always now hold a special place in my heart."

To us, Hannah is someone we'll remember for her humility, sporting prowess and yes, for being gorgeous!



Hannah shows off her Paralympic Medal!

Yes, I know the London Olympics are over and the Editor has already told us to keep stuff on the Games to a minimum as the last few issues already had enough on them! But hey, there's one young former **Dial-a-Cab** employee who could well have been standing on an Olympic podium to collect a gold medal - and it was a young lady!

The 6ft 6ins, 25 year old **Peter Wilson** enthralled the nation when he sank to his knees in relief after securing the double trap gold medal after firing 188 from 200 clays to win the 2012 shooting event. But going back a few years, **Call Sign** was sponsoring a young DaC call taker whose shooting credentials knock Peter Wilson's into a cocked hat!

It was some ten years ago and at the age of 24, **Donna Merry** was handed what must be the ultimate honour in any sport - the captaincy of her country. Even at that young age, she had already been representing England for 6 years and according to many in her sport, she was the best female shooter in the country and very close to being number one overall.

Then in just one amazing year, **Donna** took the English, Scottish and Irish titles before adding to them by amazingly capturing the British Championship!

The following year, the regular sponsor of the **European Championships** withdrew their sponsorship after going into administration. A tearful **Donna** phoned Editor **Alan Fisher** and told him not to bother going to watch as the Championships looked like being cancelled.

Alan told **Brian Rice**, who agreed to sponsor the event and for that year, it became the **Dial-a-Cab European Championships**. And no prizes as to who won after she defeated former England Captain, **Steve Taylor** and the then current World Championship Gold medal winner **Craig Lakey**!

Donna really was at the top of the mountain with just one challenge left - the **World Championships** held in San Antonio, Texas. After all, she had just beaten last year's World Champion!

By now she was the number one shooter in the country, yet still a call taker at Brunswick House! Happily for her, **Brian Rice** agreed to let her have the time off and she crossed the Atlantic to test her skills, not just against UK shooters, but against the best in the world! Well, even **Donna** admitted that the winner of the gold medal in her event was just unbeatable and did not miss with a single shot! But she came a close second and returned to Brunswick Place with the silver medal and a silver cup for best individual performance after the winner.

The only problem left was one of motivation and she found going back to small-time shooting events difficult - but she still did enough to keep her shooting eye in. Then one year on and still at DaC, she took a University IT degree course but it interfered with her shooting, so something had to go and she needed the degree.

In 2005 **Donna** confirmed to **Call Sign** that she had fired her last shot. She said that her love for shooting had diminished and that she was finding it difficult to compete against some of the newer young shooters. She left DaC with her IT degree

How close was DaC to a gold medal!



Brian Rice welcomes **Donna** back from the World Championships in Texas with her silver medal

having been offered a PA job with a large bank, but before going she sent this magazine a message.

"I'd like to thank **Call Sign** for sponsoring me over the past five years and especially **Brian Rice** who always turned up at those events to present the prizes. Winning the Euros was such a big thing for me, and DaC coming in at the last minute to sponsor them made me feel so proud of working for an organisation that would do that for an employee."

So really, we'll never know the answer, but we suspect that had **Donna Merry** been selected for the 2004 Olympics in Athens, there may well have been a gold medal winner at **Dial-a-Cab**.

And of course, as **Alan** pointed out at the time, **Call Sign** would have sponsored **Donna** even if she hadn't been young, gorgeous and blonde!

Baghwat Singh
Call Sign Online

Cameras with the frozen peas!



The ever-vigilant **Vic** at **Dial-a-Cab's Roman Way** depot was shopping recently at his local **Waltham Forest** superstore, when he spotted this ultra-modern looking smart car parked up and took a photo for **Call Sign**.

"With all those artificial eyes popping out from every corner of the car roof, you have to be very 'smart' not to get caught on camera. As well as the regular telescopic camera, the vehicle is fitted with ANPR (Automatic Number Plate Recognition) equipment, which means that the operative can check for any outstanding court summonses, unpaid parking fines, together with info on whether it is taxed and insured and to confirm that the vehicle's MoT hasn't expired!

"All this information, together with the owner/driver's details, will flash up on the smart car's on board computer screen in just seconds," **Vic** continued, his electronic technical expertise in such matters coming to the fore, "so there is no chance of escape if you do not play their game and I have no doubt these highly mobile money making wagons will be rolled out across London very soon. And if they can't get you via their technology, I suppose they could always revert to just running you over!"

With that, **Vic** put his camera away and made for his car, realising that his frozen peas were beginning to melt!

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Hello! I've been a bit of a stranger the past few months much to the Editors' chagrin (or relief) due to being too busy at work, while in my personal life trying out any new games. Consequently, I've not had anything interesting to write about; mind you, it seems that although there are a steady stream of games available on all platforms, none of them is sufficiently different from the current plethora of games that already flood the market. With the run-up to Xmas gaining momentum - is it that time of year already - I will have some game recommendations for you next month. However, this month I thought I'd recommend some of my favourite websites, with hopefully something here for everyone.

1. Gizmodo (www.gizmodo.co.uk): This website is in blog format and very easy to read. Journalists who write for Gizmodo (a blog which started in the USA) provide up-to-the-minute news of gadgets, as well as the latest rumours of what new gadgets are on the horizon. If you're an Apple fan, this blog is the only place you need go for live minute-by-minute updates on the latest and greatest Apple product launches. This blog isn't just about technology; they often write about fascinating subjects like the Mars Curiosity landing and solar flares. All their posts are in a short and easy to digest format.

2. MakeUseOf (www.makeuseof.com): Another blog-format website, this one started out as a 'how-to' website but has grown to list hundreds of articles on all manner of subjects. Many of their user-friendly guides (often written like the "Dummies" series of books for clarity) are available for free PDF download. There are other, bigger websites out there (like www.about.com) but for general interest and readability, MakeUseOf is easier reading.

3. Udemy (www.udemy.com): This website is fairly new, so it is still growing. Anyone can provide video lecture courses on here and anyone can watch those courses. Many of the available courses are free, but some of the best ones do require payment (they accept PayPal). I've bought and studied a couple of courses on this website and can attest to their high standard as well as the whole user experience. If you want to learn **Calligraphy** or **Microsoft Office** or pretty much any other subject (whether hobbyist or professional), you could do a lot worse than to try out Udemy. Personally I find learning a whole lot easier from 30 minute video lectures (anything from 5 to 50 of these per course), rather than reading textbooks or attending physical courses. It allows you to learn at your own pace, revisit previous lectures and take notes whenever you want to. Many of the lecturers even let you download their video lectures so you can watch them offline on a tablet or laptop.

4. Lifehacker (www.lifehacker.com): Here's another blog-format website which I find useful and interesting. There are thousands of posts on this website covering every topic under the sun. They provide tips and tricks for all sorts of things

From DaC's IT department, Jon Winterburn has been searching for some...

Interesting Websites!



ranging from kitchen hacks to money saving tips to which apps to buy. There are also plenty of downloads available like recommended free Android and Apple apps, complete with reviews.

5. Khan Academy (www.khanacademy.org): A bit like Udemy, but aimed specifically at the academic world. This website was set up by **Salman Khan**, a graduate of MIT. He wanted to "provide a high quality education to anyone, anywhere," so **everything** on this website is free. There are **thousands** of academic video lectures available to anyone, covering almost every subject you can imagine. If you have children in school, college or university, get them to sign up to the Khan Academy; it will surely help them in their academic studies.

6. Vodo (www.vodo.net): No doubt you have heard about the huge problem of *illegal* downloading of copyright movies and how doing so can result in court action and even imprisonment. Well, this is one website which actively encourages you to download every movie in its database for free - and it is perfectly legal! Don't get me wrong, you won't get any Hollywood blockbusters or TV series here as that would be illegal, instead, this website provides movies and TV series from amateur film makers who are working hard to get

into the mainstream. This isn't a bunch of *YouTubers* making movies of their kittens; rather, these are high quality films and programmes made with HD cameras with full casts. If you like a specific film or series and want the maker to develop more, you can help fund them. This is what YouTube should have been like!

7. This final website is one that everyone knows about, so I'm not going to go into any detail about the website itself. Rather, I'm going to bring your attention to a useful tool that you might not know about; I only discovered it by accident recently: **The Wikipedia Book Creator**. On **Wikipedia**, as you no doubt know, there are millions of articles on every subject that pretty much every existed. With all this information, sometimes sifting through it all can be a mammoth task; so much to read, so little time to read it all! What you can now do is make an eBook out of all the articles you find interesting, so that you can read it offline without needing access to the Internet and without having to search for the subjects of your interest. Simply go to <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Special:Book> and click **Enable Book Creator** (it is free). Now you can search for articles of interest, and as you find one, click **Add to My Book**. Once you have all the articles you want, you can view your book, name it, sort the articles, print it to PDF and download it. The resulting eBook is fantastic: an automatic table of contents with page numbers and each article (together with all images, references and links) printed cleanly into PDF. You can even order a printed book (at a cost of course).

Well, that's all for now. See you next month...

Jon Winterburn
DaC Network Administrator

THE ALPHA POWER PILL

Now even better!

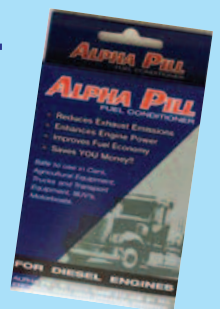
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Marc Turner (R97) has made many appearances in *Call Sign* because as he would undoubtedly admit, he is a real stubborn son-and-so!

He has had several battles with private hire vehicles who were taking liberties – one in particular who took offence at Marc telling him to pull his car off an official taxi rank. The minicab driver then tried to run Marc over! On another occasion he caught a Luton licensed taxi plying for hire outside a club on a Saturday night. After giving the driver the option of pulling off, he later caught him doing the same thing elsewhere and not only reported him to the Luton licensing authority, but also drove up there to give his evidence in person. As Marc told us at the time, the driver may have been licensed, but in London he was no better than a tout.

But most of his “battles” in this mag have been where he has refused to give in to a PCN and he has had consistent success since discovering that a face to face appeal is often a good option to not only avoiding the irritation of paying a PCN, but to also provide the added joy of beating a local council in their never-ending quest to gain funds from the hard-working taxi drivers of London.

But what he hadn't yet done was to appeal a PCN received from our masters of London's transport system (yes, we are supposed to be a part of it), **Transport for London**. Marc takes up the story...

“I've recently had my fourth consecutive PCN appeal success. That time saw a CCTV ‘sniper’ seeing me allegedly setting down on the zigzags in Great Marlborough Street. As always for non-DaC PCNs, I contacted the LTDA and we viewed the images but their **Paul Wright** felt the evidence was damning, therefore I might be better off just paying the fine to **Westminster Council**. Within 15 minutes I was down at the post office sending my appeal via the usual recorded delivery. Sorry

Marc v Tfl?

And who'd waste their money betting on Tfl!!!



Marc now has 5 successful PCN appeals on the trot!

Paul, I'm just a glutton for punishment!

As you'd expect, in just over a week I received my **Notice of Rejection** from Westminster. Well I wasn't too disheartened because I'm often called a reject - or was that retard! I'll have to ask the Mrs - when she speaks to me again!

My adjudication was set for 09.15 on Saturday 22 September and I was looking forward to it - yeah, I do need to get a life! I began wondering whether I'd get to lock horns with my old adversary 'The Lady' who I was up against last time. She somehow made me feel rather irrelevant whilst displaying what looked like utter boredom! Yes, I wonder if she still thinks of me!

As the old adage says: *When man makes*

plans, God laughs. The City of Westminster via PATAS went and spoiled everything by informing me that they wouldn't be contesting my appeal after all! Ok, it meant I'd won, but they had taken away all the fun!

Not to worry though, because I now had a new toy. It's called...wait for it...**Transport for London**! Yes, PCN number 5 was from the God of transport - Tfl. The LTDA say I've done amazingly well to win four on the spin, but added that Tfl are a tough nut to crack. One reason is that they don't let you view images at your leisure on the net. You or an advocate have to pre-arrange a time to visit their office in Croydon to view the rushes or they can relieve you of £10 to receive the DVD - you have to supply your own popcorn!

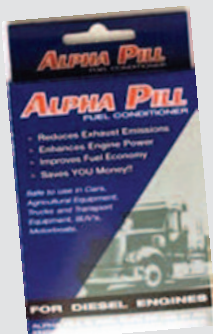
So I went in blind and appealed against a PCN for stopping at a Tesco's loading bay in E14. Yes, I know it was serious and we shouldn't laugh, but the LTDA had warned me that Tfl are tougher than all the others.

So it was much to my surprise that Tfl capitulated at the first hurdle and the PCN has been cancelled, making it 5 victories on the spin. How do I get hold of the *Guinness Book of Records*! But on reflection I might have to go some to get anywhere close to **Barrie Segal's** success rate when writing in *Call Sign* that he had appealed against 45 in one day and won them all!

So to all DaC drivers... keeeeeeeep on appealing!”

Ron Yarborough
Call Sign Online

ALPHA POWER PILL IS BACK!



If there is one question we get asked more than any other, it's whatever happened to the amazing **Alpha Power Pills**. These pills were among the most amazing things this magazine had ever tested, with numerous readers having used them and telling *Call Sign* how happy they were with them.

We began testing in 2005 and by 2007 it seemed that half the fleet were using them. The pills worked then just as they work now. The biggest problem was - and is - getting hold of them!

However, *Call Sign* has traced another supplier in **Steve Vale** and he has now supplied a number of **Dial-a-Cab** drivers in addition to Chairman **Brian Rice**.

For those who have never used the pills, they help to clear carbon that builds up in the engine, with the result of better mpg. But far more importantly, they help to cut emissions and users of the pill can see the results in their wing mirror as the smoke from the exhaust begins to clear.

If you would like to order the amazing Alpha Pill, just go to OnlyCabs.co.uk and click on the 'Order Page'. Or you can phone your order to Stephen Vale at Only Cabs on 020 3239 6101.

If you have a smartphone, you can go to the Alpha Pill ad on page 22 and you will see a QR code where you can scan directly to the website by putting the phone next to the code.

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No wonder he was smiling afterwards

Dial-a-Cab's Barry Spear (Y16) and Martin Hizer (M47) were just two of many drivers who wrote to *Call Sign* following the all-day programme on Sky Sports News that kept football fans on the edge of their seats with Sky's "who's buying who," as the first transfer window of the 2012/2013 season got ever-closer to its 11pm closure. After that time, no more transfers could take place until the next window in January.

The reason drivers called was because of the DaC taxi with the name 'Maicon' waiting outside the Tottenham Hotspur Chigwell training ground, Spurs Lodge, and right in shot behind Sky's Gary Cotterell as he was broadcasting live with all the transfer news as Spurs transfer market – and all the other clubs – saw that deadline approaching.

The expression "Taxi for Maicon" came into being following Spurs' two Champions League games against Italian soccer giants, Inter Milan in 2010, when Tottenham's flying winger Gareth Bale gave Milan defender Maicon Douglas Sisenando – known as Brazilian soccer players all are by just one name – Maicon – a total runaround, leaving the defender looking almost stationary as though he was waiting for a taxi! At the time, Maicon was said to be the best right back in the world and Brazil's almost permanent right back, yet Gareth Bale constantly left him for dead! Being an upmarket bunch, Spurs fans began singing the expression Taxi for Maicon to Donna E Mobile from Verdi's *Rigoletto*!

But how did Sky's live broadcast have a DaC Vito waiting by the Spurs Lodge entrance with Maicon on the name board? Well we only had to ask DaC driver John Gerber (N62), who planned the whole thing. He explained all to *Call Sign*:

"My son and I are both avid Tottenham fans and he wanted to go to Spurs Lodge on transfer deadline day and have his moment of fame with the Sky cameras there. So I decided I'd take him there, but just before I pulled up outside I thought I'd put Maicon's name on my DaC nameboard."

TAXI FOR MAICON???

DaC driver fools Sky TV and the world!



John's sign fools the world on live TV

When we played Inter Milan a few years back, Gareth Bale gave this world class defender the complete runaround and ever since then whenever they mention his name, they say "Taxi for Maicon. And now that he was suddenly being transferred to the Premier League with Manchester City, I thought I'd play a little joke. Getting the taxi on TV was a real bonus!"

Following the Inter Milan games, Gareth Bale went online to say that the players had picked up the Taxi for Maicon chant and had a laugh about it. And now with the irony famous in football, Maicon was signed just before the transfer deadline, leaving Inter Milan for Manchester City. It was that coincidence that gave John Gerber the idea and his opportunity to fool the world!

It also means that on Sunday 11 November, Maicon will have either the chance of revenge when his new team play Spurs in Manchester on live TV, or he will prove that he was actually waiting for a taxi during those Champions League games! Either way, listen out for football's version of an operetta!

The least John Gerber can do is to wait outside the ground in case Maicon – having been given another Gareth Bale runaround – needs a cab to Manchester Airport after deciding that he wants to go home! Spurs have since moved to a new training ground in Cheshunt. We haven't been told whether that was to get away from John Gerber's taxi!

Jamie Corum
Call Sign Online

CallOver available at DaC



May's *Call Sign* contained a small article on the launch of new magazine, *CallOver*, aimed at those on the Knowledge. But when a message went out via driver's terminals to say that there were some copies in the **Dial-a-Cab** driver's reception and that if they knew anyone on the Knowledge, this magazine would be a useful tool for them, all the copies were snapped up before you could say leave on the left Northumberland Avenue!

The magazine is now left at DaC every month, so if you have a son, daughter or even a neighbour who is doing the KoL then keep a look out for *CallOver* in Driver Reception and pass a copy along to them. *CallOver* is a welcome addition to all the stuff Knowledge students accumulate...

Baghwat Singh
Call Sign Online

Life after Lehman Brothers

Looking back, 2008 was my halcyon year as a taxi driver with London buzzing and work levels a plenty, however I used to say to punters that I was enjoying it while it lasted! For some reason, I just knew it wouldn't last and that the saying would come back to haunt us: *If it seems too good to be true, it probably is!*

It has been well documented that things are tough, but what are we really looking for things to return to? Well so far as I am aware, no drivers have handed their badges back because they can't earn a living. Some drivers may have temporarily left the trade to pursue other work interests, only to return because they couldn't make it pay. We are very lucky in that we are all self-employed people who have guaranteed work; by that I mean that people want picking up off the streets and we are the only drivers licensed to do it. But if the work comes back, how will affect us? Does it mean we will hit our targets earlier and head home a few hours before we used to? Perhaps it means a day off in the week for golf? Increased work levels would mean greater flexibility and control for us all.

One thing about post **Lehman Brothers** is that we've all had to change our workdays or working week in one way or another and spend our time in different ways. We all want to earn the most amount of money in the least amount of time; however we've all had to lower our work expectation levels. I for one don't try and grind out another few pounds but head for home instead. As for being a **Dial-a-Cab** driver, I'm doing a little less work than I used to, but don't rely on it so much. But I would always have it there simply because it gives me another string to my bow and two chances of getting a job, plus of course the mapping, credit card facility and printer. Besides that, the circuit fees are good value compared to other companies that charge 10% on account trips, which would on my current average week, double my subs. Yes, get a £60 ride on GetTaxi and that's £6 just for one job! I would also point out that lower work levels are the same for everyone and it's not any DaC employee's fault. If ComCab and RTG were bucking the trend, then there would be a case, however all the radio circuits are currently treading water.

Getting tired!

When it comes to taxi tyres, its horses for courses and I've always come from the remould school of thought. I wouldn't buy them if they were unsafe, but **Jetyres** remoulds, *kingpin* and *extra* are a good quality product, much cheaper than new **Dunlops**, use much less oil to produce and so are better for the environment. As for my private car, I always tended to buy new premium tyres as instructed by the lady in my house who is an expert on all subjects! However I wasn't convinced, so this time I brought budget tyres through **Tyreshopper online**. You place an order then go to **National Autocentres** who fit them for you. I have found the four **Tigar Hitris** tyres (owned by **Michelin**) that I bought to have better grip in the wet and make less noise

Former fireman Richard Potter and life behind the

POTTERS WHEEL



than the previous **Firestones**. So far so good and if you want a budget tyre at half the price of a premium tyre, try **Tyreshopper**.

TX4

It's now October, the cold weather and frosty mornings will soon start to appear again and time to see how my TX4 is doing. Well it's still running with 190k on the clock and the original engine and gearbox still in place. I recently had a problem with the injectors and

decided it really needed a new set. I phoned **M&O** at the **London Taxi Company** only to be told that they cost nearly £400 each! So I went to **Good Diesel** in Homerton High Street for a set of reconditioned injectors for £650. The difference in my cab is quite amazing with improved MPG.

As the TX4 gets older, it sometimes takes a greater number of turns before firing up in the mornings but I find that if you use a premium diesel mixed with standard, there is an improvement. When it's really cold, I only use premium diesel but at other times put £15 in and fill the rest up with standard every third fill.

But talking of MPG, I was interested to learn that the new Nissan NV 2000 will do 50 MPG around the heavy stop-start streets of London on a 1.5 litre engine. Well **LTT's** original information about the TX4 said that it would do 35 MPG but we really know it does 26mpg. Similar claims happened when the **Vito** came out, so the proof of the pudding will be in the eating!

Richard Potter (T51)

Autocar votes the London taxi as one of the... GREATEST BRITISH CARS OF ALL TIME!



Whether its a Fairway at the old Royal Oak or TX4 in San Francisco, it is still an icon



The iconic London Taxi has made the top 10 in a "greatest British cars of all time" competition as voted on by readers in a recent **Autocar** poll.

Unsurprisingly, the original **Mini** was voted into the number one position, followed by other famous vehicles such as the **Range Rover**, **Jaguar E-Type**, **Caterham 7** and **Morris Minor**. But there was only one taxi model that made the ranks, the iconic and purpose-built London Taxi...which gives it the title of greatest British taxi of all time! Exactly which version of taxi voters were thinking of isn't known, but although the **TX** series is now accepted as the London taxi, many consider its predecessor, **The Fairway**, as the picture they automatically see in their minds when thinking of an all time London taxi. Some even say the **FX4** – even though that model hasn't been seen on London's streets for many years! Whichever model it is, the honour is no less....

Whenever I go down Bayham Street I always steal a glance at the premises down the bottom on the left. At the moment it's a Rent-a-Car establishment and down the years it's been a tyre shop and twice been auto electricians.

It certainly was 40 years ago when run by a very quiet but pleasant old boy who seemed to be able to work blindfolded. He sat at a bench in what appeared to be a jumble of wire, coils, batteries, fuses, dynamos and numerous other bits and pieces. From time to time a woman appeared from somewhere bringing him mugs of tea.

So if you dealt with him, it was no problem. But he had an assistant - a young Frenchman, and in those pre-EU days it was unusual to find anyone French working here outside of the catering industry. The waiters were notoriously rude and arrogant and this guy lived up to that reputation.

As a young butter boy, I came up against him on a couple of occasions. I once went in there with a problem. He opened the bonnet put his hand down the side of the engine and announced that I needed a Dynamo.

"How" I asked the young Monsieur, "can you tell just like that?"

His lip curled, he stared at me for several seconds as if to say how dare I question him and then he snarled: "Because eet ees ma job, zat is how!" Well that was me told.

Then there was the time after breaking down just before Christmas and the AA getting me started, that I drove straight to

Viva la France???

Another true story from Geoff Levene



Bayham Street and made the mistake of turning off the engine. In an accent that **Inspector Clouseau** would have baulked at, he said: "We will 'ave to burmp start you." I had no idea what he meant but was too embarrassed to say. So I sat in the cab while he and two other guys started to push, and push, and push! I didn't know that you were supposed to stick it into second gear, get up some speed, let out the clutch and it would start. With Gallic fury and Xmas cheer he declared: "Are yew sure you know 'ow to drarve?"

I think that ended my association with

Bayham Street's Auto Mechanics! I then discovered MAM of Midland Road and now Blundell Street. Michael and his family (originally from Cyprus) looked after me for many years.

George from Warwick Avenue is his brother-in-law and I may be wrong but I think that "Uncle" from Great Suffolk Street is ... his Uncle! In fact I've spent so much time with them I now qualify for Greek citizenship! But not French, thank you...!

Geoff Levene (W32)

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

CALL SIGN EN LA BELLE FRANCE



Bob meets up with Paralympic Marathon winner Shelley Woods in New York

Well done Shelley...

I surprisingly enjoyed the Paralympics recently and especially enjoyed watching **Shelley Woods** claim a *Silver Medal* in the Wheelchair Marathon on the very last day of London 2012.

Shelley, 2007 winner of the London Marathon, also won *Bronze* in Beijing in 2008 and I had the pleasure of meeting her at a charity function in a New York



hotel suite the following year - we were both representing an absolutely fantastic charity called *Get Kids Going*. I must say I was certainly inspired (perhaps!) to have

another go at the 26.2 miles! Speaking of which, I will always be grateful for the donations that **Call Sign** readers made to my fund raising appeal.

A Scottish getaway?

After working right through the Olympic Games, I am now writing these notes from my Scottish retreat - a log cabin near **Galloway Forest**, which has had a summer full of bookings after the 3-bed property was renovated and refurbished earlier in the year.

It has been made available for lettings - there is no swimming pool, but it's perfect for walking, cycling and fishing holidays - rain or shine! And if the weather is clear, then there is no better view of the stars anywhere in the UK.

If any Dial-a-Cab subscriber fancies a

break, drop an email to me at woodford19@btinternet.com for further details and 'mates' rates.

Learning about the 'Island'

A few weeks ago I popped into the **Island Trust**, a voluntary organisation situated in East Ferry Road, Millwall. Their main function is to preserve and promote the heritage of the **Isle of Dogs**.

The curator informed that, depending on interest, they were considering laying on a 6-week course on the history of the Island. I became quite interested myself in attending an informal history lesson - no exams and no pressure for a change. Some of my **Black Cab Heritage** Guides are also keen.

So it occurred to me that some **Call Sign** readers may be up for this too - after all so many of you start off by ranking up on the Wharf.

If that is the case, let me know at rob@blackcabheritagetours.co.uk and I will pass your interest on to the Trust.

A bientot...

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



Brother Bradly's taxi fare agreement

With the debate on whether there should be a third runway at **Heathrow** hotting up since new big boss – Transport Secretary **Patrick McLoughlin** – came into the cabinet to replace **Justine Greening** who was violently against any such idea, it has given **Call Sign** the chance to turn the clock back some 55 years and look at a suggestion from the **T&G Workers Union** in connection with the **British European Airways Corporation** about London's main Heathrow terminal, **West London Air**. If you are too young to remember, then it was where **Sainsbury's** in Cromwell Road is now.

The vision of London Mayor **Boris Johnson's** new **Britannia Airport** with its four floating runways tethered to the sea bed, as designed by architects **Gensler**, is said to look akin to an alien airport. However, back in 1957 no one had even yet even heard of **Star Trek** or **Yuri Gagarin** and the widely held belief was that the moon was made of cheese!

So those passengers going to Heathrow back then would usually ask the taxi driver for the West London Air Terminal. And as Britons were suddenly finding themselves with money in their pockets again after the

As Boris looks at a future airport in the Thames estuary to replace Heathrow, retired DaC driver Monty Dobrin (ex-B56) takes a look at how passengers got home back in 1957 at a time when most passengers going to the flyers would ask the driver to take them to...

WEST LONDON AIR TERMINAL PLEASE



An artist's impression of Boris's new airport

pulling away telling you the destination and how many passengers. The only downside was that you had to wait till you went back to the terminal on the next visit to cash in the chit.

Although at that time, extra passengers were charged anyway, that was only 3d (1p)

ravages of war, more and more were changing their holiday destinations from Southend to Majorca! As a result of Heathrow getting busier, BEAC and the T&G introduced a price chart as of 6 October 1957, said to have been thanks to the negotiating skill of T&G committee member, referred to only as Cab Section organiser, **Brother Bradly**. Anyone out there in **Call Sign** land know of him?

The idea was that if a passenger hailed their own cab, or phoned the infant **ODRTS** where they were still 12 months away from opening their first account (the BBC), then the metered fare would apply. But thanks to Brother Bradly, there was an agreement put in place where if you took passengers from the terminal to an hotel, then the hotel would pay the fare plus a 10% tip – which was guaranteed to be no less than 6d (2p).

However, if you were lucky enough to get a job to a railway station, then you could have struck gold because BEAC would give you a chit before

each, so the extra prices were doubled and to the drivers, it represented a very good deal.

As an example, one passenger to **Paddington** was charged as 5 shillings (25p), but each extra passenger increased the fare by 6d (2p), so a four-hander would get you an extra 1/6d (8p). When you consider that the fare to go all the way to Heathrow was fixed at £1.13.0 (£1.65), then that extra to Padders was worth getting. The longest trip was to **Liverpool Street**, which cost a single pin 9/3d and with four passengers, earned the driver 10/9d (54p)!

Around 20 years later, **ODRTS** had an account opened at the terminal where drivers would deliver luggage that had gone missing during the flight. That account was described by many at the time as the best account we had ever had as the airlines, mainly BEA and BOAC, would pay to have the lost luggage delivered back to its owners anywhere in the country!

But now WLAT is just another branch of Sainsbury's and Heathrow's future looks to be in doubt as an airport, to be replaced by a huge housing development. Isn't life strange...

Call Sign Comment

Ascotts providing apprenticeships

Most **Dial-a-Cab** drivers will know of the **Ascott Cab Co**, either by being customers of the south London garage or from their regular advert in each issue of **Call Sign**. They have always been ahead of the game and that obviously hasn't changed with the **Ascott's Apprenticeship** scheme and the announcement of another three young men to join the apprentice ranks.

One thing that drivers look for when wanting to find a garage that won't just stick a piece of *sellotape* over a problem but fix it, is reliability. And by investing their time and money in this scheme, Ascotts are showing their commitment to the future of the London taxi business.

Well done chaps. Micky Ascott would have been proud...



Keith Reading
Professional Toastmaster
Master of Ceremonies

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10% discount for DaC drivers and staff

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With much talk about apps, Contact Centre manager Keith Cain takes a brief look at Dial-a-Cab's new application and explains what has happened so far...

'APPY TO HAVE AN APP!

Many of you would have seen the messages that went out recently on driver's terminals regarding coverage to a credit card trip.

The message referred to us testing our **Credit Card App**. Since then, many drivers have contacted me to say that although they had heard all the current talk about apps, they didn't actually know what they were and exactly what they did.

Well, so far as the apps you have read about in *Call Sign* and indeed the rest of the trade press are concerned, an app - short for application - is simply another way of ordering a taxi but rather than having to speak on the phone, it is done via an **Android** or **iPhone** by simply pushing a few buttons.

Users simply log on to the **Apple** web-site and request to download the app they require to their phone. Once received, they then register their credit card details into their own phone and once this has been done, they are ready to order their taxi.

The idea is to simplify for the customer how they order their cab, so **Dial-a-Cab** have put together two variations for them.



tions for them.

The first one is for their location to be found via their phone using GPS (Global Positioning Satellite), while the other is for them to manually enter where they want to be picked-up from. Having registered their credit card details into the phone, it is then sent directly to our dispatch system and automatically offered to the first driver within the pick-up zone.

It really is that simple and because it is felt that this is the way forward, we have developed this in-house by our

own IT staff who have proved the technology is not as mind blowing as some would portray.

Drivers have been raving about this method of booking taxis and how they feel we may have slipped behind in the technology race. But I will say it again; it does not matter how simple you make ordering a taxi, the service is judged on how many times a cab turns up, how polite the driver is and how much it costs. If all these three boxes are not ticked every time the user requires a cab, I assure you there is far less involved in deleting an app from a smartphone than there is in setting one up! If I tell you that the Apps store has received over 25 billion apps requests, that will tell you what I mean.

We are now at the stage where we will be sending our app to **Apple** for approval and we see no reason why they should not accept it. We will then market the product and off we'll go into the 'appy world of apps!'

The success of this really does depend on the service our drivers provide and it is something we will be monitoring very closely before we offer this to other clients.

Keith Cain

**Contact Centre Manager
Drivers Operation Manager**

HOW DO I READ CALL SIGN ONLINE?

In this age of technology when the subject of apps or the internet has moved into everyday conversation with children, let alone adults, there are still many people out there who use computers as glorified typewriters (remember them) without taking advantage of the many wonders available online - in this case, *Call Sign Magazine*?

Well thanks to *Call Sign's* IT whiz-man, **Vince Chin**, it really is simple. The mag has been online since the summer of 1998 - years before any other trade magazine! So if you want to take a look at any issue of *Call Sign* going back to 1998 - and even some real old ones from 1967, 1977 and 1987 - then just put www.dac-callsign.co.uk into your browser and once it has loaded, click on the year you want (shown on the left of the screen) and then the issue you want to look at.

Then either browse through every issue of *Call Sign* since 1998 or type in a clue and let the search engine do the rest. For example, if your name is Fred Smith and you wrote a letter to the mag in 1999 and want to read it, type Fred into the search facility and everything with Fred will come up. If there is only one Fred in *Mailshot*, then bingo!

If you want to read each complete issue with ads et al, you can do that as well. Since May 2006, *Call Sign* has also gone online in a PDF version. Just click the PDF logo. No search facility for that though! Happy reading...

VICTORIA STATION TAXI ARRANGEMENTS

For the next five years!

From Sunday 30 September 2012 until May 2017, there will be significant changes to the taxi rank arrangements at **Victoria Station**. The planned changes are partly as a result of the ongoing Victoria Station Upgrade works and TfL has worked closely with Network Rail and Westminster City Council to ensure that taxis can continue to serve Victoria Station.

The new arrangements are as follows:

The entire station forecourt, including the taxi rank and set down area will be closed and the ranks in **Wilton Road** and **Neathouse Place** will be removed. The new point of the rank will be in **Hudson's Place** on the east side of Victoria Station with a new taxi feeder rank appointed in **Bridge Place**.

Taxis will be able to set down passengers on the east side of **Wilton Road**, with a designated space in front of the rank in **Hudson's Place** for taxis to drop off disabled passengers.

The taxi rank in **Gillingham Street** will be converted into a rest rank, but the taxi rank in **Vauxhall Bridge Road** will be extended to the **Queen Mother Sports Centre**. The 'Air Deck' taxi rank at the station will continue to operate as normal.

Taxi marshals will be at the new taxi rank during the first two weeks of operation to assist passengers and drivers whilst the signage inside the station will be changed. Extending the taxi rank in Vauxhall Bridge Road helps ensure that taxis can continue to serve the station, but retaining this space is dependent on Taxis not over-ranking or stopping on the zigzag lines behind the rank and not disrupting the traffic flow or compromising pedestrian safety along Vauxhall Bridge Road.

Parking and loading bays in the area must not be used as illegal taxi ranks.

Mailshot

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

Vito steering

Dear Alan

Whilst reading your *Call Sign Online* Editorial about how difficult it can sometimes be to fill the pages of the mag, I have often wondered about the many types of characters that end up driving cabs - you know, sportsmen, actors, musicians etc. I remember doing the Knowledge around forty years ago with a member of the Foundations (remember *Baby now that I've found you* and *Build me up a buttercup*). Anyway, it got me wondering if any driver on Dial-a-Cab has a claim to fame and if they could write in and let us know about it? Just an idea...

Terry Farmer (Ex-T55J)
Any volunteers...Ed

Who got the Spurs job?

Hi Alan

With the work trickling out at ridiculously slow rate in August, what lucky driver got a radio job at Spurs Lodge that was shown live on *Sky Sports News*? I suppose they also requested a Merc like many customers are doing and leaving the rest of us with even less of the scraps.

Barry Spear (Y16)

Looks like you were one of many who were fooled by DaC driver John Gerber (N62) - who also fooled the whole nation! The story is inside this issue ...Ed

Where is the News

Hi Alan

Just read 32 pages of the October 2012 *Call Sign* and feel surprised that there is no information from the Chairman or Board members regarding our future. Where are the new terminals (nothing at Roman Way)? When is the app arriving? Do we still need zonal booking in? Run-ins? Gratuities? Alan, I feel the content of September's edition was lacking any content about ODRTS. Let's stop knocking Addison Lee, Hailo etc and be proactive and fight for the work back. It is quite obvious why customers are not using us - it's all about price. The Board must act quickly before it's all gone - we cannot wait any longer.

Joseph Hornstein (K78)

Always nice to hear from you, Joseph, however my life as editor isn't quite as straightforward as you make out. Of course I try to get as much info as I can and most of your questions have been answered at one time or another. If the answers aren't those you'd like to hear, then there isn't much I can do about that.

Things have now picked up as they usually do once the kids go back to

school. In that case, and had we not lost Westminster, can you honestly say that you would run to Belgrave Square for a no run-in and no minimum trip to Victoria Station when there was cash work about? Ok, let's assume the worst and that there was NO cash work around, would you run from Parliament Square for that job? If your answer is yes, how many DaC drivers out of 10 would also do that? I think we'd still struggle to cover it. I think the same thing would apply to most no run-in jobs.

I suppose our drivers could take matters into their own hands and announce that they were no longer going to put their meters on until the passenger got in, but it wouldn't happen because although the names were hidden from me, last month I was shown a list of run-ins that drivers had after pushing their arrival button. Some may have just forgotten to announce that they had arrived, but there were a few others who constantly arrived with more than the £4.20. Should we announce in the mag that some of our drivers were cheating passengers by overcharging on run-ins, bearing in mind that many now read *Call Sign* online (over 9000 regulars last time I looked). It could make us look like a bunch of crooks whereas the vast majority are honest and would never deliberately do that. It's been written about many times by Allan Evans - even though the number is minimal. He sometimes almost begs! But that has made no difference. So what do I do?

I'm not a BM and they don't discuss their plans with me although I may hear about them before most drivers, but I've seen the scrubs on days when it's quiet out. Credit rides from Kensington to Hampstead scrubbed, from Nott Hill to W7 scrubbed, Selfridges to Stockwell scrubbed and West Ealing to Victoria scrubbed - although that was a cash ride. And all four in the same lunch hour. Why? Obviously because there must have been a bit of street work about, so whereas you and I may care enough and invest some of our time to try and cover work to help get those accounts to use us again, many drivers won't - and when it comes to feeding the family, I can't criticise them for looking after the family before DaC. But it isn't as simple as cutting run-ins/gratuities etc because you still have to cover the work.

Then there are the drivers who take the time to contact me about something that has happened to them that they consider is worthy of going into the mag. My philosophy has always been that the drivers are the most important parts of the mag because without them there is no *Call Sign*. So, yes, I always try to involve them and I am usually happy to do so. Then there is *Mailshot*, which



gets more mail than all the other trade mags added together. One of the nicest letters I have ever received in my 15 years as Ed came from the boss of one of our biggest accounts. He said that the openness *Call Sign* was allowed to show was one of DaC's biggest strengths - even when we criticised ourselves. It's that same BoM that you say are hiding stuff, who trust me enough to allow me to put out the mag with no interference whatsoever.

As for zonal booking, I like it when it's busy, but when it's quiet does it really matter which system you use 'cos your chances of a trip become less. If it was that good, then Mountview drivers wouldn't be queuing up to leave with many trying to come on here. Sadly, because it is currently so quiet, many of those then pass straight through and end up with no radio at all.

Finally, what is it that you think Brian is holding back? I can only compare him with his equivalents at ComCab and RTG and they give their drivers no info whatsoever...Ed

A message to Monty

Hello Alan

Once again I have enjoyed reading the *Call Sign Online* magazine (September). On Page 29 is a letter to you from Ex-B56 (Monty Dobrin) indicating that he had retired and had a few old fare schedules, etc. The 1979 fare schedule caught my eye as this would be a welcome add-on in my 1979 London Taxi if still available and we can overcome the logistics of getting it to me. I would like to reimburse whoever for any costs incurred.

Lloyd Powell

Member LVTA, Boynton Beach, Florida
The charts are on the way to Florida, Lloyd, courtesy of Monty Dobrin. Hope it enhances the look of your taxi...Ed

Wynns and losses!

Hi Alan,

In response to Howard Sales (Ex-A11) comments to the Wynns debate, I would just like to add that when I was seeking a reason for the EOBD (*European on Board Diagnostics*) light coming on, I didn't feel there was a fault with the cab itself as it ran well. But I suspected that the damp weather was the culprit with the warning light also being more likely to appear if I parked facing downhill! Sure enough, when I requested a message be put out over the terminal asking if any other drivers had similar problems, a driver confirmed my suspicions. KPM looked at it and with the

Mailshot

Continued from page 29

recent warm weather, it hasn't re-appeared for weeks. I leave it to you to stop the damp returning!

Thank goodness the Olympics are over, we can have our roads/turns back again...
Alasdair Kay (C47)

Hi Alasdair, thank you for your confidence in me. I've been asked to do lots of strange things since becoming Editor, but to keep the damp away? I can't promise, but I'll have a go. If the damp returns, then you'll know that I was too busy!!! ...Ed

How about...?

Good evening Alan

I'm sending this email whilst booked onto E14 on a Sunday evening. I can't remember the last time I worked a Sunday, in fact, it's been so long that I had to ask dispatch what the rules were regarding booking onto E14 and E14C. I'm sure there are plenty of drivers who have also forgotten, so I thought it might be a good idea to print a reminder of what happens to the E14 ranks during the weekends.

My second question is in regards to our new system. I don't know whether I'm too late to make a suggestion, but whilst sitting empty in Bank Street on the Island waiting for a job, I thought it might be a good idea if the new system allowed drivers to see how many jobs had fired out of a postcode in the last hour. I believe this would benefit both drivers and the Society alike. It would help drivers see exactly where the work was coming from and allow them to make a more informed choice when deciding which rank to book onto. In turn, DaC would benefit from better coverage as you would have more drivers booking into the busier postcodes. It sounds like a reasonable idea to me but I've got to go now, I've got an account run to SW5. Not a bad start to my night!

Mike Parkins (Z03)

Hi Mike, see Allan Evans article for the info you require about booking in to E14. As for your suggestion, I asked around at DaC House and the consensus of opinion is that knowing where the work was isn't as useful as knowing where it's going to be and messages are often put out if a large number of cabs are pre-booked for an area or if a trip is due to fire out in a zone that is out of town ...Ed

Who's taking the airports?

Hi Alan

Your Editorial about GetTaxi "buying" Heathrow trips and others trying to do deals, was spot on. It means that those of us who work as we are supposed to, have a grim outlook. I suppose there is always someone who wants to go to Harrods...

David Heath (Ex-W27)

Perhaps I'm just old fashioned, David,

but I don't believe in paying doormen for doing the job they are already being paid for. If their passenger goes round the corner or down the road, they get the same courtesy from me. Yep, perhaps I'm just old fashioned ...Ed

Corruption and new terminals!!!

Hi Al

Just a thought on the GetTaxi plan to pay hotels £10 for airports (*Call Sign September*), wouldn't this fall foul of the Governments new anti-corruption legislation?

By the way, is there any news on the new terminal only I was thinking of throwing a 16th birthday party for my current one and need to get the invitations sent out!

Charlton Clark (F25)

The question is whether it counts as corruption or commission? Anyway Charlton, there is an update on page 10 re the new terminals ...Ed

What is Hailo up to?

Dear Alan

On reading Ian Skeels (J74) letter last month and the way he explained the way Hailo works for the driver, I was surprised to learn from the answer Brian gave that not only have £millions already been invested in Hailo, but they are to borrow another £11 million to invest. I think we have always assumed PH to be our biggest threat, but as the three main circuits compete for accounts mainly on a level playing field, PH has the price advantage. They may have secured and won some large accounts from the radio circuits, but I think that as big as some of them are, they are not yet in a position to secure the amount of accounts held by the big three. If our fleet has shrunk by 30% then I assume the other two circuits have also had similar reductions. I hear that Hailo has some 6,000 drivers signed up. That number has to be close to the total number of subscribers on all three circuits. As it appears the cost to join Hailo for the driver is minimal, this may give them the potential to recruit thousands of other taxi drivers. The question I have is this; why when after so many years on entrepreneurs have ever tried to start another radio circuit of the size of the main three, suddenly in a recession along comes Hailo investing £millions in the cab trade. What do they know or see in this trade to warrant such huge investment? It can't be to nick a few jobs back from the minicabs, they have to have another angle. They do not have to buy terminals for the cabs, their costs cannot be as high as the circuits, so the only conclusion I can come up with is that they want the major accounts held by the three main circuits. They are black cabs, like us, their fleet will outnumber the whole of the three circuits and although the metered fare would probably still apply, they have the advan-



tage of no arrival costs and that five minutes of free waiting. So my question is should we be worried and do we have a plan B?

Ian S. Connelly (T21)

As the Chairman is away at the moment, I'll have to pretend to be him, so I can't tell you if there is a plan B! But I can probably answer the rest of your letter. Are they after our accounts? Well I don't suppose they would turn them away, but firstly they don't do pre-bookings and even if they could, they would never cover any work dispatched 12 minutes before the booked time with no run-in and with the driver not even being able to put his meter on for a further five minutes when he gets there and having to pay 10% for the privilege! And what if it only went round the corner for a fiver? Nope, their niche is taxi work during a recession when drivers are happy just to put their meters on. You call 'no arrival costs and 5 minute free waiting' an advantage, but it's only that so long as drivers are prepared to do it and pay the 10% on top. And that will be until it gets busier, as it's starting to get now – and sure enough, Hailo's coverage at times hasn't been too good.

Then onto why are they doing it? Unsurprisingly, it isn't for the driver's benefit, it's to make money! Hailo co-founder, Jay Bregman, originally co-founded online minicab company *eCourier* and after several years, he sold his stake and moved into Apps. Mr Bregman was recently asked if he would ever consider selling his Hailo stake? His response was that he would do so at some stage, using the expression shared by many businessmen of 'entering to exit'. In other words, make your money and move on. The problem, Ian, is that there is nothing wrong with that and that's how many operate in business.

So the only question is whether, if and when it gets busy again, will Hailo drivers pass street work or let DaC account work go to cover a no run-in and free waiting time trip? That could be the time for Mr Bregman to sell up. And one final thing Ian, for around fifteen years I've said on and off that I believe two of what you call the big three would merge. Will it ever happen? I don't know but I wouldn't be surprised if the topic isn't broached in the radio circuit halls of power somewhere! ...Ed

Upside down fuel price!

Hi Alan

I wonder if you remember me? I was on ODRTS until 1978 and met you when we

Mailshot

Continued from page 30

once did a two cab job to Luton airport, wait and return. We had seven passengers between us who had to attend a meeting at the airport with people who were flying in from Hamburg and then flying straight back again. I bet that doesn't happen anymore with video calling and the internet. I emigrated to Australia in 1977 and moved on to New Zealand in 1981.

I always read *Call Sign Online* and I have to say that your September Editorial, with its heavy dose of sarcasm, really made me smile. "Hands up if you really believed that fuel prices were on the way down," you wrote, following that up by telling us that there was one born every minute! You're right! All my London friends have been emailing me for weeks telling me that diesel was going up weekly, so your further comment that BP's profits had dipped from £5.3billion to £3.5billion before saying that if we think we've had it tough, to spare a thought for BP was heart-wrenching – I don't think! And of course, UK newspaper reports are now catching up with your comments and calling the increases a rip-off! Perhaps they should read your magazine first just like my London friends are now all doing. Anyway, I feel better having renewed an old acquaintance with you and would like to wish all the Jewish drivers at ODRTS a happy new year...

Ralph Dover (Ex-B11)

Gisborne, New Zealand

Hi Ralph, nice to hear from you – although in all honesty I remember the job more than I remember you! Then again, Luton and back with, if I remember rightly, around a four hour wait wasn't something you'd forget too quickly! ...Ed

£1 subs or a gold watch?

Hi Alan

Very interesting article in the *August Call Sign* regarding the DaC long-service awards for staff members. I understand these awards are now an integral part of the office regime and occur twice yearly to recognise the longer serving members of staff. It does say something about Dial-a-Cab in an industry where large numbers of staff turnover is not only expected, but is the norm. I just feel it's a pity that the same recognition is not afforded to subscribers. I understand that staff and subscribers are different – one group being self-employed and one employed – but I'm betting that there are more long serving members as subscribers than employees?

In the same August edition on page 10, **Keith Cain** said: *"You, the drivers, are the main workforce and the service you provide to our clients is not only of great significance, but forms a huge part of the wheel that turns and makes this Society what it has become today."*

So why do longer serving members not get some form of recognition? I know that after 30 years (that's one third of the average lifespan) we get £1 subscriptions, but I have often wondered how the 30 years was arrived at. Standard industry practice is 25 years with a gold watch! I also acknowledge that this represents a loss of revenue for the Society and it would also be interesting to find out how many are currently paying the £1 subs.

Perhaps this may be the time to re-think

the rewards for subscribers; perhaps we could start off at say 20 years with a 10% yearly reduction in subs, until the 30 years are reached, or perhaps after 25 years' service a 20% reduction is given for 5 years until the 30 year mark is reached, or even one or two free months per year?

Anyway it's just a thought and I would like to know what Board members think about re-thinking driver rewards. And before you ask, I have been on the circuit for over 32 years, but only 28 as a subscriber. So not long now!

Alan Sullivan (F20)

Hi Alan, unfortunately your letter arrived at the last minute and I was unable to get a response in time. I did ask our HR department some time ago whether a similar idea for drivers would be feasible, but it never really got any further and until your letter arrived, I'd forgotten about it. But you should remember that the staff's reward is a champagne reception and a certificate – a long way from what you are suggesting. I also don't think a suggestion giving different drivers different rates would go down too well because of the admin involved. What I do know is that as a 30+ year driver, I'd rather get the £1 a month than a gold watch. Perhaps there will be some responses next month ...Ed



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 goes back to February 1956 and the Chairman's Report from a strangely named ODRTS handout sheet...

From Odrats News, February 1956...

FROM YOUR ODRTS CHAIRMAN

As I explained in the last newssheet, your Committee has decided that subscriptions will remain at £7 per month for the present and we would re-emphasise that you should continue to not put your meter on until your passenger has entered the taxi. This will ensure that we build up a name as a good, trustworthy and reasonably priced organisation. It will help to remove the myth that taxis are the form of transport used by the upper class only.

Our aim must be to get everyone to use taxis. That means our prices must be reasonable, while at the same time our passengers

must realise that although there is a difference between ourselves and number 653 London Transport trolleybus, the difference is not huge and the extra is well worth paying.

We also have advertising cards showing the cost of some longer jobs. Please do not charge more than these prices as the passenger may pay on that occasion, but will not phone again. As an example, there is London Airport for £2, Gatwick Airport for £3.7s.6d and the Royal Docks for £1.7s.6d.

Our dispatcher, **Mr Defries (D03)**, has complained that some drivers are using profanities over the air and on one occasion a female telephonist overheard the driver. This is unacceptable and I am asking you to remember who we are.

If any of your passengers enquire, yes, we still are members of the Holidays and Travel Association. We

feel that the mentions we get from being members outweigh the cost.

If you know of anyone who is interested in coming on to the ODRTS radio circuit, let Frank Duncan know. Fitting to our organisation is still free.

Finally, thanks to our friends at Rootes of Piccadilly for sponsoring this newssheet. **Bonnie Martyn, Chairman** ODRTS, 172 Pentonville Road, London N1, Phone TERminus 6444

Flashback
1956



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