

September 2014



# Call Sign

From the home of Dial-a-Cab International

A taxi, a camel and a bicycle; which of the three can't be forced to take a breathalyser? See Peter's nightmare comes true (*page 13*)...



As a DaC driver gets trapped for 18 minutes, we ask if London needs Tower Bridge (*page 9*)...







# NASH'S NUMBERS

From Alan Nash (A95)

Chain hotels (last issued March 2013) updated, although not that many changes. But these are the hotel chains that tend to blow our brains of hotels we should know but seems to get lost in the grey matter.

## London Hotel Chains

<b>APEX HOTELS</b>			
Temple Court	1-2 Serjeants' Inn, Fleet St, EC4Y 1LL	City of London	1 Seething Lane, EC3N 4AX
London Wall	7-9 Copthall Avenue, EC2R 7NJ		
<b>DOUBLETREE HOTELS</b>			
Chelsea (was Jurys)	Imperial Rd, SW6 2GA	Hyde Park	St Petersburg Pl, W2 (Entrance)
Heathrow	745 Bath Road, Cranford TW5 9QE,	Marble Arch	4 Bryanston Street, W1H 7BY
Tower of London	7 Pepys Street, EC3N 4AF	Victoria	2 Bridge Place, SW1V 1QA
West End	92 Southampton Row, WC1B 4BH	Westminster	30 John Islip Street, SW1P 4DD
<b>DOYLE HOTELS</b>			
Bloomsbury	16 Gt Russell Street, WC1B 3NN	Kensington	109-113 Queens Gate, SW7 5LR
Marylebone	47 Welbeck Street, W1G 8DN		
<b>GUOMAN HOTELS</b>			
Charing Cross	Strand, WC2N 5HX	Royal Horseguards	2 Whitehall Court, SW1A 2EJ
Cumberland	Great Cumberland Pl., W1A 4RF	The Tower	St Katharine's Way, E1W 1LD
Grosvenor	101 Buckingham Palace Rd, SW1W 0SJ		
<b>INDIGO HOTELS</b>			
Paddington	16 St, W2 1HL	Tower Hill	142 Minories, EC3N 1LS
Kensington	34 Barkston Gardens, SW5 0EW		
<b>MERCURE HOTELS</b>			
City Bankside	71-79 Southwark Street SE1 0JA	Bloomsbury	130, Southampton Row, WC1B 5AF
Greenwich	Catherine Grove, SE10 8FR	London Bridge	71-79 Southwark Street SE1 0JA
Kensington	1a, Lexham Gdns, W8 5JJ	Paddington	144, Praed St, W2 1HU
<b>NH HOTELS</b>			
NH Harrington Hall	5-25 Harrington Gardens, SW7 4JW	NH Kensington	202-220 Cromwell Road SW5 0SW
<b>PREMIER INN HOTELS</b>			
Angel Islington	18 Parkfield Street, N1 0PS	Bank (Tower)	20, St.Mary-at-Hill, EC3 8EE
Blackfriars	1-2 Dorset Rise, EC4Y 8EN	Beckton	1 Woolwich Manor Way, E6 5NT
Borough Market (Sth'wark)	34, Park St, SE1 9EF	County Hall	Belvedere Rd, SE1 7PB
Docklands Excel	Festoon Way, E16 1RH	Ealing	22 Uxbridge Rd, W5 2SR
Euston	1 Dukes Road, Euston Road, WC1H	Greenwich	43, Greenwich High Rd, SE10 8JL
Hammersmith	255 King Street, W6 9LU	Hampstead	Orman Rd, 215 Haverstock Hill, NW3
Heathrow Bath Rd	15 Bath Road, Hounslow, TW6 2AB	Heathrow Hayes	362, Uxbridge Rd, UB4 0HF
Heathrow M4/J4	Shepiston Lane, UB3 1RW	Heathrow T5	420 Bath Road, W. Drayton, UB7 0RF
Kensington(Earls Ct)	11 Knaresborough Place, SW5 0TJ	Kensington Olympia	32, West Cromwell Rd, SW5 9QJ
Kings Cross	26- 30 York Way, N1 9AA	Leicester Sq	1, Leicester place, WC2H 7BP
Old St (City)	Corsham Street, N1 6DR	Putney Bridge	3 Putney Bridge Approach, SW6 3JD
Southwark (BoroMkt)	34, Park St, SE1 9EF	Stratford	Int'l Sq, Montfichet Road, E15 1AZ
Tower Bridge	159, Tower Bridge Road, SE1 3LP	Tower Hill (City)	24, Prescott St, E1 8BB
Victoria (Gillingham St)	82, Eccleston Sq, SW1V 1PS	Waterloo	85, Belvedere Rd, SE1 7PB
Wimbledon	27, Chapter Way SW19 2RF		
<b>TRAVELODGE HOTELS</b>			
Aldgate East	6, Chamber St, E1 8BL	Bank	19 St Swithin's Lane, EC4N 8AD
Barking	4, Arboretum Pl. IG11 7RX	Balham	177, Balham High Rd, SW12 9BX
Battersea	200 York Road, SW11 3SA	Bethnal Green	231, Cambridge heath Rd, E2 0EL
City Airport	Hartmann Road, E16 2BZ	City Road	1-23 City Road, EC1Y 1AE
Covent Garden	10 Drury Lane, High Holborn, WC2B 5RE	Clapham Junction	155 Falcon Road, SW11 2PD
Cricklewood	Cricklewood Broadway, NW2 3DU	Crystal Palace	61, Croydon Road, SE20 7TS
Docklands	Coriander Avenue, E14 2AA	Euston	1 Grafton Pl. NW1 1DJ
ExCel	1016 Dockside Road, E16 2FQ	Farringdon	Gwynne Place, WC1X 9LN
Feltham	High St Feltham TW13 4GU	Fulham	290 North End Rd, SW6 1NQ
Gatwick	Church Road, Lowfield Heath, RH11 0PQ	Gatwick Central	Povey Cross Road, RH6 0BE
Greenwich	Blackheath Rd/Deal's Gateway SE10 8EF	Heathrow T5	Calder Way/Horton Rd, Colnbrook, SL3
Heathrow Central	700 Bath Rd, TW5 9SW	Heston WB	Moto Svc TW5 9NB
Heston EB	Moto Svc TW5 9NA	<b>Kings X Royal Scot</b>	100 Kings Cross Road, WC1X 9DT
<b>Kings Cross</b>	356, Grays Inn Road, WC1X 8BH	Liverpool Street	1 Harrow Place, E1 7DB
Marylebone	Harewood Row, NW1 6SE	Stratford	High St /Park Ln, E15 2JG
Southwark	202 Union Street, SE1 0LH	Tower Bridge	1 Goodmans Yard, E1 8AT
Waterloo	195 -203 Waterloo Rd, SE1 8UX	Woolwich	125, Powis St, SE18 6LQ
<b>TUNE HOTELS</b>			
Paddington	41-47 Praed Street, W2 1NR	Liverpool St	13-15 Folgate Street, E1 6BX,
Westminster	118 Westminster Bridge Rd, SE1 7RW	Kings Cross	324 Gray's Inn Rd, WC1X 8BU

Go to [www.myfav.co.uk](http://www.myfav.co.uk) click the link "Taxi <----'MyFav Taxi' for loads of taxi related websites by simply clicking an icon.

# from the editor's desk

## Uber giveaway...

You will read inside this issue about London's latest and most controversial apps' attempt to give away free phones to licensed London taxi drivers – Yellow and Green badges – at London City Airport in return for their signatures. Also about the disturbing events that happened afterwards...

Uber representatives turned up at LCA and began dishing out the free phones in return for drivers signing up to work for them. Amazingly to us, there was no shortage of drivers prepared to give a signature in return for what they probably already had anyway and you would have to assume, to cock an absolute snook to all those 11,000 drivers that gave up several hours work in order to attend the June demo against TfL and their new friends at Uber.

So while I have no desire to assist any of those that were happy to sell their souls for the price of a phone, Uber's record around the world tends to follow a pattern; so what Uber does in the US, they will sooner or later do over here. And currently Uber are telling all the drivers that work for them in New York that they can no longer work for anyone else having all received texts "forbidding" them from driving for anyone else. Currently that "anybody else" is rival app Lyft.

One NY driver told CNN recently: "I got a tablet, a phone and my Uber phone so when I have no passengers in my car, I turn on all my applications and whichever one gives me a job first, I take."

Well if Uber have their way, that driver will find that he is now just an Uber man – and it's no good telling me that the London circuits do the same because so far as I know, none of Dial-a-Cab, RTG or ComCab ever offered free phones in order to bribe drivers to join.

## Citi giveaway...

I have to smile each time I pass a London licensed taxi with an advert along its side proclaiming that *a Citi client anywhere is a Citi client everywhere*. That may well be true, but I think I'd prefer to see something more akin to: *We used to be clients of a licensed taxi company, but prefer minicabs as they are cheaper even though they're nowhere near as good.*

There's nothing as satisfying as some good old English plain speaking...

## Deregulation Bill

As you read this, there will be just a matter of six weeks until their Lordships in the "other place" debate – among other sections of the same Bill – the now notorious **Clause 10**. This is the part of the *Deregulation Bill 2013 – 2014* that will allow anyone to drive a Private Hire vehicle regardless of whether they are licensed or not. Of course, if they aren't actually licensed then they will not be allowed to pick up passengers, so that's ok then! I can stop writing!

What do you mean what happens if they take no notice of that but start driving around looking for passengers in a PH vehicle that proclaims Fred's Cars. Don't be silly, surely that's against the law so they wouldn't... would they!

Well, sorry your Lordships, but if any of you actually believe that the only reason a non-minicab licensed driver would want to use the car is



for a day out at the seaside, then you are living in the same world as the late **Judge James Pickles** who once asked in court who **The Beatles** were.

This could be the biggest menace that the public have ever faced – notice that I didn't say the taxi trade's biggest menace. If the House of Lords get this Bill through its Committee Stage on October 21st and a passenger is attacked inside the car borrowed by a non-licensed driver, then whatever happens to that passenger will be the fault of the Lords.

*Call Sign* did ask **Lord Holmes of Richmond** to give his views on this issue but we still haven't heard from him and it seems unlikely that we will now, having waited almost two months. He had previously told a **Dial-a-Cab** driver that the Lords had hoped to include a discussion in the same *Bill* on what represented a meter in a taxi and that most of his colleagues said they believed that an app could not classify as a meter.

So if this Committee Stage isn't till 21 October, why am I writing about it in the September 1 issue; well in your jobs as licensed London taxi drivers you will undoubtedly pick up Members of the House of Lords. Ask them for their view on Clause 10 and give them yours – in a polite way of course. And if they honestly believe that there would be no problem in licensed minicab drivers loaning out their vehicles to non-licensed drivers, ask them if they also believe that the police should be free to allow their friends to borrow a police car complete with siren for escaping traffic jams?

## Namby pamby London (continued)

Last month's page 3 saw yours truly writing about namby pamby London and how safety has overtaken plain commonsense. I'm certainly not making light of anyone that is run over by a motor vehicle – especially one that is speeding. But surely reducing the speed limit to a ridiculous 24 hour 20mph is going over the top?

Modern cars are not designed to go that slow unless they are in traffic. Manual vehicles would have to go in a lower gear whilst the rest of us would have to drive along London Wall at 2am with one eye on the speedo instead of on the road.

And why are there more accidents – if indeed that is the case? Could it be because of the number of pedestrians who believe that you have to make phone calls while crossing the street? If they walk into a car, whose fault is it? Well we

know who the City Corp think is at fault; it's always London's taxis – accidents, smoke, noise – it's all down to little old us.

Now London, Southwark (northern section) and Blackfriars Bridges are also 20mph zones. I'm just waiting for the first passenger to complain to the police that their taxi is deliberately driving slowly at 2am when all they want to do is to get home.

And does the Mayor really think that no one has noticed how the traffic light signals have changed so that they stay red far longer? Namby pamby London is right. Perhaps the Mayor would do us all a favour if he became an MP sooner rather than later and gave up the Mayorship...

## RideLondon cycling weekend

Should I be ashamed of my feelings? On Saturday 9 August, around 60,000 cyclists took part in a 10-mile ride through central London causing, so far as the taxi trade was concerned, traffic chaos.

Then on the following day, Sunday 10th, the **RideLondon-Surrey 100** began from Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park with 100 top cyclists riding out to Surrey and then back again. The police, in their wisdom, closed all roads along the route and other than for emergency vehicles, they stayed shut for the duration of the event.

So why should I feel ashamed of my feelings? Well I'll put up with one day of disruption, but the two days of the week that many use to subsidise the rest of a week when the kids are still on holiday and which invariably will be quiet? Is that fair to those that have to work in a London where you can't move anywhere?

Well I didn't work on the day of the London-Surrey and return cycle event was scheduled to take place because going by last year, it would have been pointless with even a simple event such as crossing the Thames to get to Waterloo becoming problematic – not just for we drivers, but also for those unsuspecting passengers who have to fork out an unexpectedly large amount for their taxi fare. They probably think we have ripped them off; but who cares about us? After all, the Mayor is TfL and we know about TfL and Uber.

Ashamed? Not really! I was delighted when the weather in the shape of Hurricane Bertha spoiled the event. Yep, I still lost a day's work but instead I sat at home playing with my two youngest grandchildren, Samuel and Imogen. I even enjoyed working on Monday 11 August when I happily told passengers that the downpour had been the Mayor's fault for not giving a fig about London's oldest and most respected transport system. Sadly Boris doesn't see it that way because just words don't really cut it.

Telling the world how wonderful we are but then doing absolutely nothing to help us, makes his office farcical. A fifteen year limit that many believe will soon become 12 and then 10 years? Diesel taxis suddenly becoming the bad guys after years of our being forced into buying them?

I could go on, but instead I'll happily take all the flak that will undoubtedly be thrown at me for being so gloomy at the sudden clearing up of the weather and for not feeling ashamed at the illicit affair I almost had with Big Bertha!

**Alan Fisher**  
callsignmag@aol.com



# reflections of the chairman

## Subscriptions

The announcement in last month's *Call Sign* that we will be going over to a different method of charging subscriptions in the near future was met, as you would have expected, with mixed reviews. Some Members are all for it, whilst others are against it.

Conversely, when we charge the straight £30 per week, some Members - especially the higher earners - considered that was very good value for money while others were totally against it and thought we should go over to a **Pay As You Go (PAYG)** system, something which appears to be quite popular in the cab trade at the moment.

However, of one thing you can be absolutely certain, whatever system the Board adopts, it will not please all Members and there will be a section of the **Dial-a-Cab** membership that will be totally against any policy the Society adopts. This will be purely and simply because that particular individual considers that the new system does not suit them personally and after all, everyone wants what is best for them. And of course there is absolutely nothing wrong with that.

However, the Board of Management has to decide what they consider to be in the best interests of the Society and the membership as a whole. In fact it wasn't that long ago - at the February AGM in fact - that a subscriber made a passionate plea for a PAYG system while adding that the charge should not be as much as the 10% that Hailo charge. Well ours is 7.5% - a substantial 25% less than Hailo and others charge.

But as you all know, whatever we do there is just no way that we can possibly please all of the people all of the time.

## Driver App

During the past month whilst speaking with - in addition to also being in correspondence with - Members regarding the Dial-a-Cab PAYG scheme, many of those drivers also asked me why we have not yet developed a Drivers App.

During these conversations, it has become apparent to me that not everyone understands the difference between a Customer App and a Driver App.

At the moment we have a Customer App and those customers that use it can order a taxi from us on their Account or via a Credit Card on our App. That will then be despatched to Members as a normal Account or Credit Card trip. The driver in his cab will not have any idea how Dial-a-Cab received that particular trip. It could just as easily have been received via telephone, on-line or indeed via the App. They all appear the same when received by the Member on his or her terminal.



That now brings me onto a Drivers App, which is the smartphone receiving the trip being booked via the Customer's App. However, Dial-a-Cab drivers do already have that facility. The only difference is that it does not go to them via their smartphone, it goes to them via the terminal in their taxi; the terminal acts as the smartphone!

**However, I do still have some Members asking me why we have not built an App for the whole trade? It does seem to be a topic that has everyone jumping onto the bandwagon.**

If Dial-a-Cab were to produce a Drivers App for the rest of the trade - and DaC's IT department are more than capable of doing it - whereby they could receive work via their smartphone, I believe that would be to the detriment of DaC Members. However, that does appear to be the opinion of some Members who have not really thought the issue through but perhaps are just latching onto the latest buzz word.

**If you think about it, why would Dial-a-Cab produce a Drivers App that would**

**compete against the Members of Dial-a-Cab?**

We would be producing an App for the rest of the trade with liveried - although not Dial-a-Cab liveried - taxis, operating you would have to assume on a no run-in, no gratuity and free waiting time basis, pretty much the same as the other two Apps.

If that were the case, why on earth would our customers continue to use Dial-a-Cab in preference to the Drivers App? We would, in essence, be producing an App for the rest of the trade that would compete against ourselves. I just don't get it!

A new App of that kind would be built by DaC at the expense of Dial-a-Cab Members to benefit the remainder of the trade; is that what we really want?

## August

As per normal, it seems that most of London - and of course the people that work in London - have taken their holidays in the month of August, making business so much quieter - although I am led to believe there has been an increase in the number of tourists here this year, especially our Arab friends.

But August has now passed again and once we get into the second week of September, hopefully business will begin to improve again as it does most other years. Hopefully this year will not be any exception....

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

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# Berlin says *verboden* to Uber!



The Senate of the German federal capital, Berlin, has now followed the lead of Seoul, Brussels and Hamburg in banning the Uber app for booking private hire vehicles –

known as Mietwagen - and for booking the PH vehicles and the drivers (UberPOP).

**The app is said to be contrary to the Passenger Transport Act and any infringement carries a fine of 25,000 euros. The Senate particularly wants to protect passengers using UberPOP's unlicensed drivers and vehicles. In these cases, drivers face a fine of 20,000 euros.**

The problems began when a German trade magazine (Taxi Times) revealed that passengers might not actually be covered by the operators' private car insurance. Uber has

said it will appeal and cites 'restriction of freedom and mobility.'

Most drivers will remember the international day of action for taxis on June 11. The current argument for London drivers, in addition to whether the Uber app is a meter, revolves around ultra-strict rules and regulations for taxis, whereas Uber seem to have walked through.

But it isn't only Tfl and Boris Johnson that seems to have given Uber the green light; Berlin's Mayor, Klaus Wowereit, visited Uber's new HQ wearing an 'I love Uber' hat and sunglasses!

## Another 3 bogus PH driver prosecutions by Tfl



**TfL Enforcement and on-street operations Compliance Team alongside their policing partners have successfully prosecuted three re-offending minicab touts in an ongoing commitment to crackdown on bogus and unsafe minicab drivers in London.**

The latest prosecutions now bring Tfl's total to 25 successful convictions for illegal plying for hire and other related offences in the last 12 months, with many more cases currently awaiting court dates. The three convictions were for a number of offences including touting, illegal plying for hire, driving without insurance and operating without a valid private hire driver licence.

**Olaide Tijani** from NW London was sentenced at **Westminster Magistrates' Court** having been stopped during a routine check by City of London Police and TfL Compliance Officers in December 2013. Mr Tijani had a passenger when his details were checked by officers and it showed that his PH driver licence had been revoked in 2011 after a touting conviction. He later pleaded guilty to four offences of no private hire driver licence, no operator licence, no insurance and plying for hire. He was ordered to pay £410 in fines and court costs. His driving licence was endorsed with six penalty points for having no insurance and as a result, he was disqualified from driving for six months.

**Tahir Zaheer Baig** from east London was also sentenced at Westminster Magistrates' Court. He was first seen on 26 October 2013 by TfL Compliance touting for business but drove off before he could be questioned. TfL were in the process of addressing this first incident when he was stopped again on 9 November in South Woodford and found to be working without a private hire vehicle operator's licence. He was interviewed under caution and charged with breaching the Private Hire Vehicles Act. Mr Baig was later found guilty of touting, having no operator licence and plying for hire. He was ordered to pay £900 in fines and court costs and disqualified from driving for four months.

**Rajalingham Paheerathan** from Bromley was seen by TfL Compliance Officers on 24 October 2013 on Uxbridge High Road having a conversation with a woman before letting her and a friend into his car. Officers approached the vehicle and established the journey was not pre-booked. He was interviewed, charged and pleaded guilty to plying for hire, having no operator licence and was ordered to pay £370 in fines and court costs. He was also disqualified from driving for three months.

TfL's Enforcement and on-street Compliance Team carry out vehicle and driver licensing checks across London to keep the public safe and stamp out illegal activity. They work closely with the police, delivering over six hundred joint operations every year. They also carry out evening patrols in hotspot locations, plain clothes anti-touting operations and high visibility enforcement activities to detect and deter bogus cab drivers.

**Steve Burton**, Director of Enforcement and On Street Operations at TfL, said:

**"These convictions demonstrate that we take illegal touting and other illegal private hire activities extremely seriously. Thanks to the great work of our Compliance Officers and policing partners, these offenders have been successfully prosecuted."**

## TX4 on trial in Melbourne



The TX4 on trial in Melbourne

It seems that the march of **Geely** and the **London Taxi Company** to dominate the world's taxi market is spreading across Australia. Perth has seen the TX4 for some time with 100 of the vehicles on its roads and now Melbourne has decided to test the vehicle out on its roads as well.

They will be assessing customer feedback before deciding how many of the iconic taxis will be ordered, according to **Evan Simeon**, CEO of the London Taxi Company (Australia):

"We'd like to trial at least 100 here in Victoria as a sample patch and then work from that. We have just landed a London taxi in Melbourne for evaluation in the City while the Taxi Services Commission has approved the London TX4 for use as a conventional taxi in the state of Victoria."

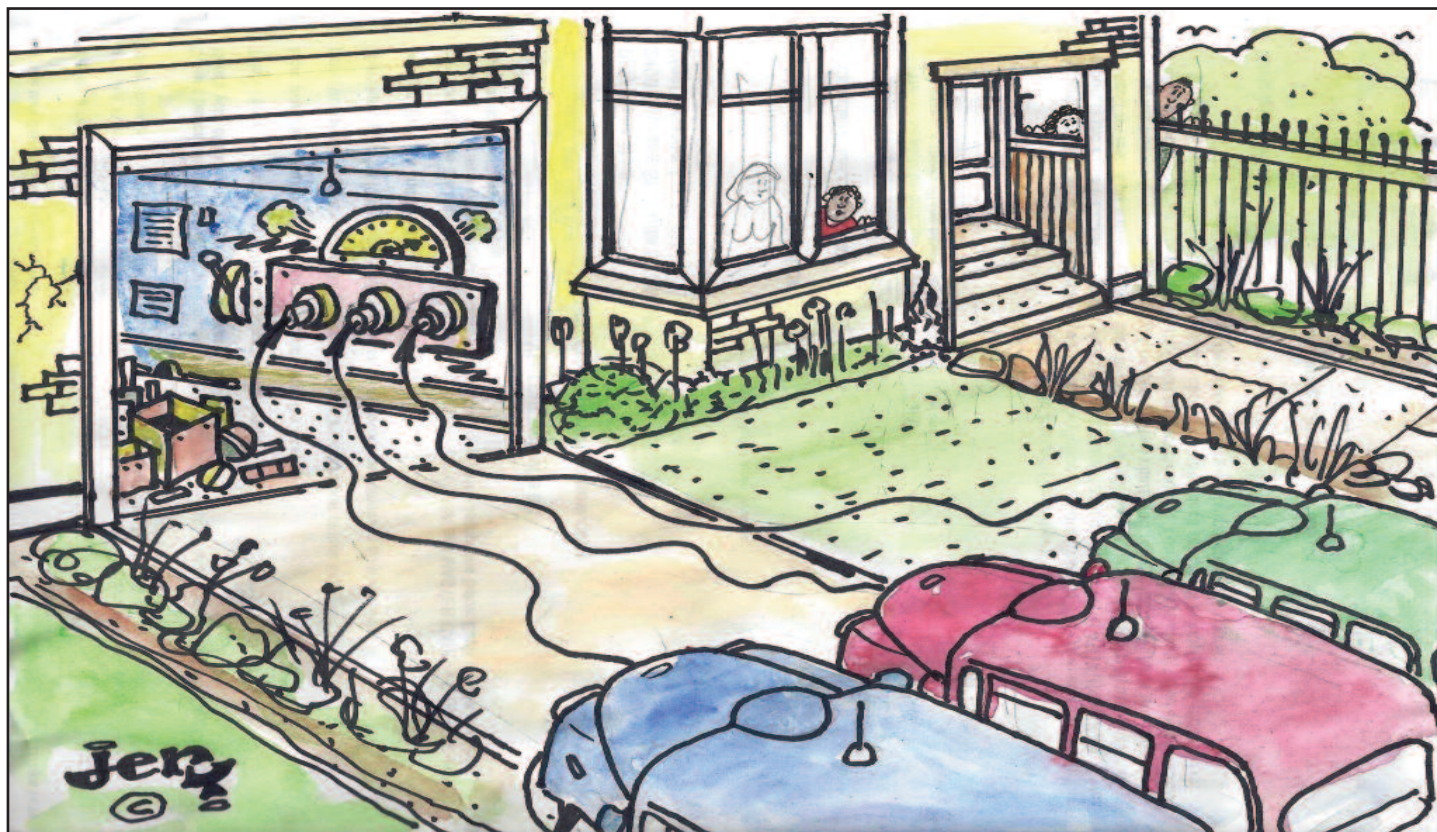
The trial taxi – coloured silver – is currently being driven around Melbourne covered in 'evaluation' stickers. It is picking passengers up.

"We've already done three and a half million kilometres in the trial in Perth and carried over 60,000 passengers," Mr Simeon said.

"Of all the passengers in Western Australia," said Mr Simeon, "95 per cent say they would book a London taxi again while seventy-five per cent say they would wait longer for a London taxi over a conventional sedan because it is a purpose built vehicle."



# Jery's World



Boris didn't mention this bit when he told us we'd all have to get electric taxis!

## AUGUST CAPTION WINNER

Due to a printing problem, an important section of last month's photo – an outline of the Queen and Duke of Edinburgh – was left off the page so no one was really sure as to whether the driver was picking up or setting down. Fortunately, 103 of you took a chance on what it was and still sent in your captions. So we allowed for that. Some of the best captions were:

- \* Taxi for Liz Windsor paying by credit card, but tell her I'll need some ID. Having your face on banknotes is not sufficient according to my office.
- \* Look mate, all I know is I've dropped her off and she sent me around here for the fare.
- \* If I let off every Queen I pick up, I'd go skint!



But the winning entry – and the first time a member of staff has ever won a Call Sign caption contest – was from the Control Centre's Abdul Wadud whose entry said:

\* Seriously mate, you wanna get her to open an account!  
This month's contest is on page 28...

## TAXI AIR CONDITIONING

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A disturbing story came to *Call Sign's* office recently. The **Dial-a-Cab** driver, who asked to remain nameless for reasons to become obvious, told us that on a recent trip to **London City Airport**, he was disturbed to see a representative of **Uber** giving out free phones to any black cab driver who would sign up with them. Even more disturbing, he said, were the number of taxi drivers taking up the offer.

Bearing in mind the demo on **11 June** where thousands of taxis descended on Trafalgar Square to protest against TfL and their allowing Uber to use smartphones as meters, our driver was quite upset to see how little it took to get these drivers to sign up and was going to take a photo of them queuing. But he was beaten to the punch by another driver who got out of his cab, camera in hand and began snapping away.

One hefty driver took offence and told the driver to delete the photos. The driver refused. The newest Uber driver asked again and again the answer came back that there was no reason for him to delete the photos as they were newsworthy. Mr *Black Uber Cab* made a grab for the camera and threw it straight into the Thames together with a warning that if this driver didn't get back into his taxi and leave the airport, that he would throw him in as well.

The driver left; our driver decided he didn't want any trouble and life returned to near normal except for one thing; someone had called the police.

**Taxi drivers queue to sign for Uber - just to get a free phone...**

## Battle of City Airport



**Driver threw camera into Thames**

drivers, may well have been wasting their time. Hands up those that took a phone who were also at the demo? Thought not...

*See Editorial on page 3*

**Michael Toomey**  
**Call Sign Online**

"We were quite shocked when the two policemen came over and told the Uber reps they had to leave the Airport grounds" said the DaC driver. "They claimed that Hailo and GetTaxi had been allowed to sign-up drivers at LCA, so why couldn't Uber?"

"One reason," said the policeman. "They asked for permission first and you haven't. So please leave the Airport now!"

The thought of two taxi drivers acting like that in front of watching eyes is bad enough, but for so many Licensed London taxi drivers to be bought for the cost of a phone explains better than anything else why all those that stuck up for our trade against TfL at the demo, including those 10,000 or so

### Call Sign

#### September 2014

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It used to be lies, damned lies and statistics, but with the way the **London Taxi Drivers Forum** (LTDF) operates, it doesn't really matter if you lie about anything because you do so without giving your name. As *Call Sign* readers know, this magazine rarely allows writers to our letters page to remain anonymous. The LTDF have no such concerns and can say whatever they wish without needing to worry about any legal action, as those few on there that abuse it are far too cowardly to put their name along with their accusations – usually about **Dial-a-Cab** or its Chairman, **Brian Rice**.

Although I have never been on it, I often get parts sent to me when they mention DaC, Brian Rice or even little old me! But the one thing they all have in common is their lack of any testicular fortitude in putting their name to anything.

Of course, the best thing is usually to ignore it knowing that it is just spiteful rubbish, but some things just can't be ignored and I have asked **Brian Rice** to answer some of the most recent accusations.

Like me, he hadn't seen then either and perhaps I should just have consigned them to the rubbish bin where they and those that write them deserve to reside. But surprisingly and judging by comments from those that have forwarded the messages to *Call Sign*, it seems likely that the writers are not now and have not been DaC members for many years – if at all. Yet they were trying to set up an SGM (Special General Meeting) with an online form that looked as though the writer was aged 11 – or even less – and giving instructions as to what Members should ask!

The idea behind the SGM (according to the anonymous writer) was to find out what DaC were "hiding" with reference to recent offers for the Society. They add that drivers should sign up and "go at him (Rice) with numbers: get him out. Then use the Societies Lawyers (Rice's Lawyers at the moment) and sue him." The spelling is theirs.

Astonishingly, they then go on to say that the Chairman would "collapse in a heap, as he did before when he thought he could not use DaC funds. What happened: bang he went down with a heart attack."

It then refers to the "real men" who didn't go down like a sack of tatas (they may have meant potatoes, but to 11 year olds they may well be tatas). This brave (although anonymous) writer then says that he will "say something else when enough members are signed up the members should get in touch with DaC's lawyers and demand that as, Field Fisher Waterhouse are the members lawyers and remind them that they are not Rice's personal lawyers and demand FFW act for the members." Again, the grammar is theirs and not ours.

The website given to LTDF members where they can sign up – as you'd expect from those who can only write anonymously – probably won't be accepted because a/ it's lack of professionalism in setting it out, and b/ far more importantly, it doesn't ask for badge numbers so that anyone could fill in someone else's name and call sign – and I wouldn't put that past anyone afraid to give their name. Seeing as they can't spell signature, perhaps they also couldn't cope with five numbers in one line!

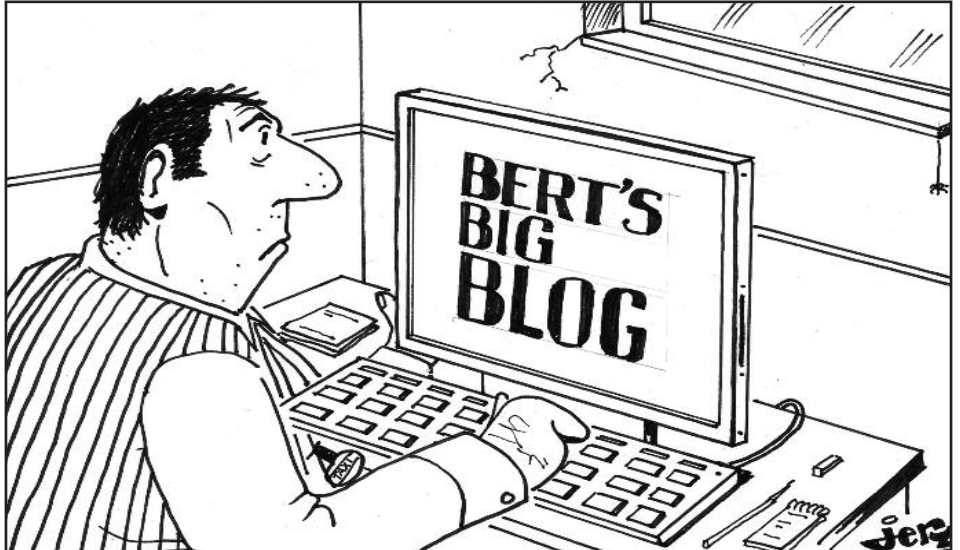
So what do they want drivers signing up to ask at an SGM? It's this:

*Presentation by the Board of the details of all approaches made to the Society since 1 January 2012 by third parties concerning any proposal for the sale, purchase, amalgamation or any other form of joint enterprise involving the Society.*

And perhaps we should thank the LCDC's

*Call Sign Says...*

# Lies, damned lies and anonymmmity



Saying what you want because you don't give your name

Twitter am for forwarding it to driver's phones even though they didn't bother checking with DaC whether the info contained was correct. Mind you, they certainly wouldn't have picked up any of the grammatical or spelling errors!

The LTDF's anonymous writers also inferred that deals may have fallen through because *back-handers* weren't enough!

I think *Call Sign's* readers get the picture and as much as I feel like ignoring the emails, just as I have been doing since their inception, I felt that I should ask the Chairman for answers to the anonymous accusations. Here they are...

**Call Sign:** How many offers were made for Dial-a-Cab and why weren't drivers given details of those offers?

**Brian Rice:** Initially, there were two but after I wrote to Members regarding the offers, a third offer arrived. The third offer was the best and the other two were informed. One of the two then came back with a revised offer, but it was still not as good as the best offer. When they were informed of this, they withdrew their offer. The other party then decided to go public and disclose their offer on Twitter and generally lobby our Members. Unfortunately, their organisation is a 'start up' and they do not have any substance and their abbreviated accounts showed they were in the red to the tune of £96k; in the Board's opinion it would have been negligent to have put their proposal to Members. The company with the best offer then embarked on some advanced due diligence in order to turn their indicative offer into a firm offer. After two and a half weeks of due diligence, they were not able to turn their indicative offer into a firm offer, certainly not enough to tempt Members as they were not prepared to offer more than the asset value of the Society. What that would actually mean was that someone would buy and control the Society with our own assets, so they did not proceed with a firm offer. Two

of the above organisations required Non-Disclosure Agreements to be signed so that details of negotiations should not be made public unless an agreement was reached. Incidentally, I have already relayed these points to Members in the letter I wrote to them dated 22 July...

**Call Sign:** Why was Cab:App's bid not given publicity?

**Brian Rice:** I think they did that themselves, however, they are the company above that I refer to being £96k in the red!

**Call Sign:** How many backhanders have you been offered and did they play any part in any decision re selling the Society?

**Brian Rice:** There was never any offer of a 'backhanders' from any of the organisations and if there had been, it would have been to the detriment of the company offering it.

**Call Sign:** Was your heart attack caused from being concerned that you would have to pay DaC's solicitors yourself?

**Brian Rice:** My heart attack in June 1998 was not caused by being concerned over paying solicitors myself, because although we (the BoM) were being sued as individuals, collectively we were the Board representing Dial-a-Cab, so personal solicitor's fees never came into the equation. That is what the Society's solicitors advised was the case and the Judge agreed, so it never entered the equation.

In all honesty, *Call Sign* was reluctant to give any publicity to those few former members now on the LTDF who are so bitter towards DaC that they will say anything to try and damage this Society. However, we were left in a situation where regardless of those that want to have an SGM to hear the above at first hand or not, they cannot be allowed to think that there is any truth whatsoever in the rubbish spouted on that site...

**Alan Fisher**

callsignmag@aol.com



If you drive a taxi in London, you'll be used to the inconvenience of being delayed by one of **Tower Bridge's** 1000 estimated raisings each year. If you don't have a fare, you can turn around and ply your trade in a different direction. If you have a passenger and are on the Bridge, as happened to a **Dial-a-Cab** driver recently, and they just want to cross the Thames to get to **Trinity Square**, then what do you do? You can turn around and attempt to go over London Bridge adding around £6 to the fare or you can just wait for the Bridge to go down.

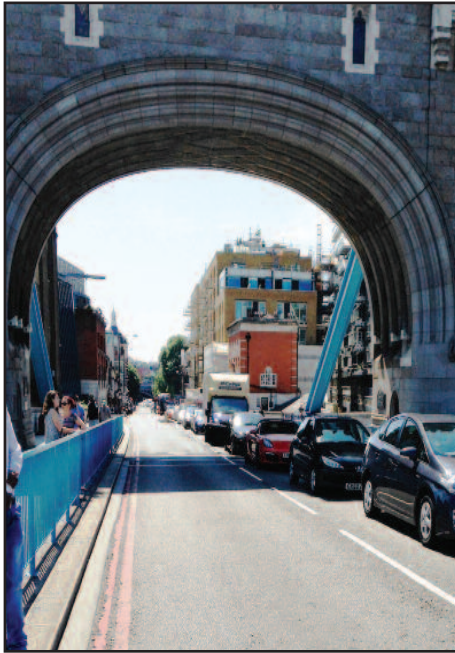
The driver, who doesn't want to be identified, took the photos for *Call Sign* to show what the delay was like. He told the passenger that the Bridge would be up and down in a few minutes and it would be quicker and cheaper to just wait. The passenger left it up to the driver.

The problem was that the Bridge went up around 12 minutes before the ship reached it and stayed open for almost three minutes after it passed under. Including the time it was directly underneath, the driver was stuck there with his engine off for 18 minutes. A £4.20 run-in on Rate 1 when stationary takes 4 minutes and 30 seconds to arrive at, so you can imagine how much the fare increased by in 18 minutes. Gallantly, the driver, offered to stop the meter and to reset it as a new fare when the Bridge opened. The passenger thanked the driver but said it wasn't his fault and not to worry.

But did Tower Bridge really need to stay open that long? As usual, the same old excuse of *Health and Safety* showed its head. The only saving grace to pass onto the DaC driver is that the ship that passed through while he was there had the highest mast allowed. Any vessel with a mast or superstructure of 30ft or more can ask for

# Tower Bridge CHAOS

*Does London need such a relic of Victoriana?*



Huge queues caused by Tower Bridge closing for 18 minutes (see cover pic)

double decker across the Bridge and with no warning, the Bridge began to open. Albert decided that he would have more chance if he got over the opening rather than stopping suddenly. He put his foot down onto the throttle and cleared the 3 foot gap, dropping 6 feet onto the north bascule. There were no serious injuries, just a few bruised passengers, and Albert was praised by the City Corporation for his bravery. It was caused due to the regular Bridge lifter being away and a deputy sitting in for him. The bell that should have rung never did.

Not praised quite so much as Albert Gunter was whoever was in charge in May 1997, when the motorcade of then-US President **Bill Clinton** was divided after a scheduled Thames sailing barge on its way to **St Katharine Docks** arrived at its allocated time and the Bridge opened, leaving the Prez on one side with his hefty security motorcade on the other!

*Call Sign* asked a City spokesperson connected to the Bridge how long the Bridge is supposed to allow before a ship reaches it – even though it is mainly automatic nowadays. He didn't know but gave us a number to call. We left messages but they never responded.

Work on building Tower Bridge began in 1886 and lasted just under 10 years. But is it a good idea in 2014 for one of the world's major capitals to have to stop all traffic in the heart of the City for almost 20 minutes. **Queen Victoria** may have been proud of it, but shouldn't we start thinking of another way?

## DOES TFL ENABLE TAX AVOIDANCE BY UBER?

*Barking and Dagenham Labour MP Margaret Hodge recently made the news when asking London Mayor Boris Johnson if he was enabling Uber to opt out of the UK's tax regime, which in turn put the London taxi trade at a huge and unfair disadvantage.*

The MP, who has many licensed taxi drivers in her constituency, said she was particularly concerned about the Uber tax structure "and its impact on the public purse and the livelihoods of London cabbies and private hire drivers." Her experience in the field comes from chairing the Public Accounts Committee at the House of Commons.

In Mrs Hodge's letter to the London Mayor, she asked him to ensure that Transport for London, which regulates both sides of the industry, "does not inadvertently allow tax avoidance in London."

Uber's tax problems arose because their customers use an app that is operated via a Dutch entity, meaning that their corporation tax is paid in the Netherlands rather than in the UK.

Mrs Hodge pointed that out and accused TfL of failing to apply the appropriate regulations to Uber by not insisting they have a London-licensed base, which would then oblige them to pay UK corporation tax.

"Surely TfL has a duty to enforce legislation that will ensure a fair and level playing field for all taxi and private hire operators," Mrs Hodge said.

Uber responded by claiming that they complied with all applicable tax laws and paid taxes in all jurisdictions such as corporate income tax, payroll tax, sales and use tax and VAT. Uber London Limited is a licensed PHV Operator and recently passed with flying colours the largest inspection of records ever conducted by TfL.

In response, COO of TfL's **Surface Transport**, **Garrett Emmerson**, said:

"TfL's role is to license and regulate the taxi and private hire industry in London. We do not have any powers in relation to an operator's corporate structure and how or where they pay tax. We are fully satisfied that based on our understanding of the relationship between passengers and Uber London, and between Uber London and the Holland registered Uber BV, that Uber is operating lawfully under the terms of the 1998 PHV(L) Act."

**Dial-a-Cab** Chairman **Brian Rice** told *Call Sign*:

"Again this is an example of Uber flouting the rules. This situation should never have arisen in the first place had TfL enforced the regulations correctly and refused Uber an Operator's Licence. Once again, by issuing an Operator's Licence contrary to regulations, it illustrates the inefficiency of this particular public body."

Uber's tax structure is said to include companies and partnerships in Bermuda and Ireland in addition to the Netherlands...



Margaret Hodge



**Royal Tom...**

It was 5.30 in the morning as I lay in the bath thinking about the day previous, which I'd spent assisting travellers with their taxi needs. But today would be completely different as I was to collect a Land Rover from Buckingham Palace and drive it to Birk Hall near Ballater in Scotland. Birk Hall was the Scottish holiday residence of Her Royal Highness, Queen Elizabeth the Queen Mother.

This was to be a regular part-time job of mine for 17 years during which time I held the **Royal Warrant to Her Majesty the Queen Mother**. For 14 years I travelled round England and Scotland, before finally basing myself in London doing more 'local' stuff while the others did long range work.

As I drove to **Marlborough House** where I would be leaving my car, I heard on the radio that a Land Rover had been stolen from **Buckingham Palace** during the night. When I reached the Palace I was informed that the stolen Land Rover was in fact the one I would be taking to **Scotland** that day! The police had recovered the vehicle and arrested the thief. I hoped the police informed other forces, as I didn't fancy getting stopped all the way up to bonny Scotland!

The time was now 6.30am and the sun was shining as I made my way up Constitution Hill, on towards the M1 and M6, cutting across the top of **Birmingham** and onto **Charnock Richard** where I would stop for breakfast. Then it was back onto the M6 and up onto the A74 with the miles zipping past until I reached **Gretna Green** - my lunch stop. Then, I'd pass the edge of **Glasgow** and round on to the M9 and A9 up to **Sterling**, **Perth** and the country roads through **Braemar** and on to **Balmoral**.

On my first trip to Birk Hall, I was instructed to get to **Balmoral Castle** and it would be the next building along the road; what they forgot to say was there were 8 miles between the two buildings! So to say it was a little different from driving a taxi around London was an understatement. In this area of Scotland, there are few people to ask if you get lost - just trees, heather, some deer and a few bunnies!

On my eventual arrival at the royal residence, I had a cup of tea and a wash to freshen up before stepping out to explore the estate, which extended to some 53,000 acres. The flower gardens from spring through to summer are a beautiful spectacle of colour and variety. Part of the flower arrangement is on a slope with a flight of steps in the middle, quite often made into a royal design. After walking through the flowers, you arrive at the **River Dee**; this is where the Queen Mother used to go fly fishing and when the river water was high enough in the summer, relaxed whilst completing one of her favourite pastimes.

In the evening, the housekeeper would supply me and the other chauffeur with dinner,

*For those that didn't know, Tom Whitbread used to be a chauffeur for the Queen mum....*

# TOM'S TALES



then we might take a trip into Ballater for a leisurely pint before a good night's sleep.

The following morning it was up, wash, shave and downstairs for a substantial breakfast before we set off for **Castle May**. This time I was driving an adapted coach, which had been filled to the roof with luggage for the holiday; it varied from clothes, household silverware, shotguns and fishing rods! The journey was in the region of 200 miles, mostly through parts I would call isolated. If you broke down, boy would you have a long walk!

On arrival at **Castle Mey**, which was the only property the Queen Mother owned, you drove around the rear of the building to unload. It was then you noticed the **Pentland Firth**, a stretch of sea that I had only heard of on the BBC shipping forecasts. I was also instructed by the other chauffeurs that if I ever was given the job of transporting the royal corgis and a mishap happened, when I got to the **Pentland Firth** I should just keep going out to sea as my life would not be worth living!

It was at this location that you could experience the four seasons in one day; snow, rain, wind and brilliant sunshine. If you ever fancy a holiday trip to Scotland and go to **John O'Groats**, on the way stay at the **Castle Arms** in **Mey** and pop across the road to do the **Castle Mey** tour, its gardens and farm. Then you can trace the steps of the Queen Mother

when she took *Ranger* and his corgi colleagues on their daily walks.

Whilst I walked in the gardens with Sandy, the Estate Manager, sampling the beautiful tended fruit crops and looking out to sea, I would wonder why the hell I regularly tormented myself by sitting in London traffic, swallowing tons of soot and fumes when there is another side to life which is so peaceful, relaxing and with the luxury of filling your lungs with clean clear fresh air.

How many other **Dial-a-Cab** drivers can say they had been walking in a beautiful private garden as the Queen Mother came walking towards them and stopped to pass pleasantries, which happened to me often over the 17 years. But to save any **Dial-a-Cab** driver asking, no, she never asked how much it would cost from **Buck House** to **LAP**!

After a day's rest, it was my job to accompany the other chauffeur to **Wick Airport**, he would be driving a one-off special edition **Daimler/Jaguar** and I would be following in a specially extended **Ford Granada** Estate, which had many extras in those days. On arrival at the airport, we would park up and await the royal flight; when it arrived we'd drive onto the tarmac and park next to the plane. It was here as the **Equerry** alighted with the Queen Mother that the **Equerry** and I exchanged roles and he would take over driving the **Granada**.

Then I would climb the aircraft steps and be transported back to London as a lone passenger, or I may even have had a **Royal Protection Police Officer** as a travelling companion. Whilst on the plane, we were afforded the same attention that royalty would be given on the flight up to Scotland.

But then the next day it would once again be: "Can you take me to **Kings Cross** cabbie and could you hurry because I'm late." All this and not a please or thank you...

**Tom Whitbread**  
DaC Board member

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# Special DaC deal at the Drift Golf Club

Cabbies are well-known for enjoying golf, so the Drift Golf Club at East Horsley is hoping to attract more of you by offering vastly discounted rates. We already have several black cab drivers as members, which is what originally gave us the idea of contacting Call Sign.

We would love to see more Dial-a-Cab members playing here and I am glad to say that I can offer discounted rates to DaC from



now until the end of 2014.

If you were to book a four ball during the week, we can offer this for just £80. I realise that it is not always possible to get four players together, so we will offer each individual a special Dial-a-Cab rate of just £27.50 per round, but if there are four or more together then the rate drops to £20 per head in a four ball format – and it includes your friends so long as one of you holds a badge.

**This is a huge saving on our normal green fee rates, saving a massive £100 on the normal individual**

**rates. To book, all DaC drivers have to do is call 01483-284772 and quote "Dial-a-Cab" when booking. On arrival, all you have to do is show your taxi licence badge.**

We think DaC drivers will enjoy playing this prestigious, but very friendly course which is also home to **The Southern Pro-Am**, which hopefully speaks volumes for the quality of the course.

We also offer a great choice of food and beverages in our very comfortable bar/restaurant area, so all in all, a day spent at The Drift is a day well spent.

**You can read more about The Drift at [www.driftgolfclub.com](http://www.driftgolfclub.com) and we look forward to welcoming DaC drivers and their friends in due course.**

*The Drift Golf Club  
The Drift, East, Horsley*

Call Sign's Stephen Berndes (R14) says...

## IT'S A CABBYY'S LIFE



### Lost property

I don't know whether it's an apocryphal tale of the driver clutching a newly-found mobile driving through Hyde Park; the phone rings and it's the owner demanding that he immediately returns his phone. The driver agrees saying that he will engage the meter soon and then meet the owner. The owner then becomes abusive saying: "You frigging return that mobile now!" The driver then asks the owner if

the mobile can swim as he hurls it into the Serpentine!

It may or may not be true, however it highlights the fact that we cab-drivers will inevitably lose out when possessions are left in the cab.

**A passenger recently passed a mobile phone over to me that he had found on the back seating area - a new iPhone 5 in a posh leather casing. My first reaction was dread having read the letter from Ronnie Robinson in the August Call Sign detailing the palaver that goes into returning items; looking for an open Police Station, the interminable wait, then dealing with a surely officious police constable.**

Should I keep it? No, why suddenly become dishonest; it will only play on my mind. After all, aren't these new-fangled mobiles fitted with anti-theft apps? Apparently they can track mobile phone locations and even take photos of the theft area! This mobile was turning into a ticking time bomb. Would the Flying Squad burst through my portals and ransack my personal possessions with a sophisticated homing device?

I spoke to my Magistrate brother. He said he'd had a case before the bench of a chap who whilst working in a restaurant, bought a mobile phone from a diner. He took the phone to a shop to be unlocked. When he returned to collect it he was arrested for receiving stolen goods. His defence was that the diner said it wasn't stolen or lost. Nonetheless he was done with a community order.

So on the next day - 7 August - I turned up at the Lost Property Office, Baker Street. There was free parking and no queues, with a chap showing considerable courtesy while attentively dealing with my find.

**I took the liberty of writing down the list of rewards, assuming the lost property failed to find its rightful owner. These rewards are with the discretion of management and are subject to change. Laptops and tablets carry a reward of £75, smart phones drop to £50 while mobile phones and MP3 players are £20. A collected Kindle will bring you a tenner.**

Interestingly, the chap told me that if the goods are then uncollected or they cannot be traced to their owners, they are auctioned off with sites such as XS Auctions and others. The lost property service is self-funded.

So now I must pray that the smart phone fails to be reunited with its owner so I can collect a £50 fee; or otherwise pray that it becomes reunited with its owner so that I might get that lovely feeling of self-satisfaction. I'll leave it to you to decide.

Either way, it's usually us that lose out...

**Stephen Berndes, Call Sign Online**

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Any taxi driver, whether on Dial-a-Cab or not, will have had nightmares about the way some cyclists seem to be almost asking to get run over. So often it's just the skill of the licensed taxi driver that prevents accidents, and unlike a road traffic accident with another vehicle made of metal, cyclists have no protection – many even choosing not to wear a helmet that could prevent head damage in a bad 'set'.

How often have you been giving a left turn indicator and yet still see cyclists attempting to pass you at speed on the inside? How often have you stopped at a pedestrian crossing only to see a cyclist flying through and just missing a pedestrian? How often have you crossed over a green light only to see a cyclist coming from the other direction where the light is still red? If you recognise similar events to the above, you'll also know how cyclists stick together and always blame the motorist.

So if a taxi is involved in an accident with a cyclist and another cyclist offers to act as a witness for the driver, you know the cyclist must really be at fault. And that is why Call Sign believes Peter Marks (L07).

Peter has been with DaC since 2012. His driving record is similar to most of us – we drive thousands of accident-free miles each week with that accident-free tag earned because we are so good. Not everyone outside of the trade recognises that skill, but we all know it's there and how many accidents that skill prevents us being involved in and how many cyclists it saves from serious injury.

Peter was driving his TX4 along Bow Street, Covent Garden on the northbound side of the street at 9.30pm. It was a beautiful evening but

## PETER'S NIGHTMARE COMES TRUE!

*Cab hit by "drunken" cyclist, but guess who had to take the breath test!*



Every cabby's worst fear

the summer evenings were drawing in and it was almost dark. As he got to Russell Street, a cyclist came shooting out of the one-way section and straight into the front of the cab at speed; he went flying through the air, bounced off the bonnet and fell onto the ground. Witnesses said it looked as though he may have broken his legs and that when attempting to comfort him as he lay on the ground in pain, there was a strong smell of alcohol. The bike had no lights on and the cyclist had no protective headgear.

Bow Street had to be closed as police and ambulance took charge. A sympathetic police officer told Peter that they did not have the

power to force cyclists to take a breath test and that unless he voluntarily agreed, then there wouldn't be one – except for Peter who *did* have to take one!

Naturally Peter was completely alcohol free. Apparently the police have to actually see what they believe to be a drunken cyclist as their only evidence, other than if the cyclist volunteers to take the test. Turkeys voting for Christmas come to mind! And even more astonishingly, someone on a camel *could* be breath-tested!

In the same week, a Heathrow-based car hire company had to issue an apology after its website labelled UK cyclists as a hazard. It read:

*"In London, as in other places, cyclists can be a bit of a hazard, since – though they pay no road tax – they still have the same rights as any other vehicle. No law requires them to wear reflective clothing, have lights, or give any sort of signal. Furthermore, cyclists tend to ignore traffic lights and one-way streets, so please be careful you don't hit them. Cyclists become most indignant if you hit them, and legally, it is always the motorists' fault."*

The company later apologised and claimed the remarks were meant to be just light-hearted banter. *Call Sign*, on the other hand, endorses their comments and cannot understand why a cyclist that appears to be drunk cannot be breathalysed...

## JACQUELINE HART COUNSELLOR

BA (Hons), Dipl in Transactional Analysis  
MBACP, EATA

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- Do you find yourself becoming increasingly more angry?
- Do some of your thoughts burden you and get in the way of day to day activities?
  - Do you find yourself asking "why does this always happen to me"?
- Are you noticing your behaviours changing, maybe using alcohol, food or drugs to make you feel better?
- Are there any of your relationships ie with your husband, wife, partner, boss, manager, son, daughter, mum or dad that make you unhappy and question yourself too often?

Any of these and many more could be an indication that your well being needs some attention.

It maybe a surprise to hear that there needn't be anything wrong with you for you to see a counsellor. Counselling could simply enable you to become happier, healthier and a more fulfilled human being.

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"Yes, I had a wonderful and fulfilling time over the years playing football. I met some very interesting people in the game and I kept pretty fit too," Roger Day (F76) told Call Sign.

Roger graced the Wembley turf, not once, but seven times in his amateur football career. At school level he had learned his craft playing alongside the likes of **Jimmy Greaves** in the Dagenham District side and **John Lyall** (ex-West Ham manager) in the Ilford District side.

"When I left school I was an apprentice tool-maker at the **Brigg Motor Co.** They made body parts for Ford cars. I joined their football team, playing various other local teams and we enjoyed success, winning numerous trophies along the way. I had two years with them before being taken on by **Leytonstone FC** and then moving to **Watford Reserves.**

"I played one first team game with Watford and applied to turn professional, but we couldn't agree terms and I would have been out of pocket. There was no big money in those days. Also, the journey from my home in Hornchurch to Watford three times a week was horrendous, so I moved a little nearer to home with **Enfield Town** where I stayed for an amazing seven years." Roger grinned at the memory.

"It was while playing at Enfield Town that I realised just how dangerous football could be and how lucky I was, on one occasion, to have seen the following morning." The memory caused Roger to briefly pause in a moment of contemplation.

"I remember it well; we were playing against **Highgate United** when a sudden flash of lightning struck an opposing player standing just a few feet in front of me. I heard the 'whoosh' and ducked instinctively as it passed over my head. The 24 year old Highgate centre half collapsed on the pitch, not moving. He died in hospital the following day." Roger's voice cracked as he recalled the incident.

It was at Enfield where Roger played his first Wembley final in 1964. Enfield finally lost to **Crook Town**, but Roger scored Enfield's consolation goal. He went on to play in FA Amateur Cup finals in 1967 and 1970 for Enfield and 1972 for **Slough** - playing against opposing skipper, **Dave 'Harry' Bassett**. He then played under the old twin towers for **Ilford** in 1973 and also twice for Great Britain in the Olympics!

The 1967 final against **Skelmersdale** was played in front of 75,000 fans! It ended in a 0-0 draw with the replay at **Maine Road** drawing another 50,000 where Enfield finally became 3-0 victors.

"My manager at Enfield moved to **Slough Town** and persuaded me to go with him, but soon after, I moved on to **Wembley** where I stayed for over two years before

DaC's Roger Day talks about...

## My fun filled footballing years!



Roger scores for England Amateurs against Northern Ireland in 1968 and inset, now at DaC

returning to Enfield Town and then another change taking me over to **Ilford** for a two year stint. Then it was back to Enfield and it was there I met the leg-

endary **Fred Callaghan** who had played for **Fulham** in the 1960s and 70s.

"Some time after, I was approached by **Hayes** who were struggling and in danger of relegation. Fortunately, with my modest efforts they kept up and I once again moved on - this time to what would be my last club and the conclusion of my football career - at **Wickham Wanderers** (as against Wycombe Wanderers). I stayed there for three months before finally retiring at 39 years old, with my fifty-plus England amateur Caps sitting alongside my trophies on the display cabinet shelves."

Roger also captained every team he played for including England's amateur team and in the Olympics for Great Britain! In fact, in the 1967 programme of the Wembley Final against **Skelmersdale**, Roger was described as 'The General' of his Enfield side!

"It was while I was moving around from club to club that I met several players who were on the **Knowledge** - including **Fred Callaghan** - and it was suggested to me that I might sign on myself, which is what I did, completing the Green Badge course in eighteen months - quicker than blokes that had started before me!"

Roger grinned broadly, proud of his achievements both on the pitch and on the road...

**Alan Green (E52)**  
Call Sign Online

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*The WCHCD are always representing the London taxi trade in a way that shows us at our very best. These are three of the events they attended since the last Call Sign...*

### **Election of Sheriffs**

On 24th June, Master of the Worshipful Company of Hackney Carriage Drivers, **Graham Woodhouse**, together with Past Masters and other members of the Company, attended the Election. The office of the Sheriff is the oldest civic office in the City, older even than the office of the Lord Mayor itself. The *Livery assembled in the Common Hall* sees City Livery Companies elect two Sheriffs each Midsummer Day. Normally, one of the Sheriffs is an Alderman who will hope to go on to become the **Lord Mayor of the City of London**; while the other - sometimes referred to as the non-Aldermanic sheriff - has no further civic ambitions after completing their year at the Old Bailey.

The title of Sheriff, or Shire Reeve, evolved during the Anglo Saxon period. The Reeve was the King's representative in a city, town or shire, responsible for collecting taxes and enforcing the law. By the time of the Norman Conquest in 1066, the City of London already had Sheriffs, usually two at a time. The Sheriffs were the most important city officials and collected London's annual taxes on behalf of the Royal Exchequer; they also had judicial duties in the City's law courts.

Up until 1130AD, the Sheriffs were directly appointed by the King. London gained a degree of self-government by a charter granted by **Henry I**, including the right to choose its own sheriff, a right which was affirmed in 1141 by a charter from **King Stephen**.

By Henry's charter, the Sheriffs of The City also gained jurisdiction over the neighbouring county of Middlesex. This did not make the county a dependency of the City, but rather from that time the City of London and Middlesex were viewed as a single administrative area.

### **Guildhall Cart marking**

On 16th July, **Graham Woodhouse**, Master of the **Worshipful Company of Hackney Carriage Drivers**, attended the Annual Cart Marking ceremony in Guildhall Yard. The Corporation of the City of London has exercised its rights over carts and carriers since its inception. A **Carman Fellowship** existed in 1277 and the City regulated its trade.

Now once a year, when the new Master and Wardens are installed, the Carmen gather outside the appointed City Hall and one of their number furnishes a Cart - sometimes a modern truck, sometimes an older wagon, occasionally horse drawn - and the Master 'hires' the vehicle before proceeding to the church for the

*Worshipful Company of Hackney Carriage Drivers*

# **A BUSY TIME FOR THE WCHCD**



**WCHCD Master Graham Woodhouse with DaC's John Dixon (left) and Jim Rainbird (far right). Brenda Bartlett is in the middle...**

Installation Service. Also once a year, Carmen bring their horse-drawn wagons and carriages, steamers, veteran and vintage lorries, buses and coaches, and modern trucks and tractor units to be branded or marked with a red hot iron on a wooden plate; with the year letter and a 'Carr' number, as a reminder of centuries of service to the City and to maintain their ancient tradition.

At this year's Cart Marking ceremony, 47 vehicles were marked between the Master Carmen, **Commander Robin Bawtree OBE RN**, the Rt.Hon Lord Mayor of London, **Alderman Fiona Woolf CBE** and the Master Glover **Alderman Alison Gowman**. Other attendees included London's Transport Commissioner and Carman **Sir Peter Hendy CBE** along with his main transport co-ordinators for London, **Leon Daniels** and **Andrew Barr**. The Royal Logistic Corps was in attendance and **Major Scott Dunlop**, OC 28 Squadron **The Queen's Own Gurkhas Regiment** assisted in the running of the event with a number of his soldiers acting as Marshals.

### **Safe and Skilled driving event**

Regents Park Barracks on July 24 saw the **Worshipful Company of Hackney Carriage Drivers** taking part in the annual **Safe and Skilled** driving event hosted by **20 Transport Squadron** at their Albany Street barracks home.

The WCHCD has an affiliation with the Squadron and the event is held as part of 20 Squadron's Road Safety Campaign.

Taxi driver **John Sheen** is Liaison Officer between the Company and the Squadron and responsible for making sure everyone arrived on time and was ready to face the challenges of the day. With the aim of encouraging participants to refresh their safer driving skills, the teams from the Squadron and the WCHCD took part in a number of tests of their driving skills - and some new ones!

Although the day is fun, it is also challenging, bringing out a competitive edge amongst those taking part. This year the teams took part in several different events including a wheel change task, a Land Rover and trailer reversing exercise, a navigation exercise in a taxi, a bicycle assault course, PS rally, a hystermanoeuvre course and a remote control competition. After all the events had taken place, everyone enjoyed a barbeque in the sunshine while the results were calculated.

The winning team was from the WCHCD consisting of **Dial-a-Cab's Richard Chamberlain (C96)**, **Carlos Olivera** and **Pat Fallon** - this team also won the hystermanoeuvre challenge and the Land Rover reversing exercise. The team winning the navigation challenge in the taxi was DaC's **Jim Rainbird (T25)**, **Mike Saunders** and **Alan Goldsmith**, with the bike riding course event won by **Sylvi Olivera**, **Roberto Olivera**, **Jackie Quaile** and **Leigh Dargan**. Overall on the day the best driver was **Jackie Quaile**, so congratulations go to her.

Grateful thanks go to the hosts of the day at 20 Transport Squadron on behalf of the WCHCD..



# Questions drivers ask

**Hello everybody,**

**Now that the fleet is completely fitted with the new MDT I have been asked to compile a Frequently Asked Questions section.**

## How do I print a receipt for an account customer?

Unfortunately there currently is not a 'Print Receipt' button on the 'Account Completion' screen; this will be added to Version 8 of the software, which will be launched later in the year.

But for now, if a customer requires a receipt, press the 'Review' button.

From the 'History Log' screen press the 'Print' button.

Press 'Cancel' button or 'Trip' tab to exit 'History Log'.

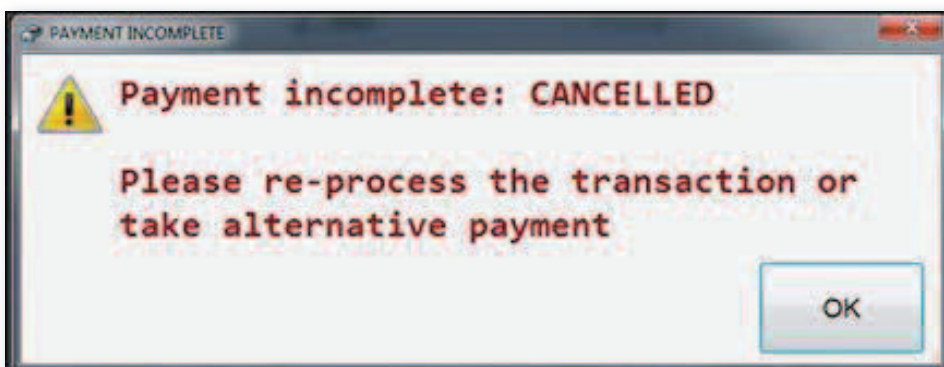
The screenshot shows the 'History Log' screen with the following details:

- Booked-In:** N1E
- NEW:** N1E
- MTR:** Stopped
- QF:** N1E 001
- REG:**
- NET:** Connected
- LOC:** N1 LAH
- Buttons:** Trip, Map, Nav, Settings, Prev, Next, Remove, Print, Page 1, Delete All
- Transaction Details:**
  - PU>E14 RI# 4.20
  - ODRTS IT
  - MAP NO25 FLAT
  - BANK ST
  - JOHN BANKES
  - TO>39-47 EAST ROAD N1 N1E
  - AC 91000
- Timing:**
  - Started: 23 Jul 16:24 (Wed)
  - Completed: 23 Jul 16:25 (Wed)
  - Waiting Time:
- Costs:**
  - Meter Fare: 2.40
  - Meter Extras:
  - Expenses:
  - Expense Code:
- Footer:** Record 1 Of 1, 00:03:04, 11 Aug (Mon), 12:05:35

## Card Transactions

**On card transactions why do we get Void, Cancelled or Declined?**

When a card transaction is incomplete, a 'Payment Incomplete' pop-up box will appear on the MDT to inform you that the card payment has not been processed. It will stipulate why the transaction is incomplete and the appropriate action you should take. Once you have read the message, you should press the 'OK' button to clear the pop-up box.



*Please see below for explanations and solutions. You cannot re-process any card until you have received receipts.*

### Response says 'void'

**Description:** Occurs when a transaction is incomplete, card removed, signature not approved.

**Solution:** Reprocess card.

Please ensure you give the cardholder their 'Void' receipt. Passenger should remove their card.

Press the green 'Enter' button to print your merchant receipt.

Press green 'Enter' button to return to Credit/Debit screen.

Press 'Process' button to re-process card.

### Response says 'Not Authorised' or 'Declined'

**Description:** Can be caused by three separate reasons:

**Issuer (bank):** Insufficient funds, fraudulent card, etc.

**Card:** Certain transaction types are not supported by the card.

**Terminal:** Amount above the ceiling limit.

**Solution:** Customer must use alternative card or cash.

Make sure you give the cardholder their 'Declined' receipt. Passenger should remove their card.

Press the green 'Enter' button to print merchant receipt.

Press the green 'Enter' button to return to Credit/Debit screen.

Press 'Process' button to process alternative card or cash.

Press 'To Cash' button if passenger is making cash payment.

### Response says 'Cancelled'

**Description:** Either the customer or yourself has cancelled the transaction.

**Solution:** Reprocess card or seek alternative payment.

Please ensure the passenger is given their 'Cancelled' receipt. Passenger should remove their card.

Press the green 'Enter' button to print merchant receipt.

Press the green 'Enter' button, to return to Credit/Debit screen.

Press 'Process' button to re-process card or use alternative payment.

Press 'To Cash' button if passenger is making cash payment.

### Response says Unable to Connect

**Description:** Connection failure between the MDT and the PED.

**Solution:** Reprocess card.

**Note:** If you are continuously experiencing a connection failure, you must get an imprint of the card and the amount. Any transaction over £100 must be manually authorised.

### Response says Card Abort (on the PED screen)

**Description:** The card has been inserted into the PED but the transaction has not been processed.

**Solution:** Ask passenger to remove card from PED.

Press 'Process' button to send amount to PED.

### Passenger did not put card in PED but payment is incomplete

If the passenger has a Contactless card and the terminal is not set up for contactless payment, there is a strong possibility that the transaction was not processed. If the passenger requires a receipt, a copy can be obtained from the MDT.

### The terminal has printed both receipts

To clear the job from the screen, the driver needs to press the 'Process' button and the Pin (PED) device.



# Ask about the new terminal

ons. The important thing to remember is that  
ve printed both the cardholder and merchant

errupted half way through; i.e. PED rebooted,

' receipt.

chant copy.

bit Card Completion screen.

lined'

sources:

d, restrictions on use abroad.

d by certain cards.

or pay cash.

ed' receipt.

copy.

it/Debit Card Completion screen.

d.

sh payment.

as pressed the red 'Cancel' button on the PED.

payment.

elled' receipt.

copy.

it/Debit Card Completion screen.

alternative card.

sh payment.

PED and the acquiring host.

onnection failure, complete a manual credit card

the passenger's signature.

authorised over the phone.

display)

the PED before the information has been sent

PED.

payment was processed?

ransaction was under £20 with only a merchant

that the passenger has inadvertently made a con-

that their card has a Contactless chip). If the pas-

d from the 'Review' screen.

out the screen is still grey?

Is to press the green 'Enter' button on the Chip

**The passenger doesn't have chip and pin?**

Not a problem; the card can be swiped through the PED. The driver should follow the same procedures as with Chip and Pin, when they press the 'Process' button they should then swipe the card through the PED. Two receipts will be printed; customer should sign the 'Merchant Copy' for your records.

**PED keeps beeping**

Disconnect the PED lead from the holster; leave for a minute and then reconnect. This should resolve the problem.

**I have been given a Dial-a-Cab Charge Card. How do I process it?**

Currently Charge Cards can't be swiped through the PED. Go to 'GenCode' press the 'Charge card' button and then manually enter the details.

## Mapping

**Why doesn't the 'Pickup' and 'Destination' button always work on account trips?**

Unfortunately trips that are booked on our old booking system will not send the co-ordinates to the map.

Bookings taken on our new system *will* send the co-ordinates; once the trip has been accepted by the driver he/she can then press the 'Pickup' button to view the location.

**How do I view a pickup address on the map?**

Press the 'Map' tab at the top of the screen and then press the 'Pickup' button, the map will then zoom in on the pickup address.

**I can't see the search button on the map?**

The 'Hide' button may have been pressed by mistake. Check the map screen to see if there is a 'Show' button in the left hand corner of the map. Press the 'Show' button and all the buttons should re-appear.

**Where the Search button was, I now have two flags instead?**

The **A to B** has been activated on your terminal; this is a feature where you can create a cotton line from a street pickup to their destination. Press the **Green Flag** on the map and the 'Search' screen will appear, enter the address and select, Green Flag will be planted. Press the **Blue Flag** and carry out the same procedure, the map will then draw a cotton line between the two locations. To clear the information off the screen, press the 'Clear' button on the left hand side of the screen.

**How do I turn the A to B off?**

Press the 'Menu' button and then press the 'A to B Off' button.

**Can I turn off the speed and camera alerts off?**

Press the 'Nav' tab. In the right hand corner of the Nav press the 'Settings' button, press the 'Advance Settings' button, select 'Alerts' un-tick the 'Auditive Alert' box, press the large tick at the top of the page to save the settings.

**My Map has stopped working?**

Press the 'Nav' tab then press the 'Reload' button on the left hand side of the screen, this will reload the software and rectify the problem.

**Can I get further training?**

Our aim is to have all our members confident in using the terminal. If you need any further training, just call **0207 553 7231** or alternatively e-mail to [techproblems@dialacab.co.uk](mailto:techproblems@dialacab.co.uk). I will be more than happy to arrange a training session at a convenient time for you.

**Daren Morley**  
DaC Training Manager

# VisitBritain: Taxis more popular than trains!

**T**ourist information centre, VisitBritain, has released a report revealing that just over half (53%) of all visitors to Britain get around the country via bus, tube or tram, followed closely by one-in-three who book a taxi (32%).



Train trips, outside of towns and cities, have become the third most popular way of getting around with only 28% of international visitors doing so. Somewhat surprisingly, rather large proportions (15%) bring their own car to Britain, a number dominated by business travellers and European holiday visitors. Only one-in-ten decide to hire a car when in Britain. Those who visited Britain on business were most likely to book a taxi (42%), followed closely by wealthy international students (33%). However students are also the most likely to use a bus, tube or tram (72%) followed closely by holiday visitors (66%). VisitBritain also discovered that 68% of 16 - 24 group use public transport such as bus, tube or trams (the highest age bracket) and female tourists are equally as likely as males to use taxis in Britain, with similar proportions across every age bracket.

**The taxi industry across the north of the country is booming, with taxis trips the most popular form of transport used across Northern Ireland (44%), North West (40%), Yorkshire (29%) and the North East (38%) for overseas visitors. The majority (bar Yorkshire), actually have a higher percentage of taxi usage than London (37%).**

Tourists visiting the North West prefer to get around using a taxi than by bus, tram or coach. A huge 77% of visitors to London take local public transport, followed by 40% to Scotland, yet visitors to Wales and across the Midlands are least likely to use public transport. In fact, the most popular mode of transport for international visitors to Wales is by personal car or group vehicle. Almost all of our Brazilian visitors (79%) take public transport, followed closely by one of Britain's fastest growing markets, South Korea (70%). Eastern Europeans and the Irish are least likely to use public transport according to this study. Half of New Zealanders and Fins are most likely to use trains outside of towns and cities (47%), however only 12% of Belgians and 17% of our major market, France, use trains to get around outside of London.

Taxi use has emerged as a key transport option for international visitors across Britain. High spending Middle Eastern visitors dominate, with 74% of Bahrainis, 71% of Qataris, 72% of Kuwaitis and 66% of Saudi Arabians only using taxis or private cars. Middle Eastern visitors spend on average £2,644 per trip in Britain.

It could have been... but it wasn't!

# Hello Ducky!

**I**t was early August along Whitehall and a **Radio Taxis** driver, doing his job, had stopped briefly outside the theatre after suffering the usual horrendous traffic conditions along that stretch of road and thinking how pleased he was to see the back of that jam.

Something he was even less pleased to see the back of was a **London Duck Tours** bus/boat that for no apparent reason backed into the taxi. The result is shown in these photos taken by **Gary Cox (046)**. However, contrary to the heading, no one said hello ducky! But there was no way **Call Sign** could allow a little matter like that to spoil a good headline!



Not so pleased to see the back of it!

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4 Bedroom 2 Bathroom Pool home sleeps 8/9



6 Bedroom 5 Bathroom Pool home sleeps 12



Pool and conservation view at 6 bedroom home.

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So, if you are considering a Florida based holiday in the near future then call us and you may be helping us to give a very sick child the will to say "Let me live another day".

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Tel: 020 8530 5589



The last *Call Sign* was undoubtedly the most downbeat for many months and I think it's a shame that the Society was overlooked when it came to getting sold; however it's not the end of the world. I am sure that if you were an older driver looking for a payoff to put into the bank before retiring, it must be frustrating. But there is a long line of people who have also had the opportunity pass them by. I won't be going anywhere in the near future and even though I thought that the work would eventually come back, now that we have lost those two accounts on the Wharf, I'm preparing for it to be a bit flat for the foreseeable future as mornings are quieter.

However, the new PAYG scheme is very generous to drivers as the £10 a week fee will basically disappear if you only work 10 months a year, thus paying £40 per month for the months you miss instead of £140. And the quicker we go AVL, the less time we will have to wait in zones and the work will be shared out much more fairly.

But we do have an alternative by taking control of our own destiny. If we were sold, no doubt the company taking over would downsize *Dial-a-Cab*, knock down *DaC House* and develop it into penthouse flats and split the profits. Why let someone else do that if we can do it ourselves? We even have some money in the bank to do it. I am personally happy to leave things as they are, because the value of *DaC House* is going up all the time and if I leave without getting anything back for my share then that's OK. But what I would *not* like is some company from outside the trade coming in and profiteering after years of hard toil by *DaC* drivers and the BoM. Don't forget that *DaC* still has many accounts and a big turnover and there are people out there who want our services, so let's not be defeatist.

I would be disappointed if I drove past *DaC House* and there were white flags hanging from the windows. If the public want to take a cheaper transport route, that's up to them and they are always enti-

DaC: To sell or not to sell...

## THAT IS THE QUESTION!



itled to have a choice, just like we have when it comes to buying taxis etc.

But if we do decide to change our long term strategy, we are in good company. My wife was recently in Tesco's and commented on the many shelves of crisps and long life products. Well Asda and Tesco have recently admitted that most of their out-of-town stores are oversized and they don't plan to build anymore. In fact they want to build more smaller stores. The reason for the crisps and long life products is that they don't want isles left empty because it gives a poor impression as they lose their market share to guess who - the cheaper alternatives, the Pound and 99p stores. £1 in every nine is now spent at such stores. It's not only taxis that the public want on the cheap - it's happening all over.

### Adult madness?

When I was a child I used to wonder whether adults really knew what they were doing and I had my suspicions; in fact I thought the world was sometimes quite mad. Now I am an adult, I still wonder whether adults know what they are doing and I still have my suspi-

cions, but now know for sure that life is quite mad.

One boiling hot summer's afternoon, I stopped in the traffic on *Oxford Street*. On my left was one of those refrigerator bicycles with a couple of pretty young ladies handing out free goods. Was it ice creams, maybe lollipops! Nope! It was a well-known brand of great tasting buttery spread! What! Who or why would you want a tub of buttery spread on a hot day! Now I know the English are mad

about freebies, but really! I can hear it now: "Mum what's that dripping from your bag...!"

Later when I got home, I was flicking through the channels on the box and on *Sky Sports* was a fishing competition that caught my attention. After watching for a few minutes, I was aghast to notice that there was a spectator's gallery at the event. Fishing with spectators! Now for those of us who have sat by a Carp lake for hours, making home-made boilies and catching zilch, these people must be a bit naive or have been told it's going to be great entertainment - or got in for free! Whatever next, stands going up around the pond by Toms on Clapham Common!

*Finally, I'd be interested to know if the number of lost badge applications has dropped significantly since TfL began introducing IDs. I saw a 74 numbered driver with a notice in his back window saying: "Don't have a go; old driver new badge!" Quite an incentive not to lose yours!*

**Richard Potter (T51)**  
Call Sign Online

Call Sign's Bob Woodford's series of walks to help understand what was behind WW1...

## BOB'S WAR WALKS



My first **World War One Commemorative Walk** on 23 August was well attended and well received. I never as a rule get nervous before a public Walk - but I did a little this time - mainly because as a rule my material is geared to being fun and entertaining, but with a subject that the tragedy of the Great War was, I am covering a very serious and emotive subject.

It always amazes me just how diverse the age ranges of the individuals are who show up for Walks - and this one certainly drew quite a few younger people along, which was quite refreshing.

I use some of Westminster's iconic landmarks as well as statues and memorials to tell the story - but it was the Cenotaph that people tend to relate to more than anything. The Cenotaph was at first intended to be merely a temporary structure. The Government, having considered arrangements for peace celebrations in July 1919, decided that a saluting base in Whitehall would be most appropriate for the march past of allied troops through London. A Cenotaph conveyed the simple message of an empty tomb uplifted on a high pedestal.

Sir Edwin Lutyens was the architect whose name was put forward as the most suitable designer of such a memorial and you will of course know that the **Lutyens Restaurant** in **Fleet Street** is named after him, because that is one of his own buildings.

He came up with the required temporary edifice, constructed in lath and plaster and painted to look like stone. But after the ceremony, there was such a powerful public outpouring of grief with flags and wreaths adorning his memorial for many months, that it was decided he should construct a permanent memorial in an identical design in Portland stone.

You *Dial-a-Cab* drivers probably pass the Cenotaph most days of your working life and almost certainly know that it is inscribed with the words: *The Glorious Dead*. But not too many people know that Lutyens had wanted flags to be sculptured in coloured marble, but he was overruled by the Government. The permanent Cenotaph was unveiled by **King George V** on Armistice a day 1920.

Try and join me on a forthcoming a Walk - *Call Sign* readers get a £5 discount if they book in advance at [rob@blackcabheritagetours.co.uk](mailto:rob@blackcabheritagetours.co.uk) and the £5 they do pay will be donated to the Royal British Legion.

We start under the statue of King George V in Old Palace Yard.  
The next dates are Saturdays, 20 September and 11 October...

**Bob Woodford, Call Sign Online**

*Hello Ladies & Gents,***Buy out...**

We now know the buy-out that was potential on the table for your share in **Dial-a-Cab** has failed to materialise; we as a Board can now move forward with ideas to gain new accounts.

The new *Pay As You Go* (PAYG) subscription rate has had mixed reviews, however the drivers I've spoken to have been mostly positive and realised that a new approach was needed to help retain membership and make us attractive to new members in the future.

We all need to work together to make sure the service to clients that DaC provides is always first class! There have been incidents reported to myself where this wasn't always the case. I know the hot weather that we have experienced can lead to making you a little hot under the collar, however a few misplaced words could lead a client to consider taking their business elsewhere and you, as a driver, being put on complaint.

**Clearing account trips**

When clearing an account ride, please allow your terminal time to read the fare by stopping the meter and *then* pressing the CLJ button on the terminal *before* clearing the fare from the meter, rather than putting the meter into the *for hire* mode and *then* clearing the

# Compliance with Garry



been well received by those drivers carrying the ads. There are now new hand-out cards available for you to give to your passengers; you could hand them out when giving customers their receipt.

The app booking market seems to be the growth part of the taxi business at the moment with people preferring to book this way rather than hailing a cab off the street. So please be mindful of your run-ins and to make contact ASAP with the passenger, as good experiences will lead to future bookings with DaC and not a competitor.

**Logos**

If you would like to replace your old DaC door logos because they have faded, you can get that done at Roman Way; we now only use the smaller logo, which look good on both the TX and Mercedes Vito taxis.

As you are no longer permitted to do journeys for **Hailo** or **GetTaxi** as a DaC member, please make sure there are no advertising/stickers left attached to your taxi so that we only advertise our own app and help each other.

**Garry White**

**DaC Compliance Officer**

fare reading by entering it manually. That could lead to a late payment.

If requested by an account customer for a receipt, please make yourself aware as to how to do it. DaC Training Manager **Daren Morley** has written an article on pages 16 /17 of this month's magazine on the correct procedure should you need to know how to do it.

**Advertising the DaC app**

The superside advertising campaign has been renewed for another year with a new design that is much bolder and which has

*Another true story from Geoff Levene*

## Taxi life of the Regents Park rich...



There are some places where I never seem to find a job. High Holborn between Kingsway and Princes Circus has always been a desert for me. I've always wondered what the Cuban Embassy is doing there or perhaps they just like being close to the nightlife of Covent Garden and Soho!

On the other hand, I always seem to get lucky in Marylebone High Street. There's such a mix in the area - coffee houses, supermarkets, specialist shops and offices of all kinds. And I also like the way the bustle of Baker Street contrasts with the quiet streets and squares to the west.

**But a little to the north is a terrace in Regents Park which has also been a happy radio hunting ground for me. There are about 20 houses – or should I say mansions – and I have regularly picked up at many of them.**

At number 1 lived a Scottish couple. I never saw him in a kilt but I'm pretty sure he had one. With his red hair and beard, I could imagine him charging at the Redcoats at the Battle of Culloden screaming out his war cry! His wife, however, was rather plump and plain and I suddenly began picking him up at various places accompanied by a series of attractive blondes. It was obvious he had divorced. The last time I drove him he was living at The Pavilion in St Johns Wood and discussing £multi-million deals over the phone.

A few doors down was a family with two daughters and an army of **Filipinos**. The staff seemed to be shared among two houses in Hampstead while the children had matured from spoilt brats into sullen teenagers. On one occasion I picked the two girls up together with grandma and a nanny. The **Dial-a-Cab** terminal gave the destination as Finchley Way off Finchley High Road.

"We're going to **Clowntown**," said Grandma.

I'd never heard of it and we searched up and down without success until eventually I had to take the four disgruntled passengers back to Regents Park. I later discovered Clowntown was a children's entertainment centre in Friern Barnet. Apparently when they ordered the cab they said they were going "...up Finchley way!"

Next door was an interesting fellow. He seemed happily married with children but his wife lived on the other side of the park. Perhaps that's the secret of a happy marriage?

Further along was a long-standing account customer who seems to have slipped off the radar. He had previously lived in Chelsea and Totteridge and was a tax lawyer and property developer. A nice guy in reality, but one who could sometimes be a bit difficult - well actually he was a pain in the wotsit! He was the sort of chap who would keep you waiting for ages and then demand you get to his destination ultra-quickly because he was very late. I dropped him at a station once and he needed a coin for the luggage trolley. He was far too grand to travel with small change so he asked me for a pound, instructing me with no please or thank you to put it onto the account.

"Certainly," I replied, while under my breath I whispered 'that's ok Mr Property Millionaire, have this one on me'! Mind you, I did make him smile once. I put my thumbs in his mouth and pulled his cheeks apart. I think I heard his face crack. But in all seriousness that would have been the only way he would ever smile in public!

He has moved on, but there is another DaC account customer next door. He has a brother and business partner who lives in the West End. They are very similar types - quiet, polite, almost shy as they sit looking out of the window and quite amazingly, not staring at their phones. A few years ago I saw their names in the *Sunday Times Rich List*. They were worth a total of £160million but always showed that you can be rich *and* pleasant.

Sometimes you can see a private security man in the Terrace complete with van and dog. What amuses me is that he is often parked outside a house where years ago I regularly picked up a partner from a firm of City solicitors. He used to order his cab for 6.30am but always looked a bit edgy, smoking continuously. Then he suddenly stopped phoning for his morning taxi. One day while reading the *Evening Standard* I discovered why. He had received 6 years at the High Court in London for stealing £8million of clients' money! No wonder he looked nervous; he must have been going in early to cook the books!

So my question must be: Is the security man protecting them from us... or the other way round?

**Geoff Levene (W32)**  
Call Sign Online





**S**o it's that time of year when we begin to reflect on the glorious summer of football and the missed *Pimms* on the lawn; not to mention that wonderful day - even if you were static for three hours in the sunshine talking to a copper who would not stop moaning about how bad his job had become, what with the lack of loos and being mugged for his pension! Then there's the bloody stickers all over their cars saying they work in conjunction with TfL *for a safer London*. And if that wasn't bad enough, going on and on about the fact the he had just had to weigh out five hundred quid on his own crash helmet because the Met will only give him a make that doesn't fit! Well at least that day was productive from my counselling point of view.

Those members who managed to find some work this summer could not fail to have been depressed with the array of **stickers** adorning the taxi of a driver flying two full size Algerian flags on his cab - well we would have done it too if we'd got 4 points from the group stages of the World Cup and then we could have put some really good ones up!

You can't blame minicabs for flouting the laws. Take Uber (I wish someone would); they have spent the summer trying to dish out hats. You know the type, like a pea on a drum that usually has the name of a tractor company stamped across the top; it took them some time as they couldn't find any farmers in Knightsbridge!

## Stickers

However, the one that is most disappointing - not for the artwork because no one can knock that - are the Hailo ones that drivers have been putting up. It's the lack of uniformity in which drivers stick the Hailo stickers all over the place. That's some corporate image for the taxi trade even though at least most just say Failo or 'Delete the app'!

Mind you, there was one that was worse, the self-made sticker that said Independence for Scotland! But there's one sticker I hope doesn't appear as it seems to be from Hailo and aimed at their car fleet (see pic).

There is an illusion in the taxi trade that many drivers adhere to - that it's their cab so they can put up whatever they want. No! The cab belongs to whoever is in the rear at the time. Mind you, it can be handy knowing which football team a driver supports, if only for a sly dig. So the moral is to get a **Dagenham and Redbridge FC** sticker and at least get some sympathy.

So as work starts to picks up, we'll all no doubt forget about the past summer of glory until work slows down again, so maybe it's time to reflect on

# Hailo, Failo, Schmailo... and stickers!

the future at a time when there is a bit more positivity about the place. Who won this summer? Without a doubt it was Hailo punters, after all if a Hailo punter - notice I use the word punter - does not find a cab they will just go elsewhere, after all it's not a loyalty based business - however much their PR tell us it is. A minicab is always a flick away on an app - they all have them now. It's not that I want to go back to the dark ages, but someone has got to do something about the stickers. Guess that's what you get with TfL.

My personal observation leads me to believe that TfL would love to see the back of the taxi trade as much as the **I was the in the Square** stickers. It's the individualism and the fractures within our mindset and community that they struggle with. How ironic that **Napoleon** called us a nation of small shopkeepers, and we all know his fate! Maybe the trade associations need to shout a bit louder about a bit more of a corporate image like the old days, because all and sundry are desperate to take *corporate black* off us. How ironic; older drivers will remember the fight we had to get other colours!

## Who's catching who?

How much do drivers make out of a superside advert or that stupid shark thing on the roof that they're paying to power? Bet nobody mentioned the cost to those drivers. Then see how much a bus company gets paid and what the profit margin is to the ad company that tell you it's a good deal! Not for me, a pox on your stickers - all except the 'I was in the square' and **Dial-a-Cab** ads. Ok, I never got nearer than the far side of Covent Garden, but until I get paid what it's worth, it's radio stickers only for me. Drivers don't have to take what the ad companies are offering - a bit like Hailo punters.

We all had an uncle we never much liked, but **Auntie Norma** was a bit special and well made up for the **Woodbine** cigs and **Elastoplast** on uncle's glasses. Well, he had a good excuse for the musty smell but years later after uncle passed away, as the pair of us wash those dishes after lunch, you'd broach the subject of those dirty pigeons he kept. She would smile and just say

that loyalty belongs at home, he paid the bills and Auntie made the beds. You could say that's how we should feel about stickers. Just maybe we can learn from those dirty Germans who robbed us of World Cup glory; how many individuals did they have in their World Cup winning squad? Ok, nor did England; you got that one on a plate to throw back!


In other words, the only thing that should be sticking are the customers and not hundreds of stickers. We will all have more stickers on our cab once the **Mayor** stops telling us we all have to take credit cards, because once he stops demanding then it will naturally happen or sink, then we will have to get selective with the available space on the cab for those stickers. Unless TfL pulls its finger out and does a monumental U-turn in its approach to the way it deals with stickers and applies rules about the offending graffiti. But don't panic **Uber**, you're too big to touch - well you don't need me to tell you that! I rather fancy that job with all the custard on the hat at TfL. We in the taxi trade use well-trained thinking members. The word I think I'm looking for is *logistics*. Plain terms with someone having to run that little bit further every now and again for our credibility in the future and at the same time you may well blow half those dodgy stickers off your cab... but hurry!

I would now like to personally apologise for my rant at this point and fall back in line, but regrettably I can't because the cab trade runs deep in my veins and I still care about my trade almost as much as I do about my beloved city, unlike some out there. I await the vitriol from lost souls in the wilderness (God bless 'em), who would tear me from limb from limb then moan again about the lack of work as they pick over my carcass in their favourite watering hole alongside the carcass of the beautiful game as was.

Must dash, I've got this book to finish reading: **Bring down the Krays** by Bobby Teale. Ok, I know the end because the establishment always wins.

*Where to guv...???*

**Gary Cox (046), Call Sign Online**

<b>Black Cabs</b>	£43+	<b>37</b> min
 <b>Get a Hailo</b> 3 cars nearby		
<b>Minicabs</b>	£22	<b>37</b> min
Black cab price based on standard rates, suggested route, and time of day, but not traffic or disruptions.		

*Call Sign doesn't usually give its pages over so that someone can thank their parents for being wonderful, but we've made an exception for Laura McKenzie. In addition to having done work experience at Dial-a-Cab in her last school year (she is now 26), her dad Brian McKenzie (A63) has been a driver with this Society since 1997. Neither Brian nor Mum Jane has a clue that this is going into the magazine...*

"All I really want to do is say a big thank you to my Dad and Mum for everything. We have had such a tough last few years and as neither of them know about this (*he he*), I'm hoping it will put a smile onto their faces. Every time my Dad gets his *Call Sign Magazine*, he reads it from cover to cover, so I hope this one is no different because no one actually knows (except for Alan the Editor) that I have written this article.

No doubt many are wondering what the actual point of it is and I'm sure by now that if he has seen it, even my Dad will be very curious!

Those that know my Dad and our family will know that we have had such a tough last few years. Each year we always say let's hope the next one is better, but I don't see that possible now as my Nan sadly left us on 4th April this year and it has hit all of us so very hard! Yes, we

# THANKS MUM AND DAD!



Laura wants to not just thank her mum and dad but to tell them how much she loves them

all the family know that had she been she would want both Mum and Dad to know

all knew it would happen, like it will to us all, but admitting it is the hardest part.

For many years, Mum and Dad have suffered with various health problems in addition to also looking after Nanny, as she too had many illnesses. But despite all that life has thrown at us and no doubt will in the future, Mum and Dad have always been there supporting us and getting us through it all.

So this is really just to thank them both for everything they have done and no doubt will continue to do - not just for family members, but also our friends.

It's so easy just to say thank you, but I felt that maybe something like this would show them that bit more how truly grateful we all are.

My Nan is no longer here to say it herself, but

how grateful she was for everything they did for her and how much she loved them both.

By now my mum will probably be in floods of tears and say she is embarrassed about the picture I've sent to Alan, but when you have a Mum and Dad like ours, you don't care about that. For one, you want to get your own back for all the times they've embarrassed you (!!!) but more to the point, you want to tell the world how wonderful they really are and how much you love them.

Mum and Dad, you are both one in a million and we ALL love you so much with all our hearts. Thank you for everything you do..."

*Your loving daughter*  
**Laura**

## TDOY Dinner and Dance

*'Remembering those less fortunate than ourselves'*

The Taxi Driver of the Year Charity Fund presents their Annual Dinner and Dance on Saturday 6th December 2014 at a NEW venue: The Holiday Inn Regents Park, Carburton Street, W1.

Reception begins at 6.15pm with dinner at 6.45pm followed by dancing to a live band. The cost of tickets is £65 per person and includes a 4-course meal with half a bottle of wine per person.

With your support, *The Taxi Driver of the Year Charity Fund* is able to make substantial donations to the taxi trade charities that support them. Don't miss one of the year's great nights. Great food and great company! It will prove to be an enjoyable and memorable occasion for all.

For tickets, please send completed form and cheque made out to T.D.Y.C.F to:  
Russell Poluck MBE, TDYCF Hon Chairman, 5 St Brides Avenue, Edgware, Middlesex, HA8 6BT

RSVP by 1st November

PLEASE PRINT

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Title: \_\_\_\_\_

Company (if applicable): \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Tel: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Number of tickets: \_\_\_\_\_

Dietary requirements:

Veg

☐

Fish

☐

Meat

☐

Dress smart



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

Registered with the Charities Commission No: 1000761



DaC driver Sean Farrell (B39) looks at trade history from a different angle

# Brethren of the Whip



## The Great Beigel Bakery Robbery

On September 27th 1959 at 3am **Albert Rainbird, Royston Shaw, Leonard**

**Ketley** and Shaw's girlfriend **Carol Debono** went into **Bernstein's**, an all-night bakery in Christian Street, Whitechapel and purchased some beigels. They left, but returned a few minutes later, this time armed with coshes with which they attacked and robbed the three members of staff, bundling them into a sub-basement where the ovens were – the bakery itself being below ground level.

After finishing his shift and dropping his cab off at the yard, **David Klein** would often end his day by buying some beigels, which the **Daily Mirror** helpfully informed its readers was "a kind of bread role with a hole in the middle."

To get into the bakery, Klein had to walk down a darkened alleyway and then a flight of darkened stairs. Carol Debono - described as blonde but who was definitely black haired - warned the other robbers of Klein's arrival. Armed with the baker's own knives, they grabbed hold of Klein, put a knife to his throat and robbed him of his £12.5s (£12.25) takings.

Next to arrive was another cab driver, **Philip Roselaar**. Likewise, he too was attacked and robbed - this time of £25 - and bundled downstairs with the others. The delightfully named **Barnet Osofsky** was the next cab driver to arrive. As he entered the bakery, he was attacked from behind and robbed of his £8 takings, his driving licence and his Bill. He was followed soon after by **Maurice Michaels**, who had his pen, torch and £9 taken. He was probably aware of the darkened stairway – hence the torch – but obviously not of the two men hiding in the shadows, at least until it was too late.

He was followed shortly after by **Harold Reuben** who had £13 1s 3d taken from him in addition to his wristwatch. He too was bundled down into the sub-basement.

**Charles Austin** then entered the trap; as he descended the staircase he suddenly felt a knife being jabbed into his back. He was robbed of £7, a wristwatch and a ring – the watch and ring later being valued at £22 10s (£22.50). That made at least three members of staff and six taxi drivers – though some reports said there were seven drivers plus two members of the public held by the armed robbers.

**Shockingly, Shaw then informed**



them he was the brother of **Donald Hume** and that he would be avenged. **Hume had murdered Stanley Setty, was found innocent at his trial and later wrote a book on how he had actually murdered Setty and disposed of the body! He was now on trial in Switzerland charged with murdering a taxi driver in Zurich. The Swiss authorities would find him guilty and sentence him to life imprisonment. He was later transferred to Broadmoor.**

The cab drivers were terrified that they would somehow be sacrificed for Hume's crimes. The terror was compounded when Albert Rainbird threatened them that they would be searched again "...and if you've got anything else, I will chop your head off!"

Charles Austin was ordered to take his jacket off, which he then placed over a chair. As Rainbird walked towards him, Austin picked up the chair and crashed it over him. The two men fell to the floor and the other

It definitely wasn't this Jim Albert Rainbird even though he does like a beigel!

assailants went to Rainbird's rescue. Austin was kicked in the head and suffered knife wounds to his face, though nothing serious. Despite overpowering Austin, the three robbers and the pseudo blonde then ran out and drove off in a car they had outside.

All four were soon picked up and arrested. Carol Debono was later released on bail. At the subsequent trial, the judge described the robbery as "...clearly not premeditated but was a drunken outburst of inexcusable dishonesty and bullying." After pleading guilty, Albert Rainbird of Dagenham was sentenced to 15 months on seven charges of armed robbery, Royston Shaw, also of Dagenham, received 21 months and Leonard Ketley, a sailor from Barking, was fined £20 or six months default. All charges against Carol Debono were dropped and she later returned to her native Malta.

*Many thanks to Dial-a-Cab's Jim Albert Rainbird (T25) for letting me run with this story and helping me to establish that he and Albert, despite the similarity of the name, are not related. If there are any skeleton's in Jim Rainbird's closet, Albert T Rainbird is not one of them...!*

**Sean Farrell**  
Call Sign Online

## Dial-a-Cab Credit Union

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

*Well wonder no more! If you are a subscriber, journeyman or member of staff at Dial-a-Cab, then you qualify to join the Dial-a-Cab Credit Union. Any member of your family residing at your address also qualifies for membership!*

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

### The cost?

*Just 1% per month on the outstanding balance (or APR of 12.7%).  
Loans can be paid back early AND there can be an annual dividend on your shares.*

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

**Call us on 020 7729 8171 or 020 7749 0585**

Members of the Financial Ombudsman Service  
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Registration number 213263

One of the great lines from New York comedian **Jerry Seinfeld** was: *Who are these people?* He goes on to quizzically discuss how many people in power and authority are there and WHY should society keep being inconvenienced by their nonsense... time after time after time.

The same could be said for the 'fresh, new progressive' climate being jammed down NY cabbies throats by the new regime in NY's City Hall - and their *flunkies-de-jure* at the various City agencies. So let's start with our 'old friends' at the **Taxi and Limousine Commission** - the equivalent of your **London Taxis Private Hire** in Blackfriars

First, how many of *their* staff have ever had to drive a cab for a living before working at the TLC? Have they agreed to a mandatory drug test every year? Have they agreed to subject themselves to having a 6 - 10 point DMV (Dept of Motor Vehicles) suspension plan against *their* licenses? Have they agreed to have mandatory speed cameras attached to *their* Taxi and Limousine Commission vehicles...and have they agreed to pay hundreds - if not thousands - of dollars in cash fines for minor, on-the-job infractions?

I think in the spirit of good faith negotiations, members of the Taxi and Limousine Commission should agree to *all* of the above, starting first thing next Monday morning. No problem, right? I mean, isn't that what a 'progressive' society is all about.... equality?

**Now let's look at a few members of the NYPD....**

Apparently out of 34,000 New York City police officers, the only person qualified to run the NYPD is a Giuliani re-tread, **William Bratton**. Is that the best that new Mayor de Blasio can do? A former Giuliani hack who, uh, 'resigned' and was replaced by the great **Ray Kelly** - thank God!

**Now let's take a look at some of Bill Bratton's NYPD 'highlights' from the last month...**

1) It's been revealed that gun-related assaults have *doubled* since Bill de Blasio took office.

**Mike Higgins not only edits New York's Taxi Talk magazine, but also runs a chat show for cabbies on NY's public service MNN1 TV channel. And now he also writes for Call Sign about problems in the NY cab trade...**

## WHO ARE THESE PEOPLE???



Stop and frisk, anyone?

2) Some wackos climb to the top of the **Brooklyn Bridge** and paint the huge American flag white, while at least five NYPD officers at the base of the bridge and other nearby locations manage to miss the whole thing. Well at least they managed to check their Twitter and Facebook stuff!

3) A guy dressed in a super hero uniform beats up a cop in **Times Square** while his, uh, 'partner' calmly calls for back-up and does practically nothing to break up the melee (it's all there on YouTube, of course).

4) A 350-pound, **Staten Island** father of four was apparently strangled to death while being busted for selling bootleg cigarettes on a street corner.

5) A fugitive child pervert from **Los Angeles** gets killed in a gunfight with two US marshals and an NYPD detective (all three *real* heroes) were hit with gunfire but fortunately survived. So just where was that effing pervert hiding, you ask?

*Nope, he wasn't hiding at all. He'd been working for months at the front counter of a 'bead shop' on West 4th Street in Manhattan!* If you **Dial-a-Cabbers** in London don't know what a Head Shop is, well imagine a retail outlet specializing in tobacco paraphernalia used for all sorts of different things - not all of them legal. Then there's stuff for giving legal highs, legal

party powders and sex toys. Oh yes, you can also get your favourite magazine - so long as it isn't **Taxi Talk** or **Call Sign**!

The other thing NYPD Commissioner Bratton apparently *loves* to do is hammer **Yellow Cab drivers** with street summonses. He was in charge of the NYPD when taxi strikes and demonstrations broke out in the 1990s - all because of City Hall, NYPD and TLC harassment! His *Broken Window* theory of sweating the little stuff apparently means ticketing cabbies right and left - and eroding the support of one of the great methods of street communication. I mean, why would anyone with even half a brain want to alienate the New York City cab drivers - the historical eyes and ears of the streets. You guys in London must feel the same.

In fact, some of those five examples of an NYPD 'bad day' could have been avoided with just a bit of positive interaction with cab drivers and other community leaders who *do* care. Instead, many New Yorkers - particularly cab drivers - are being pushed aside and forced to look the other way when trouble arises.

**Is that what they really want? Is that the new 'Progressive' society that Mayor de Blasio and Commissioner Bill Bratton are creating?**

I hope there is a major commonsense attitude adjustment within the course of the next few weeks at City Hall, TLC and the NYPD. But for now, the Brattons, de Blasios and other 'experts' who allegedly run this city are succeeding in doing one thing; getting all New Yorkers to finally ask the question...

*'Who are these people....??'*

**Michael Higgins**  
**Taxi Talk, New York City**

## My lords, ladies and grandchildren!



**Henry in charge of Keith's Vito!**

Many of you will have seen the advert in every issue of **Call Sign** for **Keith Reading (W76)**, who besides driving a taxi is also now one of the top toastmasters around. In fact several **Dial-a-Cab** drivers and staff members have used his services for various functions (he gives a discount to DaC drivers and staff).

We recently saw a photo of Keith's grandson, **Henry**, who is now pushing on to 3 years and 3 months. It left the question open; will he be a cab driver or a toastmaster? Or even both like granddad!

On Henry's first foray into the taxi business, he soon found the Vito's wiper lever, gave the rear sliding doors and windows a good workout but had trouble pushing the horn hard enough to wake the neighbours! To get over that disappointment, Henry ran inside and put on his favourite **Thomas the Tank** DVD.

As Henry talks remarkably well for his age, we suspect that granddad will also be getting him a junior beginners red tunic. It probably works out less than a new Vito!

## No more cash payments at Dartford Crossing

**U**p until this month, drivers have had a choice of payment methods at the Dartford crossing - cash at the booths or by using a pre-pay Dart Card. But as of **October 2014**, there will no longer be an option to pay by cash and payment options will be similar to the congestion charge.

**They will include paying via text, online, phone or at some retail outlets. You will be able to pay in advance or up until midnight of the following day.**

Current exemptions to payment will be maintained as will the free crossing time between 10pm and 6am.



What a difficult year it has been for **Dial-a-Cab** members and the cab industry in general with competition from many private transport providers with deep pockets and unlimited funds to promote their services.

The radio circuits are no doubt concerned about the future of the radio taxi services they provide. It is also obviously important concerning how many drivers will continue to support the radio taxi service. No drivers – no radio circuits...

**Customers have over the years been very complimentary on the uncompromising service provided by DaC and the other two circuits. Parents trust London taxi drivers to transport their children when unaccompanied to their destinations; then there are others, whether able-bodied or requiring the use of our vehicle's wheelchair accessibility, who rely on the help and trust of the taxi driver to get them to their destination safely and efficiently in a vehicle that is made for the job.**

How things have changed! Any car driver with a minimal knowledge of London plus an old banger fitted with a satnav can take passengers and their belongings to wherever. Well that's what some of my passengers tell me.

Ladies and Gentlemen, I am not telling you anything you don't already know so why am I banging on about it.

Since the introduction of the App revolution and the fact that anyone can set themselves up as a taxi service, it is becoming increasingly more

**DaC Board member Mike son asks a poignant question. It's about...**

## **TFL AND AN ULTERIOR MOTIVE???**



**Transport Panel under Chair Baroness Tanni Grey-Thompson, Vice Chair Charles Belcher and members Roger Burnley, Brian Cooke, Keith Williams, LPHA Chairman Steve Wright and LTDA Assistant General Secretary Bob Oddy.**

Other than the LTDA's Bob Oddy who has been a spokesperson on behalf of the cab industry for many years, there are no other representatives of our industry. Steve Wright represents the minicab side.

I have been and continue to believe there must be some ulterior motive for the Mayor not to invite at least one other competent representative / advisor to express the views and interests of our industry.

Due to the Uber debacle and Tfl - prior to any investigation on whether the Uber App is a legitimate method of calculating the taxi fare - allowing the public to use vehicles and drivers that may or may not be legal, I feel that Leon Daniels, who is the MD for Tfl's Surface Transport and his Board may have been ill advised.

**This is my opinion and not necessarily that of the BoM. Nonetheless, like you, I am really concerned about the future of the trade.**

**Mike Son, DaC Board Member**

**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 Call Sign goes back to February 2003 when the mag took a look at its own history...**

### **CALL SIGN LOOKS BACK AT ITSELF**

#### **Bernie Lyons – ODRTS News Sheet**

Back in **Pentonville Road**, there was the odd **ODRTS News Sheet** that drivers could pick up. The news sheets were the responsibility of **Bernie Lyons**, someone who hated doing them! Fortunately, they were few and far between and consisted of one sheet, usually written by the Chairman of the day. Bernie's job was to get them printed using a duplicator – not an easy job in those days when you had to type on a stencil and then manually turn round a drum to print out copies! Bernie was often heard to say that he'd do the news sheet so long as he didn't have to write anything on it – and he never did!

#### **Joe Toff – ODRTS News Magazine**

With ODRTS becoming more successful and often used by celebrities of the day, Chairman **Eli Solomons** said that ODRTS needed a higher profile and so was launched **ODRTS News Magazine**. As **Joe Toff** had already had editorial experience with **Steering Wheel**, he was a natural to start as the first Editor and although the first issues were not as regular as they are now, it soon became a monthly mag and a very good one too with stars of the day such as **Bernie Braden** and **Ann Todd** writing to the magazine to either praise or moan at us!

In November 1974 after a bout of illness, Joe Toff had to leave not just the Editor's job, but also stand down as a Board member. By then, due to financial restraints, the mag had reverted to a newsletter format with 6 or 7 pages being stapled together. Joe's legacy was that the Editor had to be a Board member, so it came down to which member other than Chairman **Martin Gellman** wanted the job. On the BoM at the time were **Jack Taylor**, **Aubrey Siteman**, **Phil Messias**, **Peter Speroni**, **Phil Emden** and newly elected **Lou Gitlin**. Martin asked for volunteers, but only Phil came forward.

#### **Phil Emden – ODRTS News and Views**

In December 1974, a new name appeared on the Editor's page with a new name for the mag - **ODRTS News and Views**. Its contents changed dramatically with **Phil Emden** deciding that Joe's magazine was far too serious. **Phil's Phillers** included trivia about what drivers were doing when not driving a cab and don't even ask about **Fanny's News!** This was added to the usual BoM reports that invariably consisted of 'please cover the work' messages. In 1981, News and Views became **Call Sign** but still retained its stapled Zerox paper format until January 1983 when Phil took the decision to go glossy and increase the format to a regular 8 pages. Then in the November 1983 issue, Chairman **Peter Fennymore** and Editor Phil became concerned about a group referred to as the **Gang of Four**. There was a fear that this group might attempt to disrupt the AGM that month. They were right to be worried. It was one of the rowdiest AGM's ever seen with a Board member (**Ron Maskell**) losing his place after just one year following unproven accusations that he had referred to new drivers unfavourably. In addition, some drivers considered that having a Board member as Editor made it biased against subscribers. A proposition said a Board member could no longer edit the magazine. The rule change was accepted and Phil had to stand down.

#### **Jery Craig – Call Sign**

So in January 1984, a new name appeared on the Editor's page – one that was already well known through his brilliant cartoons. **Gerald Craig** had been using the signature of Jery for so long that he had already become Jery to everyone who knew him. In his early Editorials, Jery said he wanted to bring both sides closer together so that stand-up arguments could become sensible discussions. Jery's **Call Sign** quickly gained in popularity and he added two new columns – **Steve Shaller's** "Spanner in the Works" where Steve told drivers how to fix minor cab repairs and the rather infamous **Big Al** – who stayed until 1997 insulting anyone and everyone that he could think of!

In April 1997, the BoM under **Brian Rice** decided that **Call Sign** editors should be tied by a renewable contract after Jery had completed 14 years in the job. Jery was invited to re-stand with the other seven applicants, but decided that 14 years was enough and threw his weight behind current Editor **Alan Fisher**. And that, as they say, is a wrap...

**J.P.Duval**

# Dial-a-Cab Credit Union



Hello everyone in the green and gold club (that's your badge)! Well my last article was hardly a success with not one new member joining your credit union. I know some have left our wonderful circuit, but crikey there must be many left who can see the value of joining what

many say is the most successful credit union in the country. Strangely, we had more calls for our other credit union, Harp. So don't delay, give us a ring and start saving. You know it makes sense.

## Harp Credit Union

If you read the above, you'll have noticed that the Harp had more enquiries than the DACCU. I'm sorry, that was my fault for saying that it had all the same benefits as the Dial-a-Cab Credit Union. It does have up to a point; everything *BUT* the 7% account. Harp is nowhere near big enough to support that kind of account. To give out that kind of percentage interest rate, we have to loan out the money and with somewhere in the region of 100 Harp members as against DACCU's 1000, I'm sorry but there is no chance. Of course, with more members than you never know. So apologies if you mistook my meaning...

## Hackney Road Taxi

### Tyres (0207 729 5237)

Now this is a benefit to members of either one of the two credit unions we run, as you can take out your savings for new tyres. So even if you only came out with a tenner as your float and suddenly need new tyres, then no problem – unless, of course, you want to give our hard working fitter Chris a nice tip and please none of that “don't eat yellow snow” etc!

I know what you lot are like, so come down to Hackney Road, get a FREE tyre check and join one of our Credit Unions.

I think that's all for now other than I bet you're glad it's September! So take care and be very careful out there...

**John Riley**  
DACCU Vice President

Cab getting on a bit and doesn't start so well? It could be...

## All Clogged Up!

**W**hen you get on the cab eager to begin your shift, you expect the taxi to share your enthusiasm to go to work. Well, sometimes the engine is reluctant to fire up and that's not a good start!

A member of the *Call Sign* team had just such a problem recently, which we relate for the benefit of a wider audience.

"I'd noticed my TX2 was becoming increasingly difficult to start from cold," this magazine's long-time snapper **Alan Green (E52)** told *Call Sign*. "It seemed to require more and more attempts to turn the engine over and get it running. I thought that perhaps the 'glow plugs' were weak and not pre-warming the engine enough. The cab had recently been serviced and was working fine at that time, so it was a bit of a mystery really," he said.

"I made an appointment to visit my service agent, **Cricklewood Carriers** near Staples Corner and they rapidly diagnosed a blocked **Exhaust Gas Recirculation** valve – better known as an EGR valve.

**This critical component to engine efficiency re-directs exhaust gases back into the engine for better performance while creating less exhaust smoke - except when it gets clogged up!**

"The valve was stripped down and thoroughly cleaned together with the black plastic inlet manifold before being refitted and then the engine ran as sweet as a nut. I was told that the Ford engine, as fitted to the TX2, needs to be given a regular burst

of revs to keep the valve and the airways clear, for example a high speed romp along a motorway. Low speed town driving doesn't really give the EGR valve much of a chance to work as it was intended.

"I was lucky really that my EGR valve could be stripped and cleaned. Sheldon, the head honcho at Cricks told me the TX4 valve can only be replaced when it malfunctions as it is a sealed unit, so I breathed a sigh of relief when my cab started up instantly the next morning! Not forgetting my *Call Sign* job, I also took a photo! It shows the dismantled EGR valve being thoroughly cleaned before refitting on my TX2.

*Cricklewood Carriers can be contacted on 0208 452 5461*



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# LOOKING AT (TAXI) LIFE

## London land grab

There was a massive uproar a few years back regarding parts of Spain grabbing back land from ex-pat communities and rebuilding on them for their own benefit.

As I watch the latest set of privatisation surges proposed by our own government, I cannot help but notice that we are to be subjected to the same practice, with the apparent intention of slimlining.

**Fire stations and post office sorting centres, when you look at each one of them especially in London and the suburbs, all take up a lot of valuable land, while most come with add-on car park spaces.**

I could not even begin to calculate the combined value set around **Rosebery Avenue** with the closure of the **fire station** together with the proposed closure of the **Mount Pleasant** sorting office. With every inch of land in London seemingly being built on, the cynic in me doesn't actually believe that these proposals have anything to do with modernising systems or working practices, but are just a back door method of getting hold of land that we own - and cheaply in comparison to the real worth - then eventually to sell off to private real estate developers in order to make vast profits.

If any real evidence were needed, take a look at the **Care in the Community** projects where every large mental care health asylum or hospital such as **Colney Hatch**, **Claybury** and **Spencer Park** etc are all now large housing developments. Claybury especially, is so expensive that most people just couldn't afford to live there anyway!

Most of the land, which was once owned by **British Rail** and **London Transport** ie railway sid-

## With Tom Quigley (Y33)



ings and car parks, will have some sort of development on them. With the population of London expected to soar to over 11 million people, space is at a premium, but it shouldn't come as a cost to the rest of us just for the profit of the few that can afford it...

## The 'write' price...

Like everyone else, I look to get value for money from anything I buy.

With the help of barcodes in supermarkets and even with the huge array of items on the shelves, generally speaking it's quite easy to work out what most most of the products that you buy are costing you with prices per litre or kilo etc.

**Well most products that is, until you go to buy an ink cartridge for your printer. Then you come across all sorts of different sizes, multi-**

**packs, colour codes and manufacturers own brands. Then there are supermarket and others with their copies. It's a huge understatement to say that the whole area is confusing.**

However, the question is whether it's confusing because they are dealing with a pretty simple bunch of folk who accept and believe everything that they see - or could just it be on purpose?

**Recent consumer programmes and retail price checkers have been giving some attention to what must be one of the most valuable of everyday products and unless there is a world shortage of octopus ink, somehow the price of ink within everyday cartridges will range from around £1000 per litre up to around a staggering £2500 per litre for some leading manufacturers own brands.**

This makes it far more expensive than real vintage **Champagne**, dearer than the world's most expensive coffee - **Kopi Luwak** - at £480 a kilo, where the beans are eaten by an **Asian Palm Civet** and then excreted by it, which is said to give it a rich aroma! Or what about the world's most expensive milk to put in your **Kopi Luwak** coffee, coming to you direct from Japan's **Nakazawa Foods** at a bargain £14 a pint!

Even the late - and yes, great - **Marilyn Monroe** would be tempted in the modern day to reply when asked what she wears in bed: "No, not **Chanel No 5** but **HP** - and I don't mean the sauce..."

Anyone want some shares in **Hewlett Packard**...???

**Tom Quigley**  
Call Sign Online

## DON'T SAY WE DIDN'T ASK YOU!

The London Assembly is investigating how Taxi and Private Hire services can better meet the needs of Londoners.

## Licensed Taxi drivers – we want your input.

We will look at a wide range of issues including:

- Availability of Taxis and Private Hire vehicles
- Safety and security, including touting
- Fares and payment options
- The performance of TfL's Taxi and Private Hire Unit



We need your thoughts by **30 September 2014.**

Please email us at [transportcommittee@london.gov.uk](mailto:transportcommittee@london.gov.uk)

Or write to: Transport Committee, London Assembly, City Hall, The Queen's Walk, London SE1 2AA.

**#beepbeep**

# LONDONASSEMBLY

*Holding the Mayor to account and investigating issues that matter to Londoners*

# Win £100 with a caption...



Holidays are over and it's time to pay off those credit card bills, so here's another chance to pocket £100 in *Call Sign's* Caption Competition. The best caption in the view of the judges will pocket the loot! So get thinking...

Email entries to [callsignmag@aol.com](mailto:callsignmag@aol.com), post to Call Sign at the usual office address or just drop your entry into the DaC driver's reception addressed to Call Sign caption contest.

Closing date is Thursday September 11. The editor's decision is final...

## TAXI TYRES BACK IN HACKNEY ROAD



Many Dial-a-Cab drivers were using the tyre garage in Hackney Road that was handily situated downstairs from the DaC Credit Union offices. Handy because with the cost of new tyres nowadays, members of DACCU could just pop upstairs to the CU office and get them to pick up the tab knowing that the CU interest rates are among the lowest anywhere and that the repayments would be relatively easy.

Suddenly the garage announced it was closing. But now, because so many drivers expressed disappointment at the closure, it has reopened under the name of Hackney Road Taxi Tyres.

So the next time you need any tyres for your cab within five minutes of the City, you can find Hackney Road Taxi Tyres and be back in the work minutes after fitting. And members can still use the Credit Union to pay!

***Hackney Road Taxi Tyres are situated at the Peterley Business Centre, 472 Hackney Road E2***

## Vito: Trading is tough...

Eco City Vehicles, the company supplying the Mercedes Vito taxi has cast blame on both **Uber** and **Mayor Boris Johnson** for their decline in sales. Between the two, said ECV, they had caused uncertainty within the London trade for those that buy taxis. The group also said it would need extra funding this year.



**Eco pinpointed the uncertainty of the Mayor's decision to introduce zero emissions standards from 2018 on top of a fear about any damage Uber could do.**

Revenue for the six months to June fell 33% to £11.4m compared to 12 months ago, with new Vito sales plummeting to 139 taxis compared to 299 in the last period. That resulted in their share of the London taxi market falling to 24% compared to 44% 12 months back.

There was also some good news in that Eco's rental fleet is continuing to grow with an increase of 30 cabs since the end of last year making it 75 units out on hire at the end of June.

The group confirmed that there were no plans to sell the company, but the share price recently hit an all-time low of 0.35p, more than 80% down on its year high..



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Many Dial-a-Cab drivers know Bill Tyzack (ex-C06) who retired from driving his Metrocab in 2013 at the age of 85. Many not on the radio also know Bill as the hard-working Life President of the London Taxi Drivers Fund for Underprivileged Children.

Unfortunately Bill hadn't been in the best of health since his retirement; but to make things so much worse, just over three months ago Bill fell over whilst walking along and cracked his thigh bone. That is a very nasty injury even to a young person, but to an 86-year old it can be catastrophic.

Bill was immediately taken into hospital but not too long afterwards, he was struck down by the MRSA virus. Bill would have

# Bill Tyzack out of hospital



Bill & Grace

been the first to say that things weren't looking too good at that time, so when the surgeons suddenly announced that he also needed his appendix removed, it would have been difficult to find anything positive to say about his condition.

But drivers know what a tough guy Bill Tyzack is and amazingly after 11 weeks, Bill came out of hospital and went home. When *Call Sign* spoke to his wife Grace, she told us that Bill was still very tired and needed help getting about but was determined that he

would be able to get about the house on his own soon.

Bill arrived at the ODRTS offices in Pentonville Road on 19 September 1962, and at the time of his retirement was one of only two drivers that had joined the Society when Eli (Trixie) Solomons was Chairman (1959 – 1962).

In 1987 Bill was honoured by the Queen with the BEM at Buckingham Palace in honour of his charity work with the LTFUC.

We wish you well Bill..

## Are we there yet?



Head of the trip's organising committee, Phil Davis (F10), getting into the mood

This year's Children's **Magical Taxi Tour** to the **Disneyland Paris Resort** is drawing closer and in less than two weeks, 12th September, around 100 taxis with drivers including several from **Dial-a-Cab**, will take children and their helpers from Canary Wharf to the Disneyland Paris Resort, a trip that most of the children will say has been the best of their young lives.

Most of the children on this magical journey suffer from life limiting illnesses and as such, included in the 400+ going to Paris with the Magical Taxi Tour will be medical teams, ambulances, breakdown services and of course, cars. The trip, organised as usual by **The Worshipful Company of Hackney Carriage Drivers**, will be escorted by police from the **City of London** and the **Met** in the UK, in addition to the **Gendarmerie Nationale** in France.

Very soon, the 100 licensed London taxi drivers will hear the words: "Are we nearly there yet!"

More than 4000 children have been on the trip over the years and although the trip is named the Magical Taxi Tour, how they get there isn't magic. It is thanks to those that help with sponsorship – companies such as P&O who provide the ferry crossing to Calais – and those who make donations throughout the year. Then there are the drivers who volunteer. It may sound like an attractive trip driving to Paris, but in addition to it being a long journey, there is the responsibility of driving children who may not be too well. And of course there are the organisers – the WCHCD – who do such an amazing job year after year since the first trip in 1994.

There will be a report and photos in the next issue of *Call Sign*...

**You can learn more about the Magical Taxi Tour at [www.magicaltaxitour.com](http://www.magicaltaxitour.com) where you will find details of previous trips and also how you can help by making a donation to help fund next year's outing.**

## 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**

# Mailshot

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

## Shortsighted?

Hi Alan

Multiple destination jobs were sent out in W5 recently with repeated messages to please cover them for AMV. Myself and another driver put ourselves out (I was at Marylebone) at 6.00 on a Thursday evening to help cover the work for a good client. When we got there, we were told to wait and that the passenger was coming down. After waiting, we were then scrubbed off because of overbooking. I spoke to a DaC supervisor and asked for remuneration as it had cost us a significant amount in time and money in attempting to cover the trip. Eventually, after I had finished banging my head against a brick wall trying to get him to see my point, he told us to clear the job for £20 – the meter was now reading £16.40 anyway.

The point here is very simple; knowing now that this job was for AMV – an account we have only recently got back, I doubt that any driver on DaC would have begrudged us being paid a decent remuneration for putting ourselves out for them. To my thinking, less than a tenner just by clearing the meter was an insult. This didn't have to penalise AMV as it could have been done on our own 99966 docket, then me and the other driver would have been happier and would still have put ourselves out for the Society. I think you can see why there are two drivers here who will think twice before putting themselves out to that degree to cover the work again. And if other drivers are treated the same way after going down the same route, we will end up losing more accounts and be told it's because WE don't cover the account work. So before any messages are put out: "Please cover this job or we could lose the account," think about how many drivers have been let down and won't put themselves out. Shortsighted is the operative word. Rant over...

**Dave Humphryes (A69)**

**Allan Evans replies:** Hi Dave, having read your email I can understand your rant! We are constantly sending out messages to cover work in areas that can cause us problems and we do rely heavily on drivers like yourself to go that extra mile as you did on this occasion. It is at the discretion of the dispatchers whether or not the charges are passed on to the account customer and if any additional driver payment should be paid. In this case, it appears that the actual client cancelled one of the taxis on line and then changed the destination in the first taxi that arrived to take both passengers, leaving you without a trip. Normally the dispatcher would equate the driver payment (scrub) to the time spent on the trip, which in your case was slightly underestimated. I will certainly bring this to their attention for future reference and

hope that you will continue to carry on in the same vein; it is appreciated and it does help to keep accounts in this highly competitive market.

## Goodbye from Jon

Dear all

I took my annual leave from Friday 1st August until Friday 8th August but did not return to Dial-a-Cab as my notice period had then come to an end. It was with a heavy heart that after 10 years, I relinquished the keys to the kingdom; this fine kingdom of which I have had the honour to serve and protect. My years at DaC have been the best of my career thus far. Never shall I forget the experiences I've had here, nor the friendships forged. And so I pass on my legacy to Martyna.

The crowning achievement of my career to date: the Data Centre. It is the beating heart of this kingdom and its stability and longevity is nothing short of a miracle, considering the odds that have stacked against us over the years. I have no doubt Martyna will take care of, and significantly improve it. So I roll the dice again and accept the quest that fate has offered me.

Our time together was fantastic. No doubt you'll see me again from time to time. I wish Dial-a-Cab and all of you the very best for the future. Look after my old team mates in the IT department.

Over and out...

**Jon Winterburn**

**Former DaC Network Administrator**

**Jon said his official goodbye to Call Sign last month. In addition to writing about IT, Jon pencilled articles about any new gadgets hitting the market and about the love of his life (after his family and Dial-a-Cab) - gaming! There wasn't a computer game out there that Jon couldn't defeat. Good luck for the future Jon ...Ed**

## Thirty years

Hi Alan,

Regarding the way in which we are to be charged starting from September, I see the 30 year+ drivers have been shafted again. We used to pay £1 per month plus vat, then it went up to £78 per month including vat, ie 50% for our long and loyal service. So 50% of the new price should be £5 per month and 3.75% of each job. Nowhere in the *August Call Sign* does it say that the 30 year+ drivers are having another increase, but we are. Most weeks my credits are £200+ (ie £200 @ 7.5% = £15 + £5 = £20 – that is £2 more than the £18 per week I am currently paying and if I do even more credits, the total would be even greater.

Alan the editor pointed out a few issues ago that most 30year+ drivers stuck with Dial-a-Cab through three recessions; we did not leg it like a lot of drivers and then come back when things got better. I do not want to hear that the computer can't handle 3.75% and that it would have to be attached to each driver with 30 years' service - probably about an hour's work. I really don't think that 30 year drivers are being treated fairly...

**Brian Marcantonio (R73)**

**Brian Rice replies:** Brian, long serving Members enjoyed £1 per month subs for in excess of sixteen years and we maintained that criteria for as long as we could. However, circumstances have changed and the Society has to change as well, but the BoM will review the way in which subscriptions are charged in the future, especially if our business conditions improve. Our longer serving Members are appreciated and I am sure most will understand the current conditions the Radio Circuits find themselves in. The BoM understand it is extremely difficult to take something back after so many years, but when times were better for the Radio Circuits we looked after our long serving Members, let's hope those times soon return.

## And subscriptions

Hi Alan

I guess your postbag must be bulging with shareholders giving their opinion to the way subs are to be collected. Personally I don't blow hot or cold about the changes - if it works ok, if it doesn't then change it. Over the years, you have been scathing of the stupidity of Hailo drivers being charged 10%. Now we are doing the same, so has your opinion changed? The Chairman stated that all jobs carry a 10% gratuity. But if the fare carries a capped £2.50 gratuity or even no gratuity, what then?

There are rumours that the Chairman is going to retire; bad timing, please try and persuade him to delay and lead us through these troubled times. However, the Chairman does talk of cost-cutting so perhaps he should tell Board members to earn their living driving a cab. Why do we need a Board member to attend complaints more than once a month when we have a complaints committee? Why do we need a Board member for Sales to go in daily when we have a Sales team? Why do we need a Control room Board member 24/7 when we have a Control room manager? I just feel that if Board members work at the coalface, it will give them a far better appreciation of what is happening.

I know Board members do not have to be proprietors, but they must have a Badge and Bill to prepare them for a time when they may not be Board members, so there is nothing to stop them driving a cab. As I understand it, the Chairman and only the Chairman is allowed not to have a Badge and Bill. I may be wrong, I usually am...

**Stephen Field (f68)**

**Hiya Stephen, a famous man once proclaimed that questions and answers represented the statements of a life. But it wasn't me! However, as it's me you've asked, I'll have a bash! Yes, I have been**





# Mailshot

scathing about the stupidity of Hailo drivers being charged 10 percent; but I did align that with them also having no run-ins, no gratuities, free waiting time, having to pay the credit card charges in addition to paying for their own air time. We, however, get a terminal with brilliant mapping and points of information, credit card swipe and printer etc. Yes, I still don't like the system but you have to bear in mind that we didn't choose to do it, it was forced on us by the way the other apps charged drivers. And if we have to do it, at least we are only charging 7.5% rather than 10%. Incidentally, there are currently no accounts that I know of where there is not a 10% gratuity and only very few where the gratuity is capped.

If Brian Rice intends retiring as Chairman then he hasn't told me about it and I'm sure he will appreciate your words.

As for Board members; they all have Bills and two of the five – Garry White and Mike Son still work on their cabs. Allan Evans not only runs the Control centre but is also Operations Manager (the rule book says we have to have one). Up until very recently he was also driving his taxi, but holding two positions now takes up all his time. Tom Whitbread can't drive at present due to the health problems he bravely told *Call Sign* about last month, leaving Keith Cain working full time. As for him just leaving his Sales team to do everything, I think you would understand more if you saw his desk and his workload. You can have someone to do your accounts and even buy spare parts for your cab, but they can't go to work for you. As for Badge and Bill, yes, even the Chairman has to have them. And no Stephen, I certainly don't believe that you are usually wrong ...Ed

## Subscriptions

Hi Alan

I just thought that I would add my comments to that of other members regarding the proposed subs increase. Personally I would love to pay £50 plus £10 for the use of the system every week because that would mean I would be taking a lot of money off the radio, but unfortunately the way the work levels are at the moment I will not be paying anything like that amount every week and in fact I could even be paying less than the £36 per week that I am currently paying.

If the society is in such dire straits that the Chairman feels subs have to be raised to help things along, perhaps he and the other Board members should set an example, lead from the front and maybe start work one hour later plus pay for their own cabs backwards and forwards to the stations.

When times are hard we all have to make sacrifices and perhaps this small gesture on the BoM's part would add to the ailing coffers of DaC and help us through this tough time!

Howard Flavin (A.26)

Thanks for the letter Howard. As only one

Board member – the Chairman – uses a taxi to get in each day, I'm not sure that would make much difference. And as he comes in on the train from Hampshire every day, I think that might be pushing it as an example! As has been pointed out, only two other BMs work regularly and to cut the hours of those trying to get more work seems to be rather counter-productive. You should also remember that DaC has around £6million in the bank and a four storey office block in the City that is fully paid for. So although the work is quieter than most of us remember, we are certainly not in any way in dire straits! In addition, the new payments are not a subs increase – just a response to a method that many kept asking for. As you point out, if it is quiet then your subs will decrease and not increase ...Ed

## Thanks to the Barking Physical Therapy Centre ...and Andy!

Hi Alan

We want to thank you for advertising the Barking Physical Therapy centre in *Call Sign*. After many visits to doctors and A&E walk in clinics, I took Hazel to see Andy about her knee at Barking Physical Therapy centre. He worked his magic and now Hazel has had key-hole surgery and is on the mend. Thank you....

Martin Howells (F84) and Hazel

Pleased it worked so well Martin. A number of Dial-a-Cab drivers have been to see Andy over the years and have marvelled at his success. That also includes Chairman Brian Rice whose shoulder had been so bad for such a long period that he began to need help just putting his jacket on. Several appointments with Andy and he was cured! The same thing happened to me this June and again his magic worked. One DaC driver had such a problematic back that he was told he may have had to give up driving. Well Andy sorted him out too and although he goes for occasional treatments still, he is now driving his taxi absolutely normally. So your letter doesn't surprise me, Martin, but it's still nice to hear. And DaC drivers get a genuine discount down to (I believe) £20 a session. It's worth every penny....Ed

## New terminal mapping

Hi Alan

You may want to sit down before reading further, as this is a positive letter to *Call Sign*! I think the new map is brilliant, particularly the points of interest. Will we get automatic updates or do we as drivers have to do anything to get them? Also, is there a way that we can go about suggesting new points to be included on future updates? For example, last week I was asked for the Xenia Hotel in Cromwell Road and the Lockhart Restaurant, which is in the one way bit of Seymour Place - both of which are yet to appear in the points of interest.

Mick Kennedy (M30)

Pleased you like it Mick. I too love the POI



even though I believe it is making our brains rather lazier than they should be! The list is updated yearly and the new list will be updated when the next fix takes place – as will be the mapping too because London is constantly changing. If anyone has any points they think may be worth adding, email them to [info@navigationmaster.com](mailto:info@navigationmaster.com) and say you are with Dial-a-Cab. The chances are that most will be on there already, but it's always worth mentioning ...Ed

## Reed and the IAM

Hi Alan

Just to let you know on a few occasions when I drove your son Reed home from DaC on the late shift, he slowly tried to convince me that I should take my Institute of Advanced Motorcyclists test.

When Reed passed on, I never went to his funeral feeling that I may have looked a little pushy. But after a short time, I popped along to the cemetery and we had a long chat. And today I can confirm that the chat paid off. I am now the proud owner of an IAM green badge. I just wanted you to know that your boy is still doing it.

Incidentally, can I also thank Derek Ade from Herts and Beds Advanced Motorcyclists? I joined them after Reed mentioned that one existed in Essex, so I did some research online and found HBam nearer home. I was given Derek as a volunteer observer and he coached me whatever the weather.

Gary Cox (046)

Thanks Gary. That has put a smile on my face. Mind you, Reed was an IT expert and wanted me to follow in his footsteps and now, having been using a computer for 30 years, I still type with two fingers!

Reed was the Sunday evening dispatcher at DaC for 25 years in addition to being involved with the Ford Motor Company in his real job as a systems analyst ...Ed

## Call Sign

Hello Alan

Although I no longer live in London or drive a cab there, I still enjoy reading *Call Sign Online*. But of late I have had trouble navigating the 'Search Call Sign' facility and also your August issue, which seems to have vanished. Is it me or is there a problem?

Mike Bradley

Bedminster, Bristol

Hi Mike, yes there was a serious problem which caused my phone to ring non-stop! Fortunately Call Sign's IT guru Vince Chin had it fixed in no time. But for future info, Call Sign also runs [www.dac-callsign.com](http://www.dac-callsign.com) in addition to the usual .co.uk site where the problem was ...Ed



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