

From the home of Dial-a-Cab International

July 2015

# Call Sign



*Sid Gold:  
A DaC legend dies...*



# NASH'S NUMBERS

From Alan Nash (A95)

This is the 200th edition of Nash's Numbers. I know there are repeats at times, especially 'Eurostar Arrivals' and the annual distance chart, but none of them are purely repeats. They may look similar to a previous article, but it will have been updated to the latest situation. Whilst this month is about hotels, it is somewhat different from my previous lists; it features recently opened hotels or even still being built or in planning for 2013 to 2017, I guess DaC drivers find out first! But I can't believe the official name for a hotel will finish up as 'Park Plaza near Waterloo Station'!

## New Hotels 2013-2017

Hotel	Address	Open(s)
Ace Hotel London Shoreditch	100 Shoreditch High Street, E1 6JQ	Sep-13
Admiralty Arch Hotel	The Mall, SW1A 2BN	2016
Artist Residence London	52 Cambridge Street, SW1V 4QQ	Sep-14
Art'otel London Hoxton	Great Eastern Street, EC2A 3JL	2017
Beaumont	8 Balderton Street, Mayfair, W1K 6TF	Oct-14
Belmond Cadogan	75 Sloane Street, SW1X 9SG	Summer 2016
Chiltern Firehouse	Chiltern Street, W1U 7PU	Feb-14
citizenM St Paul's	61-65 Holborn Viaduct, EC1A 2DY	Nov-14
citizenM Tower of London	38-40 Trinity Square, EC3N 4DJ	2015
Dorsett Shepherds Bush	58 Shepherds Bush Green, W12 8QE	Jun-14
Edition	10 Berners Street, W1T 3NP	Sep-13
Great Northern Hotel	Pancras Rd (Cheney Rd), N1C 4TB	Apr-14
Great Scotland Yard Hotel	3-5 Great Scotland Yard, SW1A 2HW	2016
Ham Yard Hotel	1 Ham Yard, W1D 7DT	Jun-14
Hampton by Hilton London Waterloo	157 Waterloo Road, SE1 8XA	Mar-14
Hilton London Bankside	Great Suffolk Street, SE1 0UG	Summer 2015
Hotel Xenia	160 Cromwell Road, SW5 0TL	May-13
Hoxton Holborn	199-206 High Holborn, WC1V 7BD	Sep-14
Hub by Premier Inn Covent Garden	110 St Martin's Lane, WC2N 4BA	Nov-14
Hyatt Place London Heathrow/Hayes	Hayes Gate Hse, 27 Uxbridge Rd, UB4 0JN	Spring 2015
Ibis Styles Piccadilly Circus	Trocadero, 7-14 Coventry Str, W1D 7DH	2017
London Edition	10 Berners Street, W1T 3NP	Sep-13
M by Montcalm	151 City Road, EC1V 1JH	Feb-15
Manhattan Loft Gardens Design Hotel	20-22 International Way, E20 1GQ	2017
Mondrian London	20 Upper Ground, Southwark, SE1 9PF	Sep-14
Nadler Soho	10 Carlisle Street, W1D 3BR	Jun-13
Nobu Hotel Shoreditch London	10-50 Willow Street, EC2A 4BH	2016
Old Street Courthouse Hotel	335-337 Old Street, EC1V 3UD	Mid 2015
One Leicester Street	1 Leicester Street, WC2H 7BL	May-13
Park Plaza near Waterloo Station	Hercules Hse, 6 Hercules Road, SE1 7DU	2017
Park Plaza Park Royal	628 Western Avenue, W3 0TA	2015
Rosewood (was Chancery Court)	252 High Holborn, WC1V 7EN	Oct-13
Royal London House By Montcalm	22-25 Finsbury Square, EC2A 1DX	Nov-14
Shangri-La Hotel London	Shard, St. Thomas's St, SE1 9SY	May-14
Ten Trinity Square	10 Trinity Square, EC3P 3AX	2016
Tobacco Dock Hotel & Aparthotel	The Highway, E1W 2BU	2015
Z Piccadilly	2 Orange Street, WC2H 7DF	Jun-14
Z Shoreditch	136-144 City Road, EC1V 2RL	Jan-15
Z Soho	17 Moor Street, W1D 5AP	
Z Victoria	5 Lower Belgrave Street, SW1W 0NR	
Zetter Townhouse Marylebone	28-30 Seymour Street, W1H 7JB	2015

# from the editor's desk

## Yes, we're back!

Back from a lovely break in and around **Bruges**, Belgium, where in addition to the lovely *olde worlde* feel of this capital city of **West Flanders**, it was also close enough to **Dunkirk** to allow **Linda** and myself to drive there in time for the celebrations that took place 75 years after the amazing **Operation Dynamo** evacuations between 27 May and 4 June 1940.

Now I'm back - quite astonishingly as I head into my nineteenth year in the Editor's chair! So I really feel that I should look back at the promises I made at the time of my first issue in June 1997. The trouble is that it's so long ago... I can't remember them! So that's that!

Speaking of my month off, I hope you will understand if some of the trade news that would usually have appeared in last month's issue seems slightly dated in this month's mag, but as June doesn't exist in this magazine's vocabulary, it's how life is! But I've tried to minimise them when possible. So it's just on with the show...

## Vito doors

**Call Sign** has been told that should any **Mercedes Vito** be involved in an accident and needs a new door, then the replacement will now be coming direct from Mercedes rather than via Manufacturer of the Year award winner, **Penso**, as was the case before. The old doors were fitted with ADLS (Automatic Digital Lights System) - you can see the red lights on the inside of the doors. As a result, insurance companies will have to accept that any repairs involving the doors will take a further three hours following an accident. Just thought you'd like to know!

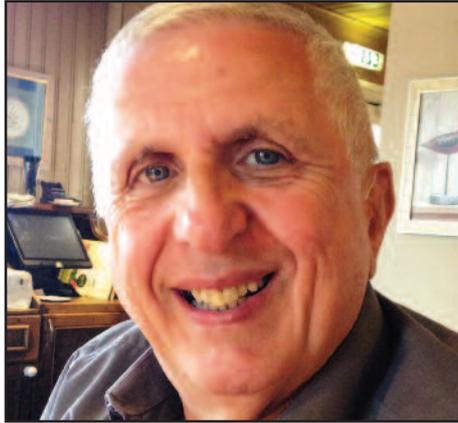
## Operation Neon

**TfL's** announcement that they had launched a two-month attack on wrongdoers of the PH and taxi trades via **Operation Neon**, seemed to be good news when looked at quickly. Indeed, some of it was; but surely hearing that just 8 PH drivers were reported for hire offences, whereas 30 drivers were reported for parking on taxi ranks seems rather a waste of resources! Don't get me wrong; there is little more irritating than seeing a minicab parked on a taxi rank as though they had a right to be there, but compared to other offences that are committed before the eyes of most licensed taxi drivers many times each day, to find just 8 drivers reported seems to be a ridiculous waste of emphasis on what needs to be done.

Then there were the 600 drivers who were moved on from **Swallow Street**, **Dover Street** and **Berkeley Street**. Moved on? Doesn't that infer they were doing something wrong, yet they were apparently just moved on - that, no doubt, courtesy of Westminster who took their parking enforcement officers with them and probably covered their costs via PCNs! Personally, I'd have thought an all-out assault by the police might have done more good. But hey, what do I know, I only drive a cab...

## Online gaming ads

Long-time **Call Sign** readers will know this magazine's policy regarding online gaming ads - we just don't accept them. Now two **Dial-a-Cab** drivers have told me how online gambling has affected them with their offspring - one son and one daughter - losing fairly large amounts using the credit cards of their dads who were out trying to earn a living in their cabs at the time.



One of the dads wanted me to publish details of his son's losses (almost £800) including his name. I didn't think that identifying him - and thereby the dad as well - would serve any useful purpose because very few would know of his son from a taxi magazine. He eventually agreed.

I take no pleasure in being told by both of those drivers that I was right to refuse the ads, my only hope being that those who criticised my decision to refuse the ads and their freebie offers of start-up cash at the time from the online casinos, can at least understand why I made that decision. It wasn't to stop drivers gambling should they choose to, but because of the possibility of driver's children seeing the ads, using their parent's credit card details and then opening up accounts because everyone thinks they can win. Advertising revenue isn't *that* important to me...

## More time for cyclists and cyclists and cyclists!

**TfL** have announced the trial of a new technology that will help give cyclists more time on green lights. The trials are taking place along **Cable Street** on **Cycle Superhighway 3** and detect the numbers of cyclists travelling along a route, which enables traffic signal timings to be adjusted to give more green time when there are high numbers of cyclists at key junctions during peak times. Apparently a radar based technology detects the heat of riders as they enter the detection zone. Sadly they aren't quite efficient enough to detect the heat emanating from motorists who have already given more time to pedestrians - regardless of whether any are around - and now have to put up with horrendous traffic hold-ups caused during the building of the cycle superhighways, hold-ups that must be sending emission levels through the roof!

**And now finally, two months after our interview with Cycling Commissioner Andrew Gilligan in the April Call Sign when we revealed to the world that cyclists won't even have to use the new lanes and that they can still keep to the main highway, the whole of London now finally sees TfL's stupidity following Mayor Boris finally admitting that fact on LBC!**

Also, according to the Mayor, London is leading the way in new technology trials that have the potential to bring significant benefits to cyclists. Sadly, the rest of us are being left to stew, even though we are told that over half of all junctions in London now use 'Scout' technology, which is said to use sensors buried in carriageways that detect real-time traffic conditions and optimise traffic light timings to reduce delays, after working out how many people are waiting to cross that

road. I'm waiting to see my first set, because to me there have been no reductions in waiting times. But hey, what do I know, I only drive a cab!

Now **TfL** have also said that **Cycle Superhighway 1** will run from Tottenham to the City on quiet side streets running parallel to the A10. Journeys along it "will be substantially quicker, safer and more pleasant than using the main road." Well at least it will be for those on two wheels!

More than 1000 people are said to have responded to a public consultation on the route, with 77 per cent being in favour. But that wasn't enough for **TfL** and **Hackney Council**. They have gone further by closing even more side streets in the area and shoving motor vehicles into the main roads, where they can breathe in even more of those dangerous emission fumes that the Mayor claims he wants to get rid of.

**So excuse me, Mr Mayor, but it seems to me that it's actually you that is causing more and more congestion and as a by-product, polluting the atmosphere even more. I sometimes wonder whether we should tell the European Commission - the same Commission that may fine us up to £300million a year for being over the emissions limit - about the stupidity of TfL's road planning. Does any trade organisation have the testicular fortitude???**

Among the so-called major enhancements is one to the junction of **Great Eastern Street** and **Old Street**. And guess what? These are to allow cyclists to cross more safely! And if you want to get to **Dial-a-Cab's** office, road closures at **Pitfield Street** probably won't help!

There will also be a segregated track on **Balls Pond Road** and other short stretches where the route has to use a busy road, but again, cyclists can choose to ignore them and use whatever part of the road they want to. The segregated tracks will link the scheme to the **Old Street roundabout**, which will become unrecognisable next year - in addition to being unused if you have more than two wheels! This is following (the same?) 1000 respondents to the Mayor's consultation on how to rid London of any traffic and send all our major businesses following **HSBC** back to anywhere but here!

So where was I? Ah yes, the **Old Street roundabout**; that will be converted into an attractive new pedestrianised public space with lovely seating for tired cab drivers who have lost the will to live - oh yes - and some lovely trees for those same drivers to sit and stare at. Did I mention that of course, cyclists will still be able to use it! And by the way, 63 per cent of the 1000 who replied considered that the changes would "improve conditions for bus and Tube users." Yes, I put that into inverted commas because I couldn't understand the logic in that either!

**Hackney Council** is also proposing further area-wide closures in **De Beauvoir Town**, which will make sure that you can't cut off the traffic along **Kingsland Road**! But then again, **Hackney Council** has never been famous for acting logically.

It all sounds stupid to me. It will cause horrendous traffic hold-ups, horrendous emission problems and will lead **TfL** to once again blame taxis for it all. And does anyone know someone that filled in the consultation document who wasn't actually a cyclist? But hey, what do I know, I only drive a cab!

# reflections of the chairman

## TfL and Consultations

It seems that TfL are always producing Consultations regarding future decisions that could affect our trade. We've had them regarding Cycle Superhighways, Private Hire Regulations and now Credit Card Mandating. All the Consultations that are produced via the TfL website can be completed and returned by any individual or organisation, but it has become apparent that some sections of society complete them *en masse*; for instance the Consultation regarding the Cycle Superhighway was completed and returned by many cyclists who were advised to do so by various factions within the cycling fraternity. I wonder how many licensed taxi drivers completed that Consultation? We then just sit and complain about the horrendous congestion that will be caused by these highways and the extra pollution emitted by traffic stuck in the jams, while also being told that a good way to combat this extra pollution is to insist that every new taxi sold from 2018 has to be zero emission rated! And then to add insult to injury, the extra congestion will make taxi fares even more expensive! We really are taken for a bunch of idiots by TfL, but in reality we only have ourselves to blame because we do not participate enough in topics that concern our trade.

**After stating the above, it does appear that many taxi drivers have attended the last three public meetings at City Hall, although the last one was not as well attended as the first two. At that last meeting where the Mayor was in attendance, the frustration from the taxi industry began to show through when the Mayor was heckled on a few occasions, unlike the first two meetings where the behaviour of the trade was exemplary.**

However, on a few occasions during that last meeting, the Mayor let his guard slip when discarding his usual bluster and buffoonery to become rather irritated and aggressive. On one occasion while being heckled regarding Uber, he stated quite aggressively that it was a 'free market' out there. I don't know what planet the Mayor is on, but it is anything but a free market! In fact our part of the trade is a highly regulated market. How could it be a free market when the average time to complete the KoL is just over four years; we are then told what vehicle we must drive and what tariff we must charge – how on earth is that a free market?

On the other side of the coin, there is the Private Hire industry where entrance to the trade is extremely easy; even the test for the topographical knowledge that is contained within the 1998 legislation is ignored. The test - if you can call it that - is conducted by the Private Hire operator! That surely is just laughable and undoubtedly not what was meant in the original legislation. Again it's a story of TfL condoning the harm being done to our industry; no wonder there are nearly 80,000 minicab drivers out there with another 1,000 licences a month being issued.

There isn't any doubt in my mind that TfL are doing serious damage to our trade; you cannot expect a highly regulated trade to be in a position to compete with an industry that has no qualifications and consequently can operate



from a much lower cost base.

I have never known the morale of the cab trade to be so low, with the reputation of the body that governs us to be held in such low esteem by the trade. However, it does seem that we do have allies in the shape of the **London Assembly Transport Committee** chaired by **Val Shawcross** and **Caroline Pidgeon**. These two ladies and their colleagues on the committee are aware of the harm that TfL are doing to our trade by not enforcing the law and obviously realise that if TfL do not improve their record and start giving some protection to the Licensed Taxi trade, corporate work will be completed by Private Hire and the general public will be transported by Uber. Taxis will be left with the occasional trip between Trafalgar Square and Buckingham Palace for the odd tourist. Unless TfL drastically improve their track record, we will not have a Taxi trade as we know it today!

## Merger

Not much has happened since my last report; negotiations have not been terminated with **Mountview** but some of their people have been on holiday or away at conferences and that scenario coupled with planning for their impending move at the end of August has not left a great deal of time available for talks. However, at the time of writing we have a meeting planned for around the time you read this issue

of *Call Sign* and hopefully some progress can be made then.

## Bank of England

I have regular meetings with the **Bank of England** as they consider the London Taxi trade to be a very good barometer on how the economy in general is faring. Under normal circumstances, I would say that the economy in general for the whole country was pretty good. However, as I explained to them, the Taxi industry is really suffering at the moment due to facts that you as drivers are only too well aware of.

I explained that the trade was on its knees and unless there was some intervention by the authorities, that consequences could be dire. I've seen downturns in our trade in the past, but not like this. Past downturns have been due to wars, acts of terrorism such as 9/11 or just a general slowdown in the economy. But this time it's different; the downturn is due to unfair competition such as rogue apps and an unregulated and unfettered Private Hire industry with very little enforcement from TfL - the very authority that should be protecting the public's safety by regulating both industries but which is failing miserably. I'm not sure that giving my views to the Bank of England will change anything, but the more people that become aware of our plight the better.

I have just read through all the above and boy is it gloomy! On a brighter note, there has definitely been more enforcement at night and let's hope this continues. The Mayor now seems to have woken up by stating he believes there are too many minicabs in London, adding to pollution and congestion and says he will seek to limit their numbers. But the trade with help from the Transport Committee must keep pressure on TfL to ensure they fulfil the role they are supposed to...

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

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# SID GOLD: October 1921 – June 2015

Although it's true that no one lives forever, many over the years had often started to believe that Sid Gold (ex-E20) might have proved that to be wrong! Sadly, on 11th June 2015, Sid passed away after a spell of pneumonia.

Sid had been one of Dial-a-Cab's longest serving drivers until finally calling it a day with the Society at the astonishing age of 86. He told *Call Sign* at the time:

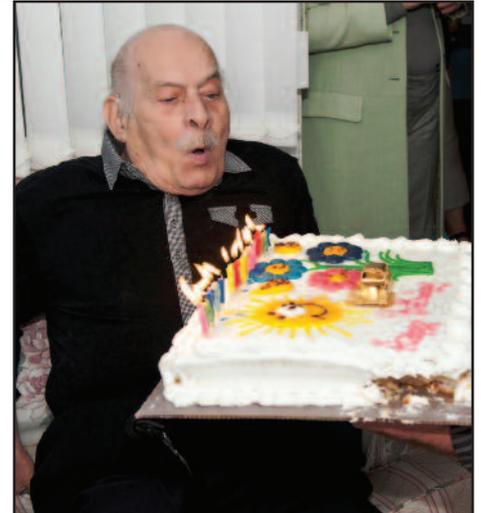
**"I'm over 86 years of age, so it's a bit of a responsibility. Although I have regularly passed my PCO medicals with flying colours, driving a radio taxi carries much responsibility with it. But Dial-a-Cab has been such a big part of my life and I really am so sad to let it go, however that time had to come one day. But I still have my cab with a plate on, so I can occasionally go out to work the streets and I won't starve! I'd also like to thank Brian and the Board for their support over the years. Not every company would have been so kind to someone of my age."**

He was then London's oldest driver and still continued for a short time; however his

appearances on London's streets became fewer and fewer. But he always kept in touch, insisted that he stayed on *Call Sign's* mailing list and we felt honoured to be invited to his 90th birthday party. His sense of humour still abounded when he asked me to see if Brian Rice could take him back as a driver at 90 because he was getting bored!

Then, 12 months later, we had a phone call from Sid's son Larry telling us that following a heart attack, his father was undergoing open heart surgery. His chances were given as slim, yet as each week passed he got stronger until the day he was discharged. On his release from hospital, he even said to *Call Sign* how upset he was because his heart attack now meant he would have to wait 6 months before he could get his taxi licence back! No mention of being 91 and he never did say if he was joking! Knowing Sid, we felt that he still had that urge to get behind the wheel again!

Sid was born in the London Hospital in October 1921. He began driving in 1939 but never passed a driving test as there were none in those days. He was in the RAF throughout the war until his discharge in 1946 when he



Sid celebrates being 90 in 2011

went into radio and TV sales and repairs. He worked from two different shops in Brick Lane until 1961 when he decided to do the Knowledge of London on a part-time basis so that he could also run his other businesses. Sid did the KoL with two friends, but not on a bike – the trio bought an old FX3 between them and did it in that!

Sid showed his toughness when at the age of 82 he was left lying on the floor in Cheshire Street after three jobs – one of whom held a gun to Sid's head – attempted to rob him of his takings. They knocked him to the ground but he refused to give them his wallet, lying on top of it until the two thugs gave up and left. He was back at work the following night, when he recounted the story and showed off a bruise with the excitement of a 15 year old!

Sid joined Dial-a-Cab in 1965 and left 43 years later much to the sadness of the girls in the call centre. Political correctness wasn't something that Sid ever coveted and he would get away with saying the most outrageous things to them. But they loved him.

**Sid Gold was of the old breed – a real character. Now he has gone and we're left with just memories. Our condolences to his family and our thanks to them for sharing Sid for all those years...**

**Alan Fisher  
Call Sign Online**

**Taxis will again get the blame as the Euro Court gets tough over diesel but...**

## 2014: OVER HALF NEW CAR SALES WERE DIESEL!



We all know, and indeed have become used to taxis being blamed by the Mayor's office for air pollution problems said to be caused by diesel vehicles. Yet according to **Sue Robinson**, Director of the **National Franchised Dealers Association**, diesel vehicles share of new car sales has been increasing steadily, with figures published for 2014 showing more than half of new cars sold ran on diesel.

By the same token, petrol sales fell by 10% in March to a record low of 1.31bn litres, following a 4% growth in February when drivers took advantage of the 22p a litre petrol price reduction compared to 12 months earlier.

Ms Robinson added: "The decline in petrol sales has been apparent for several years as motorists switched to diesel for better fuel economy and lower carbon dioxide emissions. Diesel fuel sales overtook petrol sales in 2007 (diesel 25.5bn v petrol 24bn litres) and have continued to grow to 27.9bn litres in 2014 in contrast to just 17.6bn litres of petrol."

**It came at the same time as the Government was ordered by the European Supreme Court to act immediately in complying with EU pollution limits, following a case brought by campaigning group ClientEarth against the Environment Secretary and was related to the nitrogen oxide amounts produced by diesel engines, which could lead to tighter controls in UK cities.**

HMG claimed they would be on target by 2030 – 20 years after the original 2010 deadline. However, the panel of five Euro judges said that HMG must submit new air quality plans to the European Commission by the end of the year and that will undoubtedly involve the taxi trade.

According to air quality expert, **Dave Mackay**, taxis should switch their engines off every time they set down a non-account passenger to sort out a cash or credit card transaction. Holding an air quality monitor close to an idling cab, he demonstrated that air quality deteriorates every time a taxi stops for over 30 seconds.

"Research proves that if your vehicle remains idle for 30 seconds or more, you are not only doing serious damage to the environment, you are also doing damage to your vehicle and wasting fuel. Every taxi we saw today setting down a passenger idled for an average of 90 seconds; there are 25,000 taxis in London and if they all switched their engines off whilst handling fares, that would save London over 3,000,000 hours of wasted pollution every year."

**As we said at the beginning, over half of the new vehicles sold in 2014 ran on diesel, but who was certain to get the blame? Right first time. Us!**

**Jamie Corum  
Call Sign Online**

### Call Sign July 2015

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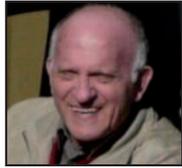
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# Jery's World



A day in the life of a Mayor!

Cabbie: "You're a tosser!" – Mayor: "Yes, we all need a hobby!"

## Freebie Theatre Tickets

Since Tom Whitbread left the Dial-a-Cab Board at the last AGM, there has been a notable decrease in the availability of freebie theatre tickets. Now Tom has told *Call Sign* that any driver who would like to be informed when complimentary theatre tickets are available should send him their email address and he will start a database to allow those drivers to be notified via email when and where freebie theatre tickets are available.

Just as when Tom advertised availability on driver's terminals, it will always be first come first served until they are gone.

If you haven't already, then send Tom your email address; put DaC theatre tickets on the subject line and your name and call sign in the main part. Then whenever Tom's many theatre contacts give him details, he will pass them straight over to drivers email addresses. If you don't send Tom your email address with those details as above, then you can be certain that you won't be informed. You have already missed the Beatles 'Let it be' and Flatley's Lord of the Dance among others!

Emails to [tom.whitbread@btclick.com](mailto:tom.whitbread@btclick.com)

## MINICABS IN BUS LANES

Despite Euro Court decision, could it still happen here???



A shock story appeared in French newspaper *La Connexion* that could provide a warning to London drivers. A dedicated bus / taxi lane on the A1 motorway to Paris Roissy (Charles de Gaulle) was suspended by order of a court after *véhicules de tourisme avec chauffeur* (minicabs) complained. The drivers said the fast bus/taxi lane caused unfair competition to them.

The Montreuil administrative court agreed as part of a referred decision - a fast-track temporary measure. A final decision is expected after the court looks at the matter in more depth, but a lawyer for the minicab drivers says he believes the court will reinstate the lane, allowing them to use it too.

The head of **Taxis Bleus** – one of several Parisien radio circuits having close contacts with **Dial-a-Cab** - recently told *Le Parisien* that nothing was definitive until the court takes its final decision. French taxi drivers believe their case is made stronger by the recent **European Court** ruling against Addison Lee who felt they should also have London bus lane access.

The French lane opened at the end of April and a bylaw was passed at the end of May allowing for a similar measure on a lane of the A6a towards Orly "in case of congestion." But in the case of the A1 lane, the judge reportedly decided that reserving a motorway lane just for the taxis and buses was not justified by sufficient public interest.

After the French government asked minicabs to accept fixed-rate tariffs between the airports and central Paris from next year, their union said yes but only on the understanding that they would be able to avoid being stuck in jams – ie bus lane access.

And if it happens, would it give Addison Lee grounds for a further appeal against the Euro Court's decision in favour of licensed taxis?

Ever since former Dial-a-Cab driver Stanley Roth told Dial-a-Cab drivers through Call Sign about the benefits of changing 15 year old cabs over to LPG from diesel and giving your TX1 an extra five years of licensing, we've had a constant stream of drivers asking if it was available yet. The answer was always that no one was actually doing it... Now they are!

Your cab will be converted by **Battersea Autogas** in **Elcho Street, Battersea** using technology from **GasTech**. It can be done on TX1s only and needs to be completed anytime up to one day before the 15th birthday of the taxi according to the date of first registration on the logbook - not according to the plate.

Bookings are required from up to 2 months in advance due to numbers of cabs that want the gas conversion to LPG. However, you do not require any Tfl authorisation to have your cab converted as Battersea Autogas are approved by Tfl and as long as your cab is within the above criteria, your TX1 can be converted and you will be able to get the extra 5 years out of it.

The cost is £6000 + VAT, which takes it up to £7800. It sounds a lot but means that your cab's extra 5 years will cost you £31 a week – substantially cheaper than renting, even adding the usual expenses. The price includes an engine replacement for a radically modified

Numerous TX1 owners kept asking Call Sign...

## TX1 GAS CONVERSIONS NOW HERE!



**Garry Farr: The first DaC driver to get a gas conversion on his TX1 and gain an extra five years**

and fully reconditioned engine that has been converted from diesel to one that runs on petrol and LPG, but from the same **Nissan TD27** family. It comes with a warrantee of 20,000 miles or one year.

Your taxi will be returned with two different fuel tanks and a rear end conversion. A small petrol tank (for back up only) is fitted instead of the diesel one and a 80+L GAS tank occupies the space of the boot. You would obvi-

ously have two separate filling points and two different fuel indicators in the cabin with a changeover switch that allows the driver to swap from fuel to fuel at any time.

The first Dial-a-Cab driver to have the conversion was Garry Farr (R87). He told **Call Sign**:

"The Engine is noticeably quieter than the old diesel engine, especially when starting it up in the morning. The acceleration is faster than the old engine, but it's something you get used to. As for filling up, that is very easy although you do have to get used to a different way compared to how it is with your current diesel cab. But again, you get the knack very quickly."

So the \$64,000 question to Garry – does he regret having it done and are there any downsides?

"No regrets; I'm extremely happy with the cab, the conversion and the performance and I really would recommend it to anyone who is considering a conversion to LPG and getting the extra 5 years.

I have only one negative comment; living in Essex, there are not too many garages that supply LPG, but once you are in London then it's no problem."

**All enquiries to Battersea Autogas on 0208 871 2233  
1-4 Elcho Street, Battersea, SW11**

## One-to-One Personal Service.

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# THANKSGIVING AT SOUTHWARK CATHEDRAL FOR KUPKAKE

Stuart Cohen, the cousin of Call Sign's long-time poet, David "Kupkake" Kupler and himself a former Dial-a-Cab driver, attended a thanksgiving service on 15 May at Southwark Cathedral to honour the memories of those whose selfless last deeds were made to help humanity – one of those being honoured being David Kupler.

In November 2013, a small shadow was discovered on David's lung that within three months had grown to such an extent that there was no treatment available that could help. David died on 1 April 2014 – less than five months after the initial diagnosis.

With just weeks to live, David contacted *Call Sign* telling us that he would like to write his own obituary and two new poems to put into the magazine after his death. And being David, that is exactly what he did. He died three weeks later, but not before shocking us even further by telling us that he had filled in a form donating his body to medical science after death and even asking us to post it.

"How else can future doctors learn," he asked. "How do we eradicate these types of illnesses if doctors have no bodies to look at? What good does a grave and a headstone do for the world? Those who want to



David's picture at the front inside the Cathedral along with others who donated their bodies to medical science  
Inset: David as many remember him

remember me need to just look into their hearts and I'll be there; not to visit a cold cemetery to read nice words on a piece of stone."

Following the service, Stuart told us: "The thanksgiving service was very comforting and poignant for all the families concerned, with around 500 people inside the Cathedral to

offer thanks for the lives of the 300 people that had donated their bodies for anatomical research in the past year. Among those representing David were his daughter Rachel and grandson Daniel.

"Speaking personally, I am so proud of David for what he did for medical science and that pride was added to by the tributes coming from Kings College professors, doctors and clergy all echoing David's words – it would be so difficult to find cures without having those prepared to donate their bodies after death so that doctors can learn what causes these terrible illnesses. David's photo was placed at the front of the table.

"Nothing can bring David back, but his memory will surely live on when incurable illnesses finally have cures found for them because of courageous people like my cousin David..."

Stuart Cohen  
Call Sign Online

## Driving licence paper counterpart now obsolete

From 8 June 2015, the paper counterpart of the driving licence (D740) was abolished and is no longer issued by the Driver and Vehicle Licensing Agency (DVLA). According to Sue Robinson, Director of the National Franchised Dealers Association:

"There will no longer be a need for drivers to keep the paper part of the driving licence as the photocard part will be all that is now needed. More sophisticated on-line systems allow data to be stored about individual motorists driving offences, making the counterpart driving licence effectively redundant. Counterparts after 8 June 2015 no longer have legal status and motorists are advised to destroy their counterparts. However, paper driving licenses issued before 1998 will remain valid and should not be destroyed."

Ms Robinson added that changes to the counterpart licence affected the UK only and if drivers were going abroad, they needed to check the licence requirements for each country before hiring a vehicle.

DVLA offer an on-line system to check driving licences which can be accessed at:

[www.gov.uk/view-driving-licence](http://www.gov.uk/view-driving-licence).

## Dial-a-Cab Credit Union

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Several Dial-a-Cab drivers have written over the past few months of the difficulty in obtaining a second hand taxi after their cab hit the 15 year limit. As a result, *Call Sign* will be happy to give the details of any driver whose cab will soon be approaching the end of its life and who is looking to permanently rent another driver's cab in the next few months.

However, if you are thinking of buying a new taxi and would rather go into a deal as partners with another DaC driver, then we'd also be happy to put your name, call sign, mobile phone number and the area you live in to see if there is anyone near you with similar thoughts.

Post your details to Call Sign at DaC House or email us at [callsignmag@aol.com](mailto:callsignmag@aol.com).

**Bernie Silver (G08)** has been on DaC since 1975 and will be looking for a cab to rent on DaC from 24th August. He lives in the **Barkingside** area has a full no claims bonus to transfer if that helps.

**James Griffin (T97)** has been on DaC for 10 years and is interested in the joint purchase of a new taxi. James lives in the **Carshalton** area.

## Renting or sharing a DaC taxi



Bernie Silver is looking to rent and James Griffin is looking to buy a shared cab

# VITO TYRES SHOCK!

In November 2011, Call Sign published an article about a Dial-a-Cab driver whose Mercedes Vito taxi had failed to be relicensed at SGS because of two tyres – both of which were new!

Now four years later, another driver has complained about the exact same thing and this magazine is concerned that the message about Vito tyre suitability isn't being given to the cab's owners. This time **Eleftherios Eleftheriou (A23)** – known as Akis to his friends - complained to this magazine with virtually the same story as that driver did four years ago.

He told us: "It's all about the Speed Rating as indicated on the sidewall of the tyre and whether the rating is suitable for that particular vehicle – in this case it was my Vito. I've been using the same type of tyres for four years and no one has said a word. Suddenly the SGS tester told me that he couldn't pass the cab as it had R rated tyres and it should have had T rated ones. I just couldn't understand why the tyres I had always used were suddenly not good enough, but realising that they wouldn't change their mind I said I would go and change them for the correct ones and come straight back. But shock number two came when they said they couldn't fit me in for a further 5 days!

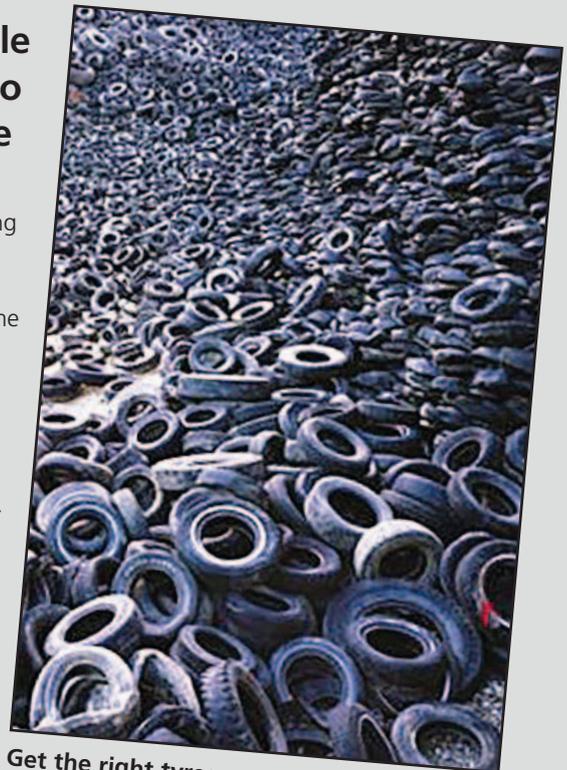
So not only did I waste £400 on new tyres that I now couldn't use, but I had to buy a new lot and throw away the old ones. On top of that I was also losing the best part of a week's work. When I took the cab back, the tester just walked round the cab in seconds and passed it. So much for a system that is supposed to help us!"

We asked **Hackney Road Taxi Tyres**, who are situated directly below the DaC Credit Union, what the difference between the two tyres was. We were told:

"R rated tyres are only rated at up to 97 mph whilst T rated tyres have a maximum speed of 104 mph and the Vito is capable of doing over 100 mph – even though to do so would be breaking the law."

The Taxi Licensing Inspection Manual says that taxi tyres must be of the designated size, speed and weight rating for that make and model of vehicle as prescribed by the vehicle manufacturer, which suggests that it's down to Mercedes.

So be warned; taxi tyres should be T rated. Otherwise you may have a wasted trip to your local SGS centre...



Get the right tyres or your new ones could end up here!

"It was a bit strange," Paul Campbell (W68) confided to *Call Sign*. "I was sitting on the rank in North Wharf Road reading my newspaper when I became aware of another *Dial-a-Cab* taxi slowly reversing really close and parallel to my luggage door. The rank on North Wharf Road is situated on the right hand side of the street, leaving cabs nearside doors visible and accessible from the main roadway. There are always a steady stream of taxis using the one-way street to gain access to the *Royal Oak* eatery, so for a moment I didn't pay a great deal of attention when the other cab got even closer, because I thought he was going to back up into the tiny space behind me.

"But soon the other cab was literally just inches away from mine, so I wound my window down with the intention of telling the driver that if he was trying to join the rank then there were several cabs waiting behind me further down the road and that he would be queue jumping if he continued his manoeuvre. But to my utter astonishment, the other driver calmly leaned out of his drivers' window, stretched his hand out towards my luggage door, then pulled out and handed my cab keys to me through my open nearside window! He then just drove off without saying a word!"

**But hang on, have we missed something here? How did a set of Paul's cab keys get left in his luggage door when Paul was clearly sitting in his cab at the time with his keys in the ignition?**

The simple answer was that Paul had previous lock and key problems, so much so that on one non-auspicious occasion his passenger became locked in the cab! So Paul keeps a spare set of keys on him and while setting

*DaC's Paul Campbell isn't a Red Indian brave – there is a reason for his name of...*

# Paul Two-Keys!



Paul (and his two keys)!

his passengers down at Paddington Station, he left the cab and nipped round to the luggage door to assist with the suitcases but left the cab engine running with his main set of keys. He then pulled the spare set from his pocket to open the luggage door.

At that point, having removed the suitcases and shutting the door, his attention was dis-

tracted and he just forgot to remove the spare keys from the door and drove around to North Wharf Road with his spare keys still protruding from the luggage door, until the other *Dial-a-Cab* spotted them. And that's where we came in!

Alan Green (E52)  
Call Sign Online

## Ascott Cab Co appointed official TX4 retailer

**C**ontinuing its journey to commercial excellence, The London Taxi Company has announced a new strategic alliance with Ascott Cab Co, appointing it as an official retailer of its TX4. The agreement will allow Ascott Cab Co to sell the iconic London Taxi to retail customers through its flagship dealership in Blackhorse Road, Deptford, giving customers greater choice and flexibility. It will become the first TX4 retailer in London outside the London Taxi Company, which has its showroom in Brewery Road, Islington.



The alliance with Ascott Cab Co will allow the London Taxi Company to benefit from the company's position in the market and high standards in customer service.

Ascott Cab Co will take responsibility for vehicle plating, meter installation, customer insurance and part exchanges, with the London Taxi Company retaining responsibility for product quality, vehicle registration and manufacturer warranty provision.

Commenting on the deal, The London Taxi Company's Vice President of UK Operations, Peter Johansen said:

"The standards that Ascott Cab Co upholds in customer care and quality perfectly reflect our values at the London Taxi Company and set a benchmark for the future. It will allow the company to take advantage of the vast market knowledge, loyalty and connection it clearly has with its customer base."

The deal will run for a six-month trial period and, if successful, there is potential to use it as a platform for the next generation of products as the London Taxi Company looks to the future.

Andy Ascott of Ascott Cab Co said:

"This is an exciting opportunity for Ascott Cab Co and welcome recognition of the high standards we set ourselves. I think our appreciation for customer service and the understanding of the trade in London means we're well positioned for success now and in the future."

## Taxi charging partner for TfL

**F**rom 1 January 2018, all newly registered taxis must meet a zero emission capable standard. With the new Metrocab already here and LTC expected to follow fairly soon with a TX5, many more rapid charge points will be needed so that 80 percent of a full charge will be available in less than 30 minutes.

Transport for London is now looking for partners to assist with the programme of putting in charging infrastructure in London, to explore the full range of technology available and to see how it can be deployed across the capital.



## Why Have Your Taxi Serviced with Ascotts?

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*Is your current Taximeter ready?*

**O**n 22nd May 2015, *Call Sign* paid a visit to Dunkirk to watch the 75th anniversary commemorations of the mass evacuations in 1940 at the **Battle of Dunkirk** or **Operation Dynamo**, when hundreds of little ships criss-crossed the Channel to rescue thousands of stranded Allied troops as the German forces quickly advanced towards the Channel, leaving the Allies trapped.

The ceremony took place in front of Prince Michael of Kent, together with civilian and military authorities from the British, French and Belgian Veterans Associations.

The operation in 1940 - between May 26 and June 4 - was the largest evacuation in military history and an amazing success with many thousands of the troops getting back to the UK, including many non-English speaking "Aliens" arriving here for the first time and knowing nobody. Official totals showed 338,226 Allied soldiers waiting in Dunkirk harbour and on the beaches were rescued. Sadly many also died - probably around 100,000.



It had been just 10 days earlier when the Germans invaded Holland, Belgium and Luxemburg. Within days, the British Expeditionary Force in France found itself cut-off from supplies with nowhere to go except to retreat back towards the coast. Soon after, Calais surrendered to the Germans and Operation Dynamo got into full swing. Troops waited on the beaches for their turn to be evacuated, injured soldiers going first. British minesweepers attempted to keep three channels clear. Every single available ship - big or small - was forced into action.

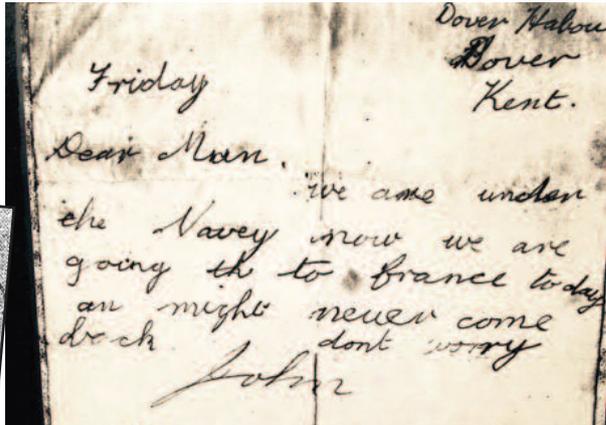
It was a further 5 years until Dunkirk was freed of the Nazis as Allied troops forced their way forward once again, but on that occasion to gain complete victory.

Although *Call Sign* was the only representative of the London taxi trade, we mentioned the **London Taxi Benevolent Association for War Disabled** to many of the Vets we spoke to and all spoke in high praise of the organisation. One very elderly French Vet in more than passable English told us how he remembered 9 June 1994 when the LTBAWD brought a whole fleet of London taxis across to Normandy for the fiftieth anniversary of Operation Overlord - the Normandy landings - remembering it as being the most moving day of his life and the day he learned to love the English!

We could write pages and pages about the day and the many boats that returned for the ceremony, each of which told its own story in print alongside its mooring. But we have picked just one short story to concentrate on to represent all those that didn't make it - that of 15-year old John Atkins who died in trying to preserve the freedom of his country.

All of his life John dreamed of going to sea. He left school at 15 had found work in a factory, but the pull of the sea was too strong and he eventually found work as a cook on the barge, **Lady Rosemary**. He soon became third mate.

# Call Sign at 75th Dunkirk Evacuation ceremony



John's final letter

But war soon came and on June 1 his parents in Gravesend received a poignant letter from their son that was to prove to be prophetically true.

Giving an address of just Dover Harbour, John's letter read: "Dear Mam, we are under the Navy now. We are going to France and might never come

back. But don't worry. Love John."

He was later reported missing, assumed killed. His body was never found and he was believed to have been Britain's youngest war victim. He was one of a family of seven and still aged just 15...

*I made a ferry through the foam, Dunkirk and Deal, Dieppe and Dover; I brought the flower of Britain home, and took the fruits of freedom over.*  
(Admiral Sir Bertram Ramsay)

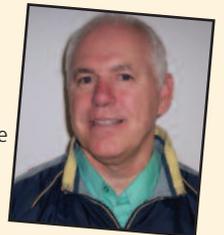
Alan Fisher  
Call Sign Online

## LOOKING AT (TAXI) LIFE

With Tom Quigley (Y33)

### Keep it amongst ourselves...

The industry war over Taxis, minicabs and Uber rages on. But could we help ourselves a bit more? Living in the suburbs of a typical Yellow badge area, I'm sure that I am not alone in using a local minicab firm; some would argue that there are not enough Yellow badges riding around to hail, whereas I'm equally as sure they would argue there are too many for not enough work.



But a change of our off-duty usage away from local minicabs and into our own trade would maximise their work. As we approach the holiday season, using a London Licensed Taxi driver - Yellow or Green badge - for the airport drop would have a significant effect on our industry. I have a brother driving a Hackney Carriage in Essex, who says most of his work comes from London Taxi drivers on a night out or Stansted Airport pick-ups.

**I've been on Dial-a-Cab for a number of years and I am guilty as charged in not having an account or credit card booking with our own Society. In fact I don't have an account with any of the Taxi accounts on offer.**

It's very hypocritical of us to bemoan people using other ways to get home in London, when we ourselves do the same. It would be a great step forwards to increase the income of our industry by keeping our monies circulating amongst ourselves and not by financing our enemies - and not just looking to outsiders for assistance...

### Green Badge success

On a happier note, I am into my second year of running a Knowledge School/Club. Within our small group, we now have four students passed out and driving taxis. These young men (there are lady students as well) have been typical butterboys, working away to try and get back to a financial status quo and I'm pleased that they are working the unsocial weekend night shifts, thereby helping the industry during busy periods. Every job they do is a job the opposition doesn't.

**I'm also pleased that despite reports of an easing of the Knowledge and mismanagement by TfL, that from where I'm standing, all the students are having to work just as hard as each and everyone one of us ever did.**

They still come back after their appearances, beaten up, broken, having been put through the mill, moaning about dropped points and dodgy lines; but more often they return elated that their efforts are being rewarded as they move to the next stage.

Yes, the legends and tales of Messrs Ormes and Finlay often come flooding back to the memory, but to those on the KoL now, they have been replaced by new examiners with similar reputations. The ethos has not changed, despite apps, books, laptops and every aid that the modern age has, you still have to go out to do the work, call your Blue Book and get a good call over partner(s) who will probably become lifelong friends and probably along with their families too.

The only difference is that in modern day parlance, they no longer call it a Badge; students have nicknamed it the Green Medal!

Tom Quigley  
Call Sign Online

**What do you prefer? A three letter questioned, or a four letter rant...?**

It would seem the situation between London taxi drivers and the authorities that govern London transportation are reaching a point where our democracy has failed us. We, as in common with most people within a democracy, have come to realise that we have no real influence on the people in power other than our vote. That vote in parliamentary terms allows us to choose who represents us, but in London a quango has emerged that with a £10.1 billion turnover, answers to none of us.

**We have in fact become alienated from the decision-making process. The bureaucratic machine that drives Transport for London has become engulfed by specialists, driving an unwanted agenda and exercising all those involved with their specialist knowledge.**

The network of rules that govern TfL have now reached a point where the complications of a decision cannot be challenged, laymen no longer have any possibility to control TfL's administrative activities.

TfL have in fact developed a reflexive system, they have become authoritative and self-governing. What recourse have we to challenge their decisions? Must we constantly wait for the courts to decide because of the semantics of law?

**The term "plying for hire" has been understood in law since before 1789 and with legal theory being questioned, lawyers have decided to challenge this term and many other parts of Hackney Carriage law as being *de facto*.**

In Britain, we have been told that the culture we work in has become a "big society," **David Cameron** expounding this American philosophy as it drives its mantra, telling us to listen as "it tries to influence choices in a way that will make choosers better off, as judged by them-

# Brazil Calling



selves." Well, it would seem "big society" is not necessarily an open society.

**TfL and its decisions must be open to public scrutiny... decisions must be open for inspection by those involved before implementation and available to the scrutiny of law before enactment. We must not allow a culture where undemocratic decisions become the norm and we are left to try and survive, whilst being crushed by a bureaucratic quango beyond the reach of common man. We vote for our government, but have other lawmakers foisted on us by long departed administrations imbued with the political rhetoric of defunct predecessors.**

**So, how do we proceed?**

The Secretary of State for Transport is the **Right Honourable Patrick McLoughlin MP**, a former miner from Cannock. I would presume he more than understood the plight of workers - he himself went from the belts of a mine to an

elected councillor and onward to the zenith of public office to better his life and that of the people he serves. He is the man with the power to question decisions.

We have trained for years to obtain credit for our position in life, only to have it usurped by an unrepentant bureaucracy.

**It is time we had our elected representatives ask questions of TfL. The law is understood regarding plying for hire; it is understood regarding immediate hire and being available for immediate hire. Also, the meaning of a taximeter as a device for calculating the fare is also unambiguous...but ... now all are nevertheless questioned with advanced law theory and the laser guided philosophy of the language of Wittgenstein.**

We, with the help of the Right Hon Secretary of State for Transport, Mr McLoughlin and the government he represents, must do all in our power to stop the "tax efficient" big businesses that are bringing the stench of irregular practice to London. It must be stopped - and stopped at the top if necessary.

London is a byword for quality worldwide, its services unparalleled. Competition is best served by bringing all to our world class standard instead of joining the race to the bottom that has been brought into our great capital by four-lettered Silicon Valley investors.

**Joe Brazil**

**DaC Board Member**

*The Right Honourable Patrick McLoughlin, Secretary of State for Transport, is available by letter at: House of Commons, London SW1A 0AA or on twitter at @Patrick4Dales.*

**Designed to clamp down on illegal minicab activity**

## TfL and Operation Neon

**Transport for London** announced in May that the first five evenings of their high visibility, multi-agency operation to clamp down and disrupt illegal activity by minicab and taxis, **Operation Neon**, saw a total of 331 private hire drivers had been reported for failing to comply with regulations.

Eight drivers were reported for plying for hire offences, 30 drivers for parking on taxi ranks and 73 tickets being issued for parking offences. Around 600 vehicles were moved on from outside clubs and late night venues. Priority locations such as **Swallow Street, Dover Street** and **Berkeley Street** were said to have been kept clear of such vehicles. This action continued throughout June.

Operation Neon involved TfL enforcement and compliance officials, **Metropolitan Police Service** officers and **Westminster City Council** parking attendants and had substantially increased the levels of visible enforcement in central London, combating touting and other illegal activity. It also kept ranks clear to support legitimate taxi and private hire drivers and claims to have received positive feedback from trade associations.

**TfL claim that as a result of Operation Neon and other offences, the proportion of women approached by touts at the end of a night out in London has reduced by 77% since 2003. Since April 2013, the TfL funded Cab Enforcement Unit has reported 148 drivers for unlawfully plying for hire, resulting in a 97% conviction rate of those that have gone to court.**

**Garrett Emmerson**, TfL's Chief Operating Officer for Surface Transport, said: "We are determined to protect the livelihoods of all legitimate taxi and private hire drivers through robust enforcement action. Following engagement with the main trade associations (LTDA, the LCDC and UNITE), we will continue to be relentless in enforcing the law through action such as Operation Neon to protect the legitimate trade, improve public safety, promote high levels of compliance and tackle illegality."

See Editorial on page 3...

*Immaculate White Cab Available for Weddings*



**Female driver**

**10% reduction for Dial-a-Cab drivers  
Contact Debbie (W18) on**

**07956 317040**

After spotting this minicab, a DaC driver asked us about...

# ADVERTISING ON PH VEHICLES

**D**uring *Call Sign's* one month *biatus*, we received an email from a **Dial-a-Cab** driver who wanted to remain anonymous. He attached the photo that you can see with this article and said he had been under the impression that PH vehicles were not allowed carry ads other than just their company name and phone number. The car in the photo seemed to go way beyond that.

*Regulation 11.5 on TFL's Guidelines for Advertising on licensed London Taxis and Signs on licensed London Private Hire Vehicles' clearly says that no commercial advertising is permitted on PHVs.*

But we thought we'd check with Tfl anyway. They told us:

"The driver you spoke to is correct in that this particular vehicle advertisement signage contravenes the rules for

private hire vehicles. Those regulations state that while a private hire vehicle may carry an advertisement that covers the whole rear windscreen, such material must not obscure rearward vision or be visible from the inside of the vehicle. This advertisement appears to break both of those regulations. As well as this, private hire vehicles are only permitted to carry advertising featuring the telephone number and/or the website of their operator. Again, this regulation seems to have been breached.

Thank you for bringing this vehicle to our attention – the matter will be passed along to our compliance team." Now we know...



Ron Yarborough  
Call Sign Online

This PH vehicle is breaking Tfl advertising rules

## LEFT HAND DRIVE PH?

**C**all Sign has received reports from several drivers over the past two months claiming to have spotted a private hire vehicle sporting a left hand drive. Not being sure about the rights and wrongs of the situation, we asked Tfl's General Manager at London Taxis Private Hire, **Helen Chapman**, to give us the answer. She said:

"It is a requirement for private hire vehicles to be right hand drive. However, Tfl will consider exemptions for exceptional circumstances on a case-by-case basis. These circumstances may include disability dispensations or a model of vehicle not being available in the UK. There are currently 16 private hire vehicles with an exemption of this nature."

We asked if there were any left hand drive London taxis and were told that as our cabs are manufactured specifically for the market, there are no left hand drive versions – at least not in London. Hope that answers the questions...

DennisLatchett  
Call Sign Online



There are 16 left hand drive minicabs in London

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4 Bedroom 2 Bathroom Pool home sleeps 8/9



6 Bedroom 5 Bathroom Pool home sleeps 12



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**O**n Sunday 26th April Dial-a-Cab driver Colin Greaves (M91) and his son Ben completed the 2015 Virgin London Marathon, crossing the line together in a time of 4 hours 22 minutes and 44 seconds.

In completing the Marathon, they have raised a combined total of over £10,300 for Haven House Children's Hospice in Woodford Green, which rises to around £12,200 with the inclusion of Gift Aid Tax Relief.

Apart from the pride of completing the Marathon with his son, Colin told *Call Sign* that his memories of the day will always be the 'buzz' at the start line, the amazing support of the crowd along the whole 26 mile route, recognising his family and friends on route and the sheer relief of seeing and crossing the finish line!

He said he would also always remember the whole range of emotions encountered by his son Ben in completing his first (and as he said at the end - his last) London Marathon. Some quotes from Ben on the day included at the start when he said it was brilliant, that he couldn't believe the number of people there and the amazing atmosphere, up to the 10 mile mark when he still said it was great and he was enjoying it so much that he was thinking about doing it again in 2016!

# Colin's Marathon for Haven House Hospice

But then came his quote after 20 miles, when he said that he would never, ever do it again, followed three miles later with a sincere message to his dad: "I hate you for making me do this!"

But at the finish line, a proud Ben looked at Colin and said just as sincerely: "I'm really so pleased we finished this together - thanks dad."

Colin, Ben and everyone at Haven House Children's Hospice would like to thank everybody for their support and contributions to their London Marathon Appeal. It was very much appreciated.

*Haven House Children's Hospice supports families and cares for children and young people with life-limiting and life-threatening conditions across North and East London, West Essex and East Hertfordshire.*



Colin crosses Tower Bridge on his London Marathon run

## JACQUELINE HART COUNSELLOR

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

- Do you feel as though things are getting on top of you?
- 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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Another true story from Geoff Levene...

# A DAY IN THE LIFE OF A SUNDAY MORNING

You can't expect to do this job without occasionally having to lend a hand in some fashion. We've all got to the point of a station rank when out comes mum, dad, young Zane and little Tiscali. They're just back from Spain and have been flying all night. There are four cases, a pushchair, teddy-bears, a cup of coffee, three hamburgers, a football and Tiscali's blanket.

So you leap out (remembering to start the meter first) and start to load up. Time was before the wheelchair ramp and Dial-a-Cab data terminal took great lumps out of the luggage area, you could get three or four cases in the front. But now you just about get one in and the rest goes in the back.

And I know I'm getting older when a teenage girl tells me not to get out because it's very heavy! But I've already grabbed it and realise she has no idea what 'heavy' is until she's lifted the good lady wife's stuff!

But there's a driver I haven't seen for a while who is obese. I've seen him arrive at the cafe in **Camley Street** and pull right up to the door. A girl brings out a huge plate of meat and potatoes which he balances on his vast stomach. The luggage compartment is taken up with his Zimmer frame. It's a shame, but there's no way he could help anybody - certainly not in the situation I will describe below.

It was a Sunday morning at about 7am. I was sitting at the corner of **Delancey Street** and **Parkway** when an old man came rushing up waving frantically. Actually *rushing* was the wrong word. He was staggering along holding onto every lamp post, letterbox, crash-barrier and parked car before finally making it to the cab.

"Thank you," he said, "I don't want to go far, just the paper shop at the beginning of **Camden Road**."

We were soon there but it wasn't open yet. He directed me to another place in **Kentish Town**, but we drew a blank there as well.

"What are you after?" I asked. He said that he needed to top up his electric key.

We got lucky at **Morrisons** garage at **Chalk Farm**. He struggled to get up, so I helped him make his slow, tortuous passage to the till and back to the cab. He put £30 on the key. Then back to **Parkway**.

"You'll have to help me," he said and we headed for the front door. Once inside, he opened a cupboard and pulled out a stick with which he opened a meter box high up on the wall. From the same cupboard appeared a four-legged stool. To call it rickety was a gross understatement.



Its vinyl top was covered with insulating tape and the legs held in place by string. He handed me the electric key.

"Can you see meter number 9 up there, put the key in that," he said as I nervously nodded.

Now as you can imagine, that entailed climbing onto a rickety stool, standing on tiptoes while reaching up as high as I could and then pushing a key into a meter.

*You see there are many things in life that worry me; here are just a few:*

1. Being attacked by a vicious guard dog (it's happened).

2. Breaking down on the M4 while POB to the airport (it's happened).

3. Having my keys stolen (it's happened... twice).

4. Loading so much luggage that you have to open the boot - or spare wheel compartment as I believe it's officially known - and balance a case on the lid. And then as you drive along the lid collapses, the case falls out and is crushed by a truck (it's happened, but thankfully not to me)! Paranoid? Me? Nah!

**And 5.** Standing on tiptoe on a rickety stool while reaching high above my head! Anyway I did it.

"Right," he said, "if you come up to the third floor, I'll pay you."

Oh no! I've now got to follow the old boy up to the top floor. At his speed this is going to take an age. But then an amazing thing happened; although he could barely walk on the flat, he was brilliant on the stairs and I couldn't keep up! A passing mountain goat would have been left open-mouthed with envy!

He paid me £20, so £30 of electricity cost him £50...

Geoff Levene (W32)

Call Sign Online

## HACKNEY ROAD TAXI TYRES

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## TfL counter and online service

**A**s *Call Sign* wrote several months ago via **Tom Quigley's** column, TfL's new counter service launched on 1 June at **Chancel Street**, Blackfriars. In addition, an online application service has also been introduced.

Go to <http://www.tfl.gov.uk/info-for/taxis-and-private-hire/> for that service.

The counter service was reintroduced as a result of requests from both sides of the trade. The service will be by appointment only and is principally for customers who need help with driver or operator application process. It opens from 9am to 4pm on weekdays, the counter service will have Customer Advisors who will be able to assist with any questions or difficulties that applicants may have regarding their application. However they will not be able to issue licences, badges or identifiers, which will continue to be printed by TfL's secure print partner. To book an appointment, call **0343 222 4444**. A confirmation email will be sent, including information on what you should bring with. TfL will not be able to see anyone without an appointment.

TfL will evaluate how the two new services work and continue to evolve them to ensure they meet customers' needs.

Almost at the same time as the Evening Standard published a piece from student nurse Daisy Riley who took a video of her Uber driver watching a movie on his phone whilst driving her home, Uber's CEO was at a US conference repeating his future plans.

We're used to hearing Uber's UK head honcho, **Jo Bertram**, claiming that not only are they not against the London black cab but to almost profess a hidden love for us - before also adding that they pay "all the taxes they are liable for." However, something tells us she would be delighted to see the back of us! Now her boss and the boss of all things Uber, CEO **Travis Kalanick**, has admitted it once again.

The part we're not that bothered about at the moment is that he plans to ditch all his drivers after buying out Google's self-driving cars when they finally hit the road. At present **Google** have 23 of them out on test in California, but the last *Call Sign* heard was that they had been involved in no fewer than 11 RTAs since the testing programme began. Hey Mr K, we can do that too, we just don't!

But notwithstanding the fact that he still has to use human drivers and to show his rather dislikeable heart, Mr Kalanick added: "The upside of Uber using them will be greater than the downside of having to let the drivers go!" We're not sure that his drivers will see it that way! But he then went on to speak about taxis.

"We're in a political campaign and the candidate is Uber. The opponent is an asshole named Taxi and nobody likes him. He's not a

# Uber's real view of taxis!



**Travis Kalanick: Driverless cars will let him sack all his drivers!**

nice character, but he's so woven into the political machinery and fabric that a lot of people owe him favours. We have to bring out the truth about how dark and dangerous and evil the taxi side is."

Now we have **Addison Lee** CEO, **Liam Griffith**, writing to **Mayor Boris Johnson** and seemingly coming from a similar page to that of licensed taxis, albeit with one difference being their belief that there should be no cap on PH licence numbers. Some of the items Mr Griffin wrote to Boris were:

"We welcome fair competition and new entrants to the market who are prepared to compete fairly. However, the arrival of several app-based operators in this new wave has caused a number of problems that are now harming not just London businesses, but the general public too. It is undeniable that we are

now witnessing growing public safety problems with touting and clear regulatory breaches from some new entrants. It has been impossible to miss the international backlash against companies such as Uber. Amongst its catalogue of regulatory breaches, its recent prosecution for permitting a driver to operate an uninsured vehicle is particularly concerning. Add to this the accusations of it offshoring its profits to avoid UK tax rates and the negative impact of its operations is felt more widely as a threat to the fair competitive environment and rigidly-enforced regulatory regime on which the high reputation of the capital's private hire sector lies."

He also told the Mayor: "As the regulator of our industry, TfL's response to these changes has been deplorable. Through a hesitance to apply the same regulatory standards for private hire operators to app-based firms, it has enabled these e-hailing services to distort public perception of the wider sector."

He later went on to add: "We recognise that things are now being done to resolve previous mistakes, but the fact that the problems TfL have allowed to happen over the last two years have adversely and significantly impacted public safety can't be ignored. The two-tier system of hailed taxis and pre-booked private hire cars, which has successfully ensured operational order and optimum passenger safety for years, and is fundamentally important to our business - is now in jeopardy."

And this was before *The Guardian* caught Uber out on driver's insurance scam..

*Previously, Addison Lee had written to Call Sign insisting that any of their drivers caught touting would be dismissed...*

## WCHCD

### AT ROYAL DOCKS COMMUNITY SCHOOL CEREMONY

The **Worshipful Company of Hackney Carriage Drivers** recently unveiled a new orchard at the **Royal Docks Community School** as part of their ongoing affiliation with the east London school that began in 2008.

Last year the WCHCD made a donation to the Royal Docks School, which the school used to plant the first trees in what is hoped to be a long term initiative to create an orchard. In May, current Master **Malcolm Paice**, along with Past Master and former Governor at the school, **Andrew Overton**, unveiled the orchard and its first planted trees thanks to the WCHCD donation.

In the presence of school Head, **Wendy Bowyer**, her staff and a delegation of the students led by the head girl and boy, Malcolm and Andrew listened to the wonderful school choir before Malcolm cut the ribbon to announce the orchard as being open. The Company Master said:

**"We've been given a wonderful welcome here today and it is a privilege to be part of this great relationship between the school and our Company. The orchard is a great idea that will be here for many years for future generations of the school's students to enjoy."**

The orchard was created by the school as the *Royal Charter Orchard* in commemoration of the WCHCD receiving its Royal Charter from HRH Prince of Wales last year. The school itself is a purpose built, mixed, community comprehensive school for students aged 11 to 16, with around 800 students. Opened in 1999, the school building has achieved national architectural recognition for its design and is a rapidly improving fully inclusive mixed school, which is now at an exciting stage in its development with a 3 year plan to become outstanding.

## New credit/debit card stickers



There are now new partition stickers available at Dial-a-Cab

House, which in addition to previous passenger information (ie 10% charge with a minimum of £2 for credit cards etc) also add debit cards to that.

Some passengers have apparently pointed out that the old notice mentions just credit cards, believing that debit cards carried no charge.

Please pick up one when you pass the office and replace the old one.



**Robert had a lucky escape!**

“To quote the Duke of Wellington after the Battle of Waterloo,” Robert Deans (C49) told *Call Sign*, “it was a damn close run thing!” Robert was referring to his non-fault accident with a car.

“I was on Mortlake Road, heading back towards London; it was raining and the light was fading. I was driving across a green traffic light and still actually within the yellow-box junction, when a small Renault car suddenly appeared on my right coming from the Kew Green direction heading towards Kew Road and travelling at some speed, entered the junc-

# DaC driver's lucky escape!

tion and smashed straight into my taxi, impacting itself at my drivers' door.

“I was really shaken about, being thrown sideways inside the cab with the force of the collision. My mind was buzzing in those initial few seconds at just how lucky I had been, not having sustained any serious physical injury. Forcing my drivers' door open, I staggered out of the cab still in a state of shock, to determine exactly what had happened in what had been the blink of an eye. It appeared that the driver of the Renault had become confused at the traffic lights filter arrow and had jumped 'his' red light and subsequently collided with me.

“The other driver admitted liability immediately, but that of course is no guarantee that the insurance company will pay up or that the driver wouldn't change their story later, so I was extremely grateful when even in my dazed state of mind, a passing pedestrian offered her details as a witness in my favour. From then on, the other driver's insurers had no way back other than to accept liability,” Robert

acknowledged with a grin borne more out of relief than humour.

“I took the cab to my regular service agent, **George Jackson** in **Scrubs Lane**, but his bodywork repairer was on holiday and so having previously lived in Cricklewood, I took the cab into **Cricklewood Carriers** where **Sheldon** and his team were just brilliant! Everything went smoothly; they were very helpful and made a really good job, so I have no complaints!

“Mind you,” Robert said as he finished his story, “I still marvel at the strength of the taxi to have sustained such an impact and yet kept me safe inside, even if I was 'shaken but not stirred!'”

Robert laughed as he drove away... **George G Jackson** can be contacted on: 0208 9641929. **Cricklewood Carriers** can be contacted on: 0208 452 5461

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

## Taxi Driver of the Year back for 2015

**T**he Taxi Driver of the Year Competition is back for 2015 (see page 15 May Call Sign) and the charity's committee - in conjunction with leading taxi advertising operator Ubiquitous - have come up with a new approach to help get the competition back on the road after many years when exorbitant costs prevented the former yearly taxi competition taking place.

The TDYCF are now inviting nominations from the trade, cabbies and anyone that would like to enter the Taxi Driver of the Year 2015, which will not only raise the profile of black cabs and drivers, but also raise money for the five charities that the Fund supports. The Finale of the Award will take place at the annual TDYCF dinner dance on **Saturday November 7th** in central London.

If you want to nominate a driver for the Taxi Driver of the Year competition, firstly you must get permission from that driver and make sure that he or she is available to attend the Finale on November 7th when the shortlisted drivers will be asked to take part in a written knowledge test and meet the judges. The winner will be decided on the night and announced as the 2015 taxi driver of the year, collecting their prize as well as the glory!

**Spaces for finalists are limited and all entries must be received by 17th August 2015.**

It costs just £200 to enter a driver but this includes two dinner dance tickets, one for the driver and one for the person nominating them. Additional drivers can be entered for £100 and this will include the cost of their ticket to the dinner dance. It would be nice to see a great turnout for the Award at this years' dinner dance. Tickets are just £65 per head and tables of 10 are available.

Driver nomination forms and dinner dance ticket booking forms are available by emailing **Barbara** at [brussella@talk21.com](mailto:brussella@talk21.com) and can be downloaded by visiting the **News** section at: [www.UbiqTaxis.com](http://www.UbiqTaxis.com).

Charity Chairman, **Russell Poluck MBE (T55)** said: “Let's not forget that the focus of this initiative is to raise money for those less fortunate than ourselves. We are thrilled that with the help of Ubiquitous, we are now able to reinstate the TDYCF Award and hope that the increased profile of the event will help to provide extra support for the trade charities. We urge the trade to get behind the initiative, so we can reinstate the great tradition of the driver competition and raise money for them.”

**Dial-a-Cab** drivers have an excellent record in winning the TDoY title, especially **Howard Kott (B74W)** – the only driver to win it three times in consecutive years! Hopefully we can now win it again.



**Fifteen years ago and Howard Kott wins the first of his 3 TDOY titles!**

## TAXI AIR CONDITIONING

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The time has come to accept that the world in which we live can never be the same again and that we must now choose between one of two paths.

**Path one:** The parental path of a race to the bottom with **Mr Sit your bottom down, do as I say, don't do as I do, copy that.** That comes down to a society of Pound and coffee shops whose staff will be continually subsidised by the nation's taxpayers while its leadership counts its money offshore with a grateful thanks to you and a low paid, unskilled workforce takes the public's life in its hands as they occasionally lift their head over the top of the steering wheel to avoid the odd cyclist, while knowing full well they will hit the kerb before the pedestrian, as they work for and subsidise another 'legal' parasitic business blot on the landscape for someone else's get rich scheme at societies expense.

**Path two:** a well-educated, independent minded, forward thinking workforce like our cousins in Germany and our **Eurovision Song Contest** cousins, the Israelis; a well-educated stylish workforce where the value of its citizens is to build a civilisation paramount to its aim.

**In plain language, Mr Mayor, it's make your mind up time!**

Do you lead us all down the path of **President Google** and the tumbleweed connection of middle America, where the value of your opinion is judged by the number of dollars in your pocket and if you can raise a billion of them, then you can be President. And spending that amount of money, you're *bound* to be right in your judgement.

**The power of the Mafia at this high tech corporation is frightening when you think of where they could soon be if left unchecked and then be able to decide a whole nation's diplomatic policy towards great swathes of our continent.**

Thus we look forward to a future where thinking and the ability to challenge the actions of the man in the big chair, will be all but gone and the one-stop-shop will truly arrive. After all, it will supply the life blood to your every moving part and it won't be that far removed from reality.

**Uber** is a business that proudly announces how it likes to disrupt the market place, so it's sure as hell going to disrupt HM Government's Treasury - and to all intents and purposes will very quickly go through the

Call Sign's Gary Cox looks at Uber and spells it out to the Mayor...

## IT'S MAKE YOUR MIND UP TIME!

arteries of all Government departments. The last time I heard something similar was when the Nazis decided to march on Poland to *save* the Poles from democracy and freedom. **Well, one or two good things did come out of the war - like going to the moon. But Mayor Boris Johnson must be thinking whether this is his equivalent moment to Winston Churchill's crisis with the Dardanelles?**

We may suspect that the subject of Uber will show us all how good the Mayor is playing politics at the big table. He knows that if he calls it right, he calls Britain right for the next 50 years. Meanwhile the world holds its breath awaiting the court hearing to see if Boris is master of all he surveys - or the master of none. The time has come to accept that the midnight gravy train of Socialism that made us able to support an ageing population, has gone and we will all need to pull our weight - that's you, me and the zero hours contract employers in the modern age of our part-public part-private world.

After this debacle is over and **Sir Peter Gerard Hendy CBE** walks out the door with an even bigger gong - or by having his collar grabbed and rear end kicked all the way from

SW1 to WC1 - the licensed London taxi trade that **Oliver Cromwell** breathed life into will never *ever* be the same again.

The trade will be divided into two sections; those that keep muttering their cab badge is their pension, and those who accept that you are never going to earn a living from a 40 hour week and start to think like the *raison d'être* of **Eaton Square**, whose concept and thought process is to get the monies in and then worry about how to distribute it. One thing is for certain; there's no room at the inn for dinosaurs.

Take your pick Brenda, Dean or **Arthur Scargill** - and a job at **B&Q** matey. Why do I write so candidly? Because I believe every word and I'll tell you what I think you need to hear. Any complaints with anything I've written, contact your trade association. But phone and make an appointment first, because if you go in on the off-chance son, they will probably be busy talking to their financial advisor...!

Gary Cox (O46)  
Call Sign Online

## Starstruck? Me? Naaah!

"Carrying people from A to B is fine while ferrying the famous - and in some instances the infamous - it's part of the job," **John Kenny (Y23)** told **Call Sign**, "but there have been a few instances that have stuck in my mind regarding celebrities.

"I remember stopping onetime outside a restaurant in W1 in response to a raised female hand. I must admit that she was stunning as she spoke to give me her destination and as my eyes took in this shapely woman, I realised that by her side was none other than footballing legend **George Best!**

"I took a deep breath, thought 'wow' and got under way towards their destination. I remember thinking what a lovely person he was as we chatted amiably during the journey. But I did have some difficulty solely concentrating on George, as in my mind I considered the attributes of the young lady sitting beside this world-famous footballer!" John laughed at the image the memory brought back.

"That's the way it is; when a hand stretches out from the kerbside to grab your attention, you stop and they get in. Sometimes you recognise them instantly, other times it takes a moment or two," John said.

"Such was the case when a group of men and a young woman stopped me on the street and the lady gave me their destination. They all piled into the cab and off we went. I overheard one of the men ask the woman whether she thought the driver knew who they were, but didn't catch her reply. I dug deep into my memorybank as her image was somehow familiar and I do remember suddenly thinking that I *did* know who they were. They were pop group **T'pau** and she was their lead singer, **Carol Decker**. There was no mistaking that lady's mop of fiery red hair. When they got out and she paid me off, I said good luck with the record. She smiled and thanked me as she walked away towards the others. The record I referred to was **China in your Hand** which became a big chart success."

"I also remember an account ride from Chelsea where the trip details were simply **Mrs Michael Caine**. Indeed, it was Mrs Caine who walked towards the cab and as I stepped out to open the cab door for her, it was then that I noticed Mr Michael Caine right behind her! My mind buzzed as I recalled **The Ipccross File**, **Zulu** and countless other movies I had enjoyed seeing - and there was the very man standing right in front of me!" John smiled recalling the moment.

"I must have looked a little shocked as I mumbled 'M-Michael, what can I say! In an ultra-friendly reply and in his familiar London accent, he simply said: 'You can start by saying hallo' and extended his hand to shake mine! Then they both stepped into the cab and settled down onto the seat! Just another day in the life of a **Dial-a-Cab** cabby," said John as a broad grin spread over his face.



John isn't starstruck!

Alan Green  
Call Sign Online

# ALL WHITE ON THE NIGHT

## Hello Ladies & Gents

### Uber

For those that follow me on *Twitter*, you will know my utter contempt for **Uber** and for the way they have circumvented taxi legislation in London by operating an *on demand* service via an app straight to the drivers mobile phone, without the booking going through a licensed private hire premises.

The way **Transport For London** have interpreted this as being within their own rules, goes against what is written on their website. So no wonder the **United Cabby's Group** have used their **TFL** initials against them with the **Totally Failing London** slogan.

Sir Peter Hendy was recently on the **Eddy Nester's** drivetime radio show on **BBC Radio London**, where he said he would like to limit the number of private hire licenses being issued, which currently stand at 1000 a month. However he didn't say *when* this would happen, so don't expect it sometime soon!

**Boris Johnson**, however, seems to have changed his stance from



being a friend of the taxi trade in the days when he courted us to vote for him when he first ran a campaign for becoming Mayor of London and visiting taxi rest stops to gain votes, to now saying when asked about Uber at Mayoral question time that it's a "free market" and that we need to accept that "it's customer choice."

With rumours and revelations a-plenty about how deep Uber's contact reach at City Hall and the Westminster Village is and the High Court ruling still to come, I'm watching the media daily for more news on this US tech co' as more and more cities ban them from operating, whereas we in London just watch and wait.

If you, like me, *Tweet* and you see a dangerous Uber driver and manage to take a photo,

don't forget to add the **#uberred** when you tweet your photo with a caption.

### ITDA

It's been good to hear the radio ads being played on various radio stations promoting the trade in a positive way and also to see the **ITDA** advertising van being parked outside **Mayfair** touting hotspots. This has helped us win back work previously lost to the touts.

However, the best ad and parking place the van has been of late was at the **Mansion House** in the city for **George Osborne's** annual speech to the city. I just hope all the media outlets that saw the van will ask the Chancellor some awkward questions about Uber's lack of tax payments to the UK.

*Be lucky...*

**Garry White**  
DaC BoM

## Getting away with speeding tickets?

**Call Sign** has heard that one in four of the UK's speed cameras have been switched off or are just out of action with no repairs planned. However, there are still 1714 fixed sites in the UK and between them they caught 968,715 speeding drivers just in 2014 alone. There is also the chance of being caught by a mobile camera and between the 345 of them in the UK, 2014 saw their total reach a staggering 774,537 motorists caught.



**Confused.com** carried out a recent survey that saw five per cent of drivers claim they'd had an accident as a direct result of the presence of the cameras, with 20 per cent saying that they been affected by the erratic driving of others close to speed cameras. But the survey - apparently not involving robot Brian - also revealed that 66 per cent of drivers admitted speeding when they assumed there were no cameras nearby.

**Roger Reynolds**, the policeman who first brought speed cameras to the UK, says that speed cameras have not always proven an effective method of tackling speeding offences. He told the Press Association:

**"Enforcement agencies have been too strict with minor offenders and one in eight motorists say they have been sanctioned for driving just 1-4 mph over the limit. This is in order to raise revenue and ignores those who really pose a danger on the roads."**

But the best way to avoid the legal consequences of being caught speeding is simply not to speed - especially when your living is at stake.

The Worshipful Company of Hackney Carriage Drivers

## CAB GUIDE COURSE



Enhance your KoL,

become a qualified Taxi Tour Guide

The next Cab Guide Course is due to start on 7th September 2015 and costs £299 plus VAT

If you would like more information on joining the course please contact The Clerk, Mary Whitworth by email [wchcd@tiscali.co.uk](mailto:wchcd@tiscali.co.uk) or Tel: 01494 765922  
Classes held at Museum of London every Monday, with walks on Sundays.  
Course runs for 8 weeks



A smiling Daryl back in his cab again!

"Actually, just saying thank you to our **Dial-a-Cab Credit Union** really isn't anywhere near enough to express my deep gratitude to those great people." **Daryl Wood (G07)** told *Call Sign*, his voice breaking with emotion.

"My wife, **Wendy**, has been very seriously ill over the past few months having to undergo several gastric operations while enduring many bouts of excruciating pain in the process. It also meant that I have been unable to work with any regularity as I've shouldered the majority of her care - both medical and personal - together with my family when they could help," Daryl explained.

"Wendy has undergone treatment in two hospitals - initially at St. George's (Tooting) and also as an emergency patient in Queen Elizabeth's at Shooter's Hill, neither of which are an easy journey from our home in Sidcup. And don't get me started on hospital car parking fees, which I think are outrageous. I was

DaC driver Daryl Wood asks Call Sign to pass a message to DACCU...

## A VERY BIG THANK YOU!

visiting Wendy every day and that cost me £20 each time. As she was in hospital for a week or more each time, £140 a week when you're not really working is no laughing matter."

**Daryl told us that Wendy's operations were so complex, that each one took six or more hours and that when she finally came around in the recovery room - where he would be waiting - she looked and indeed was, completely exhausted. She hadn't been able to eat for many weeks - taking in fluids only - and losing around 35lbs in body weight.**

"She now calls me fatty," Daryl told us as a smile came to his face. "My priority throughout was my Wendy's health, but I was naturally stressing big-time about how all the expenses were going to be met; the cab, house and all the other bills you don't usually think about when you're able to work regularly and have money coming in to cover all these things. So I went to the Dial-a-Cab Credit Union, not knowing what they would say about a loan that was nothing to do with the cab. There was only one question they asked: How much did I want? You just can't imagine the relief I felt at that moment! Almost as good was the fact that they transferred my request by the close of business that very same day! No complicated questions, no 'sorry you do not fit our criteria' or 'your request has been declined' as I hear almost daily about other financial institutions. They just asked me how much I

thought I needed to get by until Wendy was back on the road to recovery and assured me it was already in my bank at the press of a button!" Daryl beamed, his eyes moistening as he recalled the moment at least one heavy weight was removed from his shoulders.

"That gesture meant I could concentrate on attending to Wendy, knowing that all our outgoings were being met and that meant so much to both of us. I understand there is interest to be paid on the loan - nothing is free of course - but that added sum was more than reasonable and the request was met so positively in my hour of need. So you can see why I say that just a 'thank you' is hardly enough." Daryl ended his story - still with that regained smile on his face.

*Call Sign* spoke to DACCU Vice President, **John Riley**, He told us:

"We're all cab drivers at DACCU and we know how tough it is out there, so we were delighted to help Daryl and Wendy when they needed us. We know there can be unforeseen problems, so we are here for **Dial-a-Cab** drivers and anyone else that needs us and is a member of the CU.

"We had a lovely card from Wendy expressing her thanks, which we appreciated here in the office, but when it came to it, we were just happy to be able to help..."

*You can contact DACCU at:*

**Unit 14, Peterley Business Centre, 472 Hackney Road, London E2 9EO**  
Tel: 020 7729 8171 or 020 7749 0585

## Zero emissions Metrocab: Volume production next year!

Frazer-Nash Research Ltd and Ecotive Ltd, the makers of the all-new Metrocab - the only zero-emissions capable black cab currently operating in London - have announced that the UK Metrocab will enter volume production in Coventry next year as part of a new partnership with manufacturing specialist, Multimatic.

Multimatic is a privately held global corporation supplying components, systems and services to the automotive industry. The company is headquartered in Markham, Ontario, Canada and has operating divisions in North America, Europe and Asia, with manufacturing partners in South America and Australia. Multimatic's core competencies lie in the high volume manufacture of automotive mechanisms, structures and suspension components, as well as the design and development of automotive body and chassis systems.

Multimatic Niche Vehicles (MNV) manufactures complete cars as well as body/chassis assemblies for low volume programs such as Aston Martin's One-77, Zagato and GT12, the Lagonda Taraf and Ford GT. Multimatic Engineering supplies customers as diverse as Red Bull Formula One, Tesla and Mercedes AMG. Multimatic has a well-established manufacturing facility in Coventry, which is now undergoing a programme of expansion to accommodate the start of Metrocab production next year.

Metrocab chairman, **Sir Charles Masefield**, said: "This announcement marks another important step in bringing the all-new electric powered Metrocab to volume production. Our prototype fleet is already operating very successfully in London, proving that our Range Extended Electric taxi is the solution to delivering on the City's Ultra Low Emission Zone promises from 2018. Next year we will enter volume production with the hugely respected and experienced Multimatic. We are delighted to be working with such an established partner to fulfil our ambitions, following our significant investment in developing this product and to bring further skilled jobs to the UK."

Multimatic Vice President, Larry Holt added: "We have been following closely the development of zero-emissions capable taxis in the UK and have worked with Metrocab for a number of years to bring their prototype fleet to the market. We are all delighted with the performance and operational results of this first fleet and it is very satisfying to now commit to enter series production of the all-new Metrocab. The taxi has clearly been designed and engineered from the ground up with the global market in mind and Multimatic has the facilities and capabilities to make this a truly international product - a prospect which really excites us."

**The new Metrocab is driven by two electric motors, with a 1-litre petrol engine range extender coupled with an optimised generator to recharge the battery pack (which takes as little as 10 minutes while driving). Charging is also available via any mains electric outlet providing even lower fuel consumption.**

**The cab is said to provide 98 MPG on the European ECE101 cycle, emits 75% less CO<sub>2</sub> than any comparable current London taxi and have a combined range of 560km.**

*\*There is a possible legal action in the pipeline over the shape of the vehicle...*



The new Metrocab driver's cabin; the extra seat is optional

# Kenny Tarr

Sadly, Call Sign has to report another long-time Dial-a-Cab driver who has passed on. Kenny Tarr (T41) was with the Society since 1996 and the sad news was passed on by his brother Micky (R02). The Tarr family as a whole also sent the following message to DaC drivers...

"Thank you to all the many drivers who attended Kenny's funeral. Thanks also to the drivers who sent some lovely messages. Kenny made many friends on DaC.

He missed the Finz where he would meet the gang! He was in his element when the mickey-taking started, those late night and early mornings when he would tell his many stories and have an audience for his corny jokes!

Our sincere thanks again for the kind words and support we have received in these sad times."

**The Tarr family**

**Board Member Allan Evans, who represented DaC at Kenny's funeral, wrote:**

"Kenny was very well liked at Dial-a-Cab and he will be greatly missed by his many friends on the circuit. It was obvious to me what a close family Kenny has, and in this very difficult and sad time I am sure they will all help to comfort each other.

Our deepest condolences to his wife Janet and the whole family."



*NY cab driver Michael Higgins writes for Call Sign...*

## Is Uber going down the tuber!



**Will NY Mayor Bill de Blasio help legitimate NY cabbies?**

**Well, well, well. So the New York City Taxi & Limousine Commission is finally requiring strict new regulations for share-ride operators and their drivers. It seems that recent deaths and injuries caused by reckless non-yellows over here have finally have forced their hand!**

Then there's that other little bit of news that came down the Pike from **Craine's New York** – a respected publishing conglomerate based in Detroit, Michigan who include in depth finance items and who have started asking questions such as where are the number\$ for **Uber's** alleged wealth?

First their Chief Financial Officer resigns. RED FLAG! Then they get an infusion of \$1.6 billion new dollars from the **Goldman Sachs** death star. Yet their \$40 billion dollar alleged value doesn't budge. Huh???

**Now their internet minions / slaves**

are posting Uber's so-called wealth as \$50 billion. Why? Because Uber says so? Where's the maths, the numbers? When do they open their books? Listen you guys at Dial-a-Cab; I've driven cabs in New York City off and on for damn near twenty years. You're not gonna bullsh-t me. I invented bullsh-t and I know bullsh-t when I see *and* smell it! And it smells exactly like an Uber driver who's now living in his \$65,000 SUV with very little business and the stink of an 18-hour shift on his back and buffet of fast-food crumbs littering the floor.

How do I know that? Well Uber passengers tell me whilst explaining why they *don't* take Uber anymore. Duh! And not to mention women passengers who tell me that they've had too many Uber drivers who are 'creepy.' Welcome home, girls... But hey **Call Sign** – that doesn't mean I've finished writing for the month yet! Just because you get a month off doesn't mean the rest of us are doing nothing! So listen up Al...

There's another little diddy in that some *farkakta* group say they want the City of New York to give Uber a 'pass' on regulations because they are apparently one of their corporate *homies*. Well *farkakta* you! Get out of NYC, mo' fo's...

I hope New York Mayor, **Bill de Blasio**, finally takes a stand for the legitimate working drivers and gets all this straightened out - starting with the heroic Yellow cab drivers and medallion owners who have finally weathered the storm! Woo hoo!

And as a PS ...Don't think we haven't noticed that **Lyft** and **Gett** weren't as upset at the TLC regulations as their 'friends' at Uber. Hmmm....

*Michael Higgins  
Editor New York City Taxinews  
Call Sign Online*

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Like most of us, **Roy Carter (H79)** has seen many strange things in his 16 years as a **Dial-a-Cab** driver, but most of it you just learn to accept and look the other way at – even some bilks.

“Sometimes they really aren’t worth the hassle of catching someone and going through the whole police rigmarole of statements and court cases. But there is a line where I won’t allow the passenger to cross and that is if I believe that they have got into the cab with the intention of bilking the driver because they have done it before and obviously got away with it. And that’s exactly what Roy came up against.

The bilk was for over £13, but it wasn’t the money that made Roy take this one seriously. He picked up an approx 25 years old lady in **Portland Place** who wanted to go to **Goswell Road**. Roy admits that he found it strange that on a hot and sunny day where temperatures were up in the mid-70s, this young lady should have a heavy Parker coat with the zip pulled up to the top, but overlooked it because if she was cold then what’s it got to do with him!

But Roy’s vague suspicions turned to reality when he slowed down in Goswell Road and she opened the window to release the door from the outside – obviously knowing that there would be a delay in opening the inside with Roy’s foot still on the brakes. Then she made a bolt for it! At the same time as she got out, Roy suddenly realised that the Parker was probably to hide any descriptions of her that

*You’ve heard the one about a dog biting the driver, but not...*

# PASSENGER BITES DAC DRIVER!



**Gary's** passenger door is still open as police turn up and arrest his passenger

anyone could give; so he immediately gave chase, caught and restrained her. There were two witnesses and the police were called.

She was carrying a drink and threw that over Roy in addition to kicking, punching and then biting the DaC driver!

“Fortunately she didn’t puncture my skin,” Roy told *Call Sign*, “because that could have

been serious. But she wasn’t messing about when trying to punch and kick me. The police came quickly with around 10 officers and several police vehicles! They took her away and I didn’t hesitate in saying that I would support a charge against her because she undoubtedly knew what she was doing.”

Roy is waiting to hear of any developments...

**Baghwat Singh**  
Call Sign Online

*In his last competitive soccer match, it’s...*

# Extra time heartbreak for Lee!

When **Dial-a-Cab** driver and **Colliers Wood** goalkeeper, **Lee Pearce (J71)**, told *Call Sign* in the last issue that he was going to retire at the end of this season, he couldn’t have thought that his team would fight their way into the **League Cup Final**. But that’s exactly what they did and Lee was hoping to go out with a bang in his last match and a cup winner’s medal. The game was on **May 1** at the **Woking FC** ground and they were up against **Camberley Town** - runners-up in the **Combined Counties League Premier Division** and the team with the fewest losses all season after just failing to take the league championship. They started the game as hot favourites...

**Camberley** began by strongly pressing **Colliers Wood**, who were really stretched in keeping them at bay with **Lee Pearce** making several important saves to keep the game goalless at the halfway mark.

CW’s goal scoring machine, **Mario Embalo**, had the first opening in the second half but shot straight at the **Camberley** goalkeeper, followed soon after by a **Charlie Ottoway** shot that also missed the target. But it was still **Camberley** that had most of the play and they took a deserved lead after 64 minutes through former CW striker **Manny Quarshie**. He trapped the ball, before then volleying it home past Lee Pearce with Wood’s players looking lost. **Eli Ogunseye** then came on to replace **Sam Mead** for Wood and he soon saw action when stretching the **Camberley’s** defence.

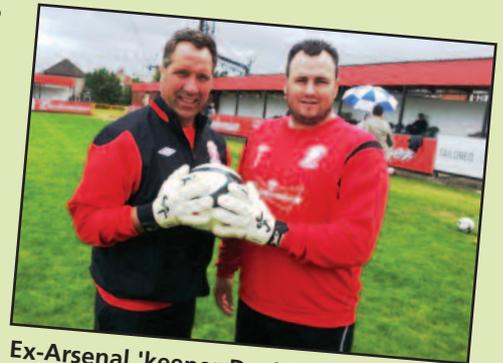
Minutes later, **Ogunseye** was heading goalwards when he was pulled down inside the area and the referee immediately blew up for a penalty from where **Mario Embalo** made no mistake. Then with just two minutes to go, **Embalo** rounded **Camberley** defender **Craig Bradshaw** but passed rather than taking a shot himself and along with it went the last chance of league cup glory for Wood.

So the game went into extra time. In the first half of extra time it was **Camberley** that looked the stronger, although **Dan Harding** put the ball into the **Camberley** net but the linesman’s flag went up signalling that Dan had handled the ball first.

So it was down to the last 15 minutes with the scores still level and a possible penalty shootout. Then with just minutes to go, **Camberley** were awarded a corner. The ball was nodded down to **Marcus Cousins** who hit it past Lee Pearce to win the cup for **Camberley** even though the supposed underdogs, **Colliers Wood**, had pushed them all the way.

After the match, Lee Pearce told *Call Sign*: “It would have been nice to bow out with a winner’s medal, but it wasn’t to be. The lads played their hearts out but on the day the better team won. I’m now 38 and been goalkeeping for many, many years diving onto rock hard grounds and to be honest, there isn’t a part of me that doesn’t ache! During my career I’ve met and played with some real legends of the game from former **Spurs** and **England** manager **Terry Venables** to **Arsenal** and **England** ‘keeper **David Seaman** to **Argentinian World Cup** winner **Claudio Caniggia** and many others. But I think it’s now time to get out while I can still walk!

I’m hoping to stay in the game either as a GK coach or perhaps even management. But **Becky** and I have baby number five due on August 28 to add to **Jack, Lauren, Holly** and **Sophie**, so there’s stuff to do at home! And of course I will still have to drive my **Dial-a-Cab** taxi! But with all its ups and downs, football is still the greatest game in the world...”



Ex-Arsenal ‘keeper **David Seaman** was just one of many footballing greats that Lee has met during his long career

Phil Davis (F10) has been on Dial-a-Cab since 2008, but for much longer than that Phil has been a valued member of the WCHCD, in fact right from the time it restarted up as a *Fellowship* in 1990. In 1997, Phil became the Master - at the same time as its status was updated to that of *Company*.

In 1994, Phil was made Chairman of a committee that was going to organise a trip to Disneyland Paris that would see taxis taking children suffering from life threatening illnesses on a Magical Taxi Tour to the French wonderland. No one knew whether there would be a second trip, but so successful and well organised was the trip, that it became an annual event and for the past 21 years Phil has led his committee into action to make sure that upwards of 100 taxis filled with kids (and helpers) have the weekend of their young lives.

Now Phil Davis has been announced as the winner of the City Livery Company Root and Branch Award for 2015.

Anyone that knows Phil won't be surprised to hear that his first comments were to say how delighted and honoured he was to have been given the Award, but that the trip was not just thanks to his work, but that of everyone else involved - from the committee to the drivers.

"I am really very delighted and surprised to receive this award and know it recognises not just me but the work that my committee and the Company do for sick children. My aim is to put smiles on the faces of these children and I could not attain this goal without their support and that of many City Livery Companies, to organise the Magical Taxi Tour every year."

To be nominated for the Award, a Liveryman has to have made exceptional contribution to the work of his Livery or the wider Livery,

**THE WORSHIPFUL COMPANY OF HACKNEY CARRIAGE DRIVERS**

*For over twenty years of chairing the WCHCD organising committee for the annual Children's Magical Taxi Tour to Disneyland Paris...*

**DAC'S PHIL DAVIS WINS CITY LIVERY COMPANY AWARD**



**Pic: Phil receives his award from Sir David Wootton, Alderman and President of the City Livery Club (Courtesy Beverly C Smith)**

which enhances the understanding or profile of it. Phil certainly meets these criteria. All those involved with the Children's Magical Taxi Tour will testify as to how much work Phil has undertaken during the years he has been involved - not just in the actual planning but also during the trip itself when he is either meeting and greeting guests at the Big Breakfast send off, or donning his high-vis jacket to direct drivers. Then in his support vehicle, he is in constant touch with the other committee members and support vehicles, liaising with both the UK police and the French gendarmes. He has to direct operations at the fuel stop and then on arrival at the Disney resort he will be busy directing cab

parking. Then before leaving France, the following year's dates are booked in with the hotel and all the fund raising starts again!

The City Livery Club Root and Branch Award seeks to recognise exemplary works from within the City Livery Companies from individuals who have made a noteworthy contribution to charity and the Livery. The criteria and competition is tough, with many remarkable nominations coming from across the eclectic range of City Livery Companies. This is only the second such award but Phil's tireless work on the annual Children's Magical Taxi Tour has touched the lives of thousands of children and their families over the past 21 years. The fact he has engaged the support from such a variety of Livery Companies is a testament to his incredible contribution to the City Livery movement and he has always acted without seeking reward or recognition.

Current WCHCD Master and former ComCab GM, **Malcolm Paice**, said of Phil:

"As a Livery Company we are very proud to have Phil as a Liveryman and Past Master, but the whole City Livery community should also be proud to have such a remarkable ambassador for the City and its charitable works. I am sure you will all join me in congratulating him on this splendid and well deserved accolade."

We think the whole trade echoes those sentiments...

**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 issue goes back 19 years and looks at how a DaC driver "saved" Princess Diana!  
From the April 1996 issue of Call Sign

**DAC DRIVER SAVES DIANA!**

You will have read in the national press recently about an incident where a loaned car driven by **Diana, the Princess of Wales**, was hit by another car that had crossed the centre of **Cromwell Road** and caused an accident involving several other cars.

Fortunately for HRH, the vehicle following her car was a **Dial-a-Cab** taxi, the driver of which saw the whole incident - although being somewhat modest, he has asked **Call Sign** not to name him. Our driver immediately jumped out to see if the person in the car in front was injured. He had no idea who was in the car and could not believe it when he opened the door to see **Princess Diana** in the driving seat. For the first few moments, he was dumb-struck, but soon realised the security aspects of the situation and advised the Princess to go with him to the nearest police station. Also having regained his composure, he enquired after her well-being and Diana told him that she was a bit shaken but otherwise ok.

The driver had a lady passenger in his cab at the time of the accident and when he went back to the cab and explained that he was sorry but she would have to get out to allow another passenger in, she was not best pleased until she saw who the passenger was. The driver saying there would be no charge helped placate her as well!

*En route* to the police station, Diana told him that she always had a high regard for London taxi drivers and that this incident only confirmed that faith in us. On arrival at the police station, the DaC driver ushered HRH into the reception where they were faced with staff who looked somewhat surprised at seeing Princess Diana being escorted in by a taxi driver. The driver told **Call Sign** that he was happy no one made a joke about whether he had caught her trying to bilk him!

The driver was interviewed and gave a full account of the incident before going back to work and looking forward to recounting the story to any driver prepared to listen - and believe him!

But then early the following morning, the subscriber was awoken out of his dreams by a phone call from **Kensington Palace** thanking him for his swift action and all his help in making sure that Her Royal Highness was kept safe in difficult circumstances. He told **Call Sign** that he was taken aback by the genuine sincerity and he apologised if he seemed non-*compos mentis* as he was a night man and had been woken out of his sleep!

In his excitement while on his way to the police station, he told us he was rather upset that he had not mentioned to HRH about opening an account with DaC while explaining the virtues of our **Female Taxicard Service**. Will **Allen Togwell** ever forgive him for this missed opportunity!



**No Female Taxicard for Diana!**  
(Pic courtesy Kensington Palace)

**Jery Craig, Editor, Call Sign**

# OPERATIONS MANAGER UPDATE

## ***Hello Ladies & Gents,***

### ***Fixed Price trips***

Since my last report, you may have noticed that we are now introducing more **Fixed Price** trips to our regular account holders. It was quite apparent to me that the only way to gain more lucrative trips was to offer them competitive rates that our rivals are offering. Over the most recent period, we have dispatched more trips to both **Heathrow** and **Gatwick** and in addition, have seen journeys as far as **Nottingham, Ipswich, Swindon** and **Clacton-on-Sea**, to name but a few that have been offered to you, the members.

The feedback from many clients has been very positive and although it is still early days, this new policy allows clients to use a black taxi, which many of them still prefer. Prices are based on mileage and distance and the length of time it may take to complete the actual journey that is being offered.

To make the journeys more acceptable to the account holders, on certain trips the rate will remain on the fixed price but a waiting time premium equivalent to £26 per hour will be incorporated into the final fare if a Fixed Price excess is applicable. As you know,



a Fixed Price is rejectable without penalty, but I hope you will understand why we are introducing this aggressive approach and that you will give us your full support in an exercise that we anticipate will not only increase these types of trips, but will help our Sales team in their tenders for new business.

It's pleasing to know that we are now offering members trips that we haven't seen for quite a while and in the process, regaining

some of the longer type of journeys. I hope that with your assistance, we can continue to do so.

### ***Complaints meeting***

You will see below the results of the most recent Complaints hearing and I hope that you will all now work within the Procedure Rules that I listed in my last article. The system is now regularly monitored and I would politely ask you all to book in correctly, especially in EC5.

These rules are in place to protect the Society and to make things fair and equal for all of us and I will do my level best to bring things back on track. This Society has never operated on a free-for-all basis; it has always offered each member a fair and honest allocation of work – and rightfully so!

Lastly, the Chairman has previously written about the new Society logo, but I have received a number of calls and emails from members that have reported **Dial-a-Cab** taxis failing to carry the logo. Please display them; they are there for a reason.

**Allan Evans**

**DaC Operations / Compliance**

## Complaints results: April 2015

There was a Complaints Hearing held at DaC House on 22 April 2015.

Due to Appeals, all the results were held over until this issue as *Call Sign* does not publish a June issue...

<u>Name &amp; call sign</u>	<u>Description</u>	<u>Verdict</u>
<b>Ian Gaffney (Z35)</b>	Driver booked into WW00 when true location was Slough W99. <i>Rules 2, 3, 11</i>	2. 1 week suspension 3. 1 week suspension 11. 2 weeks suspension
<b>Christopher Marquis (G99)</b>	Driver booked into EC5 when true location was Upminster. Driver accepted fixed price trip from EC4 to E14. Cleared trip 3 minutes later and booked back into EC5. <i>Rules 2, 3, 11</i>	2. 1 week suspension 3. 1 week suspension 11. 2 weeks suspension
<b>Alan Alty (N47)</b>	Driver booked in to E14C when true location was A102. Drivers must be within security points at Canary Wharf to book in. <i>Rules 2, 3, 11</i>	2. Warning 3. Warning 11. 2 weeks suspension <i>Reduced to above following Appeal</i>
<b>Darren Lazarus (C89)</b>	Driver reported by DaC members that he was approaching drivers at LCA to join GetTaxi. <i>Rules 2, 3</i>	3. 4 week suspension 2. Expelled <i>Decision upheld at Appeal Hearing</i>

## DAC'S NEW ARBITRATORS

On page 18 of the May Call Sign, there was a request from Company Secretary Howard Pears for members to fill three vacancies on the Arbitrator's list. As the piece said, should more than three members apply then there would have been a postal ballot.

However, as only three responded, these have now been added to the list of drivers currently on that committee.

The three members are: Richard Potter (T51), Gary Cox (O46) and Mark Tiller (K90).



It was a *Blast* from a shotgun, fired by a crazy, deranged unhinged and unsuccessful businessman that brought an abrupt and cruel end to the life of Tory leader Spencer

*In this series, Cab Guide, City of London Guide and City of Westminster Guide Bob Woodford looks at infamous peace time London explosions...*

# Blast!

**Percival – the only time in British history that a Prime Minister has been assassinated.**

At 5.15pm on the afternoon of Monday 11th May 1812, a pistol ball fired by **John Bellingham**, a member of the public sitting patiently by a fireplace in the Lobby of the **House of Commons**, would bring a dramatic end to the life and promising career of Percival.

The PM had walked through the Lobby *en route* to the Chamber when Bellingham stood up and walked towards his victim and pointed the gun at his chest. *Blast!* As Percival stumbled and then crumpled to the floor, he shouted out in agony: 'I am murdered!' whilst Bellingham calmly strode back to the fireplace and sat down again.

Percival was hit with one shot to the chest and with the bullet lodged in his ribs, he was escorted by a group of bystanders, led by **Independent Member William Smith** (maternal grandfather of **Florence Nightingale**), to the Speaker's apartments where he was laid on a table - but after a few minutes of sobbing, he died before a doctor could be rushed into the room.

Back in the Lobby meanwhile, the assassin was seized and his firearm confiscated, but it was some time later before it was discovered that he had on his person another pistol, primed and loaded, hidden in a secret compartment of his overcoat.

Bellingham was taken to the Sergeant-at-Arms quarters for questioning, while a journalist at the scene mentioned that he had frequently seen the man in the Visitors' Gallery of the House of Commons, where he regularly asked questions about the identities of speakers - most notable Cabinet Ministers.

He remained surprisingly calm, while there was uproar around him and admitted the killing, because he had been denied the redress of his grievances by Government. He stated that he had been ill-treated and was a most unfortunate man, but had felt sufficient justification for what he had done.

Earlier in the afternoon, Bellingham had been with friends at a private art collection, when he asked to be excused because he had some "business to attend to" - and his blame for failed business interests was directed at the Prime Minister, who was blasted away!

The murderer was despatched to **Newgate Prison** some 3 hours later after revealing that he had previously been falsely imprisoned for several years for debt in Russia and the British Embassy refused to help. His sense of grievance mounted to the point where he decided to kill the PM!

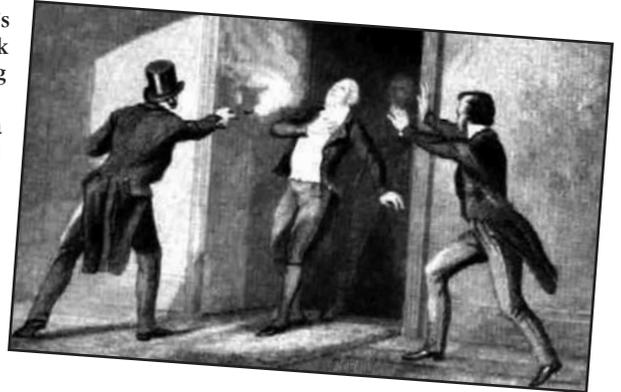
While Bellingham was confessing, the news went around beyond the Palace of Westminster and an angry mob assembled in **Parliament Square – not mourning the death of the PM, but intent on rescuing Bellingham!** But they were surged back by Life Guards.

Just like today, any excuse was needed for 'rent-a-mob' and this time it was the serious conditions of the economy and the war with France that sparked it off – and it was quickly crushed for fear of a break out in violence among the working classes.

The murderer, a **Liverpudlian**, was tried at the

Old Bailey and despite his lawyer's plea of insanity, was hung by the neck until he died – 6 days after the killing and 2 days after Percival's funeral.

The British Prime Minister, a Londoner, left a devoted wife and 12 children. He was cut down in his prime and before he could make any lasting mark, he was blasted away...



**Bob Woodford**  
Call Sign Online

## Geely suing Metrocab GEELY

The producer holding the license to the London's iconic TX4 has decided to call into court the companies that have banded together to deliver an emissions free competitor, claiming the almost identical design would be confusing for drivers and clients.

**The London Taxi Company, which is owned by China's Geely Automobile Holdings, has announced that the Frazer-Nash Research Ltd. and Ecotive Ltd zero-emission Metrocab is violating its trademarks.**

"It is actually all about the shape," said the LTC lawyer Douglas Campbell. The companies are scheduled to go to trial in November. The problem began when London Mayor Boris Johnson said last year that the city wanted all new taxis to be emissions free by 2018 to help curb London's pollution.

Geely is currently spending £250million on its new plant in Coventry to manufacture environmentally friendlier variants of the TX4. Meanwhile, Frazer-Nash Research and Ecotive have said that they will begin building their new Metrocab next year in a deal with privately held manufacturer Multimatic Holdings.

"The identity of the manufacturer of the car is a matter of supreme indifference to the passenger," Frazer-Nash commented in documents at a London court hearing. Their £50million joint venture facility is also in the Coventry area. The zero-emission Metrocab is currently on trial in London.

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

# Brethren of the Whip



## The cabman, the widow and a case of lying...

On January 6th 1865, a young cabman by the name of **William Gates** picked up the highly respectable - but recently widowed - **Mrs Marian Reece** and took her to several destinations before finally setting her down outside her own house. Gates informed his passenger that the fare, allowing for distance and waiting at the various stops, was 5 shillings (25p) but Mrs Reece told him his fare was 3s 6d (17½p) and that was all he was going to get! Without paying him even that amount, she then went into her house.

Gates waited a few minutes before knocking and informing a servant that he was still waiting for his fare and that it was 5 shillings. The servant returned and informed the cabman that if he wanted his money, he would have to summons Mrs Reece.

**Marylebone Police Court** must have been a daunting place to the young cabman; he was only 22 years old and had not been a driver for long. But he gave his side of the story, only for the highly respectable Mrs Reece to give a totally different one! She said she had sent her page boy out with 3s 6d to pay the cabman and that her housemaid, **Isabella**, had witnessed the transaction. Isabella then stepped up to the witness box and stated that she had not seen any money passed over. This was quite brave for the servant, as it would then be unlikely that she would remain in her position for going against her mistress. No matter how much Mrs Reece pressured Isabella, the maid stuck to her testimony; she had not seen the cabman get his fare. Mrs Reece said the policeman must have seen it as he was there at the time. Gates agreed there was a policeman present, but what he saw was Isabella pass him a card with Mrs Reece's name and address upon it.

The policeman was not in court and the magistrate, **Mr Knox**, adjourned the case until the following day so that he might be present. When he did appear, he backed up the cabman's version of events that no money had been paid to him. Knox had heard enough. He accused Mrs Reece's defence of attempting an imposition upon the court:

**"It is a shocking case of lying. I hope I shall never hear such a case again so**

**long as I sit as a magistrate."**

With that, he ordered Mrs Reece to pay the 5s fare and a further 6s 6d in costs. But one month later, all the parties were back in the same court with the same magistrate to hear a charge of perjury. Mrs Reece however was not in the dock, it was 'the very respectable looking cabman' William Gates, who was now on trial!

Mrs Reece testified that she first gave the maid the cabman's fare of 3s 6d, but she returned with it saying the cabman was demanding 5 shillings. Mrs Reece then sent down the page boy, but likewise he returned with it. She then sent down her cook who reported that the cabman had finally accepted the money.

**Mrs Reece's son George was then called. He testified that before the first trial, he had gone to William Gates' residence in Conduit Street to settle the matter out of court. He claimed that Gates stated he would only settle the matter if he was paid 10 shillings. This was denied by Gates and he had already served a counter-summons against George Reece for perjury relating to this evidence.**

While George Reece had been giving his evidence, a man in court had spoken a few words to him. Gates' defence team had objected to this and noted he had been in

and out of court all day. The court usher was then called and he testified that the man, Mrs Reece's brother, had been passing information to witnesses outside the court.

Once again Magistrate Knox saw fit to bring an end to the trial. He attacked Mrs Reece for her countless contradictions and had not "the slightest hesitation in most distinctly and emphatically discharging William Gates from the charge of perjury." The court erupted in applause at the verdict.

William Gates could be forgiven for thinking that was the end of the matter, but just one week later he was summoned to appear at the Old Bailey, charged under the *Vexatious Prosecutions Act* - this was for his summons against Mrs Reece's son for perjury. Mrs Reece was not going to give up that easily!

But she had to! A grand jury looking at her application to prosecute Gates was "ignored" by them and she now wished to withdraw from any further proceedings in the matter.

"It was," remarked Gates's legal representative, "all the result of a mistake."

**Sean Farrell (B39)  
Call Sign Online**

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# Choccies for the Editor???

*Call Sign* always tries to publish personal stories and photos sent in from drivers such as weddings, barmitzvahs and new grandchildren added to their families, but very rarely does Editor Al publish anything personal to himself – well not until now!

Alan has always been a self-confessed chocoholic, so his granddaughter **Shelby's** long held desire to become a pastry chef was a dream come true for him and he always bravely said she could practice on him! And now at the end of her third and final year at college, Shelby has achieved her aim and seems to have the ability to make anything sweet, including the most stunning gateaux and has even taken on private orders to make wedding cakes.

The photo shows Shelby's latest masterpiece; but if you think that what she is holding is a box of chocolates, then you'd only be half right because the whole thing is chocolate – including the box and the ribbon! So just for our editor to drool over, Shelby's masterpiece is a white chocolate box filled with a variety of milk, dark and white chocolate pralines with fillings of Baileys caramel, chocolate whiskey and chocolate orange and the edible chocolate bow!

Shelby is doing a Level 3 NVQ patisserie course with the box of chocolates being part of a 60 hour course in chocolate work, making a variety of items from lollies to chocolate bars before ending with the exam where Shelby did that amazing chocoxy box!

Often placing photos of her work online, Shelby was head-hunted by caterers, **Seasoned Events**, who host amazing parties, networking events, dinners and receptions at the **Tower Bridge Walkway**, where guests can eat with the most amazing views surrounding them. A company representative spotted Shelby's portfolio of cake designs and gateaux etc – well before she had made her chocolate box - and approached her to work for them, but Shelby said she wanted to complete her course. So they said they'd wait and allowed her to go in whenever she had some free time! Now her NVQ has been successfully completed, Seasoned Events have snapped Shelby up on a full time basis, although her ambition is to open her own upmarket tea shop/patisserie

where customers will also be able to get the most amazing cakes.

When I told Alan that I'd be writing about his granddaughter, he told me: "What can I say; she's gorgeous, funny and can make the most delicious cakes and chocolate! What else could I want!"

When I mentioned the subject of weight, the editor said it was no problem because his other granddaughter, **Imogen**, was going to be an Olympic gymnast and she'd rustle up a few exercises to help him lose it – round about every fourth month!!!"



Shelby's box of chox - even the box is chocolate!

Michael Toomey  
Call Sign Online

## Albany: 2015 Run to the sun...

On Monday 15th June, the Albany Taxi Charity Fund set out on their annual outing to Hastings with around 200 children and carers in 70 taxis. After a hearty breakfast supplied by Charlton Athletic FC and sponsored by the LTDA, they left the football ground at 9am, along with police and unit support riders who all did a wonderful job getting the convoy to Hastings with no problems.

They arrived at **Bewl Water** at 11am for a toilet break, cup of tea and a chat while also looking at the wonderful view of the lake. Then it was off again to Hastings. They arrived at **Sainsbury's en route**, where they were met by the **Mayor of Hastings** together with the **Hastings crew** who help them each year. This team is led by the one and only **Gina Sexton**.

Then a slow ride into Hastings Old Town car park and the children were off to enjoy the free rides including **Flamingo Amusement, Aquarium, Blue Reef, RNLI** and the **Shipwreck Museum**.

At 3pm it was back to the cabs for the short ride up the coast to **Azur Marina** at **St Leonard's-on-Sea** for an afternoon tea of fish and chips; then it was time to enjoy a disco before leaving the south coast behind at 6pm for the journey home and to drop the children at their respective homes.

The committee of **The Albany Taxi Charity** would like to thank **Ascott Cab Co** for once again sponsoring the diesel and the **LTDA** who sponsored the breakfast at Charlton; but a great big thank you goes to all the drivers who give up their time to support the outing.

Their next trip will be to **Herne Bay** on Monday 13th July. If you would like to take part please telephone **Ray Ali** on **07779 798872**. On a footnote, next year will be the 25th 'Run to the Sun' at Hastings. The dates to be announced. Many thanks to you all...



The Mayor of Hastings joins the outing!

The Albany Committee



If you own a motorcycle and look after it, then you probably read **Classic Motorcycle Mechanics** anyway! But on the off chance that you only stick to your taxi, you may be interested in a four-page article on **Dial-a-Cab** driver **Jon Robinson (E88)** in that monthly motorcyclist's bible. Jon has been on DaC for the past 22 years, but his love of fast bikes goes back much further and an article – **X7th Heaven** - in the issue published on May 20th tells the story of that love.

It was on his 17th birthday that he got the bike he'd been dreaming of, one that would allow Jon to get to the magical 100mph – a **Suzuki GT250 X7**. It was 1979 and £765 was a lot of loot – over £1000 when you added insurance and number plates etc - but he wanted nothing else other than that red and black power machine. Jon admits that he never did see 100mph during those early years, but he loved the bike like family – and still does! However, he didn't drive it like family, was constantly pushing it to the limit and the repair bills kept mounting up. As Jon so succinctly puts it in the article: "God, that bike kept me poor on my apprentice's wage!"

**But Jon showed his cab driver's sense of humour when telling the story of his only bad smash when girlfriend Tracey was sitting on the back. He hit a wet manhole cover, which saw the bike slide and topple over. But Tracey must have realised that it was love when Jon picked her up before looking at his beloved X7! They are now married.**

But trouble followed when the fuel tank

A four page article in **Classic Motorcycle Mechanics** tells the world about it!

# JON AND HIS SUZUKI X7...



Jon and his Suzuki publicise DaC in **Classic Motorcycle Mechanics**

– the bike's and not Tracey's – began rusting from the inside and eventually the bike ended up in a council lock-up for 16 years. Jon tried to part-exchange it for another bike, but the dealer's words of it sounding like a bag of rusty nails put an end to that! He bought a few other bikes over the years while the Suzuki remained hidden from public gaze, but it was his dad who talked Jon into restoring the bike and over the next four years, every nut and bolt was replaced – and of course it got a new fuel tank.

That led to Jon and his Suzuki going on a memorable 15 minute flat out blast around **Brands Hatch** watched by a full race crowd

who were waiting for the real races to start. But it still gave Jon a day he says he will never forget! Now on most Sundays, Jon and his bike can be seen around the Kent countryside. But the full story of Jon and his **GT250 X7** – which he still has after over 35 years – is in **Classic Motorcycle Mechanics**. And perhaps hankering for a PR job with DaC, two of the photos used for the story feature **Dial-a-Cab!**

*Classic Motorcycle Mechanics is published on the third Wednesday of each month...*

**Dennis Latchett**  
Call Sign Online

## GUBER!

Not long after **Uber** chief, **Travis Kalanick**, said that he'd like all his cars to use the **Google** self-drive cars when they finally arrive, a further link has emerged when **Rachel Whetstone** swapped positions from Google to Uber as Senior Vice President of Policy and Communications.

The story becomes interesting when you discover that Ms Whetstone had worked alongside current PM **David Cameron** in previous employment some time after leaving Bristol University where surprise, surprise, she studied politics! Then you have hubby **Steve Hilton**, who used to be a senior advisor to guess who – got it in one... David Cameron!

Not sure if it's worth mentioning, but Rachel was also linked to another former PM – **Michael Howard** - in 2003 when she became his Chief of Staff.

Is it just us, or can any **Call Sign** readers see a pattern forming!!

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

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**Prophecy or temporary breakdown?  
You tell us...**

The biggest racing certainty of the year was that during *Call Sign's* annual month off, something fairly sensational would happen. And of course it did when **Mayor Boris Johnson** finally realised that London was slowly grinding to

# PROPHECY???

a halt and put it down to too many minicabs. He didn't mention the Caledonian Clowns – or their better-known name of **Uber**.

Of course he could also have spoken of the horrendous congestion being caused by the new cycle superhighways, which *Call Sign* was first to discover that cyclists don't actually have to use and that should they choose to, they can still bypass and use the main section of road! Perhaps it's us, but doesn't that make the whole thing pointless?

Then there are the traffic lights that give more and more time to pedestrians – regardless of whether there are any about – than they do to vehicles paying a fortune to be there. Or the numerous numbers of empty

buses floating about and blocking up every road they go down.

So after hearing that Knowledge applications are down by 20% and minicabs up by around 10,000 or so and increasing by around 1000 each month, Boris went into his speech about too many minicabs saying there had to be a limit to their numbers – late as usual.

*So we thought it was the height of irony when on the same day Call Sign's Gary Cox (O46) spotted this Knowledge bike complete with obligatory directional details on its just as obligatory KoL board, being carried away by a breakdown truck. Prophecy – or just a temporary breakdown...???*



*An occasional review from a struggling 14 handicapper at some of the marquee golf courses I've had the privilege to play in my golf days away from the taxi...*

## SIMON'S GOLF COURSES

**Littlestone Golf Club**

On Monday 11th May, some golfing cabbies and myself made the trip down to **Littlestone Golf Club** on the Kent coast. It's a links course that I've wanted to play for some time and I have to say it was all I had hoped for... and more.

The first hole is probably one of the easier holes on the course, but if you have jangly first tee nerves, the tee box is a mere two strides from the clubhouse and its balcony will make that all important first drive a tad more nervy!

There are many great holes at Littlestone; at the turn the course begins to turn the screws on as a test of golf. Two holes off the white's tees deserve special mention - and if the wind is blowing towards you, a good card may well be ruined.

The 16th into the wind is one the sternest par 4's I've played; it is also majestic on the eye. A slight dog-left around a dune leaving a long iron or wood to an undulating perched green (I'd play it as a 5 next time).

The par 3 seventeenth is spectacular - in fact the par 3's at Littlestone have the best collection of 3's I've played anywhere. From a high exposed tee with the sea 100 yards away, you need to arrow your shot through the wind over a ravine and past numerous deep pot bunkers...a fabulous hole. Test yourself at links



Teeing off - overlooked by the clubhouse!

here for a reasonable green fee. It really is exceptional.

Of course I'm far too modest to mention in *Call Sign* that I hit a birdie at Littlestone – the finest 4 iron I've ever hit! And the editor wouldn't let me tell you anyway!

*Happy golfing...*

**Simon Wallis (M11)**  
Call Sign Online



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



“What a resounding result,” Dave Stewart (M13) enthusiastically told *Call Sign*. “When a brown envelope recently dropped onto my doormat, I thought it was yet another bill, so imagine my surprise when it turned out to be a letter from *Her Majesty’s Court Service for London* enclosing a cheque for £60, being the full payment of the ‘bilk I suffered some months ago.”

Regular readers will recall how Dave took two females to Ruislip (December

# Dave’s bilk loss repaid!

Thanks to his CabCam and a police officer...

2014 issue) from where they just got out and walked away from his cab without paying the fare.

“I do have a CabCam fitted in my taxi and the images from that provided the evidence for Officer Solanki of Ruislip Police Station to tenaciously investigate and bring the matter to a successful resolution in my favour. The delay in me receiving payment was because the whole process had to go through strict court procedure, from where I believe the lady concerned was given a police caution. It may not sound much, but it’s quite

a serious business and means she will have to keep her head down in future,” Dave added.

“I’m really grateful to Police Officer Solanki for his determined efforts on my behalf and that justice finally prevailed. In the very few instances where these situations occur, the travelling public must realise that they cannot get away with not paying their taxi fare...”

**Alan Green**  
Call Sign Online

## UBER LOSE ‘WHAT ARE WE’ CASE

### Are they employees or independent contractors???

The **New York Times** recently reported on a ruling regarding a **San Francisco** cab driver and **Uber**, where the **California Labor Commissioner’s Office** has now said that Uber driver **Barbara Ann Berwick** should be classified as an employee and not an independent contractor – something the app claims should be the case.

The ruling ordered Uber to reimburse Ms Berwick with \$4,152.20 in expenses and other costs for the eight weeks she worked as an Uber driver in 2014. Uber has always claimed that it is merely an app that connects drivers and passengers and has no control over the hours its drivers work, but the Commissioner’s Office cited instances in which it said Uber acted more like an employer. Uber is appealing the decision, which only applies to Ms Berwick.

**Uber has won cases in at least five other US states in keeping its definition of drivers as independent contractors. But the San Francisco ruling stands out because officials formally laid out their arguments for why Uber drivers are employees. According to the newspaper, that could bolster class-action lawsuits against the company in the state where California law expressly requires employers to reimburse employees for business expenses and several suits proceeding against Uber are based on that state law.**

Technology companies such as Uber have long contended that their virtual marketplaces, in which people act as contractors and use their own possessions – eg a car - to provide services to the public at the touch of a smartphone button, afford workers flexibility and freedom. Whereas anti-Uber activists have said that people working as freelancers and having little certainty over their wages and job status provide a way for companies such as Uber to minimise costs, even as they maintain considerable control over drivers’ workplace behaviour.

The California ruling, which was made in June and only came to light after Uber filed an appeal, noted that the company provided drivers with phones and had a policy of deactivating its app if drivers were inactive for 180 days.

**“Defendants hold themselves out as nothing more than a neutral technological platform, designed simply to enable drivers and passengers to transact the business of transportation,” the Labor Commissioner’s Office wrote about Uber. “The reality, however, is that defendants are involved in every aspect of the operation.”**

Uber now faces class-action lawsuits from other drivers who also say they were misclassified as independent contractors. **Shannon Liss-Riordan**, a Boston-based employee and labor rights lawyer who is involved in the lawsuits on behalf of drivers against Uber, said the commissioner’s office ruling would be “helpful” to the suits, which argue drivers should be reimbursed for expenses.

“This is a very big deal,” she said. “Uber has been fighting very hard against any decisions like this coming out and when a fact-finder sat down and looked at the situation they determined that Uber was an employer.”

In an interview with NYT, Ms Berwick said she began driving for Uber last summer because she had grown bored of working by herself at her computer. But she quickly took issue with Uber’s policy of classifying drivers as independent contractors.

“People who drive people are employees,” Ms Berwick said. “Bus drivers are employees. Paratransit drivers are employees.”

In the course of driving for Uber from July to September 2014, working 60 to 80 hours a week, she said, she earned about \$11,000 before expenses and taxes.

“If you work it out, if I didn’t get compensated for expenses, I’d be working for less than minimum wage.”

Ms. Berwick has a history of being litigious. Since 1991, she and her company have filed at least 20 lawsuits in California. In one case, she sued an employee of a pizza parlour for \$500 in damages for leaving restaurant menus on her gate. She was not awarded any damages...

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## Kevin Gilby

I am sure that every London Taxi driver was saddened to hear the news that one of our colleagues was killed instantly in a collision between two vehicles in Chislehurst on the morning of 5th June. Even though it is very rare, it is always very sad and I am sure everyone at DaC including myself sends their condolences to the family and friends of Kevin Gilby.

## Uber: The net closing in?

It appears that the net is closing in on Uber as **The Guardian** and TV programme **Watchdog** get their teeth into the company. It was interesting to see **Jo Bertram** trying to explain to **Anne Robinson** on **BBC 1** consumer program **Watchdog** about how it was that so many Uber customers were having their accounts hacked and why those same customers were then unable to contact anyone at Uber to get a refund after the hackers fraudulently used the accounts for cab rides.

Why don't they have a phone line? Because their technology savvy users apparently prefer emails – even those that moaned to say they couldn't find a phone number! So now we know! Who needs a phone to complain!

But then again, why would they want to complain because according to Jo, it wasn't their fault anyway; it was the fault of the customers for using the same log-in on several different online facilities!

What was almost as fascinating was when **Watchdog** showed the routes taken by the hacker's cabs. They almost made me feel dizzy watching how the drivers patently had no clue as to where they were going. However, as the "passengers" weren't using their own loot, who really cares!

Ms Bertram didn't seem to do much better when questioned by **The Guardian** about licensing checks and it seems that anyone can sign up to **Uber**, but of course we've been saying that for months so to us it's not anything new.

Ms Bertram always says that Uber don't advertise but use their disruptive status as a tool, as those being disrupted tend to publicise Uber by complaining about it. How lazy!

Remember how the trade was criticised when we held a drive-in to complain about Uber and all Jo Bertram could say was that the Uber app had been downloaded at a far greater rate on that day due to us complaining, but not how sorry she was for the trouble they had caused.

Uber are indeed quite unique - but for all the wrong reasons. I honestly believe that we have gone away from the days where people didn't trust the internet, to now when it is believed as gospel. The people need to be aware.

## Tfl: Polite if nothing else!

I know some people think that the trade is hanging Tfl out to dry at the moment, but the appalling issues some drivers have are quite true. It took a friend of mine three months to renew his licence due to delays, which he could do little about.

I have emailed Tfl three times with copies of my driving licence details to prove my medical fitness and three times they have

Richard Potter (T51) and a few things that are...

# ON MY MIND!



## London to Brighton Bike Ride

Finally, on Sunday 21st June my mate **Steve Grange** and myself cycled the **London to Brighton Bike Ride**. This is the 5th year in a row we have taken part and we really enjoy it - not just the ride, but the atmosphere. It often takes ages to get from Clapham to Banstead because of the sheer volume of riders, but it's a great day out and all in a good cause.

If you would like to add to our sponsorship by a £1 or 2 to help raise money for **The British Heart Foundation**, then please use the following link. Many thanks...

[www.justgiving.com/stephen-grange3/](http://www.justgiving.com/stephen-grange3/)

**Richard Potter**  
Call Sign Online

written back saying that I have failed to supply the information required!

You actually get a polite email from Tfl thanking you for your email and saying that they will contact you within ten days. Then nothing! Come on Tfl, get yourselves sorted out.

## LEN PLUMB 1939 – 2015

Those drivers who read **Len Plumb's** latest article in **The Cab Driver** where he wrote of suffering a heart attack following a cycling holiday in Majorca must have been shocked to hear that he had passed away on 8 June, soon after publication.

There can be few, if any, members of the London taxi trade who have been writing regularly for such a long period of time. He was regularly in **TAXI** and **Steering Wheel**, often writing a whole page of trade news – but astonishingly, it was all in rhyme!

The only way we can think of to describe Lenny Plumb was that if you had to picture a true London cabby who cared deeply about his trade, you'd see Len!

Our condolences go to his wife Mags and his whole family.



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No search facility for that but if you know the page then go to it, press CTRL F and a box will appear. Just type in the word and the text on that page will be highlighted.

There are also issues from 1967, 1977 and 1987 as a reminder of the old days!

**THE CALL SIGN INTERNET LIBRARY**

*Yes, it's that time of year again; strawberries, cream and the Wimbledon tennis championships! They began last Monday (29th) and continue until July 12th. As usual there will be special taxi arrangements for the duration of the tournament.*

### Taxi drop-offs:

Taxi passengers coming from **Southfields Station** should be dropped-off at the taxi rank in **Church Road**, near **Gate 4**. Stopping elsewhere on Church Road is not permitted. Taxi passengers coming from **Wimbledon Station** should be dropped off in **Somerset Road** near **Gate 13**.

### Taxi ranking:

**Southfields Station:** A taxi rank in **Augustus Road** near Southfields Station will operate during the Championships and fixed-fare, shared-taxi trips to the Championships will operate from this rank.

The taxi rank in **Wimbledon Park Road** near **Southfields Station** will not be operational for the duration of the Championships.

**Wimbledon Station:** Fixed-fare, shared-taxi trips from Wimbledon Station to the Championships will be operating for the duration of the Championships.

**Church Road, Wimbledon Tennis Club:** A temporary taxi rank will operate in **Church Road (near Gate 4)** where fixed-fare, shared-taxi trips will be available for passengers going to **Southfields** or **Wimbledon** stations. This taxi rank will also operate normally for passengers wishing to travel to central **London** and other destinations

Passengers will be advised to join the queue at the rear of the rank near **Gate 5** if they wish to travel to Wimbledon or Southfields stations and local destinations, or the queue at the front of the rank near **Gate 4** if they wish to travel to central London.

Drivers should ensure that **Gates 4 and 5** are kept clear at all times and that they take care when u-turning on Church Road.

**Somerset Road, Wimbledon Tennis Club:** During the Championships a temporary taxi rank will operate in **Somerset Road (near Gate 13)** offering fixed-fare, shared-taxi trips to **Wimbledon Station**. The rank will also operate normally for passengers wishing to travel to central **London** and other destinations. Drivers should ensure that **Gate 13** and the area in front of the rank is kept clear at all times.

### Fixed-fare, shared-taxi fares:

**Wimbledon and Southfields Stations:** The fare for fixed-fare shared-taxi trips between Wimbledon or Southfields Stations and the Championships is **£2.50** for adults and **£1.25** for children between 2 and 10 years old. Children under 2 travel free. It is illegal to charge more than these fares.

# Taxis at the Wimbledon Tennis Championships



Well, you never know!

**Westminster Bridge inclusive: £12.00.**  
Addresses in Postal District **WC1**;

### Journeys to other locations:

Fixed-fare, shared-taxi are also available from the rank near **Gate 4** to the following destinations:

### From the taxi rank outside Gate 4, Church Road:

To addresses in the borough of **Hammersmith and Fulham** on and south of **Hammersmith Bridge Road, Hammersmith Broadway and Hammersmith Road: £7.20.**

Addresses in postal districts **SW4, SW8 and SW11**; addresses on **Clapham Road, Harleyford Street, Kennington Oval and Harleyford Road: £8.40.**

Addresses in the Royal Borough of **Kensington and Chelsea** in the area bounded by **Cromwell Road, Brompton Road, Sloane Street, Sloane Square, Lower Sloane Street and Chelsea Bridge Road inclusive: £9.60.**

Addresses in Postal District **SW1** east of **Sloane Street, Sloane Square, Lower Sloane Street and Chelsea Bridge Road: £10.80.**

Addresses in the area bounded by **Warwick Road north of Cromwell Road, Russell Road, Russell Gardens Mews, Holland Road, Holland Park Avenue, Notting Hill Gate, Pembridge Road, Pembridge Villas, Westbourne Grove, Bishops Bridge Road, Bishops Bridge Harrow Road, Edgware Road, Marble Arch, Park Lane and Knightsbridge inclusive and Brompton Road and Cromwell Road exclusive: £12.00.**

Addresses in Postal District **W1**; addresses in the area bounded by **Edgware Road, Church Street NW8, Lisson Grove, Rossmore Road, Park Road, Allsop Place, York Terrace, Upper Harley Street, Marylebone Road, Euston Road and Tottenham Court Road inclusive: £12.00.**

Addresses in Postal District **WC2**; **Waterloo Station**; addresses in the area bounded by the **River Thames, Waterloo Bridge, Waterloo Road, Baylis Road, Lower Marsh, Westminster Bridge Road and**

addresses on **Euston Road East of Tottenham Court Road; Euston, Kings Cross and St Pancras Stations: £14.40.**

Addresses in postal districts **EC1, EC2, EC3 and EC4**; addresses in the area bounded by **London Bridge, Duke Street Hill, Tooley Street, Bermondsey Street, Thomas Street, Bedale Street, Borough High Street, Southwark Street, Blackfriars Bridge and the River Thames inclusive: £14.40.**

Taxi drivers must still start their meter at the commencement of the journey and any fare agreed in advance must not exceed the metered fare at the end of the journey. If a passenger or a group wants a normal (unshared) taxi service, the marshals at the rank will ask taxi drivers if they are willing to take the passengers. However, if a driver cannot be found after a reasonable time, the normal rules on refusals will apply and the first free taxi on the rank should accept the hiring.

**Refusing these fares or loitering to wait for a shared hiring is not allowed and any driver doing this could be subject to action by TfL.**

All taxis on the rank must be available for hire and no taxi must be left unattended on any taxi rank. All taxi drivers who hold an All London taxi driver's licence or hold a Merton and Sutton Suburban taxi driver's licence can use the taxi ranks at Wimbledon Station, Southfields Station, Church Road and Somerset Road.

### Pre-booked taxis

**Space for pre-booked Dial-a-Cab and other radio circuits to wait for their passengers has been allocated in Marrayat Road.**

Taxis play an important role in helping spectators get to and from the Championships. There will be local police, borough enforcement officers and Transport for London (TfL) compliance officers working during the Championships, so it is important that all taxi drivers (plus all private hire operators) and drivers who are planning to serve the Wimbledon Tennis Championships this year are aware of the designated areas where taxis (and PHVs) may stop to drop-off and pick-up passengers and also do not stop or park in areas where this is not permitted.

# Mailshot

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

## Renting or sharing a cab

Dear Call Sign

I read with interest the piece regarding renting/sharing a cab. My TX2 is 13 and clearly I'm starting to consider options in these uncertain times. I've been lucky with my cab and it has only cost me an average of £650/year in servicing and repairs since paying off the cost of buying the vehicle quickly when I was a keen and busy butter-boy! Clearly a new cab, whilst a lovely thought, is gonna seem very expensive to me.

What are the Society's rules regarding renting/sharing and maintaining full membership? I thought you had to own your own cab or be a journeyman. Either way I'd be interested in exploring a cab share with a suitable partner and assume that depending on interest, there will be some kind of forum for matching drivers etc.

On another note, I'm glad the new logo is in the pipeline. Even my young kids often say: "Dial-a-Cab? Who dials for a cab these days!" Hang strong everyone!

James Griffin (T97)

There have been quite a number of drivers enquiring since the article appeared in the May issue. Call Sign's pages will be open to any Dial-a-Cab driver who is either willing to rent out his or her taxi to another DaC driver whose cab is soon to reach the end of its life; or if feel you might perhaps be interested in a new taxi but don't want to spend that much and would consider a shared ownership, then just contact this magazine by either posting your details to the office addressed to Call Sign at DaC House or email [callsignmag@aol.com](mailto:callsignmag@aol.com). The Society's rules say that shared owners of a cab are allowed, but only one of you would be classed as the "owner" so far as DaC is concerned and be allowed to attend AGMs, with the other being the journeyman. Judging by attendances at that meeting, it obviously isn't too much of a penalty to many! ...Ed

## Handy hint

Hi Alan

Re the *May Call Sign* article (*DaC driver's bose and woes*) where Melvyn Harvey (E87) and Geoff Levene (W32J) broke down with various leaks from rubber or metal pipes. A good idea is to carry a roll of silicone rescue tape (made by Bond). It costs under £10 from a plumber's merchant and will fix any leaks it sticks to itself to and keep you on the road until you can

get to a garage to change the leaking pipe.

Bernie Silver (G08)

If anyone has any useful hints like Bernie's, please let Call Sign have them to pass over to drivers ...Ed

## Uber 'taxi'

Hi Al

I've done the same as you did at Kings Cross (*May Call Sign Editorial*). I was on the Marriott Swiss Cottage, an hotel already renowned for their love of minicabs. But I occasionally stop there to use the loo. A woman was standing on the stairs with phone in hand while looking up and down the road. Actually, she was looking everywhere but in my direction! After about 2 minutes, she rapped on the window; I lowered it and she asked me if I had a satnav? I said I did and started to put the window back up. But I knew what was coming next.

"I've ordered a taxi, but my driver is travelling in the opposite direction and going away from the hotel. You'll have to take me," she said. I asked which 'taxi' company she used. She was an Uber user so I let her know that Uber wasn't a taxi company and politely suggested that she waited for her car as it was obvious that she didn't want a taxi at all. She protested a bit, but not for too long as she had to move out of the way for some real taxi users who were waiting behind her. I did the same as you and explained to the drivers behind what was going on. The best taxi service in the world shouldn't be anyone's second choice.

Mickey Lappin (Ex-E46)

Let me clear one thing up Mickey; just because we did exactly the same thing, that doesn't make it right - but hey, let's hear what our masters at Blackfriars think about us! Surely they will agree with our stand. Oh look, that pig is still up there whizzing about ...Ed

## Uber, the regulations and ducks...

It is a well-known saying that "*the spirit of the law saves and the letter of the law kills*." So in considering the current situation legally as to whether Uber is breaking the law regarding their use of an app in conjunction with a modified mobile phone as a taximeter in actuality, perhaps a look at the intentions of the *Act* they are deemed to be breaking by both the London Taxi and Private Hire industries, should be considered. The *Act* states: "No vehicle to which a London PHV licence relates shall be equipped with a Taxi Meter." A Taxi Meter is a piece of equipment that records both the time and distance that a journey has taken. Therefore it must be quite clear that the *Act* intended that PH journeys

could not use time and distance to charge for the journey. It has long been the practice of the PH Industry to have fixed prices for their trips from A to B and points in between. One only has to look in the window of any PH / minicab office to see a sample of these prices quoted on their walls, windows and often on a board outside.

Now, the piece of equipment used by Uber may not look too similar to the taximeter mounted in full view of the customer in a taxi, but to quote an Americanism: "If it walks like a duck, and quacks like a duck, it's a Duck..."

Eddie Lambert (V37)

Quack, quack Eddie. quack, quack ...Ed

## Uber Plumbers

Hello Alan

I spotted a trade van the other day with a livery that advertised Uber Plumbers.com. Have they got their fingers in more than one pie?

Francis Robinson (G18)

Would it surprise anyone if they had! However, Uber Plumbers are a long-established firm of local plumbers whose office is close to DaC in Paul Street and with whom we have an unofficial agreement - they don't supply cabs and we don't fix sinks! ...Ed

## Impressed...

Dear Sir/Madam

I am impressed. Earlier today and on behalf of Fountain Court Chambers, I booked cash job (number TO0012). Every telephonist pertaining to this job has been very kind, friendly and highly efficient to deal with. A couple of people I spoke with were Jackie and Wayne. I have been given up to the minute updates. I find your driver and booking liaison to be highly efficient and your firm will be my first port of call for my bookings here at Fountain Court. Well done...

Coren Lawrence

Fountain Court Chambers

## An ex-driver looks back - and forward...

Dear Alan,

As you know I retired (by choice) from cabbage some years ago and have been residing in Spain for nearly 11 years. When you have been working for 50 years and 40 of those were as a taxi driver, going out to work becomes part of your life, part of your daily routine. You cannot imagine life without work and being a self-employed taxi driver there isn't anyone there to pull the plug on you and present you with a clock



# Mailshot

for your mantelpiece.

Work can be a bad habit, one that is hard to give up especially when you realise that in doing so one's standard of living could drop by two thirds. I think that if I would have stayed in the UK I could well have been tempted to continue part time work. It's nice to get out of the house and do a little work and then meet your friends for a cup of tea and share a joke. No need to chase serious money but just a few hours to top up that miserable state pension. But here's the rub. There is very little room in the taxi industry for part timers these days. With the price of taxis and the expensive upkeep, the part timer is slowly being squeezed into retirement. It is a pity that people in their 60s and 70s are faced with either retirement or having to buy a new or very young taxi and take on so much expense forcing them to work full time.

Initially when I gave up work, I definitely felt that there was something missing and indeed there was. I missed a routine that had become part of my life; leaving home in the evenings, working that cab, meeting my friends in the City, sharing that joke and talking shop. Work all night and sleep the mornings away.

It has taken awhile to adjust to another type of life; a life where time is of no importance, where jobs can be done in my own time and I can pursue the hobbies and interests of my choice. All days can feel the same, so much so that sometimes I have to ask what day it is, or is that early dementia? What has helped the withdrawal symptoms of not working is listening on the TV and reading trade magazines (in particular *Call Sign Online*) about how the trade is fairing (no pun intended). It does not make good reading. It is apparent to me and others of my ilk that we have seen better days – if not the best days - of an industry that appears to be slowly dying day by day. Such a slow erosion that you perhaps wouldn't notice the decay until you are in a position to look back decades in time.

I hope and pray that things will get better for the trade and that there will always be a living for those presently working and for those Knowledge boys and girls biking around town.

**Steve Shaller (ex-F34)**

**Let's hope you are right, Steve ...Ed**

## Following the demo 1...

*Hello*

In light of the ongoing dispute between London's black cabs and the business activities of unlicensed firms and new private hire market entrants, a brand new trade organisation with a difference has been formed. Spearheaded by cabby's wife Artemis Mercer, thousands of partners, wives, husbands and families of Licensed

London Black Cab drivers have come together to stand united against what they describe as the "woeful failure of Transport for London to regulate the taxi and private hire market in London." With the aim of garnering further support from the public and highlighting the demoralising effects TfL's lack of regulation enforcement is having on families and consumer choice, *Facebook's Save Our Black Taxis* has gained 5,000 supporters in a matter of weeks. In addition, the organisation has an active *Twitter* account @SaveTaxi with over 1000 followers and which continues to gain popularity by the day. With a peaceful, static demo planned (on foot) for the **31st July** outside TfL's offices at Windsor House, 8 women are working tirelessly in order to organise the day, spread the word about the cause and attempt to save a trade that means so much to each of them.

**The team fronting the group includes cabby's wife Artemis Mercer who set up the group, cabby's girlfriend Cher Morresey, black cab driver Linda Morris and PR and Marketing specialist Georgiana Foster. In addition, Amanda Shea, Deborah Martins, Shevonn Melvin, Johanna Pankhurst and Gail Kyprianides have combined their efforts in helping to plan the demonstration and assist with the development of creative ideas.**

Artemis commented: "TfL is simply not doing enough to enforce rules that ensure public safety in London taxis. While the world around them evolves and adapts, London's cabbies have been left high and dry without the support that they so desperately need from their own governing body."

Cabby's daughter Georgiana continued: "This campaign is purely to highlight TfL's incompetence. We'd like to stress that our demonstration is not in any way directed towards **Uber** as an entity. It's all too easy to deem cabbies protesting about the way Uber is regulated as them actually moaning about Uber's existence. We simply want to see an equal playing field."

Artemis added: "My husband has been a black cabby for over 10 years. For months now I have listened to his anguish over how bad this situation has become. The last straw came when he said he was no longer proud to be a London cabby! I feel so strongly that we as families deserve to be heard, we too have a voice and I thank everyone for their support so far."

We have recently contacted all of the Taxi Unions requesting support and promotion of **SaveTaxi**. Although SaveTaxi is not affiliated with any one union, we strongly believe this is a cause that transcends any union politics. Our core ethos is one of unity and family. We have received support from a few key unions already and are waiting to hear from the rest. We kindly ask our cabbie members to suggest to their union representatives that the

unions promote SaveTaxi to their members urging them to join us on Facebook and Twitter. Thank you from the team at SaveTaxi.

For more information please contact Group Director Artemis Mercer: [artemis.mercer@sky.com](mailto:artemis.mercer@sky.com) or Head of PR and Comms Georgiana Foster: [georgianafoster@live.com](mailto:georgianafoster@live.com).

**Artemis Mercer  
Save Taxi**

## Following the demo 2...

As we stand on the precipice of an abyss full of futility, desperation and disappointment, the words *too little too late* are beginning to sound the bells of inevitability. I feel the need for greater leadership and total unity under one banner could be a possible way to save our industry. So I wait with anticipation and bated breath for the rise of a positive new unified era in our industry, with cooperation rather than the current individual ideology on how to scratch a living. However, just like the *second coming*, I fear the words 'not in my lifetime'...

**Andy Colli (C84)**

**Following the demo against TfL on Tuesday 26 May – one that both Andy and I were on - we came to the same conclusion that as long as we have so many splinter groups all trying to "save" the trade, we will never get anywhere. However undoubtedly well-meaning they all are, we agreed that we need just one trade organisation that everyone belonged to. But I think that Andy's last three words might just have easily have come from me. But I wish Save Taxi good luck in their quest...Ed**

## Oooobaa!

*Hi Call Sign*

I've been off sick for a while and I hope I am not getting paranoid, but I keep seeing Oooobaa stuff around. See how the rich and powerful are ranged against us and our brothers and sisters in the trade. Will they put as much effort into bombing their tax havens? I think we know the answer to that one. How ironic that an article in The Times should appear on the same page as that featuring a picture of Piccadilly and our forefathers!

**Gordon Bennett (Y91)**

**Gordon is referring to a Times feature on Uber's new spin Doctor, Rachel Whetstone (see Guber on page 29), coincidentally alongside a photo of a taxi bustling Piccadilly Circus in 1890 advertising an exhibition at the London Metropolitan Archives ...Ed**





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