

DIAL-A-CAB DRIVER WINS AT NATIONAL POETRY DAY

The September issue of Call Sign invited Dial-a-Cab drivers to enter a National poetry challenge where a song lyric was to be the basis of their poem. The prize was pretty small by Call Sign standards - a bottle of Champagne. But, although we didn't say so at the time for fear of frightening off entrants, the winner was to be in for a real 'treat'. There was the celebrity finals of National Poetry Day and in addition, the winner would face newspaper interviews plus radio and TV appearances. Call Sign had over twenty entrants - the largest entry of any organisation entering into National Poetry Day! Our heartiest congratulations go to the overall winner, Dial-a-Cab's Paul Tully (Y40)...

NATIONAL
Poetry
DAY

for a live broadcast on **LBC Drivetime** - who have now invited Paul back with his guitar to sing them one of his songs!

Then just time for a brief look in at the Poetry Day reception before going on to **Television Centre** in Wood Lane for an interview with **BBC News 24**.

Home At Last!

Finally - and at last - back home to enjoy his bottle of champagne as the prize for writing the best poem. And when Call Sign asked Paul

what he thought of the day, the still slightly shell-shocked Dial-a-Cab driver could only say:

"Absolutely marvellous, really great, just totally magical."

We noted that his response didn't rhyme: **"I haven't the strength!"** said Paul...

The two runners-up in the Call Sign poetry competition were **David Kupler** and **George Wilson**. Both receive a bottle of **Champers** and our congratulations.

The winning poems will be in the next issue of Call Sign.

It was Thursday October 7th and Dial-a-Cab winner Paul Tully was ready! Of all the entries, Paul's **"Yesterday (All My Troubles Seemed So Far Away)"** had been judged to be the winning poem.

The organisers of National Poetry Day invited Paul along to a **'Poetry Breakfast'** together with **Poet Laureate, Andrew Motion** and also **'Poet in the City', John Mole**, (who had previously written a special poem for **Call Sign** that was published in our September issue). The event was broadcast on the **BBC Radio 4 Today** programme.

Later, at the Royal Exchange, National Poetry Day was celebrated by the reading of poems from the **Minister for Arts Alan Howarth**, the **'Poet in the City' John Mole**, the Big Issue poet **Sir George Staple QC** and of course the star of the show, our very own **Paul Tully** - the Dial-a-Cab **'Poet in the City'**.

Dial-a-Cab taxis had earlier collected a host of children and teachers from the Sir John Cass Foundation Primary School who had read out their poems and released a cascade of balloons over the City.

Poets and the audience moved through the City to the Bridewell Theatre in Bride Lane, EC4 where a number of people - including Paul Tully - read out their poetry eagerly watched by proud DaC Board representatives, Brian Rice and Allen Togwell.

The Media Nail Paul!

If Paul thought he'd had a busy day up until then, he was in for an even bigger shock - because by now the media were hot onto his trail. At the Bridewell Theatre, he had his photograph taken by one of his local newspapers the **Highbury and Islington Express**, then off to **Capital Radio** for another picture to mark his appearance on **Capital Gold** the previous Saturday. A quick dash back up to his Islington home and all smiles again for the photographer from the **Islington Gazette**. There was just time for a sandwich before a telephone interview with the journalist from the **Highgate and Islington Express** and to take a call from TV satellite/cable channel **BBC News 24**.

Back in the cab, **Allan Evans** (who himself was to represent Call Sign the following day on a book review programme on TV's **Channel 4**) deserves a medal for getting Paul to all his appointments on time! Then it was off to the Westminster studios for an interview on **BBC Radio 5 Live** before heading off to the ITN building in Gray's Inn Road

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