

WINE TASTING WITH A CABBIE

by Sandie Goodwin



For one London taxi driver, home is a little further away than the suburbs of London. Rob Woodford, who was a Dial-a-Cab driver, has moved to the South of France. He comes back to London regularly to drive his taxi, with his most recent trip being to work over the period of the Wimbledon Tennis Championships. Rob has now been doing Wimbledon for 19 years and says he would not miss this event each year.

Back home in the Languedoc region of France, Rob is kept busy showing both taxi drivers and other visitors property for sale in the region. He will organise trips for anyone looking to buy a property there and also has a selection of properties available to rent, both for holidays and longer terms. These can be found at www.southoffrancelets.com where you will find prices and booking details. Should you decide to buy a property and let it out, Rob can arrange a maintenance and cleaning service.

I have just returned from a week at one of the properties and one of things which strikes visitors to the area are the rolling acres of vineyards. Of course it was necessary for me to sample some of these wines in order to be able to tell Taxi Globe readers about the products. I asked Rob for his recommendations and one of the vineyards he told me about came from a little area of vineyards which sits in an area called the Corbières, which is slightly south-east of Carcassonne. This is a family run concern and Rob is now hoping to help these people to export their fine organic wine to England. Rob says: "Cabbies are normally a good judge of wine so I shall be trying to market the product throughout the cab trade first." My husband and I tried the wines for ourselves during our holiday in Magalas and enjoyed them, the red was particularly to my taste.

'Faillenc Sainte Marie' is a wine growing estate in the Corbières, where the river Aude runs through rough terrain the way to the white sandy beaches on the Mediterranean at the 'Golfe du Lion'. On the northern and southern

sides of 'Mount Alaric' are found 8 hectares of young vines; this part of the mountain is filled with the history of the Corbières. Even today, Roman remains are discovered when working in the vines. Later in history, an officer returning from India gave the Corbières region its name during the reign of Louis XIV.

Today, having inspired many poets of the late 19th century, 'Faillenc Sainte Marie' is getting closer to its fantastic heritage and takes part in local fetes to renew the traditions of this wine making region.

The family home is part of the wine estate, and is in the countryside, not too far from the village of Moux. This village was the birthplace of the poet Henry Bataille (1872--1922) and his tomb, on the outskirts of the village, is adorned by a particularly gruesome skeletal statue. The daughter of the winegrower is now living in England, having recently relocated to Little Clacton in Essex, to take up a position of 'Head of Languages' at Clacton County High School.

As part of the service Rob offers visitors to France, it is possible to visit the winery and taste the wines for yourself. Anyone wanting more details of the wines, property in the region or holiday availability can contact Rob by email at robert.woodford@tiscali.fr

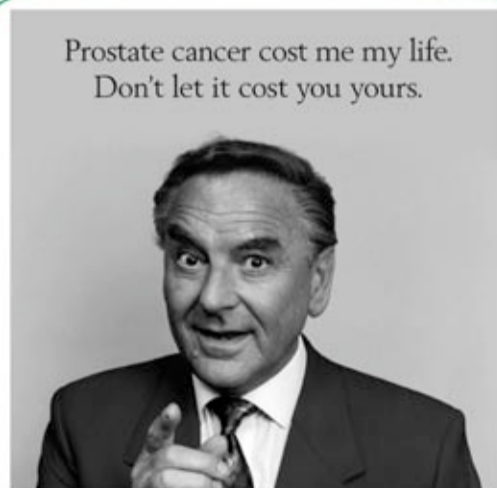


UBIQUITOUS THANK DRIVERS FOR GIVING A BOB

This month saw the launch of a new campaign with taxi advertising specialists Ubiquitous. The "Give a Bob" campaign which shows the late Bob Monkhouse asking for support for Prostate Cancer Research has proved successful with drivers and passengers alike.

MD of Ubiquitous Andrew Barnett was asked to support the campaign by the Prostate Cancer Research Fund. This meant producing 500 tip seat posters and installing them into 250 cabs free of charge. This is something

Andrew admits he could not have done without the help of the cab drivers. Andrew said: "We wanted to thank all the drivers who took part in this campaign; Prostate cancer is something which touches most people's lives, whether they are directly affected by the loss of a loved one or know of someone who has been affected by the cancer. I'm proud to be part of the campaign and I know he drivers are too. Every single person that we reach heightens the campaigns awareness."



CIGARETTES GET THE AXE

To mark the 1st July introduction of the UK public smoking ban, the 'HELP – for a life without Tobacco' campaign organised the public execution of a cigarette opposite the Tower of London. The spot was chosen because the Tower of London is the location where historically 'enemies of the state' met their grisly end and many believe that cigarettes certainly fit into that category now because of their negative effects on health.

Passer-by's and tourists cheered as the cigarette got the chop from an actor dressed as traditional English executioner. In addition to the 'execution', representatives from HELP (www.help-eu.com) and QUIT (www.quit.org.uk) were on hand to provide the public with help and advice on how to give up smoking as well as offering free carbon monoxide tests and handing out a variety of HELP promotional items including t-shirts, key rings, bags, frisbees, pens and lanyards.

