

THE LONDON TAXIDRIVERS' FUND FOR UNDERPRIVILEGED CHILDREN CHAIRMAN'S YEAR-END REPORT 2008

Within the 2007 Chairman's Report, I wrote that as we would celebrate the 80th anniversary of the Fund in the following year, a number of special events were in the planning stage. Little did I suspect that 2008 would prove to be the busiest, most rewarding, and most enjoyable year in the history of the London Taxidriver's Fund for Underprivileged Children. I thank most sincerely my fellow trustees, all working London taxi drivers who give so much time and effort, for their support, and take this opportunity to congratulate Honorary Life President Bill Tyzack B.E.M., who also celebrated his 80th birthday in 2008.

The year started with the 'best ever' Grosvenor House party for 600 disadvantaged children, and once again the Cheeky Girls headed the fantastic entertainment. Many guests were able to join us on the day, including the Worshipful Lord Mayor of Westminster, Councillor Carolyn Keen. In April, at the very kind invitation of Paul Nicholas and David Ian Associates, children were taken from East London to the West-end in a police escorted convoy of taxis to see the hit musical 'Grease'. May heralded a return visit to Chessington in glorious sunshine – for a change – but our annual visit to Southend in July was probably the wettest day of the year. Even so, almost 100 taxi drivers braved the weather, and were sent on their way by Ian

Luder, the then Lord Mayor-elect of the City of London. At Covent Garden in September, the general public were given the opportunity to see a little of what the Fund tries to achieve, and although unable to take part in this year's Pearly Kings and Queens Costermongers' Harvest Festival and Parade, I thank them for the invitation.



The highlight of this fantastic year was the Gala Dinner and Dance in October at the Palace of Westminster. This spectacular function was a celebration of 80 years of assisting those children unable to enjoy the quality of life they should, and we were so pleased to entertain many of the generous people and companies who over a period of many years have given us such wonderful support. The year was completed by our participation in the Lord Mayor's Show in November - heavy rain again! - with decorated taxis designed by driver Steve Bell, followed by a truck supporting a huge polystyrene taxi carrying many children enjoying a grandstand view. The taxi trade press are to be congratulated for giving maximum coverage of all the functions



and events that took place. The success of these events, as always, has been achieved not only through the unstinting and generous support of our many benefactors, but by the taxi drivers of London, whose unfailing encouragement - by donating lost property rewards, taking our diaries, carrying collecting boxes at Christmas, and of course giving their time when taking part in the outings for which the Fund is so well known - is truly appreciated.

Although our income this year exceeded that of last year by a little over 10%, our expenditure almost doubled!

By restricting our outgoings

during 2006 and 2007 and

allowing our reserves to accumulate, we were able to make 2008 most memorable. Apart from being seen to celebrate, our 80th year was also a record for the amount granted to worthy causes. The most notable were the purchase of a number of boats for the Docklands Scout Project, made possible by the legacy of Daphne Lines, and twenty children's wheelchairs donated to the British Red Cross for home loan use. Over £3000 was given to the dependants of London taxi drivers, and nearly £4000 helped more children benefit through the good offices of Communications Options. The total amount the Fund was able to grant in this special year was just short of a staggering £40000.

Naturally, there are the inevitable costs that accompany such an eventful year, but I am proud to report that the general administrative expenses incurred by the Fund represent just 2% of the generated income. I am truly honoured to be part of a small group of licensed London taxi drivers who act as brokers for those who have, and those who need.

David S. Lessman (Honorary Chairman)



David Lessman

CREDIT CRUNCH DEAL FOR SGS TEST

Ascott Cab Company is offering an amazing half price deal on Pre-Tests. Owners can now get their Pre-Test Inspection carried out for just £49. Ascott Cab Company were the first to offer SGS Pre-Testing, with the aim to help reduce the cost of overhauls, after all if it's not broken or worn then why spend money to fix it.

To celebrate the New Year and help beat the Credit Crunch and keep your hard earned money in your pockets Ascotts are reducing the cost of the SGS Pre-Test to just £49. The test includes checking Shock Absorbers, Ball Joints, Track Rod Ends, Brakes, Road Springs, Bushes etc. Headlights are adjusted and the Engine compartment and wheels are washed ready for presenting.

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