

## F1 ICONS MEET ICONIC CABS

As the party season got underway just before Christmas, two of London's iconic cabs met two icons from F1 racing in front of the iconic Tower Bridge to promote an anti drink drive campaign. Lewis Hamilton, 2008 Formula 1 World Champion and Mika Hakkinen, two time world champion are both ambassadors for the Johnnie Walker anti-drink drive campaign. This has seen them visit more than 20 countries between them promoting responsible drinking, which includes the anti drink drive message. Mika Hakkinen said: "Lewis and I want to use our profiles positively and to try and change attitudes. It's great we've been able to come to London and highlight the real champions, the people who get us home safely every day of the week."

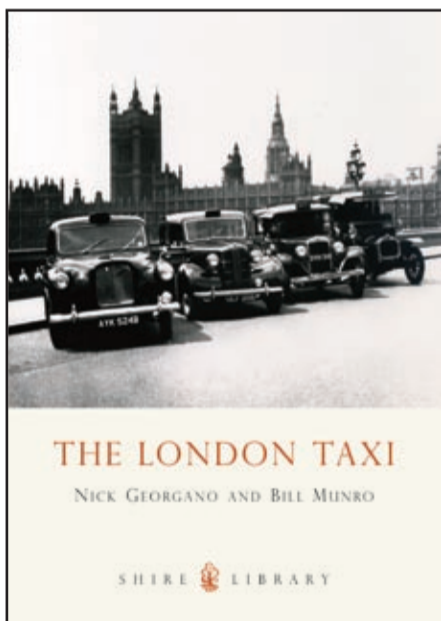


Lewis Hamilton also fulfilled a long held ambition of getting behind the wheel of a black cab. He and Mika both drove TX4 taxis, which had been liveried with the Never Drink and Drive logos, across Tower Bridge, around the Tower of London and over London Bridge. The two champions then arrived at City Hall where they were met by Mayor of London Boris Johnson. He said: "Too many lives are tragically wasted through drink driving accidents, so I hope that the message really gets through by having Lewis and Mika leading the call for people to think before driving their car when they have had a drink."

When asked how he had enjoyed driving the black cab, Lewis Hamilton joked: "It was an exciting experience, although it cannot quite compare to the excitement of an F1 car! I never thought I would get the opportunity to drive one, it is great." Lewis feels that as a role model, particularly for some younger drivers, he has a great opportunity to get the message across that drinking and driving is not an option and that people should always plan ahead for how they will get home at the end of a night out. Last year 460 people were killed and approximately 1750 seriously injured in the UK as a result of drink driving. Throughout the EU, drink driving accounts for around 25% of all road deaths.

## THE LONDON CAB

A new book has been published by Shire Publications, charting the history of the London taxi. Written by Nick Georgano and Bill Munro, the book describes taxi designs going back through the years, starting with the Bersey electric cabs. The book finishes with today's TX4 and the new Mercedes Vito taxi. Bill Munro is still a taxi driver today and his knowledge of the history of cabs is fascinating. Nick Georgano was Head Librarian at the National Motor Museum at Beaulieu and he has written or edited more than 30 books about cars and road transport.



For anyone who is interested in the history of the vehicles used as taxis since the 1800's this book is a must. Priced at £5.99, this is one of a number of books published by Shire. In 1962 Shire Publications published their first book, Discovering East Suffolk. Since then it has published more than 1000 titles. These are affordable, non-fiction paperbacks, specialising in historical and heritage subjects. Another new title in the past few months is Coachbuilding, written by Jonathon Wood, which traces the history of the coachbuilt vehicle body. This includes Cabodies who are now LTI Vehicles, one of the few survivors of Britain's coachbuilding industry.

## TAXI DRIVING TEST FEES – REDUCTION IN VAT

The Driver Standards Agency (DSA), which is contracted to carry out taxi driving assessments on behalf of the Public Carriage Office, has advised that it has reduced its fees in line with the recent reduction in VAT.

The new fees are:

Normal Hours (Monday to Friday 09:00-17:00):

Taxi driving test and wheelchair test £78.79

Wheelchair test only £22.51

Saturday and evenings:

Taxi driving test and wheelchair test £94.93

Wheelchair test only £27.40

Further information in respect of the DSA taxi driving test, including an online booking service can be found at [www.dsa.gov.uk](http://www.dsa.gov.uk).