

WAR DISABLED CHARITY MAKES ANNUAL TRIP TO WORTHING

On Tuesday 16th June 2009 The London Taxi Benevolent Association for War Disabled held their 61st annual outing to Worthing. At the village of South Holmwood, in glorious sunshine, the first of the taxis began to arrive with the veterans all looking forward to the day ahead. They met up with former comrades and were welcomed by the villagers - who as always were very helpful as they are every year in making sandwiches, tea and coffee much to the appreciation of everybody concerned.



Mayor and Mayoress of Worthing

At approximately 11.15am the convoy began to leave South Holmwood to make their way along the A24 to Worthing. On arriving in Worthing, the taxis were parked in the Civic Centre car park and everyone made their way into the Assembly Rooms where the tables had been set out ready for lunch. The Master Of Ceremonies Melvin Zeff announced the Mayor of Worthing, Noel Atkins. In his speech he said that being a former Lieutenant Commander in The Royal Naval Reserve he was especially delighted to extend a very warm welcome to both the taxi drivers and their special passengers this year, I know how much this means to all the war disabled. A minute's silence was then observed.



Lunch was then served and the resident organist Mr. Ian Flitcroft entertained the guests with a melody of tunes and played the music from the Dam Busters whilst the film was shown on a large screen. The Master of Ceremonies announced the

President of the LTBAWD, Harry Joel M.B.E. In his speech, Harry spoke of Doug Sherry who despite all the illness and suffering that he was going through never forgot the drivers on this outing and made sure as he did every year that they received money for their diesel. He then made a presentation to Martin Noble M.B.E who for a large number of years was the fund raiser for the charity and has recently due to ill health decided to leave the charity. He will be greatly missed and we wish him all the best for the future.

Next The Master of Ceremonies announced the Chairman Richard Hudd, who thanked Worthing Council for all their help over the years. He said: "In the difficult times with the recession, it is a credit to you ladies and gentlemen of the cab trade that when asked you give of your time and money even in these hard times we thank you very much."



Although the war ended in Europe in 1945 the battle was still being fought in the far east. Joining the outing were two men who were fighting that war, Lachiman Gurung 4Bn 8 Ghurka Rifles and Talbahadur Pun 3Bn 6 Ghurka Rifles and winning Britain's highest award for gallantry The Victoria Cross. The Chairman thanked them for joining them, adding: "Last year we made a commitment to support the ghurkas in their fight for justice.



I like to think that this association lives up to that pledge." He also welcomed the 430 veterans who had travelled in the 120 London taxis.

The Master of Ceremonies then introduced the charity's Guest of Honour, Miss Joanna Lumley. She told the guests that she thought she was being invited to a small gathering, so on entering the hall was amazed at the number of people seated there! She also said that when she first arrived in London in the sixties the first thing she learnt was you could always trust a London Cab driver.



Janet Fox, taxi driver, chats to Dame Vera Lynn

After lunch, the committee, together with their Patron Dame Vera Lynn DBE, LL.D went upstairs in the Town Hall where the LTBAWD painting painted by Rosa Branson was unveiled by Dame Vera. The Painting will be on permanent display in the Town Hall.

Following lunch and the speeches it was time for a walk down to the front with some of the drivers supplying a shuttle service with their taxis which was greatly appreciated by the veterans. At 4-00p.m. it was time to return to the Assembly Rooms for afternoon tea and to listen to the entertainment which this year was a group called The Jive Aces who made a great impact in their yellow suits. Also entertaining everyone was singer Kas, who sang some of the favourite songs from the 1940s.

All too soon it was time to leave Worthing and make their way home with some going back to South Holmwood for more food and drink. The Committee would like to thank the villagers of South Holmwood, The St. Johns Ambulance Service and the drivers because without these ladies and gentlemen, giving up their time for this outing there would be no outing and the committee would also like to thank everybody who sponsored taxis for this year's outing.

DEREK LEONE HON. P.R.O.