

WCHCD LIVERYMEN'S DINNER

The annual Liverymen's Dinner was held on 25th November at Cutlers Hall. The Master of The Worshipful Company of Hackney Carriage Drivers, Michael Davies, together with his Wardens, welcomed Liverymen, Freeman and their guests to the magnificent Cutlers Hall. Shortly before the Dinner, two new Freeman, Robert Hogg and Stephen Plumb, were welcomed to the WCHCD.

The guest speaker at the Dinner Dr William Beaver, who writes speeches for the Lord Mayor of London. As well as keeping guests amused by his speech, he also proposed a toast to the Company. After the Dinner, Past Master Alan Parker made the Hitch Award. This is a prestigious Award for Bravery which has been given this year to Robert Taylor.

FREEMAN RECEIVES HITCH AWARD

The Hitch Award for Bravery is named after Private Fredrick Hitch, of 'B' Company, 24th Regiment of Foot, South Wales Borderers. Hitch was a Rifleman who was awarded the Victoria Cross during the Zulu War for Valour after the battle of Rorkes Drift, Natal Province, in South Africa. Hitch later went on to become a London Licensed Hackney Carriage Driver. The Award is only given to those few drivers who have shown outstanding courage above and beyond that expected from their normal duties of driving a cab.

Robert, a Freeman of the WCHCD, is a taxi driver who works on ComCab. Back in 2007, he was out working in his taxi when he witnessed a gang

of youths chasing another group through the streets and into a take-away restaurant. A violent attack, involving several people then took place inside the restaurant, during which several people were seriously assaulted and one man, who was not a gang member but had been dragged into the melee, was viciously attacked and killed after suffering over 30 stab wounds.

Robert witnessed the incident and took down the registration number of one of the vehicles leaving the scene and his fast thinking not only led to the attackers being apprehended but his testimony in Court was also vital to the prosecution of those involved. In Court, four men were convicted of the murder of the stabbing victim and they were also found guilty of actual bodily harm and grievous bodily harm to two other individuals. The men received life sentences after being found guilty by the jury.

In Court the Judge praised Robert Taylor for his diligence and bravery in coming forward in the case and commented that his actions has not only secured the arrest of the men involved but had also ensured justice was served in Court.

Robert and his wife Jane were invited to the inner London Crown Court in March 2009 to receive a commendation from the High Sheriff of Greater London for Robert's courage in this case. Also in attendance at that commendation was the Commissioner of the Metropolitan Police Sir Paul Stephenson, who also congratulated Robert and thanked him for his efforts.



(L-R) Malcolm Paice, with Robert Taylor and his wife



(L-R) Stephen Plumb, Michael Davies and Robert Hogg

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