

THE CHILDREN'S MAGICAL TAXI TOUR GRAND CHRISTMAS GALA

by Jim Rainbird

Over 150 drivers, sponsors and their families and friends enjoyed a wonderful evening of good food, good music and good company at this annual seasonal function where people involved in the trip get to meet up again. Held at the Marriott Hotel, West India Quay, on 12th December 2009, the event raises funds for the annual Magical Taxi Tour to Disneyland Paris

While everyone was enjoying their meal, a large screen showed hundreds of photographs taken on this year's Magical Taxi Tour. The Chairman of the organising committee, Phil Davis, thanked everyone involved with this year's trip and also received a cheque for £500 from Rachael Carter, the proceeds of her recent run in the Adidas Women's 5K Challenge in Hyde Park. Rachael, now 17, had been a participating child on the trip some years ago and is also running the BUPA 10K Challenge at the end of May 2010 in aid of The Children's Magical Taxi Tour. A child who benefited from the trip now helping to raise funds for it, what a lovely story that has gone full circle.

There were numerous prizes in the Grand Raffle including tickets for restaurants, theatres and night clubs along with various electrical goods, fashion and beauty items and many other gifts. Rachael's services were again called upon



Fiona and the cross stitch picture

when she modelled the Special Free Raffle items – a box set of all the James Bond films on DVD along with a jacket and baseball cap only issued to 007 film crew on location. She handed out

envelopes to each table and then one ticket was picked out by each person so everyone had an equal chance of winning this great prize, free of charge.

There was also a silent auction for an autographed Spurs football, autographed Spurs pennant, autographed Spandau Ballet DVD and a cross stitch picture of Mickey Mouse, Minnie Mouse and Pluto. This last item was hand made by Fiona McLachlan, a Customer Service Representative from Dial a Cab's control room. This seemed to be the star item on the night as fierce bidding ensued, with Dial a Cab's Chairman, Brian Rice putting in the winning bid of £270 (possibly after some prompting from his wife Brenda and also a Dial a Cab driver - the trip's treasurer, Jim Rainbird) a lovely gift for his newly arrived grandson Charlie..

Jamie Owen's disco kept the dance floor filled with classics from the 60's, 70's and 80's and he also helped by auctioning off two huge Disney characters donated by The Disney Store.

A great night was had by all and over £2000 was raised by the auctions and raffle for next year's Children's Magical Taxi Tour. Thank you to everyone who attended and made it such a successful evening.

CABBIES CROWNED KINGS OF THE VISIT LONDON PUB QUIZ

It's a scientific fact that London Taxi Drivers have larger brains than the average person and we know their brains are packed with knowledge, so it was no surprise that a team of our finest taxi drivers took on all comers from the London tourist industry and emerged as Kings of the Visit London Pub Quiz.

Visit London hosted a pub quiz for some of the "faces" behind the capital. Teams made up of bloggers, tour guides and cabbies pitted their wits against each other to be crowned pub quiz champions 2009. Each team submitted questions on a range of topics from the Olympic Games to famous Londoners with a tricky picture round thrown in for good measure. The pub quiz was won by the team of cabbies who each took home a pair of tickets for a champagne flight on the Merlin Entertainments London Eye.

Jacqueline French from Visit London congratulated the team on their win: "Well done to all the taxi drivers who took part in the quiz.

There was fierce competition from London bloggers and tour guides but the cabbies took them all on and won the title of Visit London's Pub Quiz Champions 2009. We all live and work in one of the world's most visited cities and it was great that we could get together to share our passion and knowledge of the capital. We do hope the team will come back and defend their title next year."



You can pit your skills against London's finest and test your knowledge with the pub quiz questions. The answers are available on the Visit London web site http://www.visitlondonmediacentre.com/press_releases/press_release/cabbies_crowned_kings_of_the_visit_london_pub_quiz