

## PANCAKE RACES AT THE GUILDHALL

The Worshipful Company of Hackney Carriage Drivers took part in the 6th annual Inter Livery Pancake Race. This event is organised by the Poulterers Company and takes place in The Guildhall Yard. Pancake races are held all over England on Shrove Tuesday and perhaps the most tricky part is tossing the pancake and then keeping it in the pan in one piece to cross the finish line.

Teams of four liverymen or women in their gowns, and skirts below the knee for ladies, race for the prize of an engraved frying pan. There is also a novelty hat race to raise funds for the Lord Mayor's chosen charity – this year's theme was musicals. Unfortunately the weather was not good for the Races with rain leaving a good deal of surface water on the Guildhall Yard. Spectators of the Races were a sea of brightly coloured umbrellas, calling out encouragement to their teams. A loud start to the Race was provided by the Gunmakers Company and all the contestants were wearing gloves from the Glovers. The Master, Michael Davis was joined by team members John Dixon,



Patty Graves and Tony Norris. Sadly The WCHCD did not win any of their races, but it was a fun event enjoyed by everyone despite the weather. Lunch was held in The Guildhall Crypt afterwards when all the winners were also announced.

Shrove Tuesday is the day before Lent starts. It is a penitence, to clean the soul, and is traditionally a day of celebration as the last chance to "feast" before Lent begins. Pancakes are eaten because in times gone by families wanted to use up the eggs they had before Lent began as eggs were amongst the foods not eaten during Lent. Although the Inter Livery Pancake Race only began six years ago, there are many races with a much longer history. Pancake races are thought to have begun in 1445. A woman had lost track of the time on Shrove Tuesday, and was busy cooking pancakes in her kitchen. Suddenly she heard the church bell ringing to call the faithful to church for confession. The woman raced out of her house and ran all the way to church; still holding her frying pan and wearing her apron.

## FUEL CELL AND HYDROGEN TECHNOLOGIES TESTED IN TAXIS

Developing clean vehicles is a key priority in manufacturing of vehicles today. Manufacturers of commercial vans, cars and taxis all know how important it is to meet the latest requirements to clean up the air - particularly in cities such as London. Mayor Boris Johnson is already looking at ways to meet the targets set by the UK and EU. Once again taxis are in the spotlight as trade representatives put forward replies to the Mayor's suggestion of age limits on cabs to help meet the targets. The Technology Strategy Board recently announced it is to invest £7 million on behalf of the government in 15 demonstrator projects. One of these projects is the consortium of companies working on the possibility of a hydrogen taxi comprising of LTI Vehicles, Intelligent Energy, Lotus and TRW Conekt. Recent reports in the media have said there could be as many as 200 cabs available by the 2012 Olympics. LTI clarifies this figure as the development has yet to be tested in real time, but it is hoped there may be some taxis available by that time. Six refuelling stations are planned for London in the near future. There could be mobile trailer mounted units, placed on forecourts of existing fuel stations.

Technology of this type needs a huge amount of investment and the capital funding provided by the programme, devised by DECC and the Technology Strategy Board, will be used to accelerate the demonstration of products for both the stationary power and transport markets. The Minister of State for Energy said: "Cleaning up our energy supply and the fuel we use for transport will give the UK the opportunity to develop the low carbon industries of the future. Fuel cells and hydrogen can play a key role in cutting CO2 emissions and reducing reliance on fossil fuels." Not only can these technologies be used in the transport sector; it can also be used in

the stationary power markets, for example to provide power to homes and dwellings, such as the project at TfL's Palestra Building.

Taxis powered by hydrogen fuel cells will look the same as the current TX4 but will not have the same emissions. Pressurised hydrogen produces electricity and feeds it to the taxi's battery pack under the floor. Intelligent Energy say that the taxis will have a top speed of 81mph, with a range of up to 250 miles on a full tank of hydrogen and reach 60mph in less than 14 seconds. As the project is at development stage at the moment, costs are not available for a hydrogen taxi, but Intelligent Energy say it is expected the taxis will have similar running costs to the current diesel model. Peter Shillcock, Managing Director of LTI Vehicles said: "As a responsible automotive manufacturer we are committed to exploring all possible technological solutions to help reduce emissions from our world famous taxi. We are delighted to be involved in the project that will see a fleet of the iconic London taxis operating on the streets of London."

Hydrogen fuel cells produce power from hydrogen and air, the only emissions coming in the form of water vapour. Chief executive officer at Intelligent Energy, Henri Winand, said: "Our technical teams have already successfully integrated fuel cell power systems into motorbikes, delivery vehicles and even aircraft, where we recently provided the power system for the world's first manned fuel cell powered flight. The taxi project will provide further evidence of our ability to put commercially available hydrogen fuel cell vehicles on the market in the coming years, and what better stage to prove the credentials of British innovation than on the way to the 2012 London Olympics."