



GLH zooms ahead

By Kathryn Scorza

If you had walked across the road from East Finchley tube station 50 years ago you would have found a car hire business just as today. But rather than jumping into a GLH minicab, you would have found the limousines and be-suited and be-capped chauffeurs of Wilds Car Hire.

Cyril Wilds (pictured) established the business before the war from lock-up garages on Trinity Road, to cater for weddings, funerals and private hire, and bought 14 East Finchley High Road in 1953.

In 1968 the newly founded Greater London Hire moved onto the site, and in 1969 John Scott (an East Finchley resident off and on since 1947) took over the fledgling minicab business, which had been started by

Cyril's son Nigel as demand for chauffeured cars diminished.

John and a partner were based in one Portacabin with a driver who doubled up on the phone. "The three of us ate, slept and worked in shifts". In 1969 the annual turnover was £2,000.

Starting in East Finchley and Muswell Hill, GLH covered an ever-widening swathe of North London, and opened a City office in 1989.



Cyril Wilds with his son Nigel in 1948.

A local business

In 2005 the East Finchley office alone has around 60 staff (excluding drivers) many living in East Finchley. Over the years, the solitary Portacabin was joined by others, and this year the much-planned move into the house was finally realised, when the previous tenants moved out. During this expansion, GLH has always retained the feel of a local business - indeed 10 per cent of the entire turnover is walk-in business from the station.

On 2 May the company took over Mastercars of Kings Cross, strengthening its presence across the whole of London to a fleet of around 300 vehicles. The sizeable GLH motorbike and van fleets are based at a despatch office in the City, although despatch services are also available in East Finchley.

Managing Director John Scott estimates that today, a little over 35 years after it was founded, GLH is the second largest car hire firm in the capital - no mean feat for three men in a hut!

Balancing your diet with your daily dose

by Simone Baroke

Many of us take regular medication, and the older we get, the more pills are added to our daily 'cocktail'. Over prolonged time periods, many common prescription and over-the-counter drugs can drain your body of nutrients.

They can inhibit absorption and metabolism or increase their rate of excretion, which could then lead to further ill health. So why not take action by making some simple adjustments to your diet?

According to the British Medical Journal, more than 40% of elderly people suffer from folate deficiency, which can cause anaemia, poor memory, depression, heart and blood vessel disease, and also increases the likelihood of developing certain forms of cancer.

Commonly-taken medication that has shown to deplete folate levels include aspirin, HRT, antacids (for example Pepto-Bismol, Gaviscon, milk of magnesia), Metformin, Glucophage, diuretics, anticonvulsants (for example Phenytoin), antibiotics, Methotrexate, some cholesterol-reducing drugs and histamine-2 blockers (for example, Tagamet, Zantac).

If you are taking any of these drugs regularly, it would be wise to increase your folate intake. Good sources include broccoli, spinach, Brussels sprouts, beetroot, beans, eggs and mushrooms.

Impaired mineral absorption is also a very common problem, especially where calcium is concerned. This can significantly contribute to the brittle bone disease osteoporosis, as well as to high blood pressure and muscle cramping. If you regularly take antacids, steroidal drugs (for example,

cortisone or Prednisolone), proton pump inhibitors, thyroxine, stimulant laxatives (for example, Senokot or Dulcolax), histamine-2 blockers, anticonvulsants and loop diuretics, you should take extra care to consume foods high in calcium. These include cabbage, broccoli, beans, dairy products, sardines, nuts, seeds, whole grains, dried apricots and figs.

Good hydration is equally important. As we get older, our body becomes less efficient at registering when we are thirsty and many older people end up chronically dehydrated without realising it. This is a potentially serious problem, which can cause kidney damage, impaired mental function and it also stops your body from excreting toxins efficiently.

Take special care if you are on diuretics (water tablets) as they can severely dehydrate you. Try to drink two litres of fluid a day, even when you are not feeling thirsty.

Simone Baroke is a Nutritional Therapist and practises in Finchley. She can be contacted on 020 8883 0915.

Farmers' markets

Farmers' markets will be coming to Alexandra Palace grounds on 3 July, 10 July, 24 July, 31 July, 7 August, 14 August, running from 10am-3pm.



The GLH Board: (back l-r) Michael Mandel (Sales Manager), Peter Ross (Passenger Division Manager) (front l-r) Neil Michaeloudis (Finance Director), John Scott (Managing Director), Ross Gibbons (Director)

KALASHNIKOV KULTUR

By Ricky Savage, the voice of social irresponsibility

Motoring excess-ories

We live in weird times, times when every child has to be protected from the world outside by two tons of pollution for that 200-yard trip to school and where unfeeling greenies condemn parents for caring about their children's environment. But what makes it so bad for the caring, sharing parent at the wheel of an urban tank is embarrassing knowledge that some people out there are so stupid they think that Range Rovers were designed for crossing muddy fields, not Sainbury's car park. Do not worry, help is at hand.

At last someone with enough intelligence to realise that the average tank commander is stupid, vain, arrogant and cares nothing for the planet has solved the clean car embarrassment problem. Yes, it's here at last, spray on mud for your suburban destroyer.

No more will your Strange Rover look too clean outside the school gates, now a few squirts of instant mud and you too can pretend you've been somewhere more adventurous than Waitrose. A true first for mindlessness, a great chance to demonstrate stupidity on the roads of London and a whole new low in motoring accessories.

Ever since some German bloke called Benz stuck an engine in the back of a cart, drivers have been doing their best to flash up their cars and done it with all the taste of a pig with a hangover.

In the 1920s the rich and stupid could have an entire car made to their own spec, right down to having a solid gold teddy bear as a mascot. In the 1950s there were blinds on the windows and stickers announcing where you went on holiday, in the 70s it was paint jobs and by the 80s your average bloke was sticking expensive wheels on cheap cars and thinking he was a pretty cool dude.

But that's nothing compared with today's low-rent extras, and I'm not talking about tyres or sound systems, I'm talking smug.

I know that every child is 'special', but why does every smug parent have to announce it by sticking a "baby on board" badge on the back? Do they think I care? Why the "small person on board" sticker? Is the driver trying to warn me that they are too short to see over the top of the dashboard? Or are they smugly announcing the growth of their children and will it be replaced with a 'teenager taxi' sticker when the kid starts getting drunk and crazy on Friday nights?

And then there is the 'mother-to-be on board' badge. What does that mean, and what is medical science up to? The last time I saw one it was on the back of a Golf driven by a bloke. Now if he is going to give birth I want to know about it, but the rest of them should stick to announcing their pregnancies somewhere other than the back of their mud sprayed Strange Rover, it really is an accessory too far.

Police rise to new heights

Five of the highest peaks in the British Isles were conquered by a team of 20 officers from the Metropolitan Police in June, nine of whom were from Barnet. They were raising funds for a cancer charity, Sebastian's Action Trust. On Monday 6 June, they left Barnet to travel to Scotland. On Tuesday morning they climbed Ben Nevis (1344m) then travelled to the Lake District where in the early evening they climbed Scafell Pike (978m).

Having completed this they motored down to Wales and at 3am on Wednesday morning they climbed Snowdonia (1085m), enjoying a magnificent sunrise as they did so. Later on in the day they caught a ferry over to southern Ireland and on Wednesday evening began the climb of Carrauntoohil (1040m) in the Macgillycuddy Reeks.

Having completed this there was no rest yet; driving up to the Mourne Mountains in Northern Ireland they climbed Slieve Donard (850m) on Thursday morning, completing this and the whole challenge by Thursday lunchtime. The group then drove back to Dublin for a much-needed bath or shower, then

sleep, before returning home on Friday.

Breathtaking

Detective Constable Simon Hunt, one of those taking part, said afterwards: "What a fantastic experience, I'd do it all again if I had the chance. I have seen some breathtaking sights and views as we made

these climbs. Mind you, we had exceptional weather that made it a lot easier. There were people of all levels of ability taking part and everyone got on really well. We are well on target to achieve our goal of £10,000 so if anyone reading this owes us money, can we have it now please?"

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