

Professional Drivers

Foundation

Supporting Drivers

**Gathering of the Griffin 2013
adopt the PDF!**



Our Griffin adventure began as we loaded the car with flyers, stickers, raffle tickets and newsletters to hand out to all the show goers. Having collected the caravan so we'd somewhere to sleep, off to Orwell Crossing Truckstop we went. At not long past nine in the morning the show areas were starting to fill with superbly presented Scantias. Rob Billman had organised a lovely spot for the PDF gazebo, as well as room for us to park the caravan. Setting up the PDF display was time consuming as we couldn't resist looking round every time another lorry pulled in to see what was coming. We spent a happy couple of hours walking round the assembled lorries, talking to their drivers and selling them raffle tickets for our Grand Christmas Draw. The generosity of those present was simply amazing and many tickets were sold, giving us good

The

Winter 2015

start for the Xmas Draw. We had a wander round the brilliant light show, provided by 104 Scantias and their very proud drivers. The noise was deafening! Sunday dawned bright and sunny. We manned the car parks, taking a small donation from as many as we could. As the day went on, all the vehicles were judged and trophies presented. Rob and Michelle had organised an auction for the PDF featuring items from the various exhibitors at the show, which raised well over £300, plus a 50/50 prize draw run by Donna Billman, which added more than £60.

The sterling efforts of all who made the Gathering of the Griffin 2013 happen, along with the fantastic generosity of the drivers and visitors, left the PDF more than £770 better off. I'd just like to say, on behalf of all the PDF trustees a sincere thank you to each and every one of you. It is an honour and a privilege for the PDF to be a part of this and to be invited back in 2014.

Thanks also go to..



www.hgvlgvtraining.co.uk who make a regular monthly donation to the PDF.

How your donations help....

Sept 13 A Yorks lorry driver in arrears with the utility bills after a heart attack. The PDF made a payment and avoided him being cut off.

Sept 13

A Welsh lorry driver who'd had to give up work to nurse his sick wife found himself in arrears when she died, due to the Bedroom Tax After discussions with his rent officer and other investigations to authenticate the claim the PDF cleared his substantial arrears to allow him to move on.

Feb 14

The family of a driver were left facing £5000 funeral costs after he was killed in a works accident. His company offered just a small insurance pay out which was less than 15% of full cost of transporting his body home. We had no hesitation in offering our full support to this one.

March 14

A driver from Sussex suffering from Crohn's disease was facing bailiffs/prison after so long fighting the disease. Despite getting back to work this debt was haunting him.

Impressed by his own efforts we agreed to clear this for him

April 14

A father struggling with a drug taking daughter and her child had run up debt sending her to rehab. He was literally left holding the baby. We helped to sort out his problems.

April 14.

We received a letter with a cheque for £160 enclosed in memory of Paul J Slater who had sadly passed away after suffering from a long term illness. His family thought that Paul, who had enjoyed a varied career driving lorries, would want to help his

fellow drivers. We later received a further £25.

Jan 14.

The wife of a terminally ill driver from the Midlands asked for assistance to prepare the rooms her husband was returning too. It later turned out that her company sacked her for taking too much time off work. An initial grant was paid with reviews

May 14

Driver from the West Midlands who'd suffered a stroke but was working hard to get his licence back. His cooker failed meaning he was surviving off a microwave. We helped with the cost of a new cooker

July 14

A seriously ill driver from Sth Yorks was struggling to meet transport costs to hospital, as his wife had to accompany him he couldn't use hospital transport. To cover four months taxi fares we donated £200 (to be reviewed in November)

SUMMARY

From Aug 13 to Aug 14 we received 16 claims for help.

We agreed help with 10 claims while 6 were rejected

We paid out a total of £4103 and average of £410 per successful claim.

We have received claims from England, Wales and Northern Ireland. The majority of the claims come from drivers getting into difficulties after suffering medical problems.

Two of the claims just needed advice.

Your donations have made this possible and all of the claimants have asked us to pass on their heartfelt thanks to you all.

The Tales of Two Trustees

First Time

In September 1970 I got back early on a Friday after doing a 20 drop Scotch run and was called into the office. I was asked if I had a passport and when I said I hadn't, was sent straight to the Post office to get a visitors Passport. £1-10s or £1 .50p in new money!

Back at the yard I was told to come in at dinnertime on Sunday as I was off to Bremen in Germany with some spares for a ships engine.

On Sunday I met up with Snowy Unsworth who was going to the same place with his S39 Foden and 40ft flat trailer with a load of spares.

I was in my Dodge 4 wheeler so we had about 30tons on between us. We sailed overnight from Harwich to Hamburg, arriving about 9 am after a rough crossing .

Snowy sent me to a bank to change some money, while he sorted out the road tax for our lorries. I asked in the bank for German currency and the clerk would only offer me Deutch, I thought he said Dutch, which caused confusion but more was to follow. When I got back to Snowy, after cursing the traffic for driving on the wrong side, he was trying to talk to the tax official who wanted the separate weights of his unit and trailer but neither could understand each other.

After a lot of head scratching and drawings we finally hit the road for Bremen.

When we got there we were tipped that day and had to sail back from Bremerhaven. Snowy led the way and left me behind after I had an injector pipe come loose which, I sorted out

myself.

On arrival at Bremerhaven, I found a hotel for the night and after breakfast I found Snowy in the docks, tired, angry and starving, having spent the night across his seats!

After we got him some food and a wash we found a ramp and put my lorry on his trailer for the homeward ferry.

That was the start of my European driving experiences and the trip that I still remember fondly.

Eric Wilsher AKA Eric The Judge

Journeys End

To many, the end of the road comes unexpectedly, either through ill health or redundancy. I was lucky in the fact I'd been planning it for the past year. On my 64th birthday I set a countdown timer on my computer to run until my 65th birthday, 11Months and 30 days seems an awful long way in the future.

My original plan was to work past my birthday in June and up to the September deadline for the DCPC, after which I'd be unqualified to drive lorries for a living, but after chatting to my elder brothers the suggestion was made; "why waste the summer working?" So the die was cast and June 10th was selected as D-day. The winter was surprisingly mild and for once I made it through without encountering any major snowfall, before I knew it spring was here and just 3 months to go. I'd set myself to work and earn as much as the law would allow in the final year, and thankfully my agency kept me well supplied with work. Two weeks off in April to visit America and there was just 6 weeks to go.

At 3 weeks I discovered I was owed 5 days holidays so that brought my end date forward to June 4th.

Determined to go out with a flourish my last block of work was 5 nights followed by a night off and then another 5. Us old 'uns can show these youngsters a thing or two, but eventually the last night arrived.

Typically it was pouring down as a walked from car park to transport office and when I arrived there wasn't a unit available so I had to wait. The plan had been to take ice cream from Gloucester to Elstree and then to Wisbech to bring frozen food back to Gloucester, but due to the delay, the Wisbech section of the run was cancelled. Eventually I got away and the run to Elstree was uneventful arriving an hour after my booking time but phone calls had been made and I was soon on the bay, my last load delivered. Leaving Elstree at 2:00am the run home went well until I got near Oxford, then it dawned on me, this was the last time I'd be doing this!!!

As I ran along the A40 from Oxford to Gloucester my speed dropped as I remember the old cafés and some fantastic fry ups long before anyone worried about cholesterol and tread mills.

There were places where, sadly, drivers never made it and I tried to see if the hole I made in the wall when I jack knifed 40 years ago was still there.

I thought of the loads I'd pulled along that road, from bicycles in, and on top of, a Morris 1000 van, to propellers for a Belfast Transport plane on a low loader.

There was no delaying the inevitable though and eventually I dropped down

past the Air Balloon for the last time, pulled into the depot and carefully parked the trailer (for once it was nearly straight!).

After uncoupling I parked the unit up and took an extra 5 minutes giving it a good wipe down. Then card out, keys out and that was the end of the journey, at last.

3.5 to 4 million miles after first setting out nearly 50 years previously from another section of the same site. After a few handshakes and thank yous from both sides I was free.

Ted Boucher AKA Squarepeg

The PDA Christmas Raffle

Please find enclosed a few books of Raffle Tickets for the PDF Christmas Raffle.

We would like to ask if you could help with selling a few of them for us. The Raffle is one way you can raise funds to help us continue to help others.

We thank you in advance and ask that all ticket stubs sold be returned with a cheque to:

Professional Drivers Foundation
10 Eastmoor Lane
Doddington
March
Cambs
PE15 0TD

BY Friday December 19th 2014 please.

Enquiries can be made to
07909 995615 (9-5pm)
email: pat.nicholson@tiscali.co.uk
Website: www.pda-uk.org
Twitter: @PDFandPDA
Facebook: Professional Drivers Foundation.