

The World of *Personal Number Plates* New Year 2008 ❄️

Regtransfers

.co.uk

**Duncan
Bannatyne**



Wholesale success

Mike Shah is a quiet, unassuming man, whose calm exterior and polite manner, don't initially seem to fit the current popular image of the successful businessman.

The business people we see on our television screens are often loud and aggressive. Mike's style is somewhat different.



Mike Shah has been involved with the rag trade, one way or another, for most of his life, beginning 30 years ago when he started selling women's clothing on Petticoat Lane Market. He eventually moved into the wholesale side of the business with his three brothers, and together they built a highly successful family business. Despite that success, Mike has recently decided to take a step back and spend more time at home with his wife Milla, and to consider other

business options.

His interest in personal number plates started about 20 years ago, when he was asked by his brother to bid for a particular registration at a number plate auction. He was successful and, after witnessing the level of 'auction fever' on the day, the seeds of Mike's interest in number plates were sown. Incidentally, his brother still has the registration and the interest has since spread throughout the family, many of whom now have their own personal number plates.

Mike's first purchase was **1 VMM**, which he found in a Regtransfers advert in the Exchange & Mart magazine. The letters stand for Vishal (his eldest son), Milla (his wife) and Mike, and was originally put on his red Mercedes 200 SL convertible. It now resides on his pride and joy, a top of the range Mercedes SL 55 with every conceivable extra, including a performance pack, giving it a racing standard 550bhp and top speed of 200mph.

His next purchase, **M11 LLY**, was found in the Sunday Times. The number was for his wife Milla, who is better known as Milly to family and friends. He originally wanted to buy **M1 LLY**, but at the time the price was too high. When **M11 LLY** came along at a "more sensible price" he snapped it up. It is now proudly displayed on Milly's beloved Mercedes C180, which she regularly uses to go



shopping with her sister.

More recently Mike completed his collection when he purchased two more superb number plates from Registration Transfers, **11 SMS** and **1 VMS**. **11 SMS** was bought for his youngest son Shaneel Mike Shah on his 11th birthday and can be seen on their red Mercedes 200 SL. **1 VMS** was for his eldest, Vishal Mike Shah and put on an eye-catching black Mini. Mike bought both as incentive for his son to do well at university and to pass his driving test the next time he is home.

Mike is a great believer in buying quality cars from specialist dealers and is never afraid to travel in order to get what he wants.

He drove to Lancaster for his wife's C180, to Devon for his son's Mini and a comparative short hop to Crystal Palace

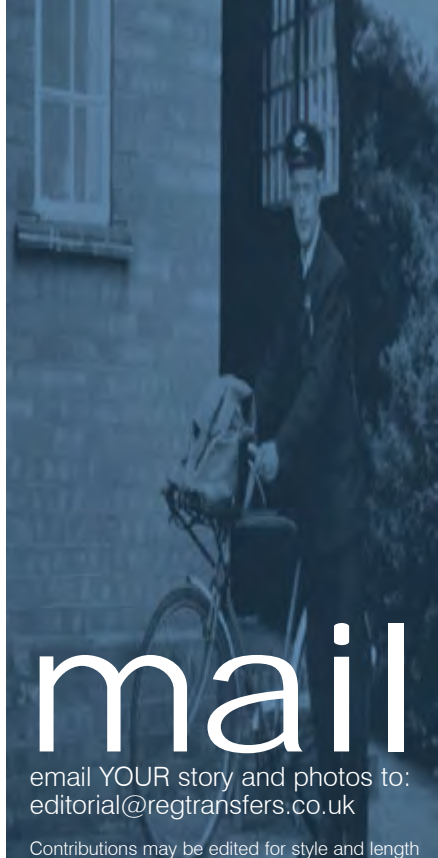


in South London back in 1991, for the 200 SL.

Fortunately, Mike didn't have to go very far to buy three of his prized number plates from Regtransfers, and we were very happy when he rated the service he received as "excellent".

Thanks Mike.

Len Stout



A bit of a giggle

B4 LDY

Not having a middle name, I have never been able to go for a standard three-letter plate with my initials. So I've always been on the lookout for something different.

I spotted **B4 LDY** on the Regtransfers.co.uk website and was immediately hooked, particularly when the car I planned to put it on was my DB9.

I thought that it would bring a bit of humour to the many frustrated and angry drivers countrywide. The car attracts attention anyway but when people see the combination of car, plate and owner, it more often than not creates a talking point and a bit of a giggle!

Stephen Harrison
by email



Registration bug

PI8 MCM

My wife purchased **P16 MCM** for my birthday, 16 September, from Regtransfers.co.uk. This is currently on a Retention Certificate as the car it was intended for has 'died'.

I saw **P18 MCM** and put this on my everyday car. Then I wanted my 'classic' car to have as near to its original registration (**PCV 1M**) as possible and managed to purchase **PCV 7M**. It finished off the restoration perfectly.

My son has the registration bug now. He has a Peugeot and 'PUG' has become the 'standard' registration for these cars. So, he has **J700 PUG**.

With the Regtransfers.co.uk magazines in my house, my other children, and eight grandchildren, will probably be phoning you in the not too distant future.

Mike Merrick
Co. Durham



Extra special

VMR 410



I bought **VMR 410** for my wife, Vivien Mary Robinson as one of her 40th birthday presents. She had wanted a personalised plate for many years but thought a dateless plate would be out of reach. Little did she know what I was planning! Vivien and I are both over the moon.

Thanks to you, I managed to secure this plate at a very reasonable price and, despite leaving it a bit late (as men always do!), your extremely quick, easy and user friendly processes meant the

transfer was confirmed in time for 'the big day'. I have already recommended you to a friend and I wouldn't hesitate using your services again.

Thanks very much for helping make Vivien's 40th birthday that bit extra special and something that she'll never forget.

Phil Robinson
by email

Tarzan and son

TAR 24N



It all started back in my late school days, when I was a bit of a rogue with a mad sense of humour. First it was 'Mad Max' then, when I used to go to toga parties, I always used to win the best imitation 'Tarzan' call. Years later, when I used to work at All Saints hospital, the name stuck.

Friends I worked with always challenged my Tarzan qualities. So I went in the back of a shipment container and bellowed my best Tarzan impersonation yet. Well, half the hospital heard it and I was laughing all the way to my boss's office to explain my antics - wearing just my boxers!

Now I live in the Western Highlands of Scotland and work as a commercial diver. Venturing into purchasing a new car, I was fortunate enough to come across your site and, when I saw **TAR 24N**, I immediately thought of my past with joy. So now I have to explain it to the locals. Damn, I thought I'd got away with it!

Rob (Tarzan) Brown
Loch Carron

G4 NTT

I'm 22 years old and I currently live in Huddersfield where I work as an engineer. I recently purchased my new-shape Corsa SXi and I really wanted the registration **G4 NTY** (as my nickname is Ganty). This had gone, however, so I settled on **G4 NTT** instead.

Sean Gant
by email



DB03 DAV

I have an established joinery and building business venture and, in my spare time, I have been searching for a suitable private registration for my van.

I wanted something that was both individual and eye-catching, and at an affordable price. I had spoken to Regtransfers many times during my search. Then, one day, I received a text from you, offering me **DB03 DAV**. The transaction was completed speedily and efficiently, just like the business I run.

I am now searching for a suitable registration for my private car.

Dave Bridge
by email



600 NER

I am a Glasgow-based property developer and have been an Arsenal fan since I was taken to the Coronation Cup game at Hampden, Glasgow in 1953 (where they played Celtic – and lost!).

David Citrin
by email



Duncan Bannatyne

Big businesspeople are big business. High-profile entrepreneurs are dominating the media just as celebrity chefs did a while ago, and as antique experts, gardeners and interior designers did before that. Shows such as *Dragons' Den* and *The Apprentice* have reinforced the stereotype of the big businessman as a ruthless autocrat with an eye for a deal, and no tolerance for weakness or ineptitude.

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With all that in mind, it was with some trepidation that our reporting team set out for a meeting with Duncan Bannatyne, OBE, perhaps the most famous of the BBC's *Dragons*. The interviewer and photographer were selected by the drawing of straws, with the recipients of the shortest straws being pushed out into the line of fire. Armed with knowledge from Bannatyne's autobiography and their best asbestos underclothes, they set out for his head office in Darlington.

The office in question is a surprisingly plain building – a former electricity board office block – but Bannatyne is no believer in spending money on flashy premises for the sake of it. He is a practical man who sees no point in increasing overheads unnecessarily.

Duncan and fellow Dragon, **Theo Paphitis**, are among the increasing number of serious businessmen who see the investment value in private car number plates, as well as the potential for marketing, branding and maintaining a public profile.

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"I didn't get **23 D** from auction though, that was a present from my first wife along time ago. She got it in the '90s and I got her **G 74** which my oldest daughter uses now. My van, the gym repair van, has **F1 TSO** on, and I bought **111 JO**, for my wife, Joanne. So we have quite a few. There's also **1 LGO**, **5 EBS**, **2 BHM**, **6 AVS**, **52 DB** and **50 PAM**."

Would he sell them if he received good offers?

"Oh yeah, they're all on the market. I had **8 DWB** on my Chrysler, I think I've sold that now. And I've sold **33 PAM**, **99 DB**, **KPS 3**, **V8 BMW**, **44 DB**, **RAC 5**, **NAC 1**, and **4 GGY**. I'd consider buying more, but the price would have to be right. I've made a bit of money on them."

As a child who had to work a paper round in order to afford a bicycle, Duncan probably never dreamed that he would, one day, own several cars with personalised registrations. He was born in Clydebank in 1949. His family was not well-off, and the young Duncan began looking for opportunities at an early age. When he was 15 he signed up for an 11-year stint with the Royal Navy, but he was discharged prematurely following an altercation with an officer. After the Navy, Bannatyne moved between a number of jobs, at one point moving to Jersey for a few years, where he met his first wife, Gail. But it was after relocating again at the age of 30, this time to Stockton-on-Tees, that he first went into business for

himself.

His first venture was an ice cream van, which he bought for £450. After building up that business by acquiring more vehicles, he sold at a profit and moved on to a different industry. The nursing home business was a far cry from selling ice cream, but Bannatyne made a success of that one too, and once again when he sold the business it was for a substantial profit. In fact, from the £450 he paid for his first van, he had, by 1996, worked his way up to £58 million, which was the price he got when he sold the nursing home business and a chain of children's nurseries.

Diversity has been a hallmark of Duncan Bannatyne's career and his recent interests have included the well-known Bannatyne's health club chain as well as bars, casinos and hotels. The 2007 Sunday Times Rich List estimates that he is worth about £200 million, and rates him as the 351st richest person in the UK. Not bad for a fellow who was once locked up and then thrown out of the navy for trying to throw a drunken, cocky officer off a jetty. Bannatyne has said that after the whole navy experience he realised that no one else would help him realise his potential, and that he had to take charge of his own life. Although he left the navy with no references or qualifications, Bannatyne became motivated to go into business for himself.

The business career has been impressive, but the British public know Duncan Bannatyne best for his role in the BBC 2's *Dragons' Den*. The popularity and notoriety he earned as one of the more fearsome Dragons has brought other television opportunities, including appearing on a somewhat similar ITV show Fortune - Million Pound Giveaway where people put their case trying to persuade a panel to give them money so they can realise their dreams.

At the time of our interview, Duncan is nearing the end of filming for the new series of *Dragons' Den*. The show is one of the things that takes him from his home in Darlington down to London; a trip he makes regularly.

"Yes, I'm down there almost every week, either filming *Dragons' Den*, or... Well, this week is the official launch of the paperback [his autobiography, *Anyone*

Can Do It: My Story]. So I'll be going round signing books in the shops."

Despite Duncan's frequent journeys south, Wynyard near Teesside is the Bannatyne family home. His house is a fairly modest affair for such a wealthy man, but its location offers many benefits for a family with young children.

"I live on an estate that has security at the gates, so my children are able to go out in safety. At five years old they can go down the cul-de-sac to visit their friends and we're never afraid that anything's going to happen to them. In fact, they're out there all the time. If I had a big house surrounded by fences and things then the children wouldn't have their friends to play with. There are about 20 children living in the cul-de-sac and they're out there playing all the time. They have a great life. I live there because it's a children thing."

In addition to the Wynyard house, there is another house in Cannes, France.

"It's a beautiful six bedroom villa which costs me a lot more to upkeep than the English house, and I have to have staff there. We spend the whole summer there. The kids have the swimming pool and, once again, it's very family orientated. My 8 year-old daughter has arthritis and being in the pool really helps her."

Bannatyne's attitude to expenditure seems very much coloured by his modest roots. There is no casual disregard for the cost of anything. No taking endless resources for granted.

"I spend where I think it's necessary. I used to fly to the villa in France on a private jet but now easyJet flies three times a day, so I use them. It's convenient. I do look after the pennies, but I spend on convenience for my family."

Family and children are recurring themes during the interview, and clearly children are very important to Bannatyne. He was awarded an OBE in 2004 for his work raising money for charity, and he is a keen supporter of UNICEF, the United Nations Children's Fund, and Scottish International Relief. He has helped with the funding of orphanages in Columbia and Romania.

Bannatyne's own children span a range

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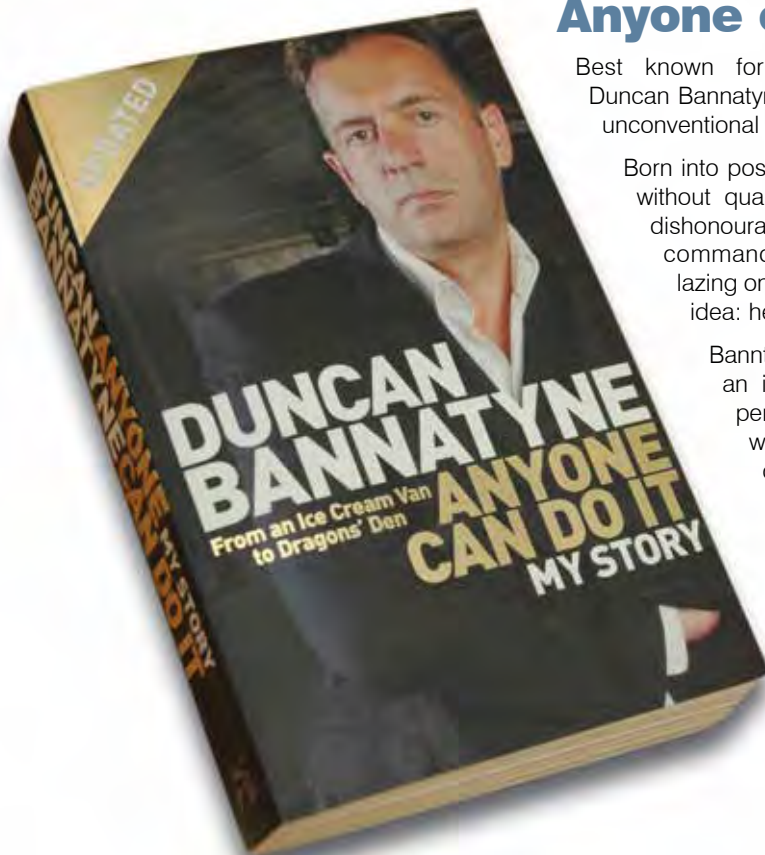
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Anyone can do it!

Best known for his role in BBC2's *Dragon's Den*, Duncan Bannatyne is one of Britain's most successful and unconventional entrepreneurs.

Born into post-war poverty in Clydebank, he left school without qualifications and joined the navy, but was dishonourably discharged for attempting to throw his commanding officer overboard. Aged 30, lazing on a beach in Jersey, he formulated his great idea: he was going to be a millionaire.

Bannatyne's career has been remarkable: from an ice cream turf war, to running up huge personal debts to launch his care homes and walking out of a meeting with City brokers over a point of principle, he has a reputation as a tough operator - as anyone who dates to enter *Dragons' Den* knows...

Duncan Bannatyne's story is candid and utterly compelling. And, as he says himself, if someone like him can make £100 million, then anyone can.

Anyone Can Do It
by **Duncan Bannatyne**
Published by Orion

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That's about the size of it

When **Glenn McCleod** bought his first personalised car registration it was for a very practical, if unusual reason. Glenn ran a limousine business, specialising in American Cadillac automobiles, and he soon found that the number plates on Cadillac limos were too small to accommodate the regulation characters that the law demands should appear on UK registrations.

"American number plates are 12" x 6", so I had motorcycle sized digits put on the plates so that I could utilise the existing mounting, simply because mounting them elsewhere and have an empty space looked a little odd. Unfortunately, there was a local beat policeman who was rather too officious and insisted that I have the plates altered.

"I studied the regulations and realised that, although there were specific size and spacing requirements, there was no requirement on the size of the plate itself,

even though they were usually made in two different sizes, depending on whether oblong or square plates were needed."

Glenn worked out that the size of plate that would fit onto the number plate mounting of a Cadillac would take the legally required UK characters - so long as the registration contained five characters or fewer, and that one or more of those characters in a five-character registration was a figure 1.

His quest for an appropriate number led him to one of Regtransfers.co.uk press advertisements, where Glenn set about scouring the list for a registration which would meet his two requirements: it must fit into the limited space on the Cadillac plate, and it must be relevant to his car and business.

"Lo and behold, amongst all the numbers in your advert was **1 CAD**. As it was unlikely that I would ever see a more relevant number, and as I had received a sudden and unexpected windfall, I decided to bite the bullet and buy it."

The personalised number plates bug had bitten, and Glenn eventually acquired two more private numbers, **1112 D** and **1480 D**, which would also fit the American sized plates, but at that point enforcement of the issue that had prompted his search became less rigorous.

"The ruling was unofficially relaxed because of thousands of Japanese cars that had turned up with U.S. size number plate mountings."

Glenn sold the third number at considerable profit, but he decided to keep the other two, partly because of an unexpected side-effect

"Because of the type of car and configuration of number plate, several traffic wardens assumed that the car was diplomatic, and so they didn't issue tickets! Sadly, this doesn't happen now because wardens are required to slap tickets on everything."



Project Kahn is exactly the kind of business we would expect to appreciate the potential of private number plates. The design based automotive company, led by creative visionary **Afzal Kahn**, turns high quality, prestige production cars into stunning bespoke vehicles. The company has its roots in Kahn's early forays into the automotive industry.



"As a kid, I used to look at car dealerships and I just knew that I could totally re-invent what I was seeing," says Kahn. "About 18 years ago I decided to go into business. I started off in the wheel industry. I approached manufacturers all over the country but I couldn't find any good enough. I went all over the world to find a good manufacturer and eventually I settled on an Italian company who had the quality and production capabilities to manufacture exactly what I wanted."

In 1996, Kahn launched RS-R and RS-S alloy wheels - two completely new and innovative set of wheels that caused quite a stir. "I was the first manufacturer to design a wheel with spokes that ran to the very edge of the rim. It is now one of the most replicated styles in the world."

In 2001, Afzal Kahn set up V12 Power Ltd, a company which was to become the most prestigious bespoke vehicle specialist in the UK. However, he still didn't feel that he was able to add enough of his own touch to the production models to turn them into true bespoke vehicles. For this reason he set up Project Kahn.

Project Kahn made its name by launching the Range Rover and Range Rover Sport conversions. Other specialist areas include conversions of Aston Martin, Bentley and Ferrari models. The product range is constantly evolving, and Project Kahn's dynamic approach and stunning results have won an impressive and expanding client-base. Premier League football celebrities including **Peter Crouch**, **Michael Ball**, **Sam Allardyce**, **Mark Viduka** and **Robbie Savage** have all acquired Project Kahn conversions. England Captain, **John Terry**, purchased a top of

Project Kahn





We use Regtransfers because of the personal service we get. We can ring up and speak to someone directly, and we can also use Regtransfers as middleman to negotiate prices with a third party. This saves us a lot of time and effort, and allows us to continue with what we know best - which is taking a standard vehicle and rebuilding it into a unique, bespoke, road-going piece of art!"

based company. Word soon spread amongst his Chelsea team mates, many of whom now have products from Project Kahn.

Former Hollywood star **Arnold Schwarzenegger**, famous for starring in the Terminator movies and now governor of California, has ordered a car from Project Kahn, as has actress **Daryl Hannah**.

Project Kahn also buy and sell cherished registrations. It would have been surprising if they did not, as a vehicle's registration number is absolutely key to its identity.

"These plates are either used as show plates or are sold with the cars," says Afzal Kahn. "They are also sold separately to customers who want to add



a bit of intrigue, style or personality. For a lot of people, adding a personal registration can do more for the way they feel about their vehicle than adding £20,000 of extras. At the moment we are concentrating quite heavily on our Aston Martin conversions, which include a full body kit for the DB9. For this reason we are buying a large number of 007 number plates.

For further information, please visit:

www.projectkahn.com

www.kahninfo.com

www.v12online.com

www.kahnshop.com/index.php



Keith Harris is one of the best known faces in showbiz. Seeing him waiting for me at Poulton-Le-Fylde station is like being met by a dear friend. He drives Stan (the photographer) and me to his house in a shiny black Mercedes complete with the famous number plate **ORV 1L**. He lives on the outskirts of Blackpool with wife Sarah and their two young children, Kitty and Shenton.

As we pull into the drive, I notice a stone plaque on the wall outside his front door. It is of the Janus masks – the smiling and frowning faces more commonly known as Comedy and Tragedy – the universal symbol for theatre and drama from ancient Greece. I wonder if they also represent happy and difficult times gone by.

Every performer has two faces: the private and the public, but there is no pretence or mask-wearing with Keith, he says it how it is, although during our conversation, he is ever the entertainer, momentarily slipping into various characters' voices with resulting hilarity.

Keith brings Orville out for the photo shoot – a lot larger than I recall from TV. Ugly duckling springs to mind, but the big sad eyes soon soften me. He has a little car of his own and of course his

Watch My Lips!

The Keith Harris interview

name on the plate.

It was fourteen years ago when Keith acquired the **ORV 1L** number. A friend told him it was coming up for auction in Harrogate. "It was fourth on the list," says Keith, "the one that sold before mine was **CYR 1L** which went for about £35,000. I thought, flipping heck, mine's going to cost a fortune. It started at £2,000 and nobody went for it, so it came down to £1,500 then down again to £1,000 so I put my little ticket up. Someone else put their ticket up and it went backwards and forwards until it got up to about £1,400 and the other fella said no, so I got it for that. I met him afterwards and he said he was only going to sell it to me anyway. It's got to be worth an awful lot more now. I would never sell it. The only other Orville I know is the singer Shaggy, who had the hit 'It wasn't me'.

"I wanted my own number plate from when I was a kid. When **24 KH** came up in the newspaper on a pre-war moped, I bought it for £75. I had it on my

MG GT when I was a young guy zooming around. Having a number plate is a showbiz thing, especially when you're trying to get recognised.

Ones I saw around that I liked were Jimmy Tarbuck's number **COM 1C**, and Danny Le Rue's **RU 2** [are you one too], plus of course **FU 2** which was on X-rated model Fiona Richmond's car."

Since the late sixties, **FU 2** has belonged to Hanna Smart, widow of Billy Smart Jr. Keith worked with their son Billy Jay in Smart's circus. "Billy Jay was my stooge; he was about four years old. My Mum probably has the show on video, she has about six hundred videos of everything I've done except the Minstrel shows. They didn't have videos then which is such a shame, but it's great to look back at all that stuff.

"I performed in *Billy Smart's Easter and Christmas Circus* every year for four years. My first TV performance was when I was seventeen on a show called *Let's Laugh* which was the forerunner to





Let's Laugh which was the forerunner to *The Comedians*. At the same time I auditioned for *Opportunity Knocks*. Trouble was I appeared on it the same week as *Let's Laugh* and that came out first so *Opportunity Knocks* weren't very pleased that I'd already been on a TV show. I had Freddy the Frog then; he said he was going to be Prime Minister because he was always in deep water and he had a big mouth. We lost by 27 votes to a young boy trumpeter who many years later was playing in my band in the pit. I had my own TV show, *Cuddles and Company* (in the 1970's). On there I had Dominic the Dog and Daphne who was a shark in a tank of water. My ideas came from animals, I was always looking for 'the one' that was going to take off. I never really wanted to be known as Keith Harris and Orville. I was Keith Harris 'the entertainer' and this was part of what I did. The reason I picked ventriloquism was because working the theatre's as a kid, there were a few ventriloquists who were pretty old by then. I thought if I take it up as my main act, by the time they die I'll be able to step into their shoes.

"My Uncle and Aunt were both in showbiz and my Father could sing so when he came out of the army, they said there was a vacancy in the show. He went for the audition and got in. He met my Mum who was a dancer and wardrobe mistress on a show called *No, No Nannette*.

"As a boy I was always making puppet theatres. Unfortunately I had many years of bad schooling. I was dyslexic but it wasn't recognised as anything apart from 'being thick'. But my mind was always full of being on the stage. After school I'd go straight to the theatre; I loved everything about it. At weekends I'd work the clubs with my Dad, earning a few quid, getting recognition. I knew that's what I wanted to do. Even in my teenage years I was a

quiet person but as soon as I got on stage I was completely different because I could control that and I was good at my art which always surprised people. I suppose I was born into it. I joined my Dad's act when I was six. I used to sit on his knee – he was the ventriloquist and I was his dummy. That's where I learnt all about timing."

By fourteen, Keith had turned professional. But it was only very recently that he discovered that he had a great grand uncle called John Oliver Harris, born in 1884, who he has an uncanny resemblance to. Even more surprising is that John Harris was also a ventriloquist, and the dummy he used looked identical to Keith's first dummy, Charlie Chat.

"To think that ventriloquism is so deeply embedded in my family history is incredible. And it's not a talent that anyone can learn. I could try and teach it to people, but there's a lot more to it than just speaking without moving your lips. You have to be two individual people and sometimes if I work with Cuddles for instance, he'll say something that I wasn't even thinking of saying and it is quite weird because your mind is working so fast – a bit of schizophrenia I suppose."

Ventriloquism comes from the Latin word ventriloquus meaning: speaking from the belly, but according to Keith, you don't speak from your stomach at all, "You speak from up here," he says, touching his neck, "and you've got to believe in your character for them to come alive. I've had so many different ones, over 170, and when Orville came along he was the one everybody wanted to see. The balance between the monkey and Orville worked really well.

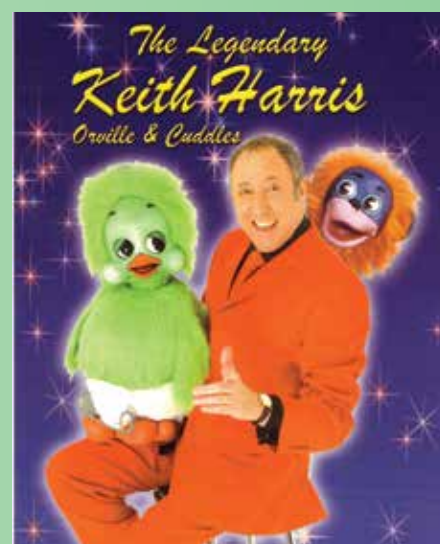
"While I was doing the Northern working men's clubs, most of my characters were hard-hitting. I had a snake called Sidney Ram Jam, which I'm not allowed to do any more – he spoke with an Indian accent and wore a little fez. I had a gay rabbit too, and I'm going back a long time, he was called Percy Pickle-tooth. "Before a show, I'd always find the toughest guy in the bar and say to him, 'Do you want to earn a few beers?' I'd get him up on stage, squeeze him on the back and he'd open his mouth and mime what I was saying. Everyone loved it because it would be the most unlikely person letting me do this to them – his mates would say 'That's Charlie up there!' – He loved it too; it worked a treat.

"I thought I'd invent a character that was a little bit softer. First I thought of a baby, but babies don't say much. People like animals so I came up with the idea of a baby bird. Orville's not really a duck, but he's an orphan – he was an egg when I found him. And he's always been shy; it took him six months before he came out of his shell! So I had to create this

character, and being lime green, apart from when you're on stage where it's obviously visible, there's no such bird as a lime green bird so we don't know what species he is.

"The first time I worked with Orville was on *The Good Old Days*. I'd designed him and sent it to a person who made props for me. He arrived back on the Saturday and I had to work with him the following day. I'd written a script and I had a voice – how I would imagine him. But when I pulled him out of the box and I thought, I hate this, I really don't like it at all, it wasn't what I expected. I took it to the girls' dressing room and they said Oooh isn't it lovely... aaah! So I thought well that's an instant reaction. I made the story up about he doesn't know what he is and he hasn't got a mummy or daddy. Together with the big sad eyes and the baby's nappy, he was an instant success. I sang a song I used to sing with my Dad – 'Little man you've had a busy day,' I'd put Orville to bed [*Keith sings a couple of lines*] and by the end, the audience were crying. From there Val Doonican saw it and he wanted me on his show, then we did shows with Lena Martell, Cilla Black and Lulu; everybody wanted Orville.

"I did a series with Rolf Harris called *Rolf's Here*, OK and *The Keith Harris Show* which ran from 1982 – 1990 and after that *The Quack Chat Show* from 1990 – 1993. Someone said you should bring a record out and I said I've got one, called *Orville's Song* but everyone knows it now as *I wish I could fly*. I asked Bobby Crush to write it for me. We went to Abbey Road and put the song down. I said – if it's good enough for the Beatles, it's good enough for the Duck! In fact it wasn't going to be the A-side, the one I wrote called *I didn't* was meant to be, so we spent all afternoon doing that with a kids' choir. We had ten minutes left so we got the other track down; we did it once, which was Orville's song. It didn't get to number one but it sold 400,000 copies and won us a gold disc."



Richard Hinde is a self-confessed number plates nut. He is an enthusiastic fan of Regtransfers.co.uk and an avid reader of our magazine. We are delighted to say that he is also a valued, and very satisfied, customer.

In 2005 Richard bought **FA55 TTT** from Regtransfers. When he wrote to us recently it was evident that he was still enjoying his great registration.

"I thought I'd write and say a great big thank you to you and your team for supplying me with, what I think, is the greatest plate ever... It really is terrific, and is FASSTTT becoming a celebrity here on Hayling Island. People are even taking pictures of it on their mobiles whilst I'm driving, pointing fingers and smiling. It really is amazing."

FA55 TTT becoming popular

Richard's first personal number plate purchase was about 15 years ago, when **H1 NDE** went up for auction.

"Unfortunately I couldn't attend because of work, but my brother went on my behalf with a limit of £5,000 to spend. As I thought it would be a once-in-a-lifetime purchase, and something I planned to hand down, I thought that sum of money was worth it.

"After the auction my brother phoned to tell me that it had sold for £5,200. I was horrified that I missed out by such a small sum. However, after teasing me for five minutes or so he revealed that he had, in fact, spent the additional £200 and got the registration!"

H1 NDE went straight onto Richard's, then brand new, BMW car where it has



been displayed proudly for 15 years. The ultimate "Hinde" name plate.

Two or three years ago Richard was struck by a inspiration...

"I wondered if I could get **EDN 1H** - basically **H1 NDE** in reverse. I pursued this idea through Regtransfers, who eventually managed to buy **EDN 1H** for me at an auction. We put it on Janet's car and side-by-side they look great [*The unique mirror-image pair was previously featured on page 31 of Regtransfers magazine Volume 3, Issue 1 - Ed*].

Richard recently decided to buy a new BMW 3 series convertible. For the uninitiated, this vehicle is a 3-litre, twin turbo beast, offering 306bhp.

"It truly is FASSTTT," says Richard.

"Therefore, the ultimate number plate was required, and yet again Regtransfers came up with the perfect plate - **FA55 TTT**. Absolutely nothing can be better and it looks superb.

"We really feel now that it has replaced the others as our number one plate, because it's so cool. We're sure that it will be seen by every number plate fan as a classic, a number that would grace any front bumper!"

As an afterthought he adds, "Perhaps Stirling Moss should be driving it!"



Storing up number plates

Thomas Brogan has been interested in personal number plates for decades, but it was only recently that he found his own ideal registration, **BR06 ANT**. Tom had previously bought **X5 AXX** for his wife, Ann, as a birthday gift. Compared to Tom's very obvious 'Brogan' plate, this one might seem to pose a bit of a puzzle, but Ann's family and friends all recognise the reference to her trademark signature, 'Ann xx' and, as the plate was to go on her new BMW X5, it was perfect.

The couple and their 15 year-old son Reese, live in Bedfordshire, where Tom runs TR Storage Supplies Ltd. He and Ann started the company ten years ago. Tom has been in the storage business all his working life, so his experience stood them in good stead when it came to setting up a business of their own. The company grew steadily and now employs 18 people on a full-time basis. During busy periods, TR Storage often takes on another 20 sub-contractors.

Tom's friend and colleague, Stewart Bourne, also displays a personalised registration on his car. Stewart, who is



TR Storage's project manager, drives a Mitsubishi L200 bearing the number **S13 TRS**: a great plate that combines Stewart's initials with those of the company.

For some years, Tom has nurtured a keen interest in sporty cars, his first being a limited edition, yellow Volvo 850 T5R, followed by a new BMW M3, and currently drives a silver 745 BMW: the car upon which he proudly displays his **BR06 ANT** number plate.

He is rightly proud of what he has achieved in making TR Storage Supplies a highly successful nationwide company. Their range of products is aimed at a wide and varied customer base, from individuals wishing to organise the storage space in domestic garages, to companies needing to set up 1 million square feet warehouses with trucks, trolleys, mezzanine flooring, racking, conveyers and packaging materials, etc.

TR Storage Ltd now has a fleet of five company vans, and Tom Brogan plans to give each of them a private registration. The new plates will help to reinforce TSR's corporate identity.

Another dynamic, growing company making the most of the private vehicle registrations they acquire from Regtransfers.co.uk.

Len Stout

www.tr-storage-supplies.com

Tel: **0800 052 7777**



more

email YOUR story and photos to:
editorial@regtransfers.co.uk

Thank you for supplying us with the new number plate for our lorry. We were competing at the finals of the SEIB National Cross Country Championships

at Eland Lodge EC in Derbyshire where we came joint 4th in the novice and 3rd in the pairs, thus winning the South West Trophy in both those classes. We were

dead chuffed with that result and reckon the **WHO5 NAG** brought us luck!

Suellen and Pete Brake
by email



J1 MNY

I was reading the registration numbers for sale section, which I do every week, in *The Sunday Times* and suddenly saw **J1 MNY**.

My son James Lelew had a Suzuki Jimny and I thought this might make a great present for him. Really the plate is in its purest form on his vehicle at present but could also be interpreted as Jimmy which is a derivative of his name.

After purchasing the registration, I received the retention certificate and gave it to my son who had a 55 plate Jimny and was delighted. He is very proud of the number and it is quite well known in Tunbridge Wells where we live and the local Suzuki dealership always comment and like having the vehicle on their forecourt.

James is hoping Suzuki continues to manufacture the model or he will sell the plate and probably look for a JL prefix in the coming years.

Both me and my wife have personal plates, **25 PAM** and **358 PL**, so I am now on the look out for one for my daughter Sarah, perhaps **S4 RAH**.

Paul Lelew
by email



and even more

email YOUR story and photos to:
editorial@regtransfers.co.uk

I have always been fascinated with



VF 1000

number plates, and hoped that someday I'd have a personalised one myself. So, last year when I bought a new BMW 330d M Sport, I decided that if I saw a suitable plate I would buy it.

As Regtransfers are the best in the UK, I started to look for a plate on their comprehensive website. When I saw **VF 1000** it just stood out; and the fact that my husband loves motorbikes helped, as apparently there's a motorbike model VF 1000.

I have since done some research on the number and found that it was first issued in Norfolk around 1927 to a motorbike - which I think is very fitting, and to know that it has history is special too.

Sue, at Regtransfers was very helpful and professional; but because I lived in Northern Ireland I thought there'd be trouble to put the plate on my car - there wasn't. It did take a little longer than a normal transfer, but I think it was well worth the wait.

Both my daughters love plates, so no doubt I'll be calling on Registration Transfers sometime in the future. You can see one of my daughters, Caroline, in the accompanying photograph along with our dog, Tyson.

Vivian Fox
by email

Spot on

I would just like to say how pleased my wife and I are to have our two cars now with both our family names displayed.

I had always thought that, one day, I would like to have my own vehicle registration number. I had looked many times but the right one never really came up.

Recently though I changed my car, one

Saab for another, and was following up the purchase of the car with another browse through personal vehicle registration numbers. When on Regtransfers website I put in my name, Satham, and it came straight up with **S747 HAM**.

Wow, should I go for it, I thought?



S747 HAM

I decided to have a word with my wife Donna, who replied, "If you would really like it then I will buy it for your forthcoming birthday." (The big 5 0 I'm afraid). She then added, "But it will be no good for passing on to the kids", as we have two girls. "Wouldn't you like to be driving round with your dad's name on your car?" I replied. "I'd love to," she answered.

With this information I revisited your site and put in Donna's maiden name, which is Polish. Her father and his family were evacuated here after the war. I typed in Kozimor, and it threw back **KO51 MOR**, which again was spot on.

So there you have it, the photo shows the rest. If we were ever asked if we would sell, I think it would be hard to persuade Donna, but myself who knows? Perhaps if a famous actor came along and offered the right price then of course I'd be tempted, but if I did, for sure I'd be back on your web site checking out more name-related number plates.

Donna and Pete Satham
by email

Taking Care of Business

The commercial benefits of distinctive number plates are now well-established.

With the UK's largest selection of quality registrations - and having recently celebrated 25 years' trading - Regtransfers has become the first choice of a wide range of businesses eager to find a cost-effective marketing solution.

We are, naturally, delighted to relate their experiences in this magazine. In this issue we are pleased to feature **NKL Automotive Ltd.**

A visit to our website at www.regtransfers.co.uk is certain to provide you with inspiration and ideas for the perfect registration to take care of YOUR business.

With stories and video clips you can see how companies just like yours have gained considerable prestige from their distinctive number plates.

Remember, our friendly sales staff are on hand to help you until 11pm every evening - including weekends.

Exceeding expectations



Nick and Joy Laister are a husband and wife business team who have a long association with good quality private number plates. They met and married in 1990 and the following year Joy bought Nick the registration plate **904 KL**. Nick soon reciprocated, purchasing **JOY 835** for his wife. He had tried to acquire another number, **30 JOY**, which seemed significant as the couple first met on Joy's 30th birthday but, as Nick puts it, "I was gazumped".

In January 2002 Nick and Joy formed **NKL Automotive Ltd**. Nick's long logistics experience, contacts and excellent reputation in the industry coupled with Joy's professional background in counselling proved to be a superb blend when it came to creating a winning team. The company has since grown to employ approximately 300 people.

Nick and Joy aimed to create a company where the appropriate support and development framework would help everyone to attain their full potential and find satisfaction in their role. Furthermore, they firmly believed that a satisfied and positive workforce would deliver an outstanding customer experience.

NKL Automotive is a flourishing company. They currently move 40,000 + vehicles per annum and have a turnover in excess of £5,000,000. Over 99% of the vehicles NKL moves are driven by their own 250-strong team of drivers. NKL now offers a range of services: collection, inspection and delivery of vehicles as well as storage and refurbishment.

In 2005 NKL Automotive Ltd completed the building of their bespoke premises and facilities Goole, Yorkshire. HRH The Princess Royal officially opened the new site on the 31st May 2006. These premises and facilities offer a show case for meeting with companies and individuals who require a discerning service.

In the last 12 months NKL has won 3 awards. The first was Motability's Logistics Supplier Of The Year 2006, the second was The Chairman of East Yorkshire Council's Award For Enhancing The Economy and lastly the BRAKE, The National Road Safety Charity, 2007 Company Driver Safety Award in the small fleet category. Joy has been nominated for a Business Woman of Achievement Award 2007.

Nick was invited by BRAKE, The National Road Safety Charity, to address their



? Why not get YOUR company noticed with corporate number plates

Distinctive number plates:

- provide excellent promotional, marketing opportunities
- look great in press releases, newspaper articles, TV, etc.
- raise public awareness of your company
- help to create corporate identity
- are great fun items
- set your company apart from the rest
- are tax deductible
- provide proven investment potential

Here are just a few organisations who have used personal number plates to identify and promote their businesses:

A Better Move **110 ADU**

All Star Limousine Hire **A115 TAR**

And So to Bed **CO51 BED**

Cry Records **2 CRY**

Gowing and Pursey **PUR 53Y**

Fantastic Fireworks **5 NOV**

Fleetwood Computers **M3 FWC**

Floors to Go **2 FTG**

Independent Safety Advisors **S4 FTY**

KMK Electricians **K13 KMK**

Julian Graves **NUT 5**

Ladybird Photography **P777 BUG**

Marston Properties **RE52 LET**

Morrow Brothers Limited **1 KEG**

New Dimension Exhibitions **WH05 NDE**

Pimlico Plumbers **F1 USH**

Progressive Print Services **D13 PPS**

Rack Storage Systems **DEX 10N**

The Accessory People **2 TAP**

Venmore Thomas & Jones **1 VTJ**

Why not advertise in this magazine?

For further information or to book space, please call **01582 470088** or email: advertising@regtransfers.co.uk



performance
driven



annual conference, held at the National Motor Cycle Museum on 21 November 2007.

Nick and Joy were quick to see the branding and image benefits of private car number plates. They purchased **4 NKL** in August 2003 and later added **904 NKL** to the collection. Their most recent acquisition is the exceptional **1 NKL**, which Nick describes as "the jewel in the crown of our family of registration plates". They are delighted to own it. Nick has **1 NKL** on his vehicle and operations manager Dean Palmer has **904 NKL** on his company car.

Despite owning 50% of NKL Automotive Ltd and being committed to the

company's success, Joy likes to remain independent and retain her own identity away from work, so she still prefers to use her **JOY 835** plates on her car.

Nick says, "Regtransfers certainly lived up to and exceeded our expectations, and has made buying registration plates easy, uncomplicated and a very pleasant experience at reasonable costs."

www.nklautomotive.co.uk



Back in the family

Glynis Symes has always been interested in number plates. When she was young, her father would buy her the *I-Spy* number plates books whenever they went on holiday. The interest that had been fed by the books meant that Glynis developed a good memory for numbers.

"Around 1963 my father bought a blue Standard Ensign car and the registration was **ECU 5**. I was always good at remembering numbers but this one really stuck in my head. My father eventually sold the car and in those days, to most people, a number plate was a just a number plate, so the registration went with it."



In recent years, Glynis has become familiar with computers and the internet. It is, therefore, no great surprise that she soon found the Regtransfers.co.uk website. Glynis decided to search for **ECU 5**, and she was amazed to discover that it was actually for sale. Regtransfers was selling the number on behalf of a client. Unfortunately, the asking price was a little out of Glynis's reach, so she began to save.

"I used to look on the website regularly to see if it was still for sale; then, when I was almost at my goal, someone moved the goal posts and the price almost doubled.

I was so disappointed but I had come this far and I started to save again."

Eventually Glynis decided to try making an offer, as she really did have her heart set on acquiring **ECU 5**.

"I rang Regtransfers and spoke with a man named Sam. I put in an offer and Sam said he would ring the owner. He called me back to say that my offer wasn't enough, and the seller wanted at least £200 more than that. I explained that I really couldn't afford to spend any more and Sam said he would speak with the seller again. Thankfully the offer was accepted (thank you so much, Sam!) and I am now the proud owner of **ECU 5**. The number means so much to me, but unfortunately my dad is no longer with us to see it on my car.

"I will pass the plate on to my son, Aaron, when I can no longer drive, and he assures me he will never sell it, as he thought so much of his granddad. He can't wait to get it on his car, but I hope he will have to wait for a long time yet!"



LAH de dah



When his daughter, Lisa Anne, passed her driving test some 16 years ago, John began looking for either **1 LAH** or **LAH 1**. To his surprise and delight, both of the numbers he sought soon became available.

"When **LAH 1** came on the market I bought it immediately. Then, just three months later, **1 LAH** came on the market with Regtransfers. How lucky can you get?"

At that time, John's wife, Sandra, had **1 JMH** on her car and refused to part



Personal number plates fans are not rare. That is quite evident from the increasing number of eye-catching registrations adorning Britain's cars. What many people will not know is that the enthusiasm often runs through entire families. Let us take the Hume family as our example.

John Hume began collecting personal car registrations in the late 1970s. His first acquisition was **2322 JH**, a good plate that he bought for £400. In those days, £400 was a tidy sum and no doubt a few eyebrows were raised at John's seemingly reckless purchase. The outlay was justified when, some years later, he sold the registration for £4,000.

Also in the late '70s, John bought **JDH 222** for his son, John David Hume.

"John complained that he was always getting stopped by the police, when they

saw this young chap driving with a fancy number plate," says John Sr. "At least, that was his excuse."

JDH 222 was also sold later for a handsome profit.

Then, in 1981, John saw **JMH 1** advertised in *The Sunday Times*. He tried to raise a loan for the purchase, but the bank would not consider it. The price at that time was £4,995. Clearly had the bank agreed the investment would have been sound, as John had to pay a lot more for that number when he finally did secure it in 2000.

Meanwhile, he managed to find a personal plate that was very nearly as good as the one that had temporarily got away. In 1991, John found **1 JMH**, which meant that for some time he had that on one car and his **2322 JH** plate on the other.

with it. John had bought a Bentley GT, so he found himself looking around for yet another registration. The next one he found was **V121 JMH**.

Eventually, John did manage to buy his perfect registration, the one that had eluded him years ago. **V121 JMH** went onto retention, and John put **JMH 1** on his Bentley.

"Sandra now has **1 LAH** on her BMW, Lisa has **LAH 1** on her Audi, which she says she will never part with, and I have the best of both worlds, **JMH 1** on my day car and **1 JMH** on the Bentley."

So, it seems that everyone is happy. Just one question nags at John's mind: "No-one has ever been able to explain why I keep looking for new personal registrations, he says. "It's just the habit



Loch Lomond Landscapes

John McNeish is the hard working director of two successful companies, both based at his farm

in Kilmarnock, Scotland. John's main business is Lomond Landscapes, supplying topsoil to various businesses

including other professional landscaping companies.

John has a long-standing interest in personalised number plates, so when he found **MCN 315H** on the Regtransfers website he told us that he just had to have it. He also treated himself to a brand new BMW X5 to proudly display it on. Extravagance? Not really, for John claims to have few vices, just his car and its personal registration... Oh, and Glasgow Rangers, of course.

John has now also put private number plates on some of his company tipper lorries, including an LLL plate for Lomond Landscapes Ltd. His three sons have also now taken an interest in personal car registrations, especially John (Jr.), who bought a KMC registration to represent his wife Karen's initials.

Email: lomondlandscapes@aol.com

Tel: **01294 850324**



Birthday Presents for Life

Sisters **Elisha** and **Kadie Masters** are very proud of their personalised number plates.

Both girls received their eye-catching private registrations as birthday presents from their mum and their nan and granddad. First, two years ago, Elisha's mum bought **E17 SHA** from Regtransfers.co.uk for Elisha's seventeenth birthday.

"It was so close to the spelling of her name, with the age of 17 in it, at an affordable price. It was just great," says her mum. "The search started again a year later for Kadie's seventeenth, and with Regtransfers' help we found **E17 KAD** at a good price."

The combination of the number 17 with characters from the girls' names means that Elisha and Kadie will have mementoes of their seventeenth birthdays for many years to come - indeed, for as long as they keep their number plates.

The numbers make a fine matching pair, and Elisha and Kadie's Fords (which they each received for their eighteenth birthdays) look terrific parked side-by-side.



Who says grime don't pay?



When *Regtransfers.co.uk*:
*The World of Personal Number
Plates* first went to see

George Devlin, he was just starting out with a new concept hiring out roll-on, roll-off, easy-access minibins. Four years on his original fleet of just four vehicles has grown to ten, and the business is expanding rapidly.

George's passion for putting private number plates on all his vehicles has led to a successful partnership with *Regtransfers.co.uk*, who have been pleased to help. With all ten vehicles sporting their own registration, George has now realised how easy it is to administer and track them during the course of the working week. They have all become known by the prefix part of their registration, e.g. R10, R20 etc.

"All the staff at *Regtransfers* have been extremely helpful, efficient and even imaginative," George says. "When they suggested putting **S500 GAD** on my new Mercedes S500, I was over the moon.

I was just going to put the next sequence of GAD numbers on it. Thank goodness I didn't, it looks fantastic - the perfect pairing in fact."

George attributes his own success largely to his character.

"If you don't have confidence, self-belief and a strong will to succeed, then you shouldn't be in business," he says. Flexibility and the ability to adapt to meet market requirements are also crucial. "Nowadays we can shift rubbish all day every day, including Christmas and are geared-up to take on large, difficult access jobs as very short notice. I can't think of any other companies in this game can say that."

George readily admits that some periods during the past four years have been a bit tough. He got very little support from the banks, who would give him only a small working overdraft. If it hadn't been for some very good friends, things may have turned out rather differently. At one point George's postman gave him the nickname "Default Devlin". George can laugh now, but during those difficult days it was sometimes hard to smile.

Hard work and self-belief got him through the hard times, and now the company is growing at a substantial rate. Turnover has increased four-fold in as many years and as the use of minibins became more convenient, popular and cost effective, George ploughed the profits back into the business, buying more vehicles and adding to his growing collection of company-related number plates.

Recent changes in legislation regarding waste collection have helped make the use of minibins far more competitive. His vehicles don't need to have tachographs fitted and the amount of waste disposed is now weighed and doesn't just rely on the size of skip. This means that George's drivers can work the necessary hours and because of the lower operating costs, they can deal with the



same amount of waste as larger companies, but at a far better rate. That coupled with the fact that the minibins can get into places that normal skip lorries can't gives him a great advantage.

George believes that he now has a franchisable business and has even had enquiries to that effect. Even though the idea makes great business sense, George is not ready to pass control on to other people just yet. He worked hard to see the company through the difficult times, and now business is good he says, "I'm here to stay. I want to enjoy the business that means so much to me - well for now anyway".

Len Stout



www.minibins.co.uk

Tel: **0845 456 1996**

What's the story?

Send **YOUR** business story
and photos to:
editorial@regtransfers.co.uk



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