



LDC News and Views



LEARNER DRIVING CENTRES NEWSLETTER

NOVEMBER 2007

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RE-LAUNCH OF NEWSLETTER...READ ALL ABOUT IT!

The Newsletter for Staff and Instructors of LDC

Well the time for talking about it is over.... Here it is after many years of saying we were going to do it, and many enquiries from instructors as to when they could have it, here it is. However the success of a newsletter really depends on its readership submitting news views and stories, so lets have all of those stories from you..... The email address for your news and views, and anything else for that matter births deaths marriages, birth of children (attach pictures please) is

news@learnerdiving.com In each Issue I hope to do a feature on one of our instructors, one of the members of staff from head office, and perhaps a profile of one of our band of happy trainers. Please let me have your views as to what content you would like included in the newsletter. As I write this we are on the verge of the move into the new building, look out for the photographs later in this issue.. Pictures from the last induction

will be included, We always post the picture on the website, but then the inevitable who is who questions arise, so a section where we introduce new instructors is to be included. If you can think of anything else you would like to see included then drop me an email with your suggestions news@learnerdiving.com

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NEW BUILDINGAT LAST

Well after many months (years) of waiting the new building is nearing completion, work is almost complete, and the handover of the keys is the first week in December, head office are gearing up for the big move, which we hope will go smoothly, the staff at head office have been involved with the layout of their new workspace, and everyone is

very excited about the move. All the staff at head office have had the chance to visit the building at various stages of the project, but it is only now as it nears completion that the full impact can be felt, it is a spacious modern building, that from the outside is visually stunning, and on the inside has a wonderfully airy light space

that will be a sheer joy to work in (those of you who have visited Baghill station know how cramped we are there) 2008 is going to be a very exiting year for LDC all of the departments finally coming together under the same roof, in a stunning new environment, make an appointment to come and visit in the new year.

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NEW BUILDING

Work continues, but the handover of the keys will be soon, the inside of the building is on schedule, but we have requested extra work be done on the outside, pointing of boundary walls and such, this will add a little time to the project



NEW BUILDING

The main floor area of the building is an airy Atrium, which gives the space a lovely open feel, the building is full of natural light, via the skylights and large areas of glass.



NEW BUILDING

A selection of photographs of the building to give you a feel of the space.



Classroom for Inductions and training meetings



IT Room



Upstairs Walkway and Kitchen area



Warehouse



Training Office



IT manager Mike Bedford being attacked and eaten by a cat5 network cable snake

LEARNER DRIVING CENTRES NEWSLETTER



INSTRUCTOR PROFILE

TOM MORRIS

**Stats:**

I was born and grew up in Glasgow, the second eldest of 4 boys.
 Left school in 1980 without any qualifications.
 Position within LDC: instructor and part 2 trainer
 Married to Sonya and have 3 kids (Ryan (10), Jenna (4) and Lucie (2))

Got to know Sonya through the CB radio (Don't ask me my handle) and we chatted for months before meeting. We eventually met in November 82 and we've been together ever since.

We got engaged in 1991 and married in Barbados in 1993.

My mother in law was born in Barbados and still has family there so the wedding was a big affair with about 100 guests. There was no battle between Hello and OK magazines for the photo rights but I'm sure I saw the man from del Monte with a disposable camera. So if the picture on your tin of pineapple chunks has a wedding in the background, it'll probably be mine.

Before I became a famous driving instructor my many jobs included working as a gardener, painter and decorator and as a charge hand in a bar/restaurant/hotel. At the age of 25 I began my training to become a chef and qualified after 3 years. I worked in the Forum Hotel (Glasgow) -which then became the Moat house Hotel and is now known as the Crown Plaza- for about 3 years. I thoroughly enjoyed this work and believed I would go on to become a head chef but after 3 years of not seeing Sonya (we lived together at this point) due to shift patterns I thought it was best to make a change. Along with a friend I opened a catering business and we did quite well with that. This all came to an end for me when Sonya and I were expecting Ryan. We had always agreed that one of us would raise our children to ensure our own values were instilled in them and it was easier for me to walk away from my business than it was for Sonya to give up her govt pension (that's Sonya's excuse anyway). It was strange being the only dad at playgroups but I did enjoy the experience of raising Ryan and starting him on his education and I guess I feel a sense of pride in myself for doing it. During this 5 years I took courses in Maths and Computer Programming with the Open University. It was weird getting back into educating myself but something in the learning process and the pressure of having deadlines had made me yearn for a new career. I had thought a few years back of doing the ADI course but as quickly as the thought had entered my head it was gone. So in 2002 -after researching the web- I began my training with LDC to become a driving instructor.

Why choose LDC

I chose LDC because I was convinced -after reading the web content - that they were an honest company with clear ambitions and I liked that.

Was I happy with my decision to train with LDC

Most definitely. 1st time passes on parts 1,2 and 3 as well as the HP test, a grade on my first check test and most recent a 1st time pass on my ORDIT exam says it all for the quality of the training that I received.

Did I enjoy my training to become an instructor

Yes. As tough as part 3 was Cliff was very supportive and never waived in his estimation of my abilities even though for most of the time I never rated my chances too highly. He was also quite witty and that helped settle me fairly quickly so needless to say we had a few laughs during my training.

Any advice to anyone beginning their course

Yes, for part 1 find a regular study pattern and try to stick to it until you pass. For part 2, listen to your tutor and get as much practise in as you can and for part 3 get the extra DVD's and practice giving the briefings as often as you can. Use the forum throughout your training

and remember the more you post the more you will learn.

Memorable times

The Induction or as I more affectionately refer to it as the "abduction" has to be one of the best times I've had with LDC so far. Having already passed my part 3 but not yet started trading it was like a gap year but only for 3 days (a very short year indeed) Meeting with all the staff at LDC and of course your good self (Editor) was a treat as every single one of you were very nice. During the induction itself I had some great laughs with other inductees especially fellow Glaswegian Colin Kennedy (still mad to this day) and that country boy from Cornwall Andy Paynter (sadly no longer with LDC)

What I like most about being an instructor

I know it sounds corny but the satisfaction of helping people gain their drivers licence is the best buzz, I guess it feeds my ever hungry ego. The freedom of only doing the hours I want and getting to know some interesting people while training them and getting paid for it are also big on my enjoyment list.

What I dislike about the job

I'm not sure I actually dislike anything to any great extent but certain moments I suppose I could do without, like short notice cancellations.

The Forum

As most will testify, I am never away from the forum. I love the banter and the opportunity to flex the brain a bit. I have got to know so many nice people on it as well as some not so nice. I sincerely believe I would not be the instructor that I am today had I not joined the forum as it is so easy for information and knowledge to slip into the back of the mind and be lost but with the forum there is always questions being posed that keeps us on our toes.

The car I use for training

After having the Corsa for 2 1/2 years I opted for the Suzuki 1.5 GLX as my current car. I had read all the reviews on the car before I swayed and I liked the "mini" like look of it but I really was taken by it during the test drive. I don't want to sound like a salesman selling the car but if you get the chance take one for a drive and let the car sell itself.

What are my plans for the future

I see no reason to break my association with LDC so I'm afraid you're stuck with me for many years to come. Anyway what better company could I be in to help me become the best instructor and tutor I can possibly be?

Politics

I've never voted in my life and unless I regret not having done so because a dictator got in by one vote then I probably never will.

Music tastes

Having grown up in the 70's I really got into groups such as The Jam, The Police, Queen. Elton John and David Bowie. Though my musical collection resembles more of an a-z of music these days, I still have a strong affection for these artists.

Sport

I hung up my football boots many years ago but I still follow the fortunes of Glasgow Celtic.

Favourite film

For a film to be a favourite of mine it must stand the test of time, which means no matter how many times I watch it, I still enjoy it. With that in mind I have a few films that fit the bill, such as Steve Martin's "The Jerk" and Monty Python's "The life of Brian" but I guess overall it would be the Godfather trilogy. It doesn't matter how many times I watch them I am always engrossed from start to finish.

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HEAD OFFICE STAFF PROFILE

LEANNE WILLIAMS

**How old are you?**

22 years of age

Relationship status?

In a relationship, with a professional footballer, (WAG) Martyn Woolford who plays for York City FC (left Wing)

Children?

No way!

Hobbies?

I enjoy socialising with friends i.e. clubbing, going to the cinema, and eating out. I also enjoy keeping fit, but going to the gym, swimming and playing badminton.

Favourite movie's?

Dirty Dancing of course, Man on Fire, My Best Friends Wedding, Pretty woman....typical chick flicks.

Favourite quote?

Does my bum look big in this????

How long have you worked at LDC?

4 years in January

What are your duties at LDC?

My main duty is taking telephone and email enquiries from potential driving instructors and sending them info packs on the training courses we provide.

What do you like most about your job?

With it being a small office I have made some good friends over the years.

Favourite TV programmes?

Friends, Sex and the city, Desperate Housewives, Heroes, Lost, Prison Break and 24.

Favourite food?

Anything from the Chinese, Indian and Thai takeaway! YUM

Favourite drink?

Alcoholic- Vodka and orange, Vodka and Lemonade, Vodka and cranberry....Vodka basically. Non alcoholic- J2O

Most embarrassing moment?

I couldn't possibly choose I have so many!!!!

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LD GOLF SOCIETY

The latest jolly jaunt of the LD Golf society saw us out for the day at Forest Pines golf resort in North Lincolnshire. Brigg to be precise, a very demanding course, three sets of nine holes, comprising, forest, pines and beeches. We played Forest-Pines the championship layout, a stern test of golf indeed, and everyone needed their A game with them, straight and long hitters were to win favour here, anything wayward off the tee was going to end up in the

100 year old Pine trees to the left and right of every fairway.

The weather was wonderful to us, and conditions could not have been better, very little wind and sunny conditions meant a wonderful day of golf for all.

We will be planning another one soon so please be sure to let me have your details if I haven't got them already.

Check the list to the right, if you wish to add your name to it drop me an email..

news@learnerdriving.com

Current Society members:

Pat Firth
Bob Morton
Mike Bedford
Phil Allcock
Gary Dagnall
Gordon Blair
Geoff Richardson
John Wright
Ken Bertram
Paul Oprysk
Mike Harkin
Malcolm Williams
Paul Huskins
Paul Stephens
Phil Hammond
Stuart Arnold
Julie Oversby
Linda Gartside
John Jarvis
Robert Redford

Partners or friends are always made to feel welcome too, if you have any ideas for venues or events for the golf society then please let me know

news@learnerdriving.com

Perhaps you would like to become more active in the running of the society, or maybe you would just like to host one event at your home golf club.

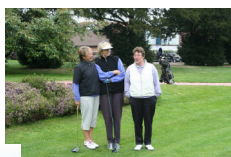
news@learnerdriving.com

FOREST PINES 2007

Fantastic weather on arrival at Forest pines for tea/coffee bacon sandwiches before play commenced.



The players line up for the big event



Many thanks to Pat Firth, who although she was injured and so didn't play, was kind enough to take these great pictures.



Winner of longest drive (to get there)

Paul Stephens



Nearest the pin (on the 8th..210yds over water to within a couple of feet. well done Paul



2nd Place

John Wright



Winner overall

Andy Gracie



Super Bunker shot



Might have won nearest pin, but was also nearest the tree

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Summer Party Photographs

SUMMER PARTY

This years summer party was again held at the Cedar court Hotel near Wakefield, a great venue as it can hold all of us, and is easy to find, well run, smart and will accommodate those of us who wish to arrive early and begin the festivities early afternoon (you know who you are!)

Many congratulations to Michelle for another successful event, I know an awful lot of work goes into the planning and running of these events (Ed I'm gutted that I missed

this years event, as I'm told by everyone that this was the best one yet!....maybe my absence had something to do with that)

Please accept my apologies for the quality of some of the pictures, but the light in the room is not exactly conducive to good photography, but I think you can get the flavour of the party from them.

Would you like more formal shots taken of you and your partner at next years event? I know I'm creating a job for

myself here, but I think it would be nice.

Let me know, It wouldn't cost you anything, unless you wanted prints from them, but they would be high resolution pictures that would print out up to A3 size.

FUN FUN FUN



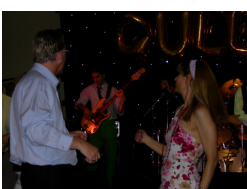
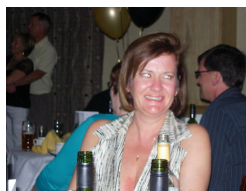
Would you like more formal shots taken of you and your partner at next years event?



You know....while you are still sober?

I think some posed shots as you enter the room for the evening would be desirable, please let me know if this interests you.

news@learnerdriving.com



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OCTOBER INDUCTION

*Octobers new LDC
Instructors*


Ken Sime
North Berwick



Neil Bayliss
Bristol



Paul Knowles
Hadleigh



Chris Foscett
Greenwich



Leanne Butcher
Bradford



Pete Collins
Derby



Duncan Stevenson
Edinburgh



John Williams
Shrewsbury



Steve Whitehand
Hull



Lax Puarewal
Halesowen



Fiona Wilkinson
Pontefract



Ian Heyer
Huddersfield



Ian Burt
Clackmannanshire



Bill Williamson
Stonehaven



Martin Cochrane
Brighton



Barry Rogers
Isle of Sheppey



Tony Hume
Basildon



Introducing the class of October 2007

A happy band of girls and boys joined us in October well most of them are new, however we are delighted to welcome back Ken Sime who returns to us this month.

A very upbeat and Enthusiastic bunch who I'm sure will do very well.

Please check the area that they are starting work in, and introduce yourselves to them if they are in your area, remember how tough it was for you when you started, and a few kind or encouraging words can go a very long way indeed

LDC PICTURE



The search for the prefect picture spelling out the letters LDC continues, however I am heartened as Octobers induction course made the best stab ever at this, at least it is reasonably obvious what we are spelling out (I think) what do you think?

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WEDDING OF THE YEAR

September 15th 2007 saw the wedding of Michelle Toffel franchise manager with LDC to Mr. Desmond McCormack (spinster of this parish) at the church in Birkin, the village where they live.

Congratulations and well wishes for the future to them both.

Those of us who were privileged to be at the event were treated to a wonderful day, sharing the happy couples marriage, and a happy couple they were too, as you

can see from the photographs it was a joyful occasion, the day was started in great fashion by the brides entrance music, Mendelssohn's wedding march which then segued into California girls by the beach boys.

Des and his best man waiting at the altar resplendent in kilts, Des looking like the cat that got the cream.

No wonder as Michelle was radiant and again the photographs show you just this.

A very warm ceremony of marriage followed, with

readings by Michelle's sister and their next door neighbour Michael, fitting tributes, to a wonderful couple, who looked very much in love. Guests had flown in from far and wide to be with the on this special day.

Following the ceremony the register was signed and we were treated to a short performance from the Abbey Belles, a program of well chosen songs and expertly executed (Ed. I know about these things!) we were then off to the venue for the Reception, Pontefract Masonic lodge, where the abbey belles were waiting to greet us with more fine music making, while we waited for Mr. and Mrs. McCormack.

A time to listen to some fine music making and drink a spot of bucks fizz. And enjoy the surroundings which had been transformed into a room fit for kings (I had been there a couple of days before, and it looked nothing like that) And so to the Meal, I always enjoy the food at the Masonic Lodge during tutor meetings and Inductions, and so knew that they knew how to do good food, but I wasn't ready for the culinary delights that were on their way to us, beautiful food, expertly prepared.

Wine was available during the meal prepared by Bob Morton (yes me!) 4 types to choose from, I had volunteered to do the wine about 9 months previous, and was really panicky about it once the day arrived, I enter competitions with my wines all over the place, including America, and am never phased by it at all, but this was for someone's big day, what if they didn't like it? (EEK!)

On offer were:

Australian Chardonnay, light in style, easy drinking

Chilean Sauvignon Blanc, quite high acid to cut through the palate

French Mourvedre the principal grape in Cote du Rhone and Chateuneuf du Pape wines, big

round wine with firm tannins, aged for four months in a French oak barrel and big fruit on the nose and on the finish, made for big meat dishes.

Raspberry Zinfandel, Californian white Zinfandel blended with raspberries to create a rose style, but very sweet and very fruity, this seemed to be the biggest hit!

The speeches were very entertaining and from the heart, Neile McQueen Toffel Michelle's step mom (Google it, you will be amazed!) sang for the couple and for the assembled guests, what a performer!

We also played pass the parcel, which got everyone into party mood, each parcel contained a present that was appropriate for someone at that particular table, and there was a parcel for each guest, and once the layers of wrapping were removed the guests at that table had to discuss and decide who the present was most appropriate for, you can see from the Photographs how popular this game proved to be.

You will also see how much everyone enjoyed the day, for me...the best wedding I have ever been to (including my own!)

LEARNER DRIVING CENTRES NEWSLETTER

WEDDING OF THE YEAR...PICTURES



Oh Dear!

LEARNER DRIVING CENTRES NEWSLETTER

DEAR DEIRDRIE

Email Deirdrie with your questions or problems Deirdrie@learnerdriving.com



Dear Deirdrie

I cannot seem to get my pupils to pay the full price for their lessons after they have had the first ten for £99, no matter what I say or do, can you offer me any advice on what to do about this?

Frustrated of Fulchester

Deirdrie says....

Dear Frustrated

The main reason behind failure to secure the higher lesson rate is normally to do with the way it is approached, if you seem less than confident in your own abilities, or if you are not confident the pupil will pay you what you are asking, then you are less likely to be authoritative as you could or should be, this will perhaps be picked up by the pupil, and result in them not having full confidence in you to warrant the extra money.

You need to make sure that the lessons you give to the pupil at the (discounted) lower rate are the best lessons you are able to deliver, they should be the equivalent of £55 per hour lessons!, that way, when it comes time to book extra lessons, the pupil cannot wait to book, if you have (as a great many instructors do) not taught the pupil well during the discounted lessons, then why should they want to pay more money for the next ones....(would you?) they will simply look for more discounted lessons with you, or with another instructor.

Be confident in your abilities (for you were well trained) and be confident about the system, and be assertive (practice) and you will secure the extra money. It is very easy to throw your hands up in the air and suggest it cant be done, but the reality is somewhat different. The work and the money is out there,....you just have to work to get it!

Regards
Deirdrie

DEAR DEIRDRIE

Dear Deirdrie

I am really struggling to fit 40 hours of work into less than 60 hours, can you help me

Disorganised of Durham

Dear Disorganised,

This is a common problem for driving instructors, the main problem is that you like people (that's why you became a driving instructor) by definition this makes you too soft, for example, you say to the pupil, ok X (insert name) 3.30 next Wednesday, and they say that 3.45 would be much better for them, and so you relent and that means you now have 30 minutes between that lesson, rather than the 15 minutes you originally wanted. Do this a few times in a week and your diary soon be-

comes messed up, so, what can be done about it?

Well the good news is you don't have to become a different person, you simply need to take control of the situation, don't show the diary to the pupil, or they will point to a time slot that they want.

It's YOUR diary and so YOU must control it, give the pupil the choice of two or three slots, that suit you. i.e. "you can have 1pm on Monday, 3 pm on Wednesday, or 11am on Friday"

The pupil is forced to choose one, this is you controlling the process, without being nasty or overbearing, it really is as

simple as that?

If you want to see the process in action, ask a plumber to come to your house at a particular time on a particular day, you will be met with a polite, no, I can do X pm on Y day, you will of course (as you have done in the past) accept this.

This is the approach you need to take with your pupils, so they see that it is you who controls the process, and not them, it will be a slight inconvenience for them at worst

Regards
Deirdrie

I Cannot get the full lesson rate following my pupils buying 10 lessons for £99

What can I do?



"I am really struggling to fit 40 hours of work into less than 60 hours"

LEARNER DRIVING CENTRES NEWSLETTER

ITEMS FOR SALE? ADVERTISE THEM HERE (IT'S FREE)

Do you have anything you would like to sell?

Perhaps you are changing your car and have a set of dual controls for sale, perhaps you want to sell your old car, place an advert here, it's free.

Email news@learnerdriving.com



FOR SALE: CHAMPAGNE BRIDAL/EVENING GOWN £99.99

The dress was originally intended as a wedding dress, however my plans have since changed (new dress, not the wedding!) hence the reason for me re-selling it.

Brand new, never been worn with labels still attached.

Champagne colour, made from high quality taffeta with a boned body and comes with matching scarf/wrap. The corset style bodice which ties at the back allows loosening/tightening to fit bust size. (A hooped crinoline underskirt has been used in the picture which is not included.)

Measurements as follows: Bust 35" - 36", Waist 26" - 27", Length 58" from shoulder to floor - to fit size 10.

It would make an ideal wedding dress, evening gown or bridesmaid dress.

Please contact Charlotte on 01977 691815 or email charlotte.cooper@learnerdriving.com if interested.