

December 2017

Gregory Distribution . North Park . North Tawton . Devon EX20 2EB

Hayton Coulthard
Delivering winners



Gregory
Delivering winners



Merry Christmas!

With just over a year to go to our 100th year, we will shortly begin to unfold our plans to celebrate 100 years of Gregory business, including a Heritage Centre at Cullompton. My grandfather was involved with this business for more than a third of a century, as was my father, who continues to be interested in everything that has happened in the business in my 33 years at the helm.

This time last year we celebrated Hayton Coulthard's centenary and I think that we should prepare to raise a glass to ourselves since there are very few private businesses, let alone companies in the transport sector, who achieve this milestone.

Despite a difficult financial performance during 2017, the past 12 months have been a mix of the usual highs and lows and the intensity of competition now is such that there is no time for us to reflect on the past – it is all about the future. With that in mind I can confidently say that the business is in good health and expects to be throughout 2018 and thereafter.

Our business strategy is evolving more and more towards warehouses and pallet distribution, along with large dedicated contracts. The historic general transport business has become incredibly difficult and competitive and although it remains a significant part of our English, Welsh and Scottish businesses, the challenges of operating in this sector are greater than ever.

So, in 2018 you will see larger warehouse facilities being operated across the Group as we foresee this generating greater stability and security for the company and its ever expanding workforce over the medium and long term.

Additionally, we are continuously restructuring the business, with an emphasis on us all working together as 'One Business'. This strategy has been very successful for us in 2017 and we expect greater benefits in 2018 as we increase our focus on the 'One Business' philosophy.

Each year I pay tribute to all our staff at Christmas for their massive contribution to the success of this company. Many long serving employees have retired during 2017 and we particularly thank them for their efforts over a significant number of years.

At the same time, numerous new employees have joined us in 2017 and we now have a policy to train up to 80 apprentices a year. Our industry needs a new generation and we are proud to be a significant contributor to this effort.

We have continued to have positive feedback from a number of you since we introduced the Christmas hamper. As we did last year, we have predominantly sourced the contents of the hampers from local suppliers, some of whom are our customers. The hampers will be available for you to collect from your line manager from Wednesday, 13th December onwards.

On behalf of the Gregory family and the Management Board, I wish you and your family a very Merry Christmas. As ever, we all strive for good health and happiness, but we keep in our thoughts those who have lost loved ones in 2017 and those who are less fortunate than ourselves.

Finally, thank you.

With best wishes.

John Gregory

DELIVERING WINNERS AWARDS

The Gregory Management Conference in November revealed who got which of the business' prestigious annual Delivering Winners awards including Driver of the Year. Read the full story on page 3.



Shaun Jury, Kevin Sweeney, Darren Clifford, Ricky Kirby of Operation Drogenbos, with Bob Lovelace
Delivering Winners Award



Chris Devlin
Employee of the Year



Dean Kendall and Neville Barnes
Driver Customer Service



SPOTLIGHT ON BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT

There's more to the work of the Business Development team than meets the eye. At first you might think their role is to win new business and you'd be right – to a point. Their job is to respond to leads often provided by GDL Board members, prepare transport and warehouse tenders and win new and profitable business. However, there's far more to the work of the Cullompton based team than this.



Pictured, standing from left: Steve Rowley (regional operations manager (Development)), Gavin Haines (general manager Business Development), Stuart Shaw (business project controller) Sitting: Barry Farrelly (business analyst), Rob Lowe (business project controller), Craig Jamieson (business unit contract manager)

New Business

Winning new business is more than demonstrating you can undertake a contract at a lower price than anyone else. Price is important but there needs to be a synergy between customer and service provider, so the team spends a lot of time building a relationship with the customer that will endure and thoroughly analysing the situation before making a formal tender.

This involves ensuring the right GDL personnel are working with the customer at all stages of the relationship. Gavin Haines, general manager of the Business Development team said: "We don't tender for everything out there. We go for business which we can win by providing added value to the customer and analysing what are the competitive benefits for customers.

"Customers will deal with people they trust and that's why we are meticulous in our pre-planning and building the right sort of relationships. I think our approach works and has enabled us to compete with some of the really large national hauliers and logistics firms.

"For us, it's not about winning a tender on cost, taking on the existing contractor's staff and then doing exactly the same thing as they did. It's about creating new solutions that work."

The team also constantly reappraises ongoing service and operations as customers' needs are always changing and GDL needs to adapt accordingly. For instance, customers' operations can shrink or grow. They may open or close business

locations or introduce new products and GDL needs to respond.

Existing Business

The team act as a support service, evaluating GDL's current transport operations with a view to improving the quality of the service provided to customers and ensuring that each operation remains efficient and profitable. This 're-engineering' of existing business involves coming up with innovative solutions to improve the ways things are done. They also support other GDL projects with planning and budgeting.

Planning & Budgeting

GDL has invested in state-of-the-art IT and acquired Paragon, a routing tool that allows Gavin's team to plan the work of a wide range of vehicles in the most efficient way, to make the most effective use of depots, vehicles and drivers and to create appropriate budgets.

Working as a team

The Business Development team has now operated for around five years and they have created a 'vibrant and exciting' work environment that is delivering winners in a number of areas that are beneficial to the company. Amongst their successes have been winning significant business with the likes of Curver, Allied Bakeries, Hobbycraft, Antalis and Smurfit Kappa.

Gavin Haines added: "As our MD Andy Walker says 'winning is only the beginning' so when we win a new contract we don't let it go until the job is implemented and making money. I have a talented team who have insight into every GDL operation."



GDL PROUD TO SUPPORT OUR ARMED FORCES

Gregory Distribution has demonstrated its support for those who have served their country by signing the Armed Forces Covenant.

The Covenant acknowledges that those who serve or who have served in the armed forces and their families should be treated with fairness and respect in the community, in the economy and in the society they serve with their lives.

It has been signed by every local authority in mainland Great Britain and by 1,500 other organisations including businesses and charities. Everyone at GDL is delighted to be amongst these signatories.

By demonstrating its commitment to serving personnel, reservists, veterans and military families, GDL will endeavour to uphold the key principle of the Covenant which is that no member of the armed forces community should face disadvantage.

GDL already has a long history of supporting our armed forces and many of our employees have service experience. Our aim is to facilitate employees' transition from the armed forces into civilian life and we believe there is a good fit with the skills acquired in the services and what our business needs for the future.

GDL chief executive and Covenant signatory, John Gregory, said: "Signing this Covenant represents a firm commitment by GDL to supporting the armed forces community by recognising the value of staff who are serving as reservists as well as veterans and military families and the contribution they make to our business."

Along with John Gregory, those attending the signing of the Covenant included Lt. Col. Jon Penhale, CO 6 Rifles and Jon Beake, Senior Employer Engagement Director from the Wessex Reserve Forces' & Cadets' Association. The signing was also attended by a number of GDL senior managers and service leavers.

Over the coming months GDL will be working to explore ways we can work with the armed forces. This includes our desire to support our employees who may wish to serve as reservists.

CIPD success for Robyn

We're delighted to announce that Robyn Ross, HR assistant who joined GDL as an HR apprentice has achieved Associate Membership of the CIPD.

HR professionals generally belong to the Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development (CIPD) which is a recognised qualification in our industry.

Natasha Stansby, head of HR says "This is a really great achievement which has taken lots of personal effort and will support Robyn with her future career in HR."



GREGORY APPRENTICES RECEIVE CERTIFICATES

Six apprentice drivers received a certificate of merit and a truck driver's atlas at a presentation held at the company's Cullompton depot in September.

The six had completed the first 12 weeks of their apprenticeships qualifying them as LGV drivers and are now out on the road driving. They are also receiving further training to attain competencies to ensure they successfully complete their apprenticeships. Each of them from the June intake surpassed the performance targets they have been set.

The six apprentice drivers are Adrian House (aged 42, Shepton Mallet), Rikki Millett (27, Willand), Stuart Govier, (42, North Tawton Milk), Ben Ryan (32, North Tawton Milk), Luke McDonald (28, Cullompton Milk) and Stephen Marsden (25, Lee Mill).

With an average age of 32 years, the apprentice driver programme is demonstrating that apprenticeships are not just for younger people and that anyone considering a career change should get in touch with the Gregory recruitment team and find out about the apprenticeship opportunities in driving, heavy vehicle mechanics, warehouse and business and administration.

The success of the programme is also a great example of development from within and how any GDL employee can take advantage of our in-house training capability to take a new career direction.

HENRIQUE IS OUR DRIVER OF THE YEAR 2017

After an intense competition in the final round, the winner of the rigid category and overall Driver of the Year for 2017 has been revealed as Henrique Navarro Correia.

Henrique who originates from Portugal has worked for Gregory's Willand radial distribution depot since June 2016, delivering palletised goods across the West Country. His standard of driving was outstanding, achieving 100% energy efficient driving scores throughout this year's event.

The runner up and winner of the artic category was South Molton driver Darren Clifford. Darren is renowned for his high standard of driving and gave Henrique a very close run during the final round of the competition.

Well done to both who each win a track day at Castle Combe race track, driving seriously fast cars, along with a Scania goody bag, which was also won by all ten drivers who competed during the final round of the competition.

Paul Willis, head of Fleet Compliance and Vehicle Procurement said: "This year's competition has again shown the high standards of driving competence and professionalism our drivers employ and we would like to congratulate all the finalists."

AN APPRENTICE'S STORY

Adrian House joined Gregory Distribution as a warehouse operative at Shepton Mallet in 2016.



The 42 year-old from Street in Somerset saw the advert for an 'Apprentice Driver' based at Palletline in Shepton Mallet, applied and gained a place on the apprenticeship scheme in June 2017. He applied for the apprenticeship because he wanted to further his career with Gregory and gain a meaningful qualification that would give him a secure future.

Steve Rose, Operational Training manager, said: "I was delighted to receive an internal application. Apprenticeships are not just for new starters, so I would really welcome internal applications from anybody who is interested in becoming a driver.

"Internal and external applications go through screening and an interview process and we expect high standards. The difference with an internal application is we will try to honour the existing hourly rate for the duration of the initial 12 week training period."

Adrian started his apprenticeship in Cullompton on 26th June 2017, where he entered the initial 12 week training period with five other new apprentice drivers. The training consisted of a week of theory training plus DVSA 1a, 1b and 2 theory tests, and then he was straight into driver training, passing first time after five days with instructor Tony Thompson.

When Adrian was not training he was out with a lead driver, learning the ropes before transferring to a full time driver role in Shepton with the same T&Cs as the other drivers on that contract.

GDL is very proud to have supported Adrian with his career progression. He will continue to learn in the next nine months of the apprenticeship, with several planned training days, before completing the 'End Point Assessment' in June 2018 and gaining the Level 2 DGV Standard.

GDL MANAGEMENT CONFERENCE DELIVERS WINNERS

Just like last year, the Champion Driver wasn't the only winner to be announced at GDL's Management Conference in November. Six other awards were announced at the annual event.

Employee of the Year was named as Chris Devlin, Palletline supervisor, Cullompton. Lucy Heales (senior transport administrator, Bristol) and Tom Frampton (senior warehouse supervisor, Shepton Mallet) were runners up.

New Employee of the Year is Cullompton based recruiter Liz McCreadie and head of HR Natasha Stansby and Bridgwater night operator, Nicola Garnier were runners up.

Dairy Crest Milk at Davistow scooped the Most Improved Business Award ahead of runners up Mendip Distribution Centre and Plymouth Radial, while the Delivering Winners accolade went to Operation Drogenbos (a complex operation between GDL and Smurfit Kappa to move a huge machine from Belgium to the UK). GDL's Driver Training and Health & Safety teams were runners up.

The Driver Customer Service Award was jointly awarded to Devon Chill drivers, Dean Kendall and Neville Barnes, with Cullompton driver Andy Clark and Bristol Patchway driver Julian Mather as runners up.

North Tawton Milk driver Stuart Govier was named Apprentice of the Year ahead of Fleet Services apprentice Josh Gunn and Shepton Mallet administrative assistant Nicola Miles.

Congratulations to all of you!



Stuart Govier
Apprentice of the Year

Liz McCreadie
New Employee of the Year

Henrique Navarro Correia
Driver of the Year

Phil Forder and Francis Doney
of Dairy Crest, Davidstow
Most Improved Business

10 DECADES OF GREGORY

The Early Years 1919–1930

Pre- War Years The purchase of a Chevrolet in 1928 marked the start of buying better, more up-to-date and reliable lorries to venture farther afield

Early 1930s The business was delivering goods including livestock and its reputation for good service was becoming established

1933 AJ Gregory & Son moved to new premises on Fore Street, North Tawton, where the veterinary practice now stands

Late 1930s The fleet increased to seven vehicles, three of which, including a Reo Speedwagon, were involved in cattle transport, two were Bedford tippers on council work with two more engaged in haulage and coal delivery.

The War Years The business premises which occupied the space of little more than a couple of garages and parking spaces were requisitioned by the War Department and AJ Gregory & Son moved to various locations in the neighbourhood including a farmyard

The two Bedford tippers became engaged on war work helping to build Winkleigh aerodrome

By the end of the war, the fleet was in a sorry state with the livestock and haulage vehicles thoroughly worn out and the coal business kept going with a little Austin K8VD flatbed



HELP US MAKE THE GDL CENTENARY ONE TO REMEMBER

As we approach the centenary of the founding of Gregory, plans are now well advanced to establish a Heritage Centre at Cullompton depot featuring a replica of Archie Gregory's first Model T Ford and several other vintage vehicles.

You can help. We are asking anyone who works for GDL, has worked for the business or knows of friends and family with GDL connections to open that old photo album and rummage in forgotten drawers for old photos connected to the business – especially ones of vehicles.

We will copy and return them and also ask the owners along to the opening of the new centre in our centenary year, 2019.

If you have anything, contact Carol Hancock on 01837 883307 or email carolh@gdl.uk.com



Gregory People

Congratulations to ...

... Shepton Mallet warehouse administrator, Lorena Mallada, who married Chris Pyne on Thursday 10th August in Asturias, Spain.

... Cullompton warehouse operative, Matt Ransley and warehouse administrator Jodie Copp on the birth of their daughter Eliza born on Sunday 17th September – a little sister for Layla.

... Shepton Mallet warehouse assistant Simon Coombes and his new wife Charmaine. The happy couple tied the knot on Saturday 16th September at Abbey Manor Conference Centre, Yeovil.

... South Molton driver Tony Attwood who married Hannah Whitfield on Saturday 7th October.

... Operational training manager Steve Rose who married Emma at Muddifords Court, Willand on Saturday 30th September.



Gregory in the Community

GDL trailers are often in demand during the summer show season and are used for stages, public address systems and bands.

They have been used at a variety of Devon agricultural shows, at sporting events, Beer & Bacon festivals, motor bike rallies and music extravaganzas. They are always helping to Deliver Winners!

Here are a couple of examples since the last Newsbrief:

The Kingsbridge Show

The Kingsbridge Show took place at Borough Farm on September 2nd. It's a great event which continues to grow whilst trying to maintain that local feel, keeping its traditional agricultural and horticultural roots.

Devon Air Ambulance

GDL's long association with Devon Air Ambulance was again demonstrated when the charity celebrated its 25th year of operation with a party and open day at Darts Farm on the weekend of 9/10 September.



The GDL trailer depicting DAA's night flying campaign was well in evidence overlooking the latest Eurocopter 135 Air Ambulance which was on display for the public during the event.

FUNDS RAISED FOR

At a time when stress, depression and other mental health issues at work are more and more in the news, it is good to announce that the team at Cullompton led by HR assistant Robin Ross and Compliance and Operational Training administrator, Emily Wadham raised a creditable £317 for the charity MIND.

It is a sobering thought that one in four people fights a mental health problem each year so it is important that they are helped and supported in every way possible. MIND provides advice and support to empower anyone experiencing a mental health problem and campaigns to improve services, raise awareness and promote understanding of mental health conditions.

READY, TEDDY, GO!

GDL's Cornwall depot has been busy traversing the county delivering boxes of teddy bears in support of the Royal Cornwall Hospital Birth and Baby Appeal (BABA), giving babies in Cornwall the best start in life.



GDL responded to Pirate FM's appeal for help from organisations and businesses to provide collection points for listeners to donate teddies which are used to raise money for the appeal.

This very worthwhile cause aims to provide additional equipment and to enhance the environments at maternity and neonatal units to give parents and their babies the best possible start on their incredible journeys.



Pictured with GDL Truro driver, Lee McGarry, are Karen Murrish, Fundraising manager for NHS and Ali Heart, Communications manager.

Long Service Awards

5 YEARS		
Name	Position	Business area
Charley Dowden	Transport Administrator	Shepton Mallet Traffic Office
Anthony Pearce	LGV Driver	Mondelez Minworth Transport
Michael Finch	LGV Driver	CDS Transport
Shane Skinner	Transport Administrator	Plymouth Transport
April Littlejohns	Transport Operator	Cullompton Transport
Natalie Peek	Compliance & Apprenticeship Admin Supervisor	Cullompton Compliance & Operational Training
25 YEARS		
Kevin Ashton	LGV Driver	Cornwall Milk