

April 2018

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

Hayton Coulthard
Delivering winners



Gregory
Delivering winners



ANDY'S READY TO START A NEW LIFE

After 25 years at Gregory, managing director Andy Walker retires at the end of April.

When Andy joined the business in 1992 after starting his career with Unilever then Unigate and Wincanton, Gregory had a turnover of around £8m, 170 employees and 126 vehicles. 25 years on, he leaves with the business turning over £170m, a staff of over 2,000, 750 vehicles and 20 operational sites from Cornwall to Scotland.

In the intervening years he has played a pivotal role in all the major projects, events and developments at Gregory, from establishing Cullompton depot as the hub for the South West and venturing into the milk collection sector for the first time in 1994, where the experience of running tankers eventually led to contracts with South West Water for moving bio-solids.

Strategic acquisitions and partnerships in that time included Western Freight in 1998, Amesbury Transport in 2001, Kay Transport in 2009, Hayton Coulthard in 2010 and Framptons in 2015. It's also 20 years since Andy led the business into the pallet network which has had such a huge impact on the company and has led to the acquisition of a number of small pallet distribution businesses, which has consolidated Gregory's position as the principal pallet distribution company in the South West. Even all this tells only part of the story.

Newsbrief asked Andy if there has been a particular highlight in his distinguished career at Gregory. He said: "I don't think there has been just one moment. It's been a journey that has seen a lot of ups and downs. What I am particularly proud of is that the business has seen consistent and profitable growth – the margins have been up and down but Gregory has always made a year on year profit.

"The fact that Gregory has remained independent and family owned has meant we have always been able to make decisions and seize opportunities because we have the financial strength to do it and in recent years we have attained a critical mass that allows us to do different sorts of deals."

It also became clear that it was not just the operational success that matters to Andy but the impact that the people he has worked with have had and the distinctive culture and values the business has developed over time.

"I also think we've brought our people with us, creating a culture and a passion for what we do," he added. "The unique partnership that John Gregory and I developed over those 25 years has made the business what it is today with a lot of very capable, committed, passionate and loyal people working here and this sets it aside from many other businesses.

"We have a senior management team in place who are ready to take the business forward and I'm also proud to have played my part in planning this succession. We were already mindful of the fact that in Angela Butler we have the ideal successor. She has the right credentials, the enthusiasm, the drive and the passion to take over and drive Gregory into the future."

So what's next for Andy and his wife Cheryl? They have three children and eight grandchildren so that's going to take up a lot of time and then there is walking, cycling, occasional golf and a big garden at his Exeter home. He said: "We are beginning a new life and have no plans to work.

Continued on page 2.



Continued from page 1. "My wife and I love to travel and there's lots of the world left for us to see, and we plan to see more of it. With our daughter living in the South of France, that will also be high on the agenda."

Will you miss it? "I'll miss the people who I have worked with although I will still see some of them from time to time. I'll also miss the excitement and the buzz of talking to customers about new projects, new solutions and new challenges – remember, in distribution the only constant is change and that makes it exciting."

John Gregory, said: "25 years ago this business was at its maximum capacity and I needed support in taking it beyond North Tawton. Andy had a distinguished career at Wincanton and it was our good fortune that he was persuaded to leave a large national organisation to join me at North Tawton on what has subsequently been our own national journey."

"Andy has overseen all the major developments that have taken place since 1992 and embraced the values and principles that our family business had espoused for nearly 100 years. We are proud of our reputation and Andy has played a huge part in developing and maintaining our success."



"It has been a pleasure and a privilege to work with him."

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PROGRESS AT ERNESETTLE

Construction of the new depot at Ernesettle is progressing well with the steel frame in place, together with the office brickwork and floor.



The yard has been levelled, and the next step is to start laying it out. All project team members from Facilities, Compliance, Finance and IT are working together to ensure we're prepared and we're on track to move in July.

The purpose-built facility will have a 25,000 sq ft drive-through transshipment facility, additional 15,000 sq ft of warehousing, a drive-through wash and axle weigh system, offices and fleet maintenance facilities and parking for approximately 50 vehicles and 80 trailers.

SUCCESSFUL FIRST YEAR AT CUMBERNAULD

Hayton Coulthard's Cumbernauld warehouse has completed a successful first year of operation, moving close to 250,000 pallets of Highland Spring Water, over 70,000 more than originally planned.

Due to the increase in throughput the site has become a 24 hour operation and the team has worked round the clock to ensure the smooth transition from initial setup stages to being a fully functional depot. This has included many challenges along the way including the worst weather experienced in many years but nevertheless the true spirit, hard work and dedication of the team has been inspirational.

One of the depot's achievements has been the recent award of AA+ status in BRC accreditation, the highest level attainable, recognising the commitment shown by everyone on site and demonstrating the high levels of customer service provided.

Going forward into 2018 the team will ensure these very high standards are maintained.



BRC ACCREDITATION FOR CULLOMPTON SPAR CONTRACT

In addition to the achievement of Hayton Coulthard's Cumbernauld depot achieving BRC accreditation, the Spar contract under the Distribution business unit at Cullompton has also successfully passed its BRC audit for food storage and distribution.

The British Retail Consortium (BRC) was the first to introduce a Global Standard for Food Safety but today it has 16,000 certified sites in over 100 countries worldwide and is used both as a global benchmark and to ensure the food industry meets the legislative requirements of the EU General Product Safety Directive and the UK Food Safety Act.

Contract manager, Simon Thomson said: "This is our sixth year of BRC accreditation and I couldn't be more pleased to advise that we have again achieved the highest grade of AA. This is truly an example of how well the Spar contract team has performed again this year."

"A big well done and thank you to everyone in the team who went the extra mile to achieve this massive result, as well as to Dawn Brown of the Compliance department for her great assistance."

NEW DEPOT IN AVONMOUTH

GDL has recently taken a lease on a new depot in Western Approach, Avonmouth.

The 51,000 sq ft warehouse is planned to provide shared user facilities for a number of customers and will become fully operational in June.



ANNUAL ATTENDANCE AWARD



Over 700 GDL employees had no absence due to sickness during the last calendar year and so were entered into a draw to 'win' additional holiday for the following year.

Deputy managing director Angela Butler said: "I would like to congratulate and thank those of you who have achieved a full year without losing any time due to sickness and wish you luck in next year's draw."

"This scheme will run again for the 2018 calendar year, I look forward to seeing lots of names in the draw again in January 2019."

THE 10 LUCKY WINNERS WERE:

3 Additional Days Holiday	Kevin Barriball (Davidstow) Christopher Nixon (HCT) Mark Prosser (Bristol)
2 Additional Days Holiday	Stephen Gray (BCT) Nigel Caseley (North Tawton) David Hay (Compliance)
1 Additional Day Holiday	Leigh Taylor (CDS) James Brace (Wales) David King (Cullompton Transport) Daniel Axente (Plymouth)

OUTSTANDING WORK IN THE SNOW FROM OUR MILK DRIVERS

Despite the Beast from the East and the atrocious snow that came with it, GDL's milk drivers rose to the occasion and recognising that life on the farm doesn't stop and milk supplies need to get through, they got on with it.

Milk operations manager Brian Stoneman was full of praise for the drivers based across Devon and Cornwall at North Tawton, Cullompton and Victoria depots. He said: "Everyone showed outstanding commitment and true dedication to their work across the depots. Being on site at North Tawton, the largest of the three Arla milk depots with over 1 million litres to collect every day, I saw some truly outstanding behaviour from drivers and supervisors throughout the duration of the snow – even from inexperienced drivers and apprentices."

Phil Forder also saw the same determination and grit at Davidstow. "Collecting 1.4 million litres of milk a day on an articulated and draw bar fleet is challenge enough but our team put in an amazing performance in the conditions they encountered. I saw a great deal of humour and willingness to work together in the worst the weather could throw at us. Everyone pulled together in blizzard conditions, with drivers and mechanics digging out vehicles to try and keep the fleet on the move."

The commitment was the same at the other milk depots at Evercreech and Medina Wickham, with drivers going out to collect milk in atrocious conditions and both supervisors and drivers working additional shifts and long hours to get the job done.

This great work didn't go unnoticed by our customers either.

Wayne Griffiths of Dairy Crest thanked all involved for the massive effort at Davidstow and Richard Wilson, Arla Inbound Logistics director, contacted GDL saying: "As we begin to get back to normality after what have been extremely challenging weather conditions, I wanted to recognise the outstanding dedication and support that you have shown to keep this business running throughout an extremely challenging period."

"The main focus during this bad weather was to keep our colleagues safe from injury, whilst doing our best to maintain farmer service either through providing this service, or keeping our farmers and customers communicated to."

"I would like to take this opportunity to thank you for your efforts and continued support."

Praise also from Anthony Barber at Barbers: "Big thanks to you for going beyond the call of duty particularly on day 1 of the snowfall. You were at the

farm gate when other hauliers were parked up."

The challenging conditions saw GDL and their customers working closer together to overcome the elements. Sharon Edwards at Evercreech said: "I am extremely grateful to Michael Masters at Barbers for his help and co-operation over the adverse weather period. He worked tirelessly to communicate with all farms throughout this time and took away from GDL the substantial workload required to liaise with the farmers."

It is worth remembering that in order to make ex-farm milk collections, drivers have to manoeuvre their vehicles down narrow country lanes with the hazards of potholes and oncoming vehicles which is a challenge at the best of times, never mind when they have to traverse ungritted snow and ice in poor visibility and sub-zero temperatures.

It clearly demonstrates that when the chips were down the teams became one operation helping each other and delivered beyond what anyone could expect in these conditions – absolutely fantastic work by all.

Fantastic teamwork at Shepton Mallet

It's not just the milk teams that delivered snow-related heroics. There was also a massive team effort at Shepton Mallet to clear the inevitable backlog of pallets that developed during the bad weather conditions and this was achieved through staff commitment to getting the job done and superb communication with customers who were very supportive and understanding despite the lack of deliveries.

Adam Woodliffe, business unit contracts manager at Shepton Mallet explained that the Palletline and Palletways networks are mutually reliant partnerships of depots inputting and running a balanced amount of pallets from the member depots to the hubs. When depots do not input for a few days a backlog soon develops and it is a major challenge to catch up, as witnessed by empty shelves in supermarkets that lasted far longer than the snow."

Adam said: "Although it was undoubtedly a testing time, we did a fantastic job under a huge amount of pressure by taking as many proactive steps as possible with everyone working together – warehouse, transport, yard team, general fleet, Palletline, Palletways, Yeo Valley and Garador all getting stuck in and working as a team."



"This included extra day trunks alongside the night trunks, extra hire vehicles and drivers lining up to make multiple runs.

"A huge week for us and an impressive recovery. We set our own standards, and truly, a better example of teamwork is hard to find."

MANHATTAN WMS PROJECT

Not the opening of a new warehouse in New York, but a new warehouse management system called Scale produced by Manhattan Associates, which will be rolled out initially in Shepton Mallet and North Tawton.

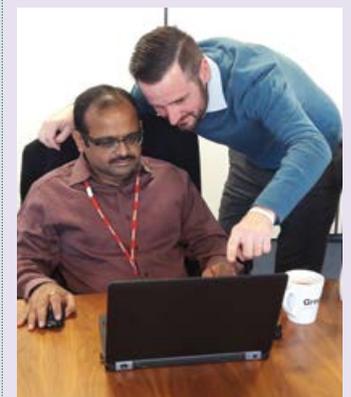
With warehousing being a key part of the group's business, this new system is a market leading product which promises improvements in efficiency and simplification of processes.

Initially the system is being implemented in close collaboration with Manhattan Associates, but once a few projects have been implemented, the GDL team should be able to implement further projects with little or no help.

Business project manager Andy Luckhurst said: "In recent weeks, work on the system design has been underway. This has been an intensive and collaborative process involving key staff from each operation."

"Particular thanks go to Richard Stockman, Simon Light and Lukasz Dzialowski. Programme Delivery staff including Sarah Cowan, Mike Hickman, Adrian Horsley and Kirsty Hare have also been key contributors alongside consultants from Manhattan Associates."

"The GDL team members are looking forward to implementing and testing the system over the next few months. The system at North Tawton is due to go live in June, with Shepton Mallet due to go live the following month. Initially, the system will support key customers at each location before further customers are added."



Simon Light (warehouse operations manager Shepton Mallet) discusses the system design with Mahesh Choudapurkar (Manhattan Associates)

RUNNING FOR OLIVIA

David Allan, a Class 1 driver from the Lee Mill depot, is running four half marathons to raise funds for his niece Olivia who was born with spina bifida and for Bristol Children's Hospital.



David (left) with brother-in-law, Chris



David is doing this with his brothers-in-law (Chris, Pete and Matt) aiming to raise £1,000 for equipment to help Olivia have a better life and for the Bristol Children's Hospital so they can carry on with the good work that they do for children with health problems.

David is running the Plymouth half marathon in May, Torbay in June, Indian Queens in August and Truro in September.

The team are looking for as much support as they can get for this wonderful cause and are asking for sponsors to visit their JustGiving page by using the link: www.justgiving.com/crowdfunding/fourhalfmarathonsforolivia

You can also search on the crowdfunding pages for David Allan's name.

Long Service Awards

5 YEARS		
Name	Position	Business area
Gary Bethell	LGV Driver	South Molton Transport
Steven Codling	LGV Driver	CDS Transport
Alan Diplock	LGV Driver	Medina Distribution
Craig Andrews	LGV Driver	Spar Transport
Nicola Ings	Traffic Planner	Cornwall Transport
Nicholas Smith	LGV Driver	CDS Transport
Heather Taylor	Warehouse Operative	Spar Warehouse
Leslie Sanders	LGV Driver	Yeo Valley
Reece Baker	Warehouse Operative	BCT Warehouse
Alan Rowland	Warehouse Operative	BCT Warehouse
Alan Fillingham	LGV Driver	SWW Dirty Water
John Dougill	LGV Driver	CDS Transport
Alastair Salter	Driver Trainer	Cullompton
Russell Fishlock	LGV Driver	Spar Transport
David Diamond	LGV Driver	Plymouth Transport
Ian Pople	LGV Driver	Palettine
Rowland Downton	Warehouse Shunter Driver	Warehouse Freight
Ieuan Jones	LGV Driver	CDS Transport
Barry Moore	Network Manager	Shepton Mallet
Kelvin Moore	Network Supervisor	Shepton Mallet
Robert Wilson	Interim Supervisor	Highbridge
Dean Kendall	LGV Driver	Devon Chilled
Ian Hughes	LGV Driver	Vital Pet Products
Daniel Palfreman	LGV Driver	Vital Pet Products
Kenneth MacPherson	Team Leader	Vital Pet Products
25 YEARS		
Ian Simons	Transport Co-ordinator	Vital Pet Products

WORDSEARCH WINNERS

Thank you to everybody who entered the word search competition from the Pension & Benefits edition of Newsbrief in January this year. We received entries from across the country and the winners were **Joe Dowden** (Shepton Mallet), **Kevin Fitzpatrick** (Lee Mill) and **Phil Forde** (Davidstow).

Each winner received a GDL gift box and a £25 gift voucher. Congratulations!

WHAT THEY SAY ABOUT US

Being aware of cyclists

Cyclist Luke Harvey contacted GDL to praise our Bristol and Shepton Mallet drivers who use the A37.

He said: "I'm just emailing to give you some positive feedback on your drivers. I commute by bicycle on the A37 from Radstock to Bristol most days. Your lorries often pass me and it's always great how much room they give me. They give me loads of space and are very patient when it comes to waiting for a point to safely pass me.

"I'd really appreciate it if you could forward this email to your managers and pass on the good feedback and most of all 'thanks' to your drivers who use the A37 in and out of Bristol.

"Many haulage companies pass me on my commute and you guys are the kindest to cyclists by far!

"Thanks again."

A great ambassador for Gregory

On a recent visit to Arla in North Tawton, Victoria based milk driver Peter Thompson went above and beyond the call of duty and in so doing, truly impressed Debra Crome, Taw Valley QESH manager at Arla. She contacted GDL to sing Peter's praises.



"When I arrived on site just before 8am, Peter approached and said that he had driven on ice on a section of the roadway here and he was really worried that a vehicle would be at risk of not stopping. I walked over to the grit bin that we have on site and Peter took out some of the salt and started to spread it on the section of road he was worried about.

"He didn't have to – I was more than happy to have done it myself but he wasn't having any of it! He was amazing and a great ambassador for Gregory. His concern not only for his own health and safety but those on site was second to none."

Peter is pictured above with a thank you gift and card that Debra sent to show her appreciation of his actions.

Gregory People

Welcome ...

... to Becky Nicholls (Cullompton Admin) and former GDL driver Paul on the birth of their baby son, Alfie Roy (right), on Friday 2nd March, a brother for Josh and Chloe. Alfie weighed in at 8lb 14oz. after a very quick delivery following Becky getting stuck in all the snow and only just making it to hospital in time!

... to Benji Snell (Chilled driver) and his partner Emily Parkinson (casual warehouse operative) on the birth of their baby. Luna Jade arrived in the early hours of Tuesday 13th February at a healthy 8lb 1oz.

Congratulations to ...

... Charmaine Brading (BCT administrator Cullompton) who married Ty Daniels at Pendragon Country House Camelford on Saturday 3rd March.

... Hayton Coulthard long distance driver Fraser Henderson and his new wife Rebecca (right) married at Gledloch House Hotel in Langbank near Greenock on Saturday 13th January.

So long, old friends ...

There have been a few retirements across the business since January so it's a fond farewell to Ian Gilbert (South West Water, Cullompton), David Blake and Gordon Rookes (North Tawton Milk), Martin Manship (Mendip Distribution Centre) and Colin Constable (CDS transport) – we wish them all a long and happy retirement.

