

Ten years of excellence

In just 10 years, GTR Contracts Ltd has become one of the region's leading machinery hire firms, with a dedicated and committed team - starting with founders Garry and Tanya Russell



Garry, Tanya, Maisie and Harvey Russell with members of the team

GTR Contracts' first 10 years in business has been a classic success story - two hard working young entrepreneurs join forces to grow a multi million pound company, creating 90 jobs and catering for 650 clients.

But setting up their business in the middle of a recession and braving the vagaries of a fluctuating rural economy, it's been no fairytale for Garry and Tanya Russell. Enterprise, ambition and sheer hard work has made the award-winning business what it is today and, to celebrate its 10th anniversary, the Russells felt they, their employees, clients, suppliers, family and friends deserved a party.

"We held a celebration at Easterbrook Hall in Dumfries and really pushed the boat out," says Tanya. "The evening was a great success and thoroughly enjoyed by all."

Operating from a 26-acre site at Terraughtie Farm, on the outskirts of Dumfries, with an office staff of seven, GTR Contracts offers teams of professional and experienced individuals, with more than 150 machines, across various industry sectors: Civil engineering; road grading; agricultural services; plant and machinery hire; crushing; plant and machinery haulage; concrete and groundworks; onsite maintenance and repairs and winter maintenance.

Although most of the company's work is in D&G and Ayrshire, GTR



works nationally and has had contracts on Arran, Mull and in Wales.

Garry and Tanya were aged just 25 and 21 when they made the bold decision to set up their own company in 2006. Garry came from a background in both farming and construction, having worked as a general farm worker on leaving school and later becoming increasingly involved in operating machinery. At 19 he became self-employed, working for an agricultural contractor while still milking cows and carrying out stock and tractor work in the evenings and weekends. He went on to operate a grader for the Forestry Commission for four years, while still doing farm work.

On leaving school, Tanya completed a degree in business information technology and management at the University of the West of Scotland in Dumfries and was working as an office manager when the pair decided to join

forces - officially. Garry announced he wanted to set up his own contracting business shortly after returning from their honeymoon, in August 2006.

"We had to work extremely hard," says Tanya. "We had no grants or loans to start the business. We were fortunate to have some really good clients, though we had to prove ourselves to them."

"Because things moved so quickly we didn't realise what we had done. It was all a bit of a whirlwind."

GTR Contracts have gone on to be named the Outstanding Performing Business with more than 25 employees at the 2014 D&G Business Awards, judges praising the Russells' "hard work, knowledge and dedication" and their "strong commitment to investing in the skills of their workforce".

Their passion is also admired by clients: "I have worked with GTR Contracts for six years," says one. "I have always been provided with a professional service with an expert finish. The attitude from the staff is always friendly and positive."

The company supports the local community, not just by offering employment, working on community projects and using local suppliers but also through sponsorships and charity support. GTR Contracts is main shirt sponsor for rugby team Dumfries Saints and supports the Beltie Beer Festival, Cash for Kids and RSABI.

Despite its phenomenal growth, GTR Contracts remains, at heart, a family business. The Russells' first child Harvey was born seven years ago and their daughter Maisie in 2013.

With very different individual skill sets, Tanya and Garry have discovered that, combined, it's a "magic" formula: "We are very different, our skills lie in completely different areas," says Garry, "This is only a good thing - to drive our business forward we need the combination of the two of us."

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Celebrating a decade in business



Tanya & Garry Russell and their children Harvey and Maisie. Photo by Kim Ayres

With aerial performers, pipers, live music, magic, and a red carpet welcome, GTR Contracts ensured that its party to celebrate 10 years in business was a night to remember.

Director Tanya Russell organised the event at Easterbrook Hall in Dumfries on September 3, with around 285 guests attending the special celebration.

There was a red carpet welcome with piper; a drinks reception with canapes; a stunning synchronised arial performance by Star Fizz Aerial; close up magic; live music from Stratosphere and the Saltire Beat Pipers, and speeches, with a presentation to the longest serving employee, Murray McGinily of Dalbeattie.

Tanya said: "It was an unforgettable evening. Thank you to our employees, clients, suppliers, family and friends for joining us in our celebrations and for showing continued support."



Catherine Russell and Archie Thomson



Tommy Lynch and Tracy Clarke



Daniel and Elinor Thorburn



Lisa McCheyne & Alison Kidd



Harvey and Susan Hamlet



Chris Mitchell and Shona & Peter Linton



Sarah Reay & Tanya Russell



Rebecca Burnett, Shaun McCoskry, Ashley Place and Douglas Halliday



Alistair McRobert



Norrie Russell, Shona Paterson, Ian Russell and Mark Paterson



Steven & Angeline McClure, Maisie Russell, Lorraine & Kevin Sykes