



PRESS RELEASE

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LBBC still leading the way

Based in Pudsey, LBBC Group, originating as the Leeds & Bradford Boiler Company, continues to offer world leading pressure vessel technology and engineering services.

In addition to its core business it is also developing some truly ground breaking technology for the 21st century, for some very high profile clients. Many of these opportunities have arisen as a result of LBBC's capability to offer the complete design, development and manufacturing package.

Originally founded in 1876 to manufacture products ranging from boilers for steam cranes to brewing pans for local pubs, a majority stake in the business was bought by David Pickard in 1892. Now, over one hundred years later, the business is still owned and run by the Pickard family. Managing Director Howard Pickard commented "We take pride in the fact that we have been family owned for five generations. It is now widely recognised that family businesses provide the continuity of ownership and long term vision that give our customers confidence in the support that we offer them".

LBBC Group pride themselves on being able to offer customers the complete package of services, from the product design and development capabilities of their LBBC Technologies division to the large scale production and manufacturing capabilities of the LBBC Beechwood division. Having the business split into two divisions makes it easy to serve both those customers who want the full package of services, and those who are just looking for a particular service to compliment their own capabilities.

The decision to split the business into the two separate divisions was made in 2003 and has increased focus on core competence and hence competitiveness. "By having the two divisions focusing on their strengths, it has improved the offering for their respective customers" said Howard. "The offering is further strengthened by LBBC Group having the respective disciplines all within the same group, enabling us to provide customers with the full range of services they require for their particular project".

With such a long history, and having exported to over 100 different countries for over 100 years, the back catalogue of LBBC products is somewhat daunting. The current product range contains a number of highly refined descendents of the autoclaves first developed in the 1960s (when investment casting was still considered a relatively new foundry process), which are used to produce state of the art jet engine components to tolerances not dreamt of in those early days. Large component and pressure vessel production is still a staple of the LBBC Beechwood order book, particularly to ASME U Stamp approval, but the standards are a far cry from those early riveted units installed in 19th century steam cranes.

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LBBC's fascinating history highlights the need for a company to continually evolve. Using the latest 3D design technology and incessantly developing and refining products is essential, as is being prepared to diversify into new market areas.

“Both of our divisions are involved in some very innovative projects, which we see as a strength that we are recognised for” said Howard. “For example, our customers consider LBBC Beechwood to be an excellent project partner because of its wealth of experience and ability to contribute at the design stage of a project in addition to the quality of workmanship. If all you expect to compete on is manufacturing alone then you are going to struggle these days”.

The Resomator™ is a clean, green, smokeless disposal machine which is set to revolutionise the funeral business. A potassium hydroxide solution is used to break down a body in under 3 hours using elevated temperature and pressure, avoiding the fume emissions associated with current incineration techniques.

The system was invented by Scottish firm Resomation Ltd, who selected LBBC Technologies as their exclusive project partner due to its unrivalled expertise in pressure containment and control system development. Speaking of the project, Howard commented “It has been an excellent relationship with Resomation and they have been very pleased with the partnership. This development is potentially fantastic for us. It's such a new thing in an industry which hasn't had a new form of disposing of bodies for a long, long time”.

In 1934 third generation Maurice Pickard invented the QuickLock® Door system for pressure vessel closure, and in doing so set a standard with which LBBC continue to lead the industry. With continual refinement the closure system is still in use today and can be found in some of the most demanding of applications. When the Royal Navy's latest Astute class submarines were being designed LBBC Technologies worked with BAE Systems to design and supply the hatches based on a development of the original QuickLock® system.

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For more information please contact:

Maddie Clark

E: Maddie@globalpr.co.uk

T: 01132 180 118