Frank Fitzgerald

Born November 11, 1929, Sheffield, United Kingdom

Dr Frank Fitzgerald, CBE FREng, is a British industrialist and researcher who was pivotal in the development and growth of the UK steel industry from the 1950's - 1990's. Fitzgerald studied Fuel Technology at the University of Sheffield, graduating with a first class honours degree and was awarded a doctorate in 1960, his PhD Thesis entitled "Heat Transfer in Furnaces with Secondary Heating".

From 1960 -1967, while working for United Steel Cos Ltd, Fitzgerald rose to Head, Fuel and Furnace Research and then Assistant Process Research Manager, responsible for plant and metallurgical processes, mathematical modelling and physical modelling. He established a high current laboratory for the study of electric arc, resulting in technology that is utilised worldwide in electric arc steel production.

From 1967-1992 Fitzgerald worked for the British Steel Corporation, with him overseeing numerous research programmes, leading to the development of new steel grades, advances in steel types, structure, capability, form, and also improvements in steel production processes. In 1972, while Head of the Corporate Advanced Process Laboratory (Now the Materials Processing Institute), Fitzgerald managed the development of the Normanton Plant. At that time, this plant was fundamental to technological developments in steel and it remains key to the UK being at the leading edge of steel and materials research.

In 1976 Fitzgerald was appointed Manager for all research at British Steel Corporation, going on to become Director, Research and Development and Managing Director, Technical, responsible for a team of over 300 researchers and scientists.

In 1981 Fitzgerald became Chairman of British Steel Corporation (Overseas Services) Limited, he joined the Board in 1986 and became Chairman of British Steel Stainless in 1989.

Fitzgerald was awarded a CBE in 1989, as recognition of his services to the steel industry and the communities that it supports.

Fitzgerald was the recipient of numerous awards including the Hadfield Medal of the Iron and Steel Institute, a Fellowship of the Royal Academy of Engineering, the Melchett Medal, Institute of Energy, the Bessemer Gold Medal, Institute of Materials, Minerals and Mining, the Royal Society Esso Energy Award and an Honorary Doctor of Engineering Degree, University of Sheffield.

In retirement, Fitzgerald remains an advocate for the advancement of scientific learning, holding several academic appointments including positions at Imperial College, University of London, Ashborne Hill Management College, Queen Mary and Westfield College and NAPAG, the National Academies Policy Advisory Group. He has also held business directorships with steel related companies and chaired or been president of industry committees, including the Institute of Metals Iron and Steel Division, the Advisory Council on Research and Development, Department of Energy, the British Flame Research committee, the International Flame research Foundation, the Cleveland Scientific Institution and the Cleveland Institution of Engineers.

In 2005 the Institute of Materials, Minerals and Mining created the Frank Fitzgerald Medal which is presented to a member active in iron and steel who demonstrates excellence in, and commitment to, continuing professional development in the form of depth and/or breadth of technical knowledge, or in a personal contribution to promoting the profession.