



Hall of Fame Inductees

Engineering Heritage Queensland

George Donald FRY AO

HonFIEAust CPEng FTSE FRINA CMarEng FIMarEST

INDUCTED IN 2003

Donald "Don" Fry's career began in Cairns working at his father's business, rising from apprentice fitter and turner to Chairman of the Board in 1986. The business which became NQEA Australia Pty Ltd in 1966 was a diversified manufacturer for the sugar, agriculture, mining and fishing industries.

Don obtained a Diploma in Mechanical and Electrical Engineering (University of Queensland) in 1960, establishing his strong fundamental understanding of engineering principles and practice.

During his leadership at NQEA, the organisation entered the boat building and maintenance industry and won the contract to build 14 Australian Fremantle Class patrol boats for the Australian Navy that entered service in the 1980s. NQEA later built luxury pleasure boats, catamarans and ferries to clients worldwide.

Don is best known as the owner and Chair of AIMTEK – Aerospace, Industrial and Marine Technology (formally NQEA Australia), a large, Cairns-based engineering firm that specialises in Research and Development, Design and Manufacture and Project Management for a range of products for the Aerospace, Industrial, Mining and Marine industries.

As an active member of Engineers Australia throughout his career, Don served as the Chair of the Cairns Regional Committee as

well as a Member of the National Committee on Manufacturing, receiving many awards and recognitions including the AGM Michell Medal in 1997 for his contribution to mechanical engineering.

After also claiming the Peter Nicol Russell Memorial Medal in 1999, Don was elected to the Engineering Hall of Fame in 2003 and received the Eric Brier Memorial Award in 2008 – also being named among the Top 100 Australia's Most Influential Engineers in 2006. He also received the innovation Hero Award from Sydney University's Warren Centre for Advanced Engineering and was appointed one of the Governors of the Centre, and was appointed Adjunct Professor in the University of Queensland School of Engineering.

Besides his business and scientific interests Don has extensive involvement with the community.

In 2003, Don was made an Officer of the Order of Australia and went on to chair Australia's National Committee advising the Government of Australia on homelessness. He also was chair of the James Cook University Engineering Advisory Board and was inducted into the Queensland University of Technology Hall of Fame. He is a lifelong board member of Lifeline Cairns and has been a member of the Cairns Salvation Army Advisory Board.