

Professor Geoffrey Bond: 'Mr Gold' International Expert in Gold Catalysis 1927–2022

NON-PEER REVIEWED FEATURE

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Professor Geoffrey C. Bond, PhD, DSc, FRSC, passed away after a short illness, peacefully in his sleep, on 9th January 2022 at Watford General Hospital, UK, close to his home in Rickmansworth. He was an international authority in the field of heterogeneous catalysis: the science that underpins almost all major industrial chemical processes. He specialised in catalysis by metals, which was the title of his first book published in 1962. Throughout his life he was in the vanguard of those extending the boundaries of his subject. Early work at the University of Hull, UK, featured the use of deuterium as an isotopic tracer to determine the detailed mechanisms of catalytic reactions. Next, at Johnson Matthey, UK, as Head of the Catalyst Research group he contributed to the development of vehicle exhaust catalysts. Then, at Brunel University, UK, he initiated a wide range of projects, culminating in his demonstration of the catalytic activity of gold: a metal which, until that time, 'conventional wisdom' had relegated to a class of inactive metals.

His scientific reputation was such that he was constantly in demand as a lecturer and speaker at international conferences and scientific events around the world. In Europe, he was an original member of the Council of Europe Research Group on Catalysis (EUROCAT) and served a term as its President.

He held posts at Princeton University, USA (1951–1953), the University of Leeds, UK (1953–1955), the University of Hull, UK (1955–1962) and at Brunel University, UK (1970–1992) where he retired as an Emeritus Professor. At Brunel he was Professor of Applied Chemistry, 1970–1971: Head of Department of Industrial Chemistry, 1971–1982: Vice-Principal, 1979–1981: Dean of



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the Faculty of Mathematics and Science, 1982–1984 and Head of the Department of Chemistry, 1985–1990. He was also a Visiting Professor at the University of Salford, UK, in his retirement.

He was a renowned expert in the field of gold catalysis and had over 300 publications including patents, research papers, review articles and books. Geoffrey wrote the seminal text "Catalysis by Metals" (1962) (1) and also co-authored one of the first books on "Catalysis by Gold" (2006) (2), and his work continues to be relevant and cited to this day. He also worked in industry at Johnson Matthey as Head of the Research and Development Laboratory of the Catalysis Research Section (1962–1970).

Geoffrey was a Member and Fellow of the Royal Society of Chemistry for over 70 years, and was the recipient of several awards for his work including: *Catalysis by Noble Metals and their Compounds* (1979), and as the most cited author in *Catalysis Today* 2002–2006 for his paper entitled 'Gold: A Relatively New Catalyst' (3).

Geoffrey received his education first at The Croft School and King Edward VI Grammar School in Stratford-Upon-Avon, before going on to achieve his BSc (Hons Chem) and PhD at the University of Birmingham, UK.

Geoffrey Colin Bond was born on 21st April 1927 in Ottery St Mary, before moving to Stratford-Upon-Avon where he met his wife Mary. He enjoyed a long and happy marriage to Angela Mary Bond (1928–2013), celebrating more than 60 years of marriage. He is survived by four children, eight grandchildren and four great-grandchildren. He had an incredible and agile mind and was knowledgeable on a vast number of subjects, he was an avid philatelist (despite being colour blind), gardener and had a lifelong interest in Roman Britain. Geoffrey had an unquenchable thirst for

knowledge, as evidenced by his extensive personal library which ranged from chemistry and physics, to history, politics and religion. He was an active member of the Church of England and was involved in the local Liberal party for many years. He will be remembered fondly, loved deeply and missed greatly by his family and friends. The funeral of Geoffrey Bond was held on 9th February 2022 at St Mary's Church, Rickmansworth.

J. L. BOND

Correspondence may be sent *via* the Editorial Team: tech.review@matthey.com

References

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