

Gerold Fleissner - Pioneer of textile-, man-made fiber- and nonwovens industry passed away at 92 years

With Gerold Fleissner the complete textile industry has lost a visionary person with activity, responsibility and social commitment who has enriched all the industry with his inventions worldwide.

In 1984 Gerold Fleissner took over the general management of the company with more than 800 employees, after his brother had died. Before that time he was responsible for the technical management.

The foundation of the Fleissner company was laid by Johann Christian Fleissner 1848 in Asch, Bohemia with a blacksmith's workshop with 8 journeymen. In the next generation Karl Fleissner started to produce steel constructions, lifts, centrifuges, household washing machines, dyeing apparatus and other textile machinery, soon a foundation was added.

In 1929, with Hans Fleissner, father of Gerold, drying of textiles became the favorite sector and he developed the first perforated drum dryer and applied a patent for it. This was the birth of the through-air principle. More patents were granted. Thus, Fleissner quickly made a name for themselves in the industrial countries all over the world.

The turmoil of world war 2nd forced Hans Fleissner to found the company anew in 1948/1951 in Egelsbach near Frankfurt/Main, Western Germany.

In 1968 Hans Fleissner handed over the company to his sons Heinz and Gerold. Heinz was responsible for the commercial management of the business and Gerold for the technical part.

In the middle of the sixties, the man-made fiber producers had developed fibers such as polyester, polyamide, polypropylene and polyacryl that were ready for production.

Since Fleissner had been successful in the rayon industry for many years, they quickly managed the first step and breakthrough as biggest supplier worldwide for staple fiber lines. The presence on the

world market was further strengthened when in 1965 the North-American branch office of Fleissner INC in Charlotte, N.C. was founded.

After the death of his brother Heinz, Gerold took over the management of the entire company in 1984.

The increasing importance of the Asian market required Fleissner's presence in this region, which was realized by opening an office in Beijing/China in 1993. Thus, Fleissner was represented by its own offices and other commercial agencies in more than 80 countries worldwide.

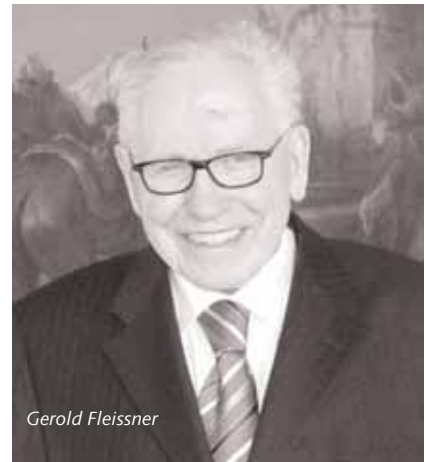
In addition to the already expanded production program for man-made fiber, wool, woven- and knitted goods and carpets, Gerold Fleissner with the support of his Vice President Alfred Watzl, has constantly developed the nonwovens sector built-up since the sixties, so that Fleissner became one of the leading manufacturers of high-duty processing lines for the nonwovens industry.

The new development of the hydroentanglement system AquaJet allowed to produce a completely new generation of nonwovens, a complete pilot line with the width of 1 m available in the technical center in Egelsbach was installed to run customer trials with speeds upto 500 m/min.

With the acquisition of Messrs. Mohr in Ansbach in 1995 Fleissner was also leading with this branch operation in production and delivery of installations for the production of fiberfill wadding webs.

At this time the perforated drum drying principle invented by his father Hans - more than 40000 drums were operating already - has been further developed and optimized by Gerold Fleissner in a revolutionary manner with the High-Tech through air drum to meet the high requirements of modern production lines.

This made it possible to enter a new production field, which had been new for



Gerold Fleissner

Fleissner until then - the drying of air-permeable filter papers and soft-tissue for toilet paper and kitchen rolls, with speeds upto 3000 m/min.

To be able to fabricate those huge machines with drum diameters of upto 5 m, a new workshop of 15 m height was built by Gerold in 1990 already.

With entrepreneurial far-sightedness Gerold Fleissner as pioneer and visionary in one person has strengthened the company's position on the world market by several cooperation agreements. Contracts were concluded with Beloit USA for the delivery of complete tissue lines and with Danweb Denmark for the production of complete airlaid nonwoven lines. With Voith Sulzer an intensive cooperation for the delivery of filter paper production lines with integrated High-Tech Dryers was started.

The agreement with Georgia Pacific USA, to use their patent for the production of hydroentangled sandwich products with fiber layers and airlaid pulp layers made this technology available for Fleissner customers to exclusively produce low-cost standard and also "flushable" wipes.

With the cooperation of world famous machinery suppliers and engineering companies like

Zimmer, Uhde, Du Pont, Hoechst,

BASF, Courtaulds, Rhodia, Lenzing, Dilo, Schlumberger, Fehrer, Trützschler, Temafa, Celli, Reifenhäuser, Ems-Inventa etc. Fleissner was able to supply complete turnkey lines.

Gerold Fleissner also attached special importance to today's demands for machinery with advanced process control systems and non-polluting technology. The latest findings of research engineering and environmental technology have been implemented in the Fleissner lines.

The cooperation with universities, research institutes, machinery- and textile associations, fiber manufacturers and customers has always been a key subject for Gerold Fleissner.

The Fleissner story is a success story of all four generations of entrepreneurs, whose chief aims were a high level of development of machines and the satisfaction of their customers. And it is also four generations of employees who have contributed to the fact that the name Fleissner always was a synonym for technical progress.

Gerold Fleissner also appreciated the work of his worldwide agencies for their successful contacts with the customers and he knew about the great importance of the media and textile magazines for their fruitful cooperation all over the years.

For reasons of having no successor to continue his life's work, Gerold Fleissner decided in 2003 to sell his company to Zimmer AG, a subsidiary company of mg technologies in Frankfurt/Main in order to be successful in the worldwide competitions. Zimmer operated for more than 50 years in the area of plant engineering for the polymer- and fiber industries.

In 2006 Zimmer sold Fleissner to the private company Trützschler GmbH in Mönchengladbach due to changes in the mg technologies strategy.

Thus, Trützschler completed its nonwovens production program which so far comprised fiber opening and blending lines as well as Erko's cards and needle looms.

The sale of Fleissner GmbH & Co Egelsbach to Zimmer was by no means a signal of Gerold to retire. Quite the reverse, he continued to run Fleissner Nonwovens Ansbach, that part of Fleissner property which was not sold to Zimmer.

He concentrated to supply successfully complete conveyor belt oven lines for drying and thermobonding of waddings.

Gerold Fleissner also continued to develop a new drum dryer with even better temperature and air flow

uniformity and supplied many lines to his customers.

In 2009 Gerold Fleissner finally decided to liquidate Fleissner Nonwovens Ansbach for reasons of advanced age. Even in this moment he showed his primary commitment to his customers by finding a way to guarantee spare parts supply for the Ansbach machines.

A success like this is not possible without having a strong woman with power and principles on his side. His wife Elisabeth Fleissner kept Gerold's options open and so he could fully concentrate on the company's welfare. But beside that Elisabeth was also a great support to the company itself.

With love and full activity she cared for the customers and as well for the employees and thus contributed to the high reputation of the company worldwide.

Which customer does not remember the numerous glorious Fleissner exhibition stands at the ITMA's, Techtxtil, INDEX, and many other local shows worldwide.

After a powerful life full of activity and commitment both Gerold and Elisabeth deserve recognition and gratitude for their magnificent life's work and we wish Elisabeth Fleissner many more years in good health. ♦

Monforts Senior Consultant Kurt van Wersch honoured by VDTF association

The German VDTF association of textile finishing specialists has named Monforts Senior Consultant Kurt van Wersch as an honorary member during its 11th colloquium in Leipzig, taking place every two years and attended by its approximate 200 members.

The theme of the 2017 colloquium was 'Industry 4.0 – a chance for the European textile Industry'

The VDTF represents scientific and economic interests of textile finishing specialists and related professions. Teaching and professional research on

behalf of textile finishing is supported by the VDTF.

Kurt van Wersch has published numerous articles relating to continuous dyeing and denim finishing methods and is widely known throughout the industry and is widely recognised as 'the man with the distinguished looking 'handlebar mustache'.

He is a long serving member of the Monforts team and is still working worldwide as a highly respected consultant for A. Monforts Textilmaschinen. ♦

