

Gerald Ronson

Date of Birth: 27 May 1939

Personal: Married to Dame Gail Ronson DBE
Four daughters: Lisa, Amanda, Nicole, Hayley

Summary

Gerald Ronson is one of the UK's most successful businessmen and respected developers of his generation; he is also the most innovative and experienced international developer in the industry. Alongside his business interests, he is one of the most hardworking and generous philanthropists in the UK today.

Gerald started working with his father in his furniture business at the age of 15, joining Heron Homes, which became one of the biggest house builders in the South of England. In 1956, at the age of 17, Gerald founded Heron Group – now called Heron International Plc – of which he is Chief Executive. He was also instrumental in the introduction of self-service petrol stations in the UK and, since 1966, has built 968 across the UK.

He is a recognised philanthropist, having raised over £100 million and personally donated more than £30 million for charities such as the Community Security Trust (CST), NSPCC, The Prince's Trust and Jewish Care. He has established The Gerald Ronson Foundation, whose purpose is to carry on his charitable work and to which he has bequeathed all his shares in Heron. He is directly responsible for raising over £8 million each year for the charities in which he plays a leadership role.

In 2000, the European Court of Human Rights adjudged his trial in connection with Guinness to have been unfair.

In 2009, His Majesty King Juan Carlos bestowed Gerald with the Encomienda de Numero of the Spanish Order of Civil Merit Decoration. In the same year, he was awarded an Honorary Doctorate of Civil Law from Northumbria University.

Gerald's autobiography, *Leading from the Front*, was released in June 2009.

Heron International

Since the 1960s, Gerald Ronson has been a major property developer and pioneer in the sector, including leading UK property developers into the European property markets. Heron International became the second largest private company in Britain and has developed 160 buildings in nine countries, 10 million square feet of commercial and retail property and over 15,000 residential units in the UK, US and continental Europe.

Gerald Ronson also developed the Heron City concept, a chain of branded entertainment-led leisure and retail destinations across Europe. The centres offer something for everyone encompassing restaurants, family entertainment centres, hotels, nightclubs, bars, cinemas, fitness and retail on single sites with large parking facilities and unique free programmes of live entertainment in dedicated central arena. Currently there are two in Madrid, and one in Valencia.

In London, developments include Heron Tower, the 46-storey office building on Bishopsgate completed in March 2011 which is the tallest in the City of London and offers flexible and sustainable world class office space; and The Heron, a development of 285 luxury apartments above new facilities for the Guildhall School of Music & Drama.



Business Career

First Job (1954) – Apprentice, Henry Ronson Ltd

Gerald started work at the age of 15, working with his father in the furniture business before moving on with Heron Homes which eventually became one of the largest house builders in the South of England.

1956 – Foundation of Heron Group

In 1956, Gerald founded Heron Group, which became Heron Holdings in 1965 then Heron Corporation and subsequently Heron International Plc where he is currently Chief Executive.

1966 SNAX 24 Corporation Limited

Gerald is Chairman of SNAX Corporation Limited and was instrumental in the introduction of self-service petrol in the UK and has built 968 stations across the UK since March 1966.

2011 Ronson Capital Partners

Gerald is Chairman of Ronson Capital Partners, a new investment firm he established to invest opportunistically in real estate assets in the UK.

2011 Rontec Investments

A consortium comprising Snax 24, Investec and Grovepoint Capital, created to acquire assets of Total Oil UK.





Current Positions Held

- Capital Campaign Board of the Guildhall School of Music & Drama
- President of JCOSS
- Chairman of the Trustees of The Gerald Ronson Foundation – 2005
- Governor of the London Academy 2004
- Founding member of the JLC and a member of its Steering Committee – 2004
- Patron of The Princess Royal Trust for Carers – 2003
- Founder Member, Cancer Research Campaign/Imperial Cancer Research Fund; Member; CRC/ICRF Appeal Cabinet since 2001
- Chairman, Liaison Committee, Office of the Chief Rabbi since 2001
- Chairman of the Development Council of the Roundhouse – 2000
- Founding Chairman, Community Security Trust since 1995
- Ambassador of the Druze Community on Mount Carmel – 1990
- Member, UMIST Millennium Project Executive Committee since 1988
- Member of the Major Gift Board for the Prince's Trust since 1986
- Patron of The Philip Green Memorial Trust – 1985
- Friend of the Royal College of Physicians since 1985
- Vice-President, NSPCC 1984
- Vice-President, Joint Israel Appeal 1983
- Founding Chairman, Group Relations Educational Trust since 1978
- Member of the Royal Southern Yacht Club

Previous Offices Held

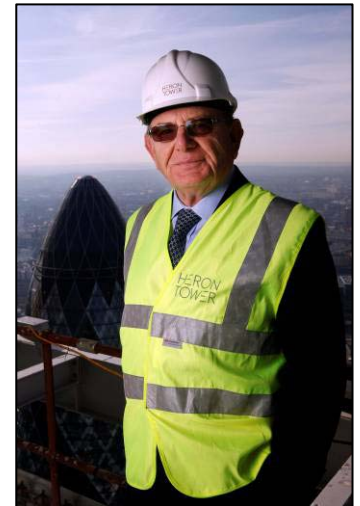
- Founding Chairman of Trustees, The Ronson Foundation
- Trustee of the Natural History Museum 1987-1991
- Member of the Board of the Great Britain Sasakawa Foundation 1985-1992
- Co-Chairman Chindit Memorial Appeal with the late Sir Angus Ogilvy
- Member of Councils of the 1988 and 1992 British Olympic Appeals
- Member of Council of the 1990 Commonwealth Games England Appeal
- Founder member, One Per Cent Club in 1986
- Vice-President of the Jewish Educational Development Trust since 1976
- Co-chairman of Israel Bonds in the UK – 1988-1993



Philanthropic Activity

The Ronson Foundation and businesses led by Gerald Ronson are one of the leading philanthropies in the UK. They donated in excess of £30 million between 1983 and 1994. Major donations include:

- Great Ormond Street
- Prince's Youth Business Trust
- Immanuel College
- The Natural History Museum (Ronson Gallery)
- King Solomon High School
- University of Manchester, Institute of Science & Technology
- National Portrait Gallery
- NSPCC
- Royal Marsden Hospital
- Life Education Centres
- North London Hospice
- JIA
- Jewish Care
- The Michael Palin Centre for Stammering Children
- St. Mary's Hospital
- 3 Ronson ORT schools



On the establishment of the new Gerald Ronson Foundation in 2005, Gerald Ronson bequeathed to the new Foundation all his shares and interests in Heron. As a result, many other new causes have been supported including:

- Royal Opera House
- Cancer Research UK (Cambridge Project)
- Royal National Institute for the Blind
- The Princess Royal Trust for Carers
- Roundhouse Development (Camden)
- JCOSS school - £50m project
- Hagalil Campus (Israeli/Arab school on the Israeli border with Lebanon)
- Jewish Care Golders Green (project)

