

## In memoriam: Henri Wassenbergh

On 1 February 2014, at the age of 89, **Henri ‘Or’ Wassenbergh**, honorary member of the board of editors of *Air & Space Law*, passed away.

He was, in many ways, a remarkable man.

His long and distinguished aviation career started in 1950 when, as a young lawyer, he became secretary to Albert Plesman, KLM Royal Dutch Airlines’ first President/CEO.

His impressive intelligence and tremendous energy made him rise quickly through the ranks, and in 1957, he became deputy head of KLM’s Foreign Relations Department, a position which, until he retired as senior vice-president foreign relations in 1989, brought him fame as a highly successful traffic rights negotiator, and aeropolitical architect of the worldwide expansion of KLM from 1960s to 1980s. In that role, he proved to be original and flexible, but also fearless and street-wise, and he never gave up.

In his articles, books and countless speeches and lectures at aviation conferences and universities, during some fifty years of ‘service’, he never ceased admonishing the international aviation community to get rid of the bilateral straightjacket that stifled growth and prevented the industry from reaching its full potential. Of course, he never forgot that he was working for the ambitious flag carrier of the Netherlands.

His vast practical experience in, and knowledge of, the legal and aeropolitical aspects of international aviation also made him, since his appointment in the mid-seventies, a highly admired and popular professor of air and space law at Leiden University.

In 1985, the same year in which he established the International Institute of Air and Space Law at Leiden University, he also joined the Editorial Board of this journal. He was instrumental in setting and insisting on high editorial standards, demanding original and innovative articles and ideas to stimulate the debate, true to his motto: *du choc des opinions jaillit la vérité*.

After twenty years of intense commitment to the success of the journal, he stepped down and became honorary member of the Board of Editors. But he continued to closely watch the editors and never hesitated to tell them where they had gone wrong.

He will be remembered for his intellectual integrity, his dedication to quality and his sharp wit.

Peter van Fenema